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Adolescence

The Person

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From *The Person* by Theodore Lidz

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Adolescence

INTRODUCTION

It is a difficult task to attempt to convey what transpires during these years in which the child blossoms into an adult beset by conflicting emotions, struggling to maintain self-control and to achieve self-expression under the impact of sensations and impulses that are scarcely understood but insistently demand attention. It is a time of physical and emotional metamorphosis during which the adolescent feels estranged from the self the child had known. It is a time of seeking: a seeking inward to find who one is; a searching outward to locate one's place in life; a longing for another with whom to satisfy cravings for intimacy and fulfillment. It is a time of turbulent awakening to love and beauty but also of days darkened by loneliness and despair. It is a time of carefree wandering of the spirit through realms of fantasy and in pursuit of idealistic visions, but also of disillusionment and disgust with the world and the self. It can be a time of adventure with wonderful episodes of reckless folly but also of shame and regret that linger. The adolescent lives with a vibrant sensitivity that carries to ecstatic heights and lowers to almost untenable depths. For some, the emotional stability achieved in childhood and the security of the family attachments contain the amplitude of the oscillations and permit a fairly steady direction; whereas others must struggle to retain a sense of unity and a modicum of ego control.

Adolescence can be defined as the period between pubescence and physical maturity. However, in considering personality development, we are concerned with the transition from childhood, initiated by the prepubertal spurt of growth and impelled by the hormonal changes of puberty, to the attainment of adult prerogatives, responsibilities, and self-sufficiency. It involves the discrepancy between sexual maturation with the drive toward procreation and the physical, emotional, and social unpreparedness for commitment to intimacy and for caring for a new generation. In industrial technical societies, in particular, the movement from childhood to the adult generation requires many years of experience. Although adolescence currently covers the teenage period, its onset varies with constitutional differences in times of sexual maturation and its duration is influenced by socioeconomic and other cultural factors. The youth whose father is a laborer and who leaves school at sixteen to take a semiskilled job and

marries at eighteen has a brief adolescence. In contrast, graduate students who still have another three or four years of study ahead of them may be considered adolescent in some respects, for they are still unprepared to assume adult responsibilities at the high level for which they are preparing. We shall, however, somewhat arbitrarily, consider that adolescence ends around the age of nineteen, when most persons have completed their physical growth, and have become legally responsible for themselves; we shall therefore leave the life of older youths to the next chapter.

The passage through adolescence forms a critical period. At the start children are still at play, dependently attached to their parents and with futures unshaped; and at the end they will be responsible for themselves, their personalities patterned, their future direction indicated. The period leading up to the closure of adolescence is particularly important, for now the personality must gel into a workable integrate. Achieving a successful integration depends upon a reasonably successful passage through all prior developmental stages, but also upon the solution of a number of tasks specific to adolescence which leads to a reintegration and reorganization of the personality structure to permit the individual to function as a reasonably self-sufficient adult. One of Erikson's major contributions to psychoanalytic developmental psychology was his emphasis upon the crucial importance of late adolescence. Now, the young person must gain an ego identity, an identity in his or her own right and not simply as someone's son or daughter, an identity in the sense of a unique consistency of behavior that permits others to have expectations of how the person will behave and react. The person will have, in a sense, answered the question "Who am I?" and therefore others will know who the individual is. The achievement of an ego identity usually requires the concurrent attainment of the capacity to move toward interdependence with a person of the opposite sex: an intimacy that properly encompasses far more than the capacity to have sexual relations, or even to enjoy orgasmic pleasure in the act. It concerns an ability to dare to form a significant relationship without fear of loss of the self.[1] But adolescence is contemporaneously a lengthy developmental stage, and there are various other developmental tasks that must be carried out before an ego identity and a capacity for intimacy can be attained.

Whatever equilibrium had been established that permitted the relative calm of the "latency" period is upset by the biological changes that usher in puberty. First, children find themselves growing away from their childhoods as the prepubertal spurt of growth places an increasing distance between their eyes and feet, and size alone begins to bring them nearer to the adult world. Then, the maturation of

secondary sexual characteristics tends further to estrange children from their bodies, and soon thereafter an upsurge of sexual feelings that intervene in fantasy, dreams, thoughts, and behavior alters young persons' feelings about themselves and those close to them. Even as the adolescent's self-image and perspective of the world is changing, and as emotions and sensitivities come under the impact of new sensations and compelling drive impulsions, equally profound changes in intellectual capacities occur, for the adolescent becomes capable of conceptual thinking or, in Piaget's terms, enters into the stage of *formal operations*. It is important that the tasks and conflicts imposed by biological ripening are usually accompanied by an increased intellectual potential to help cope with them.

Adolescence is a period during which children can prepare for self-sufficiency and independence while still gaining support, protection, and guidance from parents. The need to gain increasing independence from one's parents creates serious difficulties both for adolescents and for their families. The teenagers' situations become increasingly paradoxical, for even as they are becoming members of the adult generation, they remain members of the childhood generation within their families, where they lack certain adult prerogatives and opportunities for self-completion. The movement beyond the family gains impetus from the upsurge of sexual drives. In contrast to the erotized and sensuous longings and desires of childhood, sexual feelings are now driven by hormonal impulsions and are not easily repressed. The thoughts and feelings instigated by the drive naturally tend to attach to those who have been sources of love and affection, but run up against the generation boundaries, the incest taboo, and the guilt and fears that had been evoked earlier and brought closure to the oedipal phase. Now, however, repression cannot be as successful as earlier, and the sexual feelings must be redirected out of the family circle.

It seems essential to emphasize that the genital sexuality of adolescence is very different from prepubertal sexuality. Freud tended to obscure the difference in order to accentuate his discovery of the pervasive influence of sexuality throughout childhood. Prepubertal sexuality concerns erotic and sensuous aspects of affectional attachments, including the influence of stimulation of erogenous zones, upon general attitudes, thoughts and behavior, but it is not drive-impelled in the same sense as adolescent and adult sexuality; it does not involve increased hormonal secretions, a need to discharge sperm and semen, shifts in the menstrual cycle, or the increased erogenous sensitivity that follows the maturation of sexual organs at puberty. It is essential to any coherent theory and description of

personality development to differentiate between pre-and postpubertal sexuality.

Both the move toward independence from the family and the control and redirection of sexual impulsions require reorganization of superego directives. Although the youth may continue to accept and adhere to parental standards in many areas, they should become one's own standards rather than rules imposed by parents; they should become more completely internalized and, as far as some directives are concerned, become more ego functions rather than superego edicts (Loewald, 1951). The superego directives must also change to become suited to help direct adult rather than childhood behavior and to permit sexual gratification and intimacy.

An important aspect of finding an adult identity and becoming capable of intimacy involves the clarification and strengthening of gender identity. Gender identity, as we have noted, becomes established within the first few years of life and is strengthened by the resolution of the oedipal phase and by peer-group identifications during the juvenile period. However, during adolescence the choice of a love object of the opposite sex helps to settle residues of identifications with the parent of the opposite sex and desires for the physical attributes and social prerogatives of the other sex. The process involves a reworking of the adolescents' oedipal attachment to the parent of the opposite sex and often renewed struggles concerning identification with the parent of the same sex now that the sexual impulsions of adolescence rekindle these old problems. The dynamics of these vicissitudes in the choice of love objects, and their impact on the achievement of a firm sexual identity will be discussed more fully below.

The essential tasks of adolescence lead to some conflicts with parents that are, in our society, almost an inherent part of adolescence. Readjustments are required of parents as well as the child, and a child's adolescence can provoke turmoil within a parent and conflict between parents as well as between parents and child. We shall seek to examine the relationship between the conflicts with the parents and the conflicts that rage within the adolescent. In considering the changes in the adolescent's personality according to the *structural concept*, we must recognize the profound reorganization required because of the increased force of the sexual impulsions; because of the development of new intellectual resources; and because of the changes in the superego injunctions as well as the new ability to gain directives from ideals and ideologies. The inner conflicts between the new, intensified id drives and the superego injunctions provoke anxiety as the ego, so to speak, is squeezed between them, requiring new defenses.

Anxieties also arise because adolescents must sort out variant potential organizations of the self and come to grips with how and where they will direct their lives.

Adolescence is a time of particular significance to psychiatry, for it is then that the severe emotional casualties appear in appreciable numbers. Even though much of the damage may have occurred earlier in life, it is at this period that those severe failures of integration that we term schizophrenic withdraw from social participation, cease trying to live confined by the culture's logic and language, and retreat into fantasy, guided by delusion rather than reality; and other adolescents rebelliously turn away from the restrictions required for social living and seek to live without the law.

Now, as these introductory comments indicate, the essential tasks of adolescence are complex and not readily summed up under the rubric of the attainment of an ego identity. The several requisite achievements are precursors of a person's integration into a reasonably independent individual about to launch on a course through life and to become intimately interdependent with another in order to gain completion as an adult man or woman. However, these complex tasks cannot be mastered rapidly. Adolescence is, currently, a lengthy period, lasting from five to ten years, and sometimes even longer. Properly, it is still a period of dependency, when teenagers are still trying out ways of living and of relating to others, testing capabilities and emotional limitations; they can still assume and shed roles, and bestow love without expectation that it will lead to permanent attachments. The period involves considerable trying out, with an implicit understanding that one is not yet playing for keeps. Adolescents are exploring their worlds and learning to know themselves, but the parents are still available to offer protection and guidance, and periods of regressive dependency upon them remain possible during recuperation from defeat or disappointment.

THREE SUBPERIODS OF ADOLESCENCE

To bring some order to the description and discussion of the dynamics of this lengthy period, we shall divide it into three subperiods. However, these divisions cannot be considered as definitive separations because adolescents vary considerably in how and when they work through various aspects of adolescence. It is clear enough that the pubescent twelve-year-old differs markedly from a college sophomore, but there is considerable variation in how one turns into the other. Even though it has been

fairly customary to focus separately on the prepubertal preparation for adolescence, and then divide adolescence proper into an early and late phase, we shall make different subdivisions. Three overlapping phases will be considered. *Early adolescence* will include the prepubertal phase when the spurt in growth initiates developmental changes and the onset of puberty which does not usually provoke a marked shift in orientation. Early teenagers still continue in many patterns established earlier, remaining in monosexual groups and with home still very much the center of their lives. Then, about twelve or eighteen months after pubescence, an expansive period of *midadolescence* sets in, when movement toward the opposite sex begins to break up peer groupings and intimate friendships. It is then that the period of revolt and conformity, so characteristic of adolescence, is apt to start—revolt from parental and adult dictates and conformity to peer-group standards, loyalties, and ideologies. There is often a beginning of sexual exploration, which is often concerned more with breaking through inhibitions and testing one's own limits rather than with an interest in intimacy; and love and sex may be kept quite separate. New horizons open which the adolescent wishes to explore. It is also a time of marked ambivalence and mood swings. Sooner or later a period of delimitation, *late adolescence,* sets in when the young person becomes concerned with the tangible tasks of coming to grips with the future. The boy becomes concerned about his career, and currently the girl may become caught up in the difficult problem of how she will reconcile a career and marriage. The reorganization of adolescence comes to an end; delimitation is accepted and guidance may be welcomed. The period of late adolescence carries the individual into occupational and marital choices which consolidate the ego identity and capacities for intimacy; and even though these are often partly adolescent problems they will be left for discussion in the chapters on the young adult period.

EARLY ADOLESCENCE

The gradual progression of children toward maturity and independence is disrupted by the transformation of puberty which changes physique, drives, intellectual capacities, and social milieu and requires profound intrapsychic reorganization. Children become impelled toward becoming adults by the change in their size and contours; they must cope with a new inner pressure that creates strange feelings and longings, and adds an impulsivity and irrational force with which they have had little experience but with which each must cope very much on one's own—for as it is an intensely personal

matter that involves the ties to the parents, the child finds it difficult if not impossible to seek their help. It is a metamorphosis that brings about a new and definitive physical differentiation between the sexes, but also increases the attraction between them and prepares the individual for a search for a new type of intimacy and gratification which becomes a keystone in happiness and a loadstone in motivation.

THE PREPUBERTAL SPURT IN GROWTH

"The adolescent readjustment is set off even prior to pubescence when the gradual increase in size and weight that had prevailed since the age of two abruptly shifts into high gear. The child had been gaining approximately four to six pounds a year, but about two years before the onset of puberty girls start to gain about eleven pounds and grow three to four inches a year; and boys gain thirteen to fourteen pounds and grow four to five inches a year for the next five or six years. The boys muscle mass and strength double between the ages of twelve and seventeen, which has a profound influence upon his behavior and his self-image. Children's orientation and view of life begin to shift simply because of their change in size; they are growing away from childhood and children, and adults are becoming less distant and awesome. Two factors in this upsurge in growth are important in changing the nature of the childhood society, and they are factors which carry over into puberty: girls mature about two years earlier than boys; and there is considerable variation between individuals in the time of onset of the spurt in growth. In girls the median age of pubescence is at about twelve and a half, between eleven and fifteen in eighty percent, “normally” between ten and seventeen, and with only rare exception between nine and eighteen.[2] In boys the onset cannot be determined as readily but puberty occurs about two years later with a median age of about fifteen. Thus, the upsurge in growth starts between ten and eleven in most girls and between twelve and thirteen in the majority of boys. In the sixth to eighth grades the girls tend to tower over the boys, some beginning to look like young women; while most of the boys are still immature. Movement of the two sexes toward one another is first impeded by the differences in size and then by the differences in the sexual maturity of boys and girls of the same age and educational level.

The Reshuffling of Peer Groups

The child can be upset when the spurt in growth and onset of puberty occur either particularly early or late. The girl who develops precociously worries about becoming a giant, and then may become

embarrassed by her difference from friends and classmates as well as by her sexual feelings for which she has had little time to prepare. A mother described how she found herself becoming infuriated at men whose eyes lustfully followed her ten-year-old daughter whose bust and buttocks were rapidly taking on womanly proportions: "I want to scream at them that she is still only a little girl." The tardy girl starts to wonder if she will ever become a woman and worries about her endocrine system. Early maturation is usually more pleasing to a boy than late development. This is a time of maximal interest in competitive sports, and late maturation may force the redirection of interests. Still, it is often the disruptions of close friendships due to differing rates of maturation that may be most upsetting to some children. The girl who has already started to menstruate and feels a physical attraction to boys has new interests and secrets that she does not confide in her former inseparable girl friend who is still "a child." In the reshuffling of groups and the formation of new close friendships, the less mature girl may be left feeling lonely and neglected. She may, however, remain more popular with boys of her age who are not yet ready to relate to more sexually mature girls. Prepubertal girls tend to have a greater interest in sexual matters than boys perhaps because they undergo a more profound physical transformation in becoming a woman. They are likely to form small cliques in preparation for the coming transition within which they exchange knowledge, beliefs, and misconceptions of menstruation, breast development, procreation, and childbirth and perhaps compare their changing physiques. Many form an intimate friendship with other girls with whom private feelings and fears, and even family troubles, are shared. The prepubertal boy having some friends who have matured also seeks knowledge, and is often fascinated by scatology which has a sexual connotation to him, and in telling stories he must pretend to understand to be one of the gang. More or less accurate information about sexual intercourse becomes common knowledge, but adult indulgence in erotic pleasures is difficult to comprehend for the child who does not yet know the drive of intense sexual urges. They may find it difficult to believe that their own parents indulge in such unseemly conduct and fight off disillusionment in them.

The onset of puberty does not upset the monosexual peer groupings very noticeably. The shift in interest to the opposite sex that is driven by sexual impulsion usually lags a year or two behind pubescence. To some extent, the young adolescents' attentions and energies are absorbed narcissistically, as they are directed toward gaining a new self-image by the rapid alterations in their bodies and feelings which lead to comparisons with friends of the same sex and to a need for a close attachment to a friend of

the same sex. As the development of secondary sexual characteristics starts earlier in the girl and alters her more markedly than the boy, we shall consider her first.

PUBERTY IN THE GIRL

Adolescence in the girl properly starts with an enlargement of the ovaries and the ripening of one of the Graafian follicles that will later produce an ovum, but the first visible manifestations are the elevation of the areola surrounding the nipple to form a small conical protuberance, or "bud," and the rounding of the hips due to broadening of the bony pelvis and the deposition of subcutaneous fat. The breasts also enlarge by disposition of adipose tissue and then by the development of the mammary glands and their ducts. The legs lengthen, changing bodily proportions, and the thighs approximate one another. During mid-and late adolescence pubic and axillary hair appears, the labia and clitoris develop, and the clitoris becomes erectile. The skin secretions change, becoming more sebaceous and contributing to the development of that bane of most adolescents, acne. Sweat glands become hyperactive with ensuing hyperhidrosis, which creates an odor which can embarrass the girl. Although seemingly trivial, acne and perspiration become matters of considerable moment to adolescents of both sexes.

