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CHAPTER 6

Adolescence: Critical Crossroad in the Path of Gender-Role Development

Jacquelynne Eccles and James Bryan
University of Michigan

As interest in the development of gender-role identity has increased, several models have been proposed. The early models assumed that the ideal final stage of gender-role development was the incorporation of the traditional gender-role structure into one's self-schema and identity (Mussen, 1969). More recently, several theorists have rejected this perspective, suggesting instead that the optimal final stage of gender-role development is androgyny or gender-role transcendence (e.g., Bem, 1976a; Parsons and Bryan, 1978; Spence and Helmreich, 1978; Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp, 1974; Rebecca, Hefner, and Oleshansky, 1976). In each of these models, androgyny or gender-role transcendence is assumed to be a more developmentally mature gender-role identity orientation than the more traditional gender-typed identity and role structure because it allows the person greater flexibility, freedom, and personal choice.[1]

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[1] Although the empirical evidence for this assumption is equivocal, it does appear that females who claim to have both masculine and feminine characteristics and both males and females who engage in a range of activities stereotyped as both "masculine" and "feminine" fare better both psychologically and physically than adults who are more gender-role stereotyped in their self-perceptions and behavioral choices (e.g., Bem, 1976b; Dusek, 1987; Spence and Helmreich, 1978; Waldron, 1982).

Viewed from a developmental perspective, these models, like other similar models of social cognitive and social identity development, assume that most people in this culture pass through a series of stages in their identity development. It is assumed that, as they move through these stages, they go from being relatively conventional and conforming in their gender-role identity to a more individualized, self-reflective gender-role identity—one that they have created for themselves. Several important facets of development are not fully considered in these models. First, it is not clear that the self-reflective gender-role identity people will choose at the most mature stage will be androgynous. Some people at this mature stage of identity development may *choose* what appears to be a traditional gender-role identity; in contrast, others may reject the traditional gender-role structure and *choose* an androgynous or gender-role transcendent identity for themselves. Second, little attention is given to predicting what conditions are necessary to stimulate the passage through the idealized developmental sequence. It is quite likely that many people will never pass into what is hypothesized to be the most mature stage of identity development. Instead, they are likely to incorporate, without much question or self-reflection, the traditional or conventional gender-role structure into their self-system. For example, several researchers have noted that many people appear to get "stuck" in, or "regress" to, the conventional or nonquestioning stage of identity development in the domains of moral reasoning and ego-identity development (e.g., Josselson, 1980; Kohlberg and Gilligan, 1971; Marcia, 1980; Ponzo and Strowig, 1973). Similar developmental trajectories should characterize gender-role identity formation. Some people may incorporate the stereotypic gender-role identity into their self-system without question, others may choose this identity after self-reflection, and still others may create a nonstereotypic gender-role identity for themselves. Why do these different developmental trajectories exist, and under what conditions would we expect a person's gender-role identity to develop toward androgyny or gender-role transcendence? This chapter focuses on these questions.

In order even to describe how gender-role identity might develop—let alone speculate as to what conditions would facilitate development toward an androgynous or gender-role-transcendent identity—we must first review briefly the function of traditional gender roles and discuss the interaction of the individual and society in the process of gender-role acquisition and change. This goal is accomplished in the first section. In the second section, relevant models of social development are discussed. From these models,

hypotheses regarding the influence of maturation on gender-role identity development are generated. Extensions of these models to gender-role identity development are reviewed in section three. In the final section, the social psychological perspective outlined in section one and the developmental perspectives outlined in section two are integrated into a model of gender-role identity development that focuses primarily on identifying the characteristics of the developing person and social environments that could influence growth toward gender-role transcendence.

Gendered Role Structure and Gender-Role Identity

The distribution of roles and tasks within a culture along gender lines (a gendered role structure) is often justified by its proponents with the following set of assumptions: (1) successful performance of the various tasks is facilitated by a person's possession of related psychological characteristics; (2) these psychological characteristics are naturally distributed disproportionately between females and males and are linked to the culture's definition of masculinity and femininity; and (3) therefore it makes sense to assign tasks and roles on the basis of gender and to train males and females to fill their "appropriate" roles. For example, in this culture, the "masculine" cluster of characteristics is linked to the concepts of "agency" (Bakan, 1966) and instrumental competence (Parsons and Bales, 1955), i.e., an orientation toward oneself as an individual against the world or a concern with self-protection, self-assertion, and self-expansion, and an instrumental orientation or a cognitive focus on getting the job done or the problem solved with the greatest possible utility and efficiency. The essence of "femininity" has been described by Bakan (1966) as a "communal" orientation toward self, as being at one with the larger social system, as an affective caring concern for others and for social relationships, and as an expressive sense of feeling and nurturance. Parsons and Bales (1955) characterized this cluster as *expressive competence.*

Since both sets of characteristics are essential for survival of the group, societies must make sure that both types of characteristics are available among the people in the culture. One way to make sure this happens is to train one sex in the "masculine" cluster and the other in the "feminine" cluster. A gendered role structure is the likely consequence of this solution. This role structure emerges as tasks are allocated in accord with the personal orientations and interests assumed to be linked to these tasks—for example, caretaking is assigned to the sex presumed to be predisposed psychologically to

this task. Once in place, a gendered role structure can justify itself because tasks are allocated to those who are presumed to be best suited to perform them (Holter, 1970). As a consequence of these assumptions, gendered division of both traits and labor and the traditional pattern of gendered socialization goals are seen as both natural and functional.

