

A SOCIOGRAM STUDY OF THE TOP TEN BASKETBALL PLAYERS
OF LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL

by 4589

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
PURPOSE	3
METHODS OF STUDY	3
Top Ten Players - A Summary of Class Standing and Offices Held	4
Basketball Roster	6
Sociogram "A"	7
Sociogram "B"	11
Sociogram "C"	14
Sociogram "D"	17
Sociogram "E"	19
Sociogram "F"	21
Sociogram "G"	23
Sociogram "H"	25
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	27
BIBLIOGRAPHY	29
APPENDIX	30

INTRODUCTION

This paper consists of a sociogram study on the top ten basketball players of Lincoln High School, Lincoln, Kansas. A sociogram may be defined as "A social map or diagram showing interaction, usually of mutual attraction or antagonism among group members."

Throughout the paper the distinction of varsity, other basketball players, and non-ball players may be made as follows: Varsity players' names appear in all capital letters, non-varsity ("B" team) players' names are underlined, and non-ball players in the usual typewritten form.

The community of Lincoln itself is located on the cross-roads of Highways 18 and 14 in north central Kansas. It has a population of approximately 2,000 people. The public high school, located in Lincoln, is a unified school which includes students of Barnard, a small community of 225 people located fifteen miles northeast of Lincoln, and Beverly, a farming settlement of 200 people located ten miles east, as well as Lincoln and the surrounding farm area.

Lincoln High School, U.S.D. 298, has a total enrollment of 182 in the top three grades and is classified by the Kansas State High School Activity Association as a "2A" high school. The ninth grade has an enrollment of 51 students. Of the total 233 students enrolled at the high school, approximately 30 come from Barnard and 30 from Beverly; the rest live in Lincoln.

Perhaps the most unique characteristic of the Lincoln,

Kansas community is the existence of two distinct ethnic groups--the German Lutheran group south of Lincoln, and the Danish Lutheran group northwest of Lincoln. In the past, each of these groups was sufficient to itself and there was a minimum of social intermingling with the rest of the community. They did, however, share certain characteristics which permeated and affected the entire community, and particularly the school. They were farmers--religious, industrious, frugal, and proud. Their well-kept farmsteads also reflected a basic prosperity. They each retained and nurtured the respect of their ancestors for the necessity of a sound education. The youth of the German group attended a parochial elementary school, and when they came into high school, it was for the sole purpose of learning, not for social contacts. The school was good because that was demanded of it. With the passing of time, the clannish aspects of these groups have virtually disappeared, but their basic philosophies of life have continued to be reflected in their daily living and do yet affect the entire community.

The community is based upon an agricultural economy, and the decline in the farm population has been keenly felt. The major industry is the Quartzite Stone Company, and there are three small industries.

As in most rural communities, Lincoln High School plays a vital part in the social and cultural life of the citizens. The community avidly follows the fortunes of the athletic teams. The music department of the high school has contributed significantly to the cultural life of the community through its concerts

and has brought patrons together working for the school in such groups as the Band Boosters Club. The speech and drama department offers plays and debates which are well supported. There is a close identity between the community and the school.

The school endeavors to enable its students to know themselves in relation to the society of which they are a part, and to equip them with knowledge that will enable them to contribute to that society with dignity as a worthy citizen.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this sociogram study is to show through the use of eight questionnaires whether, among Lincoln High School varsity players, social relationships take precedence over recognition of skill and achievement as requirements for team formation. In other words, the sociogram is designed to reveal whether these basketball players are influenced more by their likes and dislikes of other students and by their social groupings outside of school and practice time, or whether ability and performance in athletics are the most important criteria considered by the players themselves for playing basketball as team members.

METHODS OF STUDY

This study came about as a result of a conversation with George Stephens, the Lincoln High School basketball coach. Mr. Stephens expressed an interest and concern in knowing what effect social contacts and groupings might have on the attitude

of players on a basketball team toward each other, and the forming of a team itself. With this goal in mind, eight questions were devised and these questions were answered by the first ten basketball players on the squad. In order to draw sound conclusions from the grams, information was gathered on the boys themselves from the school records (academic standing, and class offices held), the community of Lincoln, and the surrounding areas included in the school. After the questionnaires were filled out by the varsity players, sociograms were drawn to clarify the information so that conclusions could be reached on the subject chosen.

Top Ten Players
(A Summary of Class Standing and Offices Held)

The ten basketball players chosen for this sociogram were the first ten basketball players on Coach George Stephens' 1969-70 basketball team. The basketball team had a record of 22 wins and only 2 losses. They were champions in the Northern Kansas League and won the first place trophy at the League, District, and Regional tournaments. The team also went on to the State tournament at Hutchinson, only to lose to Ellinwood in the first round of play. This group is the first group of students that started high school together as freshmen. This is the fourth year of unification at Lincoln. The ten players are:

JIM HARLOW--Jim is from Barnard and ranked eighth in his class of 57 seniors. He was student class president of Lincoln High School.

DALEN RATHBUN--Dalen is from Lincoln and ranked fourteenth in his class of 57 seniors. He was president of the Letterman Club and vice-president of the senior class. Dalen was also co-captain of the football team.

TERRY KING--Terry is from Barnard and ranked fifty-fourth in his class of 57 seniors. He was treasurer of the Letterman Club. Terry is the older brother of TIM KING.

DON LEWICK--Don is from Lincoln and ranked nineteenth in his class of 57 seniors. He was president of the senior class.

STEVE LEWICK--Steve is from Lincoln and ranked thirty-seventh in his class of 57 seniors. He was secretary of the senior class.

GORDON OBERMUELLER--Gordon is from Lincoln and ranked thirty-fourth in his class of 57 seniors.

TIM KING--Tim is from Barnard and ranked thirty-second in his class of 58 juniors. He was vice-president of the junior class.

