

Paper 2 – Due December 7th

Think of the peer groups in your high school. Psychologists theorize that the crowd an adolescent belongs to is partly a cause of his or her behaviors and partly a consequence. In other words, adolescents' behaviors, activities, dress, musical preferences, etc. "tell" them what crowd to join. On the other hand, how adolescents act, think, etc. is affected by the crowd they join.

Use the thesis you developed in class, to explain your own experiences concerning the crowd you belonged to in high school. Now think of evidence that supports your thesis. Be sure to include aspects of media (TV, music, etc.), school classes and extracurricular activities, dress, attitudes, etc. In general, more than one example of each type of effect will be necessary. Your paper should be 3-4 pages, double spaced.

Almost as important as choosing good evidence is being able to articulate WHY your chosen evidence supports your chosen position. Why is your evidence appropriate, relevant, and forceful? Sometimes the value of a piece of evidence is self-evident, but often it's not. For example, some fact might be used to support more than one assertion. You need to be able to say why some point or example supports the position you took. The exercise posted on WebCT (Believing and Doubting) can help. Also, discrediting a counter argument can also be evidence.

Also, you might use the theories discussed in the text and class as they relate to your specific case. Theories help us organize facts. They tell us which evidence to look for and provide a causal explanatory framework for understanding phenomena (like peers and the crowds they join). Theories could be used in this paper to explain a set (or subset) of examples you've chosen. You might choose to use a theory to help organize your ideas. You might even use your case (and its supporting evidence) to evaluate one (or two) of the relevant theories.

Once your paper is written, put some polish on it. Can you reword sentences so that they are more concise? Can you get rid of phrases like "due to the fact that" or "I intend to show that" or "It can be said that," etc. Do you have any misplaced modifiers? Have you used the passive voice inappropriately? Do all of your subjects and verbs agree? How about your subjects and pronouns - "they" and "their" are plural. Check for run-on sentences and sentence fragments. Can you make your ideas clearer? Have you used the thesaurus function on your computer correctly - if you don't know what a word means **for sure**, then **LOOK IT UP** - the alternatives a thesaurus gives don't have identical meaning in all contexts.