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EXPLORATORY STUDY OF
GOSSIP IN A RURAL COMMUNITY

By

Ruth Anne Laverty

A Thesis

Submitted to the Department of Psychology
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree
Master of Arts

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

Waterloo, Ontario

Canada

1974

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Acknowledgements

The author wishes to express her appreciation to Dr. Frederick Binding for his assistance and guidance in all aspects of the research and for the preparation of the figures. Also, appreciation is expressed to the members of the committee, Dr. Edward Bennett and Mr. Alan Auerbach for their invaluable criticism. Appreciation is also due to Mr. Cameron McRae for his technical assistance and for arranging for use of the equipment. The author wishes to thank her husband, Brian Laverty, for his assistance in the taping of the sessions and his continued support and counsel.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate social psychological factors in the process of gossip. A second purpose was to determine whether gossip is a process distinct from rumor. An American community was the location of the study. The situations observed were behavioural settings which either the E or her assistant were permitted to attend without arousing suspicion. The 79 Ss studied were male and female adults and children who happened to be present in these behavioural settings. Conversations of all Ss were tape recorded as well as the gossip portions of conversations in other settings. The content of the gossip was then analyzed according to motivational categories of gossip, themes of gossip and recurring gossip colloquialisms. At the conclusion of the study the Sixteen Personality Factors Questionnaire was administered to 27 Ss and primary and secondary personality factors were scored. The Ss were divided into two groups: "hi" gossipers who engaged in gossip, and "lo" gossipers who did not. Gossipers were also identified according to their roles as contributor, receiver or impeder. Age,

sex, level of education, status in the community, occupation, number of friendships and relations by birth and marriage were recorded for each S. The relationships between each of these factors, and both gossip and roles were analyzed.

Sixteen PF sten scores revealed that there was a significant difference between the "hi" and the "lo" gossip groups for factor F, happy-go-lucky. An analysis of the 16 PF showed "hi" gossipers to be happy-go-lucky and talkative and "lo" gossipers to be sober and serious. A significant relationship between gossip behaviour and both age and occupation of the Ss was found. Specifically, gossip varies with age, and the results showed that with an increase in age there is an increase in amount of gossip. Housewives and farmers engaged in more gossip than do those persons engaged in occupations requiring them to work away from their place of residence. A significant relationship was found between the gossipers' role of contributor, receiver or impeder and the gossipers' status in the community as leader, participant, or isolate. Persons who are in positions of leadership in the community are less actively engaged in gossip as contributors, impeder and receivers.

A significant relationship between age and role

of the gossip was found. The 31- to 40-year-old group had the greatest proportion of contributors, receivers and impeters of gossip. The 11 to 20 and the 51- to 60-year-old groups did not impede gossip. Content analysis revealed five motivational categories of gossip: recreational "chit-chat", cathartic, wish fulfillment, wish to identify with the group, and source of information with view to help.

Six themes of gossip conversation were identified: observable behaviour, achievement or failure, disposition, morality, financial, and physical appearance of individual. Relationships by blood and marriage did not always impede gossip. Occasionally Ss gossiped about their close friends and relatives, contrary to popular expectation. It was suggested that future studies in gossip should involve a greater sampling of the population in more types of behavioural settings. This would allow greater confidence in drawing conclusions concerning the nature of the gossip phenomenon in such a variegated community.

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Introduction

Gossip has not been widely researched. From 1935 to 1956, many studies were completed on the phenomenon and process of rumor. Most of these studies deal with crisis-oriented situations such as rumors about war, rationing, or earthquakes. Other studies are laboratory situations in which one or more aspects of rumor are isolated and analyzed. These studies investigated the content and process of rumor, for example, the accuracy of perception and recall of rumor. Since only two studies on gossip have been published, the present review will also examine rumor, which is related to gossip. Another reason for referring to the rumor literature in the present study is that much of what is said about rumor is also discussed by Stirling (1956) in reference to gossip. The present study, then, attempts to verify whether inferences made from rumor studies are also applicable to gossip. It is first necessary to define and differentiate between the terms "rumor" and "gossip".

Review of the Literature

I. Definitions of Rumor

Rumor has been considered in terms of oral communication only. According to a theoretical paper by Knapp (1944), rumor is a "proposition for belief of topical reference disseminated without official verification (p.22)". Since rumor is usually transmitted by word of mouth, it is subject to inaccuracy and distortion. Rumor provides "information" about a particular person, happening or condition. Knapp states that rumor expresses and gratifies emotional needs of a community, just as daydreams and fantasies fulfill the needs of an individual. According to Knapp, there are three basic types of rumor based on the needs these rumors serve: wish, fear, and hostility. A "wish rumor" expresses the wishes or hopes of those among whom the rumor circulates. This is popularly identified with "wishful thinking". "Bogie rumors" are derived from fears or anxieties and are usually pessimistic or panic rumors. The third type is the "wedge-driving" or aggressive rumor which divides groups and destroys loyalties. The essential

motivation in these rumors is aggression or hatred. All of these types of rumors are transmitted through a series of more or less established inter-personal relations. "No rumor will travel far unless there is already a disposition among those who hear it to lend it credence (Knapp, p.27)". The more a rumor is told the greater becomes its plausibility. According to a field experiment in a school setting by Schacter and Burdick (1955), rumor is an unreliable, wildly distorted form of communication which spreads rapidly and mysteriously to almost all available members of a population. This form of communication is characterized by a chain pattern in which A tells B, B tells C, and so on. The possession of an item of information seems to create a force to communicate it further. Thus, Schacter and Burdick's definition includes the elements of chain communication, and motivational force giving impetus to tell the item which has not been verified and which may be distorted. These elements are also included in Knapp's definition of rumor.

Based upon observations of a primitive society,

Firth (1956) defines rumor as a "tale or report of hearsay kind, not an original expression; general currency or spread of such a report is through a special group; assertions of doubtful accuracy or unverified (p.128)". He also states that some rumors are expressions of anxiety and the rumor-monger gains ego-assertion or a release of tension in the telling of the rumor. This aspect is similar to what Knapp (1944) identifies as the "bogie-rumor".

In a theoretical paper based upon a sociological study of rumor, Shibutani (1966) defines rumor differently from preceding definitions. Shibutani points out that usually rumor is not thought of as the accuracy of perception but rather it is commonly defined in terms of error. That is, rumor is usually thought to be an unverified and probably false report. The source of a rumor is never regarded as important. Shibutani (1966) says that if a rumor is found to be true, it is usually accredited to some obscure source. If it is a false report, then it is said to be "only a rumor". A rumor is believed to become false through distortions introduced in the

course of serial transmission as the message is passed from person to person, usually in oral communication.

Shibutani (1966) also states that a rumor is a "recurrent form of communication through which men caught together in an ambiguous situation attempt to construct a meaningful interpretation of it by pooling their intellectual resources (p.17)". This definition of rumor is obviously very different from the foregoing definitions in that the motivation for telling a rumor seems to be derived from an ambiguous situation rather than from some motivation from within the individual as suggested by Knapp (1944) and Firth (1956). Shibutani's definition suggests that rumor may be positive in nature. The other definitions imply that rumor is a negative, destructive form of communication. These differences in the definition of rumor suggests the possibility that some of the above authors quoted may be discussing another form of communication related to rumor, namely gossip.

II. Definitions of Gossip

Shibutani (1966), unlike Knapp (1944), Schacter

and Burdick (1955), and Firth (1956), differentiates between rumor and gossip. He states that gossip is restricted to small local groups in which members are bound by personal contacts and concerns. People gossip about the private and intimate details of the traits and conduct of specific individuals. The most interesting topics for gossip deal with violations of moral codes (Shibutani, 1966). Gossip helps define status relations which are important for those persons who are in constant association with each other. Gossip seems trivial to outsiders but it is important in its context of ordering interpersonal relations within the group. Thus, it is a means of social control in the community. If the details of a person's private life have consequences beyond the local group, for example, a person in authority, such information concerns a larger public.

Shibutani, then, has differentiated between rumor and gossip in his definitions. He states that gossip may or may not be an unverified report about an individual; it may involve an ambiguous situation but this is not necessarily so. Gossip is usually passed

on from person to person in order to enhance the teller's position in the social setting. Firth's definition of rumor could also include gossip. In the literature the definition of rumor and gossip and the distinction between these two terms is not clear, with the exception of Shibutani's work.

Since the present study is concerned with studying gossip in a community, it is necessary to define operationally what is meant by gossip. The present definition is a synthesis based mainly upon Shibutani's definition and including elements from the definitions of rumor by Knapp (1944), Schacter and Burdick (1955), and Firth (1956). For the present study, gossip is defined as "the oral communication about private and intimate details of the traits and conduct of specific individuals within small local groups in which members are bound by personal contacts and concerns". Gossip is not necessarily an unverified or unreliable report and the situation prompting the gossip may or may not be ambiguous. Gossip may define status relations within the group for both the teller, the hearer, and the person being gossiped about.

The literature review reveals that in addition to the definitions of rumor and gossip, there exist laws and theories of rumor. But with regard to gossip there is only the one theory, that postulated by Stirling (1956). Stirling's theory of gossip is discussed below. Consideration will be given first to the laws and theories of rumor, and to further rumor studies.

III. Laws and Theories of Rumor

Allport and Postman (1946) formulated the "basic law of rumor": $\text{importance} \times \text{ambiguity} = \text{rumor}$ ($i \times a = r$). They state that rumor is spread when events have importance in the lives of individuals and when the news received about such events is either lacking or is ambiguous. Ambiguity is defined by the authors as a situation in which conflicting versions of news are presented or in which the person is incapable of comprehending the news received. Since the relationship between importance and ambiguity is multiplicative, if either factor is zero then there is no rumor.

Chorus (1953) expands Allport and Postman's

rumor formula. Chorus says that another factor besides ambiguity and importance retards the passage of rumor. Sometimes a rumor is not communicated; penalties may be imposed as in Gestapo Germany, or social barriers may prevent its transmission. In other words, there is another factor operating in the transmission of rumor. Chorus calls this factor the "critical sense" $\frac{(1)}{(c)}$ of the rumor transmitter. The rumor law then becomes $R = i \times a \times \frac{1}{c}$. As "c" increases, the rumor weakens. The factor "c" is not a constant, since it changes for each individual in each situation, according to the dynamics of the situation.

Individual differences in serial reproduction are investigated by Levitt (1953). Levitt established rumor chains on the basis of an 8 X 8 matrix so that the position of each person in the chain is varied for each of eight rumors. The rumors were eight American Indian legends. He studied the effect that position in a rumor chain has on the person's transmission of the rumor. All the Ss were tested for rote memory in order to ensure that all were at the same level. The E started the rumor and then each S told the rumor to

the next S.