Then, some time after the first changes in her physique have occurred, the girl starts to menstruate and she feels herself a woman. A few periods of spotty and almost unnoticeable discharge may precede menarche, and the periods are apt to be scanty and irregular for a year. Although ovulation may not occur during the first few months following menarche, it does take place almost half of the time and pregnancies can and do occur. Variability in the menstrual cycle is common. Even between the ages of seventeen and twenty, fewer than twenty percent of adolescent girls menstruate every twenty-eight days.

Currently, most girls are prepared by their parents and schools for menstruation. The schools show fifth-grade girls a film and distribute booklets. An examination of these materials (Whisnant *et al.,* 1975) has revealed marked shortcomings. While they assure that girls are not taken by surprise and have some knowledge of what menstruation is about, they cannot be considered adequate sources by either the girls or their parents.[3] Menarche forms a critical moment in a girl's life and it is probably unfortunate that much of the emphasis of instructional materials is upon casual acceptance. The first menstrual period is

usually a very meaningful time for the girl and her parents, particularly her mother. Even though many prepubertal girls say that the onset of menses will be "no big thing" they await the moment as an indication that they are developing normally, and when it comes they feel a sense of deep gratification and relief. Even though prepared, some feel terrified and bewildered and may start to sob—a reaction that may be primarily a release of pent-up anticipation and concern. The girl may have promised her best friend to tell her immediately, but most girls will first tell their mothers and elicit their congratulations, advice, and help. Commonly, menarche leads to a new closeness between the girl and her mother. Now the girl may for the first time really feel herself to be a woman like her mother. Reverie turns to what sort of woman and mother she will become in comparison with her mother. Girls who are sensitive to their feelings may not be able to express themselves in words, but are aware that something deeply meaningful has happened to them.

Occasionally, despite preparation and precautions, a girl may be seriously embarrassed when her first period stains her dress at school, or blood drops to the floor in the dining hall or at a party. Then, too, not all girls are properly prepared, and one occasionally finds a girl who was terrified by the flow of blood, and some who concealed it believing that it was a sign of some dread disease or a result of masturbation. The term commonly used by women for their menses, "the curse," tends to express, however jocularly, the notion that menstruation forms a symbol of woman's burden and inferior status.[4] Despite such feelings, however, it is also an important badge of womanhood. When the author engaged in a study of a group of women who had a virilizing pseudohermaphroditic syndrome at a time when the condition first could be reversed by cortisone therapy, he found it of interest that these women who had no breast development or other secondary sexual characteristics, and had deeply pigmented skins and kinky hair, expressed the hope that the new treatment would enable them to menstruate, even if it could do nothing else for them.

Menarche, and in some individuals each recurrence of menstruation, can reactivate a girl's dissatisfactions and concerns over being a female. The secret fantasy of really being a boy, which occurs with varying force in some girls, must now face the challenge of reality. A young woman described previously who was seriously ill with ulcerative colitis considered that her menarche formed a trauma she had never been able to assimilate. Throughout childhood she was her father's "pal" and insisted that she was really a boy, and that she had only been a girl because her mother insisted on dressing her as a

girl. With menarche she finally capitulated, but experienced bitter hostility toward her mother for having made her a girl. She later tried to achieve a compromise with her sexuality and overcome her feelings toward her mother by becoming a nun.

Acceptance of Femininity

How the girl accepts the change in her physique and menstruation depends, of course, on the stability of her gender identity: upon the firmness of gender allocation by her parents within the first few years of life; upon passing through childhood in a manner that leads to a firm identification with her mother; upon the group identities she achieved during the juvenile period. But during early adolescence when she is learning to feel at home with her woman's body and with woman's role in society, the parents' attitudes are particularly important—their attitudes toward their daughter but also toward one another. When a mother not only accepts her life as a woman but finds challenge if not fulfillment in it, and when a father admires and appreciates his wife, a girl can welcome the signs that she has become a woman and feel secure that she will be loved and find satisfaction in life as a woman. However, acceptance of being a woman is not the same as acceptance of the place and roles that have been given women in society. Even though a girl need not feel confined and limited because of her sex as in former eras, she may still resent the imbalance in opportunities for a career, and boys' superior attitudes.[5]

Currently, there is less dissatisfaction with being female and more about the prejudices that block opportunities. Whatever potential dissatisfactions there may be about having been born a girl are usually overshadowed by the adolescent's pride in her new status as a woman, the acquisition of a physique that attracts attention, and the value of the capacity to bear children, and in having the opportunity to be creative through bearing children and following a career, or to be able to choose one way or the other. Although many, if not most, girls have at some time had regrets at being female,[6] most will recognize some of the advantages and gain contentment through building upon these potential assets. In recent years it has become clear to many psychoanalysts that many men have deep but more hidden wishes to have been a woman, and in the past decade the dress and behavior of many adolescent boys has made this rather obvious.[7] As Bettelheim (1954) has noted, children of both sexes have some envy of the attributes and advantages of the other.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE MENSTRUAL CYCLE

With the menarche the girl's life comes under a new influence that is often puzzling to her as well as to those who live with her. The cyclic changes in the hormonal balance each month either directly or indirectly influence her mood and behavior. Benedek and Rubenstein (1942) carried out hormonal studies of women who were in psychoanalysis, and followed the nature of their dreams at various phases of the menstrual cycle. They reached the conclusion that during the first phase of the cycle, when the ovarian follicle is ripening, estrogen secretion mobilizes heterosexual tendencies and outgoing behavior, the sexual desires reaching a height at the time of ovulation—usually about twelve days after the start of the last menses; then, following ovulation, the progestin secretion favors a more passive receptive attitude and an inner-directedness, as if preparing the woman emotionally as well as physically for pregnancy; then, shortly before the start of the next period, progestin secretion drops sharply and the woman is apt to feel empty, irritable, and moody.[8]

Such cyclic changes have long been considered as an inner tide that influences the woman's life and exerts some degree of control over her conscious and unconscious behavior and thought. It is apparent that many women are profoundly affected by the course of the menstrual cycle—both by its physiological influences and by the unconscious attitudes provoked by menstruation. Among other influences, the increase in interstitial fluid premenstrually, which is quite marked in some women, can produce discomfort and irritability, but this is not usually an adolescent problem. The girl's attitudes toward her menses may reflect her mother's warnings that a girl must remain inactive during her period and put up with this burden in life, but more often will reflect her mother's own behavior. It is natural enough for a girl who has seen her mother become incapacitated for several days each month to anticipate her menarche with foreboding, and then perhaps to utilize her periods in order to obtain a secondary gain of attention and concern from those about her. Incapacitation during menses often runs in families. Even without such disturbances, the menstrual cycle provides a periodicity to a girl's life and an awareness of the passing of months accompanied by changes in mood and activity which form a major distinction between male and female psychology.

Her Changing Appearance

Concern with the continuing transformation of her figure naturally preoccupies the adolescent girl. She feels that her popularity and her chances of attracting a desirable husband will be markedly influenced by her changing facial configuration and her emerging bodily contours. Only an occasional girl can appreciate that attractiveness is not primarily tied to physical configurations, and if she is not pretty seek to become attractive through fostering other assets. To a very large degree the girl, despite her careful attention to what she sees in the mirror, and despite her constant comparisons of her own physique with those of friends and movie starlets, does not achieve an estimate of her charms by what she sees as much as through how she perceives others regard her; and at this age her father's reactions to her are particularly significant. The father is very likely to draw away from a daughter entering her teens, feeling that he should no longer be as physically close as previously, and he is often withdrawing from the sexual feelings she induces in him. The daughter often feels that her father now finds her unattractive or is actually repelled by something about her.[9] When the father separates from the mother and seeks a divorce, which seems to occur with particular frequency just when the girl becomes adolescent, the situation is aggravated. It requires considerable tact on the part of a father to convey somehow that he considers that his daughter has become attractive and likes the way she looks and yet assume a proper distance. The changes in the way in which boys and men relate to the girl can also cause anguish, embarrassment, or pleasure. A girl may become flaming red when boys emit low whistles as she walks by, or become upset when they look at another girl but not at her. A typical feminine dilemma sets in. The girl will be upset if boys do not seek her out because of her appearance but becomes angered because they like her for her looks and not for "herself," and later because they are interested or not interested in her sexually rather than in that indefinable self.

PUBERTY IN THE BOY

The physical maturation of the adolescent boy is also striking, even though it does not involve as much of a metamorphosis as the girl's. The alterations in size and muscular strength prepare him for the role of guardian and hunter. It would appear that such changes move him into a period of heightened athletic activity and competitiveness in contemporary society, and contribute to his difficulties in remaining a child in relationship to his parents. The size of the genitalia remained unchanged

throughout childhood, but now at about the age of twelve or thirteen the testes begin to increase in size and the scrotal skin to roughen and redden; these changes are soon followed by an increase in the size of the penis. The appearance of pubic hair is followed by growth of axillary hair. The prostate and seminal vesicles mature, and spermatozoa form. The beard and body hair appear and the voice deepens, usually about four years after the first pubertal changes and when bodily growth is almost completed. The indentation of the temporal hair line is among the very last changes and indicates that adolescent maturation has been completed. Most boys are fully mature at seventeen or eighteen, but some complete maturation at fifteen and others not until twenty (Schonfeld, 1943).

Many boys have been masturbating before adolescence, but the activity generally increases after puberty.[10] Ejaculation occurs after maturation of the prostate and seminal vesicles, but spermatozoa are neither numerous nor motile, so that the adolescent remains sterile for a year or longer after ejaculation first occurs. Nocturnal emissions usually start between fourteen and sixteen and can cause considerable concern if the boy has not been properly prepared by his parents, though most youths will have learned about the phenomenon from friends. A boy may think that something is drastically wrong, perhaps that masturbation has damaged him. However, even the informed may experience anxiety because of the nature of the vivid dreams which precede and accompany the nocturnal emission and which seem more real than most dreams. The repressed sexual wishes of the adolescent may find undisguised expression in the accompanying dream and, at this time of life, are likely to contain homosexual and incestuous elements.

The force of sexual drives begins to exert its potent influence upon the thought and behavior of the adolescent, and whatever innocence existed in childhood requires strong defenses to maintain, and gives way in thought and fantasy if not in action before the internal pressures that refuse to be completely denied. In general, boys seem to experience urgency concerning sex sooner after puberty than girls and must find ways of coping with it. Stimulation from the seminal vesicles adds to the hormonal influences. Genital sensations cause restlessness, direct his thoughts to sexual objects, and urge him toward relief. Although he has experienced erections since infancy, they now occur with greater frequency, heat, and even pain; and unexpected erections can cause embarrassment. T he thoughts that come unbidden and the fantasies in which he finds himself lost also cause embarrassment and feelings of shame which contribute to the frequency of blushing during this time of life.

Masturbatory Concerns

Masturbation is practiced by almost all adolescent boys and, indeed, psychiatrists consider the absence of masturbation during adolescence a cause for concern, as it indicates a need for intense repression—or self-deception. However, in some social groupings masturbation is so frowned upon that early premarital intercourse is fostered.[11]

Although masturbation is not as common in the adolescent girl, Kinsey's (1953) as well as Sorensen's (1973) figure that forty percent of girls masturbate during adolescence seems a low estimate; many girls can masturbate by pressing their thighs together, and some are unaware that they are masturbating. Girls have less immediate physiological tension that drives them toward relief, as there is no female equivalent to local pressure from the seminal vesicles. The girl is more likely to be aroused by external stimuli and may not masturbate until after she has been sexually aroused by actual experiences with another person. However, in recent years some girls have masturbated regularly following the advice in some sex manuals that it will help them achieve orgasm during intercourse. Such advice filters down to young adolescent girls; and in some groups, peers urge one another to enjoy masturbation. whereas, in 1970, a study indicated that thirty-five percent of freshman college women masturbated with some regularity, the percentage had doubled by 1974 (Sarrel and Sarrel, 1974).

Masturbation often provokes guilt and concern, particularly in the young adolescent. Such feelings may derive from the fantasies that generally accompany the act, but also from the spoken and unspoken indications from adults and peers that it is shameful and harmful. Although the belief, strongly held during the Victorian era, that masturbation caused insanity, blindness, impotence, and debility is no longer fostered, such ideas fade slowly and masturbation continues to be a source of much anguish to many adolescents.[12] Boys, perhaps because of the loss of semen, are more apt to be troubled than girls. A cycle may develop in which the boy determines to renounce the practice, struggling with himself to overcome the urge for relief and gratification, but fails to abide by his vow and suffers a loss of self-respect, considering himself a weak person and a wastrel; this can have a notable effect upon the youth's personality development and character. Still, such concerns are usually weathered and only contribute to major difficulties when other forces lead to asocial behavior. On the positive side, the ability to gain relief from sexual impulses through masturbation often permits the relative quiet needed for study or for

delaying marriage in order to prepare for a career.[13]

Within a year or two after puberty the sexual urges have added a new force to id impulsions and are consciously and unconsciously beginning to become an urgent directive force with which the young person must learn to cope in some manner or other. We shall return to a discussion of some of the influences of puberty upon the family relationships and social life of the teenager and upon the reorganization of his psychic structure, but first we must note the changes in intellectual capacities which are occurring concomitantly.

THE ADOLESCENT'S COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

It is of particular interest that at just about the time children are beset by an awakening of sexual drives that demand attention and can lead to impulsive activity that disrupts a life pattern, they also acquire a new scope in their intellectual functioning that enables them to cope with their drives and feelings more effectively. Not only do they become capable of reasoning more logically and abstractly, and to consider imaginatively the effect of what they do upon their future welfare, but they also begin to evaluate their behavior in terms of ideals and ideologies. Of course, we might consider the matter conversely—that is, to note that just as children become capable of thinking far more effectively and directing their lives reasonably toward future goals, a new force that invites irrationality and fosters impulsivity enters their lives. The body's demands for sexual fulfillment that must be contained and at least partially repressed increase the domain and power of unconscious processes and motivations. It has been said that an adolescent boy is a person with two heads and it is often the head of the penis that guides his behavior.

Piaget's Period of Formal Operations

The change in the adolescent's cognitive abilities is not simply a matter of increased intelligence. As Inhelder and Piaget (1958) and Vygotsky (1962) have clearly demonstrated, the gradual increase in intellect leads to a qualitative change at about the time of puberty and the individual enters into a new stage of cognitive development—the period of *formal operations* in Piaget's terms. The stage starts at about the age of eleven or twelve but the capacities to think conceptually and hypothetically develop

slowly over the next six or seven years and remain a potentiality attained only partially by most and fully by some (Dulit, 1972).

What is the nature of formal operational thought and why can it change the child's way of life so profoundly? The cardinal change derives from the new-found potentiality for manipulating ideas in themselves and not being limited to manipulating ideas of objects as previously. The adolescent becomes capable of understanding and building abstract theories and concepts. In contrast, the child can have coherent ideas, but does not construct theories. Whereas the child lives essentially in the present and in the domain of concrete reality, the adolescent can become involved in future projects that transcend mere continuities of the present, and can develop a passion for ideas in themselves and for ideals and ideologies. Perhaps the basic differences between the child's and the adolescent's cognitive capacities lie in the adolescent's ability to reason on the basis of hypothesis, that is, on propositions that need not be either true or false, but are formulated in order to try out all possible consequences, which are then checked on the basis of facts (Piaget, 1969). The capacity for hypothetical-deductive thinking is, then, the ability to make logical deductions from imagined conditions. The adolescent can reason "If x is true, then *y* must follow," and also "Had x been true, *y* would have been a possibility." The use of language develops to a point where concepts can be abstracted from reality and then be manipulated imaginatively—not simply as fantasy but with concern about figuring out solutions to real problems and the course of future events. Inhelder and Piaget emphasize that the critical attributes of formal operations are both the ability to think about thoughts and a reversal of relationships between what is real and what is possible.[14]

One of the most characteristic traits of adolescents and youths derives from the newly acquired cognitive faculties. They tend to overestimate the value of their cognitive solutions of problems. They fantasy or carefully develop imaginatively ways in which football teams, families, religions, nations, could be made to function better, ways in which poverty could be wiped out, warfare ended; and they cannot understand why such measures are not adopted. This overevaluation of the subjective over the objective Piaget has termed the *egocentricity of formal operations.* It involves the difficulties in seeing that one's own conceptualizations differ from those of other persons, as well as a neglect of all of the tangible measures that must be taken before a concept involving others or seeking to change institutions can be brought to actualization. Herein lies a source of much of youth's intransigence and argumentativeness but also of its inspiration and idealism. The egocentric orientation will gradually diminish as the

adolescent hears others defend opposing points of view, becomes involved in discussions, learns to regard matters from various perspectives before reaching conclusions, and encounters the need to carry out carefully planned actions as well as to formulate the plans.

