

COLLECTIVE BEHAVIOR AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

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The Collective Behavior of Fads: The Characteristics, Effects, and Career of Streaking

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REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

... Fads—a nontraditional preoccupation by diffuse collectivities on a circumscribed object or process are often considered as a form of collective behavior. Beginning with Park and Burgess (1924), fads have been listed as a substantive topic of interest for the field of collective behavior (e.g., Dawson and Gettys 1929; Turner and Killian 1957; Lang and Lang 1968; Lofland 1981). Yet, fads are seriously understudied. Although specific discussions of them abound, no one has presented a systematic conceptual and theoretical statement about them. We organized the major ideas on fads according to how they are identified, the effects of participation in fads, and their careers. Three themes focus on how to identify fads, one centers on the effect of participation, and five on their careers. We then test these themes with information on the fad of streaking.

In the last two decades, a number of ideas on collective behavior have been discarded and new ones have taken their place. These ideas concern panic flight, rioting crowds, participation in crowds, emergent behavior in natural disasters, and social-movement mobilization. This paper further revises our understanding of collective behavior by examining a prominent fad and ques-

tioning dominant social science definitions of it as homogeneous, odd, novel, nonutilitarian collective behavior, spread by imitation or the activation of the latent tendencies of people. For heuristic purposes, we use the emergent norm conceptual framework in collective-behavior theory, which emphasizes similarities and continuities between collective behavior and institutionalized social life and documents the emergence of new norms, values, social relations and communication patterns in the social organization of fads (Turner and Killian 1987). This theoretical framework models the spread of fads, not as contagion or convergence behavior, but as instances of innovation diffusion. It also supports our hypothesis that fads are heterogeneous expressions of social life and, like all other forms of social life, have histories, multiple effects, and meaningful normative constraints.

Descriptive Characteristics of Fads

(1) *Homogeneity*. Frequently cited as a major feature of fads is the idea that fad behavior is homogeneous in different times and places (e.g., Turner and Killian 1957, p. 207; Sebald 1968, p. 219; Lofland 1981, p. 445). (2) *Novelty*. Fads are

presumed to involve novelty (e.g., Davis 1949, p. 79; Lang and Lang 1961, p. 526; Fairchild 1965, p. 113) and new behavior that differs from existing routines. This idea first introduced by Ross (1915, p. 80) persists in the notion that fads have no histories (e.g., Blumer 1968, p. 344; but see Klapp 1972, p. 308). (3) *Oddness*. Fads seem to be odd by existing cultural norms. They evoke social disapproval because those not involved in them perceive fads as ridiculous, dangerous, immoral, bizarre, if not deviant behavior (e.g., Davis 1949, p. 79; Jolly 1967, p. 14; Blumer 1968, p. 276; Lofland 1981, p. 445). Earlier writers saw fads as irresponsible or irrational (e.g., Bernard 1926, p. 546; Sapir 1931, p. 139; Davis 1949, p. 79).

Effects of Participation

(4) *Nonutilitarian Behavior*. Irrespective of the reasons people participate in fads the literature portrays fad behavior as nonutilitarian and lacking in consequentiality for their participants (e.g., LaPiere 1938, p. 177; Smelser 1962: Brown 1965, p. 719; Klapp 1972, p. 314; Lofland 1981, p. 445). This is often attributed to the content areas in which fads occur. The words *frivolous* and *superficial* are frequently used by earlier and later writers to refer to fads, while few writers argue that fad behavior occurs in all areas of social life and deserves serious consideration (e.g., Bernard 1926, p. 545; Turner and Killian 1972, p. 130).

Career of Fads

(5) *Suddenness*. Fads appear suddenly and are unexpected. They are said to be the result of impulse and are perceived as not involving calculated acts or deliberate adoption, but as spontaneous caprice (e.g., Gold 1964, p. 256; Blumer 1969, p. 276; Lofland 1981, p. 445). (6) *Rapid Spread*. Fads spread rapidly and, unlike fashions that diffuse downward, originate in any social stratum (e.g., Doob 1952, p. 386; Lang and Lang 1961, p. 486; Fairchild 1965, p. 113). Fads are

limited to a small proportion of the population than are fashions (Davis 1949, p. 179). Some writers believe adolescents are particularly vulnerable to becoming involved in fads (e.g., Sebald 1968), although most emphasize that fads will spread only in certain segments of the population. (7) *Quick Acceptance and Short-Lived*. Fads obtain rapid acceptance and popularity. They peak quickly, with a rapid acceleration in the rate of adoption (e.g., Blumer 1968, p. 344). The most frequent generalization about fads is that they are short-lived (e.g., LaPiere 1938, p. 187; Klapp 1972, p. 312; Lofland 1981, p. 445; Brown 1965, p. 717; Turner and Killian 1972, p. 129). Once they pass they are gone forever.