STEVE MCREYNOLDS--Steve is from Lincoln and ranked thirty-eighth in his class of 58 juniors.

MIKE RENO--Mike is from Barnard and ranked forty-first in his class of 58 juniors.

MARK ZIER--Mark is from Lincoln and ranked nineteenth in his class of 63 sophomores. He was elected student counsel president for the school year 1970-71.

There were only three basketball players who did not hold any office in either class or extra curricular activities. It is also unusual that of the ten players who made the varsity

team, not a single player lived in Beverly.

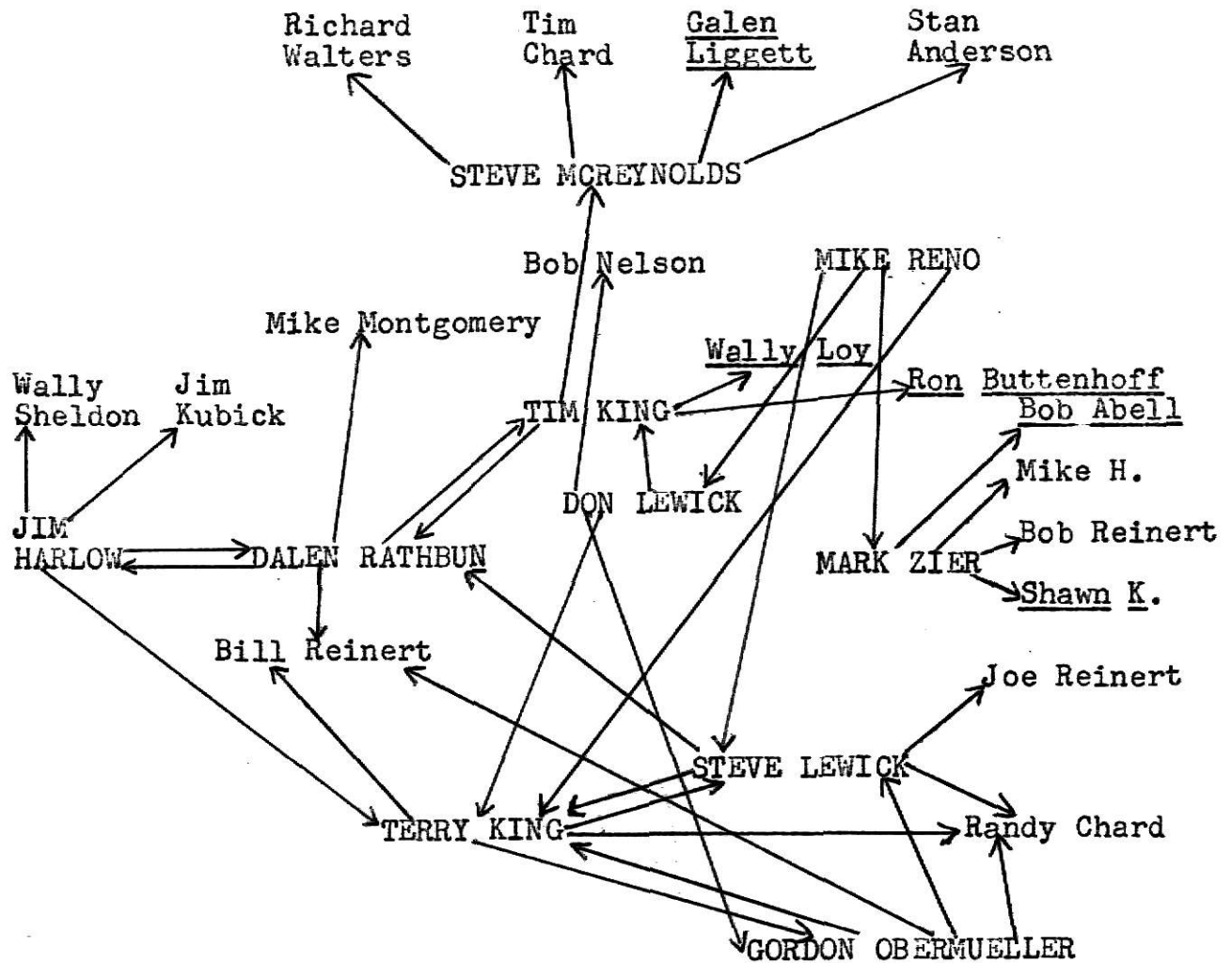
Basketball Roster

Lincoln High School had an enrollment of 233 students. The following is a list of students that participated in basketball for Lincoln High School:

Abell, David	Lagergren, Ralph
Abell, Monte	Lewick, Don
Abell, Robert	Lewick, Steve
Bolte, Ken	Liggett, Galen
Buttenhoff, Ron	Loy, Wallace
Byarlay, Dan	McReynolds, Steve
Clunn, Randall	Nunn, Kevin
Cromwell, John	Obermueller, Gordon
Eckhart, John	Pruitt, Jan
Fischer, Rex	Rathbun, Dalen
Flaherty, Denny	Rathbun, Rodney
Flaherty, Harold	Reno, Mike
Flaherty, Herbert	Rosebrook, Dale
Gerdes, Paul	Suelter, Curtis
Harlow, Jim	Suelter, Roger
Haskin, Roy	Shaffstall, Tom
Heinze, Jim	Tveit, Nils
King, Terry	Webb, Bruce
King, Tim	Wolting, Dan
Kobbeman, Shawn	Zier, Mark
Kohlmeier, Stanley	

Sociogram "A"

Name the four boys who are your closest friends at school.



The purpose of this sociogram is to discover whether the top ten ballplayers for Lincoln High School form their closest friendships primarily with members of their team.