The extent of the development of formal operations varies greatly from individual to individual and particularly from social class to social class, depending notably upon the educational level achieved. It is uncertain whether the people in some preliterate societies ever reach the level of formal operations, but it is also clear that there are many persons in our society, particularly those who do not have more than a grade school education, whose capacities for formal operations, for concept formation, and for the proper consideration of future goals, are but feebly developed.[15] As Piaget (1969) has noted, formal operations may develop differently, if at all, in persons without scientific and literary training, and many problems remain to be solved concerning the development of formal operations.[16]

Ideas, Ideals, and Ideologies

Adolescents then move beyond childhood in their capacity to think beyond the present. They can orient themselves to thinking about and directing their lives toward futures they have conceptualized. They also begin to form systems and theories into which they fit their perceptions and conceptions of reality. They become interested in ideas, ideals, and ideologies, and these serve to lift them beyond the present moment, their body's demands, and desires for hedonistic gratification. They can be motivated by goals that even surmount their lifetimes. They may well walk through these years of adolescence with eyes riveted on an unattainable star even as the body is demanding relief from the sexual tensions that possess it. Adolescents conceptualize social systems as well as logical systems. Behavior can be directed by the values of the social systems rather than simply through interpersonal relations and values, and they begin to place their families, their parents, and themselves in a broader social context in which the societal values are superordinate to the family value systems. The new abilities enable youths to embrace ideologies, to challenge the status quo, to envision a better world, to gain gratification through fantasy while waiting to become able to achieve in reality, and in general to soar above the prosaic world with its plodding inhabitants. The development of higher moral judgments and values clearly depends upon the development of formal operational thinking. As Kohlberg (1964) has shown, a morality of individual rights and communal welfare, and a morality based on individual conscience rather than laws or rules,

does not begin to develop until the onset of adolescence, and even then in only a small minority of persons.

In early adolescence the new cognitive abilities are just beginning to develop and the potentialities opened by them are not yet striking, for they are still emergent and young adolescents are still only preparing to develop their own ideas and to try them out. Nevertheless, the new intellectual resources are important in increasing the ability to cope with the heightened aggressive and sexual impulsions, to consider future objectives, and to enable them to become interested in new adventures into the world of imagination that offer alternative as well as substitute activities and gratifications. The young adolescents' intellectual development is part of the entire process of adolescent awakening in which new horizons open before them and they begin to see the world in which they are going to live with an exciting and poignant freshness.

SEXUAL DRIVES

Early Adolescent Crushes

The onset of adolescence does not produce any striking changes in behavior or way of life for a year or longer. It is a time of inner stirring from sexual arousal, but the boy or girl is not yet ready to act upon the impulsions and much of the sexual arousal is absorbed by fantasy and by preoccupations with the changes that are occurring in the body and in one's own feelings. The adolescents continue to go around in the same monosexual groupings as they did but with the group membership shifting because of the differing rates of maturation and as close friendships give way to crushes. This is a time of intense crushes, some of which are directed toward persons of the same sex. In general, girls have more intense and outspoken crushes than boys, feel freer to manifest them, and talk together about a boy with whom one or several of the group have "fallen in love." There are also crushes on an older person of the same or the opposite sex. The adored person is often someone very much like the self or someone whom the adolescent would like to be. The differentiation between an object of identification and a love object is still not clear. In the process of moving from self-love to the love of another person, the love of someone like the self is a way station. Boys, in particular, are not yet sure enough of themselves to move toward a person of the opposite sex and the attachments are part of the process of self-completion. Girls are apt to

have crushes on boys earlier than boys seek after girls, not only because they become pubescent at an earlier age but also because the boy is still fighting against his dependence upon mothering figures and fears losing his identity through engulfment by a female.

The crushes on older persons—a teacher, camp counselor, scoutmaster, older sibling of a friend whom the teenager at first admires from afar—can be extremely embarrassing and difficult for the older person. Girls find it romantic to have a crush and can unwittingly or intentionally embarrass a young male teacher or counselor to whom the postpubertal girl can be tempting and attractive. The young adolescent can find all sorts of ways to seduce the teacher or counselor into bestowing special attention and affection on him or her, and then becomes hurt and even depressed when the older person either purposely or unknowingly rebuffs the advances. Sometimes, the young teenage girl becomes seductive in nymphet fashion, having found power in her attractiveness and, perhaps, having a great need to displace her sexual attraction for her father. However, the tendency to have such intense feelings for older persons contains as much or more danger of homosexual than heterosexual seduction, because persons who are homo-sexually attracted to the young adolescent—that is, to a person who is not too definitively either a boy or girl—often take up occupations or activities that permit them to have close relationships with youngsters of this age group. However, the adolescent's crushes at this time generally are benign and fill important functions in personality development. They are part of the process of movement away from dependency on parents, and the new object of attachment forms an ideal that the youth seeks to emulate, and in the process the youth gains new ego ideals that modify the superego originally based on parental models, directives, and dictates.

Sublimation of Sexuality

The sexual impulses of boys are largely drained off into other activities, or at least efforts at sublimation of sexuality are pursued intensively. The boy seeks to gain repute among his friends and to emulate his heroes by means of his athletic prowess. His efforts to achieve security as a man and prestige as a masculine figure are still more important to him than the pursuit of love objects. He is still seeking recognition and admiration from his male peers to affirm his own worth, and only later will he perform athletically in order to gain the admiration of girls. The girls who are physically and often emotionally more mature are usually still not ready to go out with older boys. Dating is primarily a matter of going to

parties together, and at such parties kissing games, perhaps with the opportunity for tentative but exciting fondling, are a means of approaching intimacy while safe because of the presence of others.

There is, of course, considerable daydreaming about the other sex, and often there are important secret crushes. The girl, in particular, may begin to spend hours by herself daydreaming of an older boy whom she admires from afar and about whom she constructs a wealth of fantasies, even transforming herself and her hero into a knight and lady reenacting tales of chivalry.

Society usually provides means of strengthening ethical standards as children approach and pass through puberty. The scouts mobilize idealistic strivings and provide a code of ethics while seeking to interest the young adolescent in nature, as well as providing a favorable group setting to offset antisocial group formation. Religious feelings become important and churches provide confirmation ceremonies with preparatory classes that reinforce ethical values. Adolescents with their new interests in ideals and ideologies can now find an interest in religion, although it may have only bored them previously. They not only need strengthening of superego directives but are also beginning to seek reasons and meanings in life. Confirmation ceremonies seek primarily to designate to adolescents that they have reached a time of life when they must become responsible for their moral and religious behavior. Adolescents now often experience a closeness to a Deity and feel that they have support and guidance in countering the temptations that are besetting them. The attachment to the church will form an indirect continuing bond to the parents, whom they may now be starting to deny.

The Resurgence of Oedipal Feelings

Although adolescents' relationships to their families are beginning to change, they are still very much family centered, accepting their positions as members of the childhood generation even though they are beginning to feel uneasy in them. Along with the upsurge of sexual feelings there is some reawakening of oedipal attachments. The sensuous and affectional attachments to the parent of the opposite sex, even though under the ban of repression, are the obvious channels into which the sexual feelings can flow. The oedipal attachments have to be resolved once again but at a different level, and this time the sexual feelings will not be repressed so much as redirected away from the parent. The boy may now begin to idealize his mother and find nothing wrong in commenting on how beautiful she is

and seek ways to please her and gain her affection. He may feel that his father does not appreciate her enough and fantasy being her defender, or flare up at an older sister who carps at their mother. The girl's situation differs, as has been previously noted, for either just prior to the onset of puberty or early in adolescence she turns from her father and her father turns away from her. It usually constitutes the primary renunciation of her attachment to her father rather than a repetition of an earlier situation, and it can leave the girl feeling deserted, lonely, and even empty.

Then, as the real upsurge of sexual feelings gets under way, adolescents begin to turn away from their attachments to a parent, unconsciously and sometimes consciously concerned by the sexual aspects of the attraction. They begin to find fault with the parent, criticizing him or her, convincing themselves that the parent is not attractive and not an object worth seeking. lire criticism also spreads to the parent of the same sex, for they begin to try to free themselves from the domination of superego injunctions based in large part on internalizations of the parents and their dictates. They do so by devaluating the worth of the parent. This process will pick up intensity as adolescence progresses and we will examine it in greater detail in discussing mid-adolescence. The girl is apt to dream of being a woman more capable than her mother, a person more attractive to her father, and may begin to talk to her mother in rather condescending tones, sorry for this "has-been" who has passed her prime. It is generally helpful to the girl and her development if the mother is not angered by the condescension and can allow her daughter to indulge in such fantasies of being a more desirable female and potential sexual partner than her mother. It helps the girl gain self-esteem and enables her to feel capable of relating successfully to boys.

Young adolescents are about to start the process of emancipation, to begin to experience feelings that are difficult to contain, and to relate to people more as adults than as children. It is a difficult time, and during the beginning of adolescence they are not yet ready to assume responsibility for themselves and to be capable of containing their drives and fantasies on their own. They still require direction and protection; and even though they may be beginning to be rebellious, they are apt to feel unloved and unwanted unless the parents place limits upon their behavior and provide safeguards against their venturing beyond their depth.

MID-ADOLESCENCE
OVERCOMING FAMILY ATTACHMENTS AND CONTROLS

Mid-adolescence is a pivotal time of life when youths turn away from the family that has formed the center of their existence for some fourteen or fifteen years. A year or two after pubescence the increase in sexual drive adds impetus to the movement toward adulthood. After the brief recrudescence of oedipal attachments, the intensity of the feelings creates a need for adolescents to gain emotional distance from their parents. They will be motivated to form and maintain affectional and sexual relationships to persons outside the family; to have, for the first time, both affectional and sexual strivings consciously focused upon the same individual. They cannot continue to regard themselves as children dependent upon their parents and must begin to feel capable of directing their own lives. The change requires a profound inner reorientation as well as a change in the actual relationships with parents. As the tasks of this phase of life primarily concern gaining independence from parental supervision and from the youth's own emotional attachment to the parents, it is natural that the family commonly becomes an arena of conflict. However, even though arguments with parents occur, when relationships between parents and children have been good, and the adolescent respects his or her parents, the conflicts are often minimal.[17] Although adolescents may need to overcome their parents' concerns about granting them sufficient latitude, much of the conflict involves their own ambivalences as they are caught between a need to free themselves and their longings for the security and affection they are leaving behind.

The security to begin the separation from the family depends as always not only upon the successful and harmonious passage through the earlier developmental phases but also on having a stable family base from which to venture. In a sense, the child now goes through another "practicing stage" (see Chapter 6) but now for a third and final phase of separation and individuation. As infants and toddlers, children differentiate and establish boundaries between the self and the mother and then find their places as boy or girl members of the family; then school-age or "latency" children move into peer groups and school; and now in mid-adolescence they try out and work out ways of becoming reasonably independent from their families. This is not yet the time for definitive separation, and if separation occurs serious problems are likely to ensue. Teenagers, no matter how grown up they feel, still

need guidance, support, and a haven from which to venture and to which they can return. Not only will they be overcoming the repression of sexual expression, loosening their oedipal ties, and modifying superego injunctions to provide reliable inner directedness when they become free of parental supervision, but they also must be gaining a knowledge of their own capacities and limitations in terms of the adult world, and a familiarity with the ways of the opposite sex in order to overcome residual inhibitions to sexual intimacy. The odyssey is rarely calm; it includes passages between Scylla and Charybdis, times when the youth need lash himself to the mast to resist the sirens' singing, and when he can be bewitched by Circe and turned into a swine.

Revolt and Conformity

It is a time marked by revolt and conformity—a strange and interesting admixture that characterizes the height of the adolescent period. The parents and their standards must be denied as adolescents try things out in their own ways. The parents, with their conservative concerns for their children's future, do not seem to understand them; adolescents have never been able to believe that parents can grasp the problems of the new generation. Indeed, the conflict between generations is inherent in social living and essential to social change. However, the differences between parents and child are usually not explosive, nor as marked as either parent or child may believe.[18] Still, the turn from the parents as models may spread to relationships with teachers and even to most adults, and creates uncertainty and a degree of recklessness as the adolescent tests his or her own capabilities and limitations.

Even the more rebellious adolescents are, in general, among the most consistent conformists, conforming to the ways of the adolescent group from which they fear to deviate lest they find themselves outcasts and isolates. It may even be a conformity to a pattern of nonconformity that proclaims a freedom from, and even a contempt for, the useless conventions of society while also displaying loyalty to the youth group. The adolescent society provides standards that furnish considerable guidance as well as the milieu in which individuals can feel that they belong, while seeking to renounce their attachments to their families. Youthful adolescents are likely to conform rigidly with the outer tokens that proclaim membership. The way they dress, talk, flirt, become identification marks for the person who still has no secure inner identity. Customs and clothing vary for differing socioeconomic and ethnic groups and from

decade to decade: there are "hoods" who may indulge in gang fights and flaunt a degree of sexual promiscuity along with their black leather jackets that mark them as tough characters; there are youthful "hippies" prematurely following or aping older alienated adolescents and becoming involved with drugs; and various other adolescent subgroups, including those headed for admission to superior universities, who consider themselves an elite but who may seek to eschew upper-middle-class status by wearing shabby clothing, even if with studied carelessness. As other subcultures, the adolescent culture tends to have a distinctive language with many terms that are understandable only to themselves; they are contemptuous of those who do not understand, but discard expressions as they become known to younger groups or to adults. Fraternities and sororities also provide places where adolescents belong and feel accepted, conveying status and self-esteem simply through the fact of belonging, making the youth a member of an "in" group who can look down on those who do not belong. There are also the unorganized fraternities with less formal initiation procedures that hang around certain street corners where regulars can always be found for a game of cards or pool; or the more demanding city gangs in which membership requires participation in antisocial activities in preparation for later membership in criminal and semicriminal groups, though fortunately most will withdraw after a few brushes with the law and not progress to criminal careers. However, most youngsters, as during grade school (see Chapter 9), join together with others from similar backgrounds, and the group or gang, as we shall examine later in the chapter, may test limits but in general promotes a continuation of the family mores and standards.

OVERCOMING SEXUAL REPRESSION

The individual's inner equilibrium as well as the family homeostasis is upset by the intense impact of libidinal drives with which the child has had little experience. The urgency and autonomy of the sexual impulsions are strange and can be frightening. In contrast to other needs provoked by basic drives the parents cannot help their offspring very much in managing or satisfying the sexual needs. The parents may prepare, discuss, and advise them, but a great deal must remain intensely personal, particularly because it involves separating and differentiating from the parents. The early childhood erotic strivings had been directed toward a parent but had been repressed through fear of loss of love and retributive hostility, and sometimes in the boy through fears of castration. Now, the repressive ban on the expression of sexuality must be raised while the interdict on linking sex with affection for family

members is retained; and the fusion of erotized and affectional feelings toward companions of the same sex disconnected in order to permit the fusion of sex and affection in heterosexual attachments.

During later childhood the repression of sexual impulses had been sweeping and was reinforced by many ego defenses. The prohibition cannot be raised simply by turning away from parental injunctions or even by parental permissiveness, because it has become firmly incorporated in the individual as superego directives. The lifting of the repression requires both changes in attitudes toward parental authority and modification of the superego standards to permit more latitude for sexual expression. We can conceptualize the situation by saying that the strengthened id impulses push the "ego" to challenge the superego restrictions and standards that were suited to the less driven child. However, much of the ego's strength and security in the ability to take care of and direct the self was gained by identifying with the parents and accepting their authority. Attempts to deny superego restrictions mean turning away from identifications that had provided strength and stability A precipitous break with the source of identification can undermine the self, provoke intense guilt, and a loss of self-esteem in this process of achieving greater freedom for expression. Efforts to turn from superego directives can provoke severe anxiety that ego functions will completely give way before the force of the id impulses. After years in which children have accepted if not admired their parents, and during which they have felt guilt when disobedient, achieving success in surmounting either parental authority or their authority internalized as superego directives can provoke intense feelings of guilt and depression.

There are, however, other significant reasons that often retard the development of sexual relationships. The process of separation-individuation from the mother had been long and painful and the boundaries between the self and the mother—indeed, between the self and the parents—long remained tenuous. Now the adolescent is involved in becoming reasonably self-sufficient and in gaining security as an individual discrete from parents and family. The teenager fears losing his or her shaky identity in sexual intimacy. Symbolically, as sometimes reflected in dreams and fantasies, sexual intercourse is feared by the boy as reincorporation into the womb. Not until late in adolescence, when problems of ego identity are resolved, will most adolescents be ready to lose themselves in real sexual intimacy.

