

ALLEVIATING LONELINESS, ENCOURAGING FRIENDSHIP: THE ROLE THAT POLITICAL SOCIETY CAN PLAY



Andrea Chandler, Professor
Department of Political Science, Carleton University
1125 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B6
andrea.chandler@carleton.ca

October 2022

Funding source: *Alleviating Loneliness, Encouraging Friendship: the Role that Political Society Can Play* is co-funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and Employment and Social Development Canada. Knowledge Synthesis Grant (The Emerging Asocial Society), awarded April 2022, Grant number 872-2021-0008.

Acknowledgements: I acknowledge the contributions of Akaysha Humniski and Shannon Costello, respectively graduate research assistant and undergraduate research intern, who assisted with the research.

Executive Summary

Research from a variety of disciplines has established that friendship plays a positive role in people's lives, and that its absence can contribute to loneliness, which is associated with unhealthy outcomes. At the same time, a prominent theme in public discourse in recent years is the notion that acrimonious, adversarial politics are eroding contemporary democracy; therefore, a more friendly political arena could better serve the public. The project explored relevant literatures on friendship, loneliness and politics in order to pursue three interconnected objectives:

- What role can governments and policies play in facilitating friendship?
- Are there trends or structures in society that undermine or discourage friendship? If so, could policies be adopted to mitigate their impacts?
- What additional research should be done to provide more evidence-based knowledge of what these policies can do?

This study reviews existing knowledge of the political factors that encourage or discourage friendships between people. The research further examined existing literature in order to assess the evidence basis for policies that effectively advance friendships. It is assumed here that it is both desirable and possible to create a world in which everyone has at least one friend.

Research has shown that having friendships offers numerous benefits for the individual's physical and mental health, quality of life, and the improvement of communities. Given these benefits, encouraging interpersonal friendships would be a desirable policy goal for governments. Friendship is unfortunately not a universal experience; some people consider themselves friendless, or to be lonely, with a paucity of friendship experiences as one of the components of loneliness. Alleviating loneliness has been acknowledged to be a useful policy, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic which compelled the strict limitation of in-person social interactions during the most intense periods of spread of the disease. However, policies for increasing the quality and quantity of interpersonal friendships, at least at the national level, have been uncommon. While local policies to support neighbourhoods have been effective, they are not widespread enough to ensure that all people enjoy the enrichment of their lives that friendship brings.

On a related theme, some studies suggest that dysfunctional political dynamics, such as a polarized public discourse, can contribute to a sense of insecurity and animosity among individual citizens. An absence of friendship, or its invisibility, among political leaders may bring hostility to democratic politics, or even contribute to its demise. While the polarization found in contemporary democracies is much discussed in political science, there is relatively little specific research on the ways in which the practices and rhetoric of political leaders might impact interpersonal relations between citizens. Political science researchers tend to explore the theme of friendship indirectly, through concepts such as social capital, social cohesion, social networks, or nation-building. Such inquiry investigates the ways in which civil society can be empowered in order to build more democratic communities. However, studies of social capital do not necessarily address the depth, longevity or quality of relationships between individuals. A focus on friendship will require precision in the use of terms, and should avoid assuming *a priori* that friendships will develop automatically from an active civil society.

While there is ample research on how schools can build friendships among children, there is relatively little direct research on the topic of how to encourage friendships among adults at the national level. That said, many studies provide insight into how friendships can be created: for example, through particular education practices in schools; leadership and organizational decisions in workplaces; policies to build neighbourhoods and encourage people to interact with each other outside their homes; and social programs that enable people to meet others with different ages and social backgrounds. But policies to encourage friendships will be insufficient if we do not also acknowledge the forces in society that can weaken existing friendships: for example –adversarial partisan politics, urban sprawl, social and intersectional inequality, and precarious employment. While friendship has received significant scholarly attention, friendlessness is less often interrogated. Friendlessness differs from loneliness insofar as friendlessness may result from exclusion or marginalization rather than absence of a loved one. Policies to encourage friendship, therefore, may require reform of policies that discourage it. Creating a society that is more friendship-oriented will require not only helping friendless people to find opportunities for building relationships, but also encouraging those who have friends to see the lonely people within their midst, in plain sight but somehow overlooked.

The policy implications of this investigation include the following:

1. A policy of friendship could create a new sense of democratic nation-building, to supplement existing 20th century narratives of social cohesion, such as civic patriotism and the welfare state. The friendship policy would emphasize interpersonal relationships between individuals, rather than individuals' attachment to the nation-state.
2. Drawing on the concept of 'gender mainstreaming,' the encouragement of friendship could be introduced into a variety of social and economic policies at all levels; there could be an explicit expectation that policies encourage friendships. This 'friendship mainstreaming' would require the attention of all levels of government, rather than matters of interpersonal relationships (such as strengthening neighbourhoods) being the responsibility of local government.
3. At present, there is more literature on policy ideas to build community or to alleviate loneliness than there are actual evaluations of whether such policies are effective in fostering friendships. More research is required to systematically assess which friendship-stimulating policies and practices work well. Additional research is also needed in order to determine the ways in which the nature and quality of friendship relations varies across groups according to ethnicity, race, ability, and other identities. There is more research on people who have friends than on those who do not; researching friendlessness, while methodologically challenging, is essential in order to identify clearly who could benefit from friendship-creation policies.
4. Leaders in business and in politics have a role to play in modelling friendly behaviour and nurturing friendships within their respective communities. If they cannot or will not acknowledge this role, deeper reforms of the political system should be encouraged in order to incentivize friendliness.
5. At the micro-level, public information campaigns could encourage individuals to befriend others, especially those who feel isolated or on the margins of community.

Background

Friendship is an elusive concept: it is a familiar word, and yet it is difficult to arrive at a consensus definition. Friendship has long been an idea explored by political philosophers, largely because of its positive connotations as a model for interpersonal relations. The Greek philosopher Aristotle regarded friendship as an intimate, cooperative relationship between two unrelated individuals. These individuals freely chose each other on the basis of a shared affinity, and friendship brought out the best in people, as it depended on trust, conversation and mutual assistance. Aristotle thought that friendship was one of the foundations of democracy: in democracy as in friendship, people participated freely in a community of equals. (Aristotle, 1986: 111, 114, 198, 202) More recently, for prominent twentieth century philosopher Hannah Arendt, a crucial component of friendship was communication: friends could discuss and resolve their differences, and hence friendship was a model for a democratic politics based on deliberation and compromise (Arendt, 1968: 20-23; Nixon, 2015: 8-9).

Aristotle's view was interrogated by French philosopher Jacques Derrida, who argued that if one chose friendship with those similar to oneself, that left open the possibility of excluding from friendship those who were 'different.' There were two sides of friendship: a relationship of care and trust for some, but with the risk that it brings exclusion for others. Derrida drew a parallel between this potential exclusion within the interpersonal relationship to political exclusion within the nation-state; he regarded suspicion of migrants and religious minorities as a persistent problem within liberal democracies. He called for a form of friendship that was capable of being universal, of embracing difference rather than leaving it outside the circle of intimacy, and further, that politics should be based on friendship for rather than on a community based on the nation state (Derrida, 1997: 96, 135, 356)

Another critique of Aristotle's definition is centred on the assumption that friendship consists of pairs who spend time alone together in leisure. Many people, particularly women, don't have a great deal of leisure time. For women, friendship may be found in groups of women who share a workload for domestic and community work (Schwarzenbach, 2007: 238-9; Schwarzenbach, 2009). Research has indicated that middle-class people are more likely to have scheduled gatherings with specific friends, while working class people are more likely to identify friendship with places to drop-in, such as a local pub or league (Allan, 1998: 690; Jerrome and Wenger, 1999: 671-72). Friendship is also understood differently in different cultures (Harré and Moghaddam, 2013: 10-13; Mark, 2010: 10) and individuals vary in terms of who they consider to be a friend, with some including only intimates and others a large circle of acquaintances. (Spencer and Pal, 2006: 4, 169).

Thus, defining friendship is difficult; so too is the question of determining its place in contemporary society. For over one hundred years, scholars and researchers have been investigating the question of whether friendship is eroding under the pressures of modern life. In 1897, French sociologist Emile Durkheim argued that suicides were increasing in areas where people had migrated into industrial areas in search of work, especially for unmarried individuals. Cut off from their families and former communities, without new friends to anchor them, people withdrew into depression. He called for steps to be taken to absorb these uprooted individuals into new communities (Durkheim, 2006: 190, 225, 424). In recent years, concerns about rising

loneliness in society have been voiced in public discourse, especially when the COVID-19 pandemic compelled much of the population to stay at home. People who are lonely are not necessarily lacking friends, but may have few friends that they see often (Leland, 2022; Pinker 2014). Some researchers dispute that friendship is in decline; instead, many individuals, especially single people living in large cities, are deepening their friendships as their contacts with family members become less frequent (Brooks, 2020). The phrase “queer kinship” was coined to describe the very close and supportive friendships that could be found in the LGBTQ community, especially among those individuals who had become estranged from their families (Weston, 1991; Nardi, 1999: 50-71; Roach, 2012: 123-4). Yet it is totally plausible for differing trends to be observed: that loneliness and isolation have increased for some people, while others find their friendships as stronger as ever. Today, loneliness is recognized as taking a severe toll that loneliness on those who experience it, especially over a long period of time.

It is understood that both friendship and loneliness are experienced differently by different people. Still, for the purposes of this knowledge synthesis report, it is valuable to refer to a consistent definition. **Friendship** describes a relationship between two people who have deliberately chosen to engage with each other on a basis of liking and supporting the other (Harré, in Harré and Moghaddam, eds., 2013: 10-13). Friends are people who interact with each other regularly and relatively often (Brent, Chang, Gariépy, 2014: 2). The idea that friends are not related to each other is often considered an essential characteristic, although this is problematic; for instance, two spouses or two cousins may see each other as friends. Similarly, although friendship is often conceptualized as a pair relationship, it is perhaps more accurately described as a relationship between two or more people. **Loneliness** is not an absence of friends; rather it is a feeling of sadness stemming from a perceived insufficiency of warm interpersonal contact in one’s life. This sadness may be accompanied by feelings of personal inadequacy, as we live in a world in which popularity is highly prized. (Dahlberg, 2021: 1161; Enns, 2022: 30). **Friendlessness** can be described as a situation where an individual has no friends; they may wish to have friends, but feel that nobody has befriended them (Witvliet *et al* 2010: 1049).

Objectives

The primary goal of this knowledge synthesis project was to reflect upon the relationship between political society (governments and political leaders) and friendship within society, with the intention to identify policies and practices that could encourage interpersonal friendships among the citizenry. It is widely acknowledged that loneliness is a significant problem in twenty-first century society. It would be overly simplistic to suggest that friendship, on its own, can end loneliness; indeed, loneliness can be seen as a part of life, experienced by all at one point or another. Nevertheless, friendship can mitigate loneliness and can soften its impacts (Enns, 2022: 8, 30-31). Therefore, measures to stimulate friendships could be part of a comprehensive social policy to improve well-being in society (Riyanto and Yeo, 2018: 252).