Convergence and Contagion

Analytically, the spread of fads is interpreted as a form of imitation or manifestation of latent tendencies (for criticisms of these approaches, see Turner 1960; Milgram and Toch 1969). The latent or *convergence* explanation of the spread of fads has taken different forms. Doob (1952, p. 396) states that "innovations become fads only when they are perceived by people and when they satisfy some predispositions." Other writers (Blumer 1968, p. 342) suggest that fads, like fashions, "may be ways of rediscovering the self through novel yet socially sanctioned departures from prevailing social forms." LaPiere's (1938, pp. 463-64) emphasis on tension that is felt by collectivities of people and released during the *spree* continues to have resonance, as in Rose's (1982, pp. 193-94) *revels*. Better known is Smelser's (1962) idea of the function that positive wish fulfillment has in the *craze*, in which large numbers of people share predispositions in the form of anxieties, ambiguities, and strains that are resolved through the development and resolution of a collective fantasy.

The imitation or *contagion* explanation is one of the oldest in the literature (e.g., Dawson and Gettys 1929). The contagious spread of fad-dish behavior is caused by suggestion, imitation, identification and circular interaction, and rumor

(e.g., Young 1944, p. 327; Gold 1964, pp. 256–57), which amplified by the mass media (Miller and Borhek 1978), creates impulsive and highly emotional crowd behavior.

The Model of Adoption

The emergent norm framework endorses a *social-interaction* view of the spread of fads. From this newer perspective, fads, like other forms of collective behavior, occur in novel, unexpected, or “out of the ordinary” circumstances in which people are forced to create meanings to orient their behavior. They do this while interacting with others in the absence of preestablished procedures for coordinating actions and identifying members, leaders, and shared objectives. This emergent “definition of the situation” limits and justifies the behavior of the collectivity and is changed by it (Turner and Killian 1987, p. 3).

The emergence of shared rules, meanings, and emotions in collective behavior depends on communication and cues in the situation rather than on physiological arousal. The diffusion of fads follows preexisting networks of relations and involves learning behavior from others (Perry and Pugh 1978, pp. 58–75). As Sullivan (1977, p. 50) has pointed out, research indicates that, as predicted by the emergent-norm framework, participants have diverse motives, goals, and patterns of involvement. This suggests that participation in fads does not call for special sociopsychological explanations.

This emergent-norm perspective informs our effort to develop a macrolevel innovation adoption model of streaking. Here, the probability of adopting the innovation is affected by changes in the context in which individuals learn and accept an emerging collective definition of the situation.

We hypothesize that five contextual components affect the emergent definitions of the situation and the probability of the occurrence of faddish behavior in the schools at risk of adoption. These include the institutional prestige of the neighboring schools that previously experienced streaking; the severity of social control

used by those schools; the accuracy of the mass media reports of the streaking events; the heterogeneity and complexity of previous streaking events; and the sociocultural heterogeneity of the schools at risk of adoption.

This adoption model assumes temporal dependence among fad episodes, so that earlier events affect the occurrence and characteristics of later events. This assumption is also made in the analysis of social movements (Oliver 1985, p. 17) and *diffusion of innovations* (e.g., Rogers and Shoemaker 1971). In both fads and social movements, individuals, not groups, typically decide whether to participate. However a macro-level explanation of fad adoption is possible because individuals decide in interaction with others in a social context in which the emerging collective definition of the situation importantly determines the person’s course of action.

We derive five predictions from the model of adoption:

School Prestige. The higher the social prestige of the *relevant* significant schools that previously experienced the fad, the greater the probability that other schools will also adopt the innovation. We assume that schools belong to larger systems of social stratification that affect what goes on in them. This systemic nature of the units in which collective behavior may occur has been noted more extreme versions of this view, the universality of fads is said to result from the fact that “they have a natural root in human nature” (Blumer 1968, pp. 344–45).

We endorse the alternative view that fads are rooted in specific social organizations. This view is voiced only occasionally and is in the diffusion of social-movement activities (Oberschall 1980, p. 52). In the present context, the nearer and higher the prestige of the schools that experienced the fad, the greater the probability that other schools will follow suit.

Sanctions. The greater the sanctions and controls that innovating schools practiced toward fad participants, the *lower* the probability that other

schools will follow suit. This is because, as in social movements, "diffusion occurs partly as a result of a reassessment by potential activists and participants and by authorities of the chances of success and the costs of collective action after the outcomes of similar collective action elsewhere become known to them" (Oberschall 1980, p. 52).

Mass Media. The more accurately mass media covered significant schools that experienced the fad, the greater the probability of subsequent adoption. The dissemination of information about streaking events occurred through various means such as visits of students to other campuses, personal and telephone conversations, and letters, putting students from one university or college in touch with those at other schools. The accuracy of the mass media coverage of previous streaking episodes also affected the sort of information about the fad that prospective adopters received (Hirsch 1972).

