Ouachita Baptist University
Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

Honors Theses

Carl Goodson Honors Program

1-1969

A Study of the Origins of Behavior Problems

Kathryn Ann Shaddox
Ouachita Baptist University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/honors_theses

Part of the Child Psychology Commons, and the Developmental Psychology Commons

A STUDY OF THE ORIGINS
OF BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS

A Paper

Presented to

the Psychology Department

Ouachita University

In Fulfillment

of the Requirements for

Special Studies H-493

---

by

Kathryn Ann Shaddox

January, 1969

Introduction

In special studies this semester I have simply began the study of adult problems arising from childhood. To do this I read several books and an occasional periodical. The following paper tends to be an overview tying together three of these books. I only made a few references to the other three mentioned in the bibliography. The content of this paper is mainly a listing of the many aspects of personality development. The first section deals generally with the developmental tasks from infancy to adulthood. The second continues with the behavior problems of children who have failed to succeed in such tasks. I then, in the third section, delve into adult problems stemming from childhood. In this way I haope to show the progression of behavioral problems expressed in some adults.

The tasks the individual must learn--the developmental tasks of life--are those things that constitute healthy and satisfactory growth in our society. They are the things a person must learn if he is to be judged and to judge himself to be a reasonably happy and successful person. A developmental task is a task which arises at or about a certain period in the life of the individual, successful achievement of which leads to his happiness and to success with later tasks, while failure leads to unhappiness in the individual, disapproval by the society, and difficulty with later tasks.

As the individual grows, he finds himself possessed of new physical and psychological resources. Along with them he finds himself facing new demands and expectations from the society around him. These inner and outer forces contrive to set for the individual a series of developmental tasks which must be mastered if he is to be a successful human being. Some tasks arise mainly from physical maturation. Other tasks arise from the cultural pressure of society. Also, there is a third source of developmental tasks--namely the personal values and aspirations of the individual, which are part of his personality or self. The personality, or self, emerges from the interaction of organic and environmental forces. Thus developmental tasks may arise from physical maturation, from the pressure of cultural processes

upon the individual, from the desires, aspirations, and values
of the personality, and they arise in most cases from combinations
of these factors acting together. The number of developmental
tasks is domewhat arbitrary, since it depends both upon the
biosocial realities out of which the tasks arise and upon the
refinement of analysis made by the writer.

Infancy and Early Childhood

This section, and the following ones, will list the
principal developmental tasks of the different age groups.
However, I will only discuss the ones I feel are pertinent to
this paper.

1. Learning to Walk

2. Learning to Take Solid Foods

3. Learning to Talk

There are two possible explanations of how babies acquire
the ability to talk, in the human sense. One is that the infant
begins by accidentally uttering a variety of meaningless sounds.
From these, the people around him select certain ones to repeat
regularly in certain situations, until the child learns to asso-
ciate certain sounds with certain situations. The r'val explana-
tion of the first stage of speech development is based on the
theory that the infant's earliest utterances are not accidental,
but have meaning to him, because they express his feelings. The
two theories agree to this extent, namely that the human infant
develops a repertory of speech-sounds without having to learns

them, and that the people around him teach him to attach certain
meanings to these sounds. The child begins to get the central
idea of language that a word stands for something--and to gain
his own repertory of sounds to draw from in fashioning words.
The time from eighteen months to four or five years is the period
of baby-talk, when the child tries, with the aid of his own
repertory, to say everything he hears, and slowly adds new sounds
under the pressure of social reward and social punishment. There
is evidence of a period of speech readiness at the onset of which
and some months following, spoken language may be most readily
acquired by the child. If speech is not earned during this period,
the child is apt to become emotionally disturbed. Speech becomes
increasingly a means of expressing feelings, and a child with
delayed or inadequate means of expressing his feelings may become
maladjusted for this reason.[1]

4. Learning to Control the Elimination of Body Wastes

The child can be regarded as trained for toilet habits
when he recognizes the need to urinate or defecate and has voluntary
control over these acts, and to accept responsibility for
keeping himself clean and dry. Attempts to train the child
before two years of age occasionally succed through the establish-
ment of conditioning. But these attempts fail to teach the child
the meaning of toilet training as a social habit. Early training
requires great effort on the part of parents and a good deal
of systematic training, before the child can grasp the

meaning and social moral training that the child receives. The
stamp of this first moral training probably persists in the
child's later character.

     5. Learning Sex Differences and Sexual Modesty

     6. Achieving Physiological Stability

     7. Froming Simple Concepts of Social and Physical Realiy

     8. Learning to Relate Oneself Emotionality to Parents,
Siblings, and Other People

Through gestures of various kihds culminating in language
the young child learns to share some of his experience with
other people. With the aid of language he puts himself in the
place of others. He learns the habits of unconscious imitation
of parents and older brothers and sisters and of others in posi-
tions of prestige. He learns the process of identifying himself
with other people, especially his parents. The way he achieves
this taskof relating himself emotionally to other people will
have a large part in determining whether he will be friendly or
cold, outgoing or introversive, in his social relations in life.[2]

     9. Learning to Distinguish Right and Wrong and Developing
a Conscience

Departing from the naive hedomism of infancy, when pleasure
is good and pain is evil, the child must learn the concepts of
good and bad, and he must give content to these concepts. During
the later years of early childhood he takes into himself the
warning and punishing voices of his parents in ways that depend
upon their peculiar displays of affection and punishment toward

him. Thus he develops the bases of his conscience, upon which a later structure of values and moral character will be built.