The project aimed also to illuminate current debate about the possible relationship between political polarization, which is widely seen as a threat to democracy, and friendship. As discussed above, the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle conceptualized democracy itself as a relationship of friendship between citizens (Aristotle, 1986: 111, 114, 198, 202). But since the 19th century, social scientists such as Emile Durkheim (2006) have argued that modern society

isolates citizens from each other. More recently, diverse trends such as the gig economy and the use of social media have been identified as factors that could weaken interpersonal relationships, insofar as both may limit regular face-to-face encounters with others (de Zžäiga, Barnidge and Scherman, 2027; Thelen, 2019; Zhang and Lin, 2018). With the onset of the global COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, researchers, professionals and social organizations noted the social isolation that many people experienced under stay-at-home orders. Particular social groups, such as the elderly, people with disabilities or the unhoused were particularly affected (Chen, 2020; Dalhberg, 2021, 1161-2) So while we know a great deal about the benefits of friendship, and the factors that can undermine it, there is less attention to what kinds of evidence-based policies might support it. In part, this is because friendship is often seen as belonging to the ‘private sphere’ of people’s personal lives, outside of the legitimate realm of government intervention (Kaplan, 2007: 229).

In summary, the project has explored relevant literatures on friendship, loneliness and politics in order to pursue four interconnected objectives:

- To examine evidence from a variety of literatures on how friendships can be supported, with a view to identifying policies and practices that could be adopted at the government level to encourage friendship.
- To identify, from an analysis of existing research, trends or structures in society that undermine friendship, and policies that could be adopted to mitigate their impacts.
- To outline areas where additional research should be done to provide more evidence-based knowledge relevant to friendship encouragement, and to suggest hypotheses that could be tested in future studies.
- A final objective is normative, to ponder the question of whether we can create a world in which there are no friendless persons; where everybody has at least one friend. One hopes to contribute to a debate about whether government action can and should play a role in creating a friendlier world.

Methods

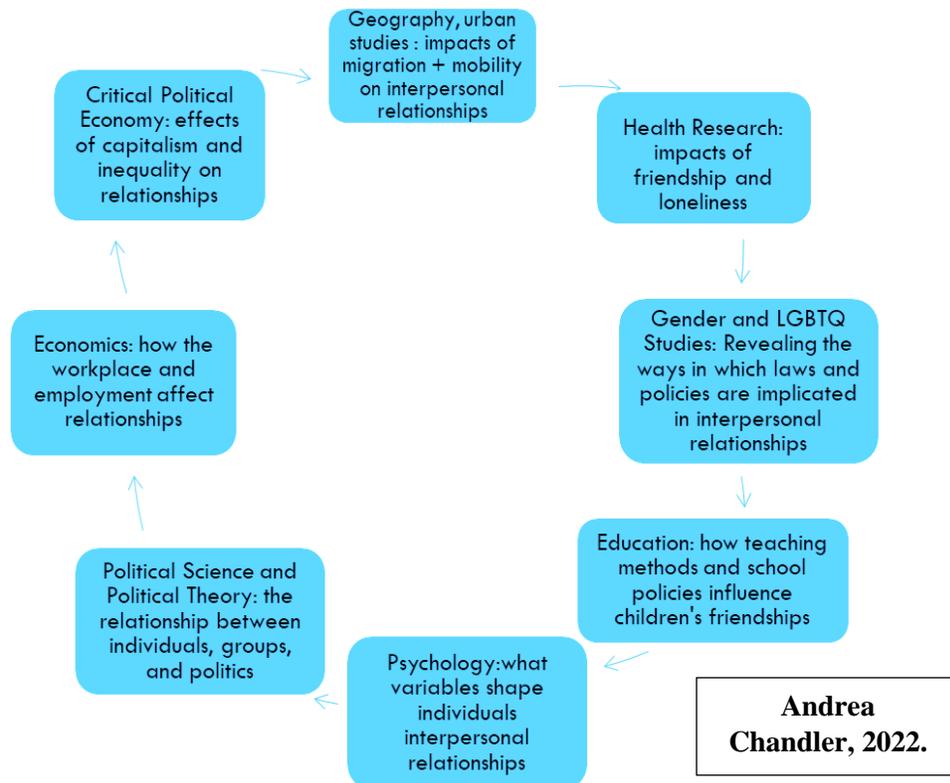
Lists of relevant secondary literature were gathered from a variety of databases to span disciplines relevant to friendship and politics, beginning with OMNI (the general search tool of Carleton University’s McOdrum Library. This search primarily yielded books on the subject of friendship, which provided general background context and whose bibliographies provided further references. Concurrently, literature searches were executed using a variety of databases: some were conducted by the principal investigator, others were performed by research assistant under the principal investigator’s direction. The databases consulted included

- Scholars Portal, a database relevant to multiple academic disciplines.
- PsychARTICLES, PubMed, Sage Public Opinion Abstracts, Social Work Abstracts and Sociological Abstracts, which were especially valuable for finding literature on the benefits of friendship/impacts of loneliness on the individual as well as policy approaches for alleviating loneliness.

- International Political Science Abstracts, PAIS, International Security and Counter Terrorism Reference Centre; these databases were useful for finding articles specifically on the relationship between friendship and politics, and the ways in which the concept of friendship is used in international relations.
- ECONLit and American Economic Association Journals, for articles related to the relationship between the economy, socioeconomic trends and friendship, as well as friendship within the workplace.
- ProQuest database, for newspaper and web-based media articles.
- Conference Board of Canada and Canadian Public Documents Collection, which were especially useful for relevant reports of the Conference Board and non-governmental organizations.

Database searches used a variety of keywords, that were tailored towards the particular discipline of focus of the database. Early searches were simple; for example, keyword searches using various combinations of “friendship/friend/friendly” “politics” “loneliness” “health” “policy” and/or “trends”. In subsequent searches, as the researcher realized that there was relatively scant literature on interpersonal friendship as a dependent variable, other keywords were used on related topics: for example “community -building” “social isolation” “anomie” “friendship loss” and “cliques/cliquism.” Searches also included possible variables that influenced friendship, such as “neoliberalism” “clientelism” “precarious” “COVID-19” and “neighbourhood.” The material gathered covered a range of disciplines, including political science, sociology, philosophy, psychology, economics, business studies, international relations, policy studies and health. There was also an effort to gather a limited amount of primary source material, from government documents and reports of international organizations. There was a snowballing effect to the gathering of secondary literature, insofar as valuable suggestions for further reading were found in the bibliographies of sources found through other means. Although social media was not systematically researched given time constraints for the completion of this report, a number of relevant sources were found on social media.

Figure 1: What disciplines inform research on Friendship?



As Figure 1 demonstrates, research sources on friendship spanned a wide variety of disciplines. The search methods used yielded a large amount of literature, not all of which could be feasibly examined in the time considered for this research report, but which will be part of the author's continuing research. The PI excluded literature that used highly technical language removed from the author's field of expertise in political science (such as very specialized medical or neurological literature), which was not directly related to the PI's research questions, or which was dated earlier than 2005, unless it was an obviously pioneering, unique or influential piece of work.

A word here is in order about how the research approach was organized. Alongside the method to gather as many sources as possible, the goal was to approach the research topic in an opened fashion. Rather than testing hypotheses (which could only be shown to be true or false), the author began with a list of opened questions:

1. What is friendship? Is there a consensus definition?
2. What impacts do interpersonal relationships have on the individual/on society/on institutions such as workplaces?
3. How do people perceive their friendships and what are the perceived impacts of friendships? Do they match the real impacts?
4. What research has been done on the impacts on interpersonal relationships of political factors, factors in the economy, policies and laws?
5. What trends have been identified in research as having an impact on interpersonal relations?

6. Does the literature contain any gaps, silences, or untested assumptions?
7. What literature specifically covers policies oriented towards improving the quality of interpersonal relationships?
8. What literature addresses how and why existing friendships are corroded? Can these effects be mitigated with policies?
9. What other words might be used in the literature as synonyms or proxies for friendship?
10. What best practices or areas of future research are identified?
11. What are the intersectionalities of friendship? Are there differences in people's friendships depending on factors such as ethnicity, gender, disability?

Looking for literature that answered these questions helped to ensure that the research maintained a broad and systematic approach.

Results

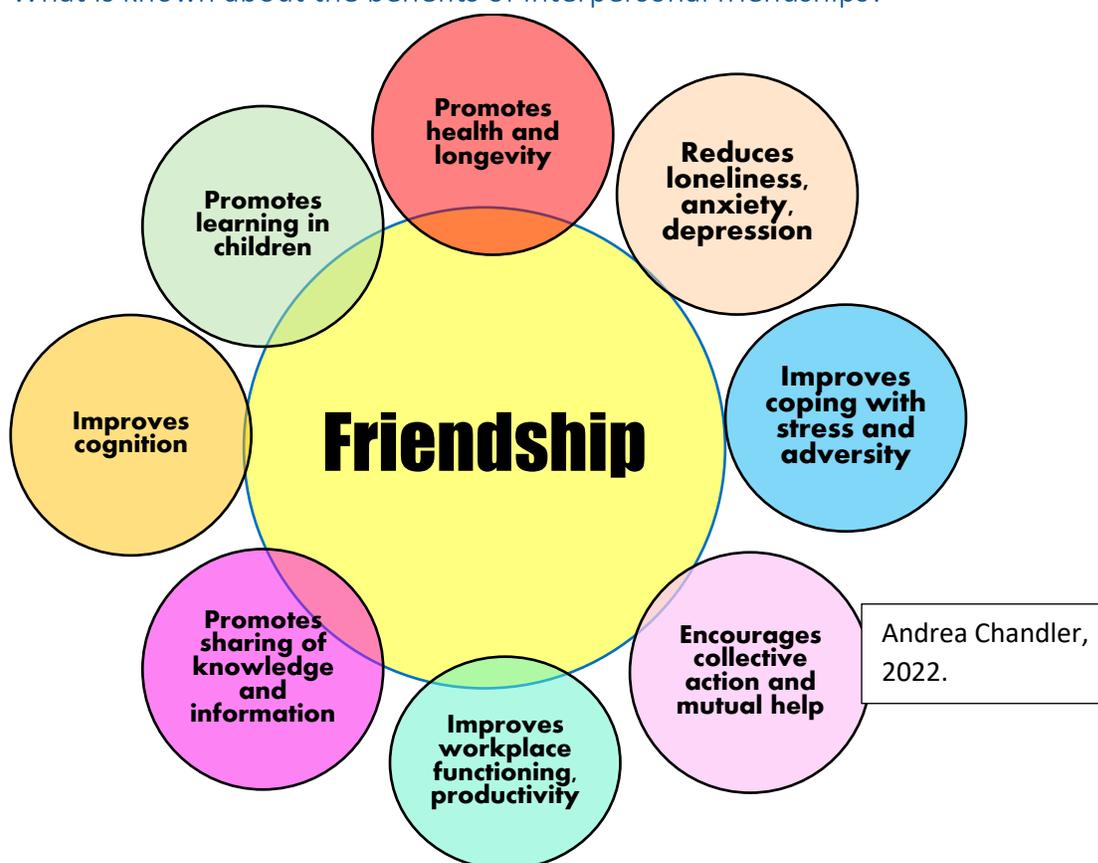
1. Friendship is good for individuals, and for society. Figure 2 provides an infographic to demonstrate the various benefits associated with friendship, that have been documented in social science research. First, studies have shown that having friends, especially close friends, is associated with the following benefits:

