Adolescence: Gateway to Androgyny

Jacquelynne E. Parsons and James Bryan

University of Michigan

As concern over traditional sex-role identity has increased, there has been a growth in alternative theoretical views; androgyny being the most prominent. Several models of androgyny have been proposed, e.g., Bem (1976b), Spence, Helmreich, & Stapp (1974) and Rebecca, Hefner, & Oleshansky, (1976). In each of these models, androgyny or sex-role transcendence is assumed to be the preferred state over the more traditional sex-typed identity and role structure. Empirical evidence supports this value judgment. Androgynous adults are psychologically healthier than sex-stereotypic adults (Bem, 1975, 1976; Spence & Helmreich, 1977). In our complex culture, then, the costs of following traditional roles now appear to exceed the rewards of functional efficiency and easy-to-grasp sexual identity. But not all individuals become androgynous, and in fact the majority of people never realize their full potential. Kohlberg and Gilligan (1971) noted that both moral progression and ego progression could be absent in persons apparently stagnated at the conventional and non-questioning stage of identity. Further, Ponzo and Strowig, (1973) found that high school girls may have more difficulty making the transition than high school boys.

Why do some individuals stagnate and under what conditions will an individual's identity continue to develop towards androgyny? It is to these questions that this paper is addressed.

In order to describe how sex-roles develop—let alone speculate as to what factors may be necessary to insure optimal development—we must first review briefly the function of traditional sex roles and discuss the interaction of the individual and society in the process of sex-role acquisition and change. This goal is accomplished in the first section. In the second section, relevant models of social development are discussed. From these models, hypotheses regarding age/limitations on development are generated. Extensions of these models to sex-role development are reviewed in section three. In the final section, the social psychological perspective outlined in section 1 and the developmental perspectives outlined in section 2 are integrated into a model of sex-role development that focuses primarily on identifying the characteristics of the developing individual and social environments that influence growth toward androgyny.

Traditional Sex-Role Identity.

Sex-roles are based on the assignment of duties according to theoretically different but complementary clusters of traits and interest patterns commonly labelled masculinity and femininity. The "masculine" cluster refers to several related traits and roles: what Bakan (1966) calls "agency", i.e., an orientation toward oneself as
an individual against the world, a concern with self-protection, self-assertion, and self-expansion; and what Parsons & Bales (1955) label instrumental competence, i.e., an instrumental orientation, a cognitive focus on getting the job done or the problem solved with the greatest possible utility and efficiency. The essence of "femininity" has been described by Bakan as a "communal" orientation towards self, as being at one with the larger social organism, as an affective caring concern for others and for social relationships, and as an expressive sense of feeling and nurturance. Parsons & Bales (1955) equated this cluster with expressive competence.

Since both sets of characteristics are essential for the survival of the 'group', societies must insure themselves of the availability of both. One solution to this need has been to separate and isolate of these characteristics and sex differentiated socialization of the associated values and goals. A traditional system of sex-role ascriptions is the consequences of this solution. These ascriptions are based upon the differences in the two realms which are assumed to be intrinsic to males and females, and which better adapt them to specific types of occupations and social roles (Holter, 1970). As a consequence of these assumptions, sex-role division is seen as both natural and functional.

These beliefs are passed along as basic components of one's indoctrination into his/her society's own cognitive orientation and system of role differentiation and assignment (Inkeles, 1968) to ultimately become "zero-order" beliefs (Bem & Bem, 1974) invisible to even the most objective visionaries. For children, motivated to seek social competence (Kohlberg, 1969), gender is among the most concrete and fundamental of social categories, and so they readily, and rigidly, pick up the particular abilities associated with sex: instrumental competence for males, and expressive competence with instrumental incompetence for females (Baumrind, 1977). And, finally, in seeking competence through social conformity, many people simply do not distinguish between the prescriptive and descriptive functions of sex stereotypes—the difference between the way things are and other ways they possibly could and perhaps should be.

This system has come about and been maintained for a variety of social, economic and political reasons. Holter (1970) notes that as one of society's functional distributive systems, sex-roles imply differentiation and specialization of particular tasks which increases overall efficiency, provided that the specialized efforts are coordinated. On an individual level, knowing one's abilities, responsibilities, and "place" on the basis of one's sex lends a great deal of structured security to that part of their
personal identity based on gender. Examples of such division of labor are common and need not be elaborated here; in general, both the efficiency and security arguments are strong. A system in which one sex specializes in caring for the children and household while the other is responsible for supporting and maintaining the family unit makes more sense "on paper" than a system in which both sexes share equally in all tasks, with less specialization and fewer clear-cut responsibilities. At least everyone knows their role and can expect to mate with someone who shares a complementary view of their own role.