Complexity and Heterogeneity. The greater the complexity and heterogeneity of previous streaking events, the greater the probability that schools will adopt the fad. The innovation is more likely to be adopted when the complexity of the previous incidents of the fad in neighboring schools is greater. The complexity of streaking incidents is a stimulus for potential adopters. For example, if many males and females, students and nonstudents, streaked repeatedly day and night, on and off campus, then many categories of persons in other nearby schools could identify with the faddish behavior. As a result, the events are no longer performed by only the rowdy but become acceptable to many potential adopters. Similarly, heterogeneity *among* streaking events in different schools increases the accessibility of the cultural innovation to potential adopters.

The importance of the degree of complexity of previous events for modeling the diffusion of collective-behavior forms is recognized by a number of scholars. For instance, Oberschall (1980, p. 48) argues that the success of collective action is measured by its impact on public opin-

ion, which is a function of the number of participants in the episode. The greater the number of participants, the greater the impact on public opinion, the greater the success of collective action, and the higher the probability of subsequent collective action. Similarly, McPhail (1984), focusing on more elementary forms of collective behavior, states that extraordinary behavioral configurations have to be audible and visible to be recognized and considered before they can be adopted or rejected. Extraordinary behavior that is recurrent, widespread, very audible, and visible is more likely to be noted and considered.

The degree of heterogeneity *among* previous streaking events also affects the probability that schools will adopt the fad. Adoption is more likely when previous streaking events differ widely in their complexity, since they would offer a wider range of available adoptive-action patterns. The risk of adoption increases when previous incidents of streaking occur in a variety of ways and settings, individually and collectively, so that potential adopters have many different "scripts" for participating in the fad. Alternatively, the adoption of an innovation ends not only because fewer people are practicing it, with the consequent decline in its value to prospective adopters, but also partly because the faddish idea is exhausted and cannot generate new behavioral scripts; homogeneity sets in (Oberschall 1980, p. 51; Turner and Killian 1957, p. 211).

School Heterogeneity. We test the effect of social setting on the adoption of fads by hypothesizing that the greater the sociocultural heterogeneity of the schools at risk of adoption, the greater the probability of adoption. Social structure is generally down-played in the sociological literature as an important influence on the occurrence and complexity of faddish events. Fads, unlike fashion, for example, are believed to occur in any type of society, traditional or modern (Gold 1964, p. 257; Blumer 1968, p. 344). In applied primarily to modern societies with complex mass-communication systems (e.g., Meyersohn and Katz 1957; Jolly 1967). Accord-

ing to this view, a fad is more likely to occur and elicit more complex and heterogeneous behavior, the greater the level of social and cultural heterogeneity of social organizations (Smelser 1962, p. 175): Two facilitating factors are increasing level of heterogeneity of the norms and values governing social interaction in social organizations and increasing levels of social mobility and social differentiation of social organizations.

The sociocultural context of collective behavior supplies resources for organizing it and helps define the situation as one that may or may not be rewarding for participation in fads. The greater the heterogeneity of the social organization, the greater the freedom the individual has from overarching hegemonic value systems, the greater the opportunity and desire of people to experiment and try the new, the more likely that some people will have interests that correspond to the innovation developing elsewhere, and the greater are the mobilizable resources available for the adoption of the innovation (Mohr 1978). Blau and Slaughter (1971) have shown that student demonstrations are most likely to occur in large academic institutions than in small ones.

We have identified nine major themes in the relevant literature concerning the characteristics, effects, and career of fads. From our model of adoption, we derived five predictions. Do these themes and predictions stand up in our study of streaking?

DATA AND METHODS

The data are derived from a national study of the streaking fad that appeared in the spring of 1974 (Taylor and Quarantelli 1974), which concentrated on institutions of higher education, since they were the major settings where streaking events occurred (e.g., Evans and Miller 1975; Anderson 1977). Some of the data were obtained from a mail survey of all (1,543) colleges and universities in the continental United States with more than 1,000 students. A 24-item, mostly forced-choice questionnaire was mailed to the deans of student affairs or equivalent officials. . . .

RESULTS

Characteristics

Homogeneity of Streaking Events. The established view predicts that one category or cluster accounts for most streaking events because their characteristics would be similar. We reexamine this assumption of homogeneous behavior. While at one level of analysis, streakers do the same thing everywhere (i.e., take off their clothes in public), the emphasis on homogeneity ignores variation in fad behaviors and in the social relationships among participants. The range of this variation is captured by the two polar unitary concepts of mass and compact crowd (Blumer 1964; 1969), which highlight the continuum of sociocultural complexity of streaking behaviors and relationships. Following conventional usage, we distinguish mass from compact crowd. In the crowd, the participants interact with one another, define and orient their joint action by communicating, and develop a division of labor and a common goal to guide their behavior.

