Adolescent Socialization

David Waters

Carroll College

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholars.carroll.edu/psychology_theses

Part of the Developmental Psychology Commons

Recommended Citation
Waters, David, "Adolescent Socialization" (1972). Psychology Undergraduate Theses. 60.
https://scholars.carroll.edu/psychology_theses/60
ADOLESCENT
SOCIALIZATION

by

David W. Waters

A Thesis Presented for Honors
in Partial Fulfillment of the
B.A. Degree for an Area of Concentration
in the
Department of Psychology

Carroll College
May, 1972
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE STATE AND STATUS OF ADOLESCENCE</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PARENTS, THE HOME, AND THE ADOLESCENT</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEERS AND YOUTH CULTURE</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE ADOLESCENT SOCIETY AND SOCIALIZATION</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOLS AND ADOLESCENT SOCIALIZATION</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELIGION AND THE ADOLESCENT</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUDING REMARKS</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

Some people define adolescence simply as an affliction. Others, probably looking back, follow G. B. Shaw in describing it as such a wonderful time of life that it's a shame to waste it on children. Freudians describe the period as dominated by sexual maturation and the flowering of sexual desire and heterosexual attachments. Some define the boundaries of the period as set by the beginning of puberty to the end of the maturation process. Probably a useful perspective is to set the lower limit physiologically (not earlier than the onset of puberty) and the upper limit socially (not later than the assumption of marital and occupational duties). Stated otherwise, adolescence does not begin before one is capable of reproduction and does not extend past entry into wedlock or full-time work.

From a socialization perspective, it is essential that one defines adolescence as a system of rights and duties, a social role, and in order to do so one must set it in a social space. To do this, one need not speak chronologically but in terms of social expectancies. In turn, it is required to specify what particular society is being talked about, and in the present instance, except where otherwise noted for comparative purposes, the focus is on modern American society.
It is important to note that adolescence is a socially created category as are all stages in the life cycle (Glick, 1957). Childhood is its predecessor and adulthood its termination. Adolescence is a status, given defined rights and duties, and assigned a set of expected behaviors. Normally an adolescent is not to be self-supporting. He cannot frequent bars nor buy hard liquor until possibly near the end of adolescence. He is not to marry or to enter parenthood. He cannot be as frivolous as a child or as responsible as an adult. By the same token, it is a vastly variegated period of life, spanning the time from the first pubic hairs to entering military service, from intensive hesitancy toward the opposite sex to involved, semi-permanent heterosexual attachments, from very limited experience with team sports to athletic scholarships and headlines on sports pages, from bedtimes strictly enforced by mothers to residence in the vast anonymous dormitories of large public universities.

It may be helpful at this point to indicate a general perspective on the social state of adolescence and designate some of the issues that will be the concern of this paper. This perspective will be general before being specific. Adolescents vary greatly among themselves and between different social classes and different regions of the country. Much of what is said in this paper is not as appropriate to rural youth; to youth of the poor, especially those who drop out
of school or otherwise assume adult responsibilities early; to minority youth; and to adolescents who, whether for reasons of rejection (social isolation) or choice (personal values, as in studiousness) are socially uninvolved. Thus, the prototype for what is said is the urban, especially the suburban, middle class, though the interpretations should apply, if less specifically, to adolescents throughout modern American society.

Though adolescence is a social role, it has the significant feature of being tied to a limited age span. Thus, there is an important sense in which adolescence must be defined chronologically since structures and norms are keyed in an important way to it: legal and normative definitions of minimum and proper age or marriage are illustrative as is the fact that the 18-year-old male becomes subject to the military draft. A person who is in the 8th grade is supposed to be 13 or 14 years old, and our strong expectation is that the high school graduating class is composed largely of 17 or 18-year-olds. Pressures toward automatic promotion of pupils in the public schools reflect this tendency to allot social roles by age. One cannot be licensed to drive a car until one is 16 or so, and those who cannot drive are eliminated from easy access to those major portions of adolescent culture that organize around the automobile. Thus, although it is the intention to discuss adolescent socialization as socialization pertaining to the
social role of adolescence rather than as socialization pertaining to a distinct age period, one cannot ignore the major linkages made between age and social expectancies. It is essential, however, that one does not link chronological age immutably to the social state of adolescence.

What, then, is supposed to happen during adolescence? How are adolescents supposed to behave, and what experiences are they supposed to have? First, adolescents are supposed to broaden substantially their range of social contacts and dramatically increase the number of others who are emotionally and normatively relevant to them by becoming less dependent on parents and home and more oriented to peers and to the adult world. Second, adolescents are supposed to experiment with what they are in relation to others in the sense of "trying on" new behaviors and experiences, questioning themselves internally as to what they are and wish to be seen as, working toward integration of past experiences, present performances, and future expectancies, attaining a somewhat coherent, somewhat permanent answer to the question, "Who am I?" Third, adolescents are supposed to be learning to be adults, in the sense of acquiring social skills, selecting internal standards of judgment and conduct, and acquiring through practice in "make-believe" organizational settings (clubs, plays, school newspaper, student activities, etc.) the skills of constraint and presentation needed for success in the adult
settings of an industrial, bureaucratized society. Fourth, the adolescent is widely viewed as being simultaneously in a suspended state of supreme frustration and in the middle of the best years of life.
Adolescence is the period of transition, the pre-adolescent stage. It marks the transition from childhood to adulthood. Adolescence is characterized by an expanding circle of influences and by an increasing awareness of self and need for identity. The period is like all other social roles, with its virtues and its limitations.

The tasks of adolescence are those that concern around the factors of physical maturity, ecology, strength, and lack of responsibility. The frustrations of adolescence are those that concern around the lack of responsibility and the definition that adolescents, being less than dependable, predictable, or in a position to be associated with full freedom and citizenship.

There is a great lack of anticipatory socialization in almost all stages of the life-cycle, whether in the play of little girls with dolls or in the rock actions in a junior high school, whether in technical schools and on-the-job training or in the gradual disengagement of the old in preparation for the role of father. Adolescence, particularly, is defined as a period of training and preparation for the future, i.e., adult roles. Instead, society has found the period in a crisis because of the demands made to keep the young frombling the job market and because modern technology requires that those entering the labor market be more highly skilled than in the past. Instead, developmentally, this period is a crisis by itself adolescents.
Adolescence is the period of tension and peace-making between the dependency of the past and the independence of the future, between demands placed on the actor by an expanding circle of influences and by an increasing awareness of self and need for identity. The period, like all other social roles, has its virtues and its liabilities. The assets of adolescence are those that organize around the facts of physical maturity, energy, strength, and lack of responsibility. The frustrations of adolescents are those that organize around the lack of responsibility and the definition that adolescents, being less than dependable, predictable, and responsible, cannot be trusted with full freedom and citizenship rights.

There is a great deal of anticipatory socialization in almost all stages of the life-cycle, whether in the play of little girls with dolls or in the mock election in a junior high school, whether in technical schools and on-the-job training or in the gradual disengagement of the old in preparation for the role of death. Adolescence particularly is defined as a period of training and preparation for the future, i.e., adult roles. Viewed societally, this period is a necessity because of the economic need to keep the young from glutting the job market and because modern technology requires that those entering the labor market be more highly skilled than in the past. Viewed developmentally, this period is a virtue in that adolescents,
being old enough to know what they are doing but not saddled with the expectation of being deadly serious about it, can gain an intelligent and realistic sense of self by experimentation with a variety of roles. Physically maturing and intellectually expansive persons, not required or expected to rush into adult responsibilities, can use the time wisely to explore themselves, test their competencies, try new modes of action, discover their limits, catalog their pleasures, and establish their identities. There is time for uncommitted experimentation where acts are not fully meaningful. One does not expect children to contemplate the question, "Who am I?" because their family circle answers the question for them. Nor does one expect adults to contemplate the question because they are supposed to know the answer—indeed, prevailing norms suggest that they should seek psychotherapy if they do not know. It may be, then, that one of the best definitions one can give adolescence is that it is that period when the person is intellectually developed enough to be able to ask, "Who am I?", released enough from familial identity to need to ask the question, and free enough of the work-world that he can answer it in broader terms than referring to an occupational activity.

One of the most provocative contemporary facts is that adolescence has been growing at both ends. Physiologically, there is evidence that puberty occurs earlier than in the past, and various bisexual contacts and behaviors
appropriate to provocative sexual experiences (cosmetics, dating, dancing, etc.) occur at earlier ages. At the other end of adolescence, the increasing demands for advanced education and the compatible needs of the labor force to keep untrained personnel out of it extend the period of dependency in some cases into the mid-20's or later.

There are, then, important ways in which adolescence as a social position is defined by societal needs. If the economy needed many relatively untrained workers, if the population were not growing as rapidly, if every able-bodied person were needed for some immense task such as national defense, what is currently known as adolescence would not exist. On the negative side, it is agricultural surpluses, technological advances, and the threat of unemployment. On the positive side, it is a complex economy demanding more highly trained workers that extend adolescence at the upper age limits. It is because society does not want people to enter into the labor market early, want them to be well trained when they do enter it that we define certain conditions (e.g., school drop-outs) as social problems, create special roles that prove troublesome (e.g., young adults who from a student's status organize social revolt), and fail generally to define sufficiently meaningful activities for persons who are physically and emotionally ready, or believe themselves to be, for more significant activities than they have to do.
Given the expectation that an increasing number of young people must defer adulthood long after they are ready for it, it is necessary to compensate them for deferred gratifications by offering substitute rewards. Since doing so is a very difficult task, being a wasteful use of talent from the society's standpoint and incomplete and unsatisfactory from the adolescent's, one should expect states of intra- and inter-personal tension and anxiety to be commonplace occurrences. How can a meaningful identity develop among those who possess only the shadow of significance and usefulness? Youth in such a state are rather useless: too old to be cuddled and watched over, too young to be productive and dependable. It is a condition to be tolerated by society in anticipation of their future utility. In their immediate state, they are useful principally to each other. Adults manage to make a few of them useful, as high school football heroes and newspaper delivery boys—and, in time of total war, as soldiers. However, by and large, they are in limbo, something like a connective tissue that simply holds the generations together (Schneider, L., & Lysgaard, S., 1953).

The child's ripening need for independence leads him psychologically away from his parents and kin. Unable to establish a state of personal independence (as in work and marriage), he moves instead into the pseudo-independence of the peer group where he gains the solace of like-situated
persons in the process substituting a dependence on peers for his earlier dependence on parents. Thus, a period that in the abstract has great potential for increasing personal individuation, experimentation, and expansion of borders and boundaries—for permitting individuals to realize their creative potential while free of the routinizing demands of work and family—often has very different effects in reality because the anxieties of freedom create huge conformity pressures regarding details and trivia that become significant.

There is a basic problem in developing commitment among adolescents because society does not need the young and therefore contributes to the trivialization of youth. There is a not unrelated problem of providing youth with disciplined experience because of ambivalence about youth and consequent uncertainties about how they should be treated. This may be why organized team sports, especially football, are credited by so many as being important character-building devices for youth. They are activities which, once entered into, require discipline and physical effort for success.