Each player named his four closest friends with the following breakdown: TERRY KING named two players and two non-players; GORDON OBERMUELLER, two players and two non-players; STEVE LEWICK, two players and two non-players; MARK ZIER, three players and one non-player; TIM KING, four players; DON LEWICK, three players and one non-player; DALEN RATHBUN, two players and two non-players; MIKE RENO, four players; JIM HARLOW, two players and two non-players; STEVE MCREYNOLDS, one player and three non-players.

These statistics show that of the 40 friends named, 25 were players and 15 non-players, revealing that 62.5% of the close friends named were basketball players with only 37.5% being non-players. It is important to note that of the ten players questioned only two restricted their four closest friends entirely to ball players. One player named three of the four of his closest friends as non-team members, and two with three of the four being team members. The remaining five all were equally divided with two of the friends named being players and two not.

While statistically the fact that 62.5% of close friends named by the ball players were also ball players is important, it was revealed by the sociogram that an even higher number of friends was chosen not by the fact that they played ball, but instead on the basis of grade level. Five out of the ten players named fellow class members exclusively as their best

friends; three out of the ten named three of their own classmates; two of the ten named two of their own classmates; and only one named only one member of his own class. Thus, 32 of the 40 friends named came from the individual's own classmates and only 8 from other classes. Eighty per cent of the persons named then came from the individual's own class. This seems to reveal that while 62.5% chose their own teammates, 80% chose classmates. One is justified then in concluding that the class level is of more bearing on choice of friends among these basketball players than that of team participation.

A few rather startling discoveries were made on a study of the sociogram. One is the fact that Jim Harlow, student body president, and Don Lewick, senior class president, were each picked only once by their teammates as a closest friend. This is especially interesting in the light that 80% of the boys named were classmates and 62.5% were ball players. Both boys were seniors and teammates and six of the ten questioned were also seniors.

Another area of importance is the fact that TERRY KING was the only player named by five of his teammates as a close friend. His brother, TIM KING, did not mention him; however, of importance also, is the fact that in only a few instances did boys name each other as mutual friends. TERRY KING and STEVE LEWICK designated each other as close friends as did TERRY KING and GORDON OBERMUELLER. There was also a mutual agreement in naming of friends between JIM HARLOW and DALEN RATHBUN. DALEN RATHBUN also named TIM KING as a close friend, with TIM

KING also designating DALEN RATHBUN as one of his closest friends.

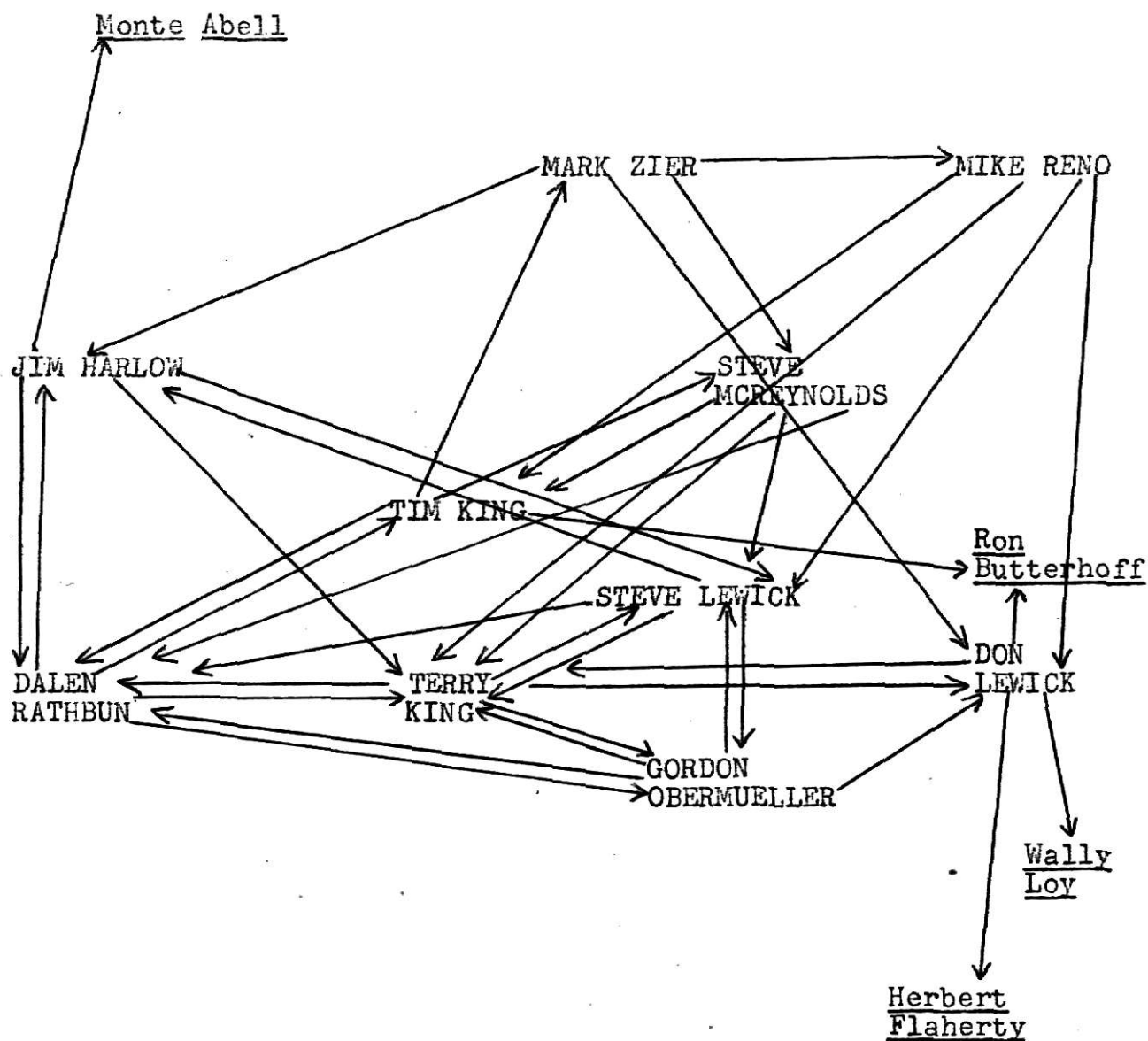
The sociogram further reveals an apparent "clique" involving TERRY KING, STEVE LEWICK, GORDON OBERMUELLER, Randy Chard, and Bill Rienert. Both Rienert and Chard were non-basketball players named as close friends by TERRY KING and GORDON OBERMUELLER. STEVE LEWICK named Randy Chard but not Bill Rienert.