Middle Childhood

Middle childhood is characterized by three great outward pushes, the thrust of the child out of the home and into the peer group, the physical thrust into the world of games and work requiring neuromuscular skills, and the mental thrust into the world of adult concepts, logic, symbolisms, and communication.

1. Learning Physical Skills Necessary for Ordinary Games

To learn the physical skills that are necessary for the games and physical activities that are highly valued in childhood is important to a young child. For the peer group rewards a child for sucess and punishes himeby indifference or disdain for failure in this task.

2. Building Wholesome Attitudes Toward Oneself as a Growing Organism

3. Learning to Get Along With Age-mates

The child moves out from the family circle into the world of his age-mates at the beginning of middle childhood. This is a move from a situation in which the child gets emotional security by his close relation with his mother and other family members into a new world where he must make a place for himself among a group of age-mates or peers all more or less competing for the attention of one mother person or father person--the teacher or adult supervisor. The child must learn to get more and more satisfaction from his social life with age-mates.[3]

This is really the process of learning a social personality
or acquiring social stimulus value. The child learns ways of
approaching strangers, shy or bold, stand-offish or friendly.
He learns how to treat friends. He learns what it means to play
fair in games. Once he has learned these social habits, he tends
to continue throughout life, unless there is a great pressure
of some kind to change them.

    4. Learning an Appropriate Masculine or Feminine Social
       Role

The psychological basis for this task is laid in the
family, where boy babies are taught to behave like boys, and
girl babies like girls. These teachings are re-enforced by the
psychological identification which the child usually makes with
the parent of the same sex in early childhood.

    5. Developing Fundamental Skills in Reading, Writing,
       and Calculating.

    6. Developing Concepts Necessary for Everyday Living.

    7. Developing Conscience, Morality, and Scale of Values

The child at birth has no conscience and no scale of
values. The principal values for him are food and warmth.
Gradually he learns values and is taught to distinguish good
from bad. The basis of conscience is probably the punishing
acts of the parents combined with their love and reward for the
child and the child's love and dependence on them.[4] Through the
process of identification with parents or taking the role of the
parents, the child develops within himself the warning and

punishing voice of conscience. From this time on he carries with him a moral controlling force where@@ver he goes. Morality, or respect for rules of behavior, is imposed on the child first by the parents. Later, according to Piaget, the child learns that rules are necessary and useful to the conduct of any social enterprise. Piaget believes that middle childhood is the crucial period for learning the morality of cooperation.

8. Achieving Personal Independence

The young child has become physically independent of parents but remains emotionally dependent on them. Then, gradually, during middle childhood, it dawns on the child that his parents and his teachers are not infallable, they can be wrong, or they can be ignorant. The child himself may know some facts better than they do. He begins to develop his own independent store of knowledge, and with knowledge comes a certain degree of authority to make choices for himself. Success in the world of his peers also helps the child to become independent of adults. The peer world supports him and gives him an opportunity to make plans and decisions that do not concern his parents. Independence from adults grows slowly and is by no means complete at the end of middle childhood. It comes first in the choice of things around the home. Then it extends to choice of friends and places of play.

9. Developing Attitudes Toward Social Groups and Institutions

Attitudes or emotionalized dispositions to act, are
learned in three ways: 1. by imitation of people with prestige
in the eyes of the learner, 2. by collection and combination of
pleasant or unpleasant experiences associated with a given
object or situation, and 3. by a single deeply emotional exper-
ience--pleasant or unpleasant-associated with a given object or
situation. Middle childhood is the period when the basic social
attitudes are learned, such as attitudes toward religion, toward
social groups, toward political and economic groups. These
attitudes may be changed by later experience, but they do not
change easily. Once, the child has a store of social attitudes,
there little reason for to change them. He knows how to act,
what discriminations to make, what people to favor and whom to
disfavor. Unless he finds these attitudes to be grossly unpop-
ular as he grows, or to get him into difficulties, he is likely
to retain them through life.

Adolescence

Adolescence is the time of physical and emotional
maturing. It includes the ages from twelve to eighteen and
is the period I shall discuss in this section.

1. Achieving New and More Mature Relations With Age-Mates
of Both Sexes

2. Achieving A Masculine or Feminine Social Role

3. Accepting One's Physique and Using The Body Effectively

4. Achieving Emotional Independence or Parents and Other
   Adults

In our society, adolescents and their parents are worried
and confused over this task. In psychological terms, we say that
they are ambivalent. Boys and girls want to grow up and be
independent, yet the adult world is strange and complicated,
causing them to wish for the continued security of parental
protection. Parents want their children to grow up, yet they are
afraid of what the world may do to innocent and inexperienced
youth. In this confused situation adolescent boys and girls
often rebel when parents assert their authority, and then become
dependent children just when parents want them to be responsible
adults. Adults who have failed in this task are dependent people
often still tied to their parents, unable to make up their minds
on important matters, unable to move about freely in our adult
society because they are still children, emotionally. Failure
in this task tends to be associated with failure in the task
of establishing adult relations with age-mates. Marriage is often
a difficult matter for such people, and successful in a limited
way only when a person finds a father-figure or a mother-figure for
a mate.5

5. Achieving Assurance of Economic Independence

6. Selecting and Preparing for an Occupation

7. Preparing for Marriage and Family Life

8. Developing Intellectual Skills and Concepts Necessary
   for Civic Competence

9. Desiring and Achieving Socially Responsible Behavior.

The process of binding an individual to his social group goes on from birth. He early learns to define his own welfare in terms of the welfare of his family, and to sacrifice certain individual pleasures for the good of the group. This process is extended steadily during childhood and adolescence. The child learns to be a participating member of his own age-group, with the give-and-take that are involved. The adolescent is ready to become affiliated with the community and the nation. Young people during late adolescence are often highly altruistic. They desire to assume social obligations. They are ready to think in terms of the good of the community and larger social groups.

