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## ABSTRACT

### TRANSMISSION OF VALUES: PEER VS. PARENT MODELS

by Phyllis C. Fratzke

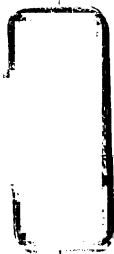
Much has been written, spoken and theorized about the adolescent of today, all of this in an attempt to better understand, and where possible, to improve the lot of today's youth. Some researchers suggest that a change in the transmission of values has taken place and that the adolescent receives more of his values from his peer group than from his parents. With this situation, parents no longer give their children the guidance needed to assist them through the adolescent period and provide a smooth transition to the adult world.

This research was based on the premise that the attention given to a few adolescents has clouded the issue and caused malformed generalizations about the entire world of adolescents. It was hypothesized that the adolescent receives his values from his parents, and while the peer group does have some influence on adolescent values it is not as significant as the parental values.

Thirty eighth grade girls, thirty of their friends (who were assumed to represent the peer group), and the thirty girls' mothers (who were assumed to represent the parental values) were given the Differential Values Profiles, Form A and Form B. This instrument was designed to measure the value areas of aesthetic, humanitarian, intellectual, materialistic, power, and religious.

The data were analyzed for correlations between the girls and

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their peer group and the girls and their mothers in each of the six values areas. The data seemed to support the hypothesis that the girls do receive some values from their parents rather than from the peer group. There was a positive correlation at the five percent significance level in both the values of aesthetic and religious between the girls and their mothers. In the other four value areas, no significant correlation could be found.

**TRANSMISSION OF VALUES:  
PEER VS. PARENT MODELS**

**By**

**Phyllis C. Fratzke**

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

"We witness these days new images, new appearances of the adolescent" (11:1). Fiction and mass media of two decades ago imaged the adolescent as a figure of fun, given to infatuation and wild enthusiasms, but rather harmless and powerless. Douvan and Adelson have identified two of the contemporary images and have labeled them the "Scar-Victim" and the "Victimizer." The "Scar-Victim" was distinguished by being able to perceive the moral values of society but was also a victim betrayed or neglected by the adult world. His anti-type, the "Victimizer," was depicted as leather-jacketed, sinister, amoral, and omnipotent (11).

We find the actual nature of the individual, his group, their values and influences hard to appraise because our perception of them is affected and distorted by the kinds of attention given to adolescents in the mass media. Because the simple or spectacular issues and instances are over-emphasized, the central issues of the dispute are very difficult, and sometimes impossible, to recognize or understand.

#### Affect of social change

The obvious thing in all of contemporary society, that has had an impact at all age levels, is change. Thomas said:

We are witnesses to a fantastic identity crisis in the timeline of specie homo sapiens. Mankind is turning a dramatic corner in human history. Society is no longer rural but urban, no longer agrarian but

industrial-technical, no longer passive but active, no longer poorly educated but liberally educated, no longer poor but affluent, no longer isolationary but interdependent, religion is no longer personal but academic, knowledge is no longer provincial but universal, science is no longer suspect but worshipped, and morals are no longer absolute but relative. And with its progress and prosperity change has brought its problems and perplexity. Change is a factor that must be accepted and harnessed (48).

Walter Lippman called this social change from rural living and self-sufficient economy to urbanization and industrialization "acids of modernity" that are eating away at the core of the American way of life (35). When the country is in the throes of change in its living patterns, the value dilemma is the most obvious by product. Morality and the relationships between men have become so complex that right and wrong have given away to the practical and pragmatic. The value dilemma could result in transmitting vague or incompatible values to our children, as children internalize the values of the institutions and significant persons with whom they associate. If the adolescent has an inadequate system of personal values he can easily be influenced and pressured by his peer group. Whether the contemporary adolescent's values are primarily transmitted by the parental family or absorbed from his peer group seems a debatable point in current research.

Coleman reported that:

Adolescence is a unique period of transition from childhood to adulthood. As part of that transition comes a shift in orientation, away from the preceding generation, toward one's own generation. This transition has been taking place since early childhood, even a young child responds more to the pressures of his fellows than to the desires of his parents (9:138).

Coleman also felt that the transition period between childhood and adulthood has become a small subculture with interests and attitudes that are far removed from adult responsibility. Cut off from large segments of society, adolescents have found psychological support and social rewards within their own group and depend upon each other, thus creating their own language and value systems. This society "maintains only a few threads of connection with the outside adult society" (9:51).

Friedenberg, on the other hand, felt that adolescent conflict was a normal developmental process by which the individual learned the difference between himself and his environment, without which no individual could develop. He felt our society and our schools were not allowing the individual conflict, but were manipulating the adolescent toward mass conformity (17).

Blair and Jones suggested that adolescents turn to one another for understanding and advice because of the difficulties in communicating with parents (5). Jersild reported that adolescents in concert with each other, to a large extent, determined what "goes." They influenced the moral climate, decided the proper way to dress, developed their own lingo, and rules of etiquette (29).

Brittain indicated that both the parental and peer groups influenced the adolescent's values, and that the adolescent was able to perceive which was the best reference group for the decision that was to be made. The adolescent observes the peer group values in areas of self-gratification and status, and follows the values of his parents in areas that would have long lasting effects (6).

Hollingshead stressed the importance of the influence of the home upon the adolescent. He stated that the home the adolescent comes from conditions the way he reacts in all his relationships (25).

#### Influence of the mother

Both parents have a definite influence on the development of the child, but the mother's relationship with her child and her values appear to have the greatest impact on his development. Cavan stated, "In all discussions of parent-child relationships, the attitude of the mother toward her children is regarded as the most significant. The warm, loving mother is the one with whom the child can identify and from whom he receives a sense of worth and self-confidence" (3:111). Since the mother is the more significant of the parents in her relationships with her child, her values can be taken to represent those of the parents.

#### Statement of the Problem

What then is the source of adolescent values: parents, peers, or both? Is there a definite relationship between the adolescent girl's values and those of her parents, specifically those of her mother, or will they more closely resemble her best friend?

#### Hypothesis

The child's values will be more like her mother's, than like her best friend.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This review attempts to provide an insight into the adolescent period for children living in contemporary American culture, and to provide a background for the research of adolescent values. This chapter is divided into five sections; the first provides a definition of adolescence and is concerned with the theories of adolescent development, the second section discusses values, the third section discusses the impact of the socioeconomic class of the parental family, the fourth is concerned with the influence of the parental family, and the fifth with the influence of the peer group.