These beliefs are passed along as basic components of acculturation into society's particular cognitive orientation and system of role differentiation and assignment (Inkeles, 1968) to ultimately become "zero-order" beliefs (Bem and Bem, 1970), invisible to all but the most objective observers. For children, motivated to seek social competence (Kohlberg, 1969), gender is among the most concrete and fundamental of social categories, and so they readily pick up the particular abilities assumed in their culture to be associated with gender—for example, in this culture, instrumental competence coupled with limited expressive competence for males, and expressive competence coupled with relative lowered instrumental competence for females (Baumrind, 1972). And, finally, in seeking a sense of personal competence through social conformity, many people simply do not distinguish between the prescriptive and descriptive functions of gender-role stereotypes—the difference between the way things *are* and other ways things possibly could, and perhaps should, be.

This system has come about, and been maintained, for a variety of social, economic, and political reasons. Holter (1970) notes that as one of society's functional distributive systems, gender roles imply differentiation and specialization of particular tasks that should increase overall efficiency, provided that the specialized efforts are coordinated. On a personal level, knowing one's abilities, responsibilities, and "place" on the basis of one's gender lends a great deal of structured security to at least one part of one's identity—that part based on gender. Examples of such division of labor are common and need not be elaborated here; in general, both the efficiency and security arguments are understandable from the perspective of the culture. A system in which one gender specializes in caring for the children and household while the other is responsible for supporting and maintaining the family unit is simpler than a system in which both genders share equally in all tasks, with less specialization and fewer clear-cut responsibilities. In the former type of social system, everyone knows his or her role and can expect to mate with someone who shares a complementary view of his or her own role. In the latter system people have to decide which tasks they will do and

have to negotiate role sharing with the other members of their social group.

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

Some people discover that they do not fit into the normative behavioral and attitudinal categories assigned to them. They reach a point of cognitive and ego development at which a personal sense of competence becomes separated from, and more important than, the socially defined, role-associated sense of competence. These people may come to view their society's gender-role prescriptions as an inappropriate, inhibiting metric for self-definition; they may come to prefer a more gender-role-transcendent self-schema (Markus, 1977), e.g., they may no longer find the societal definitions of what it means to be a competent male or female as relevant criteria for evaluating either their own actions or the actions of others. Although gender identity, the personal sense of being a man or a woman, may still be an important source of self-definition, identification with the traditional gender role may not be (cf. Spence and Sawin, 1985).

Reaching this level, of course, calls for a special person in a special set of circumstances. "Special" here refers to the unique matching between person and circumstance antecedent to gender-role transcendence. Many people may never feel restricted by the stereotypic gender-role structure; in fact, they may find this potentially restrictive environment quite comfortable. The potential to change comes when the person and the environment no longer match, creating a state of "gender-role strain"—the state of being aware of the discrepancies between a person's perceptions of her or his own personal characteristics, interests, and goals, on the one hand and the standards associated with the traditional gender-role norms in the person's cultural group, on the other (Garnets and Pleck, 1979). According to several developmental theories, this condition of strain or

crisis is necessary to establish the potential for growth, in the sense that all human development is a process of resolving such crises, of restoring synchrony between the biological, social, and psychological aspects of a whole person (e.g., Kohlberg, 1969; Piaget and Inhelder, 1969; Riegel, 1975).

The key issue here, though, is that *not everyone resolves such crises (if experiencing them at all) in the same way*. Depending upon the personal and situational variables leading up to the gender-role strain, one may indeed reject social limitations and seek a personally chosen value orientation (e.g., becoming a "liberated" woman or man through the emergence of what Kohlberg calls the "morality of self-accepted moral principles"). Alternatively, one may resolve the crisis by falling back even more rigidly into what Kohlberg calls the "morality of conventional role-conformity" (e.g., becoming a "total woman" or a "marathon man"). The outcome depends upon both the person and his or her social situation. Whereas a more general cultural shift away from the traditional assignment of roles and tasks along gendered lines will encourage and validate androgyny in those so inclined, it may increase pressure and thus increase the adherence to the traditional gendered roles in others. And even when socially restrictive or facilitative effects are present, the rejection of a traditional gender-role identity with the consequent creation of a new more individualized gender-role identity or a gender-role-transcendent identity is fundamentally a personal matter. Finding within oneself the ability to act and feel in both the conventionally defined "masculine" and "feminine" ways (or in neither "masculine" nor "feminine" ways), according to what one perceives as appropriate for oneself in a given situation, ultimately rests upon growth along underlying cognitive and ego dimensions. It is to these developmental processes that we now turn.

Individual Development

Development as conceptualized by Riegel (1975) progresses along four interdependent dimensions: (a) the inner-biological, (b) the individual-psychological, (c) the cultural-sociological, and (d) the outer-physical. This dialectic theory