Of course, a considerable number of mid-adolescents engage in sexual intercourse. A recent study indicates that thirty-seven percent have at least experienced sexual intercourse by the time they become sixteen (Sorensen, 1973). An occasional couple will pair up and form a meaningful and enjoyable sexual relationship and spend considerable time in one another's company. Others will simply have tried out having sexual intercourse to feel themselves initiated or, perhaps, to vent anger against parents. It is difficult to generalize but probably many mid-adolescents who have sexual relationships are seeking to fill non-sexual needs that are not met in their families. The girl whose father has separated from her mother—and whose depressed and needy mother seeks solace and support in affairs and can give little to her daughter—finds an equally needy boy and seeks to spend all of her time with him to fill the unbearable emptiness she feels. In such instances sex and drugs, like food, assuage "oral" needs for affection. As sexual intercourse is likely to be unsatisfactory to such immature persons, they may settle upon the simpler gratification of oral sex. The inner-city adolescent without a father and with a working mother also needs to feel wanted. The boy may need to prove his masculinity by making his girlfriend pregnant, and the girl may wish a baby to have someone who loves her, or at least to whom she is important. However, most adolescents, before they can feel free to enjoy sexual intercourse, must slowly build up their security and confidence in their abilities to cope with the sexual drives, gain standards to protect themselves realistically, test their own limits of tolerating anxiety and guilt, modify their superego directives through interacting with peer groups with similar problems, and learn in actuality that sexual expression will not lead to dissolution of the self. Perhaps they unconsciously know what parents often fail to convey, that it is not so much a matter of morality as of immaturity; that they are unlikely to consummate the sexual act properly until they are sufficiently mature and ready, and that unsatisfactory attempts might endanger later, more meaningful relationships.

Reactivation of Oedipal Attachments

In moving away from the family, which had formed the matrix of their lives, it is natural for adolescents to become involved in numerous conflicts with parents; but many of the expressed causes of conflict are but surface manifestations, rationalizations, and displacements of the sexual struggle that simultaneously attracts and repels the adolescent from them. Since much of what is going on is under the ban of repression and is carried out unconsciously and therefore contains irrational and contradictory

trends, any effort to discuss the developments of the period in reasonable and logical terms cannot convey the ambivalences, vacillations, and contradictions so characteristic of mid-adolescence.

With the onset of puberty, as has been noted, the former oedipal attachments become reactivated and the adolescent may indulge in considerable fantasy that is but thinly disguised about gaining the parent of the opposite sex and somehow gaining ascendancy over or being rid of the parent of the same sex. The fantasies usually concern parent substitutes or fictional characters but the youngster's behavior may clearly reflect the renewed attraction to one parent and the resentment of the other. Sometimes an awareness of the sexual attraction breaks through the repression or the clear revelation of a sexual dream creates alarm, but usually it is an inchoate awareness of discomfort aroused by the sexualized feelings toward the parent that leads the adolescent to seek to construct a barrier and to place distance between the self and the parent. There are many similarities with the earlier resolution of the oedipal desires, and the manner in which the young child resolved the intense attachment to a parent established a pattern that tends to be repeated in adolescence. However, the adolescent is not a five-year-old child and knows that children cannot marry parents but must find partners in the outside world. Nevertheless, the extent of the fantasies that seek to circumvent such realistic considerations can be extensive, and an adolescent's behavior may be directed toward living out such fantasies. Thus, an adolescent girl not only fantasied that she could stop her father's alcoholism by being more understanding than her mother and more interested in his work and hobbies, but she began to pattern her life to become her father's savior after her mother divorced him. A boy prepares for the day when he will be able to support his mother and thus enable her to throw his philandering father out of the house. The youth's physical development since childhood also leads to differences from the oedipal period. The adolescent boy may not only fear his father's retribution but may also fear his own hostile feelings toward his father now that he is as strong or stronger than his father. Both the girl and her father can be aware of the dangers of their mutual attraction and seek to desexualize the relationship. In one way or another the oedipal attraction is again repressed. Temporarily the need for repression creates guilt over sexuality and reinforces the ban on sexual expression, but ultimately it is the attraction to the parent as a sexual object that is repressed. However, serious problems can arise when parents cannot contain their own seductiveness. An adolescent boy whose divorced mother would come in the nude to kiss him good night, letting her breasts fall on him in the process, began to bring a girl home to sleep with him. A girl whose

mother had run off with a lover was taken to Europe by her lonely father, who, to save money, registered them in hotels as man and wife. She soon had considerable difficulty in sorting out her feelings and began to select homosexuals as boyfriends. In reasonably normal circumstances, freedom of sexual expression will eventually be gained after sexuality is directed toward persons outside of the family and the erotic components of the attachment to the parent are again securely repressed, which is often a lengthy process. When it is necessary for family members to more or less consciously move away from one another in reactive efforts to escape from their sexual feelings from one another, the spontaneity of family life suffers and the totality of the intra-familial relationships is apt to become seriously strained. Optimally a stable coalition between parents who maintain proper boundaries between themselves and their child guides adolescents to an unconscious and satisfactory resolution of their attraction to parents even as it had helped bring about the earlier oedipal resolution. Then the acceptance of the impossibility of finding sexual fulfillment in the family or of becoming a parent's primary love object helps direct the adolescent to seek a more complete and permanent love relationship outside the family.

OVERCOMING FAMILY DEPENDENCY

Needing to free themselves from their attraction to a parent, adolescents usually begin to deny the attractiveness of the parent by devaluing the parent's attributes, but they have other unconscious reasons for derogating parents. Movement toward adulthood requires them to overcome their desires to remain dependent, as well as their feelings that parents are more capable than they of directing their lives. They must prove to themselves that they are capable and do not need to rely upon their parents' judgment and advice. Nevertheless, their own inner directives derive largely from internalizations of their parents and their standards and directives. Such inner restrictions must be overcome as much as, or more than, the actual limitations set by the parents. The superego restrictions must be reconstituted in order to become suited for directing adult rather than childhood behavior; loosened to permit greater latitude but at the same time strengthened to become capable of directing the self with less supervision from parents.

Although modification of the superego is an intrapsychic matter, it usually involves altering the perception and evaluation of the parents whose value systems had been internalized. Adolescents set out to establish that their parents neither always know what is correct nor are paragons of virtue beyond emulation. They have sinned and they have erred. Even if their values and standards were once correct

they were suited to some primordial era when the world was inhabited only by squares. Adolescents are in the process of convincing themselves as much as their parents that both parents and adolescent are very different from the way they were when he or she was only a child. The adolescent sometimes begins to talk and behave as if nothing the parents do is acceptable. Beset by ambivalences, both wanting the parents and wanting to be rid of them, teenagers are trying to convince themselves. The pendulum swings from one side to the other and episodes of denial of the parents are countered by periods of regression, during which the adolescent seeks surcease from turmoil through regaining peace with the loved and needed parents. The force of the turmoil may indicate the violence of the wrench necessary for the adolescents to free themselves rather than any basic hostility toward the parents. Arguments can become blindly irrational in order to help overcome the contradictions and the longing to remain attached. The inability of parents to understand are magnified; grudges are reinstated. The turmoil is within; the pulls are in both directions. Adolescence is the proper time to want to be—and to be—both dependent and independent.

Typically, adolescents begin to search out flaws in their parents. The process may start with a basic disillusionment in learning about their sexual life—their hypocrisy in practicing what they have forbidden—but youths are apt to seek shortcomings that they can attack openly and resent rationally. The criticisms of the parents' behavior and even more the attacks upon their character constitute a serious blow to the parents' authority and self-esteem. They may turn upon the ingrate upstart with a vindictiveness that leads into a cycle of misunderstanding and bitterness. Now, although teenagers wish to free themselves from their parents' domination and direction, they do not wish to demolish their parents. They still need them as objects of identification and as objects whose admiration and affection are worth seeking. Adolescents' own self-esteem remains closely linked to the esteem they have for their parents. Late in adolescence, after they have divested themselves of constricting inner controls and begin to see their parents from a more adult perspective, they will again return to accepting many of the parental standards as part of their own.

Adolescents are apt to have unusually severe standards. In trying to contain their importunate sexual impulsions and their impetuous outbursts, which are forcing abandonment of their former ways of maintaining security, adolescents often magnify superego injunctions in order to bolster the forces of repression. They tend to judge their parents by the same standards that they create for their own

defenses, and no one is able to live up to such expectations. Still, when teenagers later become more tolerant of themselves, they will become more tolerant of their parents. The criticisms of parents and the misunderstandings with them usually diminish as adolescents find themselves capable of independence and when their perceptions and judgments of others become less egocentric.

Real Disillusionment with Parents

Unfortunately, serious and permanent difficulties between parents and child sometimes develop when the adolescent's search for flaws in a parent's behavior and character leads to the discovery of a disillusioning reality. The youth gains a pyrrhic victory, so to speak, that shatters the image of the parents and concomitantly disturbs his or her own development. A girl of fifteen was brought for psychiatric help after becoming promiscuous. She had tended to idealize her mother, who had seemed a model of both glamour and efficiency. Her mother had provided her daughter with winter vacations in Florida and unusually fine clothing by her earnings from a flourishing insurance business that supplemented her artist husband's meager income. The girl came to realize that the mother's business was not what it seemed to be. The trips that kept her mother away from home one or two nights each week were spent with a wealthy industrialist who was her sole insurance client. When the girl had accompanied her mother on two vacations, it had just happened that the industrialist was staying at the same hotel. She also realized that her father, who could not maintain the family in the manner in which his wife expected him to, was managing not to realize that his wife was being unfaithful to him, even though it was obvious to many others in the small community. The inevitable and necessary loss of unrealistic childhood idealizations, or the failure of parents to live up to the excessive standards of the adolescent, is very different from the disillusionment that cracks the parental image and with it the adolescent's identifications with them.

At this developmental stage, when the oedipal resolution must be reconfirmed, and when the young person needs tangible models to follow into adulthood, who the parents are and how they interrelate is particularly important to their child's harmonious development. The adolescent is becoming aware of the parent as a real person and model rather than as a fantasied image; and who the parent is, influences whom the child seeks to become. The coalition between the parents, the support they give one another, the admiration they have for one another greatly influence the youth's transition

through the adolescent period.

PARENTAL TRIBULATIONS

Adolescence is a time of considerable difficulty for the parents as well as for the developing child. Their trust in the child they have raised and in their own capacities to raise a child undergoes its most severe test. The child in whom they have invested so much love and effort is moving away from them. They can no longer supervise and fully protect but must place their reliance on what they have already inculcated in the child. Yet they know that their offspring lacks experience and their child's judgment cannot be fully adequate to new situations that will confront him or her. They fear that a single careless moment or a rash judgment will undo their years of effort and permanently blight the child's life. Excessive parental concerns are apt to reflect a desire to prevent a child from repeating the parent's own tragic youthful mistakes. Still there are few parents who do not experience restless nights when their son starts driving a car, or when they must first entrust their daughter to some oafish-looking, pimply-faced boy over whom she has lost whatever sense she had formerly possessed. However, parents now need to *confirm* their offspring by indicating their belief in their children's trustworthiness as well as in their capacities to assume responsibility for themselves. Still, limits must be set somewhere, but where are the boundaries? Adolescents are bound to resent delimitation and restrictions, considering them indications of lack of confidence if not an absence of trust; but they are just as likely to resent failures to set limits, taking such permissiveness as evidence that the parents are not sufficiently concerned or interested. Adolescents may begin to test their parents' limits and in the process move beyond their own. The indecisiveness of parents in the face of a changing morality can increase their children's uncertainty of what they are supposed, permitted, or expected to do—a situation that may be overcome by frank discussion of the dilemma between parents and children. Adolescents are not yet adults, and when the parents rescind their parental responsibilities prematurely, the adolescents are left without the support and protection they need—albeit sometimes from their own desires and impulses.

Adolescents are apt to take out their unhappiness upon their parents, vent their dark moods upon them, express irritation over trivia. When parents try to offer the affection their child seems to need, they may be rebuffed angrily, for it is at just such times that youths cannot let themselves continue to be babied and must tear themselves away from what they would like so much to have. They need something to

rebel against and, at times, life seems to go easier for an adolescent if the parents become more strict and thus provide something to be angry about. Wide mood swings may occur that puzzle adolescents as well as their parents. They feel expansive and elated after having proved to themselves that they do not need their parents, only to plunge into despair when they become unconsciously concerned about surpassing a father or when feelings of hostile resentment toward parents create remorse—the youth reacting as if hostile wishes toward them were equivalent to murder. It is part of the crucial struggle to come to terms with superego directives and reestablish an equilibrium between the "id," "ego," and "superego."

It is unfortunate but often an inherent part of the life cycle that the crisis of adolescence in the child occurs contemporaneously with a critical period in the parents' lives. The child's adolescence in itself tends to create a crisis in the parents' lives because of the impending change in the family composition, the loss of the child's admiration, and an awareness of the child's sexual attractiveness and vigor at a time when their own sexual powers are waning. However, most parents have problems of their own in facing middle age and the realization that their own lives have reached a climax; that they must come to terms with what they will be able to achieve in life, with menopausal problems, with declining abilities. Mothers may be resuming careers of their own, or seeking ways of having a career, and may envy a daughter's opportunity to start early in life. As Stierlin (1974) has noted, many middle-age parents would like "to fly the coop" themselves and, in one way or another, involve the child. They may gain gratification from a child's exploits, they may displace their own desires onto the child and therefore distrust the child, they may delegate the child to fulfill their ambitions, etc. Such problems will be considered in the chapter on middle life, and here we can only note that the teenager is markedly affected by-how the parents as individuals and as a couple are coping with the very consequential problems in their own lives. It may be of particular significance that the parents are coming to final terms with the limitations imposed by the "realities of life" just at the time when an adolescent offspring's imagination is beginning to soar and the adolescent is becoming impatient with the limitations that adults and their society impose by their stodginess and conservatism; the differences between the generations and the age-old ideologic conflict between them reach their zenith.

THE YOUTH GROUP AND IT'S CULTURE

As adolescents move away from their parents, the adolescent peer group gains in importance. The

peer group changes into a youth group that carries the youth culture, and differs from the childhood peer group in having something of an anti-adult orientation and in becoming heterosexual. It is no longer simply a neighborhood group and may even span several high schools and communities, tending to be composed of youths with common interests and ambitions who, therefore, usually come from reasonably similar backgrounds. Thus, it is not usually a "counterculture" but rather an age-appropriate subculture. They band together for mutual support as well as companionship. The core is formed by a few close friends—pairs and small groups of individuals who are extremely important to one another. Here youths feel accepted because of friendship and find some respite from judgment and the acceptance on the basis of achievement that is becoming increasingly important in school and to the self as well as to the parents. Within the group they feel free from parental controls and can try out more adult behavior, which at first may mean daring to carry out things that had been forbidden in childhood. Here they find others who admire them and in a sense replace the loss suffered in withdrawing from parents. The others are in very much of the same situation and they support one another and learn to manage without parental supervision. The group serves an important function in modifying superego controls, for through observing others in the group, the group's reaction to the self and others, through accepting its standards and by means of constant discussions with these friends, the adolescents alter their guiding principles.

The adolescent group at first continues to be formed of members of the same sex, and throughout mid-adolescence friendships with members of the same sex will, for many, continue to take precedence over heterosexual attachments. Identification and object choice are still intertwined, and teenagers can be closest to those with whom they can identify. There is still considerable narcissism in the admiration of another. Recently the diminution in the differences in male and female gender roles leads to an earlier and perhaps less self-conscious mingling of the sexes, and similarity in dress helps diminish feelings of difference. Still, banding together helps adolescents to cope with feelings of strangeness in moving toward the opposite sex. Friends are sought not only for support and in order to like and be liked by them, but also to have someone whom one respects to measure oneself against. There is considerable rivalry in most adolescent friendships, for even though direct competition for the same objectives is avoided, there is competition in collecting achievements. Who one is, is partly a matter of whom one has for friends. Adolescents feel that they are not so well defined by family name, for they simply happened

to be born into the family, but they have formed their friendships and have been accepted by the group. It is an important aspect of being confirmed as an individual independent of one's family. Here, in the group, adolescents learn to know who they are in the world beyond their families, to judge their own capacities; then, from the security of the group, they will begin to gain experiences with the opposite sex. Such needs for self-definition and for finding security take precedence over desires for actual sexual outlets. This process of freeing oneself from the family in order to find oneself and of moving into the proper group as a step toward independence is usually a more important task of mid-adolescence than forming love relationships and finding heterosexual outlets.[19]

The Youth Group Mores

The "gang" increasingly becomes the arbiter of appropriate behavior, a transition that often causes the parents considerable concern. Although the group's mores are likely to move toward the limits of what is acceptable to the parents, it usually serves as a modifying and restraining influence upon the individual while fostering a less family-centered orientation and an expansion of activities beyond what parents might condone. The peer group usually has a code that does not differ greatly from the basic mores of the families of its members, even though it fosters adventuresome behavior that might be imprudent. Although in this rebellious period individuals might well engage in activities that they consider unacceptable to parents, they will hesitate to risk serious censure from friends, or do something that could lead to ostracism from the group. Thus, they may smoke marijuana at a party, but would not use heroin; or a boy may gamble but not cheat; or a girl may go with a boy of whom her parents disapprove but would be reluctant to be seen with a type of boy who would lower her friends' esteem for her. The need for conformity is a major safeguard, though, of course, it can also lead to experimentation with drugs. Although delinquent gangs are most commonly found in slum areas, even here the core members come from seriously disturbed families. When youths living in better neighborhoods or from "good" homes join together with others who have delinquent tendencies, they almost always come from homes that somehow foster antisocial tendencies, or in which rigid demands for obedience permit no latitude for a boys instrumental behavior appropriate to his age, which is necessary for him to develop into an adult.

