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Social Integration:
Community Service and Marijuana
Use in High School Seniors

James Youniss
Miranda Yates
Yang Su
Catholic University of America

Reports of activities from 3,119 high school seniors were factor analyzed into dimensions that signified integration into school-based, adult-endorsed norms or engagement in peer fun activities that excluded adults. Individuals were given scores on each dimension and then grouped into orientations toward school-adult norms, but not peer fun (School), toward fun but not school-adult norms (Party), toward both (All-around), or toward neither (Disengaged). School and All-around seniors were distinguishably high in community service, religion, and politics. Party seniors used marijuana more than did School seniors, but not All-around, seniors. Results indicated important variations in seniors’ integration (connection) into the part of peer culture that coincides with adult normative society. It appears that connection may be typically associated with regulation but also may be superseded by agency-autonomy, as was manifested in the All-around group.

This study was initiated to explore factors that differentiate between adolescents who do or do not participate in community service activities. When service is defined broadly, the literature shows consistency for rates of service and the means by which youth get access to service opportunities. Between 20% and 25% of adolescents said they did community service on a regular basis, another 25% did it occasionally, and the remaining 50% never did service (Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 1990; Youniss, 1993). Participants reported that service opportunities came from schools, churches, and voluntary associations, such as local charities. Participants also said that family

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members and friends supported and accompanied them in community service (Yates & Youniss, 1996a; Youniss & Yates, 1997).

These findings fit an emerging line of thinking in which contemporary youth can be sorted categorically in their relations to normative adult society. According to Coleman (1987), some youth have numerous interactive experiences with adults who share common values and abide by accepted standards, whereas others have few contacts with such adults. In the Coleman view, youth who have contact with adults are at an advantage for accruing social capital that eases their adaptation to adult society by facilitating transitions to work and civic duties. Ethnographers of youth (Eckert, 1989) noted similarly that some adolescents have positive relationships with adults, whereas others have either negative or scant relationships. In addition, Eckert noted that the kinds of relationships youth have with society are correlated with the types of crowds in which adolescents are grouped. Students in crowds that are oriented positively toward school activities (e.g., jocks) tend to have positive relations with parents and positive attitudes toward social norms. In contrast, students in crowds that are oriented away from school and academics (e.g., burnouts) tend to have stormy relationships with parents and are weakly bound by shared norms.

Eckert (1989) used the metaphor of working with or living outside the corporation to emphasize the dichotomous stances of kinds of youth. Larson (1994) and Otto (1976) employed the term social integration to distinguish between these orientations, using as criteria the kinds of extracurricular activities in which youth participated. There is a double meaning to this concept, with one indicating the extent to which adolescents are involved in peer activities that are school based, sponsored by adults, and supervised by adult coaches or mentors. In this meaning, integration refers to engagement in peer activities that adults endorse and may monitor, in contrast to activities in which adults are kept ignorant and at a distance, activities that peers themselves control. According to Rigsby and McDill (1975), those peer activities coincide with a formal reward system of which adults approve, in contrast to an informal reward system that is peer based, isolated from adults, and oriented toward immediate pleasure. Thus the first meaning indicates the degree to which adolescents are integrated into peer activities that coincide with standards held by normative adults in society.

The second meaning refers to integration into adult society itself. Although contemporary adolescents typically do not have primary roles in economic subsistence or maintaining civil society, numerous institutions and voluntary associations are designed to provide socialization that leads to such roles. For example, 4-H clubs, church youth groups, and political organiza-
tions are designed to engender particular social skills and values that represent specific ideological positions toward society. There is some evidence that youth organizations achieve this goal, in that individuals who participated in them during their youth are identifiable years later as the adult members and leaders of charitable, civic, and political associations (Ladewig & Thomas, 1987). Interestingly, this long-term identifiability is true also of youth who participate in school-based extracurricular activities. When studied at about age 30, these individuals were more likely to belong to voluntary associations and to vote and espouse political convictions (Hanks & Ecklund, 1978; Otto, 1976). Hence adolescents’ involvement in adult-endorsed peer activities appears to enhance their integration into normative society when they are adults.