- Those with friends show better mental health indicators compared to those with few social contacts (Spencer and Paul 2006)
- In children, having friendships has been associated with a higher sense of self-esteem (Bukowski, Motzoi and Meyer, in Rubin, Butkowski and Laursen, 2009: 223) and improved learning at school compared to kids without friends (Lee and Ewing, in Harré and Moghaddam, 2013: 66).
- If a friend is present, people show lowered stress responses in challenging situations (Allen, Blascovich, Tomaka and Kelsey, 1991; Winstead, Derlega, Lewis, Sanches-Hucles and Clarke, 1992; Major, Zubek, Cooper, Cozzarelli and Richards, 1997; Uno, Uchino and Smith, 2002)
- An early study on the psychological impacts of COVID-19 found that people with good friends tended to feel less stress and a more positive orientation to life than those who did not have such friends; the researchers found that individuals who talked about the pandemic with their friends felt more control over their ability to cope (Ye, Hu, Xiao, Zhang, Liu, Wang, Yang and Xia, 20-21: 12-13). In another study, people who described themselves as lonely reported higher stress levels during the pandemic than those who felt well supported by others (Whittaker and Kingston, 2022: 1, 6).
- Friendship can reduce prejudice. An experimental study showed that when people become friends with lesbian and gay individuals, not knowing that they are gay until after the friendship is formed, they show more positive attitudes towards gay people than at the beginning of the study (Lytle and Levy, 2015).
- For transgender individuals, many of whom experience significant hostility and verbal slurs in the daily life, friendship with other non-binary individuals can significantly help them gain a sense of security in their identity (Galupo, Henise and Davis, 2014: 465-6).

Conversely, a lack of friends, or prolonged loneliness, is associated with the following negative impacts:

- There is evidence of higher incidence of depression (Lane, 1994: 525) suicide (House, Landis and Umberson, 1988: 540) and anxiety (Cacioppo, Capitanio, and Cacioppo, 2014: 1467-9);
- Children who felt left out of friendship circles were more likely to experience depression (Witvliet, Brendgen, van Lier, Koot and Vitaro, 2010: 1050) and anxiety (Lessard and Juvonen, 2018: 281);
- A study of children found an association between anxiety, friendlessness and being bullied (Ladd, Kochenderfer-Ladd, Eggum, Kochel and McConell, 2011: 1449-50) while another study of children found an association between friendlessness, being bullied and having low opinion of themselves (Samivalli and Isaacs, 2005);
- Studies of children on the autism spectrum have shown that many find it difficult to make and sustain friends, and that they experience sadness and/or depression associated with this (Ryan, Coughlan, Maher, Vicario and Garvey, 2021: 397-402; Whitehouse, Durkin and Jaquet, 2009: 312-17);
- There is a stigma to loneliness, where it is perceived as a personal shortcoming or a deviation from the norm; this can make lonely people feel unwanted and undervalued (Wilkinson, 2022);
- Lonely or isolated people are more likely to be smokers, use substances or be overweight. (Cacioppo, Capitanio and Cacioppo, 2014: 1495-6);
- The lonely are more likely to die premature death from chronic illness (House, Landis and Umberson, 541).

Figure 2: What is known about the benefits of interpersonal friendships?



One can see from this research that the various outcomes in Figure 2 are related to each other: people who feel the support of friends can feel more secure, can feel that they have support in times of stress, and can benefit from care in times of illness or dislocation.

Another benefit of friendship falls under the category of social capital. In her influential book *The Death and Life of American Cities*, Jane Jacobs (1961: 137) used the term 'social capital' to describe the notion that information-sharing and coordinated action among citizens can help drive social change. Political scientist Robert Putnam (1995: 67) wrote "social capital" refers to features of social organization such as networks, norms and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit." Social capital, according to Putnam, could strengthen democracy, as it creates space for independent organized initiatives, and helps to build a sense of solidarity between citizens (Putnam, 1995: 68, 77; Sander and Putnam, 2010: 10-12). The notion of social capital extends beyond friendship to neighbours, fellow members of a faith community or club, and acquaintances. One's network of acquaintances can enrich one's opportunities: they can provide leads or introductions to job seekers, save time in a carpool, or provide useful tips (Spencer and Pahl, 2006: 62-66). For individuals who are estranged or geographically distanced from close family members, friends can provide some degree of care

during illness or disability (Bell, Richard, Montoya, Elwood, Goush and Matta, 1998: 199-203). Friendship can also lead to community action, as friends can build social movements to call for political change (Sangupta, 2015). By contrast, friendlessness can make it harder for people to improve their circumstances: people experiencing homelessness tend to stay homeless longer if they don't have friends they can rely on (Rath, 2006:9).

Friendship can also improve people's ability to function. In their pioneering work *The Jigsaw Classroom*, Elliot Aronson and Shelley Patnoe found that small groups of children who were directed to work closely together at school developed new friendships, missed less school, and improved their schoolwork (Aronson and Patnoe, 1997: 13). Research has also demonstrated that friendship can have a positive impact on the workplace; for example if people have friends at work, they are more likely to enjoy their work, to stay longer with the same employer, and to find meaning in their job (Riordan and Griffeth, 1995: 150-51; Mark, 2010: 17). Another study showed that people who had friends at work often found that this benefitted their career and salary, although fewer women reported these benefits than men (Markiewicz, Dvine and Kausilas, 2000). Research of student participants in Singapore showed that participants used their networks of friends and acquaintances on social media heavily in order to exchange information, seek jobs, and accomplish tasks (Wang, Chua and Stefanone, 2015). Friendship can provide "communities of care," perhaps especially so for women: friendship networks can provide members with mutual help, companionship, tips on difficult situations, and support during difficult times (Francisco-Menchavez, 2018: 94-117).

A key question that arises is how much friendship does one need in order to enjoy its benefits. This is difficult to answer for a variety of methodological reasons. First, the definition of friendship varies from one individual to another (Mark, 2010: 3). Qualitative studies of individuals often allow research participants to define friendship as they themselves see fit (Spencer and Pahl, 2006: 4) while studies using statistical databases may not necessarily explore the nuances of interpersonal relationships, but rather examine general questions such as the ways in which people's time spent with friends varies over time (for example McGlone, Park and Roberts, 1999). Another challenge is that for many people, close relationships with extended family may make friendship less necessary; people who identify as having few friends may still be enjoying the benefits of intimate, reciprocal relationships (Spencer and Paul, 2006: 27). Finally, there is a difficulty with some of the literature in terms of use of terminology: friendship, social capital and social networks may at times be used interchangeably, even though they may mean different things; similarly, loneliness, social isolation, social exclusion and marginalization may be used as synonyms, which can lead to imprecision.

There are differing views of what is most beneficial about friendship: about the quality and intensity of friendship that a person needs (Medeiros and Sabat, in Harré and Moghaddam, 2013: 2015). Tom Rath (2006: 76) argues that what is important is having a small number of "vital friends" – a vital friend is someone whose presence makes your life more worthwhile and more manageable. A friend is a close, caring person in one's life (King: 2007, 130-33). Friends may be important because one can confide in them (Albert, Koltai and David, 2021), or may be valued as companions for fun recreational activities (Martinussen, Wetherell, and Braun, 2020: 5-6). Simply put, friends are people who help each other out and spend time together (Mentinis, 2015: 71-3) Longstanding friends may help to anchor a person's sense of the passage of their life,

people with whom one can share memories (May, 2012: 74-9). What these definitions all have in common is a person who is a consistent presence in one's life, who is reliable and in whom one can trust that they have benevolent intentions.

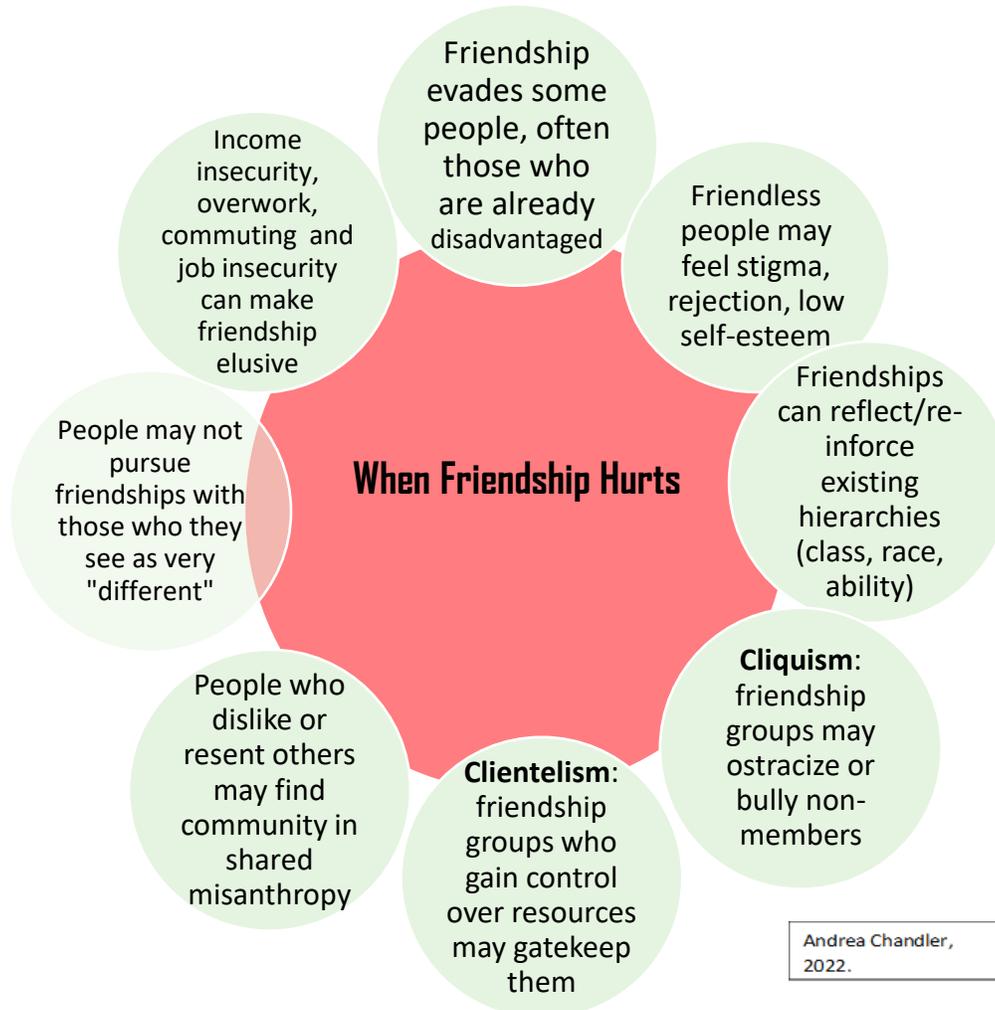
Given the many benefits of friendship, encouraging people to make more friends may be sound public policy, with few disadvantages. However, existing knowledge about friendship does not present a universally positive feature: studies have found troubling evidence about patterns and trends of friendships, including the following areas of concern:

- People's friendships have inequalities and asymmetries: we do not all have the same quality and quantity of friendships, and this has consequences for social equality.
- People who are friend-deprived tend to include individuals who are deprived of other resources, and who may need friendship the most,
- It is difficult to determine whether friendship in the population as a whole is declining, given the many complexities surrounding the empirical investigation of this question; however, what is worthy of consideration are the *economic factors* which may be undermining the durability of friendship, and the *political factors* which may be contributing to patterns of hostility between people who hold differing views.

2. Friendship Asymmetries and Friendship Inhibitors

Figure 3 identifies some of the concerns about friendship that are raised in the scholarly literature.

Figure 3: When Friendship Hurts



A striking theme in the literature is *the correlation between loneliness/friend-deprivation and membership in vulnerable groups*. As early as 1988, research demonstrated that low-income people, the elderly and racialized minorities were more likely to be socially isolated (House, Landis and Umberson, 1988: 544). If friendship brings many benefits, those left out of friendship may be at a disadvantage relative to the socially well-supported. As Ray Pahl wrote, "...it should be recognized that having someone as a friend is a form of power, which those without close friends do not have." (Pahl, 2000: 162) Status plays a role in friendship: Angelo Mele's study of schoolchildren showed that students perceived to be affluent or attractive were most in demand as friends (Mele, 2020: 247).

A second concern is that while undoubtedly many people have friends who belong to different ethnic, racial or class groups from themselves, *many people do not: instead, they tend to be friends with people who have similar identities*. A multi-author research project recently found that there are relatively few friendships between high-income and low-income people in the United States. This was partly because they often lived in different neighbourhoods and attended different schools; however, the authors claimed that ‘friending bias’ was also partly responsible, insofar as many people don’t go out of their way to establish diverse friendship circles (Chetty, Jackson et al, 2022: 122-4). Research, mainly from the United States and Canada, has shown that friendship between students of different races is less common than friendship with those of the same race (Mele, 2020: 247; Aboud, 2003, 167-70). Even a study of kindergarten children in England showed that pupils tended to befriend those who had similar ethnic background to their own: not because of conscious prejudice, but because of shared customs and practices (Barron, 2011).

A third point is that studies suggest that people who lack friendship often feel emotional pain and sadness from this deprivation. For example: health conditions such as dementia, stroke or brain injury can affect the energy and communication abilities that sustained previous friendships. Individuals who experience these friendship losses often feel sadness and frustration (Medeiros and Sabat, in Harré and Moghaddam, 2013: 216; Douglas, 2020, 1288-9; Azios, Strong, Archer, Douglas, Simmons-Mackie and Worrall, 2022: 318-19; Salas, Casussus, Rowlands, Pimm and Flanagan, 2018: 1162). People with disabilities, severe health conditions, and substance use issues may not be able to socialize as much as they like due to difficulties transporting themselves to events outside the home, or concerns about their ability to get safely home (Portacolone, Perissinotto, Yeh and Greysen, 2018: 83-5). A study of English elementary school children showed that some children were persistently excluded from small group play despite their efforts to join; the researcher said of one boy, the others “simply do not hear him.” (James, 1996: 322-3). And yet, the author argued that the lone boy, rather than the exclusionary group, was the one who needed to improve his social skills. The pain inflicted by ostracism is an under-researched aspect of studies of loneliness.

Friendlessness and loneliness have a stigma that can make the person who experience it feel like an outcast (Riley, 2002; Wilkinson, 2022). The Aristotelian definition of friendship heavily emphasized that friendship was based on admirable human traits, such as respect and reciprocity (Aristotle, 1986: 202-3, 454); therefore, those who lack friendship may see themselves as having a character flaw. People who are lonely may be exhorted to get out of the house and take initiative to make more friends, which creates more pressure on them: fear of rejection may prevent the lonely from approaching others for friendship (Pelley, 2016). People who lack friends, may lack them for no particular reason; they are simply overlooked, as friend-seekers gravitate to those who are already popular.

3. The Evolution of Friendship: Socioeconomic Influences

In today’s mobile society, many people move across long distances for study or work, and change employers, whether to advance their careers or simply to make a living. Such migrations can affect one’s friendships, as close friendships are difficult to maintain over distances (Allen, 1998: 696-7). This does not necessarily have to be the case: social media provides a vehicle for maintaining regular contact with faraway friends and relatives, and for some, new friends are

found online (Wang and Wellman, 2010) However, people often do lose touch with friends from their old place of residence, and as they become absorbed with work and activities within the home, they may fail to get to know their new neighbours (Lane, 1994: 533-8) Today's high-pressure capitalism, known as neoliberalism, erodes people's free time and compels them to concentrate on the present moment, which gets in the way of sustaining friendships (May, 2012: 74) De-industrialization has also impacted friendship, as American sociologist Eric Klinenberg wrote: "As factories shuttered, so too did the union halls, taverns, restaurants and civic organizations that glued different groups together." (Klinenberg, 2018: 150)

The workplace, and employers, have a role to play in influencing friendship. Changing jobs or being laid off can cut people off from work friendships (Pugh, 2013: 308-10. According to one study, unemployed men (though not women) showed a weakening of their friendships compared to when they were employed (Rözer, Hofstra, Brashears and Voker, 2020: 105). Workplaces vary in the extent to which they encourage friendships on the job, or make it difficult to form friendships (Riordan and Griffeth, 1995). Even those workplaces that recognize the value of friendship may not know how to create it properly. Structured 'team-building' exercises organized from the top down may not succeed in creating reciprocity and trust. For example, one researcher studied intensively a consulting firm which had a stated goal of trying to encourage friendships between employees. When interviewing staff members, the researchers found that the employer's policies were problematic: employees felt pressured to attend social events outside of working hours, showed concern about the emphasis on consumption of alcohol, and saw few signs that top executives were mingling with subordinates (Costas, 2012).

Indeed, some philosophers and political economists would argue that capitalism itself undermines friendship:

- by increasing a sense of competition between individuals for housing, jobs and other amenities (Bauman, 2001; Isin, 2004);
- by the pressure that people feel to work longer hours, at times in isolated workplaces (Dunkelman, 2014: 54);
- by overvaluing wealth as a marker of social status, so that people are more likely to seek out 'successful' individuals for friendship, with consequences for lower-income and vulnerable people (House, Landis and Uberson, 1988, 544);
- by creating an economy where people feel compelled to relocate to other locations or other employers for work (Pugh, 2013: 310), as friendships often suffer when friends become separated by long distances (Sharmeen, Arentze and Timmermans, 2015);
- or by influencing people to prioritize career success over having meaning in their lives (May, 2012: 79; Cutterham, 2013; Markiewicz, Deveine and Kausilas, 2000) .

It is valuable to have a critical conversation about the structural determinants of interpersonal relationships; however, these kinds of broad claims about capitalism are difficult to measure and substantiate. They would, however, be worthy subjects of future empirical research.

4. *The Evolution of Friendship and Loneliness: Political Factors*

The economic realm, of course, is closely linked to the political realm; politics involves debate over how the economy should be regulated, and in a democratic society, reflects differing views and influences over redistribution. Features of the economy are not predetermined; they can be influenced, even transformed, by the decisions of elected officials. We turn now to the question of how the political arena itself influences loneliness of individuals, or friendships within society. One can define the political arena as including:

- political parties, and their varying ideological and policy orientations,
- elections, and the ability of voters to make choices about the kind of government they want,
- civil society and interest groups, which may influence policy preferences,
- political discourse; the ways in which ideas and information are expressed within the media, parliamentary debate, public discussion, and popular culture.

With respect to the political arena, there is much discussion of the indirect ways in which friendship relationships can be shaped. For example, Benedict Anderson's classic discussion of nationalism posited that a sense of shared nationhood constituted an 'imagined community,' in which people felt connected to each other even if they did not know them personally. As Anderson wrote, "...[T]he nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (Anderson, 1991: 7). Democracy has often been described as relying on a shared sense of 'civic friendship.' (Kaplan, 2007: 225). Classic works of political science, such as Almond and Verba's *Civic Culture*, wrote of the importance of trust within society, often built informally between individuals, for the maintenance of democracy (Almond and Verba, 1965: 219-21). Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan argued that as society gained in complexity, one of the factors that helped to ensure the stability of democracy was the emergence of 'cross-cutting cleavages': groups of people who shared interests that transcended religious, regional and class lines; for example, professionals such as doctors shared a regard for scientific progress and ethical values (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967: 5, 30-33, 41; also Binder, in Binder et al, 1971: 46-7). Marc J. Dunkelman (2014: xvii) argued that declining social interactions between people in the United States – especially the weakening of what he called "middle-ring ties" between neighbours, community members, and casual friends – were having a direct impact on the political dysfunction within that country. These notions have in common a view that democracy and social harmony are mutually reinforcing: however, political science has seldom explored their connection to friendship in detail. As an earlier section of this report observed, political philosophy has long explored the notion of friendship as a political idea – but when it comes to empirical research on causes of friendship and loneliness, disciplines such as psychology and sociology have offered more concrete findings than political science.

At the same time, the question of social harmony within democracies has become a question of acute concern in the twenty-first century. There has been much discussion of political polarization: the tendency in some democracies for the weakening of the political centre, and the increasing prominence of a sharp divide between the far right and a fragmented left. This tendency, and its reflection within strident public voices in social media, could be a potential threat to democracy, insofar as there is little room for compromise between sharply divided actors. Although this complex phenomenon are beyond the scope of this research

report, some scholars have suggested a link political polarization and interpersonal relationships. For example, a rhetoric of animosity, rather than friendly rivalry, between those of differing political views may lead elected governments to disregard the legitimate concerns and interests of those of a differing political orientation (Sunstein, 2019: 19-36 and chapter 16; Fukuyama, 2018: chapter 6, chapter 8).