The movement toward the opposite sex generally starts from the security of the monosexual

adolescent peer group. The boy and girl must first become more secure in their own sexual identities before daring to engage with the opposite sex. The interest does not arise from sexual drive alone; the narcissistic supplies needed to maintain and increase self-esteem are not as likely to come from friends of the same sex as from the opposite sex; and prestige with friends of the same sex depends on prowess with members of the opposite sex. At first the activity patterns do not change markedly but tentative brief meetings take place with groups of the other sex. They engage in a collective teasing banter which seeks to hide interest while still showing it. "Whom one teases, one loves." At first, neither boys nor girls are likely to show more than a casual interest in the person who is actually the center of their daydreams.

In the insecurity concerning their worth, adolescents seek attributes that make one enviable or popular. There is an increased consciousness of the neighborhood one lives in, the prestige of a sporty car, etc. Security comes with wearing just the right shirt or hairdo. Both sexes may spend considerable time in front of a mirror examining their faces, the girls working on their makeup, but also in practicing the proper face to wear under certain circumstances, and how to shift facial expressions in a sophisticated manner. The boys now wish for athletic prowess to be a hero to the girls. They join clubs and run for office in high school. To know that one is someone requires recognition by others. A teenager is also likely to seek recognition from some adult, usually a teacher. Mid-adolescents, individually and as a group, are not altogether anti-adult. Aside from the adult upon whom one has a crush, adolescents also appreciate those rare individuals who listen, seek to understand, and can share in some ways rather than remain at a different level.

MALE AND FEMALE PATTERNING OF THE PERSONALITY

Although the differences in interests and attitudes of boys and girls have diminished considerably, some differences in patterning remain. Girls have matured earlier physically and, in general, are more mature emotionally. Both sexes are likely to be following patterns noted since early childhood: boys are more apt to be into motor activities and competitive games, whereas girls are often more occupied and preoccupied with people. In the past, it had been noted that the ways of thinking of the male and female begin to diverge more definitely during the middle of adolescence, when the girl is less likely to deal with abstract topics or to be an innovator. Some such differences probably persist despite the changing orientation of women concerning careers. The greater amount of time spent in fantasying how she feels

about others and how other people may feel in various situations ultimately leads to the development of "feminine intuition" and an ability to empathize with others. Of course, such attributes are not limited to girls, but we may say that boys who have such tendencies have a quality that softens their edges and their ways of relating, which has in the past been considered more "feminine." Currently, girls require capacities to think more abstractly and instrumentally, and boys to be more "intuitive" and interpersonally receptive, in order to become capable of sharing marital and parental roles more readily.

THE MERGING OF THE SEXES

The movement toward openly falling in love proceeds slowly, and achieving real sexual intimacy takes even longer. At first the male and female peer groups are apt to mingle primarily in reasonably public places, often in some hangout frequented by older mixed groups whose ways they watch and mimic. Then the groups may grow smaller, offering opportunities for couples to pair off in the dark but with the protection of having other couples close at hand, while starting tentative explorations of the mysteries of the other sex. The "necking" or "petting" at this age is as much a matter of exploring one's own feelings and learning to relax one's boundaries without fear of loss of the self or of control of one's impulsions as it is a matter of gaining sexual gratification. It is a matter of exciting exploration and stimulation rather than a means of gaining release from sexual tensions. It may have very little to do with being in love and be much more an expression of eagerness to begin to live out fantasies and enter into the mysteries of sexuality. Usually the more complete loss of the self in sexuality that leads to sexual intercourse awaits late adolescence, when a person feels reasonably secure with the self, understands the desires of another, and feels certain that limits can be set when necessary.

The group parties will change into double dating, which permits each person to feel more secure with another couple around to provide sanctions concerning what is permissible. Many boys are likely to gain their first experiences in sexual relations with casual acquaintances such as a blind date or with a girl from another community who is more experienced and will take the initiative. The need to get away from girls whom they think about in more personal terms can be very great. The girl may first overcome her inhibitions on a date with an older boy who is more daring and whose attraction to her arouses assurances that she can be attractive to a boy in sexual terms. Of course there is no set pattern, and how persons overcome their inhibitions and repressions is a very individual matter. In all eras and cultures,

some youths are unable to contain their impulses and have sexual intercourse at an early age. We have already noted that some seek close and fairly constant relationships with another person in early or mid-adolescence to fill the emptiness of their lives, and that some who had never developed proper boundaries between the self and a parent now seek to fuse with someone to replace the parent. Television as well as movies and sex manuals has made adolescents more knowledgeable and has lessened the mystery. The absence of parents from the home has increased opportunities for sexual exploration and activities, but, perhaps more pertinently, has left many youngsters feeling lonely when they return home from school. The mores have changed, so that, for many, sexual activities are not a matter of morals but of the wishes and well-being of the participants. Nevertheless, it seems as if such matters—or even the availability of secure contraception—have not greatly changed the sexual behavior of boys, and the differences that have occurred over the past several decades may be in large part due to the larger proportion of girls who are now having some type of sexual intercourse. Although it is difficult to generalize, it seems as if attitudes of mid-adolescents toward sex have changed more than their behavior: they discuss sex more openly, particularly with members of the opposite sex, some flaunting rather than hiding what they do, and more may experiment once or twice with intercourse; but sexual behavior may have changed less in recent decades for this age group than for their elders.

Blocks to Early Sexual Relationships

It usually takes a number of years before the sexual drives that have started soon after puberty can achieve expression and fulfillment, particularly among middle-class adolescents. Well over half of the students who arrive at college are still virginal. It is more than morality that is involved in creating the delay between the capacity for sexual relationships and their realization.

The adolescents of both sexes must overcome the repression of sexuality that had become so firmly entrenched and they must disengage the drive from their earlier intrafamilial love objects. Although psychoanalysis has emphasized the boys need to overcome unconscious fears that sexual activity can lead to castration by his own father or the girl's father, or at least arouse dangerous hostility in his or the girl's father, there is reason to believe that it may be still more of a problem for him to overcome his feelings that females in the image of the mother are powerful and enveloping and he will be lost if he gives in to his need for them. He may find the expectations of girls of his own age frightening now that

girls feel freer to take the initiative. Confusions of castration fears and fears of mothering figures can also arouse unconscious concerns that the boy may lose his penis in the vagina, unconsciously considered as a biting organ with teeth—a fairly widespread fantasy that sometimes emerges into consciousness. The girl, too, has special fears to overcome: fears of penetration and injury, fears of annihilation that come with orgasm, and sometimes feelings of shame with her own genitalia, which she feels must be repulsive to any male. Superego controls also gain support in repressing the id impulses by marshaling the dangers that can come from sexual indulgence. There are more or less realistic fears of pregnancy and venereal disease which have become less important only during the past decade or two. Even though venereal disease has become common among adolescents to cause concern, gonorrhea no longer imposes a threat of sterility, nor does syphilis mean years of treatment and perhaps a need to forgo marriage and having children. Although it has been thought that the "pill" has been responsible for more adolescents having sexual relations, the majority of mid-adolescents who have sexual relations do not use the "pill" or any reliable form of contraception (Sorensen, 1973). The girl usually pauses before losing her virginity, perhaps torn between her desire to wait for her true love and the wish to have the experience behind her. She may have fears, too, of becoming a lost woman, unable to control her impulses and lust after she has once given way to her desires; and the boy may also take pause in feeling that the intensity of the experience will be overwhelming and more than he can contain.[20]

The intermingling of the sexes may be more important in expanding adolescents' social awareness than their sexual knowledge and experience. Members of the other sex are perceived in more realistic terms of appreciating that they have similar problems, uncertainties, and desires. Desires for recognition shift more definitively to the opposite sex; and behavior becomes directed toward being more attractive to the other sex. There is a constant building up of illusion and return to reality. The more basic patterns of the personality characteristics of each sex begin to interrelate, and complement the other. The girl does not form a direct rival to the boy and can provide him with satisfaction and assurance by enjoying his achievements and sharing them with him; she thus bolsters his narcissistic needs while she spurs him onward. Although circumstances are changing, the girl may still hesitate to outshine boys intellectually lest she become unpopular. The girl who had felt rejected when her father withdrew from her as she became pubescent now finds that boys can like her and love her as she is—as a girl—and gain a moratorium during which she can pursue other objectives as well.

Early Love and Sexual Identity

Sometime during late mid-adolescence or early in late adolescence the young person is likely to fall in love. It is quite likely that the first heterosexual love will contain narcissistic components. The boy may well fall in love with a girl whom he unconsciously recognizes as someone he would like to have been, had he been a girl. The girl may fall in love with the boy she might have been. These early loves can be important in fostering a more secure gender identity. While there are still some narcissistic and homosexual components in this type of object love, for it is a stage in the movement from narcissistic love to heterosexual love, something significant happens for identity formation; the boy is placing the feminine components of himself—the residua of his identification with his mother—onto the girl he loves. He no longer needs to contain these elements in himself because he can have them in the girl he loves and whom he seeks to possess. His masculinity is solidified and confirmed and he becomes ready to achieve an ego identity of his own and to move toward intimacy with another. The same process is likely to happen with the girl and perhaps in an even more dramatic manner. In falling in love with a boy and finding herself lovable to a boy, she need no longer regret not being a boy or having the prerogatives of a male. She can be satisfied with loving the boy who has the penis and who may be all too willing to share it with her. She again feels complete and is ready to progress toward interdependence with another.

Unfulfilled Sexuality and the Unconscious

Being in love, a state which cannot be fully explained or analyzed, seems to be a state of existence in which the boundaries between the self and another are again loosened and one's sense of well-being depends on being of utmost importance to the chosen person. It is a condition that will be discussed again in later chapters. During these years, even though the physiological drive toward sexual expression is probably as intense as at any time in life, particularly in the male, in our contemporary industrial society —at least in the middle and upper classes—it does not usually lead to fulfillment in heterosexual love. The adolescent is going through the necessary phases in preparation for later fulfillment. Some relief is gained through masturbation, which in turn is apt to cause considerable conflict in some and little if any in other youths; and there is a greater or lesser amount of sexual play, which often serves to heighten tension rather than relieve it. Even though sexuality often preoccupies adolescents, much of the sexual thought and fantasy takes place at the borders of consciousness when the person is somewhat cut off from

the world of reality, as when in bed falling asleep or awakening in the morning—at times when ego functioning is in abeyance. Even more is censored, repressed, and remains unconscious, becoming manifest only in dreams but still exerting a powerful influence upon behavior. The high school boy who barks at his mother and criticizes her bitterly and somehow finds a reason why he must be away from home whenever his father has to spend an evening in his office has no awareness that he is combating his attraction to his mother. The girl who has started running around with a fast crowd and lets it be known that she can be had sexually realizes only during psychotherapy that she has been trying to demonstrate her heterosexuality to others as well as prove it to herself, whereas her most fundamental attachment and the subject of her half-waking fantasies is a female teacher.

The new force of the sexual impulsions, together with the repression necessary to keep the sexual urges under control, increases the scope of unconscious mental processes considerably. The increased drive, so to speak, directs the individual's perception and interests toward sexual objects and sexual matters, and like a magnet among iron filings draws more and more associations into its sphere of attraction. Further, the earlier childhood pregenital erotic and sensuous strivings that have long been banned from consciousness join together with the new unconscious sexual motivation. Oral and anal erotic desires and fantasies, masochistic and sadistic imaginings, voyeuristic and exhibitionistic strivings, homosexual attractions and concerns, imagining of the parents in the primal scene, etc., are reawakened during this period of unfulfillment as if the strivings motivated by the sexual impulsion flowed into all of these old outlets in the search for some way of achieving gratification.

ADOLESCENT MECHANISMS OF DEFENSE

The newly gained capacities for conceptual and hypothetical thinking not only increase the intellectual control of ego functioning but also make possible a greater elaboration of the mechanisms of defense. At this age the adolescents may not gain much sexual gratification in reality, but their active fantasies help them ward off impulsive activity that might create realistic dangers or generate "instinctual" anxiety of complete loss of control in the sexual act. Masturbation is usually accompanied by fantasies that relieve the emptiness and the loneliness of the act. Such fantasies can serve a variety of purposes such as permitting a safe linkage of genital activity with the desired love object, providing a mental preparation for future activity, and affording an imaginary outlet for pregenital or polymorphous

perverse erotic strivings that are residues from earlier developmental phases. Other fantasies which are less directly connected with sexual stimulation can help drain off the unconscious associations through the elaboration of romantic daydreams of loving and being loved as well as of future achievements that will bring greatness and renown and thereby admiration and love.

Fantasy formation relates to the defense of *sublimation,* in which sexual impulses are redirected into less earthy and more "sublime" activities. Sensitive adolescents who cannot yet fall in love with a specific person on a realistic basis, or at least gain sexual release through such love, can experience a more diffuse love of nature or of mankind in which there is a vague seeking for expression and fulfillment of the feelings that are surging within them. They seek to lose themselves in nature or find ways of giving themselves to the service of mankind. Poetry bubbles within them and flows from their lips, and they record daydreams as well as events in diaries. These and similar activities are pushed by the sexual drive, and the expansiveness that comes with capacities for abstract and formal operations.

Adolescents are also beginning to *intellectualize,* utilizing their capacities to think and reason in order to control impulses, not necessarily by reasoning out rational solutions of problems, but through diverting interests into intellectual channels. The common manifestations of such intellectualization are the prolonged discussions and arguments about the nature of things, the purpose of life, the errors in the parents' ideas. Adolescents are also likely to attach themselves to an ideal or an ideology in order to find an outlet for their energies, including their sexuality and aggressivity, but also to achieve new guidelines through having a more meaningful way of life. The ideology may now take precedence over parental teachings and modify the examples of parental behavior that have guided them. Young persons may embrace a new ideology with a fervor that consumes their energy and directs their attention, forcing aside any ideas that conflict with it as well as any personal needs that interfere with its pursuit. They are, in Piaget's terms, in the egocentric phase of formal operations, in which they do not appreciate that other persons can start from different premises or can reasonably believe that other ideals have even greater importance. There can be a touch of fanaticism in their behavior which both political and religious movements have often utilized. The Children's Crusade, the Hitler Youth, and the Chinese Red Guard are examples of how the ideological selflessness of youth can be mobilized into mass movements.

Asceticism, related to such abnegation of the self for ideologic purposes, is another common means

used to control the upsurge of sexual and aggressive impulsions. It is as if the strength of the erotic drives were turned against themselves and the superego injunctions that the id seems on the verge of overthrowing were strengthened to deny any pleasures. The ascetic adolescent denies all types of sensuous gratification and through such mortification of the flesh seeks to bury the erotic needs and be rid of the difficulties they are causing. Still the eroticism in this mortification of the spirit and flesh is often apparent even when it leads to the extreme of masochistic flagellation.

Although adolescents need to find means of containing the sexual drives until better prepared to cope with them realistically, the drives help push them toward seeking and gaining adult prerogatives. They are moved to explore their worlds and those in it and to expand their horizons. This is a time of expansion and expansiveness. They need to try out, to toy with ideas, to put their ideas into action, and to begin to gain recognition.

Although many adolescents are now beginning to help the family earn a living even if they continue at school, this is by and large still a time when responsibilities are not too great. Adolescents do not yet need to confine their restless energies to the prosaic step-by-step surmounting of realistic problems that later will limit daydreams, bring pause before risk, and lead them to understand the adult's inability to change the world into what the youth thinks it should be. It is still difficult for the young person to understand why people do not “do” things about injustices; why their lives are so prosaic; why they refuse to take a chance. It is a time in which the youth can float above the world, secretly glorying in beauty, being in love with love, and dream of future greatness. There is also the loneliness of feeling deserted by friends who have now found new loves. The world at times is too much to bear. The adolescent is filled with potentiality and hovers in it. Whether a person will continue to expand in late adolescence or begin to pull in his or her antennae and start to consolidate efforts depends on many contingencies.

LATE ADOLESCENCE

The major tasks of late adolescence concern the achievement of an ego identity and capacities for intimacy. When young people have liberated themselves from their families sufficiently and gained enough latitude and security to permit sexual expression, they pause before undertaking definitive

commitments. The expansiveness of mid-adolescence gives way to the need to consolidate and to try out imaginatively and realistically various ways of life, including trials at relating meaningfully to persons of the opposite sex. It is often an uneasy pause, for they may feel that time is running out in that they will soon be expected to assume adult status, commit themselves to a specific way of life, and find ways of supporting themselves. Persons require a more definitive integration than previously so as to provide them with an identity as persons in their own right and to enable them to move beyond independence to gain completion in intimate interdependence with others. For a minority of persons, these tasks will continue into the young adult period in a somewhat different form that we shall examine in the next chapter.

In the United States many adolescents of both sexes, approximately forty percent, will gain some college education. The proportion increases with social class and wealth, but community colleges and state universities provide opportunities for the underprivileged. Although college settings and educational standards vary widely, the student's horizons will widen to a greater or lesser degree and his or her outlook will become less egocentric. The process both helps and complicates the achievement of an ego identity.