Experiment two duplicated experiment one with the exception that the material was affective. The rumor content in both experiments is statistically analyzed and he found that some subjects were "distortion-prone". That is, they were more prone to distort rumors than would the ordinary person. Also he found that some subjects were rumor resistant. He concludes that there is a personal constant involved in the rumor law. That is, personal differences determine whether a given S engages in rumor. Thus, according to Levitt's findings, Allport and Postman's rumor law should be $R = c (i \times a)$. This formula is different from that presented by Chorus (1953), in which "c" is a proportion of the rumor effect. If "c" approaches zero then the rumor strengthens according to Chorus' formula. According to Levitt, as "c" approaches zero the rumor decreases and if "c" is zero then the rumor ceases altogether. What seems to be important, however, is that both authors have shown that in rumor transmission there is another factor involved, namely, individual differences and social factors.

In addition, to the rumor law, Allport and

Postman (1946) note that as a rumor is transmitted from person to person it undergoes a pattern of change. As a rumor travels it becomes shorter and more of the details are "leveled out". Coupled with this process of leveling is the process of "sharpening". In other words, the details which are retained in the rumor are those selected, retained and reported by the teller. These are the details which are emphasized by the hearer and subsequent reporter of the rumor. Exaggeration of some details may also occur. Thus, each listener "assimilates" the details of the rumor according to his own individual needs, emotions and cognitions. It seems, then, that Allport and Postman did recognize that personal factors distort rumors as they are transmitted. They do not, however, consider it to be a factor basic to the rumor law.

Allport and Postman (1946) are aware that there is a motivational factor operant in rumor transmission. They include this factor in the concept of importance of rumor law. Thus, what a person considers important is partially determined by human needs. For example,

in the aggressive rumor, one can strike at the thing one hates and in doing so relieves a primary emotional urge (p.503). As well, the individual can justify his feelings and "explain to himself and to others why he feels that way (p.503)". This motivational factor is similar to Knapp's (1944) description of the three basic types of rumor, that is, the wish, bogie and aggressive rumors. Knapp recognizes that personal motivation is very important in the transmission of rumor and without it a rumor will not travel far.

Allport and Postman (1946) also feel that rumors serve the same purpose as that of daydreams. As in dreams, the individual is able to project his fears, wishes, etc. Thus, if the story heard gives an interpretation of reality that conforms to the person's needs and desires then the individual tends to believe and transmit it (p.505). Desires and interests gain indirect expression in rumor and participation in rumor formation is a cathartic process (Roos, 1943).

Festinger, Cartwright, Barker, Fleischl, Gottsdanker, Keyser and Leavitt (1948) in their study of rumor conclude that when individuals hear a rumor their

social behaviour is modified by it. Strong forces are created to bring other people's cognitive structures in line with the rumored cognitions. If this is not accomplished then the hearer's behaviour is not understood or accepted by the others. Joint social action, resulting from all being involved in the modification, relieves this imbalance. In their study the authors find that the existence of friendships heightens the probability of having heard the rumor but there is no relation between friendships and having told the rumor to others. Other motivational factors determine whether a person has heard the rumor: the number and nature of channels of communication, the teller's perception of how relevant the rumor is to the potential hearer, and the involvement of potential hearers in the area related to the rumor's content.

Rumors may develop among people weary of a monotonous routine such as those who are engaged in boring work, or idle members of a community (Shibutani, 1966). The range of rumor is determined by spatial distribution, that is, rumor depends on the geographic disposition of the public and is limited by the

availability of communication channels. If the public is divided then there is internal differentiation reflected in the diverse versions of the same rumor. This results in the formation of different rumors about the same event due to diversity of interests.

In summary, Allport and Postman (1946); Festinger, et al (1948); Chorus (1953); Levitt (1953); and Shibutani (1966) all agree that motivational factors are an important aspect of rumor theory. Motivational factors, however, are interpreted by these authors in many ways but they all seem to feel that it is the personal aspects of the person and the social aspects in the rumor chain which determines whether the person believes what is told, and whether the individual subsequently passes the rumor on to others. It can be concluded, then, that Allport and Postman's rumor law (1946) should be expanded to include motivational factor(s). Chorus (1953) and Levitt (1953) expanded the Allport and Postman (1946) rumor law to include individual differences and social factors as determinants of rumor mongering. It has not been

established whether aspects of rumor law, such as importance, ambiguity, personal and social factors, also apply to gossip.

IV. Further Studies on Rumor

The following studies do not contribute laws or theories about rumor but do provide important findings which may be relevant to gossip. Schall, Levy and Tresset (1950) administered a sociometric test to a group of college students. From the sociometric tests, isolates and persons in the center of the group were identified. The authors gave one typed story to one of the isolates and a different typed story to one of the persons in the center of the group. The two experimenters delivering the rumors had previously established acquaintance with these two members of the group by posing as "assistants to the instructor". The students were observed during their two hour laboratory period. Prior to the distribution of the rumors, the class was given a battery of four personality and attitude interest tests. The rumors distributed to the isolate and center person, however, did not develop even though they

had been deemed to be both important and ambiguous as defined by Allport. The tests showed that both the isolate and center person had basically the same personalities. The center person accentuated his good traits, however, while the isolate accentuated his bad traits. The authors conclude that if the individuals had been more ego-involved with the rumor content and if they had such a personality that they would have perceived rumor as a means of obtaining ego-support, then both transmission and distortion of rumor would have occurred (p.128). The authors further assume "that personality-dynamics or personal value judgments and rumor should be one of the determinants of rumor-mongering, at least more so than sociometric position or 'psychological currents' (p.128)". It is noteworthy that in this study the words rumor and gossip are used interchangeably.

In a girls' primary and secondary preparatory school Schacter and Burdick (1955) examined the concepts of importance and ambiguity, as put forth by Allport. The three situations were: cognitive unclarity situation (CU-R) in which rumor was planted, cognitive

unclarity situation in which no rumor was planted (CU) and rumor condition (R). Two classes were assigned to each experimental condition with one older and one younger class in each condition. One girl was removed by the principal from her class with her books and coat. No explanation was given. The teachers recorded who asked what questions in response to the situation. In part two of the experiment, the planting of the rumor was carried out. Girls were selected on the basis of the sociometric status, academic and disciplinary record to plant the rumor. The eight girls were to plant the rumor in the two classes from the cognitive unclarity group and the rumor group. The rumor was planted a day or two before the study occurred.

At the conclusion of the study all the classes were interviewed. The results show that the CU-R classes had all heard the planted rumor. In the R groups all were aware that the girl had been removed from class. The Es found that "knowledge of a rumor creates far stronger forces to communicate and discuss it when the issue to which it is relevant is important than when it is unimportant (p.368)". There was no

distortion of the planted rumor. Thus, under conditions of widespread cognitive unclarity there is more transmission of planted rumor and more speculation involving new rumors when the issue is important than when it is judged to be relatively unimportant.

Other aspects of rumor transmission were investigated by Dodd (1953). Interviewers told 20% of the housewives in a community that a coffee company was starting an advertising campaign with a new six word slogan. They promised that every housewife knowing the slogan on their return would get a free pound of coffee. The next day booster leaflets announced that one housewife in five knew the slogan and other housewives would get a free pound of coffee if they knew it too. The following day the interviewers surveyed the housewives to check on the knowers, the time and place of telling, tellers, hearer's chains, and so on. From the 184 pairs of matched hearers and tellers they found that whether A tells B the message depends on many all-or-none influences such as whether A goes out today or not, whether B goes out or not, whether they met or not, and so on. The application of this study to gossip, as with

the other rumor studies, has not been established.

Another factor to be considered in rumor transmission is the person's role in the community. Danzig, Thayer, and Galanter (1958) found that people who have roles of responsibility for others are more likely to check for confirmation than those who do not have such roles.

Allport and Lepkin (1945) investigated wartime rumors of waste in conjunction with the rumor clinic. From the questionnaires returned the authors analyzed each of the questions and then drew these inferences. If an individual is hostile towards something then that person is more ready to believe unfounded statements which may be derogatory in nature. This rumor then gives the person a "justifiable reason" for the hostility felt. Differences of occupation are also considered as a factor. The differences between the skilled, professional and housewife groups, however, are not statistically significant. Other inferences made in this study are explained as being unique to the type of rumor investigated.

Cantril (1966) found that education is an

important factor in the credibility attached to the Orson Welles broadcast. Education is a prime factor because individuals who have learned to be critical in their analysis of situations are less apt to believe and transmit rumors. Age and income of the participants, however, are not correlated with rumor.

In conclusion, most of the rumor studies have been field studies of war rumors, (Allport and Postman, 1946) and other crises, (Prasad, 1950 and Sinha, 1952). The limitation of this kind of study is that they were conducted post facto. Some attempt was made to study rumor in the laboratory by isolating one aspect of the rumor process and studying it in detail. Serial reproduction was studied in this way. Such studies, however, are not entirely successful since as Shibutani (1960) points out "social interaction of people caught in inadequately defined situations (p.17)" needs to be studied rather than the process of transmission. Other researchers such as Schall, Levy and Tresset (1950) found that the rumor planted did not circulate in their laboratory situations.

V. A Theory of Gossip

Much of what has been said about rumor is also discussed by Stirling (1956) and applied to gossip. Stirling discusses the psychological mechanisms operative in gossip. She points out that hostile aggression is one motivating factor in gossip. Gossip may help defend one's self-image or may be cathartic in its function. Usually the gossiper is unaware of the needs which are being met by the process of gossiping, with the exception of hostility and retaliation. The psychological mechanisms operative in gossip are constant whereas social motivations vary from individual to individual and from situation to situation. Gossip may be beneficial in that it serves as a source of information and also is recreational "chit-chat". Stirling also recognizes that gossip may allow persons to project fears, wishes, and so on. This is similar to Allport and Postman's (1946) concept of projection in rumor. Wish fulfillment is also present as in rumor. Individuals may participate in gossip, not because they want to do so, but because they wish to identify with the group and be a part of the group. Thus they engage

in gossip transmission in order to become a member of the group. It seems, then, that the functions served by gossip may be similar to those fulfilled in the rumor process. The same motivation seems to be present in both situations.

VI. A Study on Gossip

The sole experimental study of gossip was reported by Davis and Rulan (1935) who investigated the relationship between gossip and introversion. They used the raw scores from the Otis Self-Administering Test of Mental Ability higher from A, which was administered to all students entering the State Teachers' College. Thirty-three seniors and fifty juniors, all female, who were living in a dormitory were administered the Bernreuter Personality Test. Their scholastic standings were recorded as well. Then the Ss were asked to complete the campus information blank which was composed of 97 multiple-choice items. This was the gossip test. All of the test information dealt with campus happenings and was supplied by one of the senior girls not used in the experiment. No significant

correlations were found between scholastic ability, intelligence, introversion and gossip.