It is not inevitable that people who have opposing ideologies will be personal enemies: a study of students showed that they could readily be friends with those who did not share their political views. (Poteat, Mereish, Liu, and Nam, 2011: 824). This finding is worthy of more research, in order to determine the factors that might transform a political competitor into a bitter adversary. One researcher showed that participants who support authoritarian values (such as conforming to the dominant view, strong authority, and intolerance of opposition) tend to support leaders who project a cold, unfeeling demeanour; however, this research is quite dated (Lane, 1978: 450-53). In their book *How Democracies Die*, Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt argued that one of the warning signs that democracy is in danger is when political actors refer to their competitors for elected office as if they are the enemy, claiming (inaccurately) that they are a threat to the established order (Levitsky and Way, 2-18: 23).)

Is the reverse true, that leaders who model caring and friendly behaviour also encourage friendly behaviour among citizens? It has sometimes been argued that politicians such as Barack Obama practiced a ‘politics of affect,’ where a personal communication style projecting empathy corresponded to more inclusive policies. However, it is not clear whether these forms of politics encourage citizens to be more friendly to each other; such research is yet to be done (Johnson, 2010: 504-6). It would be interesting to examine whether the presence of friendly talk from leaders, and visibly friendly interactions between leaders, have a measurable impact on citizens’ behaviour towards each other. One topic of debate in political science is whether some election systems produce more social animosity, while others promote more cooperative behaviour. For example, a system of preferential voting, where voters rank their preferred candidates in order, could arguably discourage highly abrasive candidates or extreme parties. Some evidence shows that where such a system exists (for example in New Zealand), over time such a system does generally build more amicable relations and patterns of cooperation between political parties. However, whether this has an impact on society as a whole is unclear (Reilly, 2002), and certainly there is little evidence that friendship patterns in society would result from electoral reform.

In political science, one term that is potentially relevant to the role of friendship is the term ‘informal politics’: the political outcomes that occur not because of formal deliberation and open legal processes, but through conversations between individuals, networks of acquaintanceship, and *ad hoc* efforts to achieve consensus. Informal politics tends to have a negative connotation: it has in the past been associated with corruption, preferential treatment of friends and loyal supporters (clientelism), or backroom-dealing that is hidden from the public (Radnitz, 2011, 351-74; Goodfellow, 2020: 278-9). Informal politics is often discussed as a feature of authoritarian states, in which political pressure, even coercion, from the top leadership may be used to prevent fair administration of the law or equitable access to resources (Helmke and Levitsky, 2006; LeVine, 2008) Yet some scholars argue that this negative bias towards informal politics excludes consideration of ways in which interpersonal relationships might have favourable outcomes for democracy (Goodfellow, 2020), such as the friendly relationships between political that might

help to prevent misunderstandings and enable calm resolution of differences (Veenendaal, 2020; Christiansen, 1200). Friendship, by its nature, need not be exclusionary of others in society, so there is no logical reason why it must be so in politics. Nor must informal communication between friends in politics be secret simply because it is informal; politicians can announce it in the media, write about it in their memoirs, or even mention their friendships in parliamentary speeches.

Let's consider friendship as an independent variable. Can friendship determine outcomes in politics? Before an election, people often discuss their choices with their friends before casting their ballot, although it is difficult to determine whether friendship plays a determining role in how people vote (Sokey and Djupe, 2011; Sokhey and McClurg, 2012). One study performed in Sweden demonstrated that politicians who had friends with members of disadvantaged groups (such as women, migrants, senior citizens, working-class people, and young people), were more likely to champion policies that aimed to improve the circumstances of those groups (Kokkonen and Karlsson, 2017: 701). Similar findings were published by Newman (2-14: 133-36) who furthermore found that such friendships were more likely to support curtailing the wealth and power of the rich. Furthermore, when politicians are friendly with each other, that can influence their political outcomes. Christian Fong (2020: 275-8) found that in the United States Congress, members often turned to trusted colleagues, even from the opposing political party, for advice on making decisions about complex legislative business. A study of city councils in ten municipalities found that when councils worked together cooperatively, in a spirit of basic belief in each other's good intentions and respect for their viewpoint, they were seen as more effective even when there were sharp disagreements on substantive matters (Nelson, Gabris and Davis, 2011: 200-201). In times of social upheaval, friendships between people of different political orientations can help to resolve crises and agree on a peaceful path forward (Horowitz, 2013).

5.Evidence-Based Policies for Encouraging Friendship

If loneliness can be attributed to concrete causes within the society and the economy, then it stands to reason that concrete policies can be adopted to alleviate loneliness. Further, the above sections have discussed some of the factors that can help to encourage interpersonal friendships. The question that arises is whether this knowledge could be applied to policy: if governments could encourage friendship and discourage loneliness with concrete actions. Policies in the spirit of friendship could include policies of redistribution that allow people from all walks of life to have a better standard of living (Bentley, 2013: 18). In other words, social policies such as education or health care could be seen as friendly policies. However, the stimulation of interpersonal friendship *itself* has rarely been considered as a subject for government involvement, and well-intentioned policies have not been distinguished from evidence-based best practices.

At this point, it is argued it is not enough for governments to try to 'add friendliness' to existing policies and structures; a more thorough reform to counteract friendship-destroying practices may be in order. Here one can mention an interesting study based on evidence from the former German Democratic Republic (the communist regime that existed in eastern Germany between 1945 and 1990). The authors note that the authorities tried to encourage social interaction through housing policy, by housing members of different social backgrounds in the same building; however, the effort was counterproductive. Due to the extreme nature of secret police surveillance carried out by the East German *Stasi*, many people kept to themselves and

mistrusted their neighbours. (Völker and Flap, 1997). While this is only one example, it suggests that friendship-oriented policies will have limited use if conditions that discourage friendships continue to prevail.

A more recent model from the United Kingdom shows that the political realm can play a role in questions related to friendship. Prior to her tragic death by assassination, Labour Member of Parliament Jo Cox formed a multi-party commission to investigate questions of loneliness and to propose actions that the government could take to ameliorate it. The commission produced a report that called for specific actions, among them: the government should have a national policy on addressing loneliness; there should be a designated government Minister for Loneliness; social policies in general should be more attentive to clients' social support networks; and the government should help to identify evidence-based research on remedies for loneliness. The Commission also held multiple public events, and one of the ideas they used was distributing "happy to chat" badges, that people could wear to signal to others that they were open to conversation (Jo Cox Commission, 2017: 3-4).

Then-Prime Minister Teresa May praised the Jo Cox Commission's Report and appointed Parliamentary Secretary Tracey Crouch to head the loneliness initiative within the Department of the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media, and Support. They followed up on the main goals of the Commission, by prioritizing research on loneliness – including developing an index for measuring loneliness, include loneliness-fighting in a variety of policies, and raising public awareness. They provided funding for community initiatives, sport programmes, and efforts targeted at older people and the enemployed (United Kingdom, 2018: 2-9). The Loneliness initiative continued and expanded even after Teresa May left the Prime Minister's position. Their reports highlighted examples of community initiatives, research efforts, and public education (United Kingdom, 2020 and 2021b). It was acknowledged that one of the tasks for the future was the effort to share evidence about which programs were most effective. One of the strengths of the UK model was its efforts to include the health care sector, the voluntary sector, and business in conversations about loneliness. However, as the 2021 progress report acknowledged, the COVID-19 pandemic halted or suspended some of the loneliness projects (United Kingdom, 2021a). Nevertheless, the Jo Cox Commission's work demonstrated that policy initiatives related to interpersonal relations need not come from the top down; opposition MPs, bi-partisan initiatives, and civil society organizations can work to propose policy ideas.

Indeed, when it comes to examples of policies that work, many of them can be found at the local level. Solutions to problems of loneliness and friendship cannot be imposed purely from the top down; they ought to be based on the strengths and limitations of distinct communities, and the needs of people living within them (Franklin and Tranter, 2021). Over sixty years ago, Jane Jacobs (1961) argued that current urban planning policies were adversely affecting interpersonal contacts within communities by replacing existing neighbourhoods with artificial and large-scale developments, often bisected by highways. While Jacobs' focus was decidedly NOT with friendship *per se*, her lament for the loss of neighbourly support and conversation documented well the multiple negative impacts that twentieth-century urban development had on social relationships. Recent scholarship has explored the ways in which cities and organizations have tried to re-create a sense of community by facilitating movement through a community and providing suitable meeting places. Eric Klinenberg (2018: 21, 31, 134-7) offered a number of

concrete and effective policies, such as the building of multi-use paths along discontinued transport routes; diversifying the services offered by public libraries, especially to encourage people to drop to socialize; creating outdoor adult gyms, conveniently located near existing concentrations of residences; and building more cooperative housing. A number of researchers have shown that programs to encourage group singing (i.e. choirs) have been effective in forming friendships among lonely and depressed people (Clift and Morrison, 2011; Clift, Manship and Stephens, 2017).

Adequate and accessible public transport is one proposed solution to enable socially isolated people to attend organized activities where they might make friends (Lamanna, Klinger, Liu and Mirza, 2020). For people living outside of cities, transit outside their homes might be difficult to arrange. Providing mini-bus transport in rural areas in a region of Northern Ireland was shown to help people develop more social interactions, with the bus itself serving as a site for socializing (McGuire, Longo and Sherry, 2022: 166-67). One study found that positive relationship experiences could be built from a program where volunteers shared art activities in the homes of people living alone in rural areas (McLeod, Skinner, Wilkinson and Reid, 2016).

One can find other examples of efforts to build friendships: in Hamilton, ON, decades after a neighbourhood declined after the main employer closed down, two former workers revived the former community by forming an initiative to build a commemorative park in the area (Moro, 2021). Lennoxville, Quebec began a regular Friendship Day festival, which was intended to build relationships between anglophones and francophones (*Record*, 2013) A Canada Safety Council program in 2014 encouraged people to walk around their neighbourhoods and get to know their neighbours (Hodder, 2014). Communities such as Guelph and Waterloo established community gardens with the direct goal of encouraging people to make friends (Shuttleworth, 2014; *Waterloo Chronicle*, 2016). “Community kitchens,” where food-insecure people have a place to cook together, have enabled participants to make friends (Engler-Stringer, 2006). “Buddy benches,” or friendship benches, have been introduced in some locales, where people are invited to sit and talk to new people (Wadhvani, 2016; McLernon, 2022). Programs to encourage more friendships between senior citizens and children could help alleviate isolation (Nee, 1989; Elliott-O’Dare, Timonen and Conlon, 2019). The author of a recent book aimed at a popular audience stressed the importance of simply having pleasant conversations with as many people as possible on a daily basis (Drouin, 2022). Small steps can have good results, which could potentially be replicated on a larger scale.