These two meanings of social integration and the empirical findings that support them have bearing on the three concepts of interest in the present special issue. Connection, regulation, and autonomy typically have been applied to adolescent/parent relationships, but they can be logically extended to adolescents’ relations with society in an equally useful way. Social integration, defined by the numbers and kinds of adult-endorsed activities in which adolescents participate, seems to be analogous to connection in the family domain. Hirschi (1969), for instance, has argued that attachments youth have to other people and normative institutions promote bonds to society, which, in turn, deter delinquency. It is difficult to separate connection from regulation because attachment to adults and normative institutions may entail mutual responsibility, which by definition implies acceptance of shared standards for behavior (Sampson & Groves, 1989). Regulation within the family may function through actual monitoring of adolescents’ behavior, whereas in the social domain, regulation may occur indirectly through membership requirements, an organization’s rules, or group pressure. The concept of autonomy may be manifested through youths’ participation in voluntary associations and political activities. By choosing freely to take action for causes, youth express autonomy as democratic actors (Flacks, 1988), taking responsibility for the welfare of others with whom they share an ethos of reciprocity (Youniss, 1980).

In the present study, connection-integration was operationalized according to two meanings of social integration. At the peer level, integration was assessed by involvement in school-based activities such as working on school publications, participating in team sports, and liking school (Eckert, 1989). At the societal level, connection-integration was assessed by adolescents’ involvement in religious, political, and community service activities. Regulation may be entailed by religious, political, and service participation insofar
as behavioral standards may have to be met to retain good standing in these organizations. Nevertheless, to obtain an independent measure of regulation, self-reported marijuana use was assessed, assuming that it would be related inversely to social integration. The operationalization of autonomy overlapped with assessment of connection-integration, in that community service and political participation entailed voluntary action to promote community well-being and thus were analogous to the agency expected of mature adults in a democratic society (Flacks, 1988).

**METHOD**

**Data**

Monitoring the Future (MTF) is an ongoing survey of high school seniors that has been conducted annually by the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan since 1976 (Bachman, Johnston, & O'Malley, 1993). Each data collection is made in the spring in about 125 public and private high schools that provide a representative cross section of seniors in the United States. The survey is focused on self-reported drug use and includes about 1,300 variables that assess lifestyles, values, and attitudes. Measures relevant to the present study included assessment of daily activities, participation in community service, lifetime marijuana use, involvement in religious and political activities, and demographic features of the sample.

The questions about daily activities and community service appeared on Form 2. The present sample included data from the recent years 1990, 1991, and 1992.

**Profiles-Orientations**

It was assumed that adolescents' social integration, in the sense of adult-endorsed peer activities, could be seen in their everyday interactions (Coleman, 1987; Rigsby & McDill, 1975). Using factor analysis on self-reports for 15 activities, profiles that were designed to signify distinctive kinds of social integration or orientations to society were constructed. Responses to each activity were 1 = never, 2 = a few times a year, 3 = once or twice a month, 4 = at least once a week, and 5 = almost every day. Table 1 lists the activities and gives factor loadings for the four factors that showed consistency across the years.

Factor 1, called School, was composed of three items: working on school publications, participating in other school activities, and liking school. Factor 2,
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NOTE: Kaiser's criterion was used in extracting factors (eigenvalue 1.0 or more); varimax rotation was performed. Loadings greater than .30 are shown in the table as significant.
called Creative, comprised four items: spending leisure time alone, creative writing, reading outside of school, and doing arts and crafts. Factor 3, called Sports, consisted of playing sports outside of school and playing sports in school. Factor 4, called Fun, was composed of going to parties, going to bars, attending rock concerts, and visiting friends.

Individual seniors next were given scores equal to the sum for the items belonging to each factor. This resulted in distributions that were divided into thirds of high, medium, and low levels. Profiles were formed by using the high, medium, and low assignments as follows. The School orientation was defined by three kinds of patterns: (a) scoring high only on the school factor and medium or low on all other factors; (b) scoring high on the school and sports factors only; or (c) scoring high on the school and creative factors only.