Whether or not they live away from home, adolescents at college move away from parental influence and usually become very much responsible for themselves. They now come under the tutelage and influence of teachers whose standards, beliefs, and ideas are considered as valid as those of parents, if not more authoritative. Many students experience life in a very different setting from the one at home: students who grew up in small towns enjoy the stimulation of large cities, with their theaters, museums, admixture of social classes; or those from a megalopolis learn the advantages of life in a college town. Students learn that others with interests that may seem strange to them are even respected because of them. A boy who scarcely knew that classical music existed has a roommate who listens only to Bach and when his annoyance wears off begins to appreciate that baroque music can be more exciting than rock and roll. A girl whose roommates must remind her to eat meals and to change her clothing occasionally turns out to be a mathematical genius whom the university had recruited almost as avidly as it had a renowned prep school quarterback. Students who had been outstanding in their secondary schools may have difficulty readjusting when they find themselves surrounded by equally exceptional students.

Here inner-city blacks meet and associate with well-to-do whites, causing as much uneasiness in one set as in the other. Students sort themselves out in fraternities, eating clubs, tables in the dining halls, cliques according to social backgrounds, and ethnic groupings. Forty years ago Jewish students often formed an uncomfortable minority who felt unwanted, whereas currently blacks and Chicanos from deprived backgrounds are likely to group together at meals and may even lessen their discomfort by aggressively turning away whites who seek to be friendly. Despite such difficulties the university setting has become one of the principal equalizing agencies. As the college years pass, the exclusiveness of the group diminishes. By the time of graduation, the influences of family and social backgrounds on individuals have diminished markedly. Whatever the student's original background, graduation from one of the academically elite universities opens the way for a person to become a leader in his or her community or the nation.

As they grow older, college men and women tend to mingle more freely, finding real companionship rather than simply going on dates with members of the opposite sex. Students are exposed to very different sexual standards from those they knew at home. A student, male or female, may strongly believe in premarital chastity, and find it difficult to live with a roommate who uses the room to have sexual relations rather than for study. Couples sleep together casually or only in a lasting relationship. Adjustments are made and readjustments of ideas develop. Parietal rules have become minimal at most universities: if students can vote and go to war, they are capable of defining their own morality. It is not simple for all. Life at the university differs markedly for the various students. For some who enter in order to become doctors or lawyers, it has become a highly competitive affair, often with interests already focusing if not narrowing; for others, these are relaxed years of socializing and play, with studies only a secondary matter. However, the first years, at least, provide many with an opportunity to broaden and learn new ways of living and thinking. Students may first appreciate that they cannot yet find an identity, learn who they are, because they had never before known who they might become. The agriculture student could never have thought of becoming a botanist before he learned of the influence of gravity on the shape of trees, or the prelaw student have considered becoming an art historian before she heard a series of brilliant lectures on Chinese painting. Some students will become indecisive about who they are. They may begin to realize that it is a matter of who they wish to become rather than of deciding who they are. Still, in one way or another, it is at college that many

students reach critical decisions about themselves, and that adolescence will come to an end.

THE IDENTITY CRISIS

"Who am I?" is a theme repeated in countless variations by late adolescents. It is a question that troubles them unconsciously even more than consciously. Young persons are in the process of finding themselves even when they give it little thought. The boy now needs to know what to do with his life in order to give it cohesion, and the girl, who formerly was more concerned about whom she would marry, wonders whether she will direct herself toward a career or to marriage and motherhood, or undertake the difficult life of combining the two. But neither the boy nor the girl can answer such questions without knowing who he or she is—yet such decisions will influence who a person becomes. In some, the recognition that a turning point in life has been reached when decisions of a fairly irrevocable nature must be made precipitates a crisis. The individual realizes dimly or with anxiety-provoking acuteness that if he or she does not make decisions the passage of time will make them instead. Friends move on, move past, embark on careers, prepare to marry. The pause can lengthen into a paralysis of indecision. The responsibility of independent choice and its consequences can bring a period of perplexity, turmoil, and sometimes profound despair. Adolescents may fly from their surroundings, leave college, leave home —as if distance will resolve their problems. The change may bring respite, and though it is unlikely to solve intrapsychic problems, a moratorium during which an adolescent can gain additional experience, a broadened perspective, or increased emotional maturity can help one find direction. Some will seek to transcend their conscious abilities to find their identities, and become "seekers" who use drugs to "expand consciousness" and somehow reveal unknown abilities; or search out a "guru," who in cryptic, oracular fashion can provide guidance; or become involved in one or several consciousness expanding groups; or enter therapy with an analyst who will help probe their "unconscious."

Identity crises of late adolescence have received considerable attention both in novels and in psychiatry. Novelists have frequently passed through serious identity crises themselves, and psychiatrists are involved with patients many of whom had difficulties in emerging from adolescence. Most individuals, however, manage the transition with reasonable calm as a natural progression into an acceptable identity. The college student who knows that he will enter his father's business is only disturbed intellectually by the various problems aroused by his studies but they have not altered his

tangible objectives. The girl who has found her future spouse has no doubts about entering teachers' college to learn to teach, in order to be able to support herself until her husband finishes his education, but she knows that a teaching career will be secondary to marriage. The "jock" who finds that he is not good enough for the freshman football team, and has no other reason to continue in college, joins the police force at Christmas vacation, content to have realized a life-long ambition. A girl who cannot remain in her large and very unhappy family after completing high school but who is too insecure to venture forth on her own, enters nursing school where she will be financially independent in a protected environment. Nevertheless, with increased education and with rapid social change, there has been an increasing need for individuals to find their own identities relatively independently of their families; the young adult is less likely to remain somewhat dependent upon the family or to follow in a family tradition than in previous eras, or to remain in the family home after leasing college. As a result, identity problems have become increasingly common and difficult.

Identity Formation

The transition from adolescent to adult involves becoming a person in one's own right, not simply someone's son or daughter, and a person who is recognized by the community in such terms. It involves the drawing together and resynthesis of a process that has been going on since birth and the crystallization out of an individual who will tend to preserve his or her identity despite the vicissitudes of life that are yet to come. The individual has passed through a series of developmental phases, and at each level there has been an identity and there has been a relatedness between the identities at each phase. Still, these identities always had a tentative quality, for each was a phase in becoming; but now it is time to be. The concept of ego identity was formulated by Erikson to emphasize that the developmental phases of childhood are not ends in themselves but stages in the progression toward developing into an integrated and reasonably self-sufficient person capable of filling an adult role in life and fitting into the social system in which the person lives. The integration is not achieved simply by passing through successive stages of psychosexual development without traumata and undue fixations, but depends on constant reorganization during the process, and then, during adolescence, a reintegration to permit moving from childhood dependency to adult responsibility.[21] It is concerned not simply with inner organization but also with how that organization permits the individual to move properly into the social

roles permitted and expected of an adult in a given society and its subsystems.

The concept of ego identity is not definable in very precise terms and a degree of vagueness is preferable, for it is still simpler to delineate the area of interest than define it in terms of critical attributes. It concerns the consistency that characterizes individuals despite the changes that occur over time, and as they move into the many different roles they fill at any one period in their lives.[22] We might say that by the end of adolescence the individual's name—as should be the case with all nominal words—provides a degree of predictability concerning how its bearer will behave and what others can anticipate from that individual under a variety of circumstances. Equally important is that the person also has some idea of how he or she will behave, relate, and feel under varying conditions. Of course, human behavior is so complex and subject to so many contingencies, as well as conscious and unconscious influences, that prediction of how a person will react and interact in unfamiliar situations remains limited (except, of course, to a psychiatrist).

Identity formation has much to do with the person's past identifications and their fusion into a new integrate. The identifications with the parents remain basic despite the many vicissitudes they have undergone, but to them have been added the identifications with various ideal figures and both friends and enemies,[23] for something remains of all. Various significant persons who have been lost—or more or less abandoned—particularly the parents, are preserved within the self. Identity formation also involves identifications with groups as well as individuals: the family as a unit with its traditions and specific mores; the social class into which one is raised; ethnic and religious groupings; and one's nation and time in history, which are usually taken for granted, as well as one's gender, which, as we have emphasized, forms a keystone in stable identity formation. To gain coherence of personality functioning and a sense of unity, aspects of identifications that are inconsistent with the total pattern, which are ego-alien, must be discarded or repressed. "Identity formation," as Erikson has pointed out, "begins where the usefulness of identification ends. It arises from the selective repudiation and mutual assimilation of childhood identifications, and their absorption in a new configuration, which in turn, is dependent on the process by which a society (often through subsocieties) identifies the young individual, recognizing him as somebody who had to become the way he is, and who, being the way he is, is taken for granted" (Erikson, 1956, p. 113).

Adolescents are seeking consistent ways of relating to others, for finding their way through life and for solving problems. They need and seek reference points. They feel, like Archimedes, that, if given a place on which to stand, they can move the world—or at least they can face it. Although finding guidance into the future depends upon the stability of previous identifications and their resynthesis, it also requires standards for judging behavior and directives. We have seen that the adolescent moves beyond superego injunctions taken from the parents; the parental injunctions have been modified through fusion with ego ideals, and through the assimilation of standards of peer groups and the mores of the community. In an effort to find a definite way of life, adolescents are likely to embrace a cause which not only tells them what to do with their lives, but also provides standards for judging what is right and wrong, what is pertinent and what irrelevant. Still, only a small minority find that their major problems will be solved by joining a political party, a religious movement, or a social movement. Politics is not a way of life for most, nor is religion. Joining an all-encompassing religious movement, whether an Eastern sect or fundamentalist Christian, usually lends direction to a life for but a few years. Direction is more apt to come from reaching a decision about a career. When young persons make a choice about their future occupations, they settle many problems, for they can then direct their attention and exert their energies in preparing for it. What an adolescent will do with his or her life helps answer the query "Who am I?"[24]

Identity and Delimitation

Yet, one of the functions of adolescence is to keep pathways into the future open, to prevent premature closure before a youth has gained sufficient experience to judge properly what to do with one's life. *Identity foreclosure,* the failure to develop beyond the juvenile period or early adolescence, limits both opportunity and the ability to guide one's own life. There are many social, educational, and intrapsychic reasons for such foreclosure that cannot be considered here.[25] Adolescents have been expanding and sampling, so to speak, but now in late adolescence matters change as they realize that they must consolidate, weighing whether or not they wish really to pursue some particular field of endeavor. They may find it difficult to renounce one potentiality to follow another, yet they know that each person has only one life to lead. Now, more than ever before, they must delimit themselves in order to gain organization. Some will flee from such closure, hating the idea that they must become someone in particular, and in so doing may find settings in which "doing one's thing"—which may mean being

nothing but simply oneself, an indefinite if not an amorphous self—is prized. But most become weary of the indecision, and seek a future objective which will do away with vacillation and the constant need to make decisions. They may feel, and believe correctly, that everything hangs in the balance—and that if, by chance, they take a left turn rather than a right, it will decide much of their future. This is a time when a single decision can greatly influence an entire life, whereas later, after a person has embarked on a set course, it will require a major reorientation to alter a life pattern. The young person can become paralyzed with indecision when any decision seems so important. A college senior had entered the university some three years before, fairly certain that he would follow his father and become a *physician*. Me had been responding to expectations for him rather than his own interests. He became increasingly engrossed in courses in literature and history, and found that the natural sciences were tolerable but uninteresting to him. His father died, and soon thereafter he decided not to become a physician; but now he found himself torn between following an academic career or entering the government's foreign service. He did not have difficulty finding something he wished to do with his life, but rather found himself unable to decide what not to do with it. Some in this predicament can, like Goethe, decide that it does not really matter whether they make pots or pans, or plant peas or beans, but can trust to their genius to make whatever they do turn out well, or that it matters little just what one decides to do—what matters is the commitment and endeavor that will make whatever one does interesting.[26]

The achievement of an identity includes recognition by others, and such recognition, even when tentative, often helps the youth find a place in society that he can occupy without inner conflicts. The recognition by a teacher who suggests or persuades him to enter a given field can help settle problems of finding an identity. Finding a mentor does more than provide guidance, the youth obtains *confirmation* of his or her worth from someone who matters. The mentor may then turn into a sponsor who provides actual help in starting a career. To some, such experiences come quietly and unexpectedly while they still consider themselves junior dependent members of society. A college sophomore spends his summer vacation working as a surveyor, enjoying the work with a crew in the woods. When the foreman becomes ill, the student takes charge of the crew and gains their respect despite his youth. At the end of vacation the head of the engineering firm suggests that he remain in a more responsible position, assuring him that he can have a good future with the firm. Although he continues college, he has definitely decided to become a civil engineer and has the assurance of an excellent position after he is graduated. He had

started the summer still carefree and without feeling pressed to decide about a career; his life and future were still amorphous, but when he returned to college he could envision a pattern of life and he had a plan to follow that solved many problems for him.

Identity Crises

The youth seeks outward to find a way of life that will satisfy, and also turns inward seeking resources and weighing liabilities. What are the talents, and what are the desires that need fulfillment? Comparisons with others are searching, and older adolescents may mercilessly take into account only the strongest assets of the persons to whom they are comparing themselves. They cast aside attributes they possess that will not lead to perfection. They hold up a mirror to the soul and unconscious processes well up and threaten to bring chaos. When the forward flow of the stream is halted, much old debris can float to the surface. A boy may recognize and become disturbed by the erotic nature of his love for his mother, by sadistic impulses, or be worries about his masculinity that make him wonder if he might be homosexual. The girl may realize that she is still sexually tied to her father, or is fleeing any identification with her oppressed and suppressed mother. Adolescents may achieve profound insights into unconscious processes, but they are often of little help at this juncture of life. For many adolescents, the solution to many sources of anguish, to much of the self-doubting, lies in finding direction and starting toward a goal rather than in further introspection. Such problems are so common at the end of adolescence that they are often considered an inherent part of the period. However, identity crises are often more severe in those adolescents who reject following patterns familiar to them, or expected of them, as well as for those who resist closure by accepting a secure way of life. Currently, women pursuing careers are likely to face identity crises, as we shall consider below. Such persons often do not finish with their identity problems in late adolescence, as we shall discuss in the section on *Youth.*

Ego Diffusion

As late adolescence is so often a time of conflict, some neurotic suffering is almost inevitable. However, more difficult problems occur and the seriousness of these may be difficult to assess. The dangers lie not in failing to reach an immediate solution and find an identity and way of life—for many persons will take several years until they find themselves—but in finding a negative solution:

adolescents give up, feel defeated, and suffer "ego diffusion," in which they virtually cease trying to direct their lives consciously, leaving themselves prey to unconscious motivations, and they drift, perhaps becoming more or less schizophrenic; or they become embittered about the ways of society and the adults who inhabit and direct the Establishment, and become alienated, refusing to become committed to a way of life; or they embrace alienation itself as a way of life, "dropping out," or becoming perpetual "seekers" after an inner light.[27]

Although the inability to find a positive identity and a way of life may seem to be a matter of decision, insofar as it depends upon decision rather than chronic indecision the choice rests upon unconscious determinants that reflect profound problems. A bright college student who "drops out" to join counterculture groups in Greenwich Village or Berkeley, experimenting with cocaine or even with heroin, not only is unable to identify with his father—or any paternal figure—but must prove to himself that he is different from his father; he may also be unable to relate to women, who are experienced as engulfing, overwhelming figures who are untrustworthy, and he may be moving into or reactively fighting against a homosexual identity. Study reveals serious family and developmental pathology. As Keniston has elucidated through his studies of alienated students,[28] the young man may have been profoundly disillusioned in his mother, who had been seductively close to him, when she betrayed him by adhering to his father; and disillusioned in a father who despite external appearances turned out to be weak, relatively ineffectual, and perhaps effeminate. Others have been disillusioned in recognizing that one or both parents are dishonest, promiscuous, deceitful toward spouse and child.

The Girl's Identity Problems

Achieving a firm ego identity has become increasingly difficult for many girls, particularly, though not exclusively, for liberated, intellectually competent girls. They are caught up in the historical crisis—brought on by the planned limitation of childbearing, women's increased education, the altered structure of the family, etc.—that has been changing women's place in society and thereby the adolescent girl's image of herself and her future self. She is very likely to realize that women's traditional roles are providing and will provide less satisfaction than in the past, but the new roles for women are still far from clear. Entering the highly competitive arena like men and with men can leave some very basic needs unsatisfied; even many men would like to be able to get away from the constant pursuit of prestige

and power. Still, many girls feel strongly that their mothers have been left with rather empty lives now that their children are grown, even though they had found gratification in being mothers. The new models that are just beginning to appear may seem conflicted and difficult to follow.