Difficulties arise when individuals grow up thinking that they cannot perform the other's tasks, or express both their instrumental or expressive abilities. At a societal level such a rigid system diminishes substitutability, increases status incongruities, and limits the number of situations in which members' abilities are used to their fullest potential (Holter, 1970). But society can withstand these problems if its socialization processes are successful in filling all of its required role slots. On the individual level, however, the costs of limited potential, increased guilt and frustration, and restricted relations with others can well exceed the rewards of functional efficiency and simplified role patterns. And so, it is at the individual level that we can expect pressure for change to emerge. It is the individual who will look for alternatives to the traditional system.

Some people eventually discover that they as individuals do not fit into the normative behavioral and attitudinal categories established for them. They reach a point of cognitive and ego development at which personal competence becomes separated from, and more important than, social competence. Self-schemata (Markus, 1977) may become sex-irrelevant, e.g., may no longer rely on societal definitions of masculinity and femininity for the evaluation of one's own actions or the actions of others. While, gender identity, the personal sense of what it means to be a man or a woman, will still be an important source of self-definition, gender-role identity may not.

Reaching this level, of course, calls for a very special person in a very special set of circumstances. "Special" here refers to the unique matching between both person and circumstance antecedent to gender-role transcendence. Many potential transcendants may never face a situation in which they feel restricted; that is, the potentially restrictive environment may feel quite comfortable. The potential to change comes only when the person and the environment no longer match, creating a state of "sex-role strain" -- the state of being aware of the "discrepancies between an individual's
perceptions of her or his personal characteristics and her or his standards for herself or himself deriving from sex-role norms (Garnets & Pleck, 1977, pg. 8). This condition of "strain" or "crisis" is necessary in establishing the potential for growth, in the sense that all human development is a process of resolving such crises, of restoring synchrony between the biological, social, and psychological aspects of a whole individual (Riegel, 1975). When the balance between self and society is lost, one is motivated to restore it.

The key issue in this regard, though, is that not everyone resolves such crises (if experiencing them at all) in the same way. Depending upon the personal and situational variables leading up to the sex-role strain condition, one may indeed reject social limitations and seek personally chosen value satisfactions (e.g., to become a "liberated" woman or man) in achieving Kohlberg's "Morality of self-accepted moral principles"; one may, on the other hand, resolve the crisis in a traditional social direction by falling back even more rigidly upon a "Morality of conventional role-conformity" (e.g., to become a "Total Woman" or a "Marathon Man"). Again, the outcome depends upon both the person and their social situation. While a cultural shift away from sex-typing will encourage and validate androgyny in those so inclined, it may increase pressure and thus rigidify the traditional roles and traits for others. But even with socially restrictive or facilitative effects, the formation of androgynous traits and qualities is fundamentally an individual matter. Finding within oneself the ability to act and feel in both "masculine" and "feminine" ways, according to what one perceives as appropriate for herself/himself in a given situation, ultimately rests upon growth along underlying cognitive and ego dimensions. It is to these developmental processes that we now turn.

**Individual Development**

Development as conceptualized by Riegel (1975) progresses along four interdependent dimensions: (a) the inner-biological, (b) the individual-psychological, (c) the cultural-sociological, and (d) the outer-physical. This dialectic theory emphasized that the changing progression of events along these four dimensions is not always synchronized and that the loss of synchrony at any time in an individual's life results in conflict or crisis. Through the process of restoring the lost balance, the individual matures--is internally strengthened. Erikson (1968) described this concept of crisis not "as a threat of catastrophe, but a turning point, a crucial period of increased vulnerability and heightened potential, and therefore, the ontogenetic source of generational strength and maladjustment..."(p. 96).
Mehrabian (1968) described a cognitive-developmental approach to personality theory compatible with this view of growth through crisis resolution. He noted that little development takes place during "steady-state" cognitive functioning marked by the assimilation of information into existing cognitive schemes. Growth is catalyzed by crisis states of "cognitive inadequacy" which may involve a regression to earlier modes of functioning; these states are dominated by extremes of accommodation to novel contexts and an openness to new and alternative modes. Attempts at resolving the crisis are seen as transition states, during which the individual strives to resynchronize the situational context with a new cognitive scheme. Transition implies a movement from old, maladaptive conditions to a hierarchically superior "steady-state" which may in turn become inadequate. Transition is marked by a "healthy" balance of assimilation and accommodation and combines set ways of viewing the world with a degree of "open-mindedness".

Development through crisis formation and resolution, as we have described it, implies a hierarchy of functioning along each of the dialectical dimensions; by attaining synchrony and successfully adapting to new contexts, individuals gradually broaden their repertoire of cognitive schemas and become increasingly capable of dealing with more complex situations. The nature and direction of this sequential hierarchy has been described in similar terms by different cognitive and ego stage theorists, in particular, Kohlberg, Eriksen, and Loevinger. These theorists all describe a graduated process of inner psychological growth, mediated by an active interaction of the individual with its environment, culminating in autonomous levels of functioning in which the individual integrates once conflicting and differentiated aspects of personality to satisfy self-realized needs in various situations. Because these theorists have so directly influenced thinking about identity development, we will look to their work for insights into gender role development.

