

The effects of labeling
on adolescent alcohol use

by

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Alcohol is a drug. A very serious drug with very serious consequences. This is true for adolescents and adults alike. Because adolescence is a stage of development and continuing growth, the consequences resulting from alcohol use are often more dangerous at this point in life. Jessor and Jessor (1977) found problem drinkers to exhibit more aggression, place less value on achievement and more value on independence, have lower grade point averages, and perceive more peer support for drinking and drug use.

Alcohol has become the drug of choice. Being socially acceptable, alcohol is readily available at most grocery as well as convenience stores. Youths experimentation is often times looked upon as a natural stage of growing up, part of the process of becoming an adult. However, using alcohol under a certain age is illegal in the United States.

The staggering financial, social and physical costs of alcohol abuse should make adolescents wary of the substance. For instance, the cost of alcoholism was estimated at \$42 billion in 1975. In 1983, the cost was estimated as high as \$120 billion according to a congressional report. (Des Moines Sunday Register, 1983). These costs included declines in productivity, goods, and services (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1971). A 1981 study by the Southeastern Pennsylvania Blue Cross revealed that people with alcohol problems were admitted to hospitals eight times as often as those without an alcohol problem (Lynch, 1983). With respect to domestic violence, estimates are that 50 percent of domestic violence incidents, including child abuse, have a strong connection with drug or alcohol use (Lynch, 1983). Other findings state the alcohol use among school age youth has increased while the use of marijuana and other

drugs has leveled off or decreased (Lynch, 1983). As Ronald Banks, Director of Policy and Planning for the Office of Drug and Alcohol Programs, Pennsylvania State Department of Health put it "alcohol has become the substance of least hassle" (Lynch, 1983:1).

The purpose of this study is to examine if any differences exist among users and nonusers in regard to parental labeling, teacher labeling, peer labeling and self-esteem. Whether or not alcoholism is a disease is not examined. Alcohol use is treated as a delinquent act.

The theories used in studying this problem and trying to explain differences among drinking patterns were found to be the most applicable in regard to the research. There are many theories on delinquency as well as many theories on drug use that may also have been appropriate. However, containment theory, labeling theory and control theory were found to be most useful in the predictions as well as the explanations of this study. If factors leading to alcohol use can be predicted, a big step towards prevention can be made.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter deals with the literature on adolescent alcohol use. The first part will deal with defining abuse of alcohol. The negative consequences resulting from alcohol use will then be discussed. Following this is the characteristics most frequently associated with alcohol users along with the factors contributing to alcohol use. The chapter will end with the effects of society, schools, family and peers on the adolescent alcohol user.

Johnston (1980) reported alcohol to be the most commonly used drug by adolescents. Truckenmiller (1982) found 35 percent of seniors in one survey admitted to drinking once a week, and 27 percent reported being drunk once a week. By their senior year of high school, 90 to 95 percent of students will have experimented with alcohol (Braucht, 1980).

Horton (1985) in a governmental study on adolescent alcohol use found the age alcohol is first used is also declining. Recent figures place the average beginning age for drinking alcohol in the United States at 12 years, 5 months. At age 12 most adolescents are still in the sixth grade. This means the average youth has experimented with alcohol before reaching junior high school.

A study conducted in San Mateo County, California (1973) found the ratio of male to female users to vary by substance and point in the life cycle. The largest increase in drinking alcohol for boys occurs between the seventh and eighth grades, and for girls between the eighth and ninth grades. Annual surveys conducted in California between 1968 and 1973 indicated an increase in the proportion of students who began drinking alcoholic beverages each surveyed year with 52 percent of the 7th grade

boys in 1969 having done so compared to 72 percent in 1973, and 38 percent of the girls in 1969 compared with 67 percent in 1973.

Although abuse of alcohol and problem drinking occurs in all ethnic geographical and income groups, Johnston (1980) contends that the coasts and large cities still have the highest rates of use by adolescents.

Definitions

The definition of alcoholism remains a problem within our society. A unitary concept of alcoholism continues to exist, specifically, that persons react the same and experience similar progressive deterioration (Pattison, 1980). Some definitions include:

Repeated episodes of intoxication or heavy drinking which impairs health, or consistent use of alcohol as a coping mechanism in dealing with the problems of life to a degree of serious interference with an individual's effectiveness on the job, at home, in the community, or behind the wheel of a car. . . and may raise a strong inference of alcoholism (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1971:1).

When a person develops increased adaptation to the effects of alcohol, so that he needs increasing doses to achieve and sustain a desired effect, and shows specific signs and symptoms of withdrawal upon suddenly stopping drinking, this is considered to be alcoholic dependence or addiction. . . an alcoholic person is one who manifests the behavior of alcohol dependence or alcoholism and needs a drink, even though he may know the political destructive behavior of his consequences (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1971:1).

Lack of self-control may be manifested either by the inability to abstain from drinking for any significant time period, or by the ability to remain sober between drinking episodes but an inability to refrain from drinking to intoxication whenever drinking an alcoholic beverage. . . alcoholism can be defined as the use of alcoholic beverages to the extent that health or economic or social functioning are substantially impaired (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1971:106).

