TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING THE AMERICAN TEEN-AGER,

A SOCIOLOGICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL APPROACH

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING THE AMERICAN TEEN-AGER, A SOCIOLOGICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ETHICAL APPROACH

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I.  Introduction

A)  Background

"What's the matter with kids today?"  "Our youth now
loves luxury.  They have bad manners, contempt for authority,
disrespect for older people...They contradict their parents...
and tyrannize their teachers."  "Young people no longer obey
their parents, our earth is degenerate in these latter days,
the end of the world is manifestly drawing to a close."

If these above quotations would be read by almost any
American adult, no matter if he was an educator, professional
person, business man, or a common laborer, the majority of
their reactions would probably indicate that these quotes
accurately describe the American teen-ager, and to a certain
degree they would be correct.  However, if they were able to

find the orginal sources of these allegations, they would

discover that our modern day youth are not the only genera-

tions that are the subjects of these remarks.

I'm sure that the above mentioned adults would be sur-

prised to find out that these three quotations cover a period

of over 6,000 years. The first, and probably the most famil-

iar, is part of the lyrics that are from a recent broadway

musical-comedy entitled "Bye, Bye Birdie". The second is a

statement made by Socrates in 329 B.C. And the final obser-

vation was found carved on a clay tablet in the Mesopotamian

Valley over 6,000 years ago.

No doubt there are, and likely have been, many other

similar affirmations made about youth which have been anno-

tated by various authors and writers over this same period

of time. And, since it is a fairly evident fact that essen-

tially human nature stays the same, there is evidence to

believe that such like remarks and observations were made

about young people all the way back to the days of Cain and

Abel.

From the above introduction, one can easily see that

the material object of my thesis is by no means a recent

or new development in the life of human beings. It is the

same transitional period from childhood to adulthood which

has existed for as long as there has been a Homo Sapiens

dwelling on the earth. However, just because there has

always been young people making this cross-over into the
adult stage, there is no reason to presuppose that the prob-
lems and difficulties of youth remain constant.  In fact,
there is every reason to presume that these problems will vary,
and vary widely, according to one's home, country, and gener-
ation.

B)  Explanation of the topic

Before proceeding any further, there are a few terms in
the title of my thesis which should be cleared up.  The first
term that we will immediately clarify is the word "Teen-Ager".
This is the title strictly applied to boys and girls from the
ages of thirteen to nineteen, although practically speaking
it includes some eleven and twelve years olds.  In some in-
stances, it will also take into account those who have not yet
attained their twenty-first birthday.  Adolescence, teens, and
young adults are similar names used synonymously to mean teen-
agers.  In our present day, Teen-Ager seems to be the popular
name applied to this age group.

It should be realized from the beginning, that I'm
treating the average, everyday American teen-ager.  It is not
the subject of our present study to consider abnormal psychol-
ogy, juvenile delinquents, drug addicts, alcholics, or any
other teen-agers who are mentally, emotionally, or economically
deficient.

Although there are some universal norms for our modern

adolescent, the subject matter for our study will be the middle class, urban teen-ager. The range of our interests will not include those teen-agers who are working steadily, married, or in the armed forces, as this latter group is expected to conform to adult standards.

"American" is the second term in our title which needs an explanation. We have limited our topic to the American teen-ager for the main reason that our youth have different problems than those youth in other countries, as a result of the complexity of our modern society. No other country, save England and Europe to certain degrees, has had as much political, educational, economical, and social prosperity as our United States. Because of these facts, we also have new conflicts and difficulties which would be lacking in other countries.

In an effort to get an overall picture and a proper understanding of our teen-agers, I will approach the problem from three different angles: sociologically, psychologically, and ethically.

Sociological-- in order to fully understand teen-agers, we must be well acquainted with the environment in which they live. This first part of my thesis will treat of the demands of modern society made on teen-agers, and an explanation of Teen-Age Culture.

Psychological-- this second section will treat the

teen-ager as an individual, with his physical, intellectual, emotional, and personality development.

Ethical-- this final section of the body of my thesis will consider some moral principles involved in teenage activities.

C) Statement of the problem

"Man the animal, hasn't changed much since the time of Moses."[1] However, circumstances have radically changed in the last half century and modern youth have found themselves forced into situations and roles which previous generations did not have to undergo. "The part that a teen-ager must play in present-day life, the decisions he must make, the way in which he is expected to conduct himself, has changed very much".[2]

One can readily see how recent these new youth con-flicts have been, if he just recalls the situation at the turn of the century. "Even this concept of adolescence, as a period of years between and merging with childhood and adulthood, is essentially a concept of our own civilization."[3] Prior to this time, especially among primitive people, there were only two stages in the life time of a person, child-hood and adulthood. The majority of the people at this time were farmers, and neighbors were miles apart. The family had to supply most of the needs of the children, be it educa-tional, social, or recreational. The boys and girls lived

with their parents, sharing the many duties of agrarian life.
When they were old enough to marry, they would purchase a plot
of land near their parents and begin their own home.

However, at the latter part of the nineteenth and the
early part of the twentieth century, agrarian form of life was
widely replaced by the new industrial towns. As these towns
grew, everything became prosperous. Children were no longer
needed to work, as the father was able to support the family
on his factory wage. One by one the children were encouraged
to attend school and to get an education.

There were many demands for new materials, jobs in-
creased, families prospered, communities expanded, which re-
sulted again in a new demand for materials. More factories
had been opened, new discoveries were made, more and more
people began to migrate to the cities. Everyone was trying to
increase his wages, buy lots, build new homes, invest in new
businesses or industries, in an attempt to expand their
standard of living. This cycle continues on up to our present
day, where it has reached an all time high, with evidence that
it will increase as the years progress.

Now during all this time, the youth were separated more
and more from their traditional settings. Emphasis was ever
more placed on education, as a result, adolescents were
pretty much shielded from the cares and responsibilities of
adult life.

Children began to find various outlets and activities away from home. They had their own friends, their own points of interests and their own forms of amusement. The center of attention was gradually shifting from the home to the group in which they were involved. These various gatherings are known as peer groups, which are generally composed of friends and associates, whose age and social status are approximately the same.