Friendship could be encouraged at the micro level. In his work, Cass Sunstein has posited that governments and other institutions can use ‘nudges’ in order to achieve policy goals by encouraging individuals to change their behaviour in small, positive ways. A nudge is part public information, part reminder, aimed to convince people that incremental changes can be in their best interest Nudges work best when they are clearly communicated, non-preachy, and show the

During the early COVID-19 pandemic, the media widely covered the phenomenon of Italians spontaneously singing together, each from their apartment balcony, to cope with the isolation of lockdown (Corvo and DeCaro, 2020).

individual that their action will have a direct result. (Sunstein, 2019: 59-62). This notion of nudges can be deployed to encourage individuals to befriend others, as Figure 4 below suggests.

Figure 4: Prompting Friendship

BE^aFRIEND

- **B**e aware of lone individuals in social settings
- **E**xpand your circle to make room for joiners
- **F**ear of approaching strangers is human, and OK
- **R**each out to strangers anyway
- **I**nvite them to your next social gathering
- **E**xpect them to say no the first time
- **N**ext time, they may say yes
- **D**on't just approach people who look and talk like you - remember **D**iversity

Chandler/2022

Implications

There are potentially three ways in which governments could influence friendships within society. Political leaders could acknowledge the institutions which shape citizens' opportunities for friendship, and begin a conversation about whether there is a need for institutional reform. Second, governments can embrace policies that can allocate resources to initiatives for developing friendship. Third, governments can help to publicize norms about how individuals can fulfill their obligations to their fellow citizens to build a society with warmer social interactions; Figure 4 above provides an example of that.

Figure 5 summarizes areas in which more concrete research could be encouraged to advance our understanding of friendship, politics and policy. As discussed above, many authors who have written about friendship have observed that it is difficult to gain a complete picture of friendship patterns, because people define friendship in such diverse ways. One concrete concern that stands out though, is that certain groups of people tend to be under-studied in research on friendship. For example, one major monograph studying friendships deliberately did not include "homeless rough sleepers, travellers, asylum seekers or international jet setters" (Spencer and

Pahl, 2006: p. 5). Efforts could be made to ensure that groups such as migrants, the unhoused, undocumented and disabled individuals are included in research on friendship.

A second area for further research would be on the phenomenon of friendlessness. There is considerable research that has been done on loneliness, but relatively little on those who are left out of friendship. Some of those individuals might experience hurtful forms of exclusion, such as ostracism or bullying. Those who feel shunned or rejected might feel pain that goes beyond the loneliness of solitude. We would understand loneliness and social isolation better if we knew more about the extent of the scope of those who feel bereft of friendship.

The research in this report focusses on the literature on friendship in Western, democratic societies; however, there is much that we could learn about how friendship is understood in non-Western and Indigenous societies. As such research is best done by members with lived experience in those communities, research opportunities for those who identify with those cultures should be encouraged. In future, the author of this report intends to research further notions of friendship in Ukrainian and Russian cultures, as research on those countries is one of the author's areas of research expertise.

Friendship also has a global dimension (Farrands, 2001: 143-44). For hundreds of years, international diplomacy between states has used the language of friendship as a desirable goal of interstate relations; indeed, the United Nations Charter (1945) includes 'friendly relations' as one of the foundations of a peaceful world order. Recent violent conflicts in Syria, Ukraine and elsewhere make the concept of 'friendly relations' seem very elusive. But if we think of friendship between nations as being, at its heart, about friendship between individuals who live in different nations, it is a concept worth reviving, especially at a time when climate change requires a global response.

Finally, if friendship-building is to become a permanent fixture of policy, then political parties themselves should work in the spirit of friendship, as they are the institutions that will eventually form governments. A research project that would be potentially interesting is: how do political parties approach the question of friendship? How do their platforms address interpersonal relationships, and how does that match the policies they promote once in government? If voters have more information about parties' positions on friendship, it could help them to make choices on Election Day, and encourage parties to be more responsive to voters' expectations.

Figure 5: Areas for Future Research

More research on specific topics could further our understanding in future --



- Friendship Research should include understudied groups, such as the unhoused
- More Research should be done on the phenomenon of friendlessness
- Studies of friendship in non-Western cultures may provide insights into alternative practices to encourage warm interpersonal connections
- Could interpersonal friendship be encouraged on a global scale, to build more friendships that transcend state boundaries?
- The role that political parties and legislatures play in advancing or inhibiting friendly discourses is worthy of attention

Conclusion

Encouraging people to make friends is an important part of alleviating loneliness, but it should not only be up to the lonely to rectify their situation. All of society should be encouraged to notice the solitary people they see in their midst and to include them in conversation. Governments can play a role in ensuring that people have the time, and the opportunities, to interact with each other. They can also play a role in public education, by challenging the stigmas of shame and personal inadequacy that have in the past been associated with loneliness. Governments can also make encouraging friendship creation to be a priority in revenue allocation. As Anthony Giddens (in Franklin, ed. 1998: 32-33) argued, the modern welfare state is oriented towards the material security of separate individuals, but it is time to move on to the next stage. The welfare state could be reconfigured in order to encourage positive interpersonal relations, as a dimension of health and security. It should be a goal to create a world in which every person has at least one friend.

Knowledge Mobilization Activities

This research report will be available on the Internet as an open-access document, and a select number of organizations will be contacted to make them aware of the location of the link. The author intends to continue the research further, with a goal of conference presentations, open-access publications, and availability for public talks. Social organizations, government agencies and members of the public who are interested in postcards of the infographics are invited to contact the author:

Professor Andrea Chandler
andrea.chandler@carleton.ca
Department of Political Science, Carleton University
B640 Loeb Building
1125 Colonel By Drive
Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B6
Canada

Bibliography starts next page →

Bibliography

- About, Frances E, Morton J. Mendelson and Kelly T. Purdy. "Cross-Race Peer Relations and Friendship Quality." *International Journal of Behavioural Development*, vol. 27, no. 2, 2003, 165-73.
- Albert, Fruzsina, Julia Koltai, and Beata David. "The Increasing Importance of Friends: Changes in Core Discussion Network Composition in Post-Communist Hungary between 1997 – 2015." *Social Networks*, vol. 66, 2021, 139-145. *ProQuest*, doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.socnet.2021.02.005>
- Allan, Graham. "Friendship, Sociology and Social Structure." *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, vol. 15, no. 5, 1998, 685-702.
- Almond, Gabriel A. "Introduction: a Functional Approach to Comparative Politics." In Almond and James S. Coleman, ed. *The Politics of the Developing Areas*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960.
- Almond, Gabriel A. *The Civic Culture Revisited*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989.
- Almond, Gabriel A. *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1965.
- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities*. Revised ed. London: Verso, 1991.
- Arendt, Hannah. *Men in Dark Times*. London, UK: Jonathan Cape Inc., 1968.
- Aristotle. *The Politics*. Trans. T. Sinclair. Harmondsworth, UK and New York, NY: Penguin, 1986.
- Aronson, Elliot and Shelley Patnoe. *The Jigsaw Classroom: Building Cooperation in the Classroom*. 2nd ed. New York: Longman, 1997.
- Azios, Jamie H., Katie A. Strong, Brent Archer, Natalie F. Douglas, Nina Simmons-Mackie and Linda Worrall. "Friendship Matters: a Research Agenda for Aphasia." *Aphasiology*, vol. 36, no. 3 (March 2022), 317-36. doi:10.1080/02687038.2021.1873908
- Barron, Ian. "The Shadows of Difference: Ethnicity and Young People's Friendships." *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, vol. 14, no. 5, 2011, 655-73.
- Bauman, Zygmunt. *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World*. Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2001.
- Bell, David C., Alan J. Richard, Isaac D. Montoya, William N. Ellwood, Soumen N. Goush, and Benjamin N. Matta. "Social Network Utility and the Economics of Risk: the Case of HIV," *Journal of Economic Behaviour and Organization*, vol. 33, no. 2, 1998, 195-205.
- Bentley, R. K. "Civic Friendship and Thin Citizenship." *Res Publica*, vol. 19, no. 1, Jan. 2013, 5–19, doi:10.1007/s11158-012-9203-5.
- Binder, Leonard, James S. Coleman, Joseph La Palombara, Lucian Pye, Sidney Verba and Myron Weiner, eds. *Crises and Sequences in Political Development*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1971.
- Brent, Lauren J.N., Steve W.C. Chang, Jean-François Garièpy, and Michael L. Platt. "The Neuroethology of Friendship." *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, vol. 1316, no. 1, 2014, 1-17.
- Brooks, David. "The Nuclear Family was a Mistake," *The Atlantic*, March 2020. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2020/03/the-nuclear-family-was-a-mistake/605536/> accessed 27 September 2022.
- Cacioppo, Stephanie, John P. Capitanio and John T. Cacioppo, "Toward a Neurology of Loneliness." *Psychological Bulletin*, vol. 140, no. 6, 2014, 1464-1504.

Chen, Mel Y. "Feminisms in the Air," *Signs* (special online issue on COVID-19, 2020) <http://www.signsjournal.org/covid/chen>

Chetty, R., Jackson, M.O., Kuchler, T. *et al.* "Social Capital I: Determinants of Economic Connectedness." *Nature*, no. 608, August 2022, 108-21. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-022-04997-3> Full list of authors: Raj Chetty, Matthew O. Jackson, Theresa Kuchler, Johannes Stroebel, Nathaniel Hendren, Robert B. Fluegge, Sara Gong, Federico Gonzalez, Armelle Grondin, Matthew Jacob, Drew Johnston, Martin Koenen, Eduardo Laguna-Muggenburg, Florian Mudekereza, Tom Rutter, Nicolaj Thor, Wilbur Townsend, Ruby Zhang, Mike Bailey, Pablo Barberá, Monica Bhole, and Nils Werenerfelt.

Chetty, R., Jackson, M.O., Kuchler, T. *et al.* "Social Capital II: Determinants of Economic Connectedness." *Nature* 608, 122–134 (August 2022). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-022-04997-3> Full list of authors: Raj Chetty, Matthew O. Jackson, Theresa Kuchler, Johannes Stroebel, Nathaniel Hendren, Robert B. Fluegge, Sara Gong, Federico Gonzalez, Armelle Grondin, Matthew Jacob, Drew Johnston, Martin Koenen, Eduardo Laguna-Muggenburg, Florian Mudekereza, Tom Rutter, Nicolaj Thor, Wilbur Townsend, Ruby Zhang, Mike Bailey, Pablo Barberá, Monica Bhole, and Nils Werenerfelt.