The moderate drinker was neither a teetotaler nor a heavy drinker. An individual was a heavy drinker if, for at least a year, he drank daily and had six or more drinks at least once a week, for over a year, but reported emphasis added no problems. A problem drinker was a heavy drinker with problems, but not

enough of them to be classified as an alcoholic person; alcoholism was inferred if an individual met the criteria of a heavy drinker and had alcohol related problems in at least three of the four areas:

1. Social disapproval of his drinking by friends and parents.
2. Job trouble
Traffic arrests
Other police trouble
3. Frequent blackouts
Tremor
Withdrawal, hallucinations, and convulsions
4. Loss of control over drinking
Morning drinking (U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1974:46)

Alcohol use must be analyzed as a multivariate syndrome focusing on the many different causes as well as effects. The literature contains many theoretical approaches to alcohol use, a single explanation does not exist. Any examination of the similarities and differences in personality and psychopathology between alcoholics deals with the concept of addictive personality. Although this area of research remains highly controversial, evidence substantiates a great heterogeneity of personality and psychopathology to be observed among alcoholics (Solomon and Keeley, 1982). The purpose of this study, however, is not to explore alcoholism as a behavioral addiction, but to treat it as a delinquent act, illegal for most adolescents to consume.

Effects of Alcohol Consumption

The fact that alcohol is illegal for adolescents is not its only contribution to delinquency. Alcohol use precedes the criminal acts of a high percentage of offenders and many commit criminal acts only while under the influence of alcohol (Ross and Lightfoot, 1985). Horton (1985) has found that over half of all teen age deaths are due to auto accidents. Research has consistently demonstrated that between 45 and 60 percent of

all fatal traffic accidents involving an adolescent driver are alcohol related (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1971). Traffic accidents are the leading cause of death among American youth (Comptroller General of the U.S., 1979). In the state of Iowa, 1985, 68 percent of all fatal accidents were alcohol related. Of these accidents, 44 percent involved adolescents (Iowa Department of Transportation, 1985).

Alcohol is a very dangerous drug for adolescents. Horton (1985) reported that one out of ever ten adults become addicted to alcohol. With that addiction comes serious negative consequences. Those who began drinking at a younger age are more likely to become addicted. Alcoholism develops more rapidly in adolescents. Some teenagers become addicted within six months of taking their first drink (Horton, 1985). Also, the physical and emotional disabilities are likely to be more severe, as well as the consequences related to drinking. Johnston (1980) contends that in the U.S., although the public has been much more concerned about the use of illicit drugs, it is the legal drug alcohol that causes adolescents the greatest difficulties. The same is true for adults.

Finn and O'Gorman (1981) state frequent and heavy use of any drug among adolescents is often a coping mechanism for dealing with personal problems that need to be confronted and resolved if normal development is to occur. When drugs are used to cover feelings and to cope with stress, normal adolescent social and psychological growth is blocked. Physical and emotional damage caused by mood altering substances are believed to occur more quickly in teenage abusers than in their adult counterparts.

The most serious effect of alcohol is depression. It is believed that 40 percent of all suicides and suicide attempts by adolescents are related to alcohol or other drugs. Suicide is the third leading cause of death

among teens in the United States (Horton, 1985). Also, other self-destructive behavior, such as cigarette burns, initials or symbols carved into the skin, and unexplained cuts and bruises may be attributed to alcohol use.

Horton (1985) found those who abuse alcohol are likely to abuse other drugs. Ninety percent of adolescent alcoholics surveyed also used other drugs. Barnes (1984) adds that most abusers are also involved in other delinquent acts. A heavy drinking pattern among adolescents has been positively associated with social deviance. Blum and Singer (1983) found very few adolescent abusers to have substance abuse as their only problem. In most recent studies, drug by adolescents has been shown to be associated with other forms of adolescent deviance such as skipping school, early sex experience, and delinquent behavior (Jessor and Jessor 1977, Robins and Wish 1978, Kandel, 1976).

Motivations for Use

Van Houten and Golembiesnski (1978) found a primary motivation for use to be boredom and/or anger. John O'Donnel (1976) states the principal motivation for use to be pleasure, simply achieving a high. Also, drugs are often used as a result of social pressure, rather than to benefit from any pharmacological effects of the drug.

Alcohol use is promoted as a rite of passage into adulthood (Horton, 1982). (Drinking is glorified by older adolescents who use terminologies such as, "partying," "bombed," "blitzed," "smashed," or "zonked" rather than the more harsh term "drunk".) The majority of delinquent acts are group related, this includes alcohol use. In order to be accepted into certain groups there often times is a stipulation of being able to consume a certain amount of alcohol. Often times that amount can be lethal.

Characteristics of Users

Alcohol use among teens has been correlated with many variables. Napier, Carter, and Pratt (1981) found that use will be highest for older males from higher socio-economic status backgrounds who have experienced personal stress, are poorer students, and have come from homes which are experiencing interpersonal conflict, or have been fractured by separation, divorce, or death. Horton (1985) adds that senior high school students who frequently drove cars while under the influence were likely to be male, in the 12th grade, to get lower grades, to have had their first drink before age 12, to get drunk at least once a week, to drink hard liquor, to drink in unsupervised settings such as cars at night, and to get into trouble with their families over drinking. Trunkenmiller (1982) found the best predictors for alcohol use to be interpersonal relationship variables. Also, the variables work synergistically rather than in a linear fashion.

Factors Contributing to Use

Family

Tudor et al. (1980), in examining the relationship between peer and parental influences and adolescent drug use, concluded that parental relationship was critical in influencing drug use while peer relationships seemed not to affect drug use.

Barnes (1984) studied parental influence and found support, nurturance and socialization factors to be a key factor in the prevention of problem drinking. Nearly all research shows a high correlation between the drinking habits of adolescents and those of their parents. A child's first drink most often occurs at home with their parents for some type of a celebration. An adolescent most often emulates the drinking patterns of

their parents (Horton, 1985). Children of alcoholic parents have more than a 50 percent chance of becoming alcoholic. This may be a matter of heredity as well as environment. An alcoholic home life is likely to nurture alcoholic behavior if there is a predisposition to alcoholism (Horton, 1985).