10. Acquiring a Set of Values and An Ethical System as a
    Guide To Behavior

A person's values and ideals fall into a hierarchy, and a scale of values emerges as the child becomes an adolescent and the adolescent becomes a man. The primary values are patterned and channeled into a host of derivative values by experience in the culture. This process of building up derivative values takes place through the agency of persons who stand in special relations to the individual. The first agent is the mother, or the person who acts as a mother. Her face and her smile, being associated with food and warmth, become values in themselves. The child learns to desire the love and attention of the mother. Later other things which win him the love and attention of his mother become values--such things as cleanliness, respect for property,

learning to talk, learning table manners, etc.

Formation of values through association of certain behavior with love or approval by the mother is the first example of a process that goes on through life. The individual desires the love and approval not only of the mother, but also of the father, teacher, other adults, and of age-mates and those slightly older than he. He learns to value the things that win him love and approval from these people. The values thus formed exist side by side with the early physiological values, and may become as deeply rooted.

Early Adulthood

Early adulthood is the most individualistic period of life and the loneliest one, in the sense that the individual, or, at the most, two individuals, must proceed with a minimum of social attention and assistance to tackle the most important tasks of life. This is a relatively unorganized period in life which marks a transition from an age-graded to a social status-graded society. During childhood and adolescence one climbs the age ladder, getting new privileges and taking on new responsibilities with each step up the ladder. This simple age-grading stops in our culture somewhere around sixteen to twenty. In the adult society prestige and power depend not so much on age as on skill and strength and wisdom, and family connections. Achieving the goals of life is not nearly so much a matter of waiting until one grows up to them as it was in the ealier years. There must be a strategy, based on an understanding of the new terrain, which

can only be got by scouting around and getting the lay of the
land for a few years. This is what young people do, and it often
takes several years to learn how to get about efficiently and to
go where one wants to go in the adult society in America.

1. Selecting a Mate

2. Learning to Live with a Marriage Partner

3. Starting a Family

4. Rearing Children

Much of the oung parents' feelings about their child will
be a reflection of their own peace of mind and harmonious adjust-
ment or lack of it. The amount and kind of attention they give
their child well tend to encourage his being warm, responsive.
and outgoing or niggardly, fearful, and cold in his relations
with others.

5. Managing a Home

6. Getting Started in an Occupation

7. Taking on Civic Responsibility

The young adult's preoccupation with the tasks of finding a
mate and getting a family started and getting started in an occup-
ation causes him to postpone the task of taking on civic responsibility.
He is too busy with his immediate personal concerns to attend to
the wider civic concerns. Furthermore, he does not yet have the
investments in the community that make him sensitive to community
needs. Not until he has children growing up. property to care
for, an income large enough for income tax, does he begin to see
that he has a stake in the quality of the civic, religious. and

political life of the community.[6]

      8. Findinf A Gongenial Social Group

Deviate behavior is the result of widely varying antecedent
consequences which produce different responses in different
individuals. To determine why a child behaves as he does, every
aspect of his life must be studied. His physical, intellectual,
and emotional assets and liabilities must be observed. The
frequency and nature of the child's daily contacts with other
children, both within and without the family, are important.
The pressures he experiences in physical, social, and intellectual
areas need to be assessed. From his earliest days the child
learns that his actions affect those of his parents; and from
their actions he draws conclusions about their attitude toward
him--conclusions which may not be correct, but upon which some
of his behavior is based. What he learns from his parents'
actions and from his own in hundreds of different situations
becomes stabilized into habitual, enduring ways of behaving.
Longitudinal studies reveal that the child shows consistency in
activity level, adaptability, intensity of reactions, responsive-
ness, mood quality, and distractibilty from pre-school days to
adulthood. Behavior becomes fixed because it provides the child
with the comfort of familiarity. Altered behavior, even though
the change is socially approved and urged by others, involves
risks, uncertainity, and a feeling of isolation for the child

because he cannot predict its effect.

In recognizing that certain habitual actions of the parent and of the child are creating problems, one needs to identify those factors in the child's life which elicit and perpetuate these actions. These determinants of behavior can be classified as objective, and therefore not subject to extensive alteration, or as interpersonal and thus controllable.

Objective Determinants

Objective determinants of the child's behavior include his individual characteristics and those of his family structure. His intelligence, physical status, ordinal position in the family, its size, and his sex direct many facets of behavior. The neighborhood in which he lives and the children available to him there affect his development. The values held by his parents direct his own attitudes and actions, and the presence of relatives in his home or near it alters his behavior. His teachers and the kind of educational experience he has, the socio-economic status of his family, and his church affiliation not only contribute to the child's estimation of others, but also present him with unsought challenges and labels.