Clift, Stephen & Morrison, Ian. "Group Singing Fosters Mental Health and Wellbeing: Findings from the East Kent "Singing for Health" Network Project." *Mental Health and Social Inclusion*, 15, 2, 2011, 88-97. [doi:https://doi-org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/10.1108/20428301111140930](https://doi-org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/10.1108/20428301111140930)

Clift, Stephen; Manship, Sharon; and Stephens, Lizzi. "Further Evidence that Singing Fosters Mental Health and Well-Being: the West Kent and Midway Project." *Mental Health and Social Inclusion*, 21, 1, 2011, 53-62.

Conference Board of Canada, Mental Health Commission of Canada, and Workplace Safety and Prevention Services. Mental Health Commission of Canada, and Workplace Safety and Prevention Services. *COVID-19 Impact on Mental Health and How Employees are Coping*. June 23, 2020 https://www-conferenceboard-ca.proxy.library.carleton.ca/docs/default-source/pdf_downloads/200623_mhcc-survey-results_en-final2.pdf?sfvrsn=e3135213_2, accessed 21 September 2022.

Corvo, Elisabetta, and Walter De Caro. "COVID-19 and Spontaneous Singing to Decrease Loneliness, Improve Cohesion, and Mental Well-Being: An Italian Experience." *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, vol. 12, no. S1, 2020, S247–S248, [doi:10.1037/tra0000838](https://doi.org/10.1037/tra0000838).

Costas, Jana. "'We Are All Friends Here': Reinforcing Paradoxes of Normative Control in a Culture of Friendship." *Journal of Management Inquiry* 21, no. 4, 2012, 377–95. [doi:10.1177/1056492612439104](https://doi.org/10.1177/1056492612439104).

Cutterham, Tom. "Just Friends," *The New Inquiry*, 22, December 2, 2013, 38-41.

Dahlberg, Lena. "Loneliness during the Covid-19 Pandemic." *Aging & Mental Health*, 2021. [doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13607863.2021.1875195](https://doi.org/10.1080/13607863.2021.1875195).

de Zžäiga, Homero Gil, Matthew Barnidge, and Andrös Scherman. "Social Media Social Capital, Offline Social Capital, and Citizenship: Exploring Asymmetrical Social Capital Effects." *Political Communication*, vol. 34, no. 1, 2017, 44–68.

Derrida, Jacques. *The Politics of Friendship*. Trans. George Collins. London and New York: Verso, 1997.

Douglas, Jacinta. "Loss of Friendship following Traumatic Brain Injury: a Model Grounded in the Experience of Adults with Severe Injury." *Neuropsychological Rehabilitation*, vol. 30, no. 7, 2020, 1277-1302. doi:10.1080/09602011.2019.1574589

Drouin, Michelle. *Out of Touch: How to Survive an Intimacy Famine*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2022.

Dunkelman, Marc J. *The Vanishing Neighbourhood: the Transformation of American Community* New York: Norton, 2014.

Durkheim, Emile. *On Suicide* (1897) Trans. Robin Buss. London, UK: Penguin, 2006.

Elliott-O'Dare, Catherine, Virpi Timonen and Catherine Conlon. "Escaping 'the Old Fogey': Doing Old Age through Intergenerational Friendship." *Journal of Aging Studies*, vol. 48, 2019, 67-75 doi:10.1016/j.jaging.2019.01.004

Engler-Stringer, Rachel (2006) *Collective Kitchens: Impacts on the Lives of Participants*. Community-University Institute for Social Research, online at Canadian Public Documents database.

Enns, Diane. *Thinking Through Loneliness*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2022.

Farrands, Chris. "Touching Friendship Beyond Friendship: Friendship and Citizenship in Global Politics." *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2001, 143-73.

Fong, Christian. "Expertise, Networks, and Interpersonal Influence in [US] Congress," *Journal of Politics*, vol. 82, no. 1, 2020, 269-84.

Francisco-Menchavez, Valerie. "Communities of Care," in *The Labour of Care: Filipina Migrants and Transnational Families in the Digital Age*. Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2018.

Franklin, Adrian, and Bruce Tranter. "Loneliness and the Cultural, Spatial, Temporal and Generational Bases of Belonging." *Australian Journal of Psychology*, vol. 73, no. 1, 2021, 57-69, doi:10.1080/00049530.2020.1837007.

Galupo, M. Paz, Shane B. Henise, and Kyle S. Davis. "Transgender Microaggressions in the Context of Friendship: Patterns of Experience Across Friends' Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity." *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity*, vol. 1, no. 4, 2014, 461-70. doi:10.1037/sgd0000075.

Giddens, Anthony. "Risk Society: the Context of British Politics." In Jane Franklin, ed. *The Politics of Risk Society*. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press with the Institute for Public Policy Research, 1998.

Giddens, Anthony. *The Transformation of Intimacy: Sexuality, Love and Eroticism in Modern Societies*. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1992.

Goodfellow, Tom. "Political Informality: Deals, Trust Networks and the Negotiation of Value in the Urban Realm." *Journal of Development Studies*, vol. 56, no. 2, 278-94.

Harré, Rom and Rathali M. Moghaddam, eds. *The Psychology of Friendship and Enmity: Relationships in Love, Work, Politics and War*. Vol. 1. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2013.

Helmke, Gretchen and Steven Levitsky. "Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics: a Research Agenda." *Perspectives on Politics*, vol. 2, no. 4, 2004, 725-55.

Hodder, Michelle. (2014, Nov 12). "Your Health and Safety is a Community Effort." *Smoky River Express*. 12 November 2014. ProQuest database.

Horowitz, Sarah *Friendship and Politics in Revolutionary France* University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013.

House, J.S., K.R. Landis and D. Umberson. "Social Relationships and Health." *Science*, 241 (4865), 1988, 540-44.

- Isin, Engen F. "The Neurotic Citizen," *Citizenship Studies*, vol. 8, no. 3, 2005, 217-35.
- James, Allison. "Learning to be Friends: Methodological Lessons from Participant Observation among English Schoolchildren." *Childhood*, vol. 3, 1996, 313-30.
- Jane Jacobs, *Dark Age Ahead* Toronto: Vintage Books Canada 2005. Kindle version
- Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of American Cities*. New York: Vintage Books, 1961.
- Jerrone, Dorthy and G. Clare Wenger. "Stability and Change in Late-Life Friendships." *Ageing and Society*, vol. 19, no. 6, November 1999, 661-76 [doi:10.1017/S044686X99007540](https://doi.org/10.1017/S044686X99007540)
- Jo Cox Commission. *Combatting Loneliness, One Conversation at a Time: a Call to Action*. London, UK: 2017. https://www.jocoxfoundation.org/loneliness_commission
- Johnson, Carol. "The Politics of Affective Citizenship: From Blair to Obama." *Citizenship Studies*, vol. 14, no. 4, 2010, 495-510.
- Kaplan, Danny. "What Can the Concept of Friendship Contribute to the Study of National Identity?" *Nations and Nationalism*, vol. 13, no. 2, Apr. 2007, 225-244, [doi:10.1111/j.1469-8129.2007.00270.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-8129.2007.00270.x).
- King, Preston. "Friendship in Politics." *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2007, 125-145, [doi:10.1080/13698230701207915](https://doi.org/10.1080/13698230701207915).
- Kokkonen, Andrej, and David Karlsson. "That's What Friends Are for: How Intergroup Friendships Promote Historically Disadvantaged Groups' Substantive Political Representation." *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 68, no. 4, Dec. 2017, 693-717, [doi:10.1111/1468-4446.12266](https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12266).
- Lamanna, Madeleine, Christopher A. Klinger, Anna Liu, & Raza M. Mirza, "The Association between Public Transportation and Social Isolation in Older Adults: A Scoping Review of the Literature." *Canadian Journal on Aging*, 39(3), 2020, 393-405.
- Lane, Robert E. "Interpersonal Relations and Leadership in a 'Cold Society.'" *Comparative Politics*, vol. 10, no. 4, July 1979, 443-59.
- Lane, Robert E. "The Road not Taken: Friendship, Consumerism and Happiness." *Critical Review*, vol. 4, no. 4, fall 1994, 521-54.
- Le Vine, Victor T. "Nation Building and Informal Politics." *International Social Science Journal*, 192 (June 2008), 155-68.
- Leland, John. "How Loneliness is Damaging our Health," *New York Times*, 20 April 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/20/nyregion/loneliness-epidemic.html> accessed 27 September 2022.
- Lessard, Leah M., and Jaana Juvonen. "Friendless Adolescents: Do Perceptions of Social Threat Account for their Internalizing Difficulties and Continued Friendlessness?" *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, vol. 28, no. 2, 2018, 277-83.
- Levitsky, Steven and Daniel Ziblatt, *How Democracies Die* New York: Broadway Books, 2018.
- Lytle, Ashley, and Sheri R. Levy. "Reducing Heterosexuals' Prejudice Toward Gay Men and Lesbian Women via an Induced Cross-Orientation Friendship." *Psychology of Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity* vol. 2, no. 4, 2015. 447-55. [doi:10.1037/sgd0000135](https://doi.org/10.1037/sgd0000135).
- McGuire, Ryan, Alberto Longo, and Erin Sherry. "Tackling Poverty and Social Isolation Using a Smart Rural Development Initiative." *Journal of Rural Studies*, vol. 89, 2022, 161-70.
- MacLeod, Ann, Mark W. Skinner, Fay Wilkinson and Heather Reid. "Connecting Socially Isolated Older Rural Adults with Older Volunteers through Expressive Arts." *Canadian Journal on Aging*, vol. 35 no. 1, 2016, 14-27.

Mark, Vernon. *The Meaning of Friendship*. 1st edition. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.

Markiewicz, Dorothy, Irene Devine and Dana Kausilas. "Friendships of Women and Men at Work: Job Satisfaction and Resource Implications." *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2000, 161-84.

Martinussen, Maree, Margaret Wetherell and Virginia Braun. "Just Being and Being Bad: Female Friendship as a Refuge in Neoliberal Times." *Feminism and Psychology*, vol. 30, no. 1 (February 1, 2020), 3-21. doi: 10.1177/0959353519857752.

McLernon, Will. "Happy to Chat benches in Dartmouth encourage strangers to start talking," *CBC News Nova Scotia*, 18 August 2022, <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/happy-to-chat-benches-in-dartmouth-encourage-strangers-to-start-talking-1.6552400>

Mele, Angelo. "Does School Desegregation Promote Diverse Interactions? An Equilibrium Model of Segregation within Schools," *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*. Vol. 12, no. 2, 2020, 228-57 doi:10.1257/pol.20170604

Moro, Tevia. "Bulldozed Brightside to Live on in Name of Future Hamilton Park: On Edge of Heavy Industry, Neighbourhood was Working-Class, Immigrant Enclave Until the 1960s." *The Spectator*, May 31, 2021, ProQuest database.

[n.a.] "Bushwood Court Celebrates Successful Neighbourhood Matching Funds Project." *Waterloo Chronicle*, June 29, 2016, Proquest Database.