The influence of these peer groups began to increase, and society continued to move along at a rapid pace. Family ties were further weakened. Eventually the teen-ager finds himself in a culture all his own, different from that of childhood, not quite the same of the adults. From this point of Teen-Age Culture, many of today's difficulties have their starting point.

The teen-ager is caught between two loyalties: that of his family and his peer group. The problems arise when the adolescent sees that the rules of conduct and activity of his peers are almost opposite to those of which he was accustomed to at home. Thus we have true conflict and real difficulty of teen-agers in our modern American society.

II. Sociological Influences

A) A Brief Look at Our Society

Being men, we are by nature social beings. We cannot exist apart from human relationships, for we depend on others

for those things which we ourselves are unable to produce.

Not everyone can live on a farm and have only agricultural needs on his mind. If there is no one to sell equipment, how is the farmer going to cultivate his land? Unless there is a demand for food, what good is it to plant acres and acres of seeds? Unless there is mill company, to whom will he sell his grain? Likewise, if a man's necessities don't go beyond his place of business, to whom will he turn to buy food? Where will he purchase his home, car, and television set if there is nobody to sell them?

This general pattern gets more involved and more complicated as communities grow. The farmer doesn't fully know who is going to buy his products, but he does know that there is a market for them. It is his job to raise his crops and to sell them at various graineries. They in turn sell the grain to large firms, who make a variety of products and sell them to the store owners, where they are purchased by the other members of the community.

Man must associate with others in order to have a well balanced life. This association can be accomplished through neighbors, relatives, and friends. Special purpose organizations and common interest groups also serve to unite those with similar aspirations and desires. Through forms of socialization, persons learn to adjust to the needs of the group as a whole. This individual group forms a small part of the

overall social organization of a city.

In each town there is a dominate trend of principles and ideas which serves as a trade mark for the individual communities. This mark of identification, which can be hereditary or environmental, is known as culture. "Culture is the total configuration of institutions that the people in society share in common."[4] The primary aim of culture is to orderly fashion the satisfaction of the social needs of the individual community.

Thus we have the many facets of educational, political, economical, religious, and social activities which, when all united into one whole, form a community, which can vary from the small rural village to the large industrial metropolis.

B)  Teen-Ager in Society

Regardless of a person's age, he is always inclined to think that this is the most important and most difficult period of life, as each stage throughout our life brings with it its own particular problems. Every person feels this way to a certain extent, as the most important thing in the world to each one of us is ourselves, and we should worry about our own needs and conflicts first of all. However, if we take an objective position and analyze the major periods of life, "there is much to indicate that the teen years are the most critical years in the life cycle today".[5]

If one could only realize the many changes and adjustments that every teen-ager must face; the various external and

internal pressures and drives he must overcome; the facing of a

society which is for the most part radically different in the

eyes of youth; and the many other demands which they must

regulate, there would be little doubt as to which period of

life is the most difficult to adjust to.

"If the adolescent could meet the problems consequent

upon his attempts to adjust himself to his ever widening social

group with the poise and nonchalance that were his when he was

ten, many of his difficulties in this field would be absent

or reduced to a minimum."[6] Of course the only difficulty here

is that it is practically impossible to be a teen-ager with-

out some degree of concern, confusion, or anxiety. The youth

is changing, he realizes this from the physiological growth of

his own body. His consequent emotional reactions makes him

self-conscious. He is gradually breaking away from home life

and its surroundings. Probably for the first time in his life

he realizes that he is an individual, with likes and dislikes

of his own.

Thus teen-agers begin to determine what life is about.

"It must necessarily be so, for he is endeavoring to determine

what he can get out of it and what he must contribute."[7] He

starts to question those things which were taken for granted in

his younger years. With his intellectual advancement, he

seriously doubts the value of previous norms. "His natural

inclination is to venture forth on his own and to determine for

himself the strength and weakness of his own personality."[8]

Yet in all of his emotional turmoil, the teen-ager is generally lacking a firm conviction about anything, except that all he wants to know is the way things are. Unless he can secure help and guidance from parents or teachers, even though at times when he most needs their assistance he will turn away from them, he will try to postpone some problems or deny their existence.

Emotionalism is very active during the adolescent years. Teen-agers represent one of the moodiest groups in our society, shifting rapidly from one emotional state to another. The person an adolescent likes today is his bitter enemy tomorrow. "During adolescence such shifts can be considered normal, abnormal as they would be in later life."[9]

Teen-agers have many potentialities, which can either lead to good or evil. They can be one of the main sources for spreading adult values, or the primary force tearing them down. "The idealism of youth is impressive."[10] Given definite and worthwhile goals, they can perform them with a high degree of success, as they lack a great deal of the greed, selfishness and individualism of adults. "They are equipped with boundless energy and enthusiam, and are looking to us for help in achieving the ideals and ambitions towards which they are striving."[11]

In order to further understand our teen-agers, we will

now proceed to an analysis of Teen-Age Culture.

C)   Teen-Age Culture

Every human being has a social instinct, which is possess-
ed in various degrees.  One evident distinction is between an
introvert and an extrovert.  The former seems to get along
fine without anyone else disturbing his own little world.
However, the extrovert always has to be doing something or go-
ing somewhere, constantly in social relationships with others.
Besides this distinction, there is one more basic, it is the
distinction between having the ability for doing something, and
the carrying of this capability.

The majority of adults are fairly well adjusted to societal
living.  They know what life is about and thus contribute to
community living.  On the other hand, children have this social
instinct but it is latent.  The child first learns to take care
of himself, which is a period of individual selfishness.  When
he reaches the adolescent stage, he finds out that he must
share life, its duties, priviliges, and responsibilities.  At
this period of life his social instincts become evident.  "His
social instincts exert a deeper influence on his attitudes and
his conduct than they did before."[12]

This influence can be seen all the more because teen-agers
begin to resent the authority of parents and teachers.  They
no longer readily agree to their demands.  Although the teen-
ager wants to get away from home life and its surroundings, and

is eager to prove himself a capable adult, still he feels
guilty over showing hostility towards those who have been good
to him all his life.  Thus if they are turning away from adult
influences and values, they must find reassurance and encour-
agement else where.  This is one of the main consolations of
the peer group.  "Peer association helps the adolescent over-
come the deep sense of guilt that results from hostile feel-
ings toward his family."[13]  Since temporarily he no longer
accepts adult values, the peer group provides fresh values and
standards of conduct.