The Party orientation was defined also by three patterns. (a) scoring high only on the fun factor; (b) scoring high on fun and sports factors only; or (c) scoring high on fun and creative factors only.

Seniors were assigned to the All-around orientation when they scored high on all four factors, and seniors were assigned to the Disengaged orientation when they had low scores on at least three factors and had no more than a medium score on the remaining factor. The Average group was defined by attainment of at least three medium scores, with the fourth score being low.

The Ns from assignment of seniors to orientations were: 314 males and 595 females in the School orientation; 707 males and 495 females in the Party orientation; 179 males and 157 females in the All-around orientation; 143 males and 187 females in the Disengaged orientation; and 155 males and 187 females in the Average group. The 3,113 seniors who could be classified by this scheme constituted 42% of the total available in these 3 years. Although this scheme of assigning orientations resulted in a reduced sample, it was justified by the criterion of having clear boundaries separating the orientations.

**Dependent Measures**

Participation in community service was one measure of social integration (Yates & Youniss, 1996b) and was assessed by the question, How often do you participate in community affairs and volunteer work? Response categories were 1 = never, 2 = a few times a year, 3 = once or twice a month, 4 = at least once a week, and 5 = almost daily.

Marijuana use was selected as a sign of an antisocial orientation or its converse, regulation. Seniors were asked to report use of marijuana; responses were 1 = in their lifetime, 2 = during the past 12 months, 3 = between 3 and 19 times in the last 30 days, and 4 = more than 19 times in the last 30 days.
Other Measures

Religion was used as an indicator of seniors’ engagement in this normative societal institution, hence, of social integration. One question asked about frequency of attendance at religious services; responses were 1 = never or rarely, 2 = monthly, 3 = weekly. A second question asked how important religion was in the student’s life; responses were 1 = not important, 2 = pretty important, and 3 = very important.

Political participation was used as another measure of social integration-connection to normative society. Four items assessed conventional political behavior; students were asked whether they had already or intended to vote, work in a campaign, give money to a campaign, and write to government officials. Students were given 1 for each item they said they had done or would do and 0 if they would not do it; hence each senior could receive a score of 0 through 4.

Seniors also were asked whether they had already or were likely to partake in the unconventional political behaviors of boycotting and demonstrating. Assigning 1 for each yes, students could earn a score from 0 through 2. These political activities, especially the unconventional items, were taken to signify autonomy-agency as well as integration-connection.

Socioeconomic status (SES) was indicated by parents’ educational attainment (Blau & Duncan, 1967). Four categories were used: 1 = less than high school, 2 = high school, 3 = college, and 4 = more than college. An individual’s score was the average when both parents’ attainments were reported. When neither parent’s attainment was reported, a score of 2 was assigned.

RESULTS

Analyses were conducted in three parts. First, differences among social orientations were assessed for community service participation, religious and political behaviors and attitudes, and marijuana use. Next, interactions of social orientation with religious measures, political behaviors-attitudes, and community service were assessed. Then, exploratory analysis was conducted on the relation of social orientation and community service to marijuana use. For each analysis, gender and SES were assessed.

Differences Among Social Orientations

A series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) revealed significant differences among the social orientations on community service participa-
tion, religious and political behaviors and attitudes, SES, and marijuana use. The means, standard deviations, and $F$ values are reported in Table 2, along with results of pairwise comparisons between social orientations, according to Tukey's honestly significant difference test.

**Community service participation.** Seniors from each social orientation participated in service to significantly different degrees. The rank order from most to least service was All-around, School, Average, Party, and Disengaged seniors.

**Religious behavior and attitudes.** School and All-around seniors attended religious services most frequently, and the Party group attended least frequently. On the importance of religion measure, School seniors were highest and Party seniors were lowest. No differences on importance occurred for other groups.

**Political participation.** Pairwise comparisons of orientations on political participation revealed a similar pattern to community service participation. All-around seniors were most likely, and Disengaged seniors were least likely, to engage in political practices. The All-around and School seniors were most likely, and Disengaged seniors were least likely, to participate in the conventional political activities. No differences were found between Party and Average seniors on conventional political participation. A significant Gender $\times$ Social Orientation interaction effect was found. Male and female members of the five social orientations had the same pattern of conventional political participation. For both sexes, the All-around group had the greatest likelihood, and the Disengaged group had the lowest likelihood, of participation. The interaction effect occurred because orientation differences for females were more pronounced than for males.