TERRY KING had included both STEVE LEWICK and GORDON OBERMUELLER on his list, and while GORDON OBERMUELLER named both TERRY KING and STEVE LEWICK, STEVE LEWICK named only TERRY KING as a close friend. Teachers in the system note, however, that even though STEVE LEWICK does not name either Bill Reinert or GORDON OBERMUELLER as close friends, these five boys were almost constantly together both at school and extracurricular activities.

Basic conclusions from this sociogram may then be made as follows: While many of the players chose their friends from fellow ballplayers, the percentage was not exceedingly high (62.5%). On the other hand, 80% of their friends were shown to be classmates.

Sociogram "B"

Name the boys on the basketball squad with whom you are most friendly.



The purpose of this question was to show which basketball players are most popular among their fellow teammates.

This sociogram revealed that the two most popular ball players were TERRY KING and DALEN RATHBUN. Each player was selected by seven of his teammates as one of the persons with whom they were most friendly.

There were more mutual agreements in designation of friends on this question than on the first sociogram. Only two boys showed a mutual agreement with all four friends named (TERRY KING with STEVE LEWICK, DALEN RATHBUN, GORDON OBERMUELLER, and DON LEWICK; and DALEN RATHBUN with TERRY KING, GORDON OBERMUELLER, JIM HARLOW, and TIM KING). Two boys had mutual naming of friends on three of the four boys they listed (STEVE LEWICK with TERRY KING, GORDON OBERMUELLER, and JIM HARLOW; and GORDON OBERMUELLER with STEVE LEWICK, TERRY KING, and DALEN RATHBUN).

Of the remaining boys questioned two boys (TIM KING and JIM HARLOW) revealed two mutual agreements in choice of friends; two players had only one mutual agreement; and two had no mutual namings. It is important to note that while DON LEWICK named only one person who also named him as one of the four persons with whom he was most friendly on the squad, his other three choices were "B" team basketball players. Thus, there is no way of knowing (on the basis of this sociogram) whether they might have chosen him too. TIM KING also named one non-varsity player.

Undoubtedly, the most significant information gained from this sociogram was that when the varsity players were asked to

name the four persons with whom they were most friendly, choosing from the entire squad, two persons (JIM HARLOW and TIM KING) named one non-varsity player, and only one person named three non-varsity players. Of the 40 total choices made, 35 were taken directly from the varsity itself, which is 87.5% of the choices given. Thus, when noting those with whom they were most friendly on the squad, a majority of the boys showed that their choices were almost always restricted to these boys with whom they actually played ball as a team.

This sociogram revealed those boys with whom the varsity players questioned would most like to be friendly. The purpose of this question was to determine whether the ten boys questioned would choose boys with whom they played ball as the primary persons with whom they would like to be friendly.

Results may be broken down into various areas. Nils Tveit, a foreign exchange student who was not a varsity player, was named by five members of the team (TERRY KING, STEVE LEWICK, DON LEWICK, MARK ZIER, and DALEN RATHBUN). No other person was named oftener. TIM KING was named four times and was the varsity player who was chosen the most times by his teammates. Of the remaining varsity players, TERRY KING, GORDON OBERMUELLER, and DALEN RATHBUN were each selected by three other players; STEVE LEWICK and DON LEWICK by two players; MARK ZIER by one player; JIM HARLOW, MIKE RENO, and STEVE MCREYNOLDS by no one.