Kohlberg.

Kohlberg's (1966, 1969) model is concerned with the overriding structure of people's views—the framework of their reasoning process, the style with which they reason about moral issues and the developmental changes in these structures rather than the content of people's thoughts. According to Kohlberg, moral reasoning develops through three major stages: the preconventional, the conventional, and the post-conventional.

At the preconventional level, the child is aware of cultural
rules and labels of good and bad and right or wrong, "but interprets these labels in terms of either the physical or the hedonistic con-
sequences of action...or in terms of the physical power of those who
enunciate the rules and labels." (Kohlberg & Kramer, 1969, p. 96).
Thus right and wrong are directly related to reward and punishment.
At the conventional level, the child gains an awareness of cultural
norms and their function in maintaining social order. Further the
child has identified the social order and judges rightness and wrong-
ness in terms of conformity with social norms. At the "post-conven-
tional, autonomous or principled level" (Kohlberg & Kramer, 1969,
p. 96), individuals separate out social norms from their conception
of right and wrong. Because individuals become aware of unrealized
possibilities and of the arbitrariness of social norms, they can
develop their own moral code which is independent of the moral code
of their social group.

Kohlberg hypothesizes, based on Piagetian stage theory, that
adolescence marks the period for the transition from the conventional
to the post conventional stage. He notes that "the central phenomenon
of adolescence is the discovery of the self as something unique, un-
certain, and questioning in its position in life (1971, p. 1052)". It
is in adolescence that the individual is first capable of formulat-
ing autonomous moral principles, of reasoning in a self-sufficient
way apart from the encompassing authority of society. Since sex
trole transcendence also depends on the separation of one's identity
from one's conformity to social norms, it seems then that the transi-
tion into the post-conventional stage may have its parallel in the
transition from conformity to gender roles to androgyny.

Erikson.

Like Kohlberg, Erikson conceptualizes development as a series
of stages; each stage representing a crises created by the individual's
level of development and the socialization demands s/he faces. Opti-
mal growth depends on the successful resolution of each of these
crises. Unsuccessful resolution can lead to stagnation and a con-
tinuing functional pre-occupation with that particular level. Impor-
tant here is that this process reflects dialectical growth, in which
the individual is able to encorporate factors of lower stages into
current schema, even while forming new transcendent ones.

While Erikson posits the existence of eight stages, one in
particular seems relevant for our understanding of sex-role develop-
ment: Identity vs. Role Confusion. It is during this stage that the
individual can develop, potentially, a stable self-schemata that will
guide subsequent role choices and goals. Central to this process will
be the individual's resolution of sex-role identity. To the extent
that sex-role definitions are incorporated into one's self-schemata,
then one's sex-role identity will be stereotyped. To the extent that the individual does not rely on societal definitions of appropriate identities, the individual may move away from a stereotyped sex-role identity.

What is important to note about Erikson's model is that it does predict a crisis around identity formation. Furthermore, he suggests a timetable for the emergence of this crisis. Like Kohlberg, he comes to focus on adolescence as the life period during which the opportunity for the development of individual identity arises. Thus, adolescence has been earmarked as the crucial turning point in autonomous development by both the cognitive-developmental and the psycho-social theoretical camps.

Is there any evidence that these two processes do emerge in an interactive fashion? That is, is it true that identity formation and moral reasoning move toward autonomy and integration and away from conformity in synchrony? Podd (1972) attempted to answer this question by relating the constructs of ego-identity and cognitive/moral stages through a series of interviews with male college juniors and seniors. Ego-identity status was operationally defined according to Erikson's criteria of ego development: (1) identity achievement--has gone through a crisis and is committed; (2) moratorium--is in crisis with vague commitments; (3) foreclosure--has experienced no crisis, but is committed to goals and values of parents of significant others; (4) identity diffusion--has no commitment regardless of crisis. Cognitive development was defined in terms of the six moral stages. About two thirds of the "morally principled" subjects were described as having achieved a mature identity status. However, subjects transitional in identity formation were also transitional with respect to moral orientation; none of the morally transitional subjects had an identity achievement status, and very few had foreclosed identity questioning (Kohlberg, and Gilligan).

undergoing an identity crisis were found to be unstable and inconsistent in their moral reasoning"(Podd, 1972, p. 497). In general, then, these results support an analogy between identity status and moral thinking.