Specific to the socialization of adolescents, it is important to note certain emergent properties of the period. Probably, adolescence is the first time that the human being consciously tries to conceptualize himself, consciously works to change himself, and consciously experiments with the presentation of various images of himself before audiences of various others.
Second, adolescence is the period when the human actor becomes reactive in his own socialization, which is to say that he plays a more important part compared to childhood in defining what his rights shall be, how he shall be treated, and what he is defined to be.

Third, this period in the life cycle is distinctive because it puts persistent pressures on the adolescent to define an expected future identity: "I'm going to be a cowboy when I grow up" has substantially different meaning when the 16-year-old says it than when the 6-year-old says it. Questions such as, "What are you going to be when you grow up?" "Where are you going to college?" "What grades are you making in school?" "How serious are you about that girl?" and "Do you have a job after school?" have an urgent reality to them that they lacked in earlier years.

Fourth, adolescence introduces the need and theme of unlearning in socialization for the first time; one begins to put away childish things: the reverent adoration of and dependence of parents, concretized conceptions of God, and unquestioning obedience to adult standards. Boys no longer define the opposite sex as "dirty ole girls," and girls cease defining the boys as "mean ole things."

---

1 Margaret Mead (1928) has observed that when, as in Samoa, children observe adults in such adult-type activities as sex and childbirth, the transitions from one life-stage to another are gradual and growth is continuous. This is the same theme that Ruth Benedict (1948) develops; continuity to Benedict means not being taught something one must unlearn later.
Fifth, this is the period when the person must, in a most important sense, come to terms with his dreams, at least by late adolescence; that is, he must make choices, know that he is making them, and know that some of them may be irreversible. He encounters the fact that to be is not to be: he cannot go steady and play the field, be in vocational and college preparatory curriculums, be a scientist and a lawyer, be a member of this clique and that clique. Adolescence is a period in which critically important decisions concerning the future are made and in which a fuller awareness of one's competence to achieve desired ends is shaped.

Sixth, a personal identity emerges that is determined less severely by those few within one's family and more strongly by friends, peers, teachers, and various specific adults, and conditioned by a new realization that "I" is the continuing entity in the midst of flux. New identities create the fear of losing all that one has had and been and may explain instabilities in the adolescent's presentation of self as well as explain the ebb and flow of adolescent friendships.

Seventh, adolescence is a period of emergency social growth; the changes in level of expected social skills and in the diversity and demands of social and interpersonal settings are much greater between, say, age 13 and 17 than
between 34 and 38 and 7 and 11.²

Finally, adolescence is a period of major confrontation between values and reality (Coleman, 1961).

Simply to list three sets of influences that largely encompass the socialization agents and experiences of adolescence is to suggest a simplicity that does not exist. Nonetheless, it will be helpful to discuss the socialization of the adolescent with reference to the interpersonal influences of parents and peers, the social organization known as the school, and the system of norms and values commonly called youth culture. Useful, yes, but also artificial and at times quite restrictive; for one shall need to say something about continuing relations with parents at the same time as the discussion of the substantial influence of youth culture. When one considers the preparatory, adult-administered, formal structure of the school, it creates an awareness that the school provides the social setting in which an adolescent-controlled, informal, present-oriented adolescent subculture exists.

Are adolescents in revolt against their parents? As peers ascend as significant others, do parents recede into irrelevance, and if so, protesting or acquiescing?

²In 1957, E. B. Reuter argues both that the prevalence of adolescent disorder is exaggerated and that prevailing tendencies to offer biological explanations of such disorders as exist simply are not tenable.
Are sharp breaks in attitudes and values as discernible during adolescence as are changes in dress and associations? Is there a youth culture or an adolescent society, and if so, is it oppositional to the adult society and does it devise boundaries (in language, ritual, etc.) so as to exclude adult influences except on terms set by adolescents? Or, rather, do adolescents continue in compatible, intense relations with their parents engaged largely in a set of peer associations and activities encouraged and approved by adults? Is adolescence demonstrably more stressful than, say, old age or the early years of marriage?

A starting point for the discussion is provided by two conditions that are regarded as beyond dispute:

1. Adolescence is a period of increasing freedom from the influence of parents, including both association and evaluation; peers are correspondingly more important; and
2. Ours is an age-graded society and from this condition flow reasonably coherent behaviors and values among adolescents that permit reference to youth culture and adolescent society (Douvan, Elizabeth, & Adelson, J., 1966). Thus one does not take these conditions to be problematic; rather it is one's task to discuss the conditions of their being, their major characteristics, and their consequences for the development of the adolescent.
Children tend to be like their parents. One would be exceedingly surprised were one to discover, in respect to any factor whatsoever, that a knowledge of the parental position or age on the factor did not predict positively to the socio-environment of the adolescent. This observation, simple as it is, is unchallengeable in light of readily prevalent observations concerning adolescent rebellion, rejection of adult authority, alienation, and parent-child conflict which must not be concluded that if parents are relevant at all to the behavior and values of youth, they are so only as negative role models. Yet there is overwhelming evidence of a variety among parents' social class and the social class of the adolescent's date and friends; between parents' educational plans and those of the children; between political party preferences and political behavior of parents and their offspring; and between the racial views of parents and children. The list might be extended indefinitely.

Typically, adolescents are distinguished from one another by the same variables as are adults. It seems clear and basic that any observation about the strength and pervasive-ness of peer influence and youth culture must be in addition to, or supplemental to, the central fact that parents are major shaping influences in the lives of adolescents. One must understand this foundation principle in order to see
Children tend to be like their parents. One would be exceedingly surprised were he to discover, in research on any factor whatsoever, that a knowledge of the parents' position or score on the factor did not predict positively to the score or position of the adolescent. This observation, simple as it is, is remarkable in light of fairly prevalent observations concerning adolescent rebellion, rejection of adult authority, alienation, and parent-child conflict which tempt one to conclude that if parents are relevant at all to the behavior and values of youth, they are relevant as negative role models. Yet there is overwhelming evidence of congruity between parents' social class and the social class of the adolescent's date and friends; between parents' frequency of church attendance, or their religious belief systems and the religious condition of the adolescent; between parents' education and adolescents' educational plans, aspirations, and performance; between the political party preferences and voting behavior of parents and their offspring; and between the racial views of parents and children. The list might be continued indefinitely. Typically, adolescents are distinguished from one another by the same variables as are adults. It seems clear and basic that any observation about the strength and pervasiveness of peer influence and youth culture must be in addition to, or supplemental to, the central fact that parents are major shaping influences in the lives of adolescents. One must understand this foundation principle in order to see
other influences on the adolescent in proper perspective.

Since everything that is known about the behaviors, memberships, and values of individuals confirms a substantial homogamy between parents and their offspring, it seems obvious that verbal rejection of parents and an increasing time-commitment to persons outside the home need not signify either the dissolution of parental influence or the breaking of kin ties. One need not look any further than the clear preservation of substantial bonds between the generations to question the significance customarily attached to loyalties to teen peers. This accent rests on failure to understand the complex and subtle relationship between parent and adolescent and a failure to appreciate the commitment to preserve the relationship that both hold and treasure. This naivete is nowhere more apparent than in Coleman's resting his case for an adolescent society on a finding that nearly as many adolescents would find it harder to take "breaking with your friend" than "your parents' disapproval."

The intellectual tradition that describes adolescence as marked by conflict with, hostility toward, and rejection of parents and other adults flow from observations of the disruptive effects of rapid social change. These changes mean, it is said, that parents have not encountered the conditions adolescents now face and do not understand the behaviors of adolescents in response to
these conditions. Correlatively, parents are not good role models for the world the adolescent anticipates; they are, instead, out of touch and inappropriate. If adolescents recapitulated the lives of their parents in a stable societal setting, this conflict of the generations would be much abated. In effect, parents hold values that differ from those of youth, and they can give youth neither the help nor the understanding their circumstances demand. They are, in a word, not modern enough; there is a basic discontinuity between the generations\(^3\) (Endleman, 1967).

From a more psychodynamic viewpoint, a related intellectual tradition defines the necessary pre-adult intrapsychic processes to include increased ego synthesis and coherence of identity. These processes cannot occur under direct parental influence since the traditional relation of the child to his parents is one of dependency and subservience which is antithetical to the processes now necessary. Further, the nature of identity is always affected by the societal setting in which it occurs, and complex society requires identity-formation under conditions of relative autonomy from parents—in contrast to, for example, simple rural farm settings (Erickson, 1954).

\(^3\)This perspective has been encouraged by accounts of various immigrant groups and the revolt by the second generation against the language and customs of the old world.
This tradition has made its intellectual contribution but now it requires substantial modification. It rests on an assumption that parents are inept in understanding, resistant to change, and hesitant to grant autonomy. While this may describe a generation of parents in a society newly exposed to rapid change, it is exceedingly doubtful that it adequately explains parents in a society that assumes change and development. Under circumstances in which, if Condition X exists at the present, the tacit assumption is made that it will be modified in the future, it is entirely problematic whether those who espouse Condition Not-X in the future will come under moral attack. That is, tension between the generations may result not so much from change itself as from unexpected change and unfamiliarity with change.

There are, on the other hand, quite good reasons to expect that a level of conflict between parents and adolescents will occur. Given that increased autonomy and initiative are desired states for the adolescent, some degree of parent-child tension should be expected—especially since the conditions under which the adolescent expresses and experiences this autonomy and initiative are not those that directly further the interest of the adults, as might be the case if the adolescent worked in the same work setting as the father and new job tasks and accomplishments were his primary means for showing an increasing competence.
and independence (Wolf, 1952). Interactionally, the passage out of dependency is a passage into independency, and the actor acquires a new identity for himself as others acquire a new conception of him. It is important to note that a system of interactions must be changed and a system of identities must also be changed. Mutually, old conceptions of self and other must yield to new ones, and all members of the interactional sphere are involved—most especially, perhaps, the parents, since they must make qualitative changes in their modes of relating to the adolescent, shifting from power to companionship and from instructing to advising.

One will appreciate these complex role and identity transformations more if the family setting is contrasted to the simple setting of the school. The role expression, "I am a 6th-grade teacher," means that the incumbent knows how to behave in relation to 6th graders, what to expect of them and what to allow them to expect of her; personalities come and go from year to year as students are promoted but across the years the persons before her are in a known role (6th graders) and, too, her identity is constant (6th-grade teacher). Also, the teacher's expectations of her students, and theirs of her, are reasonably role-specific rather than diffuse, and she, by virtue of the continuity of her identity as 6th-grade teacher, is in a strong position for helping students define what being a 6th grader means. Also,
as regards any specific set of 6th-grade students, there is no historical relationship between teacher and pupil; that is, neither has to forget previous relationships nor modify prior expectations (Becker, 1952). By contrast, parent and child are, mutually, learning and evolving a relationship that is historical, is strongly influenced and contaminated by memories of earlier expectations and performances; in addition, they are in a relationship concerning which there are immensely strong social and internal pressures that encourage its continuance at a high level of involvement and commitment.