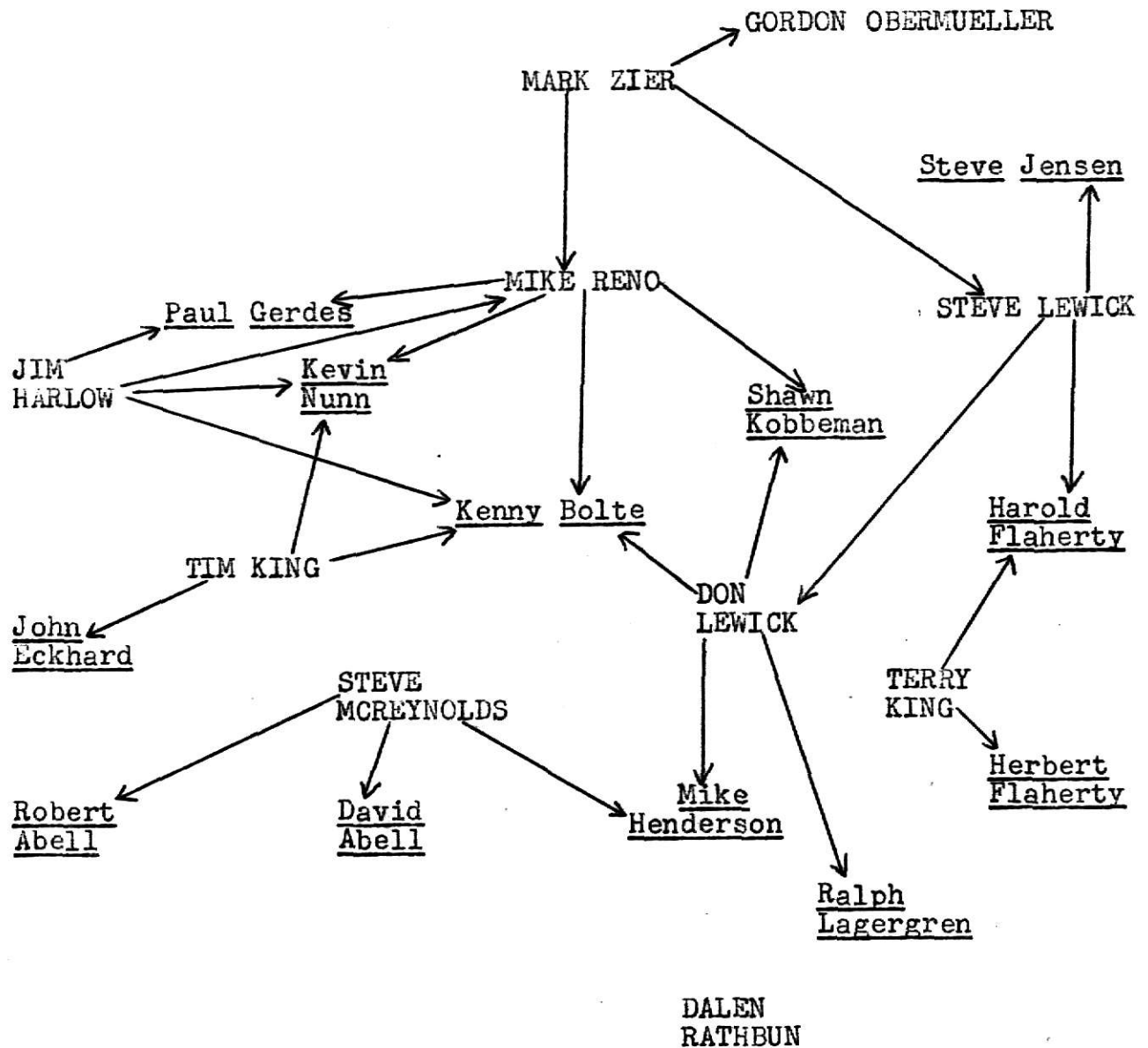
The breakdown on selections by the team is as follows: Only two players selected all varsity; one player picked one varsity (his only selection); one picked four non-varsity players; two picked three varsity and one non-varsity; one picked two varsity and two non-varsity; one picked two non-varsity and one varsity; one picked one varsity and three non-varsity; and one player named no one in response to this question (which we have to assume means he is content with the friends he has).

From this breakdown we see that of the 32 names given, 18 (56.3%) are varsity players and 14 (43.7%) non-varsity. The conclusion may be drawn then that while a larger percentage of

boys named were varsity players, the percentage was not a high one. Thus, one may assume that the varsity, when naming those with whom they would most like to be friendly, do not restrict themselves to fellow ball players, but name almost an equal number of persons who play on the "B" squad.

Sociogram "D"

Name the boys on the basketball squad with whom you would least like to be friendly.



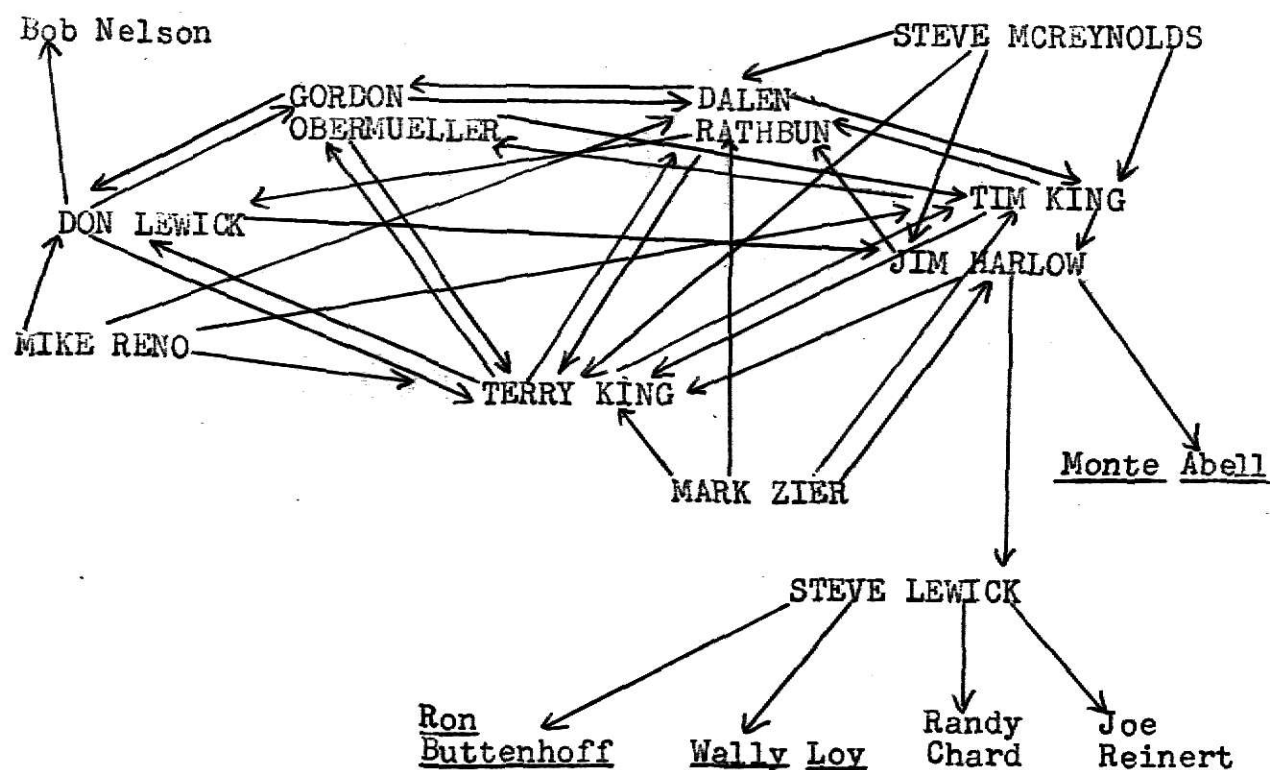
Sociogram "D" deals with a negative aspect in friendships among the players questioned. It shows that in designating those boys with whom each player (on the varsity) would like LEAST to be friendly, a large majority of the names (for the first time) are those of non-varsity players. In fact, only four boys on the varsity were mentioned--MIKE RENO, by two players; STEVE LEWICK, GORDON OBERMUELLER, and DON LEWICK each by one other player.

