

Groups & group behavior



Groups, Organizations, and Collectivities

Collectivities

“Collectivity” is an umbrella term for any distinct grouping of people

We have talked a lot about (intersectional) ***social categories*** as collectivities.

Racial/ethnic Class Gender Disability ...

These social categories define shared experiences, cultural dispositions, societal expectations, opportunity structures, etc.

Groups and ***organizations*** are (usually) considered a different type of collectivity.

Family School Friend group Office ...

Groups and organizations are made up of people who are oriented around a place or goal, and who are likely to interact with one another.



What is a group?

- ∴ Members share some aspect of identity
- ∴ Aligned interests and goals
- ∴ Regular interactions
- ∴ Shared orientation toward the group itself
It is a group because we consider it a group

Types of groups

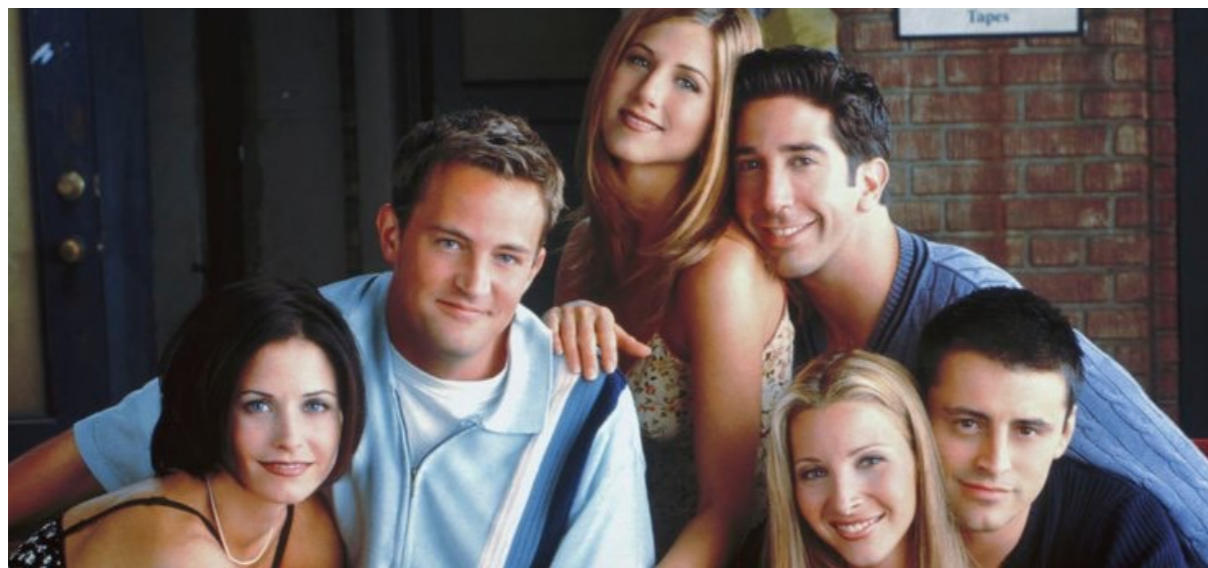
One useful distinction (Charles Horton Cooley):
Primary versus *secondary* groups

Primary groups (expressive)

- ∴ Small
- ∴ Lasting
- ∴ Close, emotional connections
- ∴ E.g. family, close friends

Secondary groups (instrumental)