Finally, this summary of the literature reveals that there is confusion surrounding the use of the words rumor and gossip. Shibutani (1966) distinguishes between gossip and rumor in his definition and use of the two words. Gossip, in the present study, is defined as the oral communication about the private and intimate details of the traits and conduct of specific individuals and is restricted to small local groups in which members are bound by personal contacts and concerns. Gossip may not necessarily be an unverified or unreliable report. An ambiguous situation may be present for those engaging in gossip. Unlike rumor, however, the ambiguous situation always centers around an individual. The individual, rather than the situation, is regarded as important in gossip. Chorus (1953) and Levitt (1953) expanded Allport and Postman's (1946) rumor formula, importance times ambiguity, to include a third factor, individual differences of each person in the situation and social factors. Other authors, such

as Knapp (1944), attempt to explain rumor and gossip in terms of psychological mechanisms of the person's personality. Many of the investigations of rumor are post facto studies of war situations (Allport and Postman, 1946). Only two studies, Davis and Rulan (1936) and Stirling (1956) investigate gossip. Thus, it is not known whether what is discussed in terms of the process of rumor is also true of the process of gossip.

Purpose

The present study attempts to discover what factors are involved in gossiping, operationally defined as oral communication about personal details of the traits and conduct of specific individuals. Further to this definition, gossip is restricted to small local groups in which members are bound by personal contacts and concerns. It is not necessarily an unverified or unreliable report.

Only one experimental study about gossip has been reported (Davis and Rulan, 1935). Stirling (1956) implies that what has been said about rumor is also applicable to gossip. Since most of the reported studies are based on the process of rumor and few on gossip, it seems, then, that investigations in the area of gossip would be valuable for a more complete understanding of this phenomenon. Accordingly, the present study attempts to verify whether rumor findings are applicable to gossip and also whether the assertions about gossip by Stirling (1956) can be verified by field

observation.

Personal motivation for this study resulted from casual observation which seemed to suggest that gossip is a significant characteristic of community social behaviour. Also, interpersonal difficulties often appeared to result from conflicts stimulated or facilitated by gossiping. It seemed logical, therefore, that insight into the nature and causes of gossip would be a socially valuable contribution to the understanding of human behaviour.

Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that:

- (a) There are different motivational categories of gossip as suggested by Stirling's (1956) theory of gossip. Gossip may be categorized according to the motivational force underlying the gossip behaviour. Some examples of motivational categories of gossip identified in the literature review are: recreational "chit-chat", wish to identify with the group, projection of one's wishes, aggression and hostility.
- (b) The transmission of gossip facilitates group identification and defines an individual's status within the group. This hypothesis is also derived from Stirling's (1956) theory of gossip. Specifically, in order to identify with the group and be a part of the group, an individual is motivated to participate in gossip. An individual's contribution to the gossip pool

is one determinant of his status or rank within the group (see Figure 1). Observation of behavioural settings results in a descriptive classification of persons according to their participation in the group. Persons who contribute gossip and to whom gossip is transmitted are in the core of the group. Persons who contribute gossip are in the intermediate of the group. Individuals to whom gossip is transmitted are also in the intermediate of the group. Those persons who do not contribute gossip and to whom gossip is not transmitted are in the periphery of the group.

- (c) Gossip may be a positive or negative force within the group, as inferred by a careful observation of the community by E prior to the study. If gossip is a positive force in a group, then the group displays cohesiveness. The members of such a group do not engage in gossip about their own members when in other groups. Thus, if gossip is a positive force in

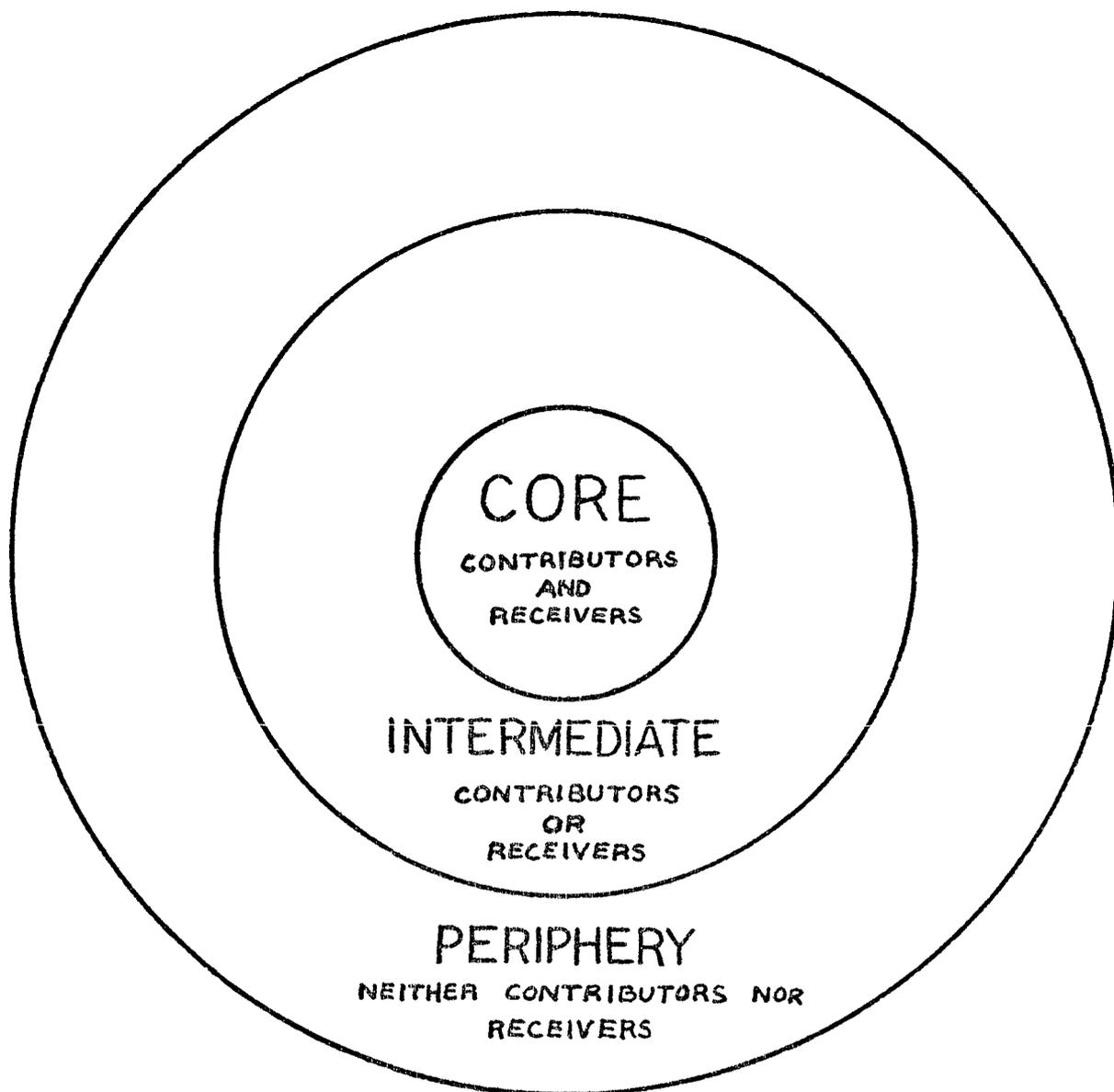


FIG. 1: Status of the individual within the group as determined by contribution to the gossip pool.

a group, it establishes loyalties among the members of the group. If the opposite is true, that is, if members of a group engage in gossip about members of their own group, then a lack of cohesiveness and a lack of loyalty is shown. If gossip is a negative force within the group than conflict results.

- (d) In the rumor studies Chorus (1953) and Levitt (1953), for example, include individual differences of persons as a determinant of rumor mongering. On the basis of these findings it is hypothesized that individual differences of each person in the situation determine whether the individual gossips. Individual differences include considerations such as: the personality types of the members--whether most individuals present are introvert, extrovert, etc.; the relationships between each member of the group --whether individuals are related closely by birth or marriage.
- (e) In the rumor studies: (1) age and occupation

were not found to be correlated with rumor.

(2) the more formal education an individual had the less the individual engaged in rumor.

(3) individuals with positions of responsibility in the community were found to engage less in rumor. On the basis of the rumor findings it is predicted that years of formal education and an individual's status in the community as leader, participant and isolate are correlated with gossip behaviour. Secondly, it is predicted that age, occupation and sex are correlated with gossip. Therefore, it is hypothesized that factors such as age, sex, education, occupation, status in the community are correlated with gossip.

General and specific hypotheses which arise directly from the literature are tested in order to determine whether gossip is a process distinct from rumor and whether the motivations and needs served by gossip are the same as those served by the process of rumor.

Method

Subjects

The subject population consisted of all those persons regularly attending the church, code named "Fair Fields" located in the township of the same name. It is a typical rural American community. Most of the ss live on farms in the townships of "South Corn" and "Fair Fields". The principal occupation is farming, including grain and corn crops, dairy, pigs and broiler chickens. Most of the residents have modern farm machinery. In their homes are found typical modern appliances and furnishings, including stereos and televisions. All of the wives do their own preserving and freezing of fruits, vegetables and meats. Some of the men do their own butchering and smoking of meats.

Several other families reside in a nearby small town, "Silos' Corners", which services these townships. The main services of the town are plumbing, electrical, hardware, construction, feed mill, and stores such as grocery, bakeship and variety. Several nursing homes are

also located in the town.

All individuals who communicate orally were considered potential subjects. Both male and female Ss of all ages and occupations formed the potential population. There were 79 Ss included in the study. The number of Ss involved in the study was determined arbitrarily by the number of Ss available in the situations studied. The behavioural settings studied determined which Ss were included. Those behavioural settings that were studied included all the situations which the E or her assistant were permitted to attend. Thus, only those situations which allowed the E to be a part of the group without arousing suspicion or which did not destroy the natural setting were included. Therefore, Ss were persons who were present in the natural course of events. Of the 79 Ss there were 32 males and 47 females aged 2 to 77 years. Three Ss were over 60 and 23 children were 12 years or younger.

Apparatus

A tape recorder (Uher Royal DeLuxe 2944 with two microphones) was used to record the conversations of

all Ss.

In the public settings, the E carried a cassette recorder (Dictaphone 704) concealed in a cloth handbag. The microphone was pinned to the lining so that it was facing toward the Ss. The remote control "off-on" switch was pinned near the top of the handbag. Since the cassette tapes lasted 30 minutes per side, only the gossip portions of the conversations were recorded. A male assistant wore a concealed miniature recorder (Dictamini) to record the gossip portions of the conversations.

Procedure

At the beginning of the session the tape recorder was switched on for the duration of the visit and all conversation was recorded. The recording sessions were taped during five social visits. With the E and her assistant were the following Ss in session (1) two middle-aged couples and two children; (2) two young male adults; (3) two young couples, one child; (4) one male adult and (5) three couples, nine children.

In public settings away from her home,

either the E or her assistant tape recorded gossip portions of conversations. Since there were technical difficulties with the recording devices used in large public settings it was impossible to record the gossip portions of the conversations. Therefore, the E and her assistant, upon leaving a behavioural setting, recorded pertinent information about the situation on file cards. Such information included location, date, purpose of gathering, names of participants, those who engaged in gossip, topics discussed including gossip and non-gossip and starting and closing time of event.