The sociogram shows that of the 26 names given, 5 were selections from the varsity, and 21 from the players who were not on the varsity team--a percentage of 19.2% varsity, 80.8% non-varsity.

Thus it can be clearly seen that within the varsity itself the percentage of players who actually do not wish to be friendly with a fellow teammate is very small.

Sociogram "E"

Name four boys with whom you would most like to play on a basketball team.



In response to the question, "Name four boys with whom you would most like to play on a basketball team," the following results were shown. Of the 40 players named, 34 or 85% were chosen from the varsity, 7.5% from non-varsity, and 7.5% from non-players.

The breakdown is as follows: Seven players named all varsity players; two named three varsity and one non-varsity; and one named two non-varsity and two non-players.

It is important to note also that of the first five players on the varsity, three named the other four players; one (TIM KING) named two of the first five players and two from the second five varsity (those being MARK ZIER, a sophomore, and JIM HARLOW, a senior); and one (DON LEWICK) named two from the top five and one from the varsity (JIM HARLOW) and one non-player (Bob Nelson), whom DON designated earlier as one of his closest friends.

Of the second five, one named boys who were all starters; two named three starters; one named two starters; and only one named no starters.

This sociogram reveals, then, that in naming those players with whom they would most like to play ball, the majority (85%) of persons selected were varsity players and a high percentage (70%) were chosen from the first five players.

Sociogram "F"

How do you generally get from school to your home after basketball practice and games? If by automobile, who generally accompanies you?

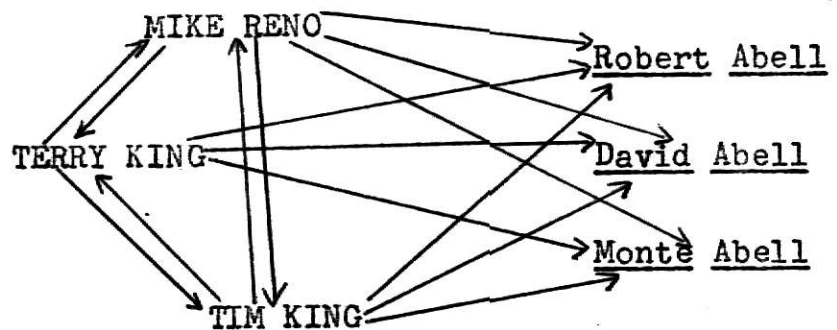
1. Automobile. 2. Walk. 3. Bus. 4. Other.