[n.a.] "Friendship Day Festival Incorporated." *Record*, March 4, 2013, ProQuest database.

[n.a.] "Further evidence that singing fosters mental health and wellbeing: The west kent and midway project." *Mental Health and Social Inclusion*, vol. 21, no. 1, 53-62, 2017. Proquest database.

Nardi, Peter M. *Gay Men's Friendships: Invincible Community*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

Nee, David. "The Intergenerational Movement." *Journal of Children in Contemporary Society*, vol. 20, no. 3-4, 1989, 79-90.

Nelson, Kimberly L., Gerald T. and Trenton J. Davis, "What Makes Municipal Councils Effective? An Empirical Analysis of how [US] Council Members Perceive their Group Interactions and Processes." *State and Local Government Review*, 43, 3, 2011, 196-204.

Newman, Benjamin J. "My Poor Friend: Financial Distress in one's Social Network, the Perceived Power of the Rich, and Support for Redistribution." *Journal of Politics*, vol. 76, no. 1, 2014, 126-38.

Pahl, Ray. *On Friendship*. Cambridge, MA: Polity Press, 2000.

Pelley, Lauren (2016, Jan 14). "How Friendship Changes as you Age: The Evidence is Clear: Friends are Pretty Great and Good for us." *The Spectator*, 14 January 2016. ProQuest database

Pinker, Susan. *The Village Effect: How Face-to-Face Contact can make us Healthier and Happier*. Toronto: Random House Canada, 2014.

Portacolone, Elena, Carla Perissinotto, Jarmin Christine Yeh, and S Ryan Greysen. "'I Feel Trapped': The Tension Between Personal and Structural Factors of Social Isolation and the Desire for Social Integration Among Older Residents of a High-Crime Neighborhood." *The Gerontologist* 58, no. 1, 2018, 79–88. doi:10.1093/geront/gnw268.

Poteat, V. Paul, Ethan H. Mereish, Marcia L. Liu, and J. Sophia Nam. "Can Friendships Be Bipartisan? The Effects of Political Ideology on Peer Relationships." *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations* 14, no. 6, 2011, 819–34. doi:[10.1177/1368430211401048](https://doi.org/10.1177/1368430211401048).

Pugh, Allison J. "The Planned Obsolescence of Other People: Consumer Culture and Connections in a Precarious Age." *Culture and Organization*, vol. 19, no. 4, 297-313. doi:[10.1080.14759551.2013.827421](https://doi.org/10.1080.14759551.2013.827421)

Putnam, Robert D. "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital." *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 6, no. 1, 1995, 65-78. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.1353/jod.1995.0002>.

Rath, Tom. *Vital Friends, the People you can't afford to live without*. New York, NY: Gallup Press, 2006.

Reilly, Benjamin. "Electoral Systems for Divided Societies," *Journal of Democracy*, vol. 13, no. 2, 2002, 156-70.

Riley, Denise. "The Right to Be Lonely". *differences: a Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2002. 1–13. doi: <https://doi-org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/10.1215/10407391-13-1-1>

Riordan, Christine M. and Rodger W. Griffeth. "The Opportunity for Friendship in the Workplace: an Underexplored Construct." *Journal of Business and Psychology*, vol. 10, no. 2, 1995, 141-54.

Riyanto, Yohanes E., and Yeo X. W. Jonathan. "Directed Trust and Trustworthiness in a Social Network: an Experimental Investigation." *Journal of Economic Behaviour and Organization*, no. 151 (July 2018), 234-53.

Roach, Tom. *Friendship as a Way of Life: Foucault, AIDS and the Politics of Shared Estrangement*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2012.

Rözer, Jesper J., Bas Hofstra, Matthew E. Brashears and Beate Volker. "Does Unemployment Lead to Isolation? The Consequences of Unemployment for Social Networks." *Social Networks*, vol. 63 (October 1, 2020), 110-111. doi:[10.1016/j.socnet.2020.06.002](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socnet.2020.06.002)

Rubin, Kenneth H., William Bukowski and Brette Laursen, eds. *Handbook of Peer Interactions, Relationships and Groups*. New York, NY and London, UK: Guilford Press, 2009.

Ryan, Christian, Maeve Coughlan, Jean Maher, Patricia Vicario, and Alison Garvey. "Perceptions of Friendship among Girls with Autism Spectrum Disorders." *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, vol. 36, no. 3, 2021, 393-407. doi:[10.1080/08856257.2021.1755930](https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2021.1755930)

Salas, Christian E., Martin Casassus, Leanne Rowlands, Steve Pimm and Desmond A.J. Flanagan. "'Relating through Sameness': a Qualitative Study of Friendship and Social Isolation in Chronic Traumatic Brain Injury." *Neuropsychological Rehabilitation*, vol. 28, no. 7, 2018, 1161-78. doi:[10.1080/09602011.2016.1247730](https://doi.org/10.1080/09602011.2016.1247730)

Schwarzenbach, Sibyl. "Civic Friendship: a Critique of Recent Care Theory." *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2007, 23-35. doi:[10.1080/1698230701208020](https://doi.org/10.1080/1698230701208020)

Schwarzenbach, Sibyl. *On Civic Friendship: Including Women in the State*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.

Sharmeen, Fariya, Theo Arentze and Harry Timmermans. "Predicting the Evolution of Social Networks with Life Cycle Events." *Transportation*, vol. 42, no. 5, 2015, 733-51.

Shuttleworth, Joanne. "Let's Hear it for Community Hubs." *The Guelph Mercury*, 14 April 2014, ProQuest database.

Sokhey, Anand Edward and Paul A. Djupe, "Interpersonal Networks and Democratic Politics," *PS: Political Science and Politics*, vol. 44, no. 1, 2011, 55-59.

Sokhey, Anand Edward and Scott D. McClurg, "Social Networks and Correct Voting," *Journal of Politics*, vol. 74, no. 3, 751-64.

Spencer, Liz and Ray Pahl. *Rethinking Friendship: Hidden Solidarities Today*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006.

Sunstein, Cass. *How Change Happens*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2019.

Thelen, Kathleen. "The American Precariat: U.S. Capitalism in Comparative Perspective." *Perspectives on Politics* 17, no. 1 (2019): 5–27. doi:10.1017/S1537592718003419.

Todd May, *Friendship in an age of Economics: Resisting the Forces of Neoliberalism*. Lanham, MA: Lexington Books, 2012.

United Kingdom, Her Majesty's Government, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). *A Connected Society: A Strategy for Tackling Loneliness. Laying the Foundations for Change* London, UK: 2018. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-connected-society-a-strategy-for-tackling-loneliness>

United Kingdom, Her Majesty's Government, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). *Loneliness Annual Report: the First Year*. London, UK: 2020.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/loneliness-annual-report-the-first-year>

United Kingdom, Her Majesty's Government, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). London, UK: *Emerging Together: the Tackling Loneliness Action Plan*.

2021 (a). <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-connected-society-a-strategy-for-tackling-loneliness>

United Kingdom, Her Majesty's Government, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). *Loneliness Annual Report: the Second Year*. London, UK: 2021(b).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/loneliness-annual-report-the-first-year>

Uno, Darcy, Bert N. Uchino and Timothy W. Smith. "Relationship Quality Moderates the Effect of Social Support Given by Close Friends on Cardiovascular Reactivity in Women." *International Journal of Behavioural Medicine*, vol. 9, no. 3, 2002, 243-62.

Veenendaal, Wouter. "When Things get Personal: How Informal and Personalized Politics Produce Regime Stability in Small States." *Government and Opposition*, vol. 55, no. 3 (2020), 393-412. doi:10.1017/gov.2018.30

Völker, Beate and Henk Flap, The Comrades' Belief: Intended and Unintended Consequences of Communism for Neighbourhood Relations in the Former GDR, *European Sociological Review*, vol. 13, no. 3, 1997, 241–265, <https://doi-org.proxy.library.carleton.ca/10.1093/oxfordjournals.esr.a018217>

Wadhvani, Ashley. "Benches Promote Friendship: a New Initiative Hims to help all Kids Feel Included." *Maple Ridge, Pitt Meadows Times*; Maple Ridge, B.C. [Maple Ridge, B.C]. 19 May 2016: A.7.

Wang, Hua and Barry Wellman. "Social Connectivity in America: Changes in Adult Friendship Network Size from 2002 to 2007." *American Behavioural Scientist*, vol. 53, no. 8, 2010, 1148-1169.

Wang, Hua, Vincent Chua and Michael A. Stefanone, "Social Ties, Communication Channels and Personal Well-Being: a Study of the Networked Lives of College Students in Singapore." *American Behavioural Scientist*, vol. 59, no. 9, 2015, 1189-1202.

Weston, Kath. *Families We Choose : Lesbians, Gays, Kinship*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991. Print.

Whitaker, Freya and Sharon Kingston, 2022. "Stress, Social Support and Substance Use in the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Translational Issues in Psychological Science*, April 2022. (Online first)

Whitehouse, Andrew J.O., Kevin Durkin and Emma Jaquet, "Friendship, Loneliness and Depression in Adolescents with Asperger's Syndrome." *Journal of Adolescence*, vol. 32, no. 2, April 2009, 309-22 [doi:10.1016/j.adolescence.2008.03.004](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.adolescence.2008.03.004)

Wilkinson, Eleanor. "Loneliness is a Feminist Issue." *Feminist Theory*, vol. 23, no. 1 (2022), 23-38.

Winstead, Barbara A., Valerian J. Derlega, Robin J. Lewis, and Janis Sanchez-Hucles, and Eva Clarke, *et al.*, "Friendship, Social Interaction and Coping with Stress." *Communication Research*, vol. 19, no. 2, April 1992, 193-211.

Witvliet, Miranda, Mara Brendgren, Pol A.C. van Lier, Hans M. Koot and Frank Vitaro. "Early Adolescent Depressive Symptoms: Prediction from Clique Isolation, Loneliness and Perceived Social Acceptance." *Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology*, vol. 38, no. 8, 2010, 1045-1056.

Ye, Baojuan, Jing Hu, Gensen Xiao, Yanzhen Zhang, Mingfan Liu, Xinqiang Wang, Qiang Yang, and Fei Xia. "Access to epidemic information and life satisfaction under the period of covid-19: The mediating role of perceived stress and the moderating role of friendship quality." *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, vol. 17, no. 3, 2022, 1227-45. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11482-021-09957-z>

Zhang, Xinzhi, and Wan-Ying Lin. "Hanging Together or Not? Impacts of Social Media Use and Organisational Membership on Individual and Collective Political Actions." *International Political Science Review*, vol. 39, no. 2, 2018, 273-289, [doi:10.1177/019251211664184](https://doi.org/10.1177/019251211664184).

United Nations Charter (1945) <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/full-text>