We assume that faddish behavior varies in its degree of homogeneity (Lange and Lang 1961, p. 179; Landecker 1981). A fad is composed of many spatially and temporally separate incidents that generate and reflect to a greater or lesser extent the new emergent norms and values that guide and justify the enactment of the new social relations and use of material culture characterizing the fad. We should be able to order incidents in a fad in terms of their degree of sociocultural complexity.

This alternative formulation implies that different subtypes of streaking events appear, which order themselves on a continuum from the most fleeting, inchoate, and masslike manifestations to its most complex, developed, compact crowdlike state. This predicted ordering of the clusters was called a complexity continuum (cf. Lang and Lang 1961, p. 197; Anderson 1977, p. 224).

The attributes used to construct the clusters are an important set of conceptual dimensions of the social organization of fads. As an ideal type, the most complex or highly crystallized social

structure would involve hundreds of men and women, both students and nonstudents, streaking together over extended periods of time by themselves and in groups of various sizes, motivated to establish or to break a school record, and engaging in mooning. The event would occur during both day and night, on and off campus, and in many different locales on campus. The least complex social structure would have the reverse set of characteristics. None of the clusters duplicated these two ideal extremes. Nevertheless, the results of the cluster analysis support the prediction that there are several types of streaking events that can be ordered according to level of complexity.

Cluster 1 is the least complex form of social organization. It represents very fleeting, masslike instances of streaking. Sixty-nine percent of the events in this cluster involved only one or two persons. In fact, in 84 percent of the cases, only one person engaged in streaking at any given time. In almost all (98 percent) of these instances, males and females streaked separately and nonstudents did not participate (91 percent). Almost three-quarters (72 percent) lasted only one day, and most (95 percent) did not involve establishing a record for mooning (99 percent). The great majority of events (80 percent) occurred only during the day, on campus (95 percent), and in fewer than two different places on campus (97 percent).

Cluster 12 differs most from cluster 1. It is the most complex form of social organization found in this research; 73 percent of its streaking events involved 100 or more males and females (88 percent), with students and nonstudents streaking together (68 percent). Of these events, 97 percent were lengthy (about a week or more) and characterized by mixture of acting units (91 percent). Sixty-four percent involved breaking or establishing a school record, as well as mooning (73 percent). Almost all occurred both at day and night (94 percent), on and off campus (76 percent), and in three or four places on campus (82 percent). The remaining 10 clusters fall between these two extremes.

The distribution of the complexity variable has a boundary region, composed of clusters 6

and 7, and two opposite areas. One of these areas is made up of clusters 8 through 12 and accounts for 25 percent of the streaking events. Very complex streaking events are quite rare; cluster 12 accounts for 5 percent of all streaking events. The other area of decreasing complexity is formed by clusters 5 through 1 and accounts for 62 percent of all the streaking events. Highly uncrystallized streaking events are quite common; one-fifth of all streaking events are in cluster 1, the least complex cluster we observed. These streaking episodes most commonly resembled the mass behavior that previously has been assumed to characterize fads.

Equally important, however, many streaking events were highly heterogeneous. At first glance, streaking behavior appears to be homogeneous, acted out by members of a mass. Some of the events labeled streaking do fit this definition, but a majority do not. Despite limitations inherent in the simple act of appearing and running round in the nude, there was substantial variation in how the act itself was organized. Contrary to traditional views, which tend to emphasize the similarity and homogeneity of fad activity, streaking showed considerable variation and a wide range of innovations. There were important differences in the way the behavior was organized and enacted on different campuses (see below).

Novelty. The characterization of fad behavior as novel and odd is also suspect. The duration of the streaking fad considerably predated and postdated public mass media attention. The behavior had been institutionalized on some campuses for decades prior to 1974, and streaking incidents were still emerging in some schools months and even years after they had stopped elsewhere. Newspaper articles document that running in the nude, while perhaps not commonly known as streaking, was widely practiced before and after the 1974 incidents (Anderson 1977, p. 227; Evans and Miller 1975, p. 402). The long-term existence of the behavior makes the origin of the fad difficult to determine. Multiple claimants to creatorship of streaking exist (e.g., on Long Is-

land during the American Revolutionary War, by American students vacationing in Mexico in the spring of 1965, at the University of Maryland, Whitworth College, University of Colorado at Boulder, Southern Methodist University, Air Force Academy, in the San Fernando Valley, in Lakewood, California, in Westchester, New Jersey). It is probable that streaking, like other fads, has multiple origins. Streaking was not novel to some segments of the population. There is always a pool of potentially faddish behaviors practiced by individuals or small groups in society (cf. Aronson 1952; Miller 1985, p. 154), and, like social problems (Blumer 1971), social movements (Lofland 1977), and fashion (Meyersohn and Katz 1957), only a few fads are legitimized, becoming part of universal culture.