Whatever the extent of stress and conflict between parents and adolescents, one must assess it in proportion to other powerful facts: the strength of their mutual commitment to preserve the relationship, the extent to which the relationship is mutually treasured, and society's interest in preserving familial bonds. Any scholarly effort to describe and dramatize the growth of peer influences, the power of youth culture, the adolescent's struggle for freedom, etc., must eventually come to terms with the fact that family structures endure through the entire period of adolescence—as residential, affectional, and companionship units. 4

---

4We could not predict from certain accounts of adolescence that parents attend their child's high school graduation and give gifts gladly received, engage mutually
There are, indeed very significant forces that subdue the intensity of parent-child conflict or reduce its impact when it occurs. The adolescent, compared to the child, can eat more, lift more, run faster, jump higher, recall more, accomplish more. These are very clear signals which present a very cogent, powerful argument to the parent that his quest for autonomy is both natural and necessary. Research evidence suggests, indeed, that parents welcome and anticipate such indications of autonomy-readiness. Autonomy is essential, and parents no less than their children realize that any control system obstructing growth into freedom and responsibility will have pathological outcomes in the adolescents' limited competence to perform in adult functions.

Indeed, the typical parent should win any direct confrontation and concernedly with the child in selecting a college, are invited to the child's wedding and do in fact attend, exchange visits and Christmas presents across the generations, are welcomed and eager guests in their child's home, fondle and indulge the grandchild, and eventually are mourned upon their death (Survey Research Center, 1965).

5In a recent study, the surveyor presented parents of high school seniors in ten North Carolina counties with a list of twenty-four possible criticisms of their child or of their relationship between them and asked the parents to check any and all that apply. The items refer generally to issues of autonomy versus control and closeness versus apartness. The wish for greater independent behavior by the child is expressed very frequently: "I would teach her/him to be more independent than she/he is" is fourth most frequently checked item, for example (Survey Research Center, 1965).
with his child that he actually wants to win since the simple truth is that parents have considerably more resources than the adolescent has: ultimate control over funds, automobile, house keys, use of home for entertainment, financial support for college and other major expenditures, location of residence, etc. They are likely to be more skilled in manipulative techniques— including the use of various nonrational powers such as appealing to God's will, society's expectations, family tradition and ancestral standards, and the whole aura of sentiments invoked by the social definition that parents are responsible for and interested only in the child's welfare. If then, parents do not make the decisions and, if necessary, require the adolescent's obeisance, it must be because they do not wish to do so. 6 Altogether, it seems reasonable to interpret most parent-adolescent conflict as occurring not because the direction of the adolescent's quest for greater independence is illegitimate but because perfect congruence in the speed and circumstances

6 Sam Shepard, district school superintendent in St. Louis, acknowledges this in advising parents concerning their need to see to it that the child does his homework. After assuring parents that the school will give homework every day, he advises them what to do when the child says he has no homework: "The first time, go along with the child and accept his word; the second time, do whatever it is you do in those circumstances when you know that you and not the child are going to prevail" (Gordon, 1957).
under which new forms of expression are tolerable is not achieved.\textsuperscript{7}

Were parents to maintain rigidly a conception of proper adolescent behavior reflecting the circumstances of their own youth, there undoubtedly would be an immense incidence of conflict between them and their children under modern conditions of rapid societal change. Instead parents, particularly those in urban middle-class settings, value companionship with their children and are strongly motivated to be knowledgeable about the conditions and circumstances of contemporary youth.\textsuperscript{8} Many parents are extremely reluctant to establish constraints that appear to handicap the adolescent in his social activities and competition for status and acceptance; they may ask him, or the parents of his friends, what the other children are wearing, how late they can stay up, how much money they are given to spend, when dating is permitted, etc. Given these pressures toward consensual validation, together with the fact that the adolescent, being human, will follow normal processes of trying to maximize his

\textsuperscript{7}An unknown incidence of parent-child conflict and tension occurs from the opposite direction, i.e., from the failure and reluctance of the adolescent to "grow up."

\textsuperscript{8}This is, indeed, sometimes carried to petty extremes, as in the case of middle-aged women whose purpose in life continues to revolve around the high-school sorority.
gains and pleasures, this information exchange probably increases the freedoms available to the adolescent while reducing the amount of adult-type behavior demanded of him. The point to be emphasized is that clashes between the generations are not death struggles. Parents and children are not trying to destroy each other; they are playing the game together and have the same goals: to secure the capacity of the child for self-direction and self-maintenance and to preserve a familial network and strong affectional bonds. Note that in groups in which the adolescent's wish for peer acceptance and participation are more intense, parent pressures often increase in the same direction; Douvan and Adelson, for example, report that upper-middle class children are the most likely to be responsive to the judgment of the peer group and that girls from professional and managerial backgrounds most often report that their parents expect them to be popular and well liked by peers.

Another indication of the fit between parent expectations and adolescent values lies in the substantial amount of coaching in role performance that adolescents receive from their (typically same-sex) parent, in dress, carriage, etiquette, social skills, college selection, entertainment, and athletic development. Indeed, the ready accommodation that parents make to certain adolescent expressive behaviors may encourage their more extreme elaboration since adolescent slang and other fads lose their symbolic significance and
their real function of group identification and boundary drawing when adopted by adults. The halting, modest efforts of adolescents to rebel, gain distinction, show independence, and create distinctive group forms represent an effort to demonstrate and gain recognition of a new status and sense of self. More extreme instances of expressive behavior are encouraged by adults who, by imitating adolescent conduct and language, rob them of their meaning and value (Glick, 1957).

Finally, one should be reminded that the special intimacies and commitments of the family bond create conditions that encourage controlled disagreement and the restoration of tolerance and affection. There is a substantial give on both sides, and the avoidance of direct confrontation is valued. Also, the ecology of adolescent behavior functions to reduce the probability of head-on clashes since a very large proportion of adolescent behavior does not occur under adult surveillance and adolescents do not emit clear signals to parents concerning these (possibly deviant) behaviors; thus ignorance is possible (Sherif & Sherif, 1964).

The research literature is almost entirely compatible with the conclusions that ties between parents and children remain close throughout the adolescent years; that the positive orientation toward parents does not diminish and may indeed increase during adolescence; and that parents and the parent-child relationship both are important influences on
the adolescent. Kahl (1955) has shown that high aspirations among "common man" boys occur when parents are unsatisfied with their position and encourage their sons to improve on it; they tend not to occur when parents are satisfied and do not stress the advantages of education. Douvan and Adelson (1966), with a national sample of adolescents, report these findings: more boys name their father, more girls name their mother, as the adult ideal than name any other figure; the proportion of girls regarding parents' rules as right and fair increases from ages 12-14 to ages 17-18; and the proportion of girls who want their parents to be less restrictive decreases over the same age period. (These latter two findings suggest that most parent-child conflicts may be concentrated in the early years of adolescence.) Dentler and Monroe (1961) found that weak home ties and strained parent-child relations associate positively with patterns of deviant conduct. Rosen (1955), asking Jewish adolescents to name persons whose opinions matter a great deal to them, found more than 90 per cent named one parent or both and in almost all cases named them first. Sone (1960) found that students active in high school organizations and activities more typically had excellent relations with their parents suggesting that peer group status and close parent-child relations are quite compatible events. Correspondingly, Brittain (1963) found that high-school girls who gave peer-conforming (as against parent-conforming) responses
to hypothetical dilemmas had lower status among peers, which suggests that positive orientation toward parents is itself a peer value. Epperson (1964) asking pre-adolescent and adolescent respondents whether disapproval of parents, favorite teacher, or best friend would make them most unhappy found over 80 per cent indicating that parental disapproval would be the hardest to bear. Middleton and Putney (1965), studying college students, found that they are more likely to differ with their parents on political matters when parent and offspring are emotionally estranged. Bowerman and Kinch (1959) suggest, in discussing their study of changes in parent-peer orientations between grades 4 and 10, that a lowered orientation toward the family accompanies a normal increase in orientation to peers during the adolescence only under conditions of poor adjustment within the family and thus is not inevitable. The research results also are compatible with the view that parent-child conflict when it occurs is more likely related to trivial matters than to basic issues and values.

Probably, one must restore a degree of balance in closing this section. Some adolescents do engage in and develop social systems that adults oppose and decry with great fervor and available evidence suggests that such adolescent systems may be remarkably resistant to adult intervention (Smith & Kleine, 1966). Also, behaviors that are trivial in their ultimate implications for basic values
and goals make up a substantial portion of the everyday world even of adults, and one must not denigrate the relevance that conflicts over small matters may have for interpersonal relations or minimize the emotional energy they may absorb. Finally, it is important that one not overemphasize the extent to which parents penetrate the lives of adolescents or adopt their standards to the pressures of the moment (Polsky, 1962). One would not want to confuse episode for pattern, and it does appear that the pervasive, continuing influence of parents as agents of socialization is not expressed best in a conflict mode or negative role-model terms.
James S. Coleman in 1961 published *The Adolescent Society*, one of the most significant and important empirical works produced by American social science. It is now the focus of a considerable controversy, partly because of its controversial, but also on more basic grounds, and a reevaluation of its major arguments will help to introduce the analysis of peer pressure and youth culture as influences in adolescent socialization.

Coleman reports data gathered in the late 1950's by questionnaire and personal research from the student bodies of ten high schools in the Chicago area ranging in size from 489 to 1,933 students. The book aims to describe the adolescent society: its values, its heroes and heroines, the things that determine and sustain these values, the association-al structures, and their joint effects on the scholastic performance and self-satisfaction of the high school students.

Schools are important institutions in American society not only because they are formal institutions to the young but also because they are the physical locus for the adolescent society: they are the setting which creates a sufficient demographic density to allow adolescents to build their own social world. A major discovery of Coleman's work is that the pressured give way in of educational institutions—scholarship to those valued in adolescent culture than are various other activities, especially athletics for boys and club activities for girls. (Such
James S. Coleman in 1961 published *The Adolescent Society*, one of the most significant and competent empirical works produced by American social science. It is now the focus of a considerable controversy, partly because of its overstatement, but also on more basic grounds, and a review of its major arguments will help to introduce the analysis of peer pressures and youth culture as influences in adolescent socialization.

Coleman reports data gathered in the late 1950's by questionnaire and record-search from the student bodies of ten high schools in the Chicago area ranging in size from 169 to 1,935 students. The task was to describe the adolescent society: its values, its heroes and leaders, the things that determine success and status within it, its associational structures, and their joint effects on the scholastic performance and self-satisfactions of the high school students.

Schools are important institutions in American society not only because they offer formal instruction to the young but also because they are the physical locus for the adolescent society; they are the setting which creates a sufficient demographic density to allow adolescents to build their own social world. A major discovery of Coleman's work is that the presumed *sine qua non* of educational institutions—scholarship—is less valued in adolescent culture than are various other activities, especially athletics for boys and club activities for girls. (Such
data lend indirect evidence concerning the strength of adolescent society since contravalue to formal educational goals survive and flourish in the very setting of the school."