#### Nature of the Adolescent Period

##### Definition

The word "adolescence" is derived from the Latin verb adolescere meaning "to grow up" or "to grow into maturity." For the purpose of this study, the following general definitions appear to be most suitable: Sociologically, adolescence is the transition period from dependent childhood to self-sufficient adulthood. Psychologically, it is a marginal situation in which new adjustments have to be made, namely those that distinguish child behavior from adult behavior in a given society. Chronologically, it is the time span from approximately twelve or thirteen to the early twenties, with wide individual and

cultural variations. A person can be old in a chronological sense and still show the behavioral and social characteristics of adolescence. Thus an approximate norm age seems appropriate. The following norms suggested by Hurlock seem suitable to the United States: pre-adolescence, ten to twelve; early adolescence, thirteen to sixteen; late adolescence, seventeen to twenty-one (27).

### Theories of adolescence

G. Stanley Hall is usually considered the father of a "Psychology of Adolescence." He was the first psychologist to advance a psychology of adolescence in its own right and to use scientific methods in his study of adolescence. These methods consisted of the development and use of questionnaires as a method for securing objective data. He also showed interest in diaries as a source of information particularly relevant to the study of adolescents. His two main theories were those of the theory of recapitulation and his concept of stages of human development. The first evolved from Darwin's theory of evolution and the second has proposals similar to those of Piaget. Both theorized that the individual re-lives the development of the human race from early animal-like primitivism through a period of savagery, to the more recent civilized ways of life which characterize maturity (12).

Hall introduced Sigmund Freud's theories to the United States. Freud's theory of psychosexual development served as the next link in the history of adolescent development. One of Freud's basic assumptions is that the first five years of childhood are the most formative ones for personality development. His theory of development

holds that the young child goes through five definite phases in the first five or six years of life - passive oral, oral sadistic, anal, phallic, and narcissism and only two in the remaining fifteen years from childhood and adolescence - genital and latency stages (16).

Erik Erikson modified the psychoanalytic position of instincts and biological needs and pointed out that social factors can modify development and id impulses. Erikson felt that youth is confronted with a physiological revolution within himself that threatens his body image and his ego identity. The adolescent becomes preoccupied with what he appears to be in the eyes of others as compared with what he feels he is (the mirror image theory). The adolescent period is the time in which the dominant positive ego identity is to be established. In the early period, this created some role diffusion. Adolescents often over identify with athletic champions, group leaders, and movie heroes to the extent that they appear to lose their own identity. During this time youth rarely identifies with their parents but more often rebel against their dominance, value system, and intrusion into his private life. The peer group helps the individual to find his identity in a social context at this point. This is a necessary defense against the dangers of self-diffusion which exist during this period when the body image changes and genital maturity stimulates the imagination (12).

Anna Freud took more pains than her father in spelling out the importance of the adolescent development, and assigned greater importance to puberty as a factor in character formation. She asserted that the factors involved in adolescent conflict are: the strength of the

id impulse, which is determined by physiological and endocrinological processes during pubescence, the ego's ability to come with or to yield to the instinctual forces, and the effectiveness and nature of the defense mechanism at the disposal of the ego (15).

Otto Rank was a follower of the psychoanalytic school of thought, but broke away and challenged some of the basic assumptions. He placed "will" as the core concept in his theory. He theorized that will is a force that actively forms the self and modifies the environment. Sexuality is not the strongest determining factor in the developmental process (as in Freud's theory), since will can to some degree control sexuality. Thus, the emphasis shifted from early childhood to adolescence since it is predominantly in this period that a most crucial aspect of personality development occurs, the change from dependence to independence. In early adolescence, the individual begins to oppose both the external environment and internal cravings. The external environment is the newly awakened instinctual urges. Establishing independence becomes a vital but difficult task and was the root of many adolescent personal relationships with his family, his peers, and himself (40).

There are a number of transition or crisis periods in the life span of the individual. Adolescence represents one of the greatest of these periods of crisis, as the individual is neither a child, nor an adult, and is caught in the overlapping forces of expectations. Lewin described him as the "marginal man" who stood on the boundary of two groups, but does not belong to either of them, or at least is uncertain about his belongingness. Because of the adolescent's position, Lewin contended that the following conditions resulted:

- 1 Adolescent unclearness and instability of ground resulted in shyness, sensitivity and aggressive-ness.
- 2 More or less permanent conflict of attitudes, values, ideologies, and styles of living.
- 3 Emotional tension from conflicts.
- 4 Readiness to take extremes to shift positions.
- 5 Only occurred in degree to type of culture (34).

Adolescents do not usually make this change from childhood to adulthood quickly, smoothly, or in an orderly fashion. Horrocks was quoted by Stanton as stating that the adolescent's behavior is typically so inconsistent that it is obvious to the thoughtful observer that he is simultaneously wanting and fearing independence (47). This inconsistency is disturbing to both the adolescent and his parents as neither knows exactly what to expect.

The adolescent, like everyone else, spends twenty-four hours a day satisfying or attempting to satisfy his physical, social, and personality needs. Blair and Jones stated that when a need existed and was unsatisfied, the adolescent became restless and tense. He sought some goals which would reduce the state of imbalance within him. The personality needs of the adolescent are the need for status, independence, achievement, and a satisfying philosophy of life. The framework within which the adolescent is to fulfill these needs differ greatly from that of his childhood. Blair and Jones reported that:

The child's role is clearly structured. He knows what he can and cannot do. The adult likewise understands pretty well what is his role. The adolescent, however, is in an ambiguous position. He never really knows how he stands. It is a well-known fact that the delinquency rates soar during the period of adolescence, that suicides become increasingly prevalent, that the drug and alcohol addiction may have their beginning, and that such general unhappiness exists (5:7).

## Values

The concept of values has been defined in literature in numerous ways by sociologists, anthropologists, social psychologists, and experimental psychologists, each contributing their own theories to this concept. Jacob and Flink recognized the difficulty of an objective analysis of the value concept when they stated: "The term 'value' is an exceedingly slippery term covering a wide range of phenomena from ideologies to habitual responses of various types of individuals, social groups, governments, private institutions, and nations" (28).

### Value definition

For the purposes of this paper, values will be taken to mean a group of concepts of personally desirable standards of behavior. Justification for this definition comes from the sociological point of view as stated in the writings of Jacob and Flink, Kluckhohn, Smith, Thomas, and Williams. Jacob and Flink define values as "normative standards by which human beings are influenced in their choices among the alternative courses of action" (29). Kluckhohn defined value as "a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means, and ends of action" (39:391). Smith stated, "by values, I shall mean a person's implicit or explicit standard of choice, insofar as these are invested with obligation or requiredness" (45). Thomas said values are "a normative, conceptual standard of the desirable that dispositionally influences individuals in choosing among personally perceived alternatives of behavior"

(49:49). Williams stated "values are things in which people are interested--things that they want, desire to be or become, feel as obligatory, worship, enjoy. Values are modes of organizing conduct--meaningful, affectively invested pattern principles that guide human action" (53:375).