Oddness. In most instances, streaking was defined in the student subculture and by school social-control agencies as harmless fun (e.g., Grimes, Pinhey, and Zurcher 1977, p. 1226; Anderson 1977, p. 225; Evans and Miller 1975, p. 408), acceptable in certain locations on campus and not in others (e.g., it was generally taboo to streak in classes where tests were being given). Moreover, the nudity involved was considered nonsexual by students and social-control agents. A new set of norms emerged, creating the context of the activity. This symbolic redefinition of fads is an important precondition to ensure their legitimacy; they must be perceived as odd, but not too odd. Otherwise, public disorder, rather than faddish behavior, occurs. Modern-day fads do not exhibit the complete social transgression of the festivals of antiquity; they are not "full and blasphemous experience" (Duvignaud 1980, p. 15).

Streaking was interpreted as deviant behavior on some campuses, usually by school officials. In some of these instances, stiff sanctions led to conflicts, which in a dozen cases produced major riots (Evans and Miller 1975, p. 407). While we do not have sufficient information to study this issue, we conjecture that there is an element of play in activity fads such as streaking (Heckel 1978, p. 147), where reactions occur

within the limits imposed by the emergent consensus. The game ends when the lines are breached. This interpretation supports Brown and Goldin's (1973, p. 131) emphasis on the transactional character of social control in instances of faddish behavior. Social-control agents adjust their actions to often-conflicting expectations of powerful constituencies (Anderson 1977, p. 232).

Effects of Participation

Nonutilitarian behavior. Streaking often had noticeable and important consequences. Like cults (Quarantelli and Wenger 1973) and fashions (Simmel 1957), participation generated new feelings of cohesion and separateness. Streaking was consequential at different levels of analysis. Apart from the obvious fun, streaking was used by small groups and residents of dormitories on campus to compete for status (e.g., Heckel 1978, p. 147). Interschool competition was also quite common (Anderson 1977, p. 223), increasing solidarity among the students. It forced television networks, school administrations, and police departments to develop new policies toward streakers. City councils and state legislatures throughout the country reacted by passing new laws on indecent public exposure and lewd and offensive behavior. Streaking was seen as a threat by dedicated nudists who worried about its impact on public opinion about nudism. Streaking was widely acknowledged in the press as an act of intergenerational symbolic protest, influenced by the then-new Woodstock sexual morality of the 60s and 70s. Deaths occurred in streaking-related accidents. Tass publicized streaking as yet another indication of the rebelliousness and unhappiness of young people in "crisis-plagued" capitalist societies. Finally, streaking had economic consequences: J.C. Penney and Sears Roebuck canceled the marketing of new lines of tennis shoes with "streaks" labels and apparel manufacturers began selling streaking medallions, uniforms, and for fashion-minded women, costly belts made of golden elk skin and pheasant feathers. It is clear that even an activity fad like

streaking has noticeable effects on society. Product fads such as the citizen's band radio fad of 1976 and 1977 have even greater impact (Miller 1985, p. 141; see also Skolnik 1978). More broadly, the consequentiality of fads is documented in the history of technology; significant technological innovations (e.g., the bicycle) often appear as fads before they become permanent elements of the culture.

Career of Fads

Descriptive Model of Diffusion. The results support the prevailing descriptive model of the career of fads, which assumes a sudden, rapid, widespread, short-lived diffusion (e.g., Miller 1985, pp. 144-48). As shown in Figure 1, the streaking fad can be represented by a positively

skewed, rapidly accelerating slope, a brief but unstable asymptote, and a precipitous decline.

Figure 1 illustrates the overall frequency of occurrence of streaking events between February and April 1974. The average daily number of newspaper articles and television reports on streaking events in institutions of higher education in the United States is also plotted. Ten streaking events had occurred by the end of February. This increased to 55 events during the first three days of March. The highest average daily frequencies occurred during the next five days (March 4-8). This peak was caused in part by the March 5 report on streaking by the three major television networks. Daily frequencies of streaking events then dropped considerably, averaging four by the middle of April. It must be stressed, however, that the fad behavior did not disappear