"No group is more susceptible to the need for status and
prestige than the adolescent."[14]  These he begins to find in
his peer group.  Here he discovers persons with similar prob-
lems and difficulties.  Here is hope and encouragement, happi-
ness and success, friends and associates.  Is it any wonder
that they co-operate with the group when such values are
received?

Robert Angel once observed in Campus, that American
youths are extraordinarily sociable and the reason he gave was
perhaps because the confusion of modern life renders the in-
dividual unstable and tends to throw him back on the mass for
support.  This feeling of "belonging" in order to be respected
seems to be deeply rooted in American life.  With this in mind,
it is easier to understand why teen-agers act in a group  If
they are not with the "in" group they are social outcasts, if

they are with the "in" group they become social heroes.

Once he is in the group, "rigid conformity is the rule". [15]
This extends to questions of dress, posture, vocabulary, recreation, desires and even in some cases, how to wear one's hair.
Thus we get a slight introduction to teen-age culture.

"Teen-age culture, even in its contrapuntal forms, is an
adaptation, prototype, or caricature of adult culture." [16] Therefore, there is a likeness between the two cultures, both having
material and immaterial aspects. Material being that which
deal: with dress, sports, automobiles, and recreation; and the
immaterial being values, attitudes, and language. We will
only treat the teen-age aspects of culture, presuming that all of
us are well acquainted with the adult positions.

1) Material aspects

One of the three main material aspects of youth's culture is clothing. "To an adolescent, feeling about clothes
are apt to go beyond the old adage that clothes make the man.
Clothes are the man." [17] A person's character is shown by his
clothes, his clothes are almost part of him, for by them he
will be judged, accepted or rejected. A young person can be
talented, show a lot of promise but it will be of little avail
to his associates unless he dresses according to modern trends.

Recreation represents the second material aspect of teen-age culture, and is rapidly becoming one of the dominating
forces during the adolescent years. One of the main reasons

for this is the many resources they have to occupy their free time.

Athletic competition is almost put on the same plane as educational achievement. Where valuable study time is spent participating, attending or discussin⊽ various sports presently going on in the school, emphasis on education is necessarily diminished. However, sports are good for the character development of the individual if they are moderately indulged in. Sports can also be a great teen-age stabilizer. Because teen-agers have abundant energy and enthusiam, they should be encouraged to put it to work in athletics or other vigorous activities, thereby making the most of the free time that they have available.

Because adolescents are so restless, they find it difficult to spend a quiet evening at home. They want to go somewhere, do something, but they aren't sure what or where. With this animated spirit of activity, the final material aspect of their culture comes in the automobile.

Cars are one of the most necessary requirements for most teen-agers, especially for boys. "To have a car is the all important thing, new, used, or junked."[18] Without a car a boy must be chauffeured to school, movies, sports events, and even dates. Just the exact position that the car does play in their culture will depend a great deal on the environment in which they live.

"The automobile has become the chief power symbol to our

young people..."[19]  The car permits a great outlet for teen-

agers.  Some find a car very interesting and spend a large

amount of their time working on it and trying to master its

composition.  To others, it is just another way for them to

get away from the authority of adults.

Occasionally one's social acceptance or rejection depends

upon whether or not a person owns or has access to a car.

2)  Immaterial aspects

"Kill it dad before it spreads."  "You bug me."  "Let's

do the messarounds."  "Who rattled your cage?"  "Kinda like

never."  "What's your mob adjustment?"[20]

There is little doubt that language is one of the evident

signs of teen-age culture.  Everyone has heard a little modern

"lingo" either from teen-agers themselves or in various

movies or television programs.

Adolescents have almost created a language of their own,

by throughly changing meanings of words and inventing others.

"Much of it is perceptive and current, based on recent polit-

ical or scientific achievements."[21]

Values are the second major immaterial aspect of teen-

age culture that we are considering.  The values and pre-

occupations of teen-agers can, to a great extent, be realized

by considering the large amount of mass media aimed directly

at them.  Two most manifest elements are teen-age periodicals

and popular records. "Teen-agers constitute an important set
of publics as well as of markets."[22] Where at one time child-
ren had to scrape for pennies and nickles, they now have
quarters and half dollars to spend on material beamed primarily
at them.

The subject matter of these magazines and records vary
widely so as to present more of a market, thereby satisfying
anyone from the narrowest taste to the broadest interest.
Some magazines are highly technical for car enthusiasts, while
others are aimed at about the sixth grade level. There is a
special liking for sport or athletic magazines. Needless to
say pornography is easily available. The majority of articles
center around fun and popularity, while others deal with prob-
lems of weight, complexion or adjustment and the many other
cares and worryies of teen-agers. Most popular records have
little more than clever lyrics or a nice beat, while having
a short-lived popularity.

Therefore, since many of these records and magazines
mostly treat of the social and recreational life, it is no
wonder that teen-age values center along these lines.

Attitudes are our final consideration of the immaterial
aspects of teen-age culture. From what we have seen thus far
about teen-age interests and values, it is logical to conclude
that youth's attitudes are largely shaped by their primary
ideals. Because they are not accustomed to work and respon-

sibility, they find it difficult at times to adjust themselves to some jobs. Even though teen-agers recognize the value of work, many times they are unable to enter the adult labor market, because of school hours or only summer availability. The only standard jobs for teen-agers are carry-out boys in the supermarkets, gas station attendants, paper routes, baby sitting and other part-time help. Unless it is necessary for them to get a job, either to buy clothes or to keep their car running, they find little interest in working when there are so many other things to do. However, give them a car to work on, or a play to prepare, or even anything else that absorbs their interests, and they will labor unceasingly to produce a worthwhile result.