The college woman is becoming highly educated—indeed educated beyond the level of all but a limited number of men in other industrial nations—but what is she to do with her education? Use it to raise educated sons, or to provide backing for an educated husband? Many college women are clearly as competent as, or more competent than, their brothers or male classmates, and see no reason why they should not seek fulfillment and realization by taking on instrumental roles in society and become business executives, lawmakers, professors themselves. Some are secure in their capabilities and since mid-adolescence have been certain that they would pursue careers. These girls often either follow in the paths of mothers who have had careers or decide that they will realize the potentialities their competent mothers had sacrificed to become wives of highly capable men (Keniston, 1971); or they have had some other such guiding principle. Thus, a college freshman decided, as soon as she assured herself that she could obtain good grades in the sciences, to follow her mother's sister and become a pediatrician, thereby making certain that she would not become a person like her mother, who catered to the needs and whims of her dominating and thoughtless father. However, even most of these girls will also expect to marry and have children sooner or later, and they are aware that combining a real career—and pinning one's future happiness on its success—with marriage requires finding a man who will consider his wife's career on a par with his own, and that having children will very likely interfere with a career and even disrupt it. They wish fulfillment through their own special abilities and not only through being women with innate capacities to create children; and set they wish to have a basic identity as women who have children and can be nurturant at home, no matter how impersonal and competitive they may be at work. They may be haunted by the fear of growing incapable of intimacy, warmth, and tenderness, and remaining unloved and lonely whatever their achievements. Their abilities to stick to their resolve may depend on their being able to find a man at college, with whom they can have a warm companionship and sexual intimacy to assure themselves that they can give of themselves and can be desired. Of course, finding other young women at college who feel reasonably at ease in competing with men also helps.

Still, even those adolescents who have the primary objective of becoming a wife and mother (who, we should remember, still constitute the large majority of adolescent girls) are now beginning to realize

that caring for children will adequately occupy only ten to fifteen years of their seventy or more years of life; and that marriages are not as permanent as formerly. Some will wish to lay the foundations for a part-time or full-time career or avocation before marriage, or at least before having children. Here, too, an identity based on being a wife and mother alone may be felt to be insufficient. Further, female classmates and professors at college may urge a college sophomore who looks forward to marriage but is highly competent to be true to herself and make the most of her capabilities by pursuing a career. Even an adolescent who believes deeply that for her a sense of fulfillment and creativity will come through complementing a man's life and nurturing children may today feel a traitor to her sex if she follows her felt needs and intuitive convictions. Such girls may realize that for them there can be a very basic inner conflict between having a career and being a mother. For some girls to achieve the autonomy necessary for a successful career, they must establish very firm boundaries which may include renunciation of remaining identifications with their mothers, and then later will find it difficult to relax the boundaries sufficiently to form a symbiotic union with an infant, or to permit a child to become sufficiently dependent upon them (Keniston, 1971). They may also fear that once they permit themselves to begin to compete for prestige, particularly with men, they may never be able to withdraw from the race and have children.

Currently, the problems of the girl's ego identity are very complex. Those who pursue careers will have not only many identity problems similar to those of men but also those related to the changing positions of women in society, problems which also involve new attitudes toward intimacy, sexual behavior, marital choice, and career choice. We shall consider such problems further in this and subsequent chapters.

INTIMACY AND LOVE

Even though young adolescents may have had various sexual experiences, usually they are not ready to become involved in intimate relationships until late adolescence; and even then, they are apt to be tentative. They have been seeking release, knowledge, excitement, and have been engaged in exploring their feelings and those of persons of the opposite sex, more than in seeking completion of the self through a lasting relationship with another. Indeed, a stable love relationship in the mid-teens often indicates an inability to tolerate separation from parents and can block the development of a firm ego

identity. Even though the sexual drives are as imperative as earlier, late adolescents are often less upset by them. They have usually found some means of coming to terms with their sexual needs, even though on a temporary basis, and superego dictates are less restrictive. They feel more certain of their capacities; they have strengthened their defenses against being overwhelmed by drives, and they permit themselves some outlets without too much conflict.

Gradually adolescents begin to have a less self-centered and narcissistic orientation to their sexual and affectional needs. They become involved in love relationships in which the welfare of the partner is also important, and the satisfaction that the other obtains becomes a source of pleasure to the self. They feel, even if they do not consciously realize it, that they are incomplete alone and that a member of one sex cannot feel complete without joining with a member of the opposite sex. They wish to share and find someone whose roles and ways of loving are complementary to their own, who gains satisfaction from what they do, who is not a rival, and to whom they are necessary. They are no longer seeking someone like themselves, or even someone of the other sex in whom they find attributes they might have liked to possess, but someone who completes them and admires them. When an adolescent persists in pursuing an unrequited love, the romantic striving has a pathological character as if the boy or girl feels fated to repeat the frustrations of the oedipal situation rather than to find situations that can bring fulfillment.

Now that persons have begun to come to terms with who they are, and have fairly definite ego identities, they often fall in love in a serious fashion. The meaning and intensity of being in love varies with the maturity of the person. Now couples are drawn together and the life of each encompasses the other. They think and talk in terms of "we," emphasizing their mutuality of interests, feelings, future lives —often temporarily overdoing the romantic belief in their unity. There is an impelling need to be together and share experiences. Things done separately are carried out with thoughts of the partner. Separation can be painful, and thoughts of being replaced by another engender real suffering. The lover invests the representation of the loved one intensely, and even though it may be painful at times, the experience of being drawn beyond one's own confines and beyond one's own life into such intimate concern and involvement leads to a loosening of boundaries of the self, to a release that is ecstatic. Now, an intense attachment to another that combines the affectional and erotic can for the first time replace the intense attachment to a parent that had to be renounced. The psychic intimacy usually blends with a physical and sexual intimacy, but the emotional and psychic investment can become more irresistible

than the sexual urges from which such feelings may derive.

I cannot don the poet's mantle to write of the bliss of early love when the self is partially lost in devotion to another, and when the awkwardness of self-consciousness shifts into a grace of being desired. Even though most early loves break up sooner or later, they form important omens for the future. They indicate that disappointments over frustrations within the family can be overcome, that repressions of sexuality are not too great, that defenses are not too rigid. The relationships may be disrupted because the choice resembles a parent too closely or, conversely, is too dissimilar; or because the boy and girl are not yet ready to relinquish their newly gained independence; or because too many tasks toward achieving security and a career remain. Sexual frustrations may produce too many frictions. Sexual intercourse between inexperienced persons, even when they are in love, may be unsatisfactory, and the couple may not be ready to seek advice, or know where they can find help. Such relationships are an important part of developing into an adult, a proper trying out of how one relates to another on intimate terms. They are part of the expansion of adolescence but also a coming to terms with the need to delimit and share, and such courtships should be trial periods rather than firm commitments.

The Changing Sexual Mores

The changes in adolescent sexual mores have permitted many in recent decades to include sexual intercourse as part of their experimentation with intimate relationships. However, it is erroneous to believe that most teenagers are having sexual relations. It has been estimated that fewer than fifty-percent of girls and about sixty percent of boys have had sexual relations as teenagers (Sorensen, 1973) and that about fifty percent of college students have sexual relations (Sarrel, personal communication). It is possible that there has not been a great change in the number of late adolescents who currently have intimate sexual experience in comparison with previous generations, but there is probably more intercourse than petting to orgasm than earlier in the century,[29] and more openness about cohabitation. There is probably considerably greater freedom, particularly for the girl to have sexual relationships without a serious commitment to the partner; sometimes with only sufficient commitment for her to assure herself that she is not promiscuous. A great effort has gone into making premarital sexual relationships more casual and less focal. The desire for intimacy and closeness may be more important than sexual release, and the practice of couples sleeping together without having intercourse has become

common among college students. The “double standard” by which parents expected sons but not daughters to have sexual relations before marriage is disappearing and parents are now more likely to be concerned about a daughter's becoming pregnant than about her losing her virginity.

It is also apparent that adolescents can permit themselves to feel bolder and require less protection by parietal rules because the sexual act encompasses far less danger and is far less threatening to the continuity of development and career than formerly, as there is less threat of being forced into an undesirable marriage. Improved contraception, the legalization of abortion, and a decrease in the seriousness of the consequences of venereal infections are important factors in producing this change; but fewer than twenty percent of adolescent girls use a reliable mode of contraception regularly, if at all. One out of six teenage girls becomes pregnant without being married, and fifteen percent of college women have unwanted pregnancies, most of whom have abortions.[30] Venereal diseases have again become common because condoms are used relatively infrequently, the male expecting the girl to take the necessary contraceptive precautions.

Many progressive religious leaders no longer equate sexual abstinence with morality, and some even believe that greater freedom of sexual expression may lead to a lessening of unconscious motivations toward unethical behavior. The concept, stemming originally from psychoanalytic teachings that sexual repression can be harmful to the harmonious development of the individual, has had considerable influence upon teachers, clergy, doctors, and parents. The greater acceptance of sexuality by elders permits more open discussion in adolescence; and it is the openness of sexual behavior as well as the freedom of discussion that represents much of the change over the past few decades. Victorian standards are considered ludicrous rather than providing a guide for sexual behavior. Abstinence is not defended as a virtue, though a large number abstain because they do not feel ready, or perhaps because it may be easier to abandon old standards verbally than in actuality. However, it is natural enough for the boy to desire sexual release with a girl whom he likes rather than with either a prostitute or someone who does not matter, and for the girl to wish to share sexually with her boy friend rather than have him turn to another for gratification.

Identity and the Capacity for Intimacy

The discussion of the problems of achieving an ego identity separately from the consideration of gaining a capacity for intimacy has been arbitrary, required for clarity, for the two processes are closely interrelated. The answer to the query "Who am I?" depends, in part, upon knowing that one can love and be loved as an individual, and even more specifically upon whom one loves and from whom one desires love. Ego identity involves the feelings of completion that come from feeling loved and needed, from being able to share the self and the world with another. Still, the capacity of intimacy can develop only as feelings of self-assurance and of being an integrated and reasonably independent individual gradually consolidate. Concerns over sexual capacities, over gender identity, and then over the ability to be close and gain closeness markedly influence the adolescent's developing ego identity.

Traditionally, the capacity for intimacy has been more of an inherent part of gaining an ego identity in girls than in boys. Those girls who enter late adolescence seeking completion through finding a husband will still find a large measure of their self-concepts in terms of exploring their own attributes and finding out which boys or young men can engender a sense of completion in them. However, for many male as well as female adolescents, just who can provide a sense of completion depends on who one believes one is or wishes to be, and not simply on the capacity to be intimate with the person. A college freshman had an excellent relationship, including a sexual relationship, with a high school classmate whom she believed she loved dearly. However, she increasingly felt a disparity between their intellectual capacities, cultural interests, and ambitions. Determined to become a tax attorney—her father was an accountant—she could not believe she could continue to share interests with a physical education instructor. In contrast, adolescents' ambitious plans for the future may vanish when they fall in love. The girl may begin to appreciate the satisfactions her mother gained in loving and being needed by others, something that previously had seemed so burdensome to her. She may learn from her experience that sex, instead of being anxiety provoking and not particularly gratifying, is extremely exciting and enjoyable, and perhaps even more enjoyable and necessary for her than for her boyfriend.[31] The young man who had expected to become a neurosurgeon decides that entering his uncle's business on graduation in order to marry his love will provide greater happiness.

It makes sense to many to explore and try out how things work with different partners; and not to

feel impelled to marry in order to have a sexual relationship. Part of women's liberation concerns the abandonment of the double standard, and as late adolescent girls are often more mature than their male classmates, they are as likely as a boyfriend, if not more likely, to desire sexual intercourse as part of a relationship. Serial monogamy, in which couples confine their sexual behavior to one another but do not thereby make lasting commitments, has become common among older adolescents as well as young adults. The new freedom can have the salutary influence of lessening the import of sexual desire as a dominant motivation for marriage and the choice of marital partners; and in diminishing sexual repression during late adolescence to permit more rational decisions concerning other matters aside from marriage, including career choice.

There are, however, some difficulties inherent in the contemporary situation. They devolve from problems of emotional maturity more than from questions of morals or ethics. Adolescents of both sexes tend to engage in sexual relationships of either a transitory or more involved nature before they are ready. The group mores no longer tend to support refusal or delay, and the individual must be willing to maintain a stand concerning what is right for himself or herself. Indeed, a college woman may find herself under pressure from her friends "to go on the pill." When a young person, whether male or female, behaves sexually in ways alien to his or her own values because of a partner's desires or demands, or because of group pressures, sexual problems are very likely to ensue. The girl may feel obligated to have sexual relations with her boyfriend, just as his last girlfriend did; and a boy may not be ready to admit his inexperience. A very popular young man on the campus became upset after his first sexual intercourse. He had gone to study in the room of a girl he liked and found interesting. Late in the evening, she started to undress and he started to leave, but it became clear from the conversation that she believed that he, a much-sought-after young man, was very experienced and would be pleased to sleep with her. He found that he was unable to tell her that he was still virginal and felt that she would take his refusal as a rebuff.

Girls today, in keeping with much of the literature on sex, consider it important to have an orgasm each time they have intercourse, and couples feel that simultaneous orgasms are evidence of a good relationship; and yet a girl is not likely to have an orgasm the first several times she has intercourse, and couples may need considerable experience before relations are fully satisfactory for both.

When a young couple has a sexual relationship, one member is apt to invest more of the self in it than the other, and not be able to accept the other's casualness; or when the affair is serious, one will be hurt when it breaks up, despite promises that neither would expect it to be permanent. Actual sexual difficulties are apt to occur more commonly among adolescents who are still not properly disengaged from their oedipal attachments, and who cannot cope with the dependency needs of a partner when they are far from independent themselves. Of course, similar problems occur in young married couples. It is not a matter of age but of readiness, and couples are more apt to be ready when they must also consider the life-long involvements of marriage. The solutions are not readily available, for there cannot be generalized answers. Here we are simply noting that the adolescent often considers such matters in terms of standards of morality and propriety, which they are willing to change, when questions of maturity may be more pertinent.

Variant Uses of Sexuality

The adolescent may start to use his or her sexuality for purposes other than either gaining sexual release or moving toward intimacy. Compulsive sexuality that enables the boy to believe that he is a real man, or the girl to think that she is irresistibly sensuous—or at least to lead others to believe so—is often a defense against fears of homosexuality or deep feelings of worthlessness, or a flight from loneliness and emptiness. Some will use sexuality as a means of sadistically dominating the partner, or of humiliating the opposite sex; or to make the other feel sexually inadequate or worthless. Then, there is the potentiality that the pleasures of the sexual act can lead a person with a shaky identity into finding solace and diversion through it, and sexuality becomes something of a game. The use of sex as a game or a diversion in late adolescence and early adult life is common enough; it can be part of a competition with peers of the same sex, as when cliques of college men keep tabulations of their "box scores." Seduction through various tactics and strategies can become a game in itself. Some consider such activities an inherent part of late adolescence and early adulthood in the male, and even some girls are attracted by men with many conquests. Such diversion need not be deleterious unless it ultimately becomes a substitute for seeking after real intimacy.

THE END OF ADOLESCENCE

Sooner or later adolescence ends for most (but not all) persons, and it can end in many different ways. Still, we may generalize and consider that persons become adults after they feel independent enough and have explored the horizon sufficiently. They begin to feel that the world is too large and they can become lost in it. They realize all too keenly that success in a chosen career depends upon the effort they put into it, for they are competing with others who seem as capable as they are. An obsessive quality may develop in youths who formerly had been carefree; it is an obsessiveness deriving from efforts to overcome anxiety about the future through thinking through and working out solutions in advance, mingled with compulsive strivings to satisfy expectations. They cannot afford to fail after finally making a decision about their futures. Such concerns can lead to overdelimitation, to a constriction of interests and of the personality. It is the danger opposite to that of ego diffusion—an outcome that is not so devastating and chaotic, but narrowing if it becomes more than an expedient to gain a good start and becomes a way of life.

Now the loss of bonds to the family is no longer pleasing, particularly as newer relationships are being cut into as friends pair off and marry. The need for interdependence with another and for intimacy asserts itself and gains dominance as a motivation. The youth cannot keep seeking after some indefinite ambition but must settle down to conquer a specific section of the vocational world. The young person begins to believe, albeit often unconsciously, that striving after fame or wealth, or the pursuit of some ideology, is less important than coming to mean something to some specific individual. The youth realizes that life will gain in meaning through being meaningful to another person and having the other person need him or her. Thus the strivings for intimacy and identity come together, for much of the feelings of having a specific identity will come from being needed and wanted by another person, and from the meaning one has to the other person. Even as the self first took form in childhood through a feedback from significant others, now one particularly significant person helps define the self. Intimacy comes when an individual is capable of balancing giving and receiving and can seek to satisfy another rather than simply seek self-fulfillment and achievement.