The behavioural settings studied were those which the E or her assistant could attend in the natural course of events, namely,

- 1 Chicken operations and barns
- 2 Dairy barns
- 3 Gift showers
- 4 Plumbing, heating, electrical and
appliance services
- 5 Sewing club meetings at the church
- 6 Social visits in homes
- 7 Work projects such as removal of
snow fences

All of the above behavioural situations occurred in the townships of South Corn and Fair Fields. Those settings which occurred in the town of Silos' Corners were not included because these contacts in the town are viewed as supplementary and the people from Fair Fields Church are a community unto themselves.

After each behavioural setting was observed and recorded the E replayed the tape and analyzed the conversation. All pertinent information such as who the speakers were was then recorded on the data sheets. The gossip portions of the tape were transcribed for later content analysis. As well, the starting and ending time for each situation was recorded on the data sheets along with the non-gossip topics. On a file card for each S the name, sex, age, occupation, education, and any other pertinent information were recorded. These data were obtained from the E's personal knowledge of the Ss prior to the study.

After all the behavioural situations were taped the E administered the Sixteen Personality Factors

Questionnaire (16PF). This test was chosen for several reasons. According to Buros (1959) the 16 PF questionnaire is distinguished from other personality tests in that the 16 PF covers "a wide range of personality dimensions and never before have the dimensions been so meticulously determined (p.112)". This was an important consideration for this study because the E desired to compare "hi" and "lo" gossipers on as many personality dimensions as possible. A second consideration in choice was the ease of administration since the test needed to be administered in small groups on several occasions. Reliability and validity coefficients are high for a test of this kind. Another factor which was considered in choosing a personality test was that the community studied has many adults with grade eight or less education and a few adults with college or university education. The 16 PF test has several forms available at different reading levels. This made it a desirable personality test for this community.

From the 46 taped Ss, 27 Ss made themselves

available for the testing. The test was administered in small groups in the Ss' homes according to the instructions in the manual. Ss were informed that the test was being administered by the E as part of a course requirement. Form A was administered to 4 Ss. Form C was used with those who had less than grade 10 education.

Raw test scores were converted into sten scores from the general population tables provided for both male and female Ss. The sten scores are distributed over ten equal-interval standard score points. Age corrections were made on the raw scores where necessary in order to obtain the adjusted raw score. This was done by using the equation and tables of age correction values for both male and female Ss available in the manual. Sten scores were adjusted for the motivational distortion (MD) factor when the MD sten score was 7 or greater. This was done by either adding or subtracting stens from the sten score according to the table provided in the manual. The analysis of the adjusted sten scores will be discussed later in this study. Sten scores were

used according to the 16 PF manual's directions (p.23 f.) to calculate the following secondary factors: extroversion, anxiety, tough poise, and independence.

All the Ss were divided into two groups, "hi" gossipers and "lo" gossipers. The "hi" gossipers included all Ss who engaged in gossip and "lo" gossipers were all Ss who did not gossip at all during the tape recording.

The Ss were classified into four groups according to the types of data collected. Group 1 included 24 Ss for whom there were completed personal information cards, 16 PF test results and tape recordings; three Ss for whom there were personal information cards and 16 PF test results but not tape recordings made up group 2; 22 Ss for whom there were personal information cards and tape recordings but no 16 PF test results formed group 3; 30 Ss for whom there were personal information cards only constituted group 4. Each S was coded with a random number between 1 and 79 for use in the Results section.

Ethical Considerations

One ethical consideration involves the use of a concealed tape recorder. The tape recorder was used as an aid to memory and did not add anything to the conversation which the persons taped did not already risk being broadcast. As such it was at worst only a minor violation of the S's privacy. The Ss, however, were interacting publicly with the E and therefore, no real violation of privacy occurred. The cautions against covert observation as described by APA (1973) in "Ethical Principles in the Conduct of Research with Human Participants" should not apply to methodology in the present research due to the fact that the hidden devices were used only to record conversation which the Ss were willingly and freely offering the E. Thus, the record of the conversation remained extant only for a small period of time to allow for accurate analysis. The use of a tape recorder removed the element of selective remembering, error and bias from the E's observations. The taped conversations permitted a time duration analysis of the gossip to be included in the study.

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Another ethical consideration deals with a possible violation of the APA principles (1973), namely, that the E did not inform the participants in the research that they were being observed in the course of their natural routines. If those observed had been so informed this would no doubt have affected the results. From the E's prior knowledge of the community and the local church, it can be stated that gossip is viewed by the community members as a morally negative behaviour. If they were aware of the E's observation then the Ss would have been reminded of their own moral feelings about the behaviour and consequently they would not have been free to act according to their usual inclinations. The study as it is would have been quite impossible. Strict safeguards of confidentiality and anonymity, however, were followed as outlined in the procedure. Nevertheless, to sacrifice ethics for the sake of research is not hereby commended but the E felt that the contribution made by this study to the body of scientific knowledge outweighs any

debatable ethical lapses.

Data Analysis

16 PF scores T-tests for a difference between two independent means were performed on the sten scores of each S within the "hi" gossip and "lo" gossip groups. Each of the 16 primary and the four secondary factors were analyzed separately.

The Cochran C test was employed to test for homogeneity of variance in the data for the 16 PF questionnaire.

Age factor Subjects grouped in age intervals of ten years were compared in a chi-square analysis. The analysis range of ages was 1 to 80. The relationship between age and "hi" and "lo" gossipers was analyzed using a chi-square analysis. A similar analysis was made between age and the gossiper's role of contributor, receiver and impeder.

Education Six levels of formal education were identified as follows: (1) kindergarten or less, (2) elementary, (3) secondary and (4) vocational schools, (5) college and (6) university.

A chi-square analysis was used to compare the relationship between level of education and "hi" and "lo" gossipers (gossip behaviour). A separate chi-square analysis was computed between level of education and gossipers' role. Formal education and not necessarily intelligence was compared in these analyses.

Occupation Ss were classified within the following 11 occupations: administrator, cheesemaker, electrician, farmer, housewife, labourer, nurses' aide, pre-schooler, retired, secretary, and student. As described above, a chi-square analysis was used to determine whether there was a relationship between occupation and (a) gossip behaviour and (b) gossipers' role.

Sex A chi-square analysis was used to determine whether there was a relationship between gossip behaviour and sex of the S. A separate analysis was performed between sex of the S and the gossipers' role.

Status in the community Ss were identified as leaders, participants and isolates by the E after

18 months of observation and interaction in the community prior to the study. Leaders are defined as those persons seen by E as giving guidance and counsel to the community. Isolates are Ss who are seen by E as being ignored by other community members and are not known to others. Participants are those community members who are seen by E as being actively involved in the community life. A chi-square analysis was used to determine whether there was a significant relationship between status in the community and "hi" and "lo" gossipers. A separate analysis between status in the community and gossipers' role was computed.

Blood relationships, marriage relationships and friendships An analysis of relationships among the tape recorded Ss was completed on the basis of birth relationships, marriage relationships and friendships. Kinships beyond first cousin were not included in the analysis.

Gossip content Content analysis of the gossip was carried out. Content of gossip was divided into different motivational categories according to the

needs served by the gossip. These needs were determined from the E's personal knowledge of the Ss as recorded on the personal data cards. As well the content was analyzed according to the speaker and the motives and predispositions behind what was said.

The content of both the gossip and the non-gossip was labeled according to the themes or subjects of conversation. The content was also analyzed phrase by phrase and those phrases signalling gossip content in the conversation were identified. Incomplete sentences were also noted.

Time duration The gossip portions of all the conversations were read by E at a uniform rate and timed. Thus, the number of seconds spent in gossiping by each S was determined.

The time spent in gossip was determined for each motivational category, and for each gossip theme. The final time study determined the total number of seconds spent in gossip for all the behavioural settings as well as the total time for non-gossip conversation.

Frequency distributions A frequency distribution was constructed indicating the number of times Ss stopped non-gossip conversations and joined a gossip conversation. A second frequency distribution was made indicating the number of gossip issues dealing with current and past happenings.

Cohesiveness An analysis across groups was made for each S in order to determine if Ss gossiped about members of their own group in other behavioural settings.

Results

Three sets of raw data were obtained: the 16 PF test raw scores, personal information for each S (sex, age, education, occupation and status of S within the community) and finally the transcribed taped recorded gossip conversations of behavioural settings.

Not all the data were analyzed. The recordings obtained in large public settings, such as the church sewing meeting, were not usable because the recording was unclear. Also, when the assistant's Dictamini was turned on to record it emitted a noise and could not be used. Thus, the tape recordings analyzed in this study are only those obtained from the larger recording device which operated satisfactorily and those obtained in other small gatherings where the tapes could be deciphered. All the behavioural settings containing gossip were taped during five social visits. On several occasions participants drank

coffee and ate doughnuts during the course of the visit.

Time Duration and General Findings Of the total conversation time for all the behavioural settings of 34,800 seconds (or 580 minutes), 94% of it was spent in non-gossip conversation and 5.63% in gossip. This indicates that the majority of the conversation is non-gossip in nature.

An analysis of each of the five gossip situations is presented in Table 1. The time spent in gossip during each situation is expressed as a percentage of the total conversation time. In situation 4 only one S was present with E and her assistant but more time was spent in gossip (17.20%) in this session than in any of the other situations. In both sessions 1 and 5 there were 5 gossipers present and 5.30% and 7.00% respectively of the conversation time was spent in gossip. Two gossipers in sessions 2 and 3 spent 2.50% and 0.40% respectively of the conversation time in gossip. It is evident that the amount of gossip in each situation is not

necessarily dependent on the number of gossip participants.

TABLE I
Group Gossip Time For Each Session

Gossip Session	No. of Gossipers in Session	Percentage of Conversation Time
1	5	5.30%
2	2	2.50
3	2	0.40
4	1	17.20
5	5	7.00

Note.--Percentages are based on the time spent in gossip by all gossipers for each gossip situation (See Appendix A).

Table 2 indicates how much time was spent gossiping by each S in proportion to the total gossip and conversation times. S 3, S 10 and S 7 each gossiped for 36.66%, 13.13% and 11.67% of the total gossip time

respectively. Together these three S engaged in 61.46% of the gossip time. S 3 gossiped for 2.00% of the total conversation time. All the other gossipers spent less than 1% of the total conversation time in gossip. These results indicate that the majority of the gossip is contributed by a very limited number of persons.

An examination of the group situations showed that some members gossiped about one another when in different groups. Some Ss gossiped about close relatives or friends of persons present in that situation. For example, S 7 gossiped about S 13's sister in two different behavioural settings. Both S 7 and S 13 are close friends and were together in one of the behavioural settings when S 7 engaged in the gossip about the sister. Conflict arose in the group and was dealt with. S 7 in the same behavioural setting also gossiped about S 3's brother. Again conflict arose and was resolved.