STEVE LEWICK

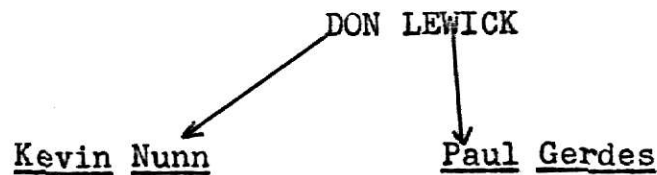
STEVE MCREYNOLDS

DALEN RATHBUN

JIM HARLOW



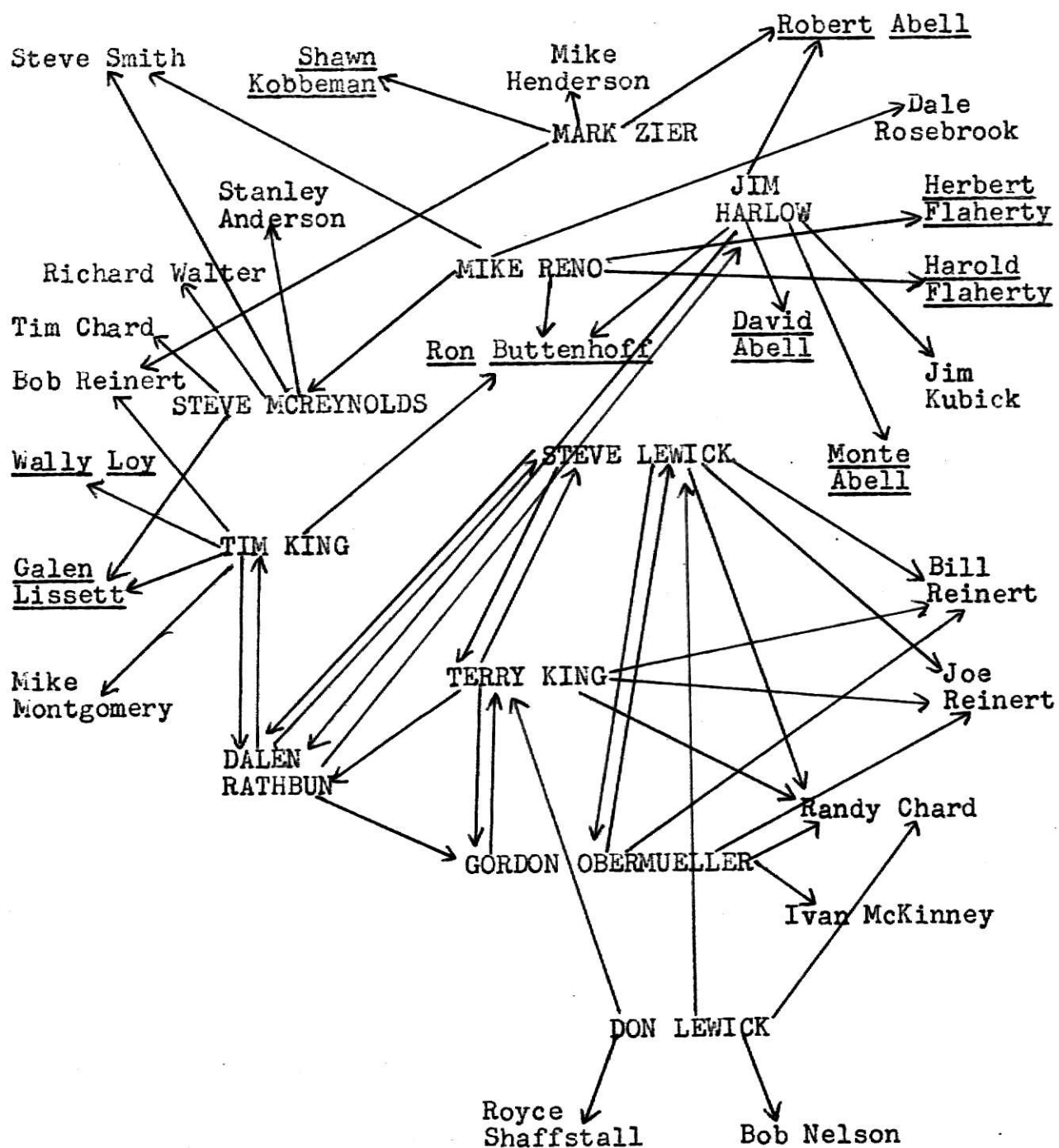
MARK ZIER

GORDON
OBERMUELLER

Sociogram "F" revealed the following: All of the varsity players stated they traveled by car from practice and ballgames. Six of the boys traveled by themselves. One boy (DON LEWICK) stated that he was accompanied by two other players (non-varsity, who also live in Lincoln), and three boys (MIKE RENO, TERRY KING, and TIM KING) stated they rode together and were also accompanied by Robert, David, and Monte Abell. All these boys live in Barnard.

Sociogram "G"

Name the boys enrolled in school whom you see and accompany frequently during hours other than at school.



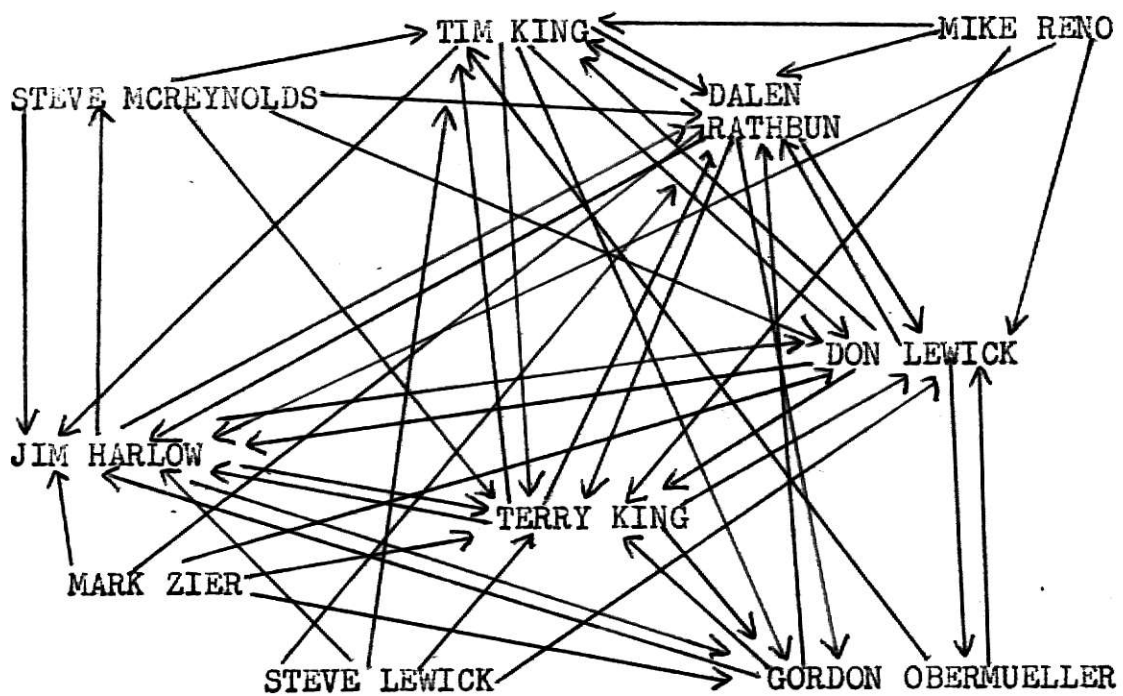
The purpose of the question used for this sociogram was to reveal whether the varsity players spent most of their after-school hours with other players or with non-players.

The results shown are as follows: Of the 57 names given, 18 (32%) were of varsity players, 13 (23%) were non-varsity, and 26 (45%) were non-players. Thus, 55% of the boys named were players (though only 32% were teammates, varsity), and 45% were not players.

In other words, while more varsity members were named than non-varsity members, there was a variance of only 10%. Thus, one can safely say that the players spend their spare time with nearly as many non-players as with fellow players.