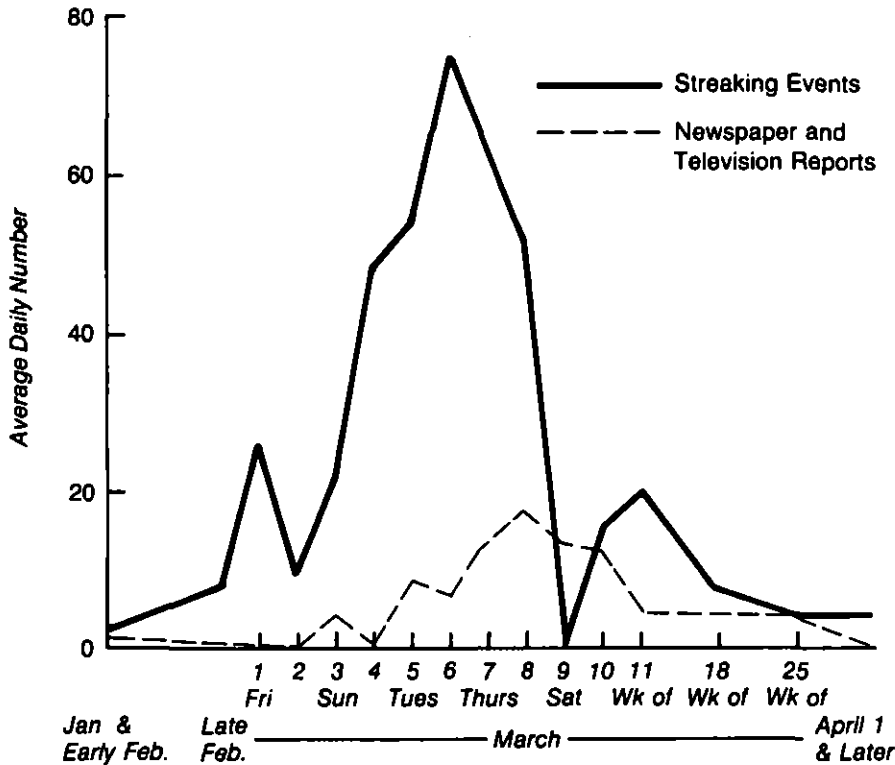


FIGURE 1 Incidents and Newspaper and Television Reports of Streaking

altogether. Schools experienced streaking incidents both before and after the streaking fad.

Our initial speculation was that, as with fictitious riots and imaginary panics, a discrepancy would exist between the events and the reporting of the events. This was not the case; the line for the mass media reports resembles the line for the events, although it trails them.

The sudden increase in the frequency of streaking events shown in Figure 1 was not solely a result of individuals experiencing an impulse to streak. Rather, a great deal of planning and organization went into the streaking events that we observed or for which documentary evidence could be obtained. Some division of labor was nearly always present; streaking without an audience has no meaning (McFadden 1974). Most cases involved organizers, actors, spectators, reporters and TV camera crews, and social-control personnel (e.g., school administrators, police) in the compact collectivities. The act of streaking was only the surface manifestation of pre- and post-group interactions that took many forms.

Streaking often involved calculated, planned actions by small groups like fraternities, sororities, or residents of floors or wings of particular dormitories (Anderson 1977, p. 227). The most active core often consisted of members of such preexisting social networks. Conscious selection governed time and place of the event. Usually, during the large-scale, highly crystallized instances we observed a quasi-scheduling of the behavior occurred as the result of informal understandings among social control agents and the organizers of the collective behavior. Some events were preplanned, to the extent that explicit negotiations about the organization and limits of allowable behavior took place between social control agents and groups of potential participants.

Actual manifestors of the behavior were chosen ahead of time. Personal skills, such as the ability to run fast, ski, ride motorcycles, or parachute, were needed. There was also a "streaking uniform," consisting of white tennis shoes, and ski caps, stocking caps, or Halloween masks. In many instances, streakers had a supporting

cast, ranging from "transportation corps" and "musical bands" to "public relations agents" spreading the word about the forthcoming attractions. An anthem, "The Stripper," became quite popular.

The Model of Adoption

Single-Variable Models. Results of proportional-hazard linear modeling of the adoption of the fad of streaking are presented in two sections: the bivariate relationships, showing the effect of each predictor on the risk of streaking, and the overall stepwise reduced multivariate model, to assess the relative importance of the predictors. (See endnote.)

As predicted by our model, greater prestige of schools previously experiencing streaking increased the probability of adoption ($R = -.13, p < .0001$) (cf. Evans and Miller 1975, p. 406).

The variables in the second component contradicted our predictions; the greater the social reactions and sanctions evoked by previous streaking episodes, the higher the probability of subsequent adoption. Results show that the risk of streaking increased as police took action against the streakers, as administrators received complaints, took positions, or made statements against streakers, and as greater administrative punishments were meted out to streakers. The effect of sanctions was to increase the probability of adoption of the streaking fad in schools still at risk; the deterrent effect postulated in the adoption model was not observed. The exception to this generalization is the finding that the greater the extent of negative reaction of students in campuses that had experienced streaking, the greater the people's unwillingness to adopt the fad.

Results support the prediction that the probability of adoption increased when previous streaking events were correctly reported by student and local radio and television stations. Likewise, predictions for the fourth component of the model are supported. The risk of adoption increases with greater levels of complexity of pre-

vious streaking events ($R = .20, p < .0001$) and with greater degrees of heterogeneity among these events ($R = .09, p < .0001$).