In summary, after emphasizing the theoretical orientation differences between his model and that of ego-development, Kohlberg (1973) acknowledged their similarities in noting that all people moving to principled morality would be expected to go through the ego-identity progression. Identity development, though, is viewed as a contribution rather than primary factor in cognitive development: "While necessary, Eriksonean stage progression would be far from sufficient to produce principled morality"(Kohlberg, 1973, p. 199). Still, he proposes the loose matching between stages presented in
Table 1.

Loevinger's (1966, 1976) stage model of ego-development is similar to the models of both Kohlberg and Erikson, as presented in Table 1. Her formulation of the direction which development may take is strikingly similar to the others' in terms of changes in conception of norms, of values, of role-taking, and of self—all of which are encompassed by her concept of ego—"the unity of the personality, individuality, method of facing problems, opinion about oneself and the problems of life, whole attitude to life, and schema of life," (1976, p. 9). Her stage approach is compatible with the other models employed in our investigation in that it is characterized by the same assumptions: an invariant hierarchical sequence of irreversible structural and qualitative change. Further, these stages imply a discontinuity in the progression marked by particular turning points she calls "milestones", and which she uses to characterize each step in the sequence. (Loevinger, 1966, 1976). Moving from milestone to milestone involves a dialectical process and thus we must interpret it in terms of all the interacting dimensions as they each go from change to constancy. Finally, her model also points to adolescence as an important period for the movement away from a conforming ego identity.

Loevinger's content area of ego development is more directly related to the development of gender-role identity than is either Kohlberg's or Erikson's model. However, though stressing the importance of change, she--like Kohlberg--has not really told us much about the nature of these transitions, what takes place during them, and why. Both the Loevinger and Kohlberg models present a logical sequence of stages that are assumed to emerge in a socio-cultural vacuum. That is, they are an idealized sequence. Little attention is given to the socio-cultural effects on the sequencing and on the final stage of development each individual reaches. Given that, adolescence takes place in a highly charged socio-cultural milieu and that gender-roles to a large extent, lie at the heart of that milieu, the extension of these models the development of gender role identity needs to be evaluated very carefully.

In conclusion, then, each of these models points to adolescence as a key period in the developmental time table. The importance of adolescence is made even more salient if one assesses it within the context of Riegel's dialectical model. Viewed from this crisis...
resolution model, adolescence has to be seen as a period in which the simultaneous changes occurring in all levels creates a stage with great potential for rapid growth. On the inner-biological level, adolescence begins with the first glimmers of puberty. Among the many other rapid physiological changes of this period, the appearance of secondary sex characteristics and the maturation of the primary sex organs transform the young adolescent into a fully sexual being; it is in adolescence that the power to have sex emerges most dramatically to influence thoughts and to direct purposive behaviors (Sorenson, 1973). As with other aspects of growth, the development of sexuality is a many-faceted jewel, each side a different perspective, a different way of looking at the matter. With sexuality, strong and distinct conflicts between viewpoints produce some of the greatest ambivalences in the emerging adult.

On the individual-psychological level, sexuality becomes a social and moral conflict between what is proper and improper for the expression of these powerful biological drives and what constitutes meaningful, honest human relationships. Synchrony is lost as the person becomes physically mature before becoming emotionally capable of handling the related psychological issues. In gradually resolving this crisis, adolescents strive toward a renewed balance between their sensual desires, their need to establish personal relationships, and their moral principles. In this process, they may accommodate the social ascriptions of others and turn strongly to their peer group both to obtain and to evaluate norms. In seeking a personally autonomous viewpoint they don't disregard the morality of their parents so much as deem it less relevant to a world in which their parents are no longer central. Peers may become the more important, more compelling, and more "real" influence in the building of an individual adaptive schema, (Kohlberg, & Gilligan, 1971; Matteson, 1975).

Adolescent adaptation in the context of sexuality expands beyond peer-group society into the perceived cultural milieu. Adolescents are concerned with shaping their rapidly developing identity into a socially acceptable role. On the socio-cultural level, then, gender role surfaces as a major determinant of acceptability during this period. The influence of gender-role on lifestyle includes beliefs about how one "should" walk, talk, shake hands, eat, dress, laugh, cry, compete, work...and even think, judged according to their conception of what is "appropriate" for a man or woman. For the adolescent, placing one's own sense of a physical male or female body into what is perceived as a socially acceptable package is what developing gender role identity is all about. That society's ideal
of masculine and feminine traits may not apply to what the individual ultimately wishes to make of herself is a discovery that may or may not come with further maturation and identity development.

Extending the dialectic interpretation, all the many sides of the adolescent's evolving identity are shaped by the sociocultural context, and the importance of these socio-cultural factors has been well noted. Kohlberg (1968) provides an example of cultural limitations on cognitive growth in his work on individual's understanding of the nature of dreams. Studies of political socialization have shown that major transgenerational shifts in political attitude change comes about when adolescents are placed in a socio-cultural environment which confronts them with new beliefs and provides normative support for that attitude change (Sears, 1969). Thus it is clear that the socio-cultural milieu in which adolescent growth takes place will influence directly the course of that development.