Williams went on to explain values as a continuum, at one pole being the intense, rigid, moral values that are the core of the individual's internalized conscience, violation of which bring strong guilt to the offender and censure from the group or society which imposed them. From this point, values shade off into less severe guilt and less intense social censure (53:376-377).

#### Related concepts

One of the concepts often confused with values is that of attitudes. For the purpose of this study, attitudes will mean the evaluation of an object, and values the standards by which such an evaluation is made. For instance, if one were commenting on an object of art, the attitudes involved in evaluating the art object would be based on personal values.

The same may be said of beliefs. A belief by itself is not capable of causing behavior. "It is when beliefs are coupled with values that behavior is elicited.....assume that an individual believed that fire is hot. He must value that belief before it affects his behavior" (49:53). "Belief refers primarily to the categories of 'true' and 'false' and 'correct' and 'incorrect.' Value refers primarily to 'good' and 'bad' and 'right' and 'wrong' " (32:326).

Williams distinguished among beliefs, values, and norms by stating:

Knowledge and beliefs have to do with what exists or is supposed to exist. Values, on the other hand, concern standards of desirability: they are couched in terms of good or bad, beautiful or ugly, pleasant or unpleasant, appropriate or inappropriate. Norms are rules of conduct: they specify what should or should not be done by various kinds of social actions in various kinds of situations" (53:400).

### Internalizing values

How does a child learn values, and on what are they based? Very little is known about the influences in forming values or how they are acquired. We do know that children are born into a social order where values and the resultant norms are established. The influence of the home, the social group of the parents, the neighborhood, and the peer group all are important influences in internalizing an individual's values, but they are not the complete story. They do not tell us, for instance, why one child from a family becomes a delinquent while others do not. We do know that the learning of values seems to be different from the learning of skills and the acquisition of other knowledge (26). A possible answer to this question might be found in the way a child perceives adult values. Thorndike, in trying to relate adult values with children's values, quoted the four elementary value concepts as evolved by Lombard: 1. physical bigness as seen in grown-ups and imaged in giants; 2. quick movements in running or bowling a hoop; 3. novelty of changing toys very quickly; and 4. a sense of power which explains why the child pulls out the legs of a fly, makes the dog stand on its hind legs, and flies a kite very high. These values were related

by Sombart to the values adhered to by adults in modern society: 1. adults attach importance to qualities of mere size; 2. speed is essential to modern man; 3. adults love novelty or sensation; and 4. a sense of power drives many adults in modern society (46).

Turner found that social values did appear early in the development of the child, but they were not stable and were subjected constantly to environmental influences (51). Studies by Smith, Hames, and Carlson indicated that the degree and extent to which attitudes and values were modifiable depended upon the nature of the experience (45), the type of contact (19), and the subjects perception of the outcome (7). Hemming felt one adopted only those attitudes and values which are normally sanctioned by the community in which one lives (22). Kahl stated that values "are convictions shared by people in a given culture or subculture about the things they considered good, important, or beautiful" (31). He further believed that values tended to become organized into systems, and that when a group of people share a number of abstract values which have been so organized into such systems, then these should be called value orientations. Such a line of reasoning would explain why various class values or occupational values develop. "People who perform the same activities or who occupy a given prestige level in a stratification system evolve a set of value orientations distinctive to themselves" (31:10).

The Allport-Vernon Study of Values (1) was used by the Planning Project group to determine if there was a relationship between selected variables and values. The variables selected were those concerning the family and school, as shown in the following table.

From an analysis of data the following conclusions were reached for the girls in the study:

TABLE 1. -- The effect of various variables on values<sup>a</sup>

Variables	Theoretical value	Economic value	Aesthetic value	Social value	Political value	Religious value
Number of Siblings	0	0	0	0	0	0
Frequency of church attendance	S-	M-	0	0	0	0
Social status of father's job	M-	0	0	S-	0	0
Father's educational level	0	0	0	0	0	*
Mother's educational level	S-	0	*	0	0	0
Number of homes parents owned	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cost of parents' home	0	M-	0	0	S-	0
Yearly family income	0	M-	0	0	0	0
Number of extra-curricular activities	0	S-	0	0	0	0
Grade point average	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mother's working outside the home	0	0	0	0	0	0

Key: 0 - No relationship  
\* - Positive relationship

M- Moderate negative relationship  
S- Strong negative relationship

<sup>a</sup> Summarizing conclusions from the Planning Project (48).

### Social Class and Adolescent Values

The previous discussion of values emphasizes the need for making a social class distinction, as the social class membership of the parents has a significant bearing on the values that will influence the adolescent.

#### Lower class values

Lower class values meet the needs and satisfactions of the populace involved in the same manner as those of any other social class. Their values have developed out of the necessities of their living conditions. Lower class persons tend to value gratification of immediate physical needs and a concept of family centeredness that is often based on the mother and children, without a father in the home. They prize the ability to look after oneself early in life, and the early termination of a formal education. (8:78).

#### Middle class values

In an upwardly mobile society, such as contemporary America, the middle class now outnumbers all other classes. "Middle-class values and goals tend to be well defined and consciously accepted by adults, who deliberately impose them upon their children" (8:93). Cavan listed three middle class values that pertain to a discussion of adolescents. The first is a value of family and home centeredness which stresses the preservation of marriage and the child rearing goals of a well balanced personality and acceptance of middle class values. The second is a value of material success emphasizing many years of educational preparation, with gratification of needs more of a future

than present goal. Material possessions are prized as symbols of class security and success. Competitiveness is classified as a third and separate value, but is felt to be necessary for success. Middle class values stress that competitiveness must be channeled into school and other organized ways (8:92).

A weakness of Cavan's theories are twofold: First, she stated that the middle classes highly prize the preservation of marriage, yet the divorce ratio in this class has reached extremely high proportions. There appears to be no research evident that relates the impact of divorce to the transmission of values. Secondly, Cavan stated that many years of education are accepted as normal preparation for future success in academic work. Failure prevents future education and is regarded as a disgrace to the entire family. Children without the ability or desire to achieve academically resort to cheating. Such an example was illustrated by Hendrick's research which concerned cheating at the college level. Fifty-seven percent of the students and seventy-five percent of all seniors cheated on examinations. Cheating was not regarded as basically dishonest by fifty-three percent of the students; only thirteen percent thought it was basically dishonest, and thirty-three percent were uncertain of their attitudes (23). Cavan stated:

It seems that cheating is a type of dishonesty supported by middle-class ambition for success and is tolerated by adults. In fact it might be said cheating permeates a number of areas of middle-class life among adults as well as children. Income tax evasion and failure to observe business ethics under the pressure of competition are examples. In these ways, children and adults alike who would regard taking money or property as criminal seek to gain an advantage for themselves in order to attain or

maintain certain middle-class goals (8:94).

Honesty is one of the values taught to the middle-class child.