It is now, at the end of adolescence, that youths often move beyond the egocentricity of "formal operations," when they could not really appreciate that solving problems subjectively is a very different

matter from solving them in actuality. They realize that to change the nation, or even the university, will take years of effort, and may have doubts whether it is worth devoting one's life to a task that is so likely to fail. However, some highly motivated and idealistic youths will resist closure and find themselves only when they come to terms with the social system in which they live, as we shall consider in the next chapter. Now adolescents begin to see themselves moving through a complex world and a maze of people rather than having others pass through their world.[32] They realize that they are living in a brief span of history isolated in an infinity of space. If they are fortunate they find meaning in what the world is, and do not get lost in their insignificance. They appreciate that there are ways of regarding the world which are very different from their own. Reluctantly, they may decide that although ideologies are worth pursuing, they must first look out for their own futures. They also begin to see their parents as individuals with lives of their own, caught up in their own marriage and occupations, rather than simply as parents. They now begin to understand their parents' foibles and deficiencies and sometimes even to hope that they will be able to do as well. They may begin again to accept components of parents as conscious objects of identification and their standards as part of their own superego directives. As they leave adolescence, they may have lingering regrets that they have not dared more or that they have not been able to stick to the ideals that but so recently fired their lives. In a way, it is always regrettable when youths become as conservative and conventional as their parents at an early age. Fortunately not all do.

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Notes

1 Erikson (1956) considers the gaining of an ego identity as the primary task of adolescence and an essential precursor of the capacity for intimacy. For reasons that will be presented in the discussion of late adolescence, I consider these two tasks as interrelated, moving ahead in steplike phases that alternate or provide support for one another, with the final phases of gaining a capacity for intimacy following the achievement of an independent identity. By the end of adolescence, although the person has achieved an identity, he or she may still be caught in a conflict between fidelity to the self and the society's ethos and mores —problems common to post-adolescent youth.

2 Figures vary from country to country: menarche had been found to occur in the United States at a mean age of 12.7 ± 1.2 years (Reiter and Kulin, 1972); in Florence, Italy, at 12.5; and in France at 13.5 (Duche et al., 1966). The age of menarche has become lower, by about four months every ten years over the past one hundred thirty years, possibly as a result of improved nutrition.

The mean body weight at menarche is 48 kg. (105 pounds) (Frisch and Revelle, 1970). However, recent studies indicate that currently menarche occurs at a mean age of 12.8 years in girls in the United States, the same age as in their mothers. The lowering of the age may have leveled off (L. Zacharias, 1976).

3 Most of these films and pamphlets are provided by industries to gain consumers for sanitary products. They are careful not to offend parents. The materials minimize the girl's subjective experience and convey how a girl should feel and behave rather than help her to explore her feelings. They draw the girl's attention away from her interest in the changes in her body and feelings and focus on cleanliness, daintiness, and ways of concealing menstruation from others. The information provided about internal and external sexual organs is inadequate and misleading. Many girls are led to believe that the bleeding comes from the ovum rather than the uterine lining. Girls are told that they are about to become "women" rather than adolescents, which can confuse them (Whisnant et al., 1975).

4 It is important to realize that before disposable menstrual pads were invented by army nurses during World War I, and their commercial introduction in the 1920s, the care of menstrual cloths or "rags" was a somewhat time-consuming and rather messy affair—and often difficult for a young girl—and that it was probably not as easy for women to remain as mobile and as free from menstrual odor as now.

5 Whereas cultural change has greatly modified the feminine position in society, conferring advantages over the male in some areas, it has also diminished the tendency toward fatalistic and unconscious acceptance of being a member of the "second sex," and has opened the way for more conscious ambivalence and for more acceptable strivings toward active careers, thus bringing new sources of dissatisfaction and unhappiness into the lives of some women.

6 Whereas the ''penis envy," which psychoanalysis believed all women must overcome or come to terms with, may not form a significant unconscious concern in all, it clearly has dynamic moment in the lives of some girls, particularly at menarche.

7 It has been fairly acceptable for a woman to wish to be a man, but shameful for a man to wish to be a woman. Nevertheless, many more men seek to be turned into a woman operatively than vice versa. The Plains Indians institutionalized the "berdache"— men who chose to live as women, but who were also unusually brave in battle as members of the Crazy Horse societies. We have already commented on the elaborate rituals required to assure that New Guinea boys will relinquish early feminine identifications and develop into warriors.

8 Although, as far as the author knows, there has been no attempt to replicate the Benedek-Rubenstein studies, a number of studies have confirmed the premenstrual tendency toward depression and anxiety. Ivey and Bardwick (1968), in a systematic study of twenty-six college students, found that anxiety scores on a test were significantly higher premenstrually than at the time of ovulation, and that death-anxiety, hostility, and feelings of inability to cope were much more prominent premenstrually. Premenstrual changes in the direction of anxiety and lowered mood and confidence could be found in virtually all subjects.

Although in very many women the cyclic changes in behavior and mood are scarcely noticeable, in some they almost dominate the women's life and the shifts in their behavior are almost incomprehensible without regard to the cycle. Thus a woman in intensive psychotherapy, albeit a very disturbed woman, exhibited very different attitudes toward the therapist as well as toward her husband and children in the different phases of flic cycle, month after month. In the postmenstrual phase she dressed carefully and tended to be seductive and outgoing—striving to please her therapist by what she brought to the sessions; during the second half of the cycle she would neglect her dress, become very discontented with life, and carry a chip on her shoulder, often attacking the therapist verbally; then premenstrually she would feel despondent and express her hopelessness, at times thinking of running away to find a new life, at others behaving like a helpless child and becoming dependent upon her husband and children as well as her therapist.

9 Women in intensive psychotherapy or analysis are often astounded when they develop the insight that their father's withdrawal was in reaction to attraction and sexual stimulation rather than because of disappointment in their daughter's appearance—an

insight that sometimes marks a significant turn in therapy.

10 According to Kinsey et al. (1948, p. 500) the percentage increases from forty-five at the age of thirteen to seventy-one at fifteen. The study by Robert Sorensen (1973) finds a much lower percentage of boys who have masturbated, but despite the care with which his study was conducted, his figures seem too low and run counter to the experience of psychiatrists.

11 Kinsey has pointed out the marked differences between social classes in the United States at the time of his study. A policeman stemming from the lower class might arrest a boy he finds masturbating, but the judge would not consider it a notable offense — whereas finding youngsters having intercourse might provoke reverse judgments. (See Chapter 10 in Kinsey et al., *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*.)

12 S. M. Woods reported in 1973 that a survey of senior medical students revealed that twelve percent of them still believed that masturbation could cause insanity or homosexuality.

13 Kinsey found that whereas masturbation is more common in children from educated circles, even lower-class children who manage to gain a higher education have masturbated more than peers from their social class. (See Chapter 14 in Kinsey et al., *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male*.)

14 Inhelder and Piaget have carefully analyzed the nature of formal operations in terms of symbolic logic and in terms of the mathematical logic of lattices and groups. These contributions to both formal logic and mathematics as well as to epistemology go beyond the scope of the present book and the reader is referred to their joint study, *The Growth of Logical Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence*, and also to *Piaget's Logic and Psychology*.

15 They may lack the conceptual tools needed for much hypothetical-deductive thinking, but the areas in which they think conceptually may simply be more limited in accord with their more limited experience in solving problems instrumentally rather than through ritual or magic (Lidz, et al., 1973).

16 Inhelder and Piaget (*The Growth of Logical Thinking from Childhood to Adolescence*, p. 337) consider that the transition to the stage of formal operations is made possible by a further maturation of the central nervous system at about the age of eleven or twelve, but they recognize that the relationship is "far from simple, since the organization of formal structures must depend on the social milieu as well. ... A particular social environment remains indispensable for the realization of these possibilities. It follows that a realization can be accelerated or retarded as a function of cultural and educational conditions. . . . The growth of formal thinking . . . remains dependent on social as much as and more than on neurological factors." Actually they produce no evidence that the capacity for formal operations depends upon a further maturation of the cerebral cortex rather than upon the steplike development of the intellectual processes, the stage of formal education achieved, and the demands of moving toward adult responsibility. A similar line of reasoning would lead to the conclusion that the type of scientific thinking that started during the late Renaissance had awaited the further genetic evolution of the brain, rather than cultural evolution and the acquisition of some new' and essential tools for thinking, such as the decimal system and algebra.

17 There is little justification for Anna Freud's (1962) statement, "The closer the tie between child and parent has been before, the more bitter and violent will be the struggle for independence from them in adolescence." Indeed, various investigators have shown that the serious adolescent disturbances and conflicts with parents reflect psychopathology in parents or pathology in their parental functioning. See H. Stierlin, *Separating Parents and Adolescents*; R. Shapiro, "Adolescent Ego Autonomy and the Family"; and N. Ackerman, "Adolescent Problems: A Symptom of Family Disorder."

18 Psychiatrists and others interested in troubled young people have probably overestimated the rebelliousness of the mid-adolescent because they are involved primarily with disturbed adolescents. Still, many parents find their adolescent offspring to be contrary and difficult very frequently. However, Offer and Offer (1975) as well as Elkin and Westly (1955), who have carried out systematic studies of middle-class adolescents, have found relatively little overt parent-adolescent conflict, or even any

marked disruption of the developmental process. We should note that even during the difficult years of the Vietnam war, which led to rebelliousness in many youths, their parents were often sympathetic toward their feelings if not toward their actions.

19 The youth group and its culture probably plays a more important role in the life of the adolescent and his development in the United States than in European countries. Perhaps nowhere else is there such definite preparation in childhood peer-group activities for autonomous youth groups. Peer-group activities both in childhood and in midadolescence are under much closer family supervision among the middle class in European countries, perhaps leading to a more definitive and precipitous break from adult guidance when independence is finally gained in late adolescence. Moving away from the family at an earlier age, the American adolescent tends to be more dependent upon being popular to maintain a modicum of self-esteem. Even though the emphasis on group loyalty and decision making in the youth groups may well be part of the preparation for democratic living, it also contributes to a marked dependency upon the opinion of peers to provide motivation and direction for behavior.

20 There are also more irrational fears that are utilized to buttress the superego. We have already observed that the male's fear of a vagina with teeth has been noted in virtually all parts of the world. Less obviously, the adolescent is also apt to be fascinated by fictitious stories of couples who were unable to separate after having intercourse and had to be taken to the hospital in the embarrassing position in which they were locked. It is of interest that this myth was utilized to preserve the sanctity of the dark medieval church, in the lore that this situation would occur when couples had sexual relations in the church. It was further fortified by the legend that such unions would lead to the birth of a werewolf. Perhaps a werewolf would be the proper product of the "black mass," an anti-Christian witchcraft rite during which couples copulated on the altar.

21 "The process of identity formation emerges as an evolving configuration, a configuration which is gradually established by successive ego syntheses and resyntheses throughout childhood; it is a configuration gradually integrating constitutional givens, idiosyncratic libidinal needs, favored capacities, significant identifications, effective defenses, successful sublimations, and consistent roles" (E. Erikson, "The Problem of Ego Identity," p. 116).

22 The concept of ego identity also implies the attainment of a homeostasis of the self or the personality which absorbs the impact of influences upon the personality and tends to resist radical change and perpetuate itself, so to speak. The homeostatic mechanisms within the personality are extremely complex, and involve matters beyond current knowledge. While the sorting out of identifications is very important, it involves many other matters, some of which I shall indicate here: (1) What a person perceives and how the person perceives it influences markedly the further development of personality traits; yet it involves a process that is circular, for perception depends in part on the projection of personality characteristics—as we know from the utility of projective personality tests, (z) Patterns of relating within the family now come to a closure, but will continue to influence all further interpersonal and group relationships. (3) Parental directives have now been internalized as superego directives; but even more important, many have moved closer to the ego "core" and become ego rather than superego functions and thus are fundamental and rather spontaneous determinants of behavior. (4) The patterns of the defensive mechanisms utilized to avert anxiety and depression as well as cognitive styles and patterns of emotional reactivity have become fairly set. (5) The individual has assimilated into the self both cultural instrumentalities and norms as well as much of the social system in which he lives, and thus gains a stability in behaving, perceiving, relating, according to these norms. (6) The assumption of a major life role—such as the role of a physician or future physician, lawyer, or even profligate —contributes to consistency and resistance to change.

23 Identification with the aggressor is often an important defense in which one takes on strengths and attributes of a feared and hated object. Thus, some sage warned, "Select your enemy carefully, because you will end up resembling him."

24 A topic that will be expanded in the chapter on occupational choice.

25 *Identity foreclosure*, including the assumption of a *negative identity*—the commitment to identification with persons who are shunned, despised, or hated—is a common outcome of development in white or black slums, but particularly black inner-city slums.

Such pathological developments, even though all too common, are beyond the scope of this book. The reader is referred to S. Hauser, *Black and White Identity Formation*.

26 Developmental novels—*Erziehungsromane*—usually deal with the crisis the author passed through in finding a way of life and are of particular interest to the study of personality development. Noteworthy examples are Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, Samuel Butler's *The Way of All Flesh*, Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*, Strindberg's *The Red Room*, and James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

27 The recent trend toward the use of marijuana and LSD as a means of finding oneself and discovering a new truth and meaning through more immediate access to the unconscious is clearly related to the Dionysian religion in ancient Greece. Dionysus was the "liberator"—the god who through the use of wine and the ecstasy of the bacchanal enabled a person to stop being himself for a brief period, thereby setting the person free from feelings of responsibility and the burden of being himself. It was a flight from the Apollonian spirit, which sought self-understanding through experience, an attempt to gain insight through revelation. Dionysus was thus a god of illusion with a welcomed way of release from planning and control. He appeared at a time when the individual began to emerge from the solidarity of the family for the first time, and "found the burden of individual responsibility hard to bear." The aim of the cult was the achievement of ecstasy, a losing of oneself, and its psychological function was to "satisfy and relieve the impulse to reject responsibility, an impulse that exists in all of us and can become under certain social conditions an irresistible craving" (Dodds, 1951, pp. 76-77). LSD is used for similar purposes, primarily by late adolescents and young adults who find the burden of achieving an ego identity too great. The illusion of profound insight into the self and the meaning of the universe so often experienced under the influence of the drug makes it particularly tempting and dangerous. The taker has the illusion of finding the self through losing the self. The use of the drug is often bound to group ritual in which individuals feel freed from responsibility for their own behavior and can be carried away as were the participants in the bacchanalia. It is of interest that some devotees seek to ritualize the use of LSD into a religious rite (Lidz and Rothenberg, 1968).

28 See K. Keniston, *The Uncommitted*. Such tragic situations are dramatized effectively and realistically in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* and Eugene O'Neill's *Long Day's Journey into Night*.

29 It should be realized that university students in many other countries had prolonged sexual affairs even prior to World War II, and, in particular, Scandinavian sexual mores have long differed markedly from those of the United States. The practice of "heavy petting" that had been considered more permissible in contrast to sexual relationships has something of a perverse character, in that forepleasure becomes the goal, and this seemed very bizarre to many Europeans.

30 In 1974 teenagers accounted for about one in five births—about 617,000 babies and a quarter of a million abortions. It has been estimated that out of every ten teenagers who get pregnant, three are married, three get married, and four have abortions or babies without getting married. The "unwanted" pregnancies are often consciously or unconsciously desired. The boy, particularly among groups where "machismo" is important, may need to prove his masculinity. In some settings boys—or men—feel cheated if the girl uses contraception and their sperm is wasted. Girls—particularly fatherless, neglected girls—may wish to have a baby as a "doll" to love them and to love; or to assure themselves that they can be fertile. Girls may wish to show their parents that they are not the only ones who can have affairs. College students may need to prove their masculinity or femininity when threatened by homosexual temptations. Somewhat older students can settle problems concerning marriage and career by becoming pregnant, or when they feel uncreative and stymied in their work, they can fall back on their natural creative capacities, etc. (Sarrel and R. Lidz, 1970).

31 The comparison of the relative satisfaction gained by each sex in the sexual act is, of course, impossible. The only person who has ever been deemed capable of so judging was the mythical Tiresias. According to legend, Tiresias had been turned into a woman when he saw snakes copulating, and had then lived as a courtesan for many years, but eventually regained his masculine anatomy. It seems that once when Hera was upbraiding Zeus for one of his many infidelities, he told her not to complain for as a woman she gained far more pleasure when they did have sexual relations. Hera did not accept her spouse's infinite knowledge and insisted that the remark was ludicrous, that everyone knew that the man gained more pleasure from the act

than the woman. The quarrel thus turned from the particular to the universal, but neither one could convince the other. Finally they remembered Tiresias and called upon him to settle the argument, admitting that for once a mortal could know something hidden even to a god. Tiresias stated that if the pleasure of the sexual act is divided into ten parts, nine parts are the woman's. This assertion so angered Hera that she struck Tiresias blind. Zeus could not undo Hera's act, but sought to compensate Tiresias by conferring upon him inner sight, thus making him the greatest of all seers; and he bestowed on him seven life spans, which accounts for the appearance of Tiresias in myths that took place in different eras.

32 A nineteen-year-old, after revisiting the town in which he had spent his first summer vacation during college and where he had made many friends, recalled his thoughts and feelings while walking to the railroad station when he left. "I was in something of a daze; the people hurrying through the streets looked different to me than people ever looked before. I realized in a way that I had never before that all of this had remained while I had come and gone: my friends were pursuing their lives, falling in love and out again, changing their studies, finding new interests, and I was only peripheral to it. indeed scarcely mattered. Of course, I had known this before but I had never felt it."