In the non-taped gossip sessions, S 2 gossiped about S 5 with S 15 and S 16. These four Ss are close

TABLE 2

Summary of Percentage of Time Spent By Each S in Gossip

<u>S</u>	Percentage of Total Gossip Time	Percentage of Total Conversation Time
<u>S3</u>	36.66%	2.00%
<u>S10</u>	13.13	0.71
<u>S7</u>	11.67	0.63
<u>S6</u>	6.34	0.35
<u>S11</u>	3.86	0.21
<u>S8</u>	3.26	0.17
<u>S2</u>	3.00	0.16
<u>S1</u>	2.97	0.16
<u>S9</u>	2.64	0.14
<u>S5</u>	2.00	0.10
<u>S4</u>	1.70	0.09
<u>S13</u>	0.47	0.03
<u>S14</u>	0.12	0.01
<u>S12</u>	0.11	0.01

Note.--Percentage of time spent gossiping by each gossipier is expressed as (a) a percentage of total gossip time and (b) percentage of total conversation time for all situations. (See Appendix B). Subjects are rank ordered according to percentage of gossip contribution.

friends and S 2 and S 5 were together in situation 2. Three other similar situations were noted where Ss gossiped about relatives or close friends.

Content Analysis of Gossip A frequency count of gossip issues showed that 21 of the issues dealt with current happenings, that is, happenings within the time of the study. Thirteen issues occurred prior to the study. It is obvious, then, that the majority of the gossip content was current.

The tape recordings were analyzed according to content of the gossip. Five different motivational categories of gossip are identified as follows: (a) source of information with view to help, (b) recreational "chit-chat" with view to entertain, (c) wish to identify with the group, (d) cathartic and (e) wish fulfillment. These motivational categories of gossip are based on the needs served by gossip. For example, in category (a) it was noted that two Ss were discussing with concern someone's personal life but during the course of the discussion the emphasis shifted from one of concern and help to simply an

exchange of information, category (b) recreational "chit-chat", amongst all the Ss present. One example of category (c) group identification, was noted when one of the two established conversations ceased, when the women became aware that the men were engaged in gossip. This then brought the two groups together and one conversation was established among all the Ss. Observed in cathartic gossip was scapegoating, hostility and aggression as implied in the content and tone of the discussion. One S who gossiped about persons "having to get married" was working out her frustration regarding gossip surrounding her own marriage. Observed in (e), wish fulfillment, was gossip which projects one's wishes and hopes such as always talking about wanting more money and then gossiping about persons who have acquired wealth.

A time analysis of the motivational categories of gossip is presented in Table 3. Eighty-two percent of the gossip was recreational "chit-chat", 9% was cathartic, 4% was wish fulfillment and 3% was source of information with view to help. This clearly indicates

that the majority of gossip is recreational "chit-chat". Category (c), wish to identify with the group is measured by the number of times Ss stopped their own conversations to join a group of gossipers. It was found that on five different occasions a total of eleven Ss in all stopped their conversations and joined the gossipers.

TABLE 3
Percentage of Time Spent in Gossip
For Each Motivational Category

Motivational Category	Percentage of Total Gossip Time	Percentage of Total Conversation Time
(a) Source of information	3%	0.18%
(b) Recreational "chit-chat"	82	4.62
(d) Cathartic	9	0.55
(e) Wish Fulfillment	4	0.28

Note.--See Appendix C

Six themes of gossip conversation are identified; (a) financial, (b) individual's disposition, (c) individual's moral life, (d) individual's observable behaviour, (e) individual's physical appearance, and (f) individual's achievement or lack of it. The theme of morality, (c), includes gossip dealing with marriage relationships, premarital sexual relationships, common-law marriage and divorce, theft, arson, and alcoholic problems. Gossip about pregnancies or persons unable to have children is included in (f). Both of these dimensions were discussed on three separate occasions in one situation by two of the couples. Other gossip included in (f) deals with individual's success or lack of it in their vocation and lifestyle.

A time analysis for themes of gossip conversation is presented in Table 4 where it can be seen that 35.6% of the gossip was about an individual's observable behaviour, 20.38% about achievement, 17.02% about an individual's disposition, 11.98% dealing with moral issues, 7.75% about finances and 7.21% dealing with physical appearance. It is interesting to note

that the majority of the gossip centered around the theme of observable behaviour.

An analysis of the conversations reveals that certain typical phrases seem to signal gossip content in the conversation. For example, on two occasions the phrase, "It is none of my business, but..." was used after the S discusses a financial and a moral theme of gossip. This phrase is used by the S who is identified as being the "highest" gossipier (S 3). The same S also uses the phrase, "Did you ever hear anything like it?" on one occasion. Either preceding or directly following gossip content with doubtful facts, the phrase, "I don't know, but..." is used 10 times by this S and 4 times by other Ss. The phrase, "Maybe it's just talk..." is used once after one S told a story about one of the couple's friends which did not seem plausible. Another S gossiped about a relative of one of the couples present, and when challenged, replied, "Well, maybe 'so and so' had this wrong."

TABLE 4
 Percentage of Time Spent
 On Each Theme of Gossip Conversation

Gossip Theme	Percentage of Total ¹ Gossip Time	Percentage of Total ² Conversation Time
(a) Financial	7.75%	0.74%
(b) Individual's disposition	17.02	1.63
(c) Individual's moral life	11.98	1.15
(d) Individual's observable behaviour	35.67	3.42
(e) Individual's physical appearance	7.21	0.69
(f) Individual's achievement or lack of it	20.38	1.95

Note 1. Amount of time spent for each theme is expressed as a proportion of the total gossip time for all situations.

2. Similarly, the amount of time spent for each theme is expressed as a proportion of the total conversation time for all situations (See Appendix D).

On eight occasions sentences were not completed and hostility, aggression and curse words are implied as the endings of these sentences. On numerous other occasions sentences are not completed because Ss were interrupted by other gossipers. From the present data it is not possible to indicate whether this is a peculiarity of the speech patterns of the gossip process.

Fourteen themes of non-gossip conversation are also noted:

- Accident
- Agriculture
- Beauty Care
- Child rearing
- Culinary
- Education
- Hobbies
- Moving to new communities
- Parenthood
- Person's own aspirations
- Physical health and illness
- Religious faith and belief
- Church related service assignments
- Travel

These non-gossip themes refer to volunteered information about the Ss themselves and about issues in general with two exceptions, the accident discussion and the parenthood discussion. The accident discussion

was brief and factual and the parenthood conversation included the reporting of a husband and wife who became new parents.

Individual Differences. A frequency distribution was made for contributors, receivers, and impeters of gossip. Ss who contribute gossip are classified as contributors, those who do not contribute gossip but who are listeners in the group are receivers, persons who attempt through verbal or nonverbal means to stop gossip are classified as impeters. The role of contributor was assumed by 25.5% of the Ss, 1.3% of the Ss were impeters and 73.1% of the Ss were receivers of gossip. These data are presented in Table 5. It is obvious that the majority of the Ss are receivers of gossip.

The chi-square test was used to determine whether there is a relationship between the variables --sex, age, education, occupation and the role assumed by the gossiper--receiver, contributor, and impeter. Table 6 summarizes the chi-square results for personal variables and role assumed in gossiping. There is a

TABLE 5
 PERCENTAGE OF Ss ASSUMING
 EACH GOSSIP ROLE

Role	Percentage
Contributor	25.5%
Impeder	1.3
Receiver	73.1

Note.--The percentages are based on the number of statements made, responded to, or impeded by participants in each behavioural situation. It is possible for Ss to be classified in one or all roles depending on their participation in the gossip settings.

significant relationship between age of the S and role of the gossiper--contributor, impeder, and receiver. The contingency coefficient for age and gossip role is 0.19 which is rather low in light of the highly significant χ^2 of 27.97. This indicates that there is a low degree of association between the age levels for each of the three gossip roles. Further examination

of the data reveals that the 31- to 40-year-old group of Ss had by far the greatest frequency of contributors, receivers and impeters of gossip. Both the 11-to 20-year-old group and the 51- to 60-year-old group did not have any impeters included in the gossip roles. A second significant relationship identified by the chi-square test was that between the gossipers' status in the community and the gossipers' role. Again the contingency coefficient of 0.2 is low suggesting a low degree of association between the gossipers' role and the gossipers' status in the community. The data further reveal that persons who hold positions of authority and leadership in the community are less actively engaged in gossip as contributors, impeters and particularly receivers in gossip. Only 23.6% of the gossip was received by persons in authority.

A number of observations can be made from Figure 2. The status of each S within each behavioural situation is determined by the S's contribution to the gossip pool. In 5 of the 16 taped behavioural

TABLE 6
 SUMMARY OF CHI-SQUARE TESTS
 BETWEEN PERSONAL VARIABLES AND THE ROLE OF GOSSIPER

Personal variables	df	χ^2
Age	8	37.97*
Level of Education	2	4.63
Occupation	6	6.70
Sex	2	1.74
Status in community	2	38.44*

Note.--*Significant at .05 level of confidence.
 Chi-square tests were computed on the frequency distributions for each personal variable and the three roles assumed by the gossip--contributor, receiver or impeder.

situations in which gossip occurred, all the adult Ss were contributors and/or receivers. In situation 1, one child was a contributor and receiver and two children were neither contributors nor receivers. Of the 17 adult Ss in all 5 situations, 3 were receivers