This too then creates a stumbling block in the transmission of values.

#### Comparison of two social classes

The socioeconomic class of the parents has a bearing on the specific values of the adolescent and on the social adjustment that takes place during the adolescent period.

The middle-class places emphasis on peer acceptance and approval. Kohn stated that the parents in the lower socioeconomic levels apparently show less concern about children's activities outside the home than do parents higher in the status scale. Middle-class parental values are more likely to emphasize self-direction and internal standards of conduct, while among the lower-class parents, an important value cluster is that of conformity to external proscriptions (53). Eys reported that adolescents are, on the average, better adjusted to parents in middle than in lower socioeconomic level families. However, he also reported other significant sociological variables that entered the picture: residence, size of family, broken homes, employment status of the mother, and age and sex of the adolescent. He found in small families, broken families, and families where the mother was employed there was no relationship between the adolescent adjustment and the socioeconomic levels (37).

Kluckhohn offered the following suggestions for the significant socio-cultural differences in attitudes and values: 1. The dominant value system is the 'official' American 'success culture,' radiating from a focus somewhere in the lower middle class; 2. dominant (Amer-

lean) values emphasize the Future as the important time, the Individual as the important person, and Being as the important aspect of personality; 3. The alternative system relevant to the present Eastern upper class placed the time most valued as the Past, the persons who mattered bear a lineal relation to oneself, and Being is the most valued aspect of the person (32).

Helm researched the traditional and emergent values of adolescents using the Differential Value Inventory (39). The findings are relevant to a discussion of the social classes. A traditional value orientation involves strong desires for individualism, puritan morality, and future time orientation. Emergent values are represented by conformity, relative moral attitudes, and hedonism (present-time orientation).

Helm reported the following results obtained after administering the instrument to seventh, eighth, and ninth graders in three junior high schools in the Salt Lake City School District:

- 1 There was a significant correlation between value patterns and academic success as indicated by I.Q. and grade point averages.
- 2 Over-achievers demonstrated higher traditional values than either equal-achievers or under-achievers. Under-achievers demonstrated higher emergent values than either equal-achievers or over-achievers. Equal-achievers demonstrated both traditional and emergent values.
- 3 There is not a significant relationship between socioeconomic levels and the number of over- or under-achievers produced.
- 4 Students in higher socioeconomic level schools did not reveal more traditional value patterns than students in middle and lower socioeconomic schools.
- 5 Socioeconomic levels were not found to be greater determinants of value patterns than academic achievement.

- 6 Within each socioeconomic level school there was a significant relationship between academic success and traditional-emergent value patterns.

Secondary findings of the three schools were also of an important nature.

- 1 Some indication was given that students with more traditional value patterns came from more stable and secure homes.
- 2 Students indicating emergent values attended church seldom or never.
- 3 Students who attend church once or more a week have more traditional values than those who attend church less than once a week.
- 4 There was an indication that students with more traditional value patterns took basic subjects more often as their favorite subjects, while students with emergent value patterns took non-academic subjects more often.
- 5 There was an indication that emergent value-oriented students were more frequently the oldest child in the family while traditionally oriented students were more often the youngest child in the family.
- 6 Older students appeared to have more traditional value scores, while younger students had more emergent value scores.
- 7 Students with emergent values generally came from homes with seven or more members.
- 8 Girls were found to be over-achievers in a greater number of cases than were boys (21).

#### Influence of the Parents

##### Changing social patterns

The American adolescent's quest for autonomy is affected by the parent's uncertainty about appropriate norms for the youngster. Parents are ever impressed by social change, they feel they lack the ex-

perience to teach the adolescent how to meet and manage his world. Many researchers agree with this philosophy. Davis pointed to the significance of rapid social change as a factor "creating a hiatus between one generation and the next" (10:523). Jersild stated that adolescents had certain interests and claim certain privileges at an earlier age than was true a generation or more ago (29:12). Specifically, Jones found that in comparing the attitudes and interests of ninth grade students over two decades, that the more recent generation of ninth graders indicated greater maturity in heterosexual activities (30).

In actuality, the adolescent and his parents are each living in a different generation, and each is then basing his behavior on a different criteria. This differences in standards and customs of different generations account for frequent conflicts between parents and adolescents in the process of achieving emancipation from the home (10:412). Jersild felt that conditions of present day society add to the difficulty of the adolescents in that many adults, both at school and at home, are themselves confused about issues pertaining to the discipline, training, and rearing of young people (29:19). Tryon added "adults are quite commonly ignorant about what goes on in the process of adolescent development. For the most part, boys and girls work at these tasks in a stumbling, groping fashion, blindly reaching for the next step without much or any adult assistance" (50). Frank and Frank stated that both parents and adolescents are confronted with a situation calling for flexibility and willingness to explore for new and more appropriate relations, yet both parents and adolescents frequently revert to the patterns and relations of early child-

hood (14:133). Adolescents do not want this type of relationship, but like children, they want and need the security that comes from knowing exactly what they can and cannot do. Parents, on the other hand, are told they should not control their adolescent's life, but are also told they should take the responsibility of preventing late parties, early dating, early marriage, drinking, and sex misconduct (29:247). Our contemporary society places great importance on the urban child having leisure and freedom to explore his ideas and interests. We place emphasis on a longer educational period and stress that the child should be free from the responsibilities of work and family that soon will absorb much of his time and energy. When an adolescent is placed in a society that finds his labor expendable, he turns to his peers to fill his leisure hours (29:12). The unstructured nature of the period adds to the conflict for both parents and adolescents. Parents are told to control the very areas of the teen's life in which society has given him his freedom.

#### Values from parents

Although society exerts many pressures on how children should behave, the strongest factor in the molding of a child's personality is the child's relationship with his parents (36). The mother, more than any other significant other, is the greatest contributor to the socializing process through her interaction with the child. She transmits the values and standards that lay the foundation for personality development (4).

Hollingshead stressed the importance of the influence of the home upon the adolescent. He said that the home an adolescent came

from "conditions in a very definite manner the way he behaves in his relations with the school, the church, the job, recreation, his peers and his family" (25:316). Children brought up in another neighborhood that is also categorized as middle-class, could have an entirely different set of acceptable and unacceptable behavioral values.

### Attitudes toward parents

The child entering the adolescent period discovers he is an individual, with his own individual thoughts, feelings, and desires.

Frank and Frank stated that:

In the early adolescent period many boys and girls become antagonistic toward adult authority. To them the adult world seems to be excessively and often unfairly demanding, and less protective than it has ever been. They think that even their own parents are totally unaware of their deep feelings and oblivious to their desire for privacy (14:61).