The child learns first to live as a member of his own family. The integration of the child into his family is influenced negatively or positively by behavior determined partially by differences of sex, intelligence, and physical status. The family structure, including its size, the ordinal

position of the child, and whether he is an only child, a twin,
a step child, an adopted or illegitmate child, prejudices ⁀ ⁀⁀⁀
parental behavior and the child's concept of himself. Special
characteristics of the family, such as the presence of relative,
the family's established values and custom, and its race and
nationality, have their effect.

The sex of the child preordains him to manifest certain
abilities and liabilities, and directs him toward explicit modes
of behavior. Girls mature physically and emotionally at an
earlier age than boys. Girls find fewer problems in this area
at first. They have their mother with which to identify. The
boy may have no well-defined, continuous model to imitate and
he is less assured in his behavior. Changes occur with age,
however. In adolescence the girl begins to lose confidence.
There is a conflict in male and female roles. If the girl rejects
traditional female roles, she runs into trouble. If she tends
to reject a woman's traditional role, she often finds herself
in conflict with her mother and disturbed about the fact that
she is female. An adolescent boy is expected to control his
emotions and to behave responsibly, but if he has failed to acquire
masculine traits because of insufficient association or lack of
rapport with his father, he cannot behave in valid masculin
ways and resorts instead to experimenting with aggressive action
such as smoking, drinking, stealing, vandalism, indolence, and
disobedience.[7]

Boys find school achievement more difficult than girls do, because boys'higher metabolic rate makes them restless at the confinement school necessitates; their fine muscle coordination is poor and contributes to inefficient reading and writing; and their resistance to direction leads to clashes with their teachers. Special problems exist for the child who is the only one of his sex in a family with several children. A girl acquires the characteristics of the males, and a boy will be of the effeminate type.

On the intellectual level, children unable to achieve as well as his siblings often develop a permanent concept of themselves as intellectually inferior. Also, parents devoted to the benefits of education are keenly disappointed in the child who has only average ability and who offers no prospect of ever becoming a source of pride to them for academic achievement or professional excellence. Of course, it is easily recognized that the dull child will be left behind by his peer group. On the other hand the problems of the superior child are not so quickly seen. They may be placed in awe and therefore, have an under-developed social life.

Physically, early-maturing adolescents are more stable and better accepted by their peers than late maturing boys and girls. Constantly ill or accident ridden children, on the other hand, are considered bad luck. Accustomed to isolation, restriction, and overconcern, this child deteriorates intellectually, socially, and physically. The child who is hospitalized

for lengthy periods of time or on repeated occasions becomes
accustomed to being cared for and leading a regulated life, and
he loses initiative. Obvious physical deficiencies invite attention
from friends and strangers. Comments may be derogatory or sym-
pathetic, but all tend to single out the child as deficient and
different. Such characteristics as protruding teeth,.prominent
ears, obesity, heavy freckling, or under or over average height
cause the child to feel inferior and peculiar.

The child who is one of four or more children inevitably
receives little direct attention from his parents. he feels
unnoticed and may also grow up with too little control and guidance.
He seeks the attention he does not receive, looking for special
favors or tending to drift with sporadic flare-up attention-
getting troublemaking. There may be strenuous competition and
stern treatment especially where one child has supervision of
another. Smaller families seem to fare better. However. in
families of two, the older brother may be seclusive, anxious,
introverted, and have a serious attitude toward life. The
younger is more extroverted and optimistic.

Many feel that there is definetely relat onships between
behavior and ordinal positions. Overconcerned with the first
child parents demand perfection of himsbecause they themselves
wish to succeed in their new roles. He is expected to be an
adult long before he can handle the position. The youngest child
is often irresponsible. He lacks adequate discipline. Also,

he may develop feelings of inferiority because he feels his know-
ledge and abilities can never equal those of his siblings. The
middle child is often neglected, receiving neither the concen-
trated, erratic training of the oldest child or the favored
attention and indulgence of the youngest. His behavior may be
directed either toward pleasing the parents and offering little
resistance to them or toward personal achievement which provides
its own recognition. Some feel he is more intel'igent, fun-
loving , and less neurotic and introverted.

The only child is given excessive attention and perhaps
is resented because of it. The child is faced with managing two
adults, and he often does so with vehement demands and some
anxiety. He feels abused, no matter how reasonably he treated,
because he never hears his parents criticize or direct a sibling.
As the odd member of the family, he feels lonely. With twins
associations with one sibling can cause them to isolate themselves
from other children and therefore, not learn to adapt to their
peers. They tend to communicate entirely with each other.
Also, an inherent competition exists. Differences are noted by
everyone. In the matter of boy and girl twins, the girl matures
more rapidly and assumes dominance over her twin,

For a step-child there is more stress and ambivalence
and a lower degree of family cohesiveness. Stepdaughters
manifest more extreme reactions then stepsons. Adoptive parents
have a heavy obligation to the child entrusted to their care.
They may be lax in rearing or overly strict. And as expected

the ghost of unknowing is always there. Because of this the adopted child has moments of extreme and unique loneliness. The illegitimate child believes his existence is a mistake and his arrival was a calamity to his parents. Many times he has not been loved therefore, he finds it difficult to love. This child assumes feelings of inferiority, insecurity, isolation and reject toward others. Illegitimate girls are drawn toward repeating sexual misconduct in identifications with their mothers. [8]

Characteristics of the Family

The presence of relatives alters not amby parental practices but attitudes toward the child. The older person may make the adult feel unsure of himself. Contradictory opinions about management keep children uncertain of their own behavior and maneuvering for advantages. When criticism comes, it is likely to come in double doses. Some relatives, even though they do not share the same roof, live close enough that they can shut out persons outside the family. A child, content wirh the close relationships he has with cousins and the constant acceptability he receives from adult relatives avoids the challenge of finding a place for himself among his peers and maintains a dependent attitude toward adults outside the family.