Johnson (1984a,b) found the junior year the strongest point of parental influence over problem drinking. Also, familial involvements are more important in deterring problem use of alcohol during the latter years of high school (Johnson, 1984a,b).

Peers

Alcohol is used as a powerful bond within peer relations. Those who abuse alcohol are likely to abuse relations. Peer group influences as well as drinking problems have also been found to be strongest around the junior year in high school (Johnson, 1984a,b). Truckenmiller states youth perceived positive peer group pressure, as well as positive labeling by significant others and access to desirable social roles, are associated with lower alcohol use levels.

Becker (1963) asserts that in order for a person to avoid making commitments to conventional society, s/he must avoid having alliances within the conventional society. There is some sense of recognition and organization with others who hold an equal disdain for conventional institutions. Thus, the members of the peer group offer the moral support needed for the break away from conventional alliances.

Hirschi (1969) states that the level of peer attachment is related to parental attachment. Once the individual has removed himself from the influence of the adult group, s/he tends to socialize and develop strong effective bonds with the peer group. Weschler and Thum (1973) note that

deviant behavior is the result of both alienation from the parents and identification with the youth culture. In other words, as the bond to parents weaken, one is likely to turn to deviant peers for support.

Schools

The school plays an important role in separating the child from the influence of his parents. Polk and Schafer (1972) indicate that the school may serve as the definer of the adolescent peer group. Within the school, many youths have their first confrontation with conventional institutions outside the home. Recognizing common interests many of these individuals cluster together as a result of their contempt for the values of the school. Frease (1973) concluded that delinquent youth felt that school was irrelevant and meaningless. The adolescents in his study expressed a weakened bond through poor grades, truancy, and deviant behavior within the school.

Bradley (1982) contends the longer a student is in high school the more likely the student is to become a consumer on a regular basis. As the student is involved in high school longer the student becomes involved in more social activities and becomes more likely to consume alcohol in some form. A linear correlation exists between grade in school and alcohol use.

According to Horton (1985), the confusing way in which school systems relay messages on alcohol can also be a cause for the rising adolescent alcohol use rate. Whereas marijuana, cocaine, and heroin are taught in terms of total abstinence, alcohol is taught as a drug to be used responsibly.

Society

An ambiguity continues to exist among society as to what the actual problem is. Should alcohol use among adolescents be looked upon as deviant behavior, or is it society that attaches the deviant label to those youths who commit the act of consuming alcohol illegally? Deviant behavior is behavior that has been successfully labeled as such (Becker, 1963). In some cases, a fine line exists between normal and deviant behavior, especially among adolescents. The process of becoming a deviant is much the same as those for becoming a conformist. It is misleading to speak of the deviant person because most of the behavior of any person is conforming. Torres (1982) contends that in many contexts youth who do not drink alcoholic beverages may be labeled deviant by their peers as well as some parents because consumption of some alcohol is considered "normal." The act of consuming alcohol then could be considered deviant by society (power structure) and not deviant by one's own social group (peer relationship).

Drinking has become the norm in American society. Television programs as well as commercials promote alcohol use. A report by the Scientific Analysis Corp showed alcoholic beverages to be the most frequently consumed by television characters. Out of the 225 programs analyzed a total of 701 drinking acts were recorded. The references made to alcohol were positive, as well as humorous in nature, portraying alcohol as a "fun" harmless beverage, not as a drug (Horton, 1985).

Society does recognize a select group of people to be abstainers. This group includes: (1) pregnant women (2) those who have evidenced alcoholic tendencies (3) anyone on medication that would react unfavorably with alcohol (4) those who are in life-sensitive jobs or who work around

potentially dangerous machinery (5) anyone under the legal drinking age (Horton, 1985). Beyond people in this group, societies attitudes towards drinking remain unclear.

Adolescents use of alcohol was presented recently by then HEW Secretary Joseph Califano as a major social problem which requires public action to ameliorate, prevent and treat (1979). He began his publication as follows (Maloney, 1977):

"Alcohol use and misuse among teenagers have recently been the target of much media attention and national concern. Numerous stories have appeared in hundreds of publications and television news shows throughout the country on teenage alcoholism, alcohol as the "drug of choice" of young people, students drinking while in school, and the impact of a lowered legal drinking age on traffic accidents. This publicity has resulted on the one hand in a panic similar to the drug scare of the early 1970's, and on the other in genuine concern among people in contact with youths to discover what is happening and what should be done about it" (Baizerman, 1982).

CHAPTER 3: THEORY

The purpose of this thesis is to find factors associated with adolescent alcohol use. The proposed contributing factors include perceived parental labeling, perceived teacher labeling, self-esteem, and normative peer grouping. Considering these variables, the three theories reviewed are Walter Reckless' Containment Theory, the labeling perspective and Travis Hirschi's control theory. The theories will be reviewed in that order.

Containment Theory

Walter Reckless self-concept or containment explanation of delinquency in the 1950s was formed because of the inability of socialization theories to account for why some people do and some do not succumb to deviance. Reckless wanted to explain why conditions such as social disorganization, differential association with criminal models, blocked opportunity structures and subcultural pulls enhance one person's deviant behavior, while not affecting others.

Containment theory views criminal behavior as the outcome of the interrelations between various psychological variables and the social environment of pressures and pulls. Containment is maximized under general social "conditions of isolation, homogeneity of culture, class, and population, and where nuclear groups have a strong hold on individual members" (Reckless, 1967:471-72). The psychological variables are inner containment, and the environmental variables are outer, or external containment.