At a still higher level, the socio-cultural milieu of adolescence also has an indirect long range impact on development. Our complex society places heavy consequences upon the wide variety of choices adolescents must make about their lives. Significant choices have to be made -- choices which will lay out the direction of one's future life. Adolescents must make their choices regarding marriage, career, a moral code, and perhaps a political ideology, all of which help form their adult social cohort group. And because these decisions indirectly influence an individual's adult socio-cultural milieu, life choices and new attitudes tend to become permanent throughout the adult years. (Newcomb et al., 1967; Rogers, 1972). All in all, then the dialectical products of adolescence are decisive in forming and shaping the adult-to-be and in providing the impetus to growth beyond the level of conformity.

Sex-Role Development

As we have seen, the theoretical similarities between the cognitive- and ego-developmental approaches to adolescent growth and psychological maturity are quite striking. Each has presented a model of development which characterizes the individual as moving from a pre-adolescent orientation to avoiding punishment and gratifying impulses as the basic criteria of morality; through a rigid conformity to and defense of perceived societal norms; through a questioning period of ambivalence and conflict between once-accepted norms and new self-evolved beliefs; to an integrated level of resolution, identity, and self-accepted moral principles.

Pleck (1975) and others (e.g., Rebecca, Hefner, & Oleshansky, 1976) have noted that these general processes should influence sex-
role development. Empirical data has supported the utility of an extension of a cognitive-developmental model to the development of gender role identity. Let us review briefly this empirical base and then return to the models that have emerged recently.

Haan, Smith, and Block (1968) evaluated the adjective Q-sort self-descriptions of male and female college students across the levels of moral reasoning to see if individuals at higher levels of cognitive-moral maturity were more androgynous; that is, described themselves in both agentic and communion terms; they did. The adjectives characteristic of both men and women at a premoral, opportunistic level showed little differentiation and were essentially agentic. Subjects on a conventional level chose adjectives stressing conformity to the social order. On post-conventional levels, males were found to endorse more communal—but not fewer agentic self-descriptions, while females showed a greater acceptance of agentic—in addition to communal adjectives.

In a similar study based upon level of ego maturity as measured by Loevinger's (1970) Sentence Completion index method the same pattern emerged (Block, 1973). Impulse-ridden high-school males and females concerned with the instrumental satisfaction of personal needs described themselves in agentic terms. At a conformity level, males and females consistently differentiated themselves along stereotyped lines. And at the highest measurable level in the sample of high-school students, once rigidly agentic males endorsed "idealistic," "sensitive," and "sympathetic" qualities. Young women also showed clear signs of mediating their conventional community—"sensitive," "altruistic"—with agency—"self-centered," "restless," "effective." As Block (1973) summarized, "These data lend some support, stronger in the case of males than females, to the hypothesis that greater maturity is accompanied by more androgynous, less sex-typed definitions of self" (p. 521).

Extensions of Developmental Models.

Two groups of individuals have proposed new stage models of sex-role development: Pleck (1975) and Rebecca, and her associates (1976a, 1976b, 1978). Four individuals have extended either Kohlberg's or Loevinger's model of development to sex-role development: Kohlberg, David (1966); Ullian, 1976; Parsons, 1978; and Block, 1973. Both Kohlberg (1966) and Parsons (1978) focused, for the most part, on early childhood and therefore will not be discussed. Each of the other models will be reviewed briefly, focusing attention, where relevant, to their discussion of adolescent period.

Pleck. In one of the first published developmental models of androgynous sex-role development, Pleck outlined three stages of
growth, noted the link between sex-role development and pointed out the concern as to whether all individuals will continue to grow into the third and final stage of androgyny. To quote:

...in the first phase of sex role development, the child has amorphous and unorganized sex role concepts, including confusion over the child's own gender. In the second phase children learn the "rules" of sex role differentiation and are motivated to make others and themselves conform to them. Such learning represents a great cognitive advance beyond the earlier stage, but in this intermediate stage persons are most rigid and intolerant of deviations from sex-role norms in themselves and others. In the third and final stage of sex role development, individuals transcend these sex role norms and boundaries, and develop psychological androgyny in accordance with their inner needs and temperaments.

...The analogy drawn here between masculinity-femininity development and moral development suggests that though there is a developmental phase of traditional masculinity-femininity development, peaking in early adolescence, its role in the life cycle is limited. The great risk in development is not that persons may fail to reach this stage, but that they may never leave it (pp. 172-173).