The adolescent's attitudes toward adults and their perceptions of how adults view teenagers may be the cause of some of the trouble in adolescents' relations with their parents. In Hess and Golblatt's study, they found that teenagers felt that they had an inferior reputation with adults, were subject to condemnation, criticism, general devaluation. The stereotype of the adolescent was sloppy, irresponsible, unreliable, destructive, and anti-social. Adolescents tend to idealize other adults more than their own parents (24).

The social identity of adolescents was the problem researched by Harris and Tseng, in which they used a sentence completion test as the source of data. They administered this instrument to 3,000 children from fourth grade through high school. Ten phrases to be completed were selected to elicit social responses ranging from

positive, neutral, to negative attitudes. The four sentences which evoked expressions of attitudes toward parents and peers showed that both sexes had a more positive attitude toward mother than father. Boys showed increased positive attitudes toward both parents in high school, while girls showed an increased positive attitude toward their fathers during the high school years. The small proportion of boys showing negative attitudes toward mother and/or father, decreased steadily through childhood and adolescence. The correspondingly small proportion of girls showing negative attitudes increased steadily through childhood and adolescence (20).

Fisher's research compared college students and their parents using the six types of personalities in Allport-Vernon's Study of Values. She reported that parents were farther from neutrality than their children, and attributed this to a better organization of value patterns with increasing age. Other significant findings were that daughters were more aesthetic than mothers, and sons were more aesthetic than their fathers. Mothers had a higher economic value than their daughters, and fathers had a higher economic value than their sons (13).

#### Influence of the Peer Group

The adolescent looks to the culture in which he lives for the satisfaction of his needs; physical, social, and personality. His parents, friends, and social agencies to which he is exposed are the dominant socializing agencies. Cavan agreed with Erikson's mirror image theory as she stated:

The people who shape a child's growth serve another

function in addition to that of impressing cultural patterns on the child. By their personal attitudes and behavior toward him they instill in him his personal concept of himself--the heart of his personality (3:41).

The child forms a self concept that is compatible with his role and at the same time satisfies his inner needs.

He will find himself more at home and more readily accepted in some groups than in others. These groups are more influential in shaping his personality than those groups which are indifferent to or reject him. Invariably these maintain cohesion through love, friendship, and loyalty. They are called reference groups. Their influence, good or bad, outweighs the influence of formal institutions (8:41).

Such a reference group assumes a role in the individual's socialization, but the extent of the influence is debatable. Ausubel stated, "It is mostly in heterogeneous urban cultures that values during preadolescence (and especially adolescence) tend to acquire a wider base and peers tend to replace parents as interpreters and enforcers of the moral code" (2). Ausubel stated the following as the functions of the peer group:

- 1 To provide the adolescent with primary status;
- 2 to act as the major source of derived status during adolescence;
- 3 to relieve the disorientation and loss of stability during the change from childhood to adult-frame of reference by acting as a merging and combining frame of reference;
- 4 to aid the adolescent in his strides toward emancipation;
- 5 to act as a solid front in combating authority;
- 6 to act as a major training institution for adolescence in our society;
- 7 to provide an opportunity and set of norms for increased heterosexual contacts and adolescent sex behavior;
- 8 to lighten the load of frustration and to anchor the whole of the transitional period (2).

Roger's findings supported Ausubel's theories. Roger's reported that a young person's relationship with his own age group becomes increasingly important as he advances through the adolescent period. The peer group helps the adolescent to develop independence from his family and thus helps in the building of the individual's ego (41).

Roger Barker reported that in any unknown situation "the perceptual structure is unstable, the psychological dynamics which result from an unknown situation are unclear, indefinite, and ambiguous"(3). Small changes in the perceptual field of a given individual may change the total field. Since the adolescent's perceptual structure is unstable, his behavior will be unstable and vacillating. The first adolescent realization of the contradictions between the values taught by adults and the failure of adults to live and succeed by their own beliefs presents a new psychological situation that may change the adolescent's outlook toward life. The less stable the situation, the more the individual depends upon small and sometimes unimportant cues. Behavior can be influenced easily. The adolescent has little resistance to suggestions. This is especially true for suggestions coming from the social group to which he aspires. "Peer group conformity is the psychological response to living in an unstable situation" (3). Those who believed there was a uniformity observed among adolescents explained this as an attempt to structure the field, which is experienced as unstable by the individual.

An experiment was conducted by Patel and Gordon using boys and girls in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades to explore factors associated with the acceptance of suggestions in a situation in which the subjects were given the option of accepting or not accepting the

suggestion, and in which task difficulty was varied independently of age-grade status. The variables explored were age-grade status, sex of the subjects, difficulty level of the task on which the subject was to perform, and prestige level of the suggestion source. Suggestions of high and low prestige were given by penciling in the incorrect answers to some of the items on the test, and ascribing the marked answers to a failure to follow directions not to mark on the questionnaire in a class that supposedly had taken the test the previous hour. Prestige level of the suggestions were varied by describing the class which had supposedly taken the test earlier as one year higher or lower in school. The results showed that the acceptance of suggestions was higher in girls than boys, high prestige suggestions were accepted more frequently on difficult than on easy items (38).

#### Individual differences

Some adolescents are more easily influenced than others. Sampson felt that the ordinal position and the sex determined the resistance to peer influence. The combined results from three separate studies by Sampson, using three different samples of subjects, suggested the following conclusions: first born persons have a higher need for achievement; first born females exhibit greater resistance to influence than later born females; and first born males exhibit less resistance to influence than later born males. These findings are taken to be consistent with a set of assumptions that the first born female is more significantly involved in independence teaching than the first born male. This early independence training produced a greater need for achievement and leads to greater resistance of influence for the first born females. First ordinal position for the males, on the

other hand, produces greater affiliative dependency and leads to greater conformity in an influence situation (43).

### Friendships

The particular advantage of the adolescent friendships is that it offers a climate for growth and self knowledge that the family is not equipped to offer, and that very few persons can provide for themselves. The adolescent enters friendship with a remarkable eagerness and capacity for change. Before adolescence the child accepts himself as he is, generally feeling there isn't much he can do about it. Later as he becomes aware of the world of self-help, of magazines published for teens on manners, dating, dress, and chit-chat, he enters friendships with an eagerness to make good, and the conviction that the self can be transformed to that end (11:10).

### Reasons for peer conformity

Adolescents turn to one another for understanding and advice because of the difficulties in communicating with their parents. They are puzzled with the adult world. Blair and Jones suggest that in this state of limbo, he joins with others, forms his own group, and might even become hostile toward the social norms of adults. He can no longer entirely accept adult standards because he sees inconsistencies in the moral code they demand of him compared with their own actions (5).