Reckless (1967) defines inner containment as the elements which affect control over one's behavior and are internal to the self. Therefore, the

personalized feelings of the youth are stressed, rather than their associations. Internal containment is the result of successful internalization of conventional norms and values. Delinquency then results from poor self-concepts. This is in contrast to the labeling perspective, which argues that negative self-concepts are the result of having been delinquent.

A positive view of oneself provides an insulation against the pressures towards delinquency, regardless of social class or other environmental conditions. Other components of inner containment include: favorable self-concept, goal orientation towards socially approved goals, frustration tolerance, and norm retention. When morals begin to become lowered, norm erosion occurs.

External containment is defined by Reckless (1967) as the capability of society and smaller groups to hold the behavior of individuals within the bounds of accepted norms and laws. External containment is the result of membership in well integrated conventional groups and organizations. The most important membership is "nuclear groups." These are one's family or one's community. These nuclear groups have a more deterring effect on deviance than the larger society. "The person who finds sense of belonging, acceptance, ego bolstering and support in nuclear groups and small organizations is more apt to follow social norms than one who does not have such integrating elements" (Reckless, 1967).

One's self serves as a container of internal pushes, while prosocial contacts serve as buffers against external pressures and containers against external pulls. External pressures can be defined as diverse living conditions, such as poverty or unemployment. External pulls may be differential associations, and mass media inducements.

A key dimension in deviant behavior is the actual conception of significant others towards the actor, as well as the latter's self-conceptions and images of others attitudes. "Self-concept has an effect on behavior, delinquent or nondelinquent, deviant or nondeviant" (Wells, 1978:202). Orientation to long-range, socially approved goals, high frustration tolerance, and high levels of norm commitment are all thought to inhibit delinquency. Attachments to conventional reference groups that yield a sense of belonging and worth are also thought to be an inhibitor of deviance.

Evidence supporting containment theory and connecting negative self-concepts and delinquency has been established by Reckless and his associates. Studies of juveniles in Columbus, Ohio demonstrated that predicted delinquents have lower self-concepts than predicted non delinquents. These data were characterized by the following conditions.

- (1) "good" and "bad" boys were initially selected by teachers predictions
- (2) the measures of the boys self-concepts were cross-validated by their teachers and mothers (Reckless, 1967).

This explanation has been criticized. Cross validation of personally expressed self-concepts with teachers' and mothers' judgments confuses the issue between what a person actually thinks of himself and what he thinks others think or expect of him (Schwartz and Tangri, 1965).

Michael Schwartz and Sandra Tangri (1965) used a semantic differential test having juveniles rate themselves on a "good-bad" continuum along several dimensions. These perceptions were then correlated with judgments of how respondents felt mothers, friends, and teachers thought of them. One hundred and one school nominated "good" and "bad" sixth grade boys

attending an all black school in a high delinquency area of Detroit filled out the survey. Those designated as "good" boys had higher personal self-concepts than those designated as "bad" boys. Self-image was correlated with different significant others tended to vary between "good" and "bad" boys.

The issue of self-concept is clearly a complex one, and its measurement and application towards delinquency is still incomplete for a thorough examination of containment theory.

Labeling Theory

The labeling perspective emphasizes societal reactions effect on deviance. An act is deviant if, and only if, so labeled. Effects of labeling was stated as early as 1938 by Frank Tannenbaum. Tannenbaum suggested a way to alleviate the problem of labeling: "The way out is through a refusal to dramatize the evil. The less said about it the better. The more said about something else, still better" (Tannenbaum, 1938:28).

Edwin Lemert (1951) defined the terms primary and secondary deviance. This resulted in the first systematic development of labeling theory. Primary deviance is the original acts of nonconformity. It is behavior contrary to a norm and prior to societal reactions. These may be caused by numerous factors and usually remain undetected by deviant others.

Secondary deviance is nonconformity resulting from labeling. Primary deviance is converted into secondary deviance by reactions to the primary deviance. "Secondary deviation is deviant behavior or social roles based upon it, which becomes means of defense, attack, or adaptation to the overt and covert problems created by the societal reaction to primary deviation" (Lemert, 1974:48). It is reached through a process of steps, beginning

with primary deviation, progressing through a series of penalties, and eventually an acceptance by the actor of a deviant status. The primary factor in the repetition of delinquency is the fact of being formally labeled delinquent. Repeated acts of delinquency are influenced by formal labels because such labels eventually alter a persons self-image to the point where a person begins to identify themselves as delinquent and act accordingly.

Howard Becker in the early '60s proposed deviance to be created by rule enforcers, who often acted with bias towards poor and powerless members of a society. "The deviant is one to whom that label has successfully been applied; deviant behavior is behavior that people so label" (Becker, 1963:9). Other definitions of deviance are stated as such: "Forms of behavior per se do not differentiate deviants from non-deviants; it is the responses of the conventional and conforming members of the society who identify and interpret behavior as deviant which sociologically transforms persons into deviants" (Kitsuse, 1980:253).

"Deviance is not a property inherent in certain forms of behavior; it is a property conferred upon these forms by audiences which directly or indirectly witness them" (Erikson, 1962:308).

The connection between labeling a juvenile a delinquent and the development of delinquent identity has been established by examinations of the court processing juveniles (Emerson, 1969; Cicourel, 1976).

Qualitative analysis, however, have failed to confirm consistently the existence of measurable changes in identity or attitudes as a result of official labeling at any stage of processing. Official labels have more impact on self-images and attitudes of those less heavily involved in delinquency (Lipsitt, 1968).

Chambliss (1973) in a study of juvenile gangs, found that juveniles generally adopted the labels the community placed upon them. Official labels contributed to a juvenile delinquents self image.