Rebecca, Oleshansky, Hefner & Nordin. Becoming dissatisfied with androgynous models and with the oversimplification of the gender role differentiated period, Rebecca, et al. have modified the basic Pleck model. Their new model adds an additional stage to the developmental sequence: sex-role transcendence. It also divides up the hyper-differentiated phase into three periods: a transitional period in

Insert Table 2

in which sex-role schemata are not yet rigid cognitive structures motivating behavioral compliance; a solidified period in which sex-role schemata have become rigid standards for self evaluation; and a second transitional period in which sex-role schemata lose their prescriptive function allowing the individual greater behavioral latitude.

Rebecca et al. argue that development will not necessarily reflect a linear progression from undifferentiated to differentiated to undifferentiated and point out the importance of the social milieu
in determining changes in the rigidity of one's sex-role schemata. Furthermore, they note the importance of the early adolescent subculture in producing an increase in the rigidity of the sex-role schemata during Stage II B. Their stress on the role of social forces in interaction with individual development provides one of the first clear articulations of the processes that may accelerate or impede sex-role development.

Ulivan. Using a clinical interview format similar to that used by Kohlberg in devising his model of moral development, Ulivan asked 70 boys and girls ranging in age from 6 to 18 about their gender role conceptualizations. She predicted (1) that there would be "age related changes in the mode of conceptualizing male and female differences," resulting from cognitive and social development; (2) that it is necessary to distinguish between the descriptive and prescriptive functions of sex-role judgments in tracing the developmental shifts in these judgments; and (3) that sex-role development can proceed through a stage of social conformity to a stage analogous to "androgyny." Based on her interviews she suggested the developmental stage model summarized in Table 2.

Block. Block (1973) has placed Loevinger's model in tabular form, and extrapolated it to include the person's conceptions of sex-role at each stage (See Table 2). Since we are primarily interested in adolescence we will focus in on Block's discussion of the passage from the conformity to integrated stage.

According to Block, conforming individuals are most concerned with accepting the ways of their social order first, and understanding them later. Thus their behavior is influenced by the prescriptive function of sex-role stereotypes. At the conscientious level, the individual is more concerned with the growing differences between these traditional sex-roles and their changing set of values. Block (1973) explains that at this level:

...a self-conscious process of evaluating oneself relative to one's own internalized values and the prevailing expectations of the culture begins. Awareness of the deviance of one's own values from the societal values appears and both are examined critically.

This, I propose, is the beginning of the process of balancing agency and communion that will occupy the individual through the autonomous level as he attempts to cope with the competing demands and costs of agency and communion. This process will,
for some individuals, ultimately eventuate in the integration of the two modalities in the highest developmental stage (p. 515).

The autonomous stage is a time of continuing attempts to resolve the questions, conflicts, and crises which originated in the conscientious period. The individual is headed toward a resolution which can create the integrated morality of self-chosen values. But autonomy is the transition period; if conscientious thought brings Kohlberg's conventional stage to a close, then autonomy is the beginning of post-conventional principles.

Upon reaching the integrated stage, the person has achieved that independent, transcendent state which is by now quite familiar to us. We have approached it from several directions; we have characterized it as the ultimate resolution of one's identity crisis, the achievement of truly post-conventional thought, and the androgynous union of masculinity and femininity—the balance of agency and communion as Block has described it.

As with the models from which they grew, these extensions, with the exception of Rebecca et al., have understated the importance of the vast array of socio-cultural forces that are impinging on the adolescent and have not dealt sufficiently with the period of transition and the forces that must be present to insure "successful" development to a "higher" stage.

Cognitive and ego-developmental stage theories describe the optimal pattern for development. Cognitive maturational changes may be necessary for the emergence of an androgynous gender role identity: but are they sufficient? A dialectical analysis suggests not. Growth and development depends upon several factors: maturational change being only one. While one's cognitive maturity may make sex-role transcendence a possibility, cognitive growth on the content level depends on the availability of "discrepant" input which would lead to accommodation of existing stereotypic schemata. In addition, behavioral rewards and punishments must be such that sex-role transcendence is a better alternative for the adolescent than sex-role conformity. If sex-role transcendence does not offer an attractive alternative, or if the adolescent sees no conflict between his own abilities and goals and the behaviors and goals prescribed by a stereotypic gender-role, or if the stereotypic gender role is not important to the individual, then no conflict will be engendered and growth will be delayed. Again, socio-cultural factors influence the likelihood of each of these events. As such, they must be key factors in one's development toward sex-role transcendence.
Give both the theoretical arguments presented above and the supporting empirical evidence, it is surprising that more attention has not been given to the issue of transition from a conventional sex-role identity to sex role transcendence and to socio-cultural factors that influence transition. It is to these issues that our model is addressed.