The adolescent system has meaningful rewards and punishments to bestow, and since this is so, adolescents direct the flow of their energies into activities which maximize the rewards they will receive from the system; the presumption is that the quality of participation in clubs and sports more nearly stretches the potential of the students than do scholarly pursuits, and that especially bright students in particular will understand the reward system and commit their energies appropriately. Findings bear quite directly on the latter point: the smaller the percent of students in the school who value scholarship, the smaller the difference in standard deviation units between the mean IQ score of the student body and the mean IQ of the students with the highest grades. Best scholars are less well-satisfied with themselves and their status in the system, compared to best athletes, and considering only those who are both scholars and athletes, the vast majority would prefer to be remembered in school as athletic stars rather than as brilliant students. Persons who are members of the leading crowds in these adolescent societies (and presumed to be the normative pace-setters) are especially likely to value athletics and clubs over scholarship. The scholarly student brings glory only to himself (and
even must create some of the sense of glory) and follows a lonely pursuit; the club activist and athletic participant engage in interpersonal activities that bring glory and satisfaction to others. Adolescents are said to orient primarily toward this adolescent society, to prefer its pleasures to those given by parents and other adults, and indeed to have only tenuous, often ritualized, ties to the larger institutions of the adult world (Coleman, 1961).

Major responsibilities are placed on the educational system by dominant trends in the modern world: The facts of social change, economic specialization, and technical growth create the need for better informed, more technically skilled young who have been taught by more specialized personnel for longer periods of time than a past age demanded. The consequence is the growth, extension, and elaboration of the public school system, and school becomes the place where during half of his waking hours most months of the year the American adolescent spends his time. It is a setting numerically and interpersonally dominated by age-peers and provides the shared experiences, common problems, and communication ease from which spring unique perspectives and consensual values. The school grounds are the adolescent's psychological and ecological turf; even if intrapsychic and intrafamilial processes did not make the adolescent's peers attractive to him as comparison points and norm-senders, the physical
clustering in schools for such long periods would produce the same high salience of peers. These physical conditions also facilitate the transmission of a culture from one generation of students to the next; each September, a new cohort arrives and is exposed to various informal processes that have the net effect of transmitting system definitions to the noviates. Coleman describes the total consequences in these words:

This setting—apart of our children in schools—which take on ever more functions, ever more 'extracurricular activities'—for an ever longer period of training has a singular impact on the child of high-school age. He is 'cut off' from the rest of society, forced inward toward his own age group, made to carry out his whole social life with others his own age. With his fellows, he comes to constitute a small society, one that has most of its important interactions within itself, and maintains only a few threads of connection with the outside adult society. In our modern world of mass communication and rapid diffusion of ideas and knowledge, it is hard to realize that separate subcultures can exist right under the very noses of adults—subcultures with languages all their own, with special symbols, and, most importantly, with value systems that may differ from adults...Society is confronted no longer with a set of individuals to be trained toward adulthood, but with distinct social systems, which offer a united front to the overtures made by adult society. Thus, the very changes that society is undergoing have spawned something more than was bargained for. They have taken not only job-training out of the parents' hands, but have quite effectively taken away the whole adolescent himself.... The elites in the school are not closer to their parents than are the students as a whole, but are pulled slightly farther from parents, closer to fellow-adolescents as a source of approval and disapproval. Thus, those who 'set the standard' are more oriented than their followers to the adolescent culture itself... They (adolescents) are still oriented toward fulfilling their parents' desires, but they
look very much to their peers for approval as well. Consequently, our society has within its midst a set of small teen-age societies, which focus teen-age interests and attitudes on things far removed from adult responsibilities, and which may develop standards that lead away from those goals established by the larger society. (Coleman, 1961).

It is well to note at this point that Coleman does not contend that parents and teachers become irrelevant to adolescents. Indeed, in a footnote to the last part of the quotation above, he quotes a perceptive teen-ager as suggesting that adolescent society is merely an immature adult society which borrows the glamorous and sophisticated part of adult society but scorns the high goals and worthwhile activities of the adult world because these involve responsibilities which the adolescent is not ready to accept (Coleman, 1961). To cite other evidence, Coleman reports that about 53 per cent of his respondents selected parents in answering this question, "Which one of these things would be hardest for you to take: your parents' disapproval, your teacher's disapproval, or breaking with your friend?" as against about 43 per cent who selected friend. In commenting on this "rather even split" he observes: "The balance between parents and friends indicates the extent of the state of transition that adolescents experience—leaving one family, but not yet in another, they consequently look both forward to their peers and backward to their parents" (Coleman, 1961). Nonetheless, the total emphasis of his report has encouraged many to think of an adolescent world
that is immune if not antagonistic to adult values and control. In the terms of politics, these two domains maintain diplomatic relations but view each other with deep suspicion while fighting a sort of cold war.

One additional observation should be made: Coleman's analysis is at the level of the school (or grade in school) as a social system; he is much less concerned with partitioning and differentiation within this system, thus he is little concerned with the influence of smaller substructures in the form of cliques, academic club groups, friends, etc. For example, it remains quite possible that certain socially significant clusterings within the high school are more congruent with adult values and the formal purposes of the school than is indicated in his discussion. His work underplays associational and value diversity within the system.

Argument over whether there are or are not adolescent societies and youth cultures easily becomes as sterile as the older heredity and environment controversy, as Smith and Kleine (1966) observe. The question of whether an adolescent society exists is ultimately a matter of definition. Also, this question is separable analytically from questions of whether this social system (assuming it exists) creates values that are alien to those in some other systems, e.g., formal education, parents, or adults in general; of the extent of insulation, hostility, separation, or other devices that maximize intrasystem interaction and restrict contacts
across systems; of the degree of value congruence and consensus among participants in the society; of whether participation in and loyalty to the society is characteristic of all, most, or only some adolescents; of whether it is a system that touches the lives of adolescents in a diffuse and pervasive manner, including basic values and central dimensions of the self, or whether instead it deals mostly with occasional matters and general trivia; of whether participants in other pertinent systems view it with alarm or, at the other extreme, sponsor and encourage it; and of whether its roots lies in confused societal definitions of the adolescent period, in the "storm and stress" of adolescence or an accompanying quest for identity, or in any other postulated source.

If simple association and communication are the central components of the definition, there is no question that such societies exist; adolescents spend a tremendous amount of time with each other and in conversation with each other. If interpersonal salience is the key (by which one means that adolescents resonate to the expectations of each other, compose a set of reference groups and persons, and are affected by judgments of them made by their peers), again there can be no issue about adolescent societies except as whether other adolescents are the only foci of orientation becomes an issue. The definitional concern and controversy really hinges on two very related issues:
whether the "society" has autonomy, and whether it is distinctive. The issue would be meaningless if adolescents in their separate associations merely recapitulated the behaviors and values of adults whenever they could do so appropriately, and the issue would be pretentious if adolescents in employing their peers as reference persons were guided to the same decisions and energy-allocations as had they turned to parents, teachers, or adult neighbors. It is essential, then, to define behaviors and values that are, minimally, distinctive from adult norms and, preferably, oppositional to them; further, the topic is trivial if the issues on which there is opposition are trivial (Scott, 1965).

Though it has been contended earlier that parents and adolescents get along remarkably well and that parents are substantial influences throughout the adolescent period, one is prepared now, in apparent contradiction, to take the position that the concept of an adolescent society is a useful description and analytical tool. Its distinctions in comparison to adult society are typically those of relative emphasis, and when it is subversive or substitutive of adult values, these "adult values" most typically represent what some adults want some of the time. One does not find values wholly absent in adolescent society but wholly present in adult society—or vice versa. The concept does provide one

---

9 But the same observation applies if one contrasts
with a handy device for describing some things that make the period of youth relatively distinctive in the life cycle. I will not want my use of the term to connote a subversive system nor one necessarily inappropriate to preparation for adult life.

It will be useful in thinking about the nature of the adolescent society relative to parents, adults, schools, and other socializing agencies, to concern one's self briefly with the conditions that affect the emphasis of this culture. As Scott points out in *Values and Organizations* (1965), the need for socialization and personal change is an inverse function of an organization's success in recruitment, i.e., the more it recruits "our type of person," the less intensive is the necessary re-training. Correlatively, the less should be the discontinuity between the person's past and future when the organization recruits "its type," and finally, to the extent that the social base from which an organization draws its clientele and membership is congruent with the nature of the organization, the less should be the tension between the organization, its recruits, and the client base. These observations suggest that an autonomous, distinctive student culture is least likely to

---

Russian to American society, the 1780's to the 1960's, or Yankees in Boston with Negroes in rural Alabama.
develop in schools where the student body is homogenous, the students know each other in nonschool (e.g., neighborhood) contexts, parents are closely associated with the school and its personnel, and the school's program is in harmony with its environs; and is most likely to develop in schools with opposite characteristics. It follows that the conditions that permit a distinctive student culture are precisely those that maximize the opportunities for school personnel (as an official body) to have a distinctive and autonomous influence on the student as against merely reinforcing and extending the values and authority of the home and neighborhood. Thus, the school as a formal organization is most likely to be an autonomous, distinctive influence under the same conditions as peers are most likely to provide distinctive choice-models for the student.
To understand the adolescent society in the relevance to socialization, one shall need to bear in mind important differences between the circumstances of the adolescent and those of the child. There are two ways of doing this: one is to describe the widening range of experiences and influences the adolescent encounters; the other is to consider the societal needs and conditions that determine the extent of this widening range. They are in fact closely related and can be considered together.

Children grow up in families, and the contemporary American family is a relatively simple structure usually composed of only mother, father, and a small number of children. It often has about as many control agents and norm-senders (parents) as there are central subjects and norm-receivers (children). Relations within the family have the following features: they are age-heterogeneous, prescriptive, particularistic, and diffuse. Societies differ in the extent to which these features govern relations in the various institutional areas, and these are some major spheres of life in every society that are regulated by criteria different from these. In an important work, 10

10 Granted, these roles can be reversed, with children as the control agents and norm-senders. But this possibility is not relevant here.
To understand the adolescent society in its relevance to socialization, one shall need to bear in mind important differences between the circumstances of the adolescent and those of the child. There are two ways of doing this: one is to describe the widening range of experiences and influences the adolescent encounters; the other is to consider the societal needs and conditions that determine the extent of this widening range. They are in fact closely related and can be considered together.

Children grow up in families, and the contemporary American family is a remarkably simple structure usually composed of only mother, father, and a small number of children. It often has about as many control agents and norm-senders (parents) as there are control subjects and norm-receivers (children). Relations within the family have the following features: they are age-heterogeneous, ascriptive, particularistic, and diffuse. Societies differ in the extent to which these features govern relations in the various institutional areas, and there are some major spheres of life in every society that are regulated by criteria different from these. In an important work,

10 Granted, these roles can be reversed, with children as the control-agents and norm-senders. But this possibility is not relevant here.
Eisenstadt (1956) has shown that the transition from childhood to adulthood goes smoothly when the value system of the society heavily emphasizes the principles that regulate family life; otherwise, the transference of identification and the extension of solidarity from family to other sets of relations that are organized by different criteria will be disruptive, and age-homogeneous groups arise at such points to ease the transition. Were occupational and familial role requirements more similar, and in general if the modes of relating in manifold adult social situations were replicative of those experienced in family life, life-cycle transitions would be continuous and gradual and the need for age-homogeneous groups would not exist. Most particularly, it is the change from the particularistic relations of the family to the universalistic relations of the extended world that occasions difficulty for the personality, basically for two reasons: one, the loss of emotional security provided by the attachments that inhere in particularistic relations; and two, the major change that is

---

11 Eisenstadt (1956) observes that the "father" as observed by the child in the family settings behaves by standards quite different from those he follows as "male at work." It is in a similar sense that Erikson (1954) observes none of the identifications of childhood are with whole people but with different part-aspects (body-parts, habitual activities, and social role) of those by whom they are most directly affected.
required in emotional attitudes toward social objects and in criteria that govern one's relations with them. Adolescent peer groups emerge in the "space" between kinship relations and those governed by achievement criteria, relative specificity of role demand, and universalistic standards of evaluation. In addition to acquainting the adolescent with the symbols of identification and standards of evaluation of the larger adult society, age-homogeneous groups provide a setting in which the young person's current dispositions and values are affirmed and in which greater spontaneity in expressive activity is encouraged (Eisenstadt, 1956).