Group support of a labeled deviant may result in transformation or further enhance deviant behavior. An example of group support as a catalyst in transforming a deviant is an alcohol abuser who joins Alcoholics Anonymous and pronounces himself an alcoholic in order to handle the problem (Trice and Roman, 1970).

The consequences of labeling on one's self-concept and behavior, has received considerable attention in the literature. The view that a label creates behavior appears oversimplifies. However, several studies, both qualitative and quantitative suggest the existence of an effect of official labels on delinquent identities and behavior. Although such effects obviously occur, they are neither as inevitable nor as dramatic as the assumptions of the theory would predict.

Control Theory

Control theory which can be historically placed in the 1950s and early '60s as an extension of Reckless' containment theory is the third theory used in this study. Travis Hirschi's general assumptions of control theory are that humans must be controlled by some source in order for criminal or delinquent tendencies to be repressed.

Control theories assume that the tendency to commit delinquent acts is to be expected. In order to explain delinquent acts, one observes the difference between delinquents and nondelinquents. Delinquency is therefore looked upon as a deficiency in something, the absence of a working control mechanism.

According to Hirschi (1969), the four elements of the social bond: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief, collectively explain the social control theory of delinquency. Attachment refers to the psychological and emotional connection one feels toward other persons or groups and the extent to which one cares about their opinions and feelings.

Commitment refers to the investments accumulated in terms of conformity to conventional rules versus the estimated costs or losses, of investments associated with nonconformity.

Involvement refers to participation in conventional and legitimate activity. For example, in a school such extracurricular activities as plays, clubs and athletic events.

Belief involves the acceptance of a conventional value system. In the logic of control theory it is argued that a weakening of conventional beliefs, for whatever the reason, increases the chances of delinquency.

Control theory is as much a theory of conformity as it is of deviance. Human action, under normal conditions of social organizations, is seen to be regulated by social norms, and deviance is considered minimal precisely because behavior is regulated. Deviance is not caused, it is made possible because of societies inability to effect social control.

CHAPTER 4: METHODS

Data for this study were collected using a Youth Needs Assessment Survey. The HEW National Strategy for Youth Development Model (Elliot, 1975) was promoted as a community-based planning and procedural tool designed to enhance positive youth development and prevent delinquency through a process of youth needs assessment, development of needs targeted programs, and program impact evaluation. The uniqueness of the National Strategy stems from the fact that it is predicated on a social-psychological model of youth development and contains requisite measures of the models components. The questionnaire contains many sections including a problems and needs section, and a series of psycho-social scales; it is these psycho-social scales that most directly effect the model's components in psychometric form.

Acceptable reliabilities (Brennan and Huizinga, 1975), substantial predictive validity of psycho-social scales with respect to Self-Reported Delinquency (SRD) on the order of $R = .70$, as well as consistent correlational structural validity (Brennan and Huizinga, 1975) have been found for the psycho-social scales.

The HEW model of social psychological youth development dynamics is one wherein mutually reinforcing components press toward and interact with positive youth development on the one hand, or delinquency on the other (Trunkenmiller, 1982). In a positive direction, a sense of general societal belonging, youth perceived positive peer group pressure, youth perceived positive labeling by significant others, and youth perceived access to desirable social roles are all synergistically reinforcing with positive behavior. In the negative direction, synergistic interactions press towards delinquent behavior (Trunkenmiller, 1982).

Materials consisted of the OYD project conducted by the Behavioral Research and Evaluation Corporation. The same questionnaire has been used by the HEW Community Youth Program administered as part of the Youth Needs survey Questionnaire package. Confidentiality was maintained by use of respondent identification numbers rather than name.

Subjects

The subjects were comprised of 8,375 males and females. The age range was from 10 to 25 with the mean age being 14.608. Sixty-six percent of the subjects were Caucasian, 24 percent Black, the others being various ethnicities. The grade in school range was from sixth to twelfth. The mean grade attending was ninth. The sample included youth drawn from selected schools in the following cities: Portsmouth, New Hampshire; Fallon, Nevada; Tallahassee, Florida; Kansas City, Kansas; Detroit, Michigan; Las Vegas, Nevada; Portland, Oregon; Dallas, Texas; and the South Bronx, New York.

Scales (Independent Variables)

Perceived Negative Labeling (TEACHER, PARENT)

By teachers and parents. This scale is intended as a measure of perceived negative or anti-social categoriation by significant others (Elliot, 1975). The scale consists of six word sets including: "cooperative-troublesome, bad-good, conforming-deviant, obedient-disobedient, polite-rude, and delinquent-law-abiding." There is a seven-point continuum for each set. The respondent is asked to choose the point on the continuum that best describes how parents/teachers see him/her on a particular dimension (see the Appendix). The scoring is directed so that a higher measure indicates more negative labeling. The reliabilities of this

particular scale were very good ranging from .76 to .82 (Brennan and Huizinga, 1975).

Normative Pressure from Peers (PEERS)

This scale is designed to measure the extent of pressure towards conforming or deviant behavior felt by a youth from his friendship group. (Elliot, 1975). The scale consists of eight statements with a response set of "Yes," "Don't Know," and "No." The scale properties are quite good with a reliability of .71 and a homogeneity of .24 (Brennan and Huizinga, 1975). The scoring is cumulative across items, with each response receiving a score of 1, 2, or 3 and the total scale scores ranging from 8 to 24 (see the Appendix). The scoring is directed so that the higher the score the higher the normative from peers to be delinquent.