Parsons and Bryan

We propose a stage model of sex-role development which is similar in format to those of Kohlberg (1966), Block (1973), Pleck (1975), Rebecca, et al. (1976, 1978) and Ullian (1976). Our thinking has been influenced by the works of Piaget, Kohlberg and Loevinger, by the dialectical proposition espoused by Riegel and by the work in social psychology stressing the importance of the social context both as a precursor of change and as the environmental factor which supports change once it has occurred. Consequently, we stress the importance of questioning, self-evaluation, conflict and the importance of the socio-cultural milieu in which the adolescent is growing. We have focused on adolescence as a period of transition and have highlighted the mechanisms that influence this transitional process. To date, these processes have been under-emphasized in models which jump in their analyses from conforming to self-principled cognitive functions.

Our model is built on the following assumptions:

1) Growth is multiply determined and is based on a conflict between the various forces impinging on an individual across the life span. While not exhaustive, the forces suggested by Riegel and enumerated in our introduction are key to understanding development.

2) Adolescence is a period in which the following three forces are almost inevitably in conflict: biological (both cognitive and sexual maturation), psychological (emotional and moral) and socio-cultural. It is also a period in which adult social roles are still being chosen and therefore, one's future life is still flexible. Consequently, it is likely to be the period best suited for the development of sex-role transcendence.

3) The relationship between socio-cultural milieu and development is interactive; that is, while the socio-cultural milieu influences development, one's developmental level also influences the socio-cultural milieu to which one is exposed. As a consequence, large scale change can be produced and, in many cases, may depend on externally induced political-historical changes, which change the individual's immediate socio-cultural milieu in a way that may initiate a conflict between that milieu and the individual's
psychological frame (or in this case one's gender-role identity).

4) Because so many forces influence development, the surface manifestations of growth will be much less regular than suggested by either the cognitive/developmental or the ego-development theorists. For example, with the potential for change comes the potential for regression to early modes of thought, especially at periods of transition (Mehrabian, 1968).

5) Growth depends on a socio-cultural milieu that provides both the basis for conflict to emerge and the supports for growth to a higher level of development.

6) The potential for growth, once it has emerged continues to be present despite apparent rigidification of the system. That is, growth potential, while optimal in adolescence, is not lost once one enters "adulthood". Continued adult development is inhibited more by the rigidity of the social roles one finds oneself in than by the passage to another developmental stage. Consequently, major shifts in social roles, like the children leaving home, can be expected to have an impact on gender role identity somewhat comparable to impact of adolescence. The outcome of this renewed crisis will depend again on the individual's socio-cultural milieu at the time of the crisis.

7) Growth toward sex-role transcendence depends on the following psychological shifts:
   a - The differentiation of gender identity from gender role identity;
   b - The differentiation of the descriptive and prescriptive functions of stereotypes;
   c - The questioning of the validity of the prescriptive functions of stereotypes for both the individual and for society at large.
   d - The reduction of gender-role salience as a defining property of one's ego identity (see Garnets and Pleck, in press).

Based on these assumptions and on the issues discussed up to this point, we have developed the following model of gender role development.

Stage I - Undifferentiated gender roles - (0-2 1/2) - The child is unaware of gender as a social category, and has not learned or developed sex-role stereotypes.

Stage II - Hyper-gender-role differentiation (3-7) - Gender becomes a social category; rigid stereotyping of activities, dress,
social roles and some personal characteristic such as strength and power emerge. Gender-role conceptualizations are both descriptive and prescriptive and the distinction between gender identity and gender role identity is not clear. But, because preschoolers do not integrate their cognitive beliefs with their behavior, sex differences in behavior will not be as great as one would expect based on the rigidity and the prescriptive nature of their gender role conceptualizations.

Stage III - Gender role differentiation (7-11). Cognitive maturation has laid the groundwork for the differentiation of gender identity from gender role identity. The child is now capable of separating external manifestations and changes from internal stable constructs like gender identity. Consequently, the child comes to realize that girls and boys can do many different things without altering their gender. But the emergence of conventional moral thought and a growing awareness of social roles leads the child to maintain his belief in the prescriptive nature of stereotypes. For boys, this belief is reinforced not only by their peers' and parents' reactions to feminine sex stereotyped behavior but also by the cultural value structure. Boys' stereotypic behaviors are both more fun and more prestigious. For girls, however, adherence to the female stereotype is neither as fun nor as prestigious and counter sex behavior is less likely to be punished. Consequently, conflict is created for them and the socio-cultural environment is supportive of alternative behavioral solutions. Girls should then begin questioning the prescriptive nature of gender roles during this period and may begin to move towards androgyny.