Each family has its own values which determine int customs and emphases in living. If the child learns to value popularity so greatly he becomes overdependent on the moods and opinions of others, as he grows older he dedicates himself

to social exhibition and exploitation. On the other hand, some are seclusive and the child learns he does not need other people or even that other hold nothing but ill will toward him.

Educational achievement is an essential of life to some families; others consider higher education an expression of snobbery. The child's own attitude toward education parallels his parents' attitude and affects his vocation choices. The investment of vast amounts of time and effort in promoting a given cause or excelling in a certain skill are of great importance to some parents. Their devotion to the attainment of a single goal is passes on to their children, and sometimes it is accompainied by defensiveness and the abuse of persons less enthusiastic than they. Also, in adopting the recreational preferences of their parents, children find their satisfactions with ot without people, in achievement or in empathy, and by means of broadened or restricted stimulation.[9]

Sociological Factors

The neighborhood, the school, and the church enhance or diminish the child's prestige and self-confidence and aid in the dete mination of his basic values and motivations. The manner in which sociological factors influence the child's b e behavior is inextricably intertwined with the family's reasons for choosing a given neighborhood, school, or church; and it is difficult to isolate the degree of influence exerted specifically by these environments, which are selected as complements to that provided by the family itself. Studies indicate, however, that differences in such diverse areas as intelligence, identity,

self-esteem, achievement, and antisocial behavior are related
in some degree to sociological factors.

The direct influence of socioeconomic status on a child's
intelligence and language skill and on his ability to profit
from education has been repeatedly observed. An environment
with toys, books, and conversation is held to be very important.
Parental behavior and attitudes vary with socioeconomic status.
Working-class fathers remain more aloof from their children.
Middle-class fathers take a more active part where their children
are concerned. Middle-class mothers emphasize achievement in
their children's training and avoid physical punishment.
Working-class mothers use physical punishment. Children of
lower socioeconomic status display emotional and behavior
problems with greater frequency than do children of higher
status. They also show greater concern with status and achieve-
ment than those of higher classes.[10]

Interpersonal Determinants

Interpersonal determinants are those factors related to
the care and training of the child by the adults responsible
for him. The adults' interpretation of their task in rearing
him is significant in his development. The child welcomes and
responds to favorable attention and to concern for his physical
welfare; he requires discipline, training in responsibility,
and practice in social interaction; he deserves honorable and
honest treatment. Without attention and concern for his needs

he is lonely and irritable. Without practice in self-control, meeting obligations, and contacts with peers, he is unproductive and immature. Without respect, he becomes vengeful and deteriorates intellectually and emotionally.

Interpersonal determinants are described as fixation of immaturity, neglect, unbalanced social experience, fatigue, rejection of responsibility, distortion of parental role, damaged self-respect, excessive punishment, and freedom to defy and attack. In the life of every child with behavior problems, one or more of these conditions is operant, and its elimination or minimization produces improved behavior in the child.[11]

Social attributes which appear at the pre-school level persist for years. Kagan reparted that passivity during the first three years correlated with timidity in social situations during the element ry perios and that inhibition and apprehension are related. Physical aggression toward peers remained a stable trait for the first ten years of life, and competitiveness, domonince, and indirect aggression were stable from three to fourteen years of age. The early appearance and constancy of characteristic social reaction suggest that a child's basic tendency toward passivity or aggression combines with his early experience in interpersonal relations with both adults and peers to establish strong habitual responses to others.

A child whose association with his peers are rare, warped by constant contact with children younger, older, or of the

opposite sex,-or subject to the interference of siblings or
parents fails to acquire social behavior appropriate for his
age and sex. His relationships with others remain inept, uneasy,
and unsatisfying. When a child does not have satisfying
relationships with his peers, he develops feelings of inferiority
isolation, and self-concern and serious behavior problems may
be associated with these feelings. A knowledge of the infinite
variety of ways in which peers live and think teaches the child
that there is no single obligatory mode of life and his
tolerance broadens as do his concepts of what is necessary and
what is possible.

The child who consistently suceeds in avoiding or refusing
responsibility finds that his freedom soon palls and that he
is left behind while others learn, contribute, achieve and
attain idependence. Constructive experiences are needed by
children to develop dtrength for coping with normal and special
stress. The child who rejects responsibility and in so doing
fails in personal achievement suffers from feelings of inad-
equacy and uselessness from a constriction of activity and from
repressed intellectual and erotional expression. Isolated from
his peers and resentful of adults, his indolence indreases
and his immaturity may lead to open aggression. He may attempt
to compensate by similating adulthood with obsequious manners,
by engaging in premature sexual adventures, or by quitting
sbhool.