Teen-agers generally possess little knowledge of politics. They might know who is their mayor or state governor, but the rest of the political setup doesn't seem to upset them in the least. "Teen-age culture provides such an absorbing way of life, that teen-agers are politically apathetic."[23] Any opinion that they might voice will mostly be that of their parents or teachers. A good sign of their political or worldly interest is shown when a room full of teen-agers are watching a program which is followed by the news. Unless the news affects them directly, as soon as the program is over, you'll either find the television off, the channel changed or the room empty.

School is one part of teen-age life which is nowadays a necessary evil, and that is the way many teen-agers regard it. So long as school involves having a good time, friendly associations, and some prestige, school is looked upon as great. But when teachers are rough, assignments pile up and a great deal of time and effort are required, they have an adverse attitude towards study.

Often times, youth consider education to consist in attending classes, with little regard for cooperation and attention during the class period. Homework is hastily completed in a matter of 25 or 30 minutes, and completing assignments in record time is something admired, whether it be done hurriedly or copied at the last minute.

Unless students are made to realize the value of their high school training during their high school years and the influence that it will have on their future life, unless teachers help them form good study habits and assist our youth to realize that studying can be interesting and enjoyable, high school will mean nothing more for them than something to be endured; a place to go, to apply themselves and their talents as little as possible, and to be left permanently behind after four years, only to regret it in a short period of time.

There is one part of teen-age life that needs little encouragement, this is athletics. This is one way of gaining

honor and prestige in school and even in a community.

Urban life is, for the most part, very sectional. Each person has his own job, his own house, his likes and dislikes. Any yet, even though people in a town differ in education, occupation, or place of residence, there are some elements which everyone shares in common. Athletics is one of these elements. Thus since the teen-ager realizes that there is a large social interest in sports, if he can excel in one or another of them, he will be able to be accepted by his peers and gain social status among the other people of the city.

There are two main disadvantages in this setup. The first is that students will put so much time in on sports that they tend to neglect their studies. There is a great danger when teachers begin to overlook the poor school work of the star athletes just so that they can remain on the team. They must realize that their education comes first and then extra-curricular activities.

The second drawback with this arrangement is that only a selected few are able to make the school teams. Thus there is anywhere from 75% to 95% of the students, depending on the size of the school, who are not able to partake in the school sports.

One answer to this problem would be to encourage more intramural activities. If this could be arranged, many more high school boys and girls would recognize that there are many

advantages that would be gained, outside the obvious consid-

erations of getting exercise and developing minds and bodies.

Among some would be: contribution to the team effort, use of

leadership qualities, co-operation, gaining self- confidence,

and "one of the most important values that group associations

offer him are the opportunities for adolescent identifica-
ions"[24].

Religion is the final adolescent attitude that we will

consider. "Generally speaking, the child believes everything

that has been presented to him in the field of morals and

religion."[25] As he begins to emerge as a teen-ager, he starts

to doubt some things which they have always observed. Skep-

ticism becomes a middle point between belief and doubt.

"With the coming of urban-industrial civilization has

come a secularization of all life, an attempt to interpret

life in terms of mechanical laws and natural forces rather

than in terms of spiritual forces, supernatural powers and

miraculous events."[24] Because the teen-ager is so wrapped up

in modern society, he can't help but be influenced by those

around thim.

They no longer have the religious fervor they might have

had as children. They begin to mistake feelings rather than

efforts as their foundations in religion. They get distract-

ed, they no longer feel comfortable in church, their thoughts

wander. Henceforth, since they are not able to find their

answers about life and their place in it from their religion,
they look else where for an answer. This subject will be
pursued further in part four of this thesis.

Now that we have attempted an adequate explanation of
teen-age culture and its material and immaterial aspects, the
only subject remaining to be explained is the "WHY" of teen-
age culture.

Briefly, "teen-age culture is a product of affluence."[27]
Our youth have more leisure time on their hands than any pre-
vious decade. Our society is very prosperous and thus teen-
agers have about anything they want for the asking. A great
deal of material comfort, a surplus of cars permitting more
mobility, a big emphasis on fun and popularity, all unite to
form what is known as "Teen-Age Culture.

III. Psychological Development

A. Physical Growth

Thus far in our consideration of the American teen-ager,
we have considered him as a member of society, subject to its
many demands. We will now turn away from the teen-ager in a
sociological background and consider him as an individual,
with his apparent troubles, difficulties, and adjustments.

"The most obvious features of adolescent development are
the changes in physical growth and in physiological develop-
ment."[28] Growth and development of the physical organism
characterize the adolescent period. Although growth and

development are often used as convertible terms, there is a

fine distinction between them. Growth ordinarily refers to

the increase in size of some muscle or organ, and development

indicates a movement toward maturity. "Functions or capaci-

ties of any kind develop, they increase in scope or in power,

but they do not grow, since growth always means increase in

size of quantity."[29]

Added significance should be given to the fact that al-

though changes in growth and changes in development are proper

to the period of adolescence, they do not always occure simul-

taneously. It is quite possible for a boy or girl to grow

rapidly and to attain many physical characteriztics of adults

and at the same time to be developing mentally at a much

slower rate. This situation can also be reversed, where de-

velopment preceeds growth.

In our effort to further our understanding of teen-agers,

it is extremely important that we consider both the intellec-

tual and physical development. For we must remember that the

mind and body as a union make up the man, and as a result the

one is able to influence the other. Because this union of

body and mind is so intimate, "it is to be expected that the

radical and prolonged physical changes of adolescence should

exert a profound influence on the adolescent's mental life."[30]

Everyone is familiar with the sudden "shooting-up" period,

which is usually evident during the first few years of adoles-

cence. Even though ~~~~ this growth begins in the pre-teen

years, it continues and at a faster rate among the thirteen and
fourteen years olds. "The body increases in size both as a
whole and in its parts, but the parts develop at widely
varying rates of speed."[31]

Along with the development of the bones, which bring
about the growth in heighth, there are varying amounts of in-
ternal and external development. These various changes, be-
cause they are so personal, are a source of worry and concern
for most adolescents. They should be made to realize that
these changes are quite normal, and that even though there is
a certain amount of anxiety about them, they should not be
overly concerned about these changes. If teen-agers can
properly understand the purpose of this new development, they
will be able to adjust themselves to these changing conditions
with youthful maturity.