Self Esteem (SELFEST)

This scale is designed to assess the extent to which a youth values, accepts, and respects him/herself. It focuses on the self-acceptance aspect of self-esteem (Elliot, 1975). The scale achieved a reliability of .74 and a homogeneity of .23 which were found satisfactory (Brennan and Huizinga, 1975). The response set is a four-point continuum which consists of "Always," "Often," "Sometimes" and "Never" (see Appendix). The scoring for this scale involves a value for each response of from 1 to 4. The 4 value always indicates high or positive self-esteem, and the 1 the converse. The scale is composed of ten items and the scale range is from 10 to 40, with the higher scores indicating better self-concepts.

Alcohol Use (Dependent Variable)

The particular item "Used Alcohol" was part of the Self Reported Delinquency Scale. This scale was designed to measure youthful involvement in delinquent and anti-social behavior (Elliot, 1975). The Self Reported Delinquency scale contains several items pertaining to drug use: "Used marijuana," "Sniffed glue or inhaled toxic (dangerous) fumes," "Used hard drugs," and "Used alcohol." All items were endorsed "Never," "Once or Twice," "Several Times," or "Very Often." This scale had a reliability of .78 and a homogeneity of .19 which is satisfactory (Brennan and Huizinga, 1975). The scoring for this scale was also cumulative with nineteen items, the total scalescore ranges from 19 to 76. A high score indicates a high degree of self-reported delinquent behavior. For this study, only the item "Used Alcohol" was included as the dependent variable making a range from 1 to 4.

Reported use of alcohol in this study is one of many variables in the SRD scale. Some disagreement exists among researchers as to the merit of this type of source when compared to official statistics. The majority of contemporary researchers, however, continue to use the self-report technique. There are four main reasons for this preference (Hindelang et al., 1981). The first reason questions the adequacy and biases of official data measures. The second reason is that self report measures have been validated relatively successfully. The third of these reasons is that self-report studies are often consistent with the theories. Finally, self-report research appears to be less politically biased and less discriminatory than official statistics. Therefore, within this study the self-report method is accepted as a satisfactory means of data collection.

A stepwise discriminant function analysis of psycho-social scales; (perceived labeling by parents, perceived labeling by teachers, self-esteem, and normative peer grouping), was run on the SRD item "Used Alcohol." Discriminant analysis is a statistical technique in which linear combinations of variables are used to distinguish between two or more categories of cases. The variables "discriminant" between groups of cases and predict into which category or group a case falls, based upon the value of these variables (Kachigan, 1986). Discriminant function analysis is an alternative to multiple regression for successively extracting variables in order of predictive power. It has the advantage of producing a cross crosstabular table showing the percentage of correct predictions, false positives, and false negatives.

The variables chosen as predictor variables (PARENT TEACHER PEER SELFEST) discriminate between various levels of alcohol use. The predictor variables relate membership into one or another of the criterion groups. Because all of the dependent groupings are dichotomous, only one discriminant function exists.

The discriminant function uses a weighted combination of selected predictor variable values to classify an object into one of the criterion variable groups, or to assign it a value on the qualitative criterion variable. It is a derived variable defined as a weighted sum of values on individual predictor variables. Each objects score on the discriminant function, also known as the discriminant score, depends upon its values on the various predictor variables. In symbolic form the discriminant function is expressed as:

$$L=b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + . . . b_kx_k.$$

where the x 's represent values of various predictor variables and the b 's are weights associated with each variable. L is then the objects discriminant score (Kachigan, 1986).

Associated with the discriminant score is the cutoff score. The cutoff score is used as a way of grouping objects into the criterion groups. Therefore, the defining characteristics of the discriminant function consist of the weights associated with each predictor variable and the cutoff score for assigning objects into alternative criterion groups. These characteristics are important in minimizing the number of classification errors.

Multiple predictor variables including (PARENT TEACHER PEER SELFEST) were used to discriminant between the various criterion groups. By weighing the values of these variables, a single predictor variable is then derived, the discriminant function.

The indices of discrimination exist for determining whether the observed differentiation between groups is beyond what would be expected by chance alone. The indices used in this analysis include the Univariate F-Ratio.

Working Hypothesis

As human beings we all have a tendency to define our world and then respond only to our definitions. According to containment theory, a key dimension in deviant behavior is the actual conception of significant others towards the actor. The labeling perspective states that the primary factor in the repetition of delinquency is the fact of being formally labeled delinquent. When parents, teachers, and peers begin to use negative labels, the individual is under great pressure to define him/herself in a similar way, and to behave in a way which is consistent

with this definition and the social role it implies. From this comes the first and second and third hypotheses:

- H1: The greater the youth perceived negative labeling by parent the greater the reported use of alcohol.
- H2: The greater the youth perceived negative labeling by teacher the greater the reported use of alcohol.
- H3: The greater the normative pressure by peers towards delinquency, the greater the reported use of alcohol.

Self-esteem is defined as a function of the relationship between a person's behavior and the standards he or she has selected to measure personal worth. When behavior falls short of these measures, the person holds themselves in low self-esteem. When behavior coincides or surpasses these standards, people hold themselves in high self esteem. "A negative self concept is defined in terms of frequent negative self-reinforcement of one's behavior, a favorable self-concept is reflected in a disposition to engage in high positive self reinforcement" (Bandura, 1971:31). People with a low self-esteem are more easily influenced but are less likely to examine the arguments within a message (Smith, 1982). Therefore, adolescents with a low self-esteem are more likely to suffer the effects of negative labeling, and also to believe the labels are correct. However, the negative labeling might also be the cause of the low self-esteem. Taken together the negative labeling and low self-esteem are predicted to result in more self reported delinquency.