### Peer conformity research

Brittain administered a test to 280 high school girls to determine the extent to which adolescents were peer conforming when con-

fronted with cross pressures from parents and peer groups. The instrument consisted of twelve story situations involving a girl and a social situation. In the unsolved story situations, the girl had two alternate choices, one recommended by her parents, and the other by her peers. The subject must decide which choice the girl would make. Brittain reported that the adolescents chose the peer society in areas where the identity needs are gratified and the status could be obtained. The adolescent chose the parents when the status position represented that to which one can aspire as an adult. The responses reflected the adolescent's perception of peer and parents as competent guides in different areas of judgment. The choices also reflected the adolescent's perception of similarities and differences between himself and his peer and self and parents (6).

Rosen in his research "Conflicting Group Membership: A Study of Parent-Peer Group Cross Pressures" studied 50 Jewish boys and girls and their attitudes toward "kosher" meats. He reported that when the parent and peer groups disagreed about eating "kosher" meats, the adolescent seemed to agree more with his peers than his parents. Rosen offered the following explanation for this action:

In our culture the physiological changes, the lag between physical maturation and social maturation associated with adolescence creates a host of problems for the adolescent. In his effort to cope with these problems the adolescent turns to his age mates for companionship, recognition, and support. The peer group provides him with a sense of belongingness at a time when conflicting loyalties, identification, and values make him unsure of himself. Within the peer group the adolescent is able to acquire the status often denied him in the adult world, a status which is more predictable and based upon values and expectations he understands and can fulfill (42).

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

In this chapter are operational definitions; assumptions; selection of sample; collection of data, including a description of the instruments and their administration; and the analysis of data.

#### Operational Definitions

For the purposes of this study values will be taken to mean a group of concepts of personally desirable standards of behavior.

Adolescence refers to the chronological period between childhood and adulthood, approximately twelve to twenty.

#### Assumptions

The following assumptions have been made about the transmission of values, mothers, peers, and the instruments used:

- 1 Through the process of socialization, parents transmit their values to their children. The peer group also has some influence on adolescent values.
- 2 The mother's values are representative of the values of the parents, as the mother plays a more vital role than the father, in the socialization process.
- 3 A best friend, named by the girl, is representative of the peer group to which she belongs.
- 4 The Differential Value Profile - Form A is a valid

and reliable means of determining parental values.

- 5 The Differential Value Profile - Form B is a valid and reliable means of determining adolescent values.

### Selection of Sample

For this study, the population consisted of all the eighth grade girls, eighty-eight, enrolled in a required first semester home economics course at the Forest Hills Junior High, Grand Rapids, Michigan. There were ten sections in the eighth grade class of approximately thirty students each, fifteen boys and fifteen girls in each section. The students participating in the band were placed in three sections, the students who requested choir were in three other sections, three sections were filled with students who were not enrolled in either band or choir, and the tenth section was for remedial students. Also, all of the students were placed in the sections according to I.Q. results. An attempt was made to have an equal number of above average, average, and below average students in each section. This gave each section, with the exception of the remedial class, an even distribution of abilities. Each eighth grade girl was required to take one semester of art and one semester of home economics. Two sections were combined for a home economics class resulting in approximately thirty girls per class. At the time this instrument was applied, six sections, or three classes, of eighth grade girls were enrolled in the first semester home economics classes. To provide a larger sample, and to



avoid having one-fourth of the population remedial students (as would be the case the second semester) the first semester classes were chosen.

The school is situated in a suburban area that is an out growth of the metropolitan city. All of the girls are from white families and range in socioeconomic status from lower middle to upper middle.

### Criteria

All of the eighty-eight girls enrolled in the home economics classes were given the instrument, and of these thirty student tests were chosen. As a part of the instrument, each girl named her best friend. This best friend was used to represent her peer group. The criteria for choosing the thirty tests to be used was simply selecting the girls who had named other girls who had also taken the test. Of the eighty-eight enrolled in the class, five were absent the day the test was administered, and five others had unusable answer sheets. Forty-five girls indicated their best friend was not enrolled in this school, were in another section and not currently taking home economics, or were otherwise unavailable to be given the instrument. Of the thirty-three remaining instruments, two of the mothers could not be contacted for several weeks. The remaining thirty-one tests were then selected as the group to represent daughters, their friend's test was selected to represent the peer group, and their mothers were contacted. One mother did not respond to the questionnaire, so a set of thirty were available.

## Collection of Data

The Differential Value Profile - Form B was administered to all of the girls in three home economics classes during a regular class period and on the same day. The girls were instructed to fill in the answer sheets according to the directions:

This test has 42 statements which ask for some of your opinions. There are no right or wrong answers. What is wanted is your own individual feeling about the statements. Read each statement carefully and then decide how YOU feel about it. Mark your answer on the proper space on the answer sheet.  
Use only 42 blanks on the answer sheet.

If you Strongly Agree, blacken the space under SA.  
 If you Agree, blacken the space under A.  
 If you Disagree, blacken the space under D.  
 If you Strongly Disagree, blacken the space under SD.

There is no time limit, but do not spend too much time on any one item. Please answer every statement. (49).

A letter was written to each of the mothers and sent home with their daughters along with the instrument Form A. The directions were the same for Form A with the exception of the length of the test, 134 statements were on this form as opposed to 34 on Form B.

### Differential Value Profiles

The Differential Value Profile is a paper and pencil instrument designed to measure six value factors: aesthetic, humanitarian, intellectual, materialistic, power, and religious. Thomas stated the following definition of each value-factor:

**Aesthetic-** The person possessing a high aesthetic value looks at his environment and reacts to it according to its form, symmetry, beauty, and harmony. Each single experience is judged from the standpoint of grace, symmetry, or fitness. He regards life in its beauty. He may not be a creative artist or musician, or even effete; he is aesthetic if he but finds his chief interest in the artistic episodes of life.

**Humanitarian** - The highest motive for this type of person is love of people; whether of one or many, whether conjugal, filial, friendly, or philanthropic. The humanitarian man prizes other persons as ends and is therefore himself kind, sympathetic, and unselfish. In its purest form the social interest is selfless and tends to approach very closely to the religious attitude in some populations. In its stronger form, it must be more than an affluent philanthropist comfortably giving of his means to others. A strong humanitarian value implies self-giving at the expense of oneself.

**Intellectual** - The person with a high intellectual value will place much emphasis on the 'cognitive' aspects of behavior. He will enjoy theoretical pursuits. He will seek to observe and to reason. Since the interests of the intellectual man are empirical, critical, and rational, he will frequently be a scientist or philosopher. A major aim of life is to order and systematize his knowledge. He sees 'reason for Existence' an important concern.

**Material** - The man with high material value looks at his environment in the light of the 'dollar sign.' Economic worth is primary. He is thoroughly practical and will tend to judge an event or object by its tangible benefits. He embraces the practical affairs of the business world -- the production, marketing, and consumption of goods, the elaboration of credit, and the accumulation of tangible wealth. He might conform to the prevailing stereotype of the average American businessman. He sees material value in everything.