The principal means by which a child learns how to act

is the imitation of his like-sexed parent. When the like-sexed parent does not fulfill his expected role in attitude, behavior, or function, the child does not acquire acceptable and satisfying modes of action. He may pattern his behavior after that of the opposite-sexed parent or any chance model he encounters. The child reared by an atypical parent suffers from sex-role confusion and social deviation. These disturbances lead to aggressive behavior, depression and anxiety and may end eventually in intellectual and emotional disentigration.

Damaged self-respect is a prime characteristic of every maladjusted neurotic or psychotic individual. A child's opinion of himself is based on his parent's opinion of him, and he must have parental confirmation of his worth in order to achieve self-respect. Delinquent and psychotic children typically have parents who do not express acceptance and approval and the children believe themselves to be unloved and undesirable. The child feels inferior and fails to achieve and he withdraws from contacts with others. He may turn to revenge in retaliation for the hurt inflicted on him or he may play the part assigned him by distrusting parents. His conviction that he is unworthy of respect causes anxiety and fearfulness.

Punishment is intended to teach the child to inhibit undesired responses, and the strength and kind of punishment which is needed to accomplish this result vary with the child,

the act, and the significance of the behavior to the parent.
When punishment serves to intimidate the child or to provide
an outlet for adult aggression, it fails in its intended
purpose, and the child develops personality and behavior problems
as a direct result of the punishment. The disturbed child
frequently has parents who are authoritative and hostile and
who demonstrate these characteristics in their management of
him. The child is punished excessively if he is physically
abused, if he is subjected to severe and continual criticism,
of if deprivation is overly harsh for the offense committed.[12]

The child learns self-control only if he first lea ns
to accede to the control of adults who are responsible for him.
Aggressive and self-centered behavior which is not curtailed
becomes habitual and is retained as the individual's sole
mode of reaction. Moral behavior is learned from the anticipation
of external punishment and if parents ignore reward, defend
or encourage undesirable behavior, it continues. The child
who does not learn obedience to authority and tocontrol his
impulses to hurt others fails to achieve his potential and to learn
to live with anxiety. His actions become increasingly antisocial
and unrealistic.

Studying childhood provides the background for a more thorough understanding of adult behavior. Most personal and social maladjustments among adults almost always have their beginnings in early life experiences. The origins of adult unhappiness and feelings of inadequacy must be sought in the individual's childhood.

The child you were is with you as an adult. It affects everything you do, everything you feel. These childhood feelings and attitudes influence-actually determine and dominate--your relations with friends, colleagues, your mate, and even your own children. The child you once were continues to survive inside your adult shell. This causes conflict and causes such serious emotional distortions that nearly one in ten of us is under treatment in mental hospitals, clinics and by physicians in private practice. However, these are not the only problems they cause. They help cause the small and large problems of ordinary people in everyday life. Our attitudes toward ourselves were created more by the general atmosphere and attitudes our families than by any single traumatic experience. This involves the fact that there is one essential difference between adults and children in an emotional sense. Children have parents who provide in many different ways an inner sense of direction and guidance, reassurance, esteem,

and worthiness, while adults act as parents to themselves, giving themselves the guidance and direction, the reassurance or the scolding that parents give to children. Adults continue the parental attitudes that were imposed on them in childhood perpetuating these attitudes toward themselves in adult life.

A child develops his sense of being as a worth-while, capable, important and unique individual from the attention given him by his parents. How one feels about himself is a basic and decisive aspect of personality. In childhood, in order to win the warmth, affection, and attention of his parents, the child absorbs and imitates even gestures and grimaces of his parents as their way of looking at himself and the world in general. He becomes his own parent--he treats himself with his parent's attitudes even though they are harsh, painful and continually downgrading and damaging. To feel at home by stimulating the emotional atmos here a person knew as a child provides a certain kind of security, but it contains all the restrictions and hurts he knew as a child.

Certain parental attitudes are the prime factors in creating emotional disturbances first in the child later in the adult. I will first present these factors as a group then go into more detail.

> Perfectionism: This is a common pathogenic attitude among "successful" people who strive endlessly and fruitlessly for still more "success," for perfection. Perfectionism is created in the child by the parent's withholding acceptance of the child until his behavior is more mature than he can comfortably achieve at the time. The child responds to this demanding attitude with a striving, over-serious preoccupation with physical,

intellectual or social accomplishment and the persistent belittling of whatever he does accomplish.

Overcoercion: The most common pathogenic parental attitude in America, this viewpoint is typically expressed by the parent who constantly directs, supervises, redirects the child an endless stream of anxious reminders and directions. Because the child's need to initiate and pursue his own interests as part of his own development is ignored by this coerciveness, the child may learn to rely excessively on outside direction. Often, because he must assert his independence as an individual some way, he reacts to this constant coercion by dawdling, daydreaming, forgetting, procrastination and other froms of resistance.

Oversubmission: Almost as common as the overly coercive parent, the overly submissive type capitulates to the child's immature whims and demands, ignoring and sacrificing his own needs and rights. Such a parental attitude makes the child the "boss," the parent a slave. The child responds to this parental attitude by demanding more, becoming impulsive, flying into temper outbursts if his demands are not met. He has difficulty in considering the rights of others.