Table 1 also supports the hypothesis that the greater the sociocultural heterogeneity of the schools at risk of adoption, the greater the probability of adoption. The probability of schools experiencing streaking incidents increased directly with size of student bodies ($R = .09, p < .0001$) and whether the schools at risk were universities and colleges rather than technical institutes or professional schools ($R = -.08, p < .0001$). Moreover, the greater the number of fraternities and sororities on campuses, the greater the probability of adoption of the streaking fad ($R = .10, p < .0001$).

Increasing levels of contextual heterogeneity lead to increased levels of complexity. Type of school, size of enrollment, number of fraternities, prestige of school, and social control of the schools were used as indicators of campuses' social and cultural heterogeneity (schools in the sample with predominantly black student bodies, with consequent high level of cultural homogeneity, did not experience streaking events.) Complexity, the dependent variable, is the numeric ordering of the clusters. It varies from 1 (most uncrystallized) to 12 (most crystallized). The mean of complexity for the entire sample of schools is 4.91 (see Table 2).

Seventy-eight percent of the 1,016 schools for which there was information experienced

TABLE 1 Predicting the Risk of Adoption of Streaking Behavior: Single-Variable Models

| PREDICTORS | BETA | CHI-SQUARE | R |
|--|------|------------|------|
| Components 1. Characteristics of sending schools | | | |
| Prestige of schools streaking previously | -.15 | 50 | -.13 |
| Component 2. Societal reactions | | | |
| Reaction of city police | -.37 | 5 | -.03 |
| Reaction of campus police | -.18 | 2 | .00 |
| Reaction of students | -.64 | 14 | -.06 |
| Reaction of faculty | -.01 | 00 | .00 |
| Public position by administration | 1.51 | 75 | .15 |
| Administration-received complaints | 2.05 | 103 | .18 |
| Number of punishments | 1.10 | 45 | .12 |
| Official statement | 1.17 | 36 | .11 |
| Component 3. Mass media coverage | | | |
| Coverage by student newspapers | -.53 | 18 | -.07 |
| Coverage by local city newspapers | -.57 | 36 | -.11 |
| Coverage by local radio and T.V. stations | -.37 | 20 | -.08 |
| Component 4. Characteristics of previous streaking events | | | |
| Degree of complexity | .26 | 122 | .20 |
| Standard deviation of complexity | .14 | 22 | .09 |
| Component 5. Social heterogeneity of schools at risk of adoption | | | |
| Size of student enrollment | .08 | 26 | .09 |
| Type of school | -.18 | 20 | -.08 |
| Number of fraternities | .01 | 30 | .10 |

TABLE 2 Multiple Classification Analysis of Level of Complexity of Streaking Events with Characteristics of Schools as Factors

| FACTORS | N | UNADJUSTED DEVIATION FROM GRAND MEAN ^a | ADJUSTED DEVIATION FROM GRAND MEAN ^b |
|-------------------------------|------|---|---|
| Number of fraternities | | | |
| 1. 0-5 | 429 | -1.18 | -.41 |
| 2. 6-12 | 78 | .06 | -.16 |
| 3. 13-23 | 93 | .64 | .23 |
| 4. 24-40 | 91 | 1.61 | .53 |
| 5. 41-142 | 92 | 3.22 | 1.31 |
| Size of school enrollment | | (.44) | (.17) |
| 1. <4000 | 452 | -.89 | -.35 |
| 2. 4,000-8,000 | 141 | .43 | .37 |
| 3. 8,000-16,000 | 123 | 1.27 | .38 |
| 4. 16,000> | 67 | 2.74 | .85 |
| Prestige of school | | (.34) | (.12) |
| 1. High | 111 | 2.82 | .80 |
| 2. | 295 | .66 | .47 |
| 3. | 105 | -.11 | .39 |
| 4. | 263 | -1.84 | -1.00 |
| 5. Low | 9 | -1.25 | -.45 |
| Type of school | | (.45) | (.21) |
| 1. University | 156 | 2.50 | .58 |
| 2. College | 398 | .04 | .18 |
| 3. Technical institute, other | 23 | -.74 | .15 |
| 4. Professional schools | 6 | -.91 | -1.24 |
| 5. Two-year community college | 167 | -2.19 | -.83 |
| 6. Branch of university | 33 | -.55 | -.56 |
| Social control of school | | (.44) | (.15) |
| 1. Private—secular | 131 | .36 | .08 |
| 2. Private—Catholic | 49 | -.16 | -.51 |
| 3. Private—other religions | 90 | -.27 | -.58 |
| 4. Public | 513 | -.03 | .13 |
| Grand Mean | 4.91 | | (.08) ^c |
| Multiple R^2 | .26 | | |

^a Numbers in parentheses are eta coefficients.