Stage IV - Transition Phase I (12-14). Cognitive maturation has now opened the possibility of considering a new social order and of distinguishing between the descriptive and prescriptive functions of gender role stereotypes. Major socio-cultural and physiological changes are also taking place. The child is expected to become a sexual being and to begin relating to members of the opposite sex. The basis for social approval and popularity shifts from acceptance by one's own sex peer group to acceptance by both sex peer groups. To the extent that one's self esteem becomes tied to this newly emerging social system, an identity crisis will be induced by the need to acquire, rapidly, the behaviors necessary for acceptance by the opposite sex. Given the absence of clear models of behavioral alternatives, the lack of sophistication of the peer group and the link of social acceptance to gender roles, early adolescents may well "regress" to gender role conceptualizations they had formed during Stage II and Stage III. Thus, despite the cognitive capacity to transcend the prescriptive function of stereotypes,
socio-cultural forces may produce a rigidification of stereotypes and a re-emergence of a confusion between gender identity and gender role identity. This process should be especially evident in the adolescents who place great importance on social success with their opposite sex peers. Since many females perceive their primary role in life to be that of wife and mother, they are particularly likely to fall into that group of adolescents for whom gender role salience (see Garnets and Pleck, in press) is high.

Stage IV - Transition: Phase II (15-18). The adolescents have established a more stable place in their peer culture and should have worked through some of the conflicts generated in Phase I. The need to solidify life plans introduces the potential for a careful examination of who one "is" and a rethinking of one's identity. Since the necessary cognitive structures are available and social roles are still quite flexible, adolescence marks the prime opportunity for gender role transcendence. If the socio-cultural milieu provides the necessary stimuli, adolescents can transcend gender roles as one aspect of the resolution of their identity crisis. While the potential for transcendence remains with the individual throughout their lives, adult social roles selected on the basis of gender-role differentiation can effectively obstruct this developmental path.

But what are the appropriate socio-cultural stimuli and rewards? Role modeling literature suggests the importance of androgynous role models. Piagetian theory suggests discrepant information that leads to the accommodation of stereotypic schemata. Behavioristic theory and attitude change studies suggest the importance of a supportive social environment. Thus we predict that adolescents who are exposed to androgynous models, who are forced to think about the relevance of gender-role for their life decisions and who live in an "egalitarian" environment are likely to grow into gender role transcendence. Adolescents in more traditional environments with limited exposure to "egalitarian" ideas or androgynous role models will probably continue to base their behaviors on the gender role stereotypes of our society.

Stage V - Identity and Sex-role Transcendence - The ambivalences and crises of Stage IV have been resolved into an integration of masculinity and femininity which transcends sex-roles. The individual is characterized by post-conventional, self-principled thought and action. This stage essentially coincides with Stage III in the Rebecca et al. model.
As should be apparent, our model is most similar to the Rebecca et al. model. It differs primarily in the elaboration of early development, in our suggestion of at least two periods of hyper-rigidity of sex-role schemata in self identity and in our focus on the identification of the social and individual factors that impinge on the course of one's development.

Summary

The theories and research we have reviewed regarding adolescent development and sex-roles are ambitious and encouraging, but are by no means conclusive. When first examining it all, we were tantalized by the promise of specific, "real" information but were left somewhat dissatisfied when finding most of the work to be theoretical and abstract. Our appetite has been whetted, but we remain hungry for answers. Thought on each of the matters in recent years has proliferated much more rapidly than has empirical evidence, and Emmerich (1973) noted the need for and lack of research clarifying the effects of hypothesized influences. In particular, little work has been performed noting how conceptions of sex-roles change throughout adolescence, though Pleck (1975) has suggested a possible operationalization of his model (presenting sex-role dilemmas similar to Kohlberg's moral dilemma technique). We have noted, too, that most of the work comes from particular theoretical backgrounds and bears the advantages, shortcomings, and biases of its approach. The result is a current state of more controversy and confusion than clarity—but this is perhaps a necessary beginning, and the opportunities for their resolution are many and apparent.

The model of adolescent sex-role development presented here is, in substance, a synthesis of the theory and findings in an area which works around, but not specifically with our topic. In approaching it we have chosen a cognitive- and ego-developmental orientation, integrated contributory aspects of several approaches, rejected others, and have justified our choices. A gap exists in the study of sex-role development, and all of the areas surrounding it must be considered before the emerging picture can be completed.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual</td>
<td>Identity vs Isolation</td>
<td>Social Contract Legalistic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conscientious-Confidential</td>
<td>Identity vs Role Diffusion</td>
<td>Law and Order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformist</td>
<td>Industry vs Intimacy</td>
<td>Good Relations and Appraisal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Protective</td>
<td>Intimacy vs Culture</td>
<td>Native Instrumental Hedonism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impulsive</td>
<td>Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt</td>
<td>Punishment and Obedience</td>
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<td>Pre-social</td>
<td>Trust vs. Heterus</td>
<td>Pre-mortem</td>
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Table 1

Current Moral and Ego-Development Stage Models

Erikson

Kohlberg
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