On unconventional political activities, All-around seniors also were most likely, and Disengaged seniors were least likely, to participate. School seniors ranked second and were more likely than the Party seniors to boycott or demonstrate. The Average group's participation ranked third and was not significantly different from School or Party groups.

**Socioeconomic status.** Differences in SES among social orientations were identical to group differences in political participation and similar to the group differences on community service participation. The parents of All-around seniors had the highest, and parents of Disengaged seniors had the lowest, educational attainment. Parents of School seniors ranked second and
<table>
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<th>Test Statistics</th>
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<tr>
<td>Community service</td>
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<td>Attend religious services</td>
<td>2.63(^{abc})</td>
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<tr>
<td>Marijuana use</td>
<td>1.50(^{abc})</td>
<td>2.30(^{abcd})</td>
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NOTE: Means with the same letter are significantly different from each other at the .05 level or less. Pairwise comparisons of means were made using Tukey's honestly significant difference procedure. Standard deviations are in parentheses.

*P < .001.
had higher educational attainment than parents of Party seniors. The educational attainment of the Average group’s parents ranked in the middle and did not differ significantly from parents of School or Party seniors.

Marijuana use. Group differences on marijuana were nearly the reverse of the religion measures. School seniors, who had the highest scores on religion, had the lowest level of marijuana use. Party seniors, who had the lowest scores on religion, reported the highest level of marijuana use. In distinction from the findings on religion, All-around seniors had significantly higher levels of marijuana use than did Disengaged or Average groups. Table 3 summarizes the paired-group comparison results.

Factors Related to Community Service Participation

The next set of analyses examined factors related to community service participation. Two separate five-factor ANOVAs were conducted, one assessing religion variables and the other assessing political variables. The first ANOVA (Social Orientation × Attending Religious Services × Importance of Religion × SES × Gender) revealed significant main effects of social orientation, $F(4, 3089) = 76.34, p < .001$; attending religious services, $F(2, 3089) = 21.03, p < .001$; importance of religion, $F(2, 3089) = 5.19, p < .001$; SES, $F(3, 3089) = 5.35, p < .001$; and gender, $F(1, 3089) = 6.22, p < .01$. No interaction effects were found.

The second ANOVA (Social Orientation × Conventional × Unconventional × Socioeconomic Status × Gender) revealed significant main effects of social orientation, $F(4, 3063) = 71.00, p < .001$; conventional political participation, $F(2, 3063) = 23.38, p < .001$; unconventional political participation, $F(2, 3063) = 6.23, p < .001$; SES, $F(3, 3063) = 2.75, p < .05$; and gender, $F(1, 3063) = 6.71, p < .01$. A significant interaction of social orientation by unconventional political participation was found, $F(8, 3063) = 2.04, p < .05$.

Religious behavior and attitudes. Pairwise analysis using Tukey’s honestly significant differences test indicated that religious behavior and attitudes were related linearly to community service. The more frequently students attended religious services, the more frequently they performed community service; similarly, the greater importance students placed on religion, the more frequently they performed community service.

Political participation. Political participation also was related linearly to community service. The more conventional political activities that students
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NOTE: Blank cells indicate groups that were not different significantly from each other at the .05 level or less using Tukey's honestly significant differences procedure.
had already participated or planned to participate in, the more frequently they performed community service. Due to an interaction of social orientation by unconventional political participation, the pairwise comparisons for unconventional political participation were more complex. For all social orientations except Disengaged, the more unconventional political activities that students had already participated or planned to participate in, the more frequently they performed community service. Figure 1 shows that this positive relation was pronounced, particularly for School seniors, whereas for Disengaged seniors, greater unconventional political participation was related to less frequent community service. It is difficult to explain this finding for Disengaged students, but it is relevant to point out that Disengaged students were least involved in unconventional activities and in community service.