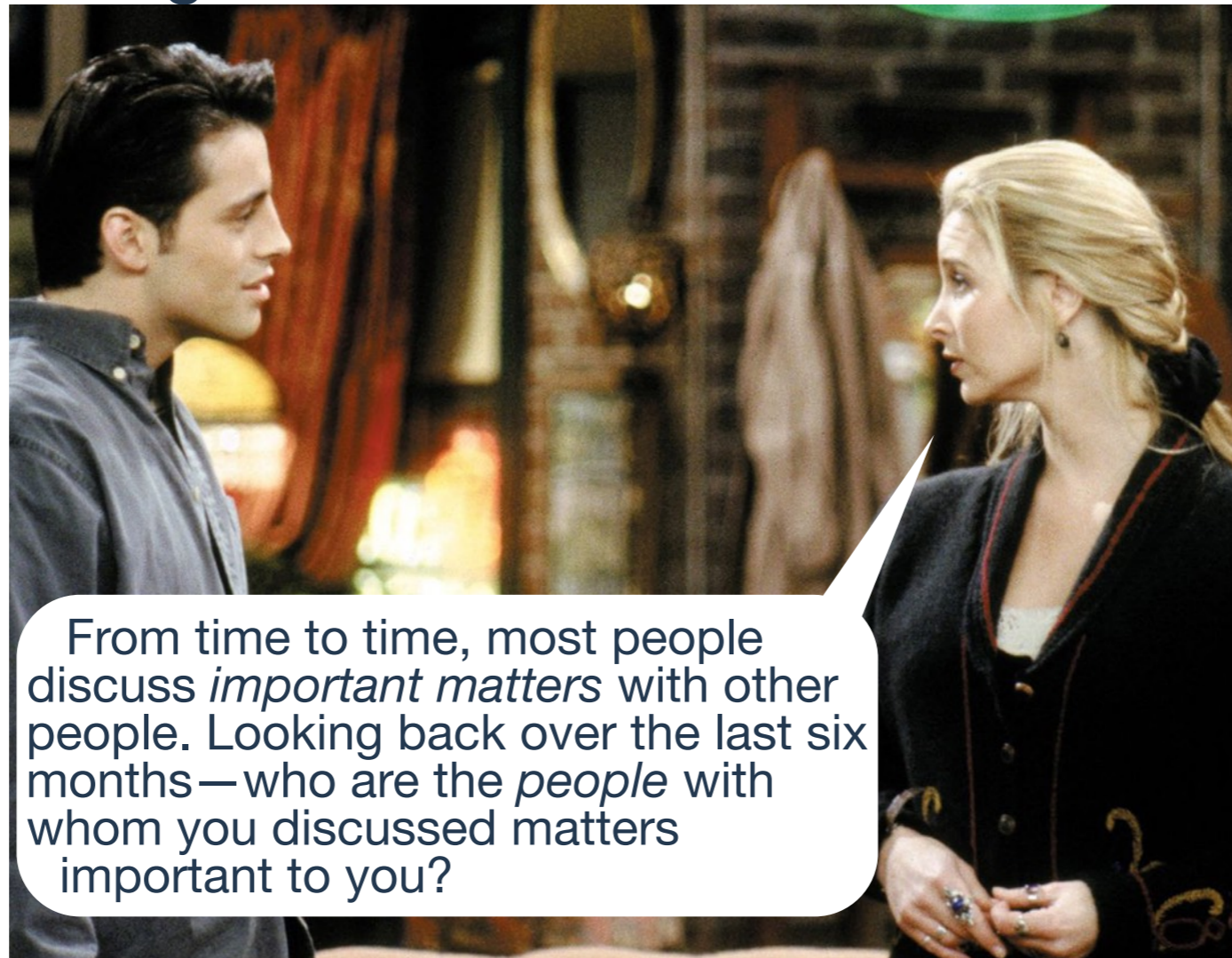
- ∴ Varying size
- ∴ Goal oriented
- ∴ Formalized, pragmatic connections
- ∴ E.g. office, class



Types of groups

Core discussion network (Peter Marsden)

- ∴ Common survey instrument to identify *primary groups*
- ∴ Asks about who we discuss “important matters” with
- ∴ Asks about those people’s relationship with each other and with respondent
- ∴ Can track changes over time

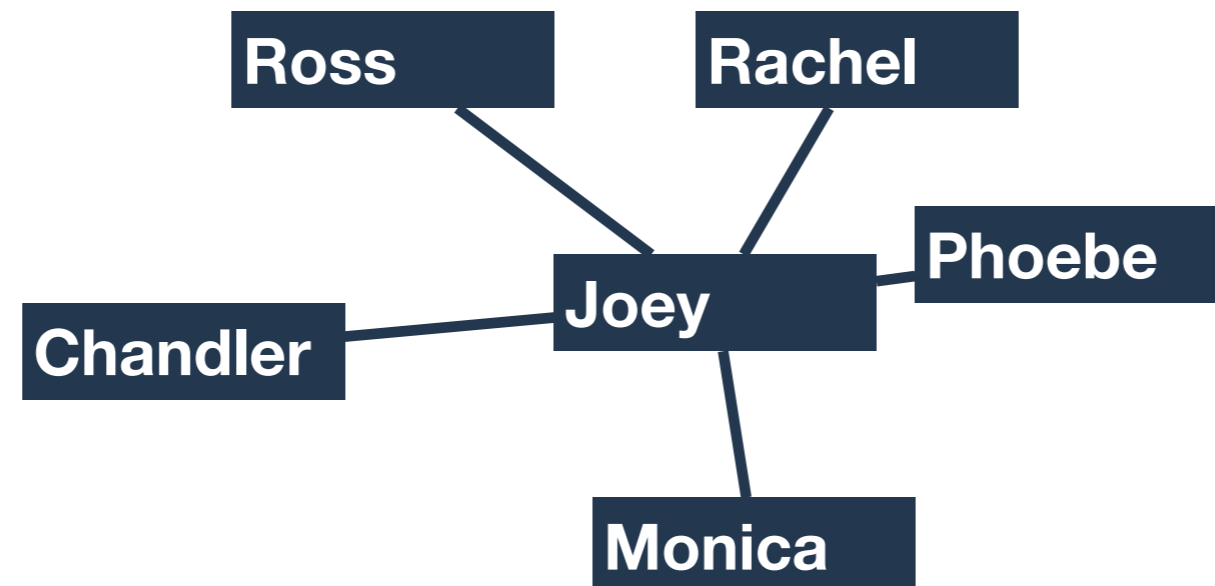


From time to time, most people discuss *important matters* with other people. Looking back over the last six months— who are the *people* with whom you discussed matters important to you?