From this comes the third hypothesis:

- H4: The lower one's self-esteem, the greater the reported use of alcohol.

The independent variables therefore are:

- Youth perceived negative labeling by parent (PARENT).
- Youth perceived negative labeling by teacher (TEACHER).
- Normative peer pressure towards delinquency (PEER).
- Reported self esteem (SELFEST).

The dependent variable being reported use of alcohol (AU).

Therefore this study runs four perception variables against one behavioral variable.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

The three hypotheses were tested in three different ways. The first discriminant analysis was run to find if there exists a predictive difference between users (those who responded "Once or twice," "Several times" or "Very Often") and nonusers (those who responded "Never").

TABLE 1: Group Means of Users vs. Nonuser

	N	PARENT	TEACHER	SELFEST	PEER
NONUSERS	2547	15.40	15.08	32.16	13.13
USERS	2920	18.25	18.38	32.31	15.22

Table 1 shows the group means of the users vs. the nonusers. Keeping in mind that a higher score for PARENT, TEACHER, AND PEER indicates a higher level of negative labeling, the table indicates that users perceive a higher amount of negative labeling. SELFEST had the smallest difference. For self-esteem the higher the score the higher the amount of self-esteem.

TABLE 2: Group Standard Deviations of Users vs. Nonusers

	N	PARENT	TEACHER	SELFEST	PEER
NONUSERS	2547	6.62	7.20	4.56	2.98
USERS	2920	6.86	7.55	4.78	3.47

TABLE 3: Univariate F-Ratio of Users vs. Nonusers

VARIABLE	F	SIGNIFICANCE
PARENT	290.8	0.00
TEACHER	272.0	0.00
SELFEST	1.4	0.23
PEER	560.7	0.00

Table 3 shows the univariate F-ratio. All variables were significant as predictive variables. SELFEST, however, did not have the significance level of the other variables. Reasons for this will be discussed in the last chapter.

TABLE 4: Classification Results: User vs. Nonuser

CLASSIFICATION RESULTS	PREDICTED 1	GROUP MEMBERSHIP 2
NONUSER	58.4%	41.6%
USER	31.7%	68.3%
PERCENT OF "GROUPED" CASES CORRECTLY CLASSIFIED: 63.69%		

Table 4 shows that the predictive variables, PARENT, TEACHER, SELFEST, and PEER have correctly classified 63.69 percent of the cases into the two groups, non-user and user. Grouping by chance alone would be a 50 percent chance. These variables taken together are 13 percent higher than

chance alone. The second discriminant analysis was run using the groups LOW USE and HI USE. LO USE is defined as those answering "never" or "once or twice," and HI USE is defined as those answering "several times" and "very often."

TABLE 5: Group Means: Lo Use vs. Hi Use

	N	PARENT	TEACHER	SELFEST	PEER
LO USE	3891	15.75	15.67	32.19	13.50
HI USE	1576	19.39	19.74	32.34	16.08

Table 5 shows that those reporting HI USE are also reporting higher levels of negative labeling. Once again, SELFEST is very similar although the HI USE mean shows a higher level of self-esteem, contrary to prior predictions. Reasons for this will be discussed in the following chapter.

TABLE 6: Group Standard Deviations: Lo Use vs. Hi Use

	N	PARENT	TEACHER	SELFEST	PEER
LO USE	3891	6.52	7.08	4.58	3.08
HI USE	1576	7.24	7.97	4.94	3.53

TABLE 7: Univariate F-Ratio: Lo Use vs. Hi Use

VARIABLE	F	SIGNIFICANCE
PARENT	326.2	0.00
TEACHER	343.4	0.00
SELFEST	1.1	0.30
PEER	721.0	0.00

Table 7 shows that once again SELFEST is not as significant a predictor variable as PARENT TEACHER and PEER.

TABLE 8: Classification Results: Lo Use vs. Hi Use

	PREDICTED 1	GROUP MEMBERSHIP 2
LO USE	93.4%	6.6%
HI USE	67.8%	32.2%
PERCENT OF "GROUPED" CASES CORRECTLY CLASSIFIED: 75.76%		

Table 8 shows that when contrasting LO USE with HI USE the predictor variables correctly classified 75.76 percent of the cases. This is a better percentage than when contrasting nonusers with users. One reason for this may be that nonusers and adolescents who have used alcohol once or twice are more similar than those who use on a more frequent basis. The third discriminant analysis compared the groups "several times" and "very often." This comparison was used to find the predictiveness of the variables between to high levels of use.

TABLE 9: Grouped Means: Several Times vs. Very Often

	N	PARENT	TEACHER	SELFEST	PEER
SEVERAL TIMES	954	18.06	18.43	32.56	15.38
VERY OFTEN	622	21.41	21.73	32.00	17.17

Table 9 shows that once again higher levels of alcohol use are also reporting higher levels of negative labeling. SELFEST is also too close to make any statement.

TABLE 10: Grouped Standard Deviations: Several Times vs. Very Often

	N	PARENT	TEACHER	SELFEST	PEER
SEVERAL TIMES	954	6.55	7.86	4.69	3.45
VERY OFTEN	622	7.75	8.44	5.26	3.37

TABLE 11: Univariate F-Ratio: Several Times vs. Very Often

VARIABLE	F	SIGNIFICANCE
PARENT	85.01	0.00
TEACHER	67.37	0.00
SELFEST	4.93	0.02
PEER	103.50	0.00

TABLE 12: Classification Results: Several Times vs. Very Often

ACTUAL GROUP	PREDICTED 1	GROUP MEMBERSHIP 2
SEVERAL TIMES	85.0%	15.0
VERY OFTEN	64.8%	35.2%
PERCENT OF "GROUPED" CASES CORRECTLY CLASSIFIED: 65.36%		

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

This research was conducted with specific goals in mind. The first of these goals was to find the predictive validity of the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The four hypotheses were all substantiated. The statistics repeatedly showed the predictive qualities of all four independent variables. Negative labeling by teachers and parents as well as normative peer pressure towards delinquency had outstanding scores. Although self esteem did not have as high a productive score, the score was still significant. One reason for the high predictive quality of the independent variables is the large sample size. Eight thousand, three hundred and seventy-five is a large enough sample to make the statistics more significant.