B) Intellectual Development

We stated earlier that man is a composite of both body
and soul. This relationship is so close and intrinsic that it
is impossible to accurately treat these component parts apart
from one another. We are rational beings with an intellect
and a free will; however, intellectual and volitional powers
would not be able to operate unless knowledge is first pre-
sented to the mind through the senses. "To say, for instance,
that the physical and the mental are unrelated in their de-
velopment is to pay homage to the worst kind of dualism."[32]

Therefore, if we hold that this intimate relation does exist, what happens in one sphere of this activity will have repercussions on the other.

One reason for our consideration of the intellectual development at this stage in the life of adolescence is surely not that the body and soul are closer together at this period than any other duration in the life span, but because the body is being so profoundly altered and the mental powers are rapidly unfolding. "Coming so simultaneously, as they do, these changes cause greater disturbances than would appear if on the physical part of the adolescent's make-up were being modified or only the mental."[33]

The first ten or twelve years of childhood is characterized by free reign of the senses. Practically all of one's activities are built around "make believe" tactics. He easily digests Mother Goose tales and other similar stories built around the "Live happily ever after" conclusions. Because he so readily partakes in these fantasies of other worlds and other people, it is little wonder that when his parents tell him something to be true or that this is the way things are, doubt or skepticism has no meaning for him. The majority of learning throughout these childhood years is based on this human faith.

However, as children begin to enter upon the adolescent years, it seems that everything begins to shape up differently.

In the preceeding years, progress was made in intellectual
improvement and was correct as far as it went, but it did
not go far enough.  Education up to this stage mostly consisted
in memory and repetitious work, but now the process of organ-
ization and the consolidation of ideas begins to take over.
He not only sees that something is so, but also why it is, what
caused it, how long it will remain and what relation it has
with other things.

"As one approaches more and more to the adult stage, the
instinct for truth, the thirst for knowledge, and the capacity
to respond to the demands of logical system are noticeably
strengthened."[34]  That there should be doubts and questions at
this period is not at all to be wondered about.  With a real-
ization of his mental powers, most teen-agers want to break
away from the limits of childhood.  What the boy as a child
once took without doubt and hurriedly memorized, as a teen-
ager he wants reasons for things being so and desires to make
his own judgments.

Having thus far established this new period of intellec-
tual awareness, we will now proceed to consider some elements
involved in this development, mainly the memory and the in-
tellect.

"Among the various psychological functions there is none
more significant for mental life and adjustment than memory."[35]
It is necessary that we retain experiences in order to utilize

them for later situations.  Without this power of retention,
learning would always be a beginning without development.

As the teen-ager soon finds out, there is a difference
between the memory he once used as a child and the power he
now possesses.  In the case of the former it was nothing but a
word for word memorizing.  His memory now begins to take on
intellectual aspects.  He no longer only retains, recalls, or
recognizes past experiencés but he starts to relate these
experiences to one another.  His thinking becomes more abstract.
He associates concepts, terms, judgments, and inferences
through an education of relationships with which he is fa-
miliar.  The memory at this stage in life is very formative
and as a result, the teen-ager's memory is sharp and subject
to deep impressions.

With this rise in his capacity of intellectual memory and
new intellectual drives, it is of little wonder that these
years produce sudden advancements in intellectual achievements.
Thus students should be made to realize that more is demanded
of them and that he must make continual adjustment.  Without
this realization, he will continue to move along as in pre-
vious years and will soon be lost, bored, and uninterested in
his advanced studies.

Closely paralled with the physical growth and memory de-
velopment is the intellectual development.  The words intell-
ect and intelligence are alike in so far as they both indicate

the capacity to think. They differ in so far as the former is one of the powers of the soul and serves to distinguish intellectual from non-intellectual beings, the latter "is an operational function in which the capacity of intellect is put to use".[36] This definition also describes thinking which involves abstraction, comparison, generalization, and judgment. But a person can have this ability and still not be intelligent. The main point of consideration is whether or not one is able to put these things to good use.

Briefly then, education is nothing more than the ultimate development of these intellectual powers. This intellectual ability will vary from one student to another; as a result education should be so set up that the capacity of the slower students is realized and the capability of the brighter ones is actualized.

Before moving on to emotional development of teen-agers, I would like to discuss the subject of critical thinking, which I consider to be lacking for the most part in high school education.

Critical thinking is the process of asking a question, surveying and evaluating a number of alternative solutions, and making a choice, at least a temporary one. Critical thinking plays an important part in the education of every student, no matter how much or how little education he gets. Educating a student is more than getting him to memorize dates,

places, and persons, which are quickly forgotten. The whole

purpose of education is to get a person to think for himself.

Students get bored day after day of just listening to

the teacher. They should be encouraged to actively partici-

pate by means of speeches, discussions or debates. Such ac-

tivities, with the teacher just supervising, can do a great

deal to inform students on these subjects, than could a one-

sided informal speech given by a teacher.

It is impossible to try and promote such a full-scale

program in many high schools, but an occassional class or two

in which the students would discuss various issues would be

very instructive, besides getting the students to conduct re-

search on their own and giving them a chance to express them-

selves.

Thus students wouldbbegin to realize that learning and

education is more than just memorizing facts and knowing

events. By doing research work and then comparing it with

other students, they would find out not only if they are right

or wrong, but they would also know why. Thus it would be an

important start in getting students to think for themselves,

a chance for them to develop their own talents and ability,

and giving them something concrete that they can carry over

into their adult life.

C) Emotional Development

Up to this point, I have attempted to clarify the mean-

ings of words that I used, when they had great bearing on my explanation. However, in treating the emotional development, I will use a different approach.