Overindulgence: A parent with this attitude constantly showers the child with presents, clothes, "treats" and services--often without the child's desiring them and without any consideration of the child's needs to develop his own ways of affecting his environment. While the overly submissive parents waits for the child's demands-- and obeys--the overly indulgent parents shower gifts and presents without the child's asking. The child eventually responds to this inexhaustible cornucopia with bored, blase behavior. Both as a child and later as an adult, he has difficulty in initiating any effort and has little perisitence.

Hypochondriasis: This common and disabling parental attitude morbidly focuses attention on body functions or organs--even when they are healthy. Minor aches and pains are exaggerated. The child, growing up in this atmosphere of anxiety about health, absorbs his parents' excessive concern, discovering that this may gain sympathy and provide a reason for inactivity and nonparticipation.

Punitiveness: A common parental attitude, often combined with perfectionism and overcoercion, punitiveness is widely accepted in our culture as something necessary for the "disciplining" and training of children. Actually, the punitive parent vents his personal hostility and aggressions on the child, his subjective feelings--not the child's error--determining the punishment. Usually the parent has been similarly treated in his own childhood and often believes sincerely

that this is only discipline. Actually, punitiveness creates a need for punishment--virtually a reliance on it in some persons--and a fierce desire for revenge which may dominate adult life.

Neglect: Hard to define because it often results from the absence or busy preoccupation of the parent, neglect is widespread, often afflicting children of prominent and economically successful people; it also frequently afflicts the children of mothers overwhelmed with overwork, alcoholism, poverty and other problems. Such a parent has little time for the child--regardless of the cause of this situation. Death and divorce may be factors. The neglected child often lacks the capacity to form close, meaningful relationships.

Rejection: This parental attitude grants the child no niche of acceptance in the family group. The child responds with bitter, anxious feelings about his isolation and helplessness and with severe self-devaluation. However, popularization of the concept of the "rejected" child has caused much confusion. The realistic need to set limits on unacceptable behavior is not rejection. True rejection is relatively rare.[13]

The perfectionistic individual may feel superior to others and look down on less-driven people as his inferiors. Yet, he yearns for the human satisfaction which he sees ordinary people enjoying, their genuine pleasure in life, and of their self-esteem through their accomplishments. Clinical work with children clearly indicates that this continual self-belittlement is the real driving force behind the perfectionist's unending efforts. It was created in the child by persistent parental demands expressed in terms of what was expected from the child. His development and behavior had to be more advanced and mature than the child could comfortably achieve at the moment. A promise of eventual acceptance.

If a person cannot get started, finds himself making extensive

no to demands and successfully establish limits to his impulsive-
ness. He therefore, has a difficult time forcing them on himself
as an adult. If he tries, he loses both the security of the old
familiar at home feeling of childhood and the immediate
satisfactions provided by letting his impulses control him.
Impulsive people are generally excessive in their activities.
Obesity, temper tantrums, overdrinking, spending, generosity,
are often present. Impulsive people rarely marry impulsive people.
Neither is sufficiently tolerant or considerate of the other to
sustain the relationship. They usually marry an inhibited and
restrained person who has to go up and down with the other's
moods.

If a person is bored and listless, unable to become inter-
ested enough in activities to participate in them, finds him-
self not wanting to do what others find satisfying, notices himself
always complaining, and cannot establish or move toward genuine
goals but seem to drift and depend on others to provide for him,
he should consider the possibility that he is being dominated by
an overly indulged child of the past. This person tends to wait and
watch while life passes him by. He is unable to anchor himself
to tnything or anyone. He waits for someone to make life
interesting. The overindulgent parent has used this as a means
of expressing his love of the child. However, in this he has
obliterated any need for the child to make an effort--even a
demand--and deproves him of the opportunity to take satisfaction

in his effort. [14]

If a person cannot participate in activities because he does not feel well, is easily fatigued and is constantly doctoring himself even though his physican cannot find a basis for his complaints and he connects his body's sensations and functions with the possibility of illness, he should strongly suspect that his inner child of the past was subjected to parental hypochondriasis.

A person who has grown up in the sick ro·m atmosphere can hardly escape exaggerating his minor aches and pains. Many times he abandons activities which others consider life itself. These include work, sex, and recreation. Pains are accepted as incapacitating. He does not expect to be healthy. This illness merely reachieves the atmosphere of their childhood home, comforting such a person with the security of the familiar. In addition, the person who complains gains the sympathy and indulgence of others. The person suffering from hypochondriasis has his greatest difficulty in working. He feels so sick, weak and fatigued that he either is absent from work frequently or does barely enough to retain his job. Because they do poorly, these people rarely feel any satisfaction in their effort. They cannot satisfactorily participate in social affairs. Many do not leave home upon reaching maturity.

Hypochondriasis must be distinguished from a psychosomatic symptom such as a headache which may develop in an other wise healthy person as a result of some inner conflict, frustration or

lists of things he should do--and then unable to get around to
doing them--feels to exhausted to do even things he likes to and
ends up daydreaming about them, he should consider the possibility
that his inner child of the past is continuing the pattern with
which he reacted to the coercive direction of his parents.
Overcoercion is the most common pathogenic parental attitude in
our culture. The child reacts to the constant directing and
redirecting. In adult life he paralyzes himself, using the same
kind of slyly concealed passive resistance and distractions to
his own directions that he once used as a resistence to the
coercive commands of his parents.