**Power** - The person with a high power value looks at everything as a potential means of power and authority. He has an urge for leadership and domination of others. He sees symbols of power in everything. He will enjoy competition and open struggle with others, although this overt demonstration may not always be obvious. He will probably be interested in politics, military positions, or such similar positions. This value may often find itself closely associated with the material value in some populations.

**Religious** - The individual with a high religious value is characterized by commitment to a Higher Purpose. He is mystical and seeks to comprehend the cosmos as a whole and to relate himself to its embracing totality. Spranger defines the religious man as one whose mental structure is permanently directed to the creation of

the highest and absolutely satisfying value experience. The religious man sees something divine in everything. He will usually have a great faith in God and might deny audience with anything that would appear to sever such a close relationship with the Divine. He will attempt to relate religiously to objects and persons in his environment (49).

### Scoring

The subject was instructed to choose strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree as her response to each item. For each value only certain items contributed to the score. The items were scored and each strongly agree and strongly disagree was given a weight of two. Each agree and disagree response was given a weight of one, according to Thomas' scoring procedure (49). The scores were totaled, giving a raw score for each person in each of the six value areas.

### Analysis of Data

Responses of each of the thirty girls were correlated with the scored responses of her mother and the scored responses of the girl's best friend, using the Pearson product moment correlation (52). Thus, for each of the six value areas there were two simple correlation coefficients, one measuring relationship between the values of the teenage child and her mother and the other between the adolescent and her best friend, who was assumed to represent the peer group.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

The findings seemed to indicate there is limited support of the hypothesis. The values of the girls appeared more closely correlated with their mothers' values than with those of their peers.

In the following table the coefficients of correlation compared the girl and friend, and girl and mother on each of the six value areas. The left hand column lists the value areas, the middle column compares the girl with her peer, and the left hand column compares the girl with her mother.

TABLE 2. -- Comparisons of girls and peers and girls and mothers values.

---

Value	Girls and peers	Girls and mothers
Aesthetic	0.1993	0.4260 <sup>a</sup>
Humanitarian	-0.1497	-0.1575
Intellectual	0.1890	0.0852
Materialistic	-0.1936	0.0136
Power	-0.1720	-0.0047
Religious	0.0653	0.5634 <sup>a</sup>

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<sup>a</sup> indicates significance at the 5 per cent level

Aesthetic - There was a positive correlation between both the girls and their peers and the girls and their mothers. The girls

and their mothers correlation was in the significant range, indicating a transmission of values from the mother to her daughter.

Humanitarian - A negative relationship was indicated between the girls and their peers and the girls and their mothers. Neither, however, were in the significant range.

Intellectual - A positive correlation was shown between both groups, but neither were significant.

Materialistic - A negative relationship was indicated between the girls and their peers, and a positive relationship between the girls and their mothers but neither scores were significant.

Power - The correlations of the power value were negative for both the girls and their mothers and the girls and their friends. The relationships were not significant in either case.

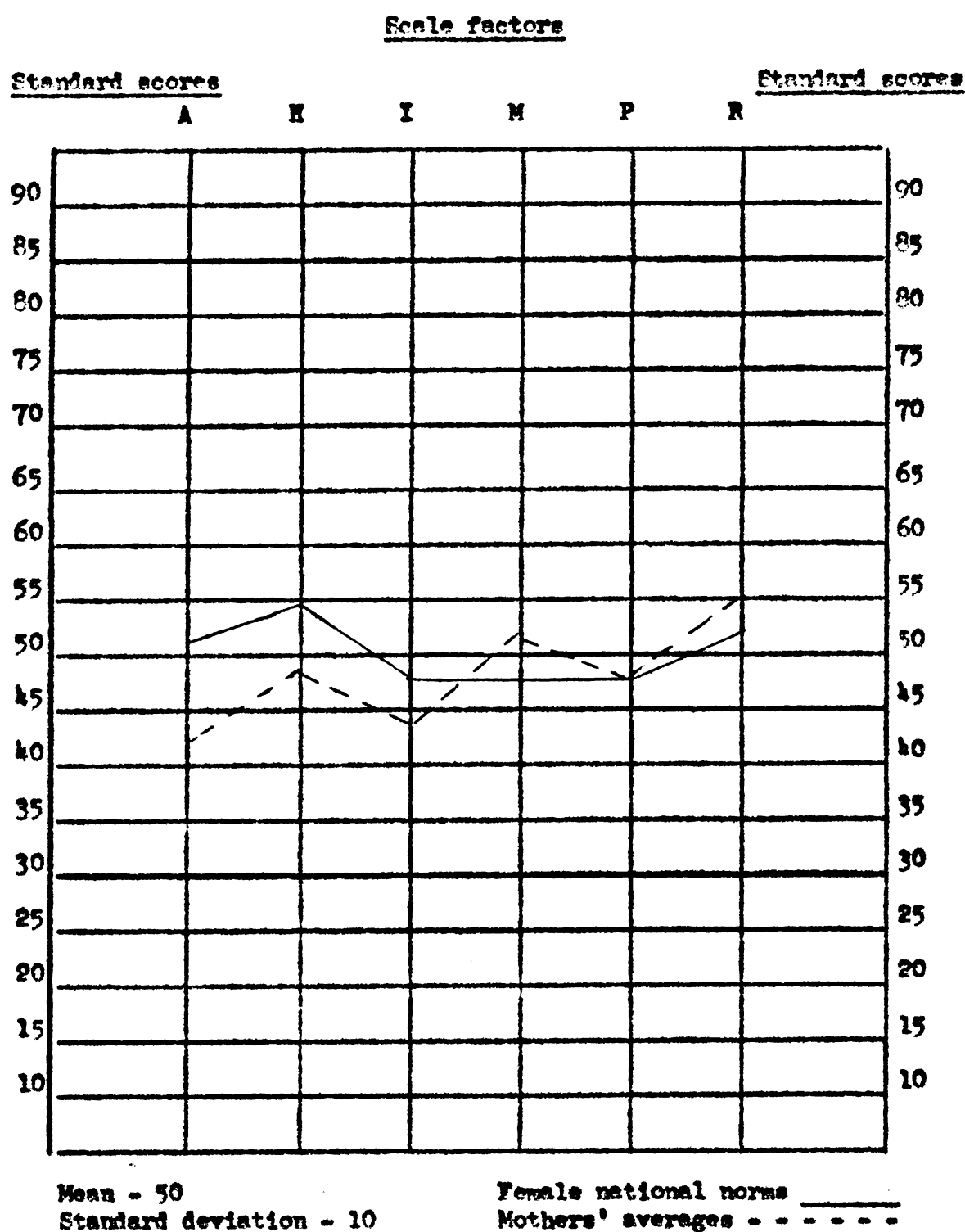
Religious - A significant relationship was shown between the girls and their mothers indicating a transmission of values from mothers to daughters.