Some of our most common and familiar words or concepts are the most difficult to define. Ideas that philosophers and psychologists have difficulty agreeing on, are readily understood by the ordinary "man on the street". I consider emotion to be in this category. Not that there isn't a definition for emotion, but I feel that by talking about emotions and making minor distinctions, while treating the subject, we will be able to better our understanding of the adolescent situation.

Many times when we ask a person what he thinks about a certain topic, he begins his discourse by saying that he feels that under certain circumstances..... This substitution of feeling for thinking comes close to my understanding of emotions. "In the practical life of the average man or woman emotion is more dominant than reason."[37] Judgments are swayed, viewpoints are colored and opinions are formed from a basis that stems from emotions.

Emotions, like the physical and intellectual aspects of growing up, also develop and change, and thus present another area of worry and confusion for adolescents.

No one is born a typical coward; this and most other sentiments and emotions are acquired. Psychologists usually agree that there are three primary emotions, some will add a

fourth and most likely there are some who hold completely
opposite ideas. But ordinarily anger, fear, and love seem to
be evident in the life of the newly born, or at least "the
child is born with adequate nervous mechanism for feeling them
under appropiate stimulation."[38] The remaining emotions are
labeled as secondary.

From the years of childhood to about ten or twelve,
emotional development is noticeably slower than in the later
years, the main fact being that "There are few stimuli that
will evoke this response".[39] But as the child begins to
approach the adolescent years, response becomes more evident
from the many stimuli and situations. Hence, this period is a
transition from the simplicities of childhood to the com-
plexities of adult life.

Because of this transitional stage, the adolescent is
very unstable. As we pointed out in the previous sections,
both his physical and intellectual development bring con-
fusion and worry. His social contacts make him very sensitive
to the remarks of others. The training and experiences of
childhood also deeply influence him. All the change and de-
velopment present him with many stimuli for development of
his emotions, both for the good and bad.

Since teen-agers are very concerned about themselves as
others see them, they find it difficult not to conform to the
feelings and opinions of their peer group. Presently, this

group is their source of aid and support. Failure to go along
with the others will lead to insecurity and inadequacy.

Another support that teen-agers use to get away from the
problems of growing up is day dreaming. Because they find
some of their wishes and desires frustrated, they discover the
fulfillment of these unsatisfied desires in wishful dreaming.
It is also used as an escape from the realities of life.
Failure to measure up to ideals, to achieve new goals, to be
accepted, wanted, and loved contribute reasons why teen-agers
desire this escape.

"Ordinarily, the emotional unrest that is aroused by the
physical development is a temporary phenomenon."[40] Providing
there is intellectual assistance, teen-agers can make the
transition with some degree of confidence. Once he begins to
understand and to adjust himself to present circumstances,
many of the concerns of adolescence will be reduced and emo-
tional harmony, balance and control will become evident.

Until such a time however, it is necessary that teen-agers
have direction to aid them. "It is not enough to protect the
adolescent from harmful outside influences. He must be given
positive training in controlling his own internal impulses."[41]
He is not yet a mature adult, he needs help in understanding
his fluctuations, but he is a rational being and can be
reasoned with. Just talking over his difficulties with him
can be very helpful, even though his gratitude might not be

shown in his actions. He needs practical suggestions for controlling his emotions and understanding when he fails.

If parents and teachers really want to assist teen-agers during this period of emotional development, the biggest influence that they could give them is to show them the necessity of acquiring a tolerance of frustration. "If he can tolerate frustration, it means that he accepts the fact that disappointments are inevitable and can be faced bravely without the loss of his self-esteem."[42]

D) Personality Development

"Personality is one of the most abstract words in our language, and like any abstract word suffering from excessive use, its connotative significance is very broad, its denotative significance negligible."[43] Part of this wide connotation can be seen just in the difference in which the word person is used in various languages. In English, person signifies an individual, a human being, where as in French, personne means nobody. Thus, in order to co-ordinate such a misunderstanding of the word, it would almost be necessary to trace its history, which is outside the scope of this study.

One can see that personality is not merely a man or woman possessing moral virtues; nor is it an external manifestation of manners or traits which please or displease others. It is a combination of the two. "The scholastic philosophers define it as the individualization of a spiritual nature,

whether human or super-human." Besides being a development
of body and soul, personality is also dynamically influenced
by one's environment, which would include the home, school,
and community.

Life is most commonly considered in four stages: child-
hood, adolescence, maturity and old age. Throughout this life
span personality begins, grows, matures, and declines with ad-
vancing years. This personality development is quite apparent.

"The newborn infant lacks personality, for he has not yet
encountered the world in which he must live, and has not
developed the distinctive modes of adjustment and mastery that
will later comprise his personality." [45] At birth the child
only possesses the rudiments necessary for his continued
existence. He is entirely helpless and completely dependent
on others for his needs. It isn't long, though, before he be-
gins reacting to surrounding influences.

One of the first personality determinants that have a
bearing on the child's development is the home. There is
little doubt that the physical character and make up of the
home, such as poverty, uncleanliness,overcrowding and similar
circumstances, have an affect on the individuals involved.
However, "of more importance to development is the cultural
level of the home". [46] Such elements as the parents' education,
the father's occupation, family spirit, and social status can
contribute a great influence in the child's upbringing. Where

parents have stable characters and mature personalities, the children can't help but to acquire these to some degree.

Because the family is the childs' first contact with society, the basis of his later personality can be traced to the home. The early socialization of the child in the family can be advantageous to the child's development, or it can be a hindrance in his social adjustment.

"One of the most adverse factors which would have to be excluded from the home is domestic conflict."[47] Where hostility exists between parents, or children and parents, where family affection and understanding is lacking and confidence in one another doesn't exist, where there is jealousy, envy, or favoritism, development can be nothing but endangered. On the other hand, if there is family affection, emotional stability, a wholesome moral and religious environment and consideration for another, the child's personality will be basically sound.