Types of groups

Core discussion network (Peter Marsden)

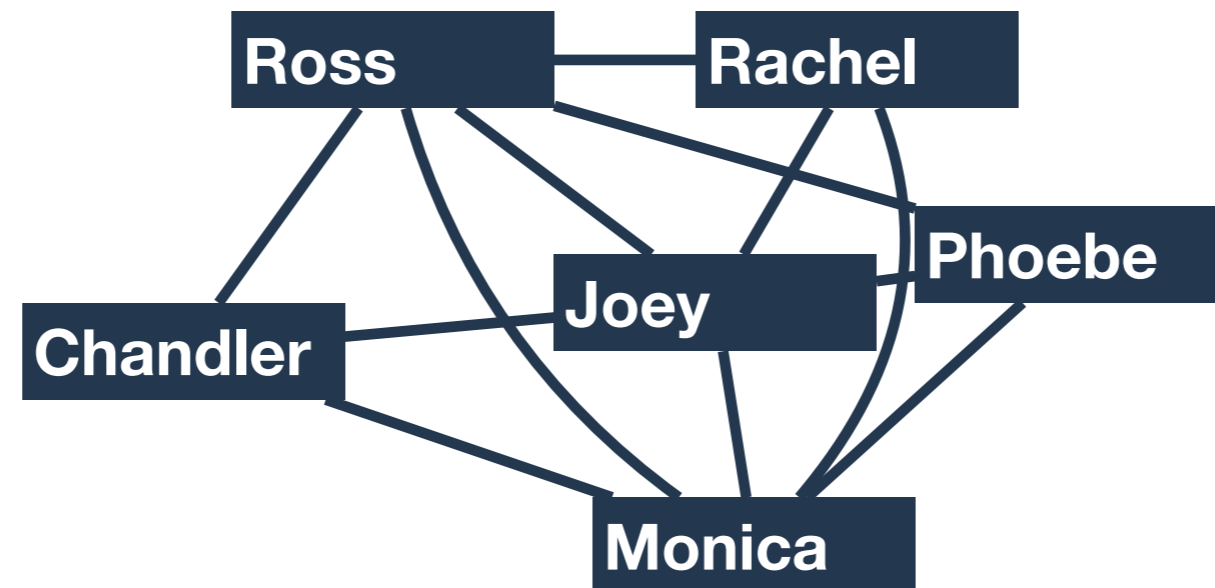
- ∴ Common survey instrument to identify *primary groups*
- ∴ Asks about who we discuss “important matters” with
- ∴ Asks about those people’s relationship with each other and with respondent
- ∴ Can track changes over time



Types of groups

Core discussion network (Peter Marsden)