Peer groups are the bridge between childhood and adulthood when society is complex enough that attainment of full adult status cannot be insured in the family unit (Eisenstadt, 1963).

The "classical" statement concerning the sources of intensive conflict between parents and adolescents, in relation to which a youth culture of given characteristics develops, goes something like this: The givens of age differentiation in the society, of reduced normative flexibility with increasing age, and the physical, psychological, and sociological differences between the age groups, establish the foundations or potential of conflict. The variables that activate this potential and determine its intensity are the rate of social change, the degree of cultural integration, and the amount of vertical mobility.
The setting is complicated further by the long years of formal education that separate youth from adulthood, theory from practice, school from life; and by the fact that the adolescent is physically the equal or superior of adults but socially is subordinated to adults. The authority of parents, then, is an inherent potential source of conflict, but normally it is bearable because the child lacks knowledge of any other possible structure of interaction, the emotional setting of the family softens the harshness of authority, and the frequency and intensity of the interaction provide the child with ways of expressing his will within this authority system. However, various contemporary processes increase the problematic qualities of this authority and make it less tolerable. These include conflicting norms within the culture, competing authorities such as teachers, the concentration of emotional energies within a small family, the failure to institutionalize the necessary process by which parental authority atrophies, the definitions of sex in modern society that make parent-child discourse taboo and lead parents to control by indirect and devious means, and the emphasis on social mobility that requires many career decisions to

---

12 Actually, Deutscher (1962, 1964) concludes that parents readily adapt to "post-parental" life and may be disposed to anticipate it.
be made during adolescence on which parents' evaluation of future possibilities differs from that of their child (K. Davis, 1954).

Youth culture arises with a set of values and perspectives that, given these tensions, is more satisfying and is experienced as more appropriate by the adolescent. This culture includes the following characteristics: Having a good time is important, particularly social activities in company with the opposite sex; there is a strong hedonistic quality. On the male side, extreme emphasis on athletics and this is a measure of valued masculinity as sexual attractiveness is a measure of valued femininity for females. Explicit acceptance of adult-sponsored interests, expectations, and discipline is negatively valued. Common human elements are emphasized among associates, such as, that a person is valued humanistically for his general demeanor and attractiveness rather than instrumentally for performance as a competent specialist. Glamour and excitement are sought, and the luxuriant waste of time is virtuous. Certain major centrifugal forces operate to secure one's release from this culture as he approaches maturity, permitting one to speak of self-liquidating features of it (Parsons, 1951). Not only does the adolescent need the psychological security of commonly situated peers as he moves outward from the family circle, but conditions operative in this peer setting provide him with needed experiences he is most
unlikely to have received in the family of his childhood. For example, relative to both the family and the school, the peer group provides a setting in which the power-differential is enormously narrowed. The norm of reciprocity, too, is learned in its fully developed form only in the peer group and not before. This process is valuable for the parents and for their relations with their offspring, since gradually as the child's circle expands and he responds to the evaluative criteria of various others, parents also learn to assess the child not only with reference to familial membership, but by reasonably detached, universalistic appraisal of his behavior. The substitution of a lateral for a vertical structure of authority is an essential feature of the adolescent's movement from the associations of the family to those of his fellow youth. Adolescents accept positions of formal authority over their fellows only with great reluctance, especially if this authority is seen as sponsored by adults, and they resist recognition of leadership structures in their informal groups (Parson & Bales, 1955). These attitudes suggest that the model of peer relations is more that of a brotherhood than of a hierarchical arrangement of authority such as a family or a bureaucracy. Parsons has made the following appropriate observation on this point:

Here it is not without significance that the most prominent class of undergraduate college social clubs are called fraternities and sororities. Members address each other as
'brother' and 'sister,' especially on ceremonial occasions. It is certainly significant that these are symbolized as groups of 'siblings' without the participation of parent-symbols. The 'old grads' are not referred to as 'fathers' but are 'older brothers.' There is, to be sure, sometimes the vaguely benevolent figure of the 'house mother,' but emphatically never a 'house father.' In the light of the functions of the youth culture in the process of emancipation from dependence on the conjugal family, particularly the parents, this symbolization is appropriate and significant. (1951)

Matza (1961) suggests that youth culture has the advantage to society of reducing serious deviancy and the deviant tradition. There are, he says, three major themes in delinquent values each of which in one way or another involves the celebration of personal prowess: the restless search for excitement, thrills, or kicks; the dreams of quick success, of securing large material awards while avoiding the canons of methodism, security, and routine emphasized by school and work; and aggressive assertion and defense of the self, sometimes called the code of the warrior. Teen-age culture is the conventional version of delinquency, conventional in that it strips away delinquency's most odious features. Teen-age culture emphasizes fun and adventure; it is disdainful of scholastic effort, especially of its visible manifestations; it involves persistent flirtation with boundary areas between propriety and immorality, and tolerates various status offenses such as staying out late, drinking, some sexual explorations, and "conning" parents; and though aggression is substantially tempered,
concern with masculine and feminine credentials and recognition is substantial. Teen-age culture, as Matza (1961) sees it, is institutionalized "playing at" serious forms of deviance; its great social virtue and contribution is that it offers sufficient inherent satisfactions to attract and maintain the loyalty of many adherents who otherwise would be vulnerable to the appeals of delinquency.

Parents and community representatives do not, of course, analyze either personal or societal needs in everyday discourse in the abstract terms used in this analysis. Yet there is widespread evidence that the adolescent's efforts to gain autonomy and a set of experiences extending beyond the family circle is complemented by adults' acknowledgment that such experiences are necessary pre-conditions for personal maturity. Therefore, it is easy to exaggerate the degree of discontinuity between the values of the home and those of the peer group. It is easy because the behavior of the adolescent encourages the exaggeration. Telephone conversations, sock colors and heights, pennies in Bass weejuns, shrieks, buttons, slang, old jalopies, and the various rock groups suggest that the really meaningful significant others in the adolescent's life space are his fellow adolescents. Also, many of his behaviors suggest the cogency of Mark Twain's famous observation about his judgments of his father: "When I was a boy of fourteen," he said, "my father was so ignorant I could
hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much the old man had learned in seven years." Yet, it is one thing to observe that adolescents may value certain activities and possessions that certain adult institutions question or oppose and quite a more difficult task to document that these adolescent values develop and flourish without significant encouragement and appreciation from many adults. It is the drug store owner, the proud father, the striving mother, the man next door, no less than the fellow student who honor Saturday's hero and the beauty queen. Especially in suburban middle-class schools, nothing is more reasonable than to interpret sports, dating, and clubs as para-adult institutions as practice and preparation for the real thing. Coleman (1961) reports, for example, that parents would more likely be proud of their children for making the basketball team than for being made student assistant in a science laboratory.13

It is a distinctive feature of the public school system that it provides a demographic mass sufficiently

---

13 In the recent study referred to in footnote 5, fathers and mothers, asked whether they would rather have been remembered as "brilliant student, star athlete, most popular, or leader in activities," favor the first over the fourth, with the middle two lagging far behind. But, asked how they prefer to have their child remembered in high school, more elect "leader in activities" than elect "brilliant student" (Survey Research Center, 1965).
dense to make possible the development and maintenance of an autonomous adolescent social system. The school is, in a real sense, the adolescent's world and they may be more excited about a contest for student body president than adults are about the mayoralty election. By and large, the adolescent society provides a play-autonomy that adults are content to let prevail precisely because it is non-threatening and because it is, after all, good practice and good experience. The alternative prospect—of continued close supervision, of contrived and irregular opportunities for self-determination, self-expression, and self-experimentation, of full rather than shared responsibility for the child's socialization—is not an attractive one for parents to contemplate. Parents may not be social scientists, but they know full well that the role structure of the modern family is not sufficiently differentiated to provide the range of socialization experiences the adolescent needs in modern society.

Intensive loyalties to a few persons may be thought of as "entangling alliances." They reduce autonomy, encourage particularism, limit mobility, and constrict the range of experience. Indeed, the adolescent who defines a stable, restricted clique or "goes steady" for extended periods exchanges family for another interactional setting without adding substantially to the range and diversity of his repertoire of significant others. As associations range
wider, one's loyalties become more diffuse, his capacity for "getting along with different kinds of people" increases, and his repertoire of roles is extended. In a word, he is free to respond and prepared for response to the occupational demands and opportunities of a mobile, industrial society. Skill in the casual cordiality that marks the business world and the country club is acquired with relative ease when one's life-space is flooded with age-mates toward each of whom one invests a modest but only modest, degree of positive affect (Schmuck & Lohman, 1965). I am describing the modern urban high school, and I am saying that it is a useful functional mediating institution between the intensive emotional ties of the family, which is a small unit, and the wide-ranging work and social world of adulthood. I am saying also that the peer group loyalties that develop and express themselves on this school stage need not, and typically do not, threaten the emotional bond between adolescent and family. This is so partly because parents expect and desire this growth of extrafamilial involvement, partly because though adolescents may appear to take their families for granted they rarely seriously desire a permanent rupture or perceive their peers as seriously competitive for their familial loyalties.  

In a national sample of boys age 14-16, only 29 per cent list acceptance by others among the things boys worry about most compared to 57 per cent who mention
The increased differentiation of the adolescent period, the larger number of stimulus-objects to which the adolescent is sensitive, and the expansion of his repertoire of roles, is typically additive rather than substitutive. Adolescence, too, often has been analyzed within a conflict mode which assumes that parents, siblings, and adults become enemies as peers become friends and recording stars become heroes. Loyalty to A is assumed to preclude loyalty to B. This is not a necessary nor even very likely condition, and it is well to observe the powerful influence of parents in the adolescent's selection of peer intimates. (The general principle is that significant others at times I are forces affecting the selection of significant others at time II.) Not only may parents have a direct involvement in who the child selects for his friends, but such values of parents as the child has internalized and such commitment to parents as he experiences are independent forces in the same direction. All boundary-maintaining systems, such as social class, religion, community, race, and morality, have the effect of reducing the range of choices available to the

such achievement themes as doing well in school. The 29 per cent decomposes into 21 per cent mentioning "girls" compared to only 8 per cent mentioning acceptance by peers. Also, almost half (44 per cent) report that they never disagree with parents and no more than 17 per cent disagree on any specific topic (Survey Research Center, 1965).
adolescent, which in effect means that those adolescents most likely to be chosen as friends and associates are precisely those reared in homes substantially similar to the subject's home. In addition, there is theoretical reason to expect that the adolescent, like others, normally selects friends in such a way as to minimize, not magnify, the diversity of expectational systems to which he is exposed (Schmuck & Lohman, 1965).