As the children enter school and advance toward the teen years, other elements begin to influence his character. With these additional forces contributing intellectual development and social adjustment, youth begins to incorporate new ideas and a variety of interest to his childhood experiences. The physical and cultural composition of the community, like that of the home, has an influential bearing on the personality of youth. The size of the community, its physical condition, its mores and customs, it cultural, recreational and historical

background all influence its members for good or bad. "Of
importance also are the composition of the community and its
stability or instability."[48]

It must be remembered that although some teen-agers find
personality adjustment very easy, the large majority find some
difficulty in adapting themselves along these lines. Although
the basis for one's character is formed in childhood, formation
during adolescence can either develop childhood influences or
can produce an about-face, which can lead to one's success or
failure.

As the teen-ager approaches the adult stage, his person-
ality becomes more and more stable. However, this is a gradual,
step-by-step proceeding, and calls for more than good inten-
tions. "It envolves a detailed examination of one's manners
and mannerisms, without becoming morose, and it means a study
of the techniques of consideration for others."[49]

Because influences are varied, changes are many and the
demands are great, worry, sensitiveness, and frustration are
easy to come by. In order to combat this negative method of
trying to make social adaptation, self-discipline along with
self-control must be acquired. Together with a reasonable
self-confidence and proper guidance, teen-agers will be able
to meet the demands required of them.

IV. Ethical Principles

    A) Morality

"Morality" is an abstract term and as such is open to many connotations, which is evident from the way people loosely toss it around. Although it is a term understood by few, it is one widely used by many. Its meaning can vary from the most serious crime to a violations of one's "pet peeve".

Because this word is used with various meanings, its real import practically escapes the teen-ager's understanding. All they hear is that "this or that is immoral", "such clothes are morally offensive", or "these actions are against the moral law". These and similar phrases have little meaning to teen-agers, except that someone thinks they shouldn't be doing something that they are doing. Just what is morality?

"Morality can be defined as the science that regulates human activity in relation to its ultimate end."[50] Morality is speculative in so far as it considers universal truths, and practical by reason of its ultimate purpose. It must treat of human acts, that is, deliberate acts resulting from man's intellect and free will. "Man, because he is rational, is necessarily ordered to a last end which is the absolute good, and his changing dispositions to this end of his nature results from his human acts."[51]

Morality can be both objective and subjective. The objective morality of an act is the goodness or evil of the act

itself. In general there are three factors which determine
the objective morality of a human act: object, end, and cir-
cumstances. Subjective morality rather looks toward the im-
putability of an act than the act itself.

With these principles thus established, one is able to
conclude that the moral goodness or evil of an act is depen-
dent upon a rational creature, with circumstances taken into
account.

B) Religion

With the rise of secularism and materialism in practically
every phase of our society, religious enthusiasm seems to be
lacking, mainly on the part of the parents and consequently
on part of the children. Although the majority of children
usually receive some sort of religious instruction, a few
principles on which to base their belief, such beliefs satisfy
child curosity but hardly stimulate the interest of bright
young adolescents.

We explained earlier that teen-agers aren't as easily
convinced as they were in younger years. They begin to ques-
tion and doubt practically everything, so religious beliefs
are hardly an exception. Unless they can understand their
faith better than they did in childhood days, it doesn't serve
much of a purpose in their lives. "Because their religious
training was of a negative, restrictive character rather than
a dynamic ideals, their religion ceases to be useful or com-

forting in their expanding life."[52]

With all of the materalistic influences present to the eager adolescent as he begins forming his attitudes, personality and character, unless their religion shows them evidence of a challenge equal to their intellectual development, they can become well versed in the secularistic way of living. It is imperative that one's religious education remain abrest with one's secular learning.

Parents can give no better religious influence to their young teen-agers than by the good example of their lives, where christian charity and mutual understanding exist in the home. Henry Link, in his "Return to Religion", points out that religion based on a belief in God and the Ten Commandments give parents certainty and an authority over their children which they would otherwise lack. It is here in the home that religious questions can be brought up and discussed. If parents can be ready at all times to listen and sympathize with the doubts and religious problems of their youngsters, the religious confusion of the adolescent period can be reduced.

Besides giving spiritual formation to growing adolescents, religion has also been "a powerful factor in helping adolescents control his sex drive"[53]. Where religious motives can inspire teen-agers toward a fuller realization of the true purpose of sex, they will possess worthwhile ideals in order to

withstand modern social trends and will find a ready source of explanation to adequately answer the doubts, questions and curiosities characteristic of this period.

V. Conclusion

    A) What teen-agers seek from adults

    "The needs of the adolescent are many but they can be summarized under security."[54] This security can either be attained in the home or in society, and from the evidence that teen-agers usually begin breaking away from family life, one can see that this stability isn't found in the former. Why isn't it found in the home? Mainly because the family no long- satisfies the needs of the adolescents.

    "The home is to be defined in terms of human relation- ships."[55] The "home" becomes a "house" when necessities, neatness, size, location, luxuries and other material goods become the primary interests. Parents must realize that there is more to a home than the provision-of material needs. Personal relationships, good example, patience, guidance, and sympathic understanding existing in any home would give teen- agers all the security which they desire.

    In parents' efforts to raise their children properly, they often lose the influence that they need. They want their children to be in stride with others and to be well liked, but they give them an unrestrained freedom to do so.. "Parents who turn over to adolescents the entire conduct of their lives,

exercising no jurisdiction and no control, can scarely be surprised when the youngsters go overboard."[56] At times, one of the hardest things a parent has to do is to express the two lettered, monosylabic word "no". Teen-agers expect this setting of limits by parents, to a reasonable degree. It is the failure to take the role as disciplinarian that parents begin to lose out. "Parents have lost dignity by being our pals and buddies."[57]

"Don't" is one term that young teen-agers quidkly become accustomed to. "Don't this, don't that, don't go here, don't go there, don't, don't, don't." They are looking for something to do, someone to follow and imitate. When this "do as I say, not as I do" attitude is uttered by parents, it has little influence on teen-agers, who are guided by the "actions speak louder than words" disposition. If parents want their children to become honest, mature and well adjusted adults, the best means to accomplish this is to display these characteristics in their own persons.