*Socioeconomic status and gender.* Pairwise comparisons also revealed that students of parents with higher levels of education, and females, performed more community service.

**Relationship Between Social Orientation and Community Service on Marijuana Use**

The final ANOVA examined the relation between social orientation and community service on marijuana use. A four-factor ANOVA (Social Orientation × Community Service × Socioeconomic Status × Gender) revealed significant main effects of social orientation, \( F(4,3049) = 133.11, p < .001 \), and community service, \( F(2, 3049) = 45.55, p < .001 \), as well as a significant interaction effect of social orientation by community service, \( F(8,3049) = 2.19, p < .05 \). Pairwise comparisons indicated that for all social orientations except All-around, community service was related inversely to lower marijuana use. All-around students reported the highest community service (see Figure 2) but the second-highest marijuana use.

**DISCUSSION**

In the search for factors that lead to community service, it was found that adolescents who were most integrated into adult-endorsed peer activities and most integrated into institutional forms of normative adult society did service at higher rates than their less socially integrated peers. That seniors from the School and All-around orientations did service at about four times the rate of seniors in Party or Disengaged orientations constitutes a new finding in the
Figure 1. Community service in relation to unconventional political activity in the five orientations.

Figure 2. Marijuana use in relation to community service in the five orientations.
literature. Students in the former two orientations shared intense involvement in school-based, adult-endorsed activities. It would be worth knowing whether the schools from which these seniors were sampled, in fact, offered service programs, because Hodgkinson and Weitzman (1990) found that participants often got involved in service through school programs. Because students from School and All-around orientations were by definition favorable toward school offerings, it is possible that their participation reflected readiness to act on available opportunities. Another possibility is that involvement in school-based activities engendered a sense of agency that gave these youth confidence to take part in service activities. When afforded opportunities to promote the well-being of society, then, these youth were primed to accept the challenge. The Ladewig and Thomas (1987) retrospective reports from adults would support this notion. Adults recalled that when they participated in community projects as adolescents, they felt a sense of competence and ability to accept social responsibility. In either case, social integration via school activities that are linked with adult normative society proved to be a powerful predictor of the degree to which youth engaged in community service activities.

The positive role of religious affiliation in service agrees with the fact that many religious denominations provide opportunities for service through youth programs (Hodgkinson & Weitzman, 1990; Yates & Youniss, 1996a; Youniss, 1993). Many churches provide organized programs for youth to instill principles of social good and social justice (Yates & Youniss, 1996a; Youniss & Yates, 1997). These programs have specific socialization goals that are designed to integrate youth into adult communities with emphasis on their identifying ideologies toward life. Hence youth who were more integrated into religious institutions had ideologies available for justifying their service. It can be speculated that service, in turn, can lead to even more integration in a positive feedback cycle.

Another correlate of service was actual or planned conventional or unconventional political activities. In the main, the more seniors had already been or planned to be politically active, the more they did service. This result could mean that political involvement represents initial steps in becoming mature citizens in a democratic society. Voting, working in political campaigns, and the like do not just happen in adulthood but have developmental origins that allow youth to sense palpably their agency in the larger community. This surely is true in studies of adults, who as youth in the 1950s and 1960s, worked to bring civil rights to Blacks in the American South (Fendrich, 1993; McAdam, 1988).

It is possible that voting, demonstrating, and the like indicate autonomy as well as integration into adult civil society. Taking part or desiring to take
part in political actions implies personal agency, which is required of citizens in a democracy. This concurs with measures of enhanced self-concepts that are reported in several studies of community service (Yates & Youniss, 1996b). It also accords with results showing that adults who had participated in school-based extracurricular activities during high school were more active and less alienated politically 15 years later than were their nonparticipating peers (Hanks & Ecklund, 1978; Otto, 1976). A more recent study by Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) has replicated this longitudinal effect.

There was an interaction between service and participation in unconventional demonstrations and boycotts. For three of the orientations, greater involvement in unconventional activities was associated with more frequent service. However, for seniors in the School orientation, two or more unconventional acts were associated with disproportionately higher involvement in service, whereas for seniors in the Disengaged orientation, two or more unconventional acts were associated with a decline in service. The former result might imply that School youth who were the most confident of their political agency were especially ready to do service. It is not clear why the Disengaged youth who were most inclined to unconventional action were least involved in service, although this pattern may reflect mere fluctuations around an already low level of participation.