The rules of the society of adolescents are unwritten and often unspoken. They thus are more subtle, elusive, diffuse, than are the parental "do's" and "don't's" of childhood or the explicit rules of children's games, and thus they help prepare the adolescent to participate in and be controlled by a larger normative order that is too complex to be reduced to injunctions and legal codes. The activities of adolescents have a normative structure that differs from the normative structures of childhood in being less explicit and, contrasted to parents, lacking clearly designated persons of superior status who are the exemplars, proponents, and sanctioning agents of the moral code (Moore & Anderson, 1960).

One final observation should be made about the functions served by youth society. There is very substantial emphasis in one's attitudes toward the youth period as one of preparation. The time perspective tilts strongly toward the future and the structured activities in which adolescents are required to engage often are defended
because they are requisite to some future activities. Adolescents are engaged in activities that are defended far less for their intrinsic worth or gratification than because they are qualificatory to a desired state in adulthood. The emphasis on what Schneider and Lysgaard (1953) term deferred gratification is endemic in the adolescent's life, and although Schneider and Lysgaard see the condition as characterizing the middle class rather than the working and lower classes, the point would be that it is a pervasive feature of the dominant themes communicated by adults to the young of whatever class position. Even current propaganda encouraging young people not to quit school prematurely does not plead the case for the pleasures of the school experience but argues rather that a time will come in the future when one will regret the present personal indulgence of school withdrawal. The emphasis on the preparatory relevance of adolescent experiences carries the definite connotation that the present state is a temporary and transitional one. What is now will not be then, and the really important things come not now but later.

In the midst of such themes of impermanence, preparation, and transition, the activities and values of peer culture have a very solid here-and-now quality about them. Attention orients to the present and the immediate future; conversation flows around what happened last night, who's
doing what today, and when the next test is. Though to the
detached observer, the experiences adolescents create for
themselves aid and abet the sense of impermanence and
rapid transition—language expressions come and go like
magic, recording stars have very brief moments of glory,
and yesterday's styles are taboo today—the meaning is
quite different to the participants. There is an immedi-
acy about things that gives a power and significance to the
present; things are important today. One is living rather
than preparing to live, one has being and identity in a
system that posts the score and declares the winners now;
while French class may be useful if one ever encounters
a Frenchman or travels abroad, knowing slang gives valida-
tion tonight. The things adolescent culture values are
"adult" creations offering useful protection from the
implication that the present is a meaningless and worthless
state except as it is used to qualify for some desired,
remote condition of the future.
Schools have various important relevances to the socialisation of adolescents. They are the physical setting for the youth culture and the varied peer groups and cliques that capture the attention of the young. Schools also are charged specifically with the responsibility for preparing the young to function as adults by giving them the skills, attitudes and knowledge needed necessary for good citizenship, and economic self-sufficiency. They also are widely recognised as an indispensable vehicle by which those of humble birth improve their station in life and those are the means by which lower-class members gain a sufficient acquaintance with middle-class skills that they have a chance of becoming middle-class are achieved. In this sense that schools supposedly reduce the gapes of family and birth as authoritative bases in the allocation of privilege. In connection with their essential operations of transmitting the culture, including values as well as information, to the next generation, schools also establish social groups in which the young acquire interpersonal skills; provide personnel in the form of teachers, counselors, and coaches who represent the adult world and are approved to serve as examp- cases and role models for students; and have control of substantial sanctioning devices by which to reinforce socially acceptable behavior on the part of children (Coletta, 1969). As Coletta (1969) remarks, the school introduces children, probably for the first time, to institutionalised...
Schools have various important relevances to the socialization of adolescents. They are the physical setting for the youth culture and the various peer groups and cliques that engage the attention of the young. Schools also are charged specifically with the responsibility for preparing the young to function as adults by giving them the skill, attitude and knowledge bases necessary for good citizenship and economic self-sufficiency. They also are widely recognized as an indispensable vehicle by which those of humble birth improve their station in life and thus are the means by which lower-class members gain a sufficient acquaintance with middle-class skills that their personal chances of becoming middle-class are enhanced. It is in this sense that schools supposedly reduce the power of family and birth as determinative forces in the allocation of privilege. In connection with their essential operation of transmitting the culture, including values as well as information, to the next generation, schools also establish social groups in which the young acquire interpersonal skills; provide personnel in the form of teachers, counselors, and coaches who represent the adult world and are approved to serve as exemplars and role models for students; and have control of substantial sanctioning devices by which to reinforce socially acceptable behavior on the part of children (Goslin, 1965). As Goslin (1965) remarks, the school introduces children, probably for the first time, to institutionalized
controls over individual behavior in a formal organization. Under a system of universal public education, the schools are required to accept and educate all children who apply and meet the quite minimum standards of decorum involved in accepting the school's rules of conduct; in complementary fashion, public law requires that children maintain their enrollment in a school system at least until some minimum age, typically 16, and in point of fact most adolescents continue their education well beyond this minimum age. One way of appreciating the school's potential for socialization lies in a simple reckoning of the amount of time adolescents, certainly those in early and mid-adolescence, spend in school and in activities forced or encouraged by the school. From September until June, children awake five mornings each week and engage themselves instantly in dressing and otherwise preparing for school. They spend 6 to 7 hours daily participating in the formal instructional program of the school and often remain under school influences after hours while they practice drama or band, attend club meetings, or practice as members of athletic teams. When they return home in the afternoons, it is probable that they must do homework for several hours before retiring for the night. One spends substantially more time in the presence of teachers and classmates than with his parents, sibs, or neighbors. School is where the adolescent spends his time.

It follows that those who run the schools make
decisions of momentous significance for the development of the adolescent. They set the curriculum content and requirements that determine the nature and organization of the knowledge presented to students. They purchase equipment and facilities that establish the physical setting within which learning occurs and affect the ease with which teachers undertake to teach. They establish standards by which they seek and employ the instructional staff, and they assign teachers and administrators to particular schools. Finally, and very importantly, they determine who the student's classmates will be by establishing attendance districts and assigning particular students to particular schools. When they are concerned about the extent of differences between one school and another, both professional educators and social reformers historically have focused their attention on the first two of these features: curricula and physical facilities. From the standpoint of socialization influences, it is the overlooked power of teachers and classmates that gives the school its distinguishing potency.

There is strong evidence that differentiation occurs both within and between schools which has the basic effect of reducing the autonomous influence of the school system on the development of its students. The internal differentiation shows most clearly along curricular lines with middle-class students taking college preparatory work in large proportions while substantial numbers from
working-class backgrounds are enrolled in general and vocational curriculums. Comparing one school with another, the distinction involves segregation of students along social class, racial, and to some extent ethnic lines and comes about because schools follow geographic lines in their assignment policies. That is, schools have their individual service areas, best expressed in the concept of neighborhood schools. Since people sort themselves residentially along income, race, and ethnic lines, any given urban school tends strongly to be more homogenous than the total community. Given this homogenization of the student body, it is possible, and tempting, for school administrations to assign teachers who are similar in background to the students they teach. This is in fact a common outcome, the best but not the only example of which is the great frequency with which Negro teachers and principals are assigned to schools that are totally or largely Negro in the composition of the student body. The net effects of these practices make for a conservatizing influence from the schools; they "mirror" the adult world as presently constituted and give their clients experiences that tend to perpetuate such arrangements of the present (Charters, 1963). Whether or not, or the extent to which, these conditions are inevitable is one of the nation's major present concerns. The government has attempted to alleviate some of these conditions with varying degrees of success, such as legislation for school bussing.
The significance of this school effect may be dramatized by a brief description of the classmates of the average Negro child compared to those of the average white child in the United States. The average Negro student in the United States, compared to the average white student, is more likely to have classmates

--whose parents are not high-school graduates
--who came from large families
--whose homes are not intact because of the absence of at least one parent
--whose homes lack such material possessions as telephones, vacuum cleaners, and automobiles
--who are Negro
--who have less reading matter in the home, specifically who less often have daily newspapers, encyclopedias, and a large number of books
--who are more likely to drop out of school before graduating
--who, when they graduate, are less likely to continue their education into college
--who are not in a college preparatory curriculum and are not taking those courses ordinarily required for college
--who have never read a college catalog nor talked with a college official about post-high-school plans
—who report low overall grade averages
—whose rates of absence from school are high
— who score low on standard subject matter achievement tests
— who engage in behaviors that distract from concentration and learning, based on principal's reports of disciplinary and behavior problems
— who believe that the fates are against them, as indicated by agreement with the statement, "People like me don’t have much of a chance to be successful in life" (Coleman, Campbell, et al., 1966).

These items are illustrative rather than exhaustive of the extent to which school administrations manage to create learning environments that differ in quality depending upon the nature of the client population. An important part of a child's learning environment consists of his fellow students for it is they who provide challenges to achievement or distractions from achievement, who focus attention and energy toward or away from learning: outside the classroom through association and casual discussions, within the classroom by the manner of their response to lesson content and required assignments. One must indeed be remarkably insensitive to the nature of learning to miss the basic point: Those whose nonschool environments
are least equipped to provide or support meaningful educational experiences are placed in schools that provide the least stimulating interpersonal environments for learning, whereas those whose home environments most typically provide knowledge and encourage curiosity attend schools that provide interpersonal environments more appropriate to educational tasks. It should be clear that race is merely illustrative of the point; one would make the same observations if race was ignored altogether and compared classmates in suburban with those in inner city schools or classmates in wealthy urban communities with those in rural Appalachia.

The import is clear: Inasmuch as the level of intellectual activity and educational preparedness of one's classmates creates an environment that either stimulates or depresses one's own intellectual growth, schools often lock students in the environments of their origin and thereby affect the capacity of their graduates to compete for occupational and other economic rewards in adult life. Whereas the public school system has been readily recognized as a major avenue for social mobility and personal advancement, the ways in which the schools operate as a restraining governor on ambition and performance have largely been ignored. The backgrounds that students bring to the school when they first enter it, as shown in their readiness to learn and the educational supportiveness of
home and neighborhood, predict powerfully both to the characteristics of their classmates and to the qualifications these students will have when they terminate their exposure to public education (Waller, 1965).

There are other ways as well in which the formal organization of the schools affects the socialization of youth. To whatever extent uncertainty and anxiety may characterize the life of the adolescent, two major sources of order and regularity are the organization of knowledge that the school provides and the routinization of life that it requires. Certain things are done in certain ways at certain times, and the unseen authority of this management of time must surely have its (unrecognized) stabilizing effects. Even the curriculum, which simply is the division of knowledge into subjects, provides a perceptual structuring; information, rather than random and chaotic knowledge, exists as history and physics and grammar and trigonometry. Similarly, the routines of the day and the repeated rituals of grading, recitation, recess, assembly, bells, and cafeteria lines direct activity and define one's orientation to this environment (Waller, 1965). In a word, the fact of organization in the school daily confronts the adolescent with an image of order and assists him in the management and comprehension of time.