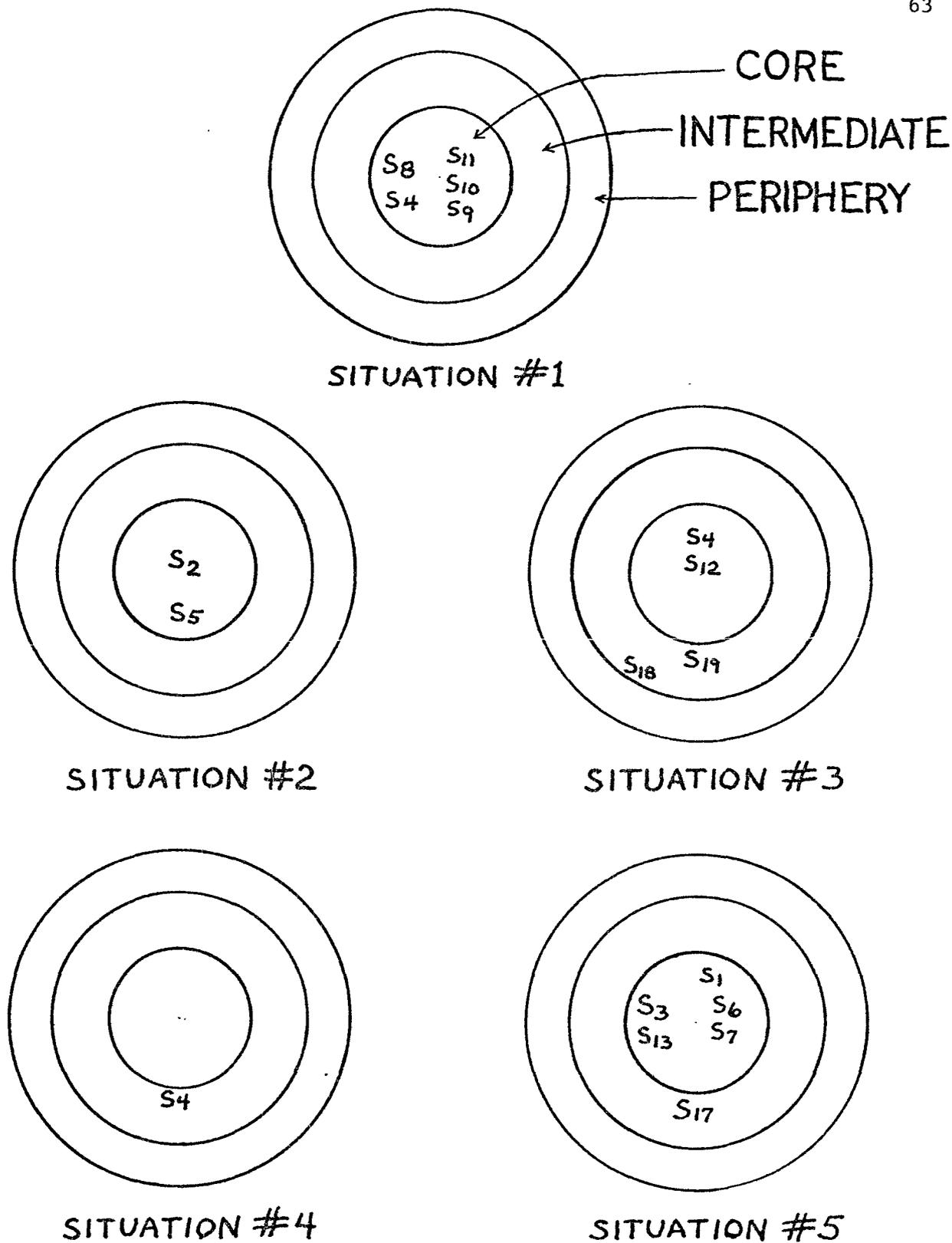


FIG. 2: Status of S within each situation as determined by contribution to the gossip pool.

Note--Ss in the core of each situation were contributors and receivers. Those in the intermediate circle were either contributors or receivers of gossip. None of the Ss were in the periphery.

of gossip, one was a contributor and 13 were contributors and receivers of gossip. The one contributor of gossip was the only S with the E and her assistant in the behavioural setting. On another occasion, however, this same S was both a contributor and receiver. Thus, it was observed that the majority of the Ss in the gossip situations were both contributors and receivers.

The chi-square test was also used to determine whether there is a significant relationship between gossip behaviour and the following variables: sex, age, occupation, education, and status within the community. Table 7, which presents the summary of the chi-square tests for the variables as a function of gossip behaviour for the 79 Ss, shows that there is a significant relationship between age of the S and whether or not the S engages in gossip. A contingency coefficient of 0.53 indicates that there is a moderate association between age of the gossiper and "hi" and "lo" gossip behaviour. The data further indicate that with an increase in age there is a trend to an increase

in gossip. As well, there is a significant relationship between occupation of the S and gossip behaviour. There is a moderate association between occupation of the gossiper and "hi" and "lo" gossip behaviour as indicated by the contingency coefficient of 0.51. Further analysis reveals that housewives and farmers engage in more gossip than those Ss whose occupations require them to work away from their place of residence. There are no significant relationships between the other variables--sex, education, status in the community--and gossip behaviour. Another set of chi-square tests were completed excluding the 23 children below the age of 13. The results are basically the same as those reported for all of the 79 Ss.

The summary of the t-tests on the 16 PF primary factors is presented in Table 8. A significant difference was found between the "hi" gossip group and the "lo" gossip group for factor F (sober vs. happy-go-lucky). The other 15 primary factors were not significant.

TABLE 7
 SUMMARY OF CHI-SQUARE TESTS BETWEEN PERSONAL
 VARIABLES AND GOSSIP BEHAVIOUR
 For "Hi" and "Lo" Gossip Groups (79Ss)

Personal Variables	df	χ^2
(1) Age	7	30.15*
(2) Level of Education	5	8.23
(3) Occupation	10	29.65*
(4) Sex	1	0.99
(5) Status in Community	2	2.73

* Significant at 0.05 level of confidence

The "hi" gossip group has higher scores on factor F than the "lo" gossip group (see Appendices E and F). Thus, the "hi" gossip group tends to be "happy-go-lucky, impulsive, lively, gay, enthusiastic" (16 PF, 1967). In contrast, the "lo" gossip group is described as "sober, prudent, serious, taciturn" (16 PF, 1967).

TABLE 8
 SUMMARY OF T-TESTS BETWEEN "HI" AND "LO" GOSSIP GROUPS
 FOR PRIMARY FACTORS ON 16 PF TEST

Factor	\bar{X} for "Hi" Group	\bar{X} for "Lo" Group	df	t
A	6.00	4.92	25	1.35
B	4.80	5.25	25	-0.47
C	4.47	4.58	25	-0.11
E	3.40	4.67	25	-1.32
F	5.27	3.75	25	2.27*
G	5.87	5.25	25	1.02
H	4.33	4.67	25	-0.39
I	4.53	4.92	25	-0.61
L	5.40	5.58	25	-0.20
M	5.33	6.25	25	-1.07
N	6.07	6.25	25	-0.20
O	7.00	6.83	25	0.29
Q ₁	4.20	4.25	25	0.07
Q ₂	5.87	5.50	25	0.53
Q ₃	4.53	4.83	25	-0.47
Q ₄	6.53	7.33	25	-1.07

Note.--See Appendices E and F for sten scores for primary factors on 16 PF rest.

* Significant at .05 level of confidence

The t-test reveals no significant differences between the "hi" gossip and "lo" gossip groups on the 16 PF secondary factors--anxiety, extroversion, independence, and tough poise.

A summary of the analysis of the relationships amongst the tape recorded Ss is presented in Table 9. A frequency distribution was established showing blood relationships, marriage relationships and friendships amongst the 32 tape recorded Ss. Kinship beyond first cousin is not recorded. It is of interest that there is a total of 223 blood and marriage relationships and a total of 205 friendships. Table 9 also shows that amongst 32 taped Ss, 12 of these Ss were not related by birth to the other 20 taped Ss. Of these 12 Ss, however, nine of them have birth relationships to other community members. Only S 17, S 18, and S 20 are not related by birth to anyone in the community. Thus, the data illustrate the complexity of intermarriage and kinship within this community.

TABLE 9
 SUMMARY OF SOCIOMETRIC ANALYSIS
 OF THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONGST TAPED Ss

<u>S</u>	No. of Blood Relatives	No. of Relatives by Marriage	No. of Friends
<u>S1</u>	0	1	10
<u>S2</u>	4	1	20
<u>S3</u>	4	3	8
<u>S4</u>	1	4	15
<u>S5</u>	10	2	13
<u>S6</u>	0	8	8
<u>S7</u>	0	3	8
<u>S8</u>	3	2	13
<u>S9</u>	3	2	14
<u>S10</u>	8	6	9
<u>S11</u>	6	7	9
<u>S12</u>	0	3	4
<u>S13</u>	6	5	8
<u>S14</u>	4	1	13
<u>S17</u>	0	1	6
<u>S18</u>	0	5	8
<u>S19</u>	1	2	2
<u>S20</u>	0	13	4
<u>S21</u>	11	2	5
<u>S22</u>	0	0	12
<u>S23</u>	0	0	21
<u>S24</u>	6	5	10
<u>S25</u>	8	4	12
<u>S26</u>	9	2	1
<u>S27</u>	11	2	8
<u>S28</u>	8	2	4
<u>S29</u>	10	3	3
<u>S30</u>	0	1	2
<u>S31</u>	4	1	15
<u>S32</u>	11	2	11
<u>S33</u>	0	1	3
<u>S37</u>	0	5	17

In summary, the following results were found:

- I (a) For the 16 PF primary factors, there is a significant difference between the "hi" gossip group and the "lo" gossip group for factor F (sober vs. happy-go-lucky).
- (b) The "hi" gossip group has higher scores on factor F than the "lo" gossip group. "Hi" gossipers tend to be happy-go-lucky and "lo" gossipers are described as sober.
- II The following measures were significant as indicated by a chi-square analysis:
 - (a) A relationship between age of the Ss and gossip behaviour. With an increase in chronological age there is an increase in amount of gossip.
 - (b) A relationship between occupation and gossip behaviour. Housewives and farmers engage in more gossip than Ss whose occupations require them to work away from their place of domicile.
 - (c) Relationships between age and role of the gossipers--contributor, impeder, and receiver.

The 31- to 40- year-old group and the 51- to 60-year-old group had no impiders of gossip.

- (d) A relationship between the gossiper's status in the community and the gossiper's role of contributor, impider, and receiver. Persons who hold positions of responsibility and leadership in the community are less actively engaged in gossip as contributors, receivers or impiders.

III Five different motivational categories of gossip are identified. They are rank ordered according to importance as determined by the amount of time spent in gossip for each motivational category as follows:

- (a) Recreational "chit-chat" with view to entertain.
- (b) Cathartic
- (c) Wish to identify with the group.
- (d) Wish fulfillment.
- (e) Source of information with view to help.

IV Six themes of gossip conversation are noted. They are rank ordered according to the amount of time spent gossiping for each theme as follows:

- (a) Individual's observable behaviour.

(b) Individual's achievement or lack of it.

(c) Individual's disposition.

(d) Individual's moral life.

(e) Financial.

(f) Individual's physical appearance.

V Certain sentence patterns and phrases signal the conversation being gossip in nature. For example, "It is none of my business, but..." and "Did you ever hear anything like it?" are used after a S engaged in gossip. Gossip content with doubtful facts is sometimes prefaced with the phrase "I don't know, but..."

VI Friendship and relationship by birth do not always impede gossip. Sometimes close friends and relatives gossip about each other in different behavioural settings. On several occasions in the presence of their close friends they gossiped about their friends' relatives.

Discussion

The purpose of the present study was to verify whether the rumor findings are applicable to gossip and also whether the assertions about gossip by Stirling (1956) can be verified by field observation. These goals were accomplished. A discussion of the study's limitations will be presented below.

Contrary to previous expectations of the E the time duration data indicate that overall the majority of conversation is non-gossip in nature. The amount of time spent in gossip was highly variable from situation to situation. In some situations there was no gossip and in other situations there was much gossip. The amount of gossip in each situation is not necessarily dependent on the number of gossip participants. The data reveal, however, that of the 14 taped gossipers, three contributed 61.46% of the gossip content. Who the gossip participants are seems to be a critical factor in determining how much time is spent in gossip. The variance in the amount

of gossip for each situation coupled with the finding that a large proportion of the gossip was contributed by a few gossipers suggests that gossip is a social activity engaged in by a limited number of persons. If several very "hi" gossipers were together in a situation then the majority of the conversation would likely be gossip. Social and religious norms may inhibit large amounts of gossip conversation but the underlying need to gossip and an interest in gossip items manifests itself in the remembering and transferring of gossip conversation. Discussion of the data for individual differences of the gossipers will be reserved until later.