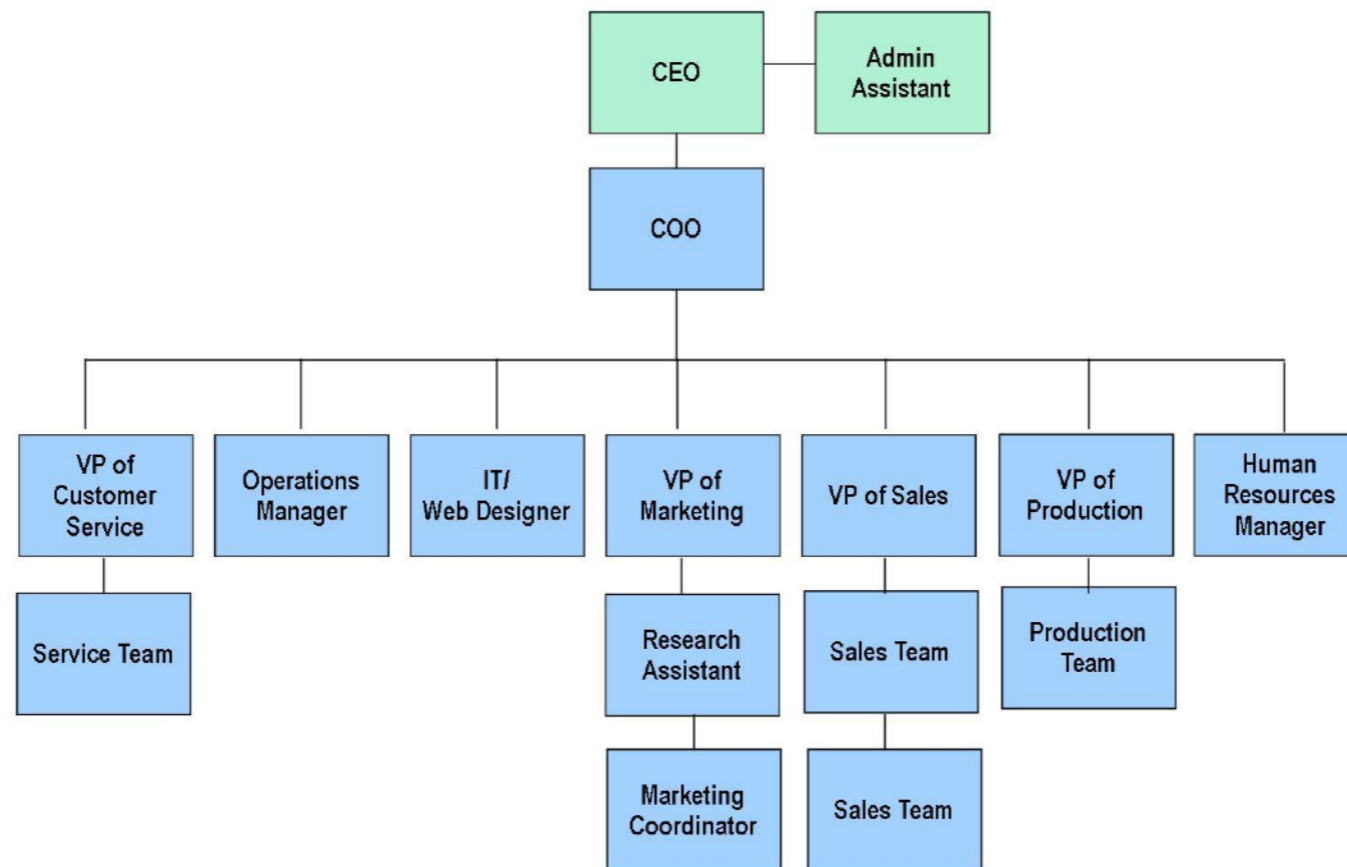
- ∴ Common survey instrument to identify *primary groups*
- ∴ Asks about who we discuss “important matters” with
- ∴ Asks about those people’s relationship with each other and with respondent
- ∴ Can track changes over time



Types of groups

Formal organizations

- ∴ Widespread example of *secondary groups*
- ∴ Membership and relations between members are *formalized*
Rosters, roles, responsibilities, regulation
- ∴ Expressed purpose or goal
- ∴ Often bureaucratically organized



Groups and Individual Behavior

Groups and behavior

How do groups affect their members?

- One reason to study groups specifically is to understand how they constrain/enable their members' behavior
- Groups and organizations adopt and promote certain *practices*.
- Related to *frames* discussion last week.
What are the goals of a group?
What are the appropriate means to achieve those goals?
What are the expectations of behavior/interaction?
- Sometimes predetermined ...
E.g. practices of soldiers in the military
- Sometimes arising organically ...
E.g. dorm-mates meeting for the first time



Groups and behavior

Reference groups

- Groups can have informal influence over individuals' behavior if it is used as a *reference group*.
- Reference groups provide an example against which to compare one's own behavior.
- Reference groups can influence behavior of non-members.



Institutional logics

(Patricia H. Thornton, et al.)

- Different possible organizing “logics” exist that groups and formal organizations can adopt to shape and justify their actions
 - Market (capitalist)
 - Professional
 - Family
 - Religious
 - Community
 - ...
- Shifts in institutional logics used to explain change in behavior of groups and individuals within those groups
E.g. shift in universities’ logic from science to market motivations (Elizabeth Popp Berman)

Image credit



Panel from Marvel's Avengers Vol 8 55, via marvel.fandom.com.



Photo from pikrepo



Photo by [Rob Curran](#)



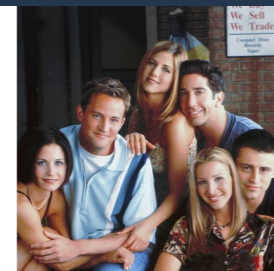
Photo from [Combined Military Service Digital Photographic Files](#)



Photo by [Museums Victoria](#)



Photo: [Alamy](#) via [Daily Mail](#)



Promo image for the TV show [Friends \(1994\)](#)



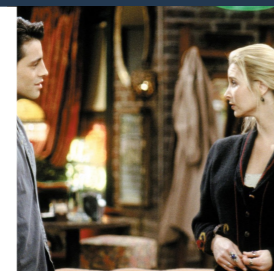
Photo: [Verena Dahmen](#)



Screenshot from the TV show [Mad Men \(2007\)](#)



Screenshot from [Mean Girls \(2004\)](#)



Screenshot for the TV show [Friends \(1994\)](#)