I have dwelt earlier on the growth in the adolescent of an orientation toward his peers, and with how, in consequence of this, an age-homogenous group develops that to
some extent is resistant to accepting authority from without and to recognizing authority from within; in this sense, the adolescent society is a radical version of democracy. It is peculiar and significant that whereas the school provides the central location for this adolescent system, it is at the same time a constant reminder that authority systems and age-heterogenous relations do in fact continue to exist and to operate. Students may con, co-opt, ignore, attack, dispute, bewail, even prevail against the authority of the school or the wishes of their teachers; they may restrict production, compare notes, cheat, draw boundaries against the intrusion of academic standards. In spite of all, an ultimate and immediate power is vested in the personages of teachers and principal to interpret policies and issue decrees that are followed though they may cause inconvenience and consternation throughout the student body. These experiences remind adolescents of their ultimate responsibility to an external authority; and, by calling attention to the preparatory tasks of the adolescent period, probably have the subtle effect of suggesting the fleeting significance of various peer values and activities. The details of James Dean's biography may seem less compelling after the principal's reminder that college-qualifying examinations will be given a week from tomorrow. Such age-heterogenous relations between teachers and pupils, also, as Eisenstadt (1956) suggests, emphasize the great difference
in power, and in symbolic and technical competence between adults and adolescents. These relations remind children that there is growth and development yet to be accomplished.

It is useful to concern one's self for a moment with the characteristics of those adults who stand in complementary role relationships to youth since they are the tangible personal representations of what adulthood and society are. One of the first things one notes here is how heavily school personnel constitute those adults with whom the adolescent interacts. Teachers are important agents of socialization, then, not only for how much they know but for what they represent. In general, many teachers are status mobile, being of modest if not humble social origins; except possibly in small communities, they are not among the most successful members of the community; again excepting small communities, they may very well not be natives of, nor permanent residents of, the locality served by the school, hence not connected into local kin, neighboring, and power structures; and while they exceed the general population in intellectual ability, they are below the average of the college-educated portion of the population. Occupationally, they are employees rather than entrepreneurs, and the formal status differences among them are quite narrow since salary variances are small. Only the three statuses of principal, department head, and teacher are differentiated (Waller, 1965). Thus it may be suggested that public school faculties
are not altogether representative elements of the adult community, that the particular situation of teachers decreases their ability to relate effectively to certain groups of students (those of extremely high and low origins), and that the role demands on teachers pertaining to the treatment of students create a specific rather than a general model of interpersonal relations.

There is also strong evidence that the social class composition of the student body affects the attitudes and work behavior of teachers, and that the class-related characteristics of the individual student affect the teacher's evaluation of and mode of relating to him. The sum of these effects is to make it more difficult for children of lower-class background to relate effectively to the schools and profit maximally from the educational experience. Becker (1952) has observed that the educational performance of children from modest homes makes it more difficult for teachers to feel successful in their work. He indicates further that slum children not only offend the teacher's moral sensibilities but also by failing to respond to mild reprimands press the teacher into more discipline-maintaining behaviors that are incompatible with her preferred professional image. Principals in lower-class and minority schools similarly offer a larger and more varied list of complaints about student deportment and activities that interfere with the educational aims of
the school (Coleman, et al., 1966). Considering the overwhelming evidence that the comportment of the middle-class students is substantially more congruent with the academic and moral traditions of the school, it would be rather astounding if the professional socialization of teachers were so complete that their perceptions of students' class position did not influence their mode of relating to students and the aspirations they have for them. For, as Charters points out in a summary article, social class position predicts

...grades, achievement and intelligence test scores, retentions at grade level, course failures, truancy, suspensions from school, high school drop-outs, plans for college attendance, and total amount of formal schooling. It predicts academic honors and awards, elective school offices, extent of participation in extracurricular activities and in social affairs of the school, to say nothing of a variety of indicators of 'success' in the informal structure of the student society (Charters, 1963).

Though one may argue that the teachers' expectations about the students' school performance, based on class, have a subtle self-fulfilling quality about them, there are other ways as well in which social class position affects the socialization experiences provided by the educational system. For a variety of reasons, it is more difficult for lower-class students to feel congruent with the school and its purposes; they are more likely to experience school life as an alien world. A view of the school as a useful tool that provides promising
interpersonal contacts as well as relevant training is probably much more advanced in the middle class, and it would follow that the utility of the school's program for anticipatory socialization is more advanced too. On the other hand, the disposition to question the utility and relevance of the school is more prevalent in the lower class. Allison Davis (1948) has enhanced our understanding by noting that the lower class child must experience unlearning if he is to be successful in school, whereas those from the middle class experience continuity and compatibility as between school and nonschool influences. Finally, the costs that schooling exacts in the form of deferred income and other instances of self-discipline are greater proportional to resources in the lower classes.

Insofar as the peer culture and informal social systems of adolescence are concerned, the prevalent literature suggests that the formal educational purposes of the school are subverted by peer norms. This is central to Coleman's interpretation:

The relative unimportance of academic achievement...suggests that the adolescent subcultures in these schools exert a rather strong deterrent to academic achievement. In other words, in these adolescent societies, those who are seen as the 'intellectuals,' and who come to think of themselves in this way, are not really those of highest intelligence but are only the ones who are willing to work hard at a relatively unrewarded activity (Coleman, 1961).
Observations and research results from other sources are compatible with this view; indeed, the oft-cited idea of "the gentleman's C" forms a part of our folklore about colleges. Bushnell (1965) observes similar phenomena operative at Vassar, and is more explicit than Coleman in stating that in student eyes good grades should not be one's sole virtue, and they are not worth an intemperate investment of time. Hughes, Becker, and Geer (1965) have noted that the amount of time and effort medical students might devote to their studies is theoretically infinite, observe that the student culture provides them with a rationale for the level and direction of their effort; correlatively, this culture provides a collective support sufficiently strong to permit the channeling of energies in directions that are antithetical to faculty will. Wallace (1964) defines upperclassmen and faculty as separate host groups for entering freshmen at Midwest College and

15 In fact, Coleman et al (1966) observe that among high-school students college is valued because it connotes adult status, "...but scholastic achievement carries the connotation of acquiescence and subordination to adults."

16 Hughes et al. (1965) believe that Max Weber offered the explanation a half-century ago: "Any group of workingmen possessed of any solidarity whatsoever, and with some common image of themselves and their situation, will not easily yield to any authority full control over the amount of work they do or over the strenuousness of the effort they put forth."
observes a substantial drop in the importance attached to high grades during the course of the freshmen year which he attributes to the influence of upperclassmen. That is, the movement in freshman attitudes "...was in the direction of greater congruence with the level of importance assigned to getting high grades among their student hosts and toward greater incongruence with the preference of faculty members in this regard." Newcomb (1958), to the contrary, was substantially more impressed than these authors by the ability of the faculty to change student values in the direction of prevailing faculty political views, at least in an isolated girls' college that had the features of a near-total institution. Also, Turner (1964) noted that peer culture may indeed depress ambition values but the ambitious students may develop considerable dexterity in ritually adhering to peer-culture values while in fact remaining detached from them; this, coupled with the generally positive valuation given academic values in all physical areas covered in his Los Angeles study of ten high schools, permitted individual students to accept the central values of the school while enjoying status and recognition among their peers.

The discussion thus far may have intimated that the formal system of school, including its values and its personnel, is a fully integrated, consistent, single-minded entity intent upon imparting the maximum amount of knowledge to all comers to the exclusion of all else. This is a
false characterization and should be corrected. There is a substantial compatibility between certain anti-(and non-) intellectual values of the adult community and those commonly observed in peer culture; and if, as Waller (1965) observed, "The culture of the school is a curious melange of the work of young artisans making culture for themselves and old artisans making culture for the young," it is not at all clear that the adults contribute disproportionately to the intellectual portion of this melange.

It was noted earlier that public school teachers were themselves not among the scholarly elite when they were students and can hardly represent the best traditions of intellectual inquiry and academic excellence. Parents, when they observe their teen-age offspring to be indifferent to dating and other forms of sociality, grow concerned and decide that something is wrong. Learning to relax, to have a good time, to get away from it all, not to take things seriously—these appeals occur commonly in advertisements beamed even to adult audiences; young people should learn to get along with others, to enjoy the company of others, and popularity is a valued achievement. The mother who complains that her daughter spends too much time on the telephone and receives multiple requests for dates is not nearly so pained as the mother who complains that her daughter reads books endlessly and hardly goes outside the house. Angell, commenting 40 years ago on the recognition
the college athlete enjoys, saw clearly that adults no less than peers enjoy his exploits:

The outstanding athlete is unquestionably the most honored of all students, both by the undergraduates and the general public. So much space is devoted to him in the public press that he attains ten times more notoriety than the most illustrious professor. Among his fellows, his ability is the subject of lengthy and earnest conversation; he is elected to campus honorary societies, is feted, and becomes the recipient of other attentions from his admirers. The fact is simply that he represents achievement in a line of endeavor with which most Americans are heartily in sympathy. His achievement is obvious, external, to be appreciated by all who care either to witness him in action or to read of his athletic exploits. His light is not, like that of his more intellectual brother, hidden under a bushel of public indifference and lack of understanding (Angell, 1928).

In a word, these things that peer cultures do very well indeed—train in sociality, honor athletic prowess, extend heterosexual contact, dampen scholarly excess, and encourage hedonism—are widely appreciated among adults and from this perspective must be viewed as adaptive. It is too much to expect that schools can instill largely alien values—most especially with instructional personnel that is broadly representative of the community in which anti-intellectual values are nurtured.
Adult socialization differs from childhood socialization in its greater emphasis on learning concrete behaviors (e.g., job and survival skills) and its lesser emphasis on learning basic values (e.g., honesty, self-control, loyalty) (Bron, 1966). Among the major experiences of adolescence in the confrontation between the abstract values taught in childhood and observations of "the way things really are" that competing experiences and intelligence permit.

The widespread idealism of youth can be interpreted as an effort to maintain in their personal belief system, and establish in the world around them, the value system of childhood in the face of various reality-imposing factors. It is a way of saying that the world is not the way adults said it was, ends up of incidents and never tells lies, officials who never cheat, husbands who love their wives, missionaries who practice the Gospel, and nations that follow the path of peace, aimed with the diligence, enthusiasm, and energy of adolescents, existence is a way of saying: "Principle should prevail. Compromise in the defeat of principle." 17

Adolescence is a crisis of faith. An older scholarly-tradition emphasizes the phenomenon of youth's life period in

17 It is a little noted possibility that the adolescent press for "making values real" may reorient more culled adults to take values seriously, and thus have regenerative, restorative effects for basic value systems.
Adult socialization differs from childhood socialization in its greater emphasis on learning concrete behaviors (e.g., job and marital skills) and its lesser emphasis on learning basic values (e.g., honesty, friendliness, loyalty) (Brim, 1966). Among the major experiences of adolescence is the confrontation between the abstract values taught in childhood and observations of "the way things really are" that expanding experience and intelligence permit. The widespread idealism of youth can be interpreted as an effort to maintain in their personal belief-system, and establish in the world around them, the naive values of childhood in the face of various reality impingements. It is a way of saying that the world should be the way adults said it was, made up of Presidents who never tell lies, officials who never cheat, husbands who love their wives, churchgoers who practice the Gospel, and nations that follow the path of peace. Mixed with the ebullience, enthusiasm, and energy of adolescence, idealism is a way of saying: "Principle should prevail. Compromise is the defeat of principle."  