Analysis of the content reveals that there are five different motivational categories of gossip in the gossip content studied: source of information with view to help, recreational "chi-chat" with view to entertain, wish to identify with the group, cathartic, and wish fulfillment. Of the five motivational categories of gossip, the latter four are identified as motivational categories of gossip

by Stirling (1956). The first motivational category, source of information with view to help, is not identified in the rumor studies by Roos (1943), Knapp (1944), Allport and Postman (1946), nor in the gossip paper by Stirling (1956).

Several reasons may be suggested why the motivational category, source of information with view to help, emerges in the present study. First, Roos, Knapp, and Allport and Postman were studying rumor as it arose out of crisis oriented situations affecting a large proportion of a group of people. The gossip analyzed in the present study originates from everyday situations affecting an individual or family. Therefore, the opportunity to identify this motivation is germane to this study. From the present observations, it seems that information is shared among individuals and families with the motivation to assist those in need. Often in the process of passing the information on to others, however, the motivation becomes lost and other kinds of gossip result.

Secondly, most of the rumor studies deal with

ambiguous situations in which individuals attempted to explain the circumstances in which they found themselves. Thus, the need to help individuals was not present. The element of ambiguity was not present in this gossip study. The individuals who were being gossiped about in the present study were aware of their own problems and shared this information with others in order to receive help.

Third, the nature of the community is such that there still exists a remnant of neighbours helping one another during harvest time and other occasions. This is actively encouraged by their common religious ethic. In working together knowledge of and concern for one another's problems results in increased motivation to help one another. In recent years modern agricultural and domestic technology has resulted in the occurrence of fewer numbers of large rural behavioural settings including neighbours working together. Consequently, there exist fewer opportunities to perceive one another's needs and to be motivated to help. Therefore, information

about people, increasingly, is shared for other reasons.

It would appear that further study is needed to determine whether the source of information with a view to help is a motivational category of gossip unique to the community studied or whether it is applicable to other gossip groups.

In the present study, the results revealed that the majority of the gossip was recreational "chit-chat". Most of the behavioural situations were leisure-time social visits. This study also found that housewives and farmers engage in more gossip than do those who work away from their place of residence. This finding coupled with the fact that the majority of gossip is recreational "chit-chat" suggests that possibly monotonous and boring work fosters gossip as a diversion in the routine.

Since only a small percentage of the gossip is cathartic and hostile in nature, this may also suggest that gossip is generally a form of social discourse with the view to entertain.

It was observed in this study that individuals stop their conversations when a gossip conversation is perceived to be occurring elsewhere and often join in the gossip conversation. It is difficult to state whether this supports Stirling's (1956) theory of wishing to identify with the persons in the group or whether it is merely wishing to participate in the content of the conversation. Persons changing groups apparently desire to be a part of the second group more than the first group. Is the behaviour of gossip motivated by a personal need to identify with the persons in the group or is it because the content of the second conversation is more entertaining? Further study is needed. More behavioural situations and a greater n might have resulted in greater clarity.

In addition to the motivational categories of gossip, the study revealed that there are themes of gossip conversation. One theme identified was that of dealing with morality. Shibutani (1966) also identified this as a theme of gossip conversation. Many people feel that gossip is primarily concerned

with moral issues. The results revealed that the theme of morality ranked in the bottom 27% of the gossip themes. As well the motivational category of cathartic, hostile and aggressive gossip did not occur frequently in the observed situations. Both of these findings imply that the content of gossip is not necessarily malicious in nature. No other researchers have identified themes other than morality.

A number of observations were made about the role of the gossiper and his/her status in the group. Individuals who contributed and received gossip formed the core of the group and those who were receivers only were in an intermediate position in the group. Those persons who were neither receivers nor contributors formed their own group for conversation peripheral to the main group. Furthermore, the findings indicated a relationship between the gossiper's role--contributor, receiver, or impeder, and the gossiper's status--leader, participant, or isolate in the community. That is, the findings revealed that there is a relationship between the gossiper's role in the conversation group

and the status of the gossip in the community. Persons who hold positions of authority and leadership in the community tend to be less actively engaged in gossip as contributors, receivers or impeters. The data further revealed that persons in authority receive less of the gossip than do other community members. Parenthetically, this may have been a factor operant during some of the behavioural settings retarding gossip as community members may have perceived the E as a leadership person. This also suggests that persons in authority may not be a part of the "gossip grape-vine". Leadership persons in the community are more apt to contribute factual information which may then be passed on by the gossipers. Perhaps leadership persons were more cognizant of the social and religious norms. It seems then that an individual's contribution to the gossip pool is one determinant of his status within the group. This finding concurs with Shibutani (1966).

The finding that persons in roles of leadership in the community contribute, receive and impede

less gossip than do other community persons seems to contradict the finding that there is no relationship between gossip behaviour and the person's status in the community as leader, participant, or isolate. In determining the data for contributors, receivers and impiders, a frequency count was made of the number of statements contributed, received or impeded. The data for gossipers and non-gossipers was determined from a frequency count of the number of persons who gossiped and the number of persons who gossiped not at all. Thus, the latter data do not take into account the amount of gossip contributed by the gossipers. This then accounts for the seemingly contradictory results.

The finding that there is no relationship between the three levels of status of the individual in the community and whether the S did or did not gossip is contrary to that reported by Danzig, Thayer and Galanter (1958). The latter researchers studied rumor in a disaster-stricken community. As mentioned before, the nature of the rumor studied was different

from the nature of the gossip. In the rumor study persons of authority in the community checked for confirmation of facts before making statements about the situations. In the present study, persons of authority were not required to exercise leadership with regard to the content of the gossip. Another reason might be that of definition of roles of responsibility. In the present study persons with roles of responsibility were those who had responsibility in the church as "lay-spiritual" leaders or persons with positions of responsibility in their occupational field. This is different from the political and vocational roles of responsibility implied in the Danzig, Thayer and Galanter study where persons of political responsibility checked for confirmation of facts before making statements about the community disaster.

The results showed a relationship between age and role of the gossip as contributor, receiver or impeder. The 31- to 40- year-old group of ss were contributors, receivers and impeder of more gossip

than the other age groups. Since only seven of the Ss were over 50 years of age, it is difficult to say whether the amount of gossip contributed, received or impeded by the 50-60, and 60-70, and 70-80 year age groups reflects in reality what actually happens. The data in the present study suggest that the amount of gossip contributed, received and impeded increases steadily with age and peaks at the 31- to 40-year-old group and then declines with age. It is interesting to note, however, that the community itself recognizes that there are three distinct theological groups based upon age. That is, the middle-aged tend to be more conservative and revivalistic in religious expression and belief whereas both the older and the younger age groups tend to be more rigid and radically evangelical in outlook. More rigorous study of the relationship between age and gossip role, with a greater number of persons in the above 50-year-old age levels, would be helpful in clarifying this finding.

In addition, the results revealed a relation-

ship between age of the individual tested and gossip behaviour. That is, the data indicated that with an increase in age there is a trend to an increase in gossip behaviour. As age increases there are more "hi" gossipers than "lo" gossipers. More observation time and a greater number of Ss might increase the confidence of this finding.

Both of the above relationships regarding age and gossip may imply that younger persons are more inhibited by the social and religious norms associated with gossip than are middle-aged persons. As well the younger individuals express verbally on occasion their criticism of older persons who gossip. This may also act as a deterrent to gossip in the younger generations. It would be interesting to know whether the older persons were inhibited by these pressures when they were younger or whether this is a new development in time.

The finding that age is related to gossip behaviour is contrary to Cantril's (1966) investigation of rumor arising out of the Orson Welles broadcast.

The present study did not find a relationship between level of education and gossip behaviour. Similarly, level of education and the role of the gossiper were not found to be related, thus, not substantiating Cantril's work.

Several reasons for these discrepancies between rumor and gossip behaviour with respect to age and level of education might be suggested. These discrepancies may be a result of the different research design and circumstances surrounding these studies. First, Cantril (1966) investigated the rumors post facto. In the present study, Ss were recorded as they actually participated in gossip. In the former study, Ss had to recall the rumor situations. Selective remembering may have been introduced. Secondly, the nature of the radio broadcast was such that fear and panic ensued and led to rumors. In the present study, the element of fear and anxiety resulting from ambiguous and threatening situations was not present. Thus, the nature of these gossip and rumor studies were very different.

In the rumor study it is reasonable to believe that people of all ages would engage in rumor surrounding an event of this magnitude. Gossip, however, seems to often be talk about the minor and mundane aspects of life and thus is present in conversation of certain age groups. With the discrepancy between the findings of these two studies, one explanation may be that the present study may not have had sufficient numbers of persons differentiated in the levels of education above grade ten. Thirdly, the event itself had importance for all individuals in the rumor study. In the present study, the subjects of gossip did not have widespread importance or effect on the total community.

The finding that there is a relationship between occupation and gossip behaviour is contrary to the results reported by Allport and Lepkin (1945). Housewives and farmers were found in the present study to engage in more gossip than persons whose occupations required them to work away from their residence. One reason for this may be that persons

who remain at home such as farmers and housewives have less opportunity to form other group relationships and exchange ideas. Thus the housewives and farmers become in-grown and form a tightly knit group which may foster gossip. The reader will recall the earlier discussion of the motivational category, recreational "chit-chat" being related to this occupational group. The results of the present study did not find, however, a relationship between occupation of the gossiper and the role of the gossiper as contributor, receiver, or impeder.

One reason for the discrepancy between the present study and Allport and Lepkin's (1945) study of rumor and occupation is the different system of classification used. Secondly, Allport and Lepkin analyzed war time rumors about waste. This information was obtained from the rumor clinic questionnaires. The rumors studied had importance for a large community and were studied post facto. As well, the nature of the rumors was different from the nature of the gossip in this study. These

factors may account for the discrepancy between the two studies.

The findings indicated that there was no difference in the gossip behaviour of male and female individuals. The results also revealed no relationship between sex of the individual and role assumed by the gossip. This finding is contrary to the stereotype of women as gossipers sometimes presented.

The results of the present study indicated that personality is related to gossiping. The "hi" gossip is a happy-go-lucky individual, "talkative, frank, expressive, and carefree" (16 PF, 1972). It is not surprising to find the "hi" gossip characterized as such. From this personality description it is easy to see why the "hi" gossip participates in gossiping. The "hi" gossip naturally enjoys social discourse with others. This description seems to suggest that the "hi" gossip would probably gossip, not out of maliciousness, but for recreational "chit-chat". That personality factors are a determinant of gossip is parallel to the finding reported by Schall, Levy and Tresset (1950).

The finding that gossip behaviour was not affected by introversion-extraversion confirms the results reported by Davis and Rulan (1935). This result may seem contrary to the earlier finding that gossip is positively correlated with factor F of the 16 PF test and also the commonly held view that "hi" gossipers are extroverted. In reality, however, some "hi" gossipers may be introverted and their gossiping behaviour is motivated by psychological factors such as insecurity. The present study also showed that gossip behaviour was not affected by other personality factors such as anxiety, independence and tough-poise.