If a person has a tendency to fly into temper outbursts,
if he likes to drive fast, and do impulsive things on the spur of
the moment, if he finds making persistent efforts at work and
other activities not worthwhile and feels unloved if people
do not give into him, he is probably still reacting to over-
submissiveness of his parents. The individual whose parents
were overly submissive toward him in childhood is generally an
attractive, bright, warm, and friendly person. However, he has
two specific kinds of difficulties. He is impulse-driven, therefore,
many times infringing on the feelings and rights of others.
Also, because they are impulse-driven they frequently unable to
move consistently toward adult goals--even though they may sincerely
want to achieve them. Instead of placing limits on the child's
immature demands, the parents submit to the child's wants. cont
At each significant stage in his development no one can say

one hundred percent successful in teaching disrespect, hate and fear. This generally true because it is based solely on power which is used to meet the needs of the parent not those of the child. Since out culture on the whole supports punitiveness, it is perpetuated from generation to generation. A special form of punitiveness is known as distrust. While it affects relatively few, it is quite specific, readily identifiable, definitely incapacitating. It is a parental attitude which anticipates a child's failure or inadequacy. This creates a specific type of self-belittlement. A person who distrusts himself has a gloomy and anxious foreboding of failure amounting to a feeling of being doomed to fail. He also has a tendency to gravitate into areas where he feels most distrustful and inadequate.

If a person has difficulty in feeling close to others and in belonging to a group, drifts in and out of relationships casually because people do not seem to mean much to him, if he feels lack of an identity of his own, suffers intensely from anxiety and loneliness, and keeps people at a distance he should suspect neglect as the troublemaking pathogenic factor in his childhood. Niglect is usually a parental attitude which results in the parent having little time for, interest in or awareness of the child's need for a continuing attachment with an adult to whom he can turn for help in satisfying his needs. It can be caused by anything that deprives a child of his full share of his parents' loving attention, whether it be social improvement, sickness, alcoholism, business, death or bowling. This causes

resentment. Hypochondriasis causes a person to exaggerate
symptoms to keep him from activity. Hypochondriasis originates,
in most cases, in the fearful attitudes toward disease expressed
by parents and heard by a child. This attitude is secondarily
supported by the gains in sympathy and indulgence which the ailing
person obtains from those around him.15

If a person frequently feels he is no good and finds himself
feeling he should be punished, if he tends to seek work that re-
quires a capacity to take it, and if he is often filled with
hateful designs to get even there are strong indications that
his inner child of the past lived in a strict, harshly punitive
atmosphere. Many people have been raised in an atmosphere which
make them feel guilty without the excessive punishment character-
istic of what is felt to be a harsh home. The harshness need
not be physical--it can be endless and strict moralizing. In such
a home a child cannot stay out of trouble and begins to think
of himself as bad. He becomes an adult feeling guilty, revenge-
ful, fearful. He becomes highly anxious, even over small matters
such as a compliment. All this causes a burning generalized hatred
This may come out in the form of criticism, protest. and furious
complaint. Such an adult may take his hatred out on smaller and
weaker people. He may try to whatever is forbidden. This type
person is unable to give or receive love. Therefore, people
fear and avoid him. In turn he in like becomes fearful.

Even though many defend it, punitiveness by itself is nearly
a total failure as a teaching method for discipline and nearly

The child's feelings about himself and others to become numb, uncertain, distorted and empty. He will either hold enormous expectations form others or feel no need to be close to others at all and will be alarmed at such efforts from them.

Conclusion

No one's behavior can be explained by simple statements.
People do not behave as they do simply because. The personality
is a result of to many complex interacting forces ever to be
adequately explained in terms of any one of them. In this
paper I have tried to point up some of the forces envolved.
Among these is the family environment. It is the responsibility
of the parents to help the child in the acquisition of the
developmental tasks. When this help is lacking physical and
mental problems may arise.

While specific preparation for all of life's problems is
obviously impossible, the basic skills involved in satisfactory
social relationships can be taught. Children should be helped
to acquire favorable emotional attitudes and personality traits.
For these attitudes become a part of his adult life and aid his
lifelong search for a happy and effective existence.

Footnotes

Elizabeth Hurlock, <u>Child Development</u> (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), p. 173.

[2] Paul Henry Mussen and others, <u>Child Development and Personality</u> (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 325.

[3] <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 379.

[4] <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 415.

[5] Hurlock, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 260-300.

[6] Mussen, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 572-582.

[7] Elinor Verille, <u>Behavior Problems of Children</u> (Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1967), p. 15.

[8] <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 18-25.

[9] <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 22.

[10] <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 30-35.

[11] <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 10.

[12] <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 34-98.

[13] Hugh Missildine, <u>Your Inner Child of the Past</u> (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963), pp. 77-79.

[14] <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 145-150.

[15] <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 172-174

Bibliography

Church, Joseph. *Three Babies.* New York: Random House, 1965.

Conger, John, Paul Mussen, and Jerome Kagan. *Child Development and Personality.* New York: Harper & Row, 1963.

Hurlock, Elizabeth B. *Child Development.* New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964.

Maier, Henry. *Three Theories of Child Development.* New York: Harper & Row, 1965.

Missildine, Hugh. *Your Inner Child of the Past.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963.

Verville, Elinore. *Behavior Problems of Children.* Philadelphia: W. B. Saunders Company, 1967.