Understanding and guidance are the other qualities needed by parents who desire to help their teen-agers. "How can any right-minded or sensible youngster be expected to tell what's on his mind to a parent who either is too bored to listen or belittles and ridicules what the child has to offer."[58] Sympathetic understanding of their difficulties, gives teen-agers confidence in their parents' judgments, whereas ridi-

cule hurts them deeply. Understanding the world as he sees it
will give us sufficient knowledge to assist them in their
needs, while at the same time, avoiding condemnation. Give
them reassurance in their doubts and recognition in their
deeds. Make them feel that they are individuals and respect
their right and suggestions.

Where teen-agers can find the example, guidance and under-
standing in the home; when their opinions and ideas are ob-
jectively listened to; when live, self-sacrifice, and respect
for others exists in the family; they will find the security
which they are seeking, where it should most logically be
found.

B) Final Observations

"We need to set standards of teen-agers not out of fear
of punishment or getting caught, but out of a deep conviction
that this is the right way for him to act for his own best in-
terest and the best interest of those around him."[59] The only
thing that really counts for adolescents, is how will they act
once they are away from family influence and school life,
where actions will no longer be determined by force or advice
but by personal convictions? These convictions will depend on
the teen-ager himself, whether he will continue to follow the
crowd or whether he is willing to take a stand for what he
knows to be right. This latter position depends on wether or
not the teen-ager is willing to be different, to act as an

individual in the true sense of the word by defending what he believes to be true.

When a teen-ager begins to take such a position, a concrete foundation for adult living is laid. Once he begins to express his opinions, ideas, and beliefs, his philosophy of life begins to take shape. This is why we must activate this youthful idealism. Give him a proper understanding of life and his place in it; show him the necessity of a well ordered living; encourage him to use his talents and abilities to their fullest; and instill in him deep religious and moral principles.

With such positive convictions and ideals, teen-agers will emerge from this period of adolescence lacking none of the necessities for a stable and successful role in adult society.

## FOOTNOTES

1.      Paul H. Landis, <u>Understanding Teen-Agers</u> (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1955), p. 4.

2.      <u>Idem</u>, p. 4.

3.      Douglas A. Thom, <u>Normal Youth and Its Everyday Problems</u> (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1932), p. 2.

4.      Joseph H. Fichter, S.J., <u>Sociology</u> (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957) p.270.

5.      Paul H. Landis, <u>op. cit.</u>, VI.

6.      Urban H. Fleege, S.M., <u>Self-Revelation of the Adolescent Boy</u> (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1945), p. 170.

7.      Douglas A. Thom, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 12.

8.      <u>Idem</u>, p. 12.

9.      George J. Nohr and Marian A. Despres, <u>The Stormy Decade: Adolescence</u> (New York: Random House, 1958), p. 170.

10.      <u>Idem</u>, p. 94.

11.      Lester D. Crow and Alice Crow, <u>Our Teen-Age Boys and Girls</u> (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1945), p. 1.

12.      Raphael C. McCarthy, S.J., <u>Training the Adolescent</u> (New York: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1934), p. 95.

13.      George J. Mohr and Marian A. Despres, <u>op. cit.</u>, p. 133

14.      Marynia F. Farnham, <u>The Adolescent</u> (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1951), p. 93.

15.      Joseph L. Stone and Joseph Church, <u>Childhood and Adolescence</u> (New York: Random House, 1957) p. 288.

16.      Thorsten Sellin (ed.), <u>The Annals of The American Academy of Political and Social Science</u>, (Philadelphia: vol. 338, November, 1961) p. VIII.

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18.      A. B. Hollingshead, <u>Elmtown's Youth</u> (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1949), p. 398.

19.      Milton Lomask, "The Teen-Age Romance With Cars" <u>Sign</u>, 40 (September, 1960) 12.

20.      George Gallup and Evan Hill, "Youth", <u>Post</u>, (December 30, 1961) p. 72.

21.      <u>Idem</u>, p. 72.

22.      Thorsten Sellin, <u>op. cit</u>., p. 5.

23.      <u>Idem</u>, p. 7.

24.      George J. Mohr and Marian A. Despres, <u>op. cit</u>., p. 110.

25.      Paul H. Landis, <u>op. cit</u>., p. 94.

26.      Paul H. Landis, <u>Adolescent and Youth</u> (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1945) p. 183.

27.      Thorsten Sellin, <u>op. cit</u>., p. 1.

28.      Alexander A. Schneiders, <u>The Psychology of Adolescence</u> (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1951) p. 53.

29.      <u>Idem</u>, p. 54.

30.      Raphael C. McCarthy, S.J., <u>op. cit</u>., p. 10.

31.      <u>Idem</u>, p. 10.

32.      Alexander A. Schneiders, <u>op. cit</u>., p. 504.

33.      Raphael C. McCarthy, S.J., <u>op. cit</u>., p. 32.

34.      Frederick Tracy, <u>The Psychology of Adolescence</u> (New York: The MacMillian Company, 1926) p. 96.

35.      Alexander A. Schneiders, <u>op. cit</u>., p. 466.

36.      <u>Idem</u>, p. 474.

37.  Raphael C. McCarthy, S.J., op. cit., p. 50.

38.  Idem, p. 54.

39.  Alexander A. Schneiders, op. cit., p. 315.

40.  Raphael C. McCarthy, op. cit., p. 61.

41.  Idem, p. 61.

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45.  Gordon W. Allport, op. cit., p. 107.

46.  Alexander A. Schneiders, op. cit., p. 395.

47.  Alexander A. Schneiders, Personality Development and Adjustment In Adolescence (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1960) p. 404.

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49.  Theodore Vittoria, S.S.P., op. cit., p. 66.

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54.  Marynia Farnham, op. cit., p. 82.

55.  Paul H. Landis, Adolescent and Youth (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1945) p. 255.

56.     Marynia F. Farnham, op. cit., p. 132.

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58.     Marynia F. Farnham, op. cit., p. 39.

59.     Paul H. Landis, Understanding Teen-Agers (New York:
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