Sociogram "H"

You are the coach--Pick a starting team composed of the five best basketball players.



In the question on which sociogram "H" was drawn, varsity players were asked to name the five boys whom they would choose for a starting team. (It is important to know that the Coach of this team, George Stephens, had picked TERRY KING, GORDON OBERMUELLER, DALEN RATHBUN, TIM KING, and DON LEWICK.) The breakdown on boys selected by individual members of the varsity was: Nine players picked TERRY KING, DALEN RATHBUN, DON LEWICK, and JIM HARLOW; seven players picked TIM KING; six picked GORDON OBERMUELLER; and one named STEVE MCREYNOLDS.

The sociogram shows that while there was some disagreement (two in the case of TIM KING, and three in the case of GORDON OBERMUELLER) on two of the choices made by the coach, all of the varsity players named three of the top five. (Nine was the most possible since no boy could name himself.)

Most important of all, all of the varsity designated that they would choose JIM MARLOW to play on the first five, while the coach himself had not chosen him as a starting player.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Any final conclusions drawn from the sociogram study must be made in relation to the fact that there were 105 boys enrolled in the high school and 41 (35%) played basketball on the varsity "B" team, or freshman team.

The sociograms have revealed the following factual information: 62.5% of the boys named by players as their best friends were fellow ballplayers; 87.5% of the persons named from all three teams as those with whom the varsity were most friendly were varsity members; of the boys designated as those on the squad with whom each player would most like to be friendly, 56.3% were varsity; 80% of the boys named as persons with whom they would least like to be friendly were non-varsity, with 19.5% coming from the varsity; in choosing boys with whom they would most like to play ball, 85% were varsity players (70% from the first five); the boys questioned revealed that their spare time was spent almost equally with players (55%) and non-players (45%); of the players named, only 32% were fellow varsity players, however; in naming the players each individual would start if he were the coach, all players picked three of the regular starting team, seven picked one, and all disagreed with the coach in the case of a boy who was not a starter (everyone on the team named him as someone they would have started).

In talking with Coach George Stephens regarding this last information, it was learned that he was not surprised to find

that there was a disagreement. He explained that JIM HARLOW, the non-starter who was named by all of the varsity members as one of their choices for the top five, was not placed on the starting team by him because of the fact that JIM HARLOW was an athlete who performed well coming into the game at any time. On the other hand, GORDON OBERMUELLER (a starter who was named by the other varsity members only six times) did not perform to the best of his ability unless he started in the game. By doing so he was able to use his top six players to best advantage in competition.

Conclusions on the basis of the statistics from the sociogram study reveal that ability and performance were considered most important criteria by the players themselves, in selection of basketball players as team members. This was clearly revealed in the case of JIM HARLOW who was named by only one of his teammates as a close friend, by only one as someone on the team with whom he was friendly, and by no one as someone with whom they would like to be friendly. Yet, all of the other nine players questioned named him as a person whom they would start on the first five if they were coach.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME _____ AGE _____ GRADE _____

ADDRESS _____

FATHER'S OCCUPATION _____ TEAM _____

How many years have you been attending Lincoln High School?

A. Name the four boys who are your closest friends at school.

1. _____ 3. _____

2. _____ 4. _____

B. Name the boys on the basketball squad with whom you are most friendly.

1. _____ 3. _____

2. _____ 4. _____

C. Name the boys on the basketball squad with whom you would most like to be friendly.

1. _____ 3. _____

2. _____ 4. _____

D. Name the boys on the basketball squad with whom you would least like to be friendly.

1. _____ 3. _____

2. _____ 4. _____

E. Name four boys you would most like to have play on a basketball team with you.

1. _____ 3. _____

2. _____ 4. _____

QUESTIONNAIRE CONTINUED

F. How do you generally get from school to your home after basketball practice and games? Underline one.

1. Automobile. 2. Walk. 3. Bus. 4. Other

1. If you underlined automobile, name the driver.

2. Who generally accompanies you?

1. _____ 3. _____

2. _____ 4. _____

5. _____

G. Name the boys enrolled in school who you see and accompany frequently during hours other than at school.

1. _____ 7. _____

2. _____ 8. _____

3. _____ 9. _____

4. _____ 10. _____

5. _____ 11. _____

6. _____ 12. _____

H. You are the coach of your present squad. Pick a starting team composed of the five best players.

1. _____ 3. _____

2. _____ 4. _____

5. _____

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

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The purpose of this sociogram study was to show through the use of eight questionnaires whether, among Lincoln High School varsity players, social relationships take precedence over recognition of skill and achievement as requirements for team formation.

Eight questionnaires were devised and these questions were answered by the first ten basketball players on the squad.

The purpose of each question asked was to discover the following:

(1) Whether the squad members formed their closest friendships primarily with members of their own team. (2) Which basketball players were most popular among their fellow teammates. (3) With whom the varsity players would most like to be friendly. (4) With whom each player would least like to be friendly. (5) What boys each individual would choose to play with him on a basketball team. (6) Whether means of travel had a bearing on social relationships. (7) Whether players spent most of their after-school hours with other players or with non-players. (8) Which boys each player would name to a starting team if he, himself, were coach.

Information on each boy was gathered from school records. A recent evaluation of the school and community by North Central Association of Secondary Schools was used for obtaining information about the community of Lincoln and the surrounding areas included in unification.

After the questionnaires were completed, sociograms were drawn to clarify the information.

It was concluded from this study that, while players did not restrict their friendships and social relationships to team members, ability and performance were considered as the most important criteria by the players themselves in the formation of a team. In selecting a team, likes and dislikes were set aside, and the information clearly revealed that ability and performance in basketball were the main criteria used in selecting team members.