As was found with the relationship of gossip and education, there was no difference between "hi" and "lo" gossipers on the intelligence factor. This finding also confirms the results of the gossip study by Davis and Rulan (1935).

Friendship and relationship by birth were found not to impede the telling of gossip about friends and relatives. These results parallel those reported by Festinger, et al. (1948) in their rumor study.

Festinger et al. also found that the existence of friendships heightened the probability of having heard the rumor. Similarly, in the present study it was observed that the complexity of intermarriage and kinship within the community provides the channels necessary to hear the gossip. Since the majority of the persons in the community are related to each other by marriage and blood relationships it is not too surprising that gossip is an activity which is engaged in by many members of the community. The three isolates in the study are not related by birth to anyone in the community and they were also in the "lo" gossip group.

In summary, then, personality factors, age, occupation, a person's status in the community, number of friendships and relationships by birth and marriage are some variables which contribute to differences between individuals who are "hi" gossipers and those who are "lo" gossipers. The personality factor-happy-go-lucky is characteristic of the "hi" gossipers. Age and status in the community effect the amount of gossip

contributed, received and impeded. Age and occupation effect whether a person is a gossiper or a non-gossiper. The number of friendships and relationships by birth provides the channels necessary to hear the gossip. It can be concluded then, that individual differences of each person in the behavioural setting determines whether the individual gossips, although as mentioned before, a larger n and more observation time would likely increase confidence in the results. This finding confirms the rumor study results of Allport and Postman (1946), Chorus (1953) and Levitt (1953) who reported in their studies that individual differences are determinants of rumor mongering.

The results indicate that gossip may be a negative or a positive force within the group. On several occasions minor conflict arose when individuals gossiped about friends or relatives of other members in the group. As well, members of the group engaged in gossip about members of their own group in other behavioural settings. Since members of the group engaged in gossip about members of their own group, a lack of cohesiveness and a lack of loyalty to the

group members are shown.

Gossip is a negative force in the group as manifested by conflict in the group and a lack of loyalty to group members. It was observed that one member of the community was continually the object of scapegoating by the majority of the gossip groups. When the groups gossiped about this member who was the object of scapegoating, cohesiveness was observed in the groups. For example, if one person in the group mentioned the name of this person who was the object of scapegoating, then everyone immediately laughed and appeared to enjoy the conversation more. Each one in turn added their bit of gossip to the gossip pool about this person. Also, everyone in the group at this point stopped their own conversation in order to participate in the gossip as contributors and/or receivers. It seemed that when one person has become the object of scapegoating the community vents their anger and frustration towards that person through gossip. It then becomes more acceptable for anyone to gossip about this person. At this point, the social

and religious norms against gossip appear to weaken. Gossip then becomes a strengthening force in the group in that all the group members are united together but the gossip is generally negative in nature. This unity is at the expense of one community member.

In summary, the results of the present research indicate that the findings of Davis and Rulan (1935) and Stirling (1956) are confirmed. The results of the present research also indicate that there are some discrepancies between the findings of studies of gossip and the findings of studies of rumor. It seems, then, that gossip is a phenomenon distinct from rumor. The motivations and needs served by gossip are similar in some aspects but different in others from those served by the process of rumor.

In conclusion, three implications might be derived from this investigation which might have significance for a community such as the one under study. First, it was discovered that the positive motivational categories of gossip were greater in number and time duration than the negative motivational

categories. This finding should alleviate much anxiety and negative feelings about gossip as a human behaviour. A healthier outlook on gossip as a normal, social phenomenon would likely be a refreshing attitude for many communities. A second implication can be derived from the knowledge that gossip occurs despite social, marital and birth relationships. This results in breakdown of trust and a weakening of the quality and depth of relationships among persons in the community. Finally, a knowledge of the social and psychological variables correlated with gossip might be of interest to persons in the community aware of the problematic aspects of gossip as a community phenomenon.

Future Directions

In further research on gossip, more behavioural situations need to be sampled. In this way, a greater sampling of the population would allow for a wider range of age levels, educational levels, and economic levels.

As mentioned earlier in this study, only

three of the subjects were over 60 years of age. A larger sample would allow one to test the relationship between age and gossip behaviour. The equipment should be designed so that the E is able to record all conversations in various settings. This would probably mean that in large gatherings, several assistants would record various individual conversations from various vantage points in the gathering. More sophisticated recording equipment would be helpful.

The correlation of behaviour traits from the 16 PF test is determined by the accuracy of assigning persons to the "hi" gossip and "lo" gossip groups. A greater sampling of recorded behavioural settings would have allowed the E to more accurately determine to which group persons should be assigned.

Another factor that should be considered in future research is the use of the tape recorded conversations. It would have been useful to have noted the amount of time spent by each S in non-gossip conversation. This would have allowed the E to compare the amount of time spent in gossip with the amount of

time spent in non-gossip for each S. In the present study, the highest gossiper was determined from the number of seconds spent in gossiping. It might be worth considering the highest gossiper in terms of the amount of time spent in gossip in relation to the amount of time spent in non-gossip.

The present study was correlational in nature and identified several variables. Future controlled experimental studies may seek to isolate and discover causal factors giving rise to these correlational relationships in homogeneous social groups.

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APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF GOSSIP TIME AND CONVERSATION TIME
IN TENTHS OF A SECOND FOR ALL TAPED SITUATIONS

SITUATION	AMOUNT OF GOSSIP TIME (Sec.)	AMOUNT OF CONVERSATION TIME (Sec.)
1	464.80	8700.00
2	135.10	5400.00
3	40.20	8100.00
4	619.30	3600.00
5	635.70	9000.00
Total	1895.10	34800.00

APPENDIX B

AMOUNT OF GOSSIP TIME IN TENTHS OF A SECOND FOR
EACH S

SITUATIONS

	1	2	3	4	5
<u>S</u>					
8	61.90				
9	50.10				
10	248.90				
11	73.30				
14	2.40				
2		57.60			
5		37.90			
4			32.40		
12			2.10		
3				528.80	166.00
1					56.20
6					120.10
7					220.90
13					9.00

APPENDIX C

SUMMARY OF GOSSIP TIME IN TENTHS OF A SECOND
FOR EACH MOTIVATIONAL CATEGORY

CATEGORY	AMOUNT OF TIME (Sec.)	NUMBER OF TIMES
Source of information	63.40	
Recreational "chit-chat"	1,607.88	
Wish to identify with group		11
Cathartic	192.60	
Wish fulfillment	95.70	
Total gossip time identified	1,959.58	

APPENDIX D

SUMMARY OF GOSSIP TIME IN TENTHS OF A SECOND
FOR EACH THEME OF GOSSIP

TOPIC	SITUATION	AMOUNT OF TIME (Sec.)
Financial	#1,4	258.20
Individual's disposition	#1,2,4,5	567.40
Individual's moral life	#1,2,4,5	399.50
Individual's observable behaviour	#1,2,3,4,5	1,188.70
Individual's physical appearance	#1,2,3,4	240.30
Individual's achievement or lack of it	#2,3,4,5	679.50
Total gossip time identified		3,333.60

APPENDIX E

STEN SCORES FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY FACTORS ON 16 PF TEST

"Lo" Gossip Group

FACTORS

<u>S</u>	A	B	C	E	F	G	H	I	L	M	N	O	Q ₁	Q ₂	Q ₃	Q ₄	Extraversion	Anxiety	Tough Poise	Independence
17	3	5	3	5	3	5	1	3	5	4	6	9	5	8	4	8	1.7	6.1	3.8	4.5
18	5	4	2	4	1	7	1	7	7	5	7	10	7	7	4	8	1.9	10.0	2.5	5.0
19	5	6	4	5	2	6	2	2	5	4	4	5	1	4	4	10	4.4	7.9	4.7	3.2
20	2	10	6	6	1	5	6	7	4	8	10	7	1	8	5	6	1.4	5.6	6.5	5.4
21	8	9	5	3	4	4	3	5	2	9	7	8	6	8	4	8	2.8	7.2	1.0	5.4
22	9	3	5	7	6	6	10	4	5	8	2	5	2	2	8	7	9.2	5.1	5.3	6.0
23	3	2	1	8	5	2	7	8	10	8	5	7	5	6	2	6	5.4	7.1	5.7	7.6
24	6	4	9	4	4	6	5	4	5	6	5	5	5	4	5	2	4.8	3.3	5.4	4.7
25	5	5	4	1	5	7	5	3	3	9	6	8	5	7	5	8	3.2	7.1	2.5	3.9
26	5	2	3	3	3	5	4	6	5	6	5	6	4	4	7	8	4.2	7.3	4.3	4.2
27	3	3	10	9	6	4	9	4	8	3	8	5	7	2	4	8	8.0	5.6	7.8	5.1
37	5	10	3	1	5	6	3	6	7	5	10	7	3	6	6	9	3.4	8.6	7.0	2.6

APPENDIX F

STEN SCORES FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY FACTORS ON 16 PF TEST

"Hi" Gossip Group

FACTORS

<u>S</u>	A	B	C	E	F	G	H	I	L	M	N	O	Q ₁	Q ₂	Q ₃	Q ₄	Extraversion	Anxiety	Tough Poise	Independence
1	8	4	9	4	6	7	6	5	1	4	4	9	2	7	6	8	5.8	6.6	5.7	2.1
2	5	9	10	3	5	5	5	7	4	9	5	5	6	4	8	5	4.8	2.0	5.5	5.8
3	9	6	4	3	5	7	7	7	4	1	6	6	4	7	5	4	5.1	5.7	2.1	2.8
4	6	2	6	3	5	4	4	5	8	8	3	8	5	7	4	6	4.1	6.5	5.3	5.1
5	8	4	4	7	9	4	3	5	9	8	7	7	5	4	3	9	7.0	8.1	4.9	5.8
6	7	3	4	3	6	5	5	3	7	2	8	7	6	7	6	9	5.4	8.2	6.8	3.5
7	5	8	5	6	6	6	6	3	4	4	1	8	5	5	5	5	6.1	6.0	5.5	4.6
8	6	2	2	2	6	7	4	3	6	6	10	9	3	7	3	7	3.7	8.6	4.4	2.7
9	8	5	6	5	5	6	5	3	5	4	6	5	2	5	2	8	6.0	6.8	6.1	3.2
10	2	6	2	1	5	7	4	6	7	6	9	7	5	5	4	9	3.4	8.7	4.6	3.4
11	6	5	3	1	3	4	4	4	1	3	7	6	4	6	6	4	2.8	5.3	4.7	1.7
12	7	2	6	4	7	7	5	3	6	7	5	6	4	5	4	6	6.4	6.0	6.2	4.2
34	7	5	1	2	2	5	3	4	10	6	5	9	6	4	2	8	4.2	9.9	4.1	4.3
35	3	5	4	1	6	10	1	6	3	5	8	6	3	7	6	4	2.0	6.0	1.9	2.3
36	3	6	1	6	3	4	3	4	6	7	7	7	3	8	4	6	2.1	7.4	4.7	6.0