In the findings, self-esteem was not as predictive as the other independent variables. Some reasons for this can be explained by the acceptance of alcohol consumption by the American society. In Chapter 2 the use of alcohol as a "rite of passage" was discussed. Many adolescents may assume usage to be normal behavior. The desire to appear as an adult within one's own peer group with the repercussions being less serious than the use of heavier drugs promotes alcohol usage.

The influence of the peer group can be used as an explanation as to why self-esteem was not as good of a predictor variable. The peer influence has a direct and observable effect on teenage alcohol habits. Pressures are widespread to consume alcoholic beverages in the youth culture (Torres, 1982). The adolescent may not perceive the use of alcohol as deviant and therefore not attach a negative self-esteem to the behavior. When taken in the contest of the individuals social milieu, it is society

that attaches the deviant label based on the illegality due to the youth's age.

Deviant behavior is behavior that has been labeled as such (Becker, 1963). This deviation can be applied in reverse to the youth's environment. Any high school youth who does not drink alcoholic beverages may be labeled deviant by social peers, even by some parents, because some alcohol consumption is "normal" behavior in that social context. Teenagers are searching for identity as well as acceptance, therefore drinking may allow them to enter into a peer group and enhance their self-esteem. This can help explain why self-esteem was not found to be as significant.

The second goal of this research was to examine three theories and find which best supports as well as explains the research. Labeling theory and containment theory have a basic controversy. According to labeling theory, a person is labeled deviant and thus becomes deviant. According to containment theory, a person is first deviant and they labeled such. As far as this research, the detection of labeling is impossible to tell. It would seem that which comes first a deviant act, or a deviant label would be very hard to examine in human behavior.

According to labeling theory people live up to that which they are labeled. This research shows the effects of negative labeling on one aspect of delinquent behavior. People must be aware of how they perceive others, because perceptions are the building blocks to labels.

All three theories can be used in a very explanatory method. Containment theory stresses inner containment or self-esteem. Because usage of alcohol can be defined as a different type of delinquency, the findings are still supported by the theory. A key dimension in deviant behavior is defined as the conception of significant others towards the

actor. Peer groups may support use of alcohol. Therefore enhance one's self esteem and erase the delinquency of the behavior.

Labeling theory best explains the findings. The effects of labels were exactly what was being examined. When an adolescent reaches the stage of secondary deviance, the youth has accepted societies label. An adolescent may continue to use alcohol because his parent has labeled him a drinker, his teachers have labeled him a drinker, his peers have labeled him a drinker, and the youth prefers to keep up his image rather than try an alter it.

Control theory stresses the social bond and its effects on adolescents. The four elements, attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief are the basis of this theory (Hirschi, 1969). If a youth is strong in these four areas, the chances of delinquent behavior are lowered. However, the opposite is also true. If a youth does not place importance on one, or all of the bonds, the chances for delinquent behavior rise.

Adolescent alcohol use needs to be examined using a multitheoretical approach. Each individual case is different. There does exist an element of heredity and that also must be taken into examination.

The third goal of this research is to propose a more effective way of utilizing this instrument to collect the data. The variables involved act in a synergistic interaction rather than a cause and effect fashion. The social processes related to alcohol use add to this relationship.

Psycho-social scales used in this study may have more potential if used in a structured interview format. In this way a youth's explanations of and elaborations of answers to questions may be noted as well as the emotional overtones of these answers. One can inquire as to the particular circumstances under which, and the particular people by whom, a youth feels

negatively labeled, and the particular nature of peer pressure. One can also incorporate information from other sources such as psychological tests; social history; school reports, probation reports; and institutional behavior observations. Thus, the particular experiences of a particular youth can be seen in the light of a general model of youth development.

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APPENDIX

VARIABLE 1: PARENTS

How do your parents see you?

Cooperative 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Troublesome

Good Bad

Deviant Conforming

Disobedient Obedient

Rude Polite

Law Abiding Delinquent

VARIABLE 2: TEACHER

How do your teachers see you?

Cooperative 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Troublesome

Good Bad

Deviant Conforming

Disobedient Obedient

Rude Polite

Law Abiding Delinquent

VARIABLE 3: SELFEST

1=Never
2=Sometimes
3=Often
4=Always

Feel you are a person of worth
Others see you as having good qualities
Feel you are a failure
Able to do things as well as most people
Feel you don't have much to be proud of
Positive attitude to yourself
Satisfied with self
Wish for more respect for self
Feel useless
Feel you are no good

VARIABLE 4: PEER

1=No
2=Don't Know
3=Yes

My group thinks less of a person if he gets in trouble
Getting in trouble is to gain respect
Laws are good and should be obeyed
Get in trouble at home, school, city
Troublesome kids feel uncomfortable in my group
Choose kids not afraid to have fun/break the law
Troublemakers are put down
Chicken if not a troublemaker

VARIABLE 5: ALCOHOL USE

- 1=Never
- 2=Once or Twice
- 3=Several Times
- 4=Very Often

How often have you

Used Alcohol