Results for marijuana use were equally informative in their bearing on the concept of regulation. One perspective is that social integration, defined at the peer level by school-based activities and at the adult level by involvement in service, was related inversely to marijuana use. Insofar as service signifies engagement in the larger community, it may deter not only marijuana use but also other forms of delinquency (Allen, Philliber, & Hoggson, 1990). It could be proposed that adolescents who are more involved in society are less likely to violate norms held by the community at large. Another perspective is that integration in society may have a direct regulatory function. Sloane and Potvin (1986), for example, have observed that adolescents who practice religion and have religious beliefs differ from their nonreligious peers on multiple measures of substance use. Litchfield, Thomas, and Li (1997 [this issue]) offer confirming longitudinal evidence from Mormon youth that greater religious commitment was associated negatively with use of illegal substances. These results point to a kind of integrated youth syndrome that is a counterpoint to the syndrome of multiple delinquency (Arnett, 1992; Elster, Lamb, & Tavare, 1987). Adolescents who are integrated into normative society partake of adult-endorsed political and religious activities and also tend not to violate norms pertaining to marijuana use.
The status of All-around seniors merits special attention. On measures of religious attendance and conventional political involvement, All-around seniors were indistinguishable from School seniors. These similarities may follow from the fact that both orientations shared the definitional feature of high involvement in school-based activities. Hence both groups of seniors were well integrated into that part of the peer domain that was oriented to adult normative society. However, All-around seniors scored significantly higher than School seniors on only three measures—community service, unconventional political behaviors, and marijuana use. Indeed, on the marijuana measure, All-around seniors were the only group whose marijuana use did not decline as community service increased. All-around seniors’ high involvement in fun activities, alone, does not account for the general pattern of findings. Although All-around seniors shared high scores on the fun dimension with the Party group, they differed on every measure from the Party group, for example, doing more service and smoking less marijuana. A more plausible depiction of All-around seniors, then, is that they represent a special type of risk taking in which challenges to be different are accepted readily, be they for service, boycotting, or smoking marijuana. Because All-around youth also participated frequently in religious practices and conventional political behaviors, they should not be identified with “druggies” (Eckert, 1989) or “metal heads” (Arnett, 1992). They appear more like the Rigsby and McDill (1975) “well-rounded” adolescents, who participate enthusiastically in the academic and fun sides of peer culture but are protected from the warps of the latter by the ballast of the former. Whereas these youth looked for fun with their peers, they took schooling and school activities seriously, in keeping with the high level of educational attainment of their parents.

This entire set of results informs an emerging line of thinking in which adolescence is viewed as being as much a function of external relations between individuals and society as of internal processes within the individual. The viewpoint recognizes that adolescence is shaped by social-historical forces (Gillis, 1981) and by institutions of labor, schooling, religion, and politics (Arnett & Balle-Jensen, 1993; Flanagan, 1995; Larson, 1994). The kinds of communities in which adolescents live determine opportunities and limits for prosocial or antisocial viewpoints (Coleman, 1987; Eccles, Early, Frasier, Belansky, & McCarthy, 1997 [this issue]; Sampson & Groves, 1989). Coherently organized communities allow people to share common values and maintain controls that permit collective pursuits of agreed-on goals. Although in modern society, youth rarely have direct responsibility for economic subsistence or maintaining the democratic order, they are given socialization
experiences that can promote their social integration. Although it is difficult to trace exact paths from adolescence to adulthood, several studies have reported links between normative activities during adolescence and socially responsible behavior in later adulthood (Fendrich, 1993; Otto, 1976). Research often emphasizes how strengthening bonds to society may deter delinquency (Hirschi, 1969; Sampson & Laub, 1994). It now is important to discover how social integration into the peer domain through adult-sponsored peer activities leads to integration into adult society, with the regulation that this implies and autonomy it engenders.

REFERENCES


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