^b Numbers in parentheses are betas (standardized regression coefficients).

^c Significance of $F = .22$.

streaking events. The analysis in Table 2 is limited to these schools and does not predict the probability that streaking would occur. Rather, the hypothesis is that if streaking occurs, the level of complexity of streaking events increases di-

rectly with the heterogeneity of the social organization of the schools.

The results support the prediction that greater sociocultural heterogeneity is associated with greater degree of complexity. Schools with

larger student bodies experienced more complex streaking episodes than smaller schools; schools with higher levels of prestige experienced more complex streaking events than their less prestigious counterparts; universities and colleges had more complex streaking events than other types of schools; and, finally, schools with more fraternities and sororities experienced more complex episodes. Schools with the most fraternities (41 or more) had the highest unadjusted mean complexity score observed (8.13). This finding corroborates Anderson's (1977) observations of the importance of fraternities in streaking. Contextual resources, such as those mobilized by fraternities, are important facilitators of faddish activities. This finding also supports the prediction of emergent-norm theory (Turner and Killian 1987, p. 9) about the importance of preexisting social groupings in collective behavior and is similar to the findings of studies of social-movement dynamics that have shown the importance of mobilizable social and cultural resources, such as those available to preexisting organizations and to friendship and kin networks in the creation of social-movement actions.

Multiple-Variable Reduced Model. Relative statistical importance of the predictors in the adoption model is shown in Table 3; variables that were statistically insignificant at the .01 level are excluded. The overall R is .38.

All five components of the adoption model are represented by the predictors in this reduced multivariate solution (see Table 3). The sign of all but one of the predictors (reaction of campus police) remain unchanged from the bivariate analyses. Reaction of faculty, insignificant in a bivariate context, is significant now; the risk of adoption increases as the reaction of the faculty to the fad becomes more negative. The most powerful predictor of adoption of the fad was the degree of complexity ($R = .17$) of previous

TABLE 3 Predicting the Risk of Adoption of Streaking Behavior: Multiple-Variables Reduced Model

| | BETA | CHI-SQUARE | PARTIAL R |
|--|-------|------------|-------------|
| Prestige of schools streaking previously | -.09 | 7 | -.04 |
| Reaction of campus police | 2.42 | 64 | .14 |
| Reaction of students | -1.30 | 16 | -.07 |
| Reaction of faculty | 1.35 | 40 | .11 |
| Public Position by administration | 1.25 | 19 | .07 |
| Coverage by local city newspapers | -.82 | 35 | -.11 |
| Degree of complexity | .41 | 85 | .17 |
| Size of student enrollment | .05 | 8 | .05 |
| Overall model | | 414 | .38 |

streaking episodes, representing the strength of the stimulus that previous streaking events provided to potential adopters. This was followed in importance by reaction of campus police ($R = .14$), reaction of faculty ($R = .11$), and coverage by local city newspapers ($R = -.11$). These results show that the relative prestige of schools and degree of sociocultural heterogeneity of potential adopter schools are less important components in explaining adoption.

The relative stability of the signs and sizes of the coefficients in the bivariate and multivariate contexts argue against spuriousness. For instance, while it is true that greater sanctions attract more mass media attention, which in turn increases the risk of adoption, both sanctions and mass media have separate, significant effects on adoption. . . .

ENDNOTE

Lagged variables: The variables in components 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the proportional-hazard linear

model of the adoption of streaking are one time period-lagged variables. These variables repre-

sent mean averages computed separately from the schools experiencing streaking for each combination of the states in the country and the 16 time periods under observation. Schools that did not experience streaking constituted the censored cases in the analysis (Allison 1984, pp. 27-29). The test of the adoption model is restricted to states with 38 or more schools in the sample to insure that there would be mean average scores for each time period for each of the states and that there would be sufficient number of cases to make these mean average scores stable. There are 364 schools in this test. The first component in the model of the diffusion of streaking is the institutional prestige of the schools. The second component is represented by eight lagged variables. Two questions ask whether or not campus and city police departments took action against the streakers; two questions ask if the reactions of students and faculty members were mostly positive, mixed or negative; and four questions ask about the reaction of schools administrators. The

third component in the model is represented by three lagged variables that ask if the streaking event was correctly, partly correctly, or incorrectly reported by student newspapers, local newspapers, and local radio and television stations. The fourth component is operationalized by two variables, measuring the level of complexity of streaking events and the standard deviation of this variable. The fifth component in the model is represented by three *nonlagged* variables. The first variable presents information on the size of the student enrollment. It ranges from 1 for schools with enrollments of about 1,000 students, to 17 for schools with more than 30,000 students. The second variable is the type of school, ordered from high to low heterogeneity as follows: universities, colleges, branches of universities, two-year community colleges, technical schools, and professional schools (Carnegie Foundation 1976). The third variable is the number of college fraternities and sororities.

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