Adolescence is a crisis of faith. An older scholarly tradition explains the phenomena of this age period in

---

17It is a little noted possibility that the adolescent press for "making values real" may resocialize more calloused adults to take values seriously, and thus have regenerative, restorative effects for basic value systems.
terms of developmental psychology and physiology; physical growth and sexual maturity were the keys to moodiness, unpredictability, idealism, religious conversion, peer attachment, and a variegated assortment of other outcomes. It would be foolish of us to assert that the physical changes of adolescence, especially in its earlier stages, are trivial. However, one may choose to work from a different perspective. People are disposed to emphasize value crises that occur because of increasing contact with a reality that is less fully filtered by parents and the protective world of childhood; the changing conceptions of self that result from vastly wider, more variegated stimuli, most of which are social and only one set of which is physiological; interpersonal tensions that occur because the adolescent and centrally significant others must continue in intense contact while mutually redefining role relationships; and the rapid as well as erratic progressions that characterize the period, as adolescents do in fact survive to enter adulthood (Brim, 1966).

There is a strong reason to believe that the quality of and changes in the religious beliefs and behaviors of adolescents deserve some attention. Theological systems are in the business of defining the place of the individual in some total cosmic scheme of things, and religious organizations have a central relevance to the maintenance and transmission of moral and ethical codes—factors that are
important to the total socialization process. Religious beliefs and organizations are not, on the other hand, so readily identified with wishes for freedom and autonomy, nor with hedonistic pursuits; in fact they may be linked in the public eye with adult authority and be unpalatable to adolescents because they are associated with childhood experiences of required church attendance and regular religious indoctrination. Adolescents neither create nor control organized religious institutions and belief structures and consequently will think of them as "ours" only with great difficulty. Church activities for the young fall clearly into the category of adult-sponsored rather than participant-created youth groups (Ross, 1950).

These latter remarks imply that religious orientations and participation probably decline during adolescence whereas the former suggest that religious experiences during the period should be quite intense. Congruent with social scientists' greater fascination with deviance than with scrupulosity, the amount of information in this area is exceedingly modest whether one refers to empirical studies or to interpretive essays. One rarely acknowledges even the pertinent fact that one of the few rites de passage our society has for initiating adolescence is religiously sponsored--Bar Mitzvah in the Jewish faith, Confirmation among Catholics and some Protestant denominations, and the widespread expectation, especially strong in Protestant
evangelical groups, that the conversion experience ("joining the church") should occur in early adolescence.

Though the scant attention paid to the adolescent religious behavior and value systems limits the discussion, one can at least raise a question concerning the widespread assumption that adolescents are not involved in religious organizations. It is contended that organized religion represents an authority rejected by adolescents, and that where it is not viewed as distasteful, it is seen as irrelevant. The empirical data are not all conclusive, however. The Purdue Opinion Panel, reporting results from its continuing survey of a national sample of youth, fails to show any substantial difference in the church going practices of 12th-grade compared to 9th-grade students, a larger proportion of the former attends more often than once a week and less often than once a month. (Nor do they find any increasing difference between parents and youth in religious beliefs; 81 per cent of the 9th graders and 77 per cent of the 12th graders say their beliefs are in accord with both parents (Remmers & Radler, 1957). Strommen (1963) reporting data from a 1959 national survey of Lutheran youth finds a very modest drop-off in church attendance when he compares high-school seniors with 10th-grade students: 70 per cent rather than 74 per cent attend church at least once a week. Another national sample, this one reporting participation in church groups
rather than attendance at worship services, finds an increase between the ages of 11 to 13 from 10 per cent to 23 per cent (Institute for Social Research, 1960). Fichter's data (1954) are not age-specific, but his analysis of religious participation in Easter services, mass, and communion among members of a southern Catholic parish finds youth under 20 firmly involved in these activities while participation declines among those in their 20's and reaches a nadir among those 30-40; the participation curve then turns up among those in their 40's and 50's but not to match the intensity of the teens. Goldsen and associates, analyzing data for among 3,000 students in eleven universities, report about one-fourth attend religious services at least once a week while another one-fourth attend "never or almost never" (Goldsen, 1960). They also find that students who score high on a scale of religious beliefs more often believe that they have lived up to their parents' expectation which suggests that the church may indeed dampen tendencies toward adolescent revolt. Among YMCA constituents age 18-29, Ross (1950) found a decided decrease in church attendance with increased age: 53 per cent attended at least once a week, 25 per cent less than once a month among those age 18-21, compared to 39 per cent and 33 per cent at age 26-29.

Various other indices of religious concern among adolescents might be cited. The empirical data are, in
general, so fragmentary that defensible conclusions about adolescent religious behavior, particularly shifts in this behavior as the second decade of life runs its course, cannot be drawn. It seems likely that the various ethnic, faith, regional, class, and rural-urban groups vary considerably in whether or not, and the extent to which, religious participation and orientation change in this age period. Little more can be added except to bemoan the fact that this important area is neglected in socialization research and to express the fear that national policies of church-state separation combined with federal support of research will continue to focus attention on other topics.
LONGISHANDING PERIODS of training and dependency in complex, technologically advanced, industrial societies, the universal requirement that the seeking of sex and age-appropriate groups in the social structure of society: "Youth is a period of expectation." At some points in the life cycle orientations vary subtly but perceptibly from one stage toward civilization and then to maturity, wherever that may happen; it certainly does not happen in adolescence and should be regarded as a major abnormality were it to happen. Ideally, youth should be socialized as to enjoy and find pleasure in a present status while anticipating and preparing for a future status, but also striving to pass out of the present one. Sociohistorically, there is need to make the status satisfying enough that rebellion does not become a permanent feature and that orientations toward society do not become perverted. On the other hand, the status must be defined as appealing, as so give out of it would be tragic if theFuture should be so marred and the deserts of trivial, accidental, and the antithetical features of an upcoming adult status, that significant energies are diverted toward retaining adolescent status indefinitely.

The potential of adolescence lies in acquainting the actor with disparate processes and in giving him experience with his constant tension state of a personal world too diverse and complex to permit either complete
Lengthening periods of training and dependency in complex modern society exacerbate, regarding adolescence, the universal requirement that the meaning of age and age-homogenous groups in the social structure be defined. Youth is a period of expectancy. At some point in the life cycle orientations turn subtly but perceptibly from expectancy toward consolidation and then to memory. Whenever this may happen, it certainly does not happen in adolescence and would be regarded as a major abnormality were it to happen. Ideally, youth would be socialized so as to enjoy and find pleasure in a present status while anticipating and preparing for a future status, and thus striving to pass out of the present one. Societally, there is need to make the status satisfying enough that rebellion does not become a paramount feature and that orientations toward self and toward society do not become perverse. On the other hand, the status must be defined as temporary, one to grow out of: it would be tragic if the rewards should be so nurturant and the demerits so trivial, compared to the anticipated features of an upcoming adult status, that significant energies were directed toward retaining adolescent status indefinitely.

The potential of adolescence lies in acquainting the actor with disparate pressures and in giving him experience with the constant-tension state of a personal world too diverse and complex to permit either complete
consistency among and between all his behaviors and values or approval from all sanction-holding others in his environment. It may, indeed, acquaint him with the potential for growth and development provided expressly by his inability to remove dissonance from his values or achieve consensus among all significant others. To find that one can survive the displeasure of others; to enjoy self-fulfilling pleasure in standing alone on occasion; to know the sense of stable self despite the fact that today he is not totally consistent with yesterday—these are necessary lessons to learn. Skilled parents probably teach them inside the home. As the circle and diversity of significant others widens, the social structure of experience explicates this lesson for the growing child.

From this perspective, there is a meaningful sense in which it can be argued that modern society makes adolescence too easy an experience. In the freedom-within-structure terms of Kurt Lewin, we would suggest that in relative proportion the freedom is present but the structure is missing in contemporary urban life. By their reluctance to impose discipline, set limits, make demands, withhold pleasure or impose pain, many parents create life-situations in which their children find it difficult to locate obstacles that challenge their competence and extend their development. Why this should be is beyond this paper's scope, but it is a reasonable assumption that popular conceptions of
inordinate tension and stress during adolescence lead parents to offer velvety compensations.\textsuperscript{18} If, as asserted, parents intentionally dampen the conflict, remove the dissonance, soothe the tension, avoid the clash of wills, forego the arbitrary use of nonrational constraints, and thereby give the period a surrealistic blandness, one then may ask an important question: Is there anything in his experiential world to bring the adolescent to seek his limits, take his lumps, recoup from disaster, search diligently for big answers to big questions through intense concern with religion, ethics, politics, causes, and movements?

One is suggesting that adults make adolescence a vacuum of triviality by too cautiously placing demands and constraints upon it. Adults refuse to be the adolescent's enemy. Douvan and Adelson (1966) comment in a similar vein:

Some discrepancy of values is sure to be found, since the two generations differ in perspectives, but for the most part, one believes, core values are shared by parents and peers, and conflicts center on peripheral or token issues. This muting of conflict helps produce a fairly untroubled adolescence, in this area at least, and from the point of view of personal

\textsuperscript{18} The most extreme statement that adolescence is what we define it to be is made in Musgrove (1964). There is, he contends a psychology of adolescence because psychologists invented it: "The position of youth is only intelligible in terms of the rise since the later 18th century of a psychology of adolescence which has helped to create what it describes." A different but not incompatible view is that indulgence of adolescents results from economic prosperity (Blaine, 1966).
adjustment the concordance of values between parents and the peer culture is a desirable thing. But there are other points of view than 'good adjustment.' An absence of tension between values also tends to produce the bland, docile youngsters who make up the majority in our high schools and colleges, and who forever remain morally and ideologically parochial.

Others have suggested that those conditions of development that impose little strain often produce a personality that is stable and integrated but lacking in depth or complexity (Freedman, 1963).

Adolescence is especially important in the socialization process because the object of this process continues in a power-dependent and economic-dependent position but, compared to childhood, has heightened intellectual powers and information which permit articulation and explanation of the demands and expectations he encounters. "Why" questions may be answered in more detail and at higher levels of abstraction. He is better able to understand the forces that shape him and shape his future. The importance of these conscious cognitions emphasizes the importance of adult role-models who guide and advise as much as they control and direct.

In light of this, there are uniquely important problems in the socialization of adolescents during times of rapid change. The aura of change suggests impermanence and a relativistic perspective. If the length of skirts and style of cars so readily change, if men travel to the planets and computers cook dinner, then what, if anything,
is or should be permanent? Particularly, this pertains to
the search for, and need for, identity. Am I to be as all
I see, changing, unstable, impermanent, subject to challenge
in the next instant? What, if anything, is it that contin-
ues, that remains the continuing one? One suspects that
this is the crucial demand placed on the stabilizing insti-
tutions in unsettled times, and it provides one definition
of the significant, central task in adolescent socialization:
To give a sense of and provide the basis for a sense of con-
tinuity and order in the self system and the societal
system, while preparing persons to respond flexibly and
competently to a world that cannot be anticipated.
REFERENCES


Bowerman, C. W., & Kinch, J. W. Changes in Family and Peer Orientations of Children Between the Fourth and Tenth Grades. Social Forces, 1959, 37, 206-211.