#### Comparisons of averages

The following table compares the averages of the mothers' scores with the female national average, as determined by Thomas. The scale factors are based on a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10.

The aesthetic value of the mothers tested was one standard deviation below the female national average. All other mothers' values were similar to the national averages, testing a variance of only one-half of one standard deviation or less.

TABLE 3.-- Comparisons of mothers' averages with female national norms



The national norms for Form B are not available for making similar comparisons between the girls, best friends, and national norms.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY

This chapter will include a summary and the limitations of this study.

#### Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine if adolescent values more closely resembled those of their mothers or their peer group. A non-random sample of thirty girls, their mothers, and a friend, assumed to indicate their peer group, were given the Differential Values Profiles. These instruments were constructed to test six values: aesthetic, humanitarian, intellectual, materialistic, power, and religious.

The findings tended to support the hypothesis that values are transmitted from mothers to their daughters. The positive correlations were aesthetic and religious, indicating that these two values are like those of their mothers. None of the other value scores were in the significant range. This seems to agree with Malm's (36) and Behren's (4) research, as they both felt that the values and standards were transmitted from the parents, and more specifically the mother.

The humanitarian values between the girls and their peers and the girls and their mothers were both in the negative correlation. These inverse relationships could indicate that an individual's humanitarian values are not transmitted nor absorbed from either group. Further

study in this area needs to be made to find the source of the humanitarian value.

The intellectual value showed a higher correlation between the girls and their peers than between the girls and their mothers. Do girls chose friends with a similar intellectual ability, and is there a relationship between the intellectual value and intellectual ability? Further research is needed to answer these questions.

A negative relationship was indicated between the girls and their peers and a slight positive relationship between the girls and their mothers in the materialistic value. Do girls want to dress and have material possessions like those of their peers or are the mothers' desires for material possessions influencing their daughters decisions?

The power value indicated an inverse relationship between both groups. Do dominant individuals chose submissive friends, and do dominant mothers raise submissive daughters? This could be another area for further study.

#### Limitations of this Study

The author would like to briefly mention some basic limitations of this study. The first limitation is that the girls indicated one girl who was assumed to represent her peer group. This may not have been an indicant of her total group.

The second limitation of this study is that girls, at this age, are influenced by many factors which could have changed or influenced their choices the day of the test.

Another limitation is that this was a non-random sample and therefore cannot be used as an indication of a total population. It also

was a relatively small sample consisting of 30 girls, 30 friends, and 30 mothers.

It was assumed that the mothers were the most significant parent in the transmission of values, however, in some families the fathers may have more influence and thus have more influence on their daughter's values.

This study has given some insight into the adolescent period in contemporary America. As we learn more about both the study of values and the affects of social change on the individual, we may be able to more adequately provide guidelines for the adolescent to help him through this transitional period.

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**APPENDIX**

# RAW SCORES FROM THE DATA ANALYSIS

	A	H	I	M	P	R
1. girl	10	5	16	13	14	6
1. peer	4	15	8	5	6	12
1. mother	14	37	17	15	10	46
2. girl	7	15	5	4	1	7
2. peer	1	12	2	6	7	15
2. mother	18	32	24	8	15	22
3. girl	15	16	0	4	6	15
3. peer	3	16	6	6	4	19
3. mother	20	40	19	19	8	35
4. girl	11	8	7	6	3	7
4. peer	8	9	6	9	3	8
4. mother	24	27	13	13	12	19
5. girl	5	10	12	6	6	3
5. peer	3	11	6	8	2	9
5. mother	20	25	25	24	10	44
6. girl	3	11	6	8	2	9
6. peer	6	4	8	13	6	14
6. mother	18	24	30	22	19	16
7. girl	2	7	7	2	4	21
7. peer	1	7	6	9	5	13
7. mother	5	32	15	30	14	61
8. girl	7	10	10	5	4	8
8. peer	13	12	9	11	9	0
8. mother	11	20	32	14	14	27
9. girl	11	14	8	4	5	7
9. peer	10	9	8	5	7	12
9. mother	13	16	33	16	12	26
10. girl	6	12	8	8	13	11
10. peer	10	11	9	4	2	12
10. mother	22	23	24	6	11	24
11. girl	13	10	4	11	3	8
11. peer	2	12	10	7	4	22
11. mother	14	12	29	20	20	25
12. girl	17	16	12	16	6	2
12. peer	8	4	12	11	7	11
12. mother	21	24	21	15	17	23

	A	H	I	M	P	R
13. girl	7	21	10	9	8	2
13. peer	11	18	4	7	2	18
13. mother	7	24	24	40	28	32
14. girl	8	14	9	4	2	1
14. peer	13	10	4	11	3	8
14. mother	22	23	33	19	10	8
15. girl	17	2	6	19	6	2
15. peer	10	7	10	4	8	10
15. mother	15	24	21	14	14	22
16. girl	21	5	7	3	1	16
16. peer	17	2	6	19	6	2
16. mother	24	32	14	9	4	29
17. girl	5	14	12	2	1	9
17. peer	14	13	7	13	15	1
17. mother	12	23	23	19	16	29
18. girl	10	7	10	1	2	10
18. peer	17	2	6	19	6	2
18. mother	22	15	23	17	16	17
19. girl	13	12	9	11	2	0
19. peer	7	10	10	5	4	8
19. mother	24	19	37	13	10	11
20. girl	11	7	5	1	13	11
20. peer	13	8	5	6	11	7
20. mother	25	23	18	10	8	15
21. girl	10	8	11	6	5	9
21. peer	9	9	7	14	4	6
21. mother	14	35	23	16	23	37
22. girl	4	18	13	16	2	9
22. peer	13	12	9	11	9	0
22. mother	15	13	20	27	19	21
23. girl	3	11	1	11	3	5
23. peer	7	17	6	11	3	7
23. mother	10	26	21	31	33	25
24. girl	3	15	7	5	4	13
24. peer	10	7	5	6	4	5
24. mother	10	15	19	17	12	56
25. girl	6	8	10	12	7	3
25. peer	8	6	9	4	4	8
25. mother	26	16	32	9	13	16

	A	H	I	M	P	R
26. girl	9	10	7	4	2	9
26. peer	13	10	4	11	3	8
26. mother	18	35	17	18	10	39
27. girl	4	5	17	9	1	9
27. peer	1	5	6	9	6	24
27. mother	22	22	24	16	12	23
28. girl	8	16	7	3	9	4
28. peer	10	7	10	4	8	10
28. mother	22	28	16	17	13	29
29. girl	18	12	5	8	6	11
29. peer	9	9	7	14	4	6
29. mother	27	20	28	30	20	22
30. girl	9	9	7	14	4	6
30. peer	18	12	5	8	6	11
30. mother	21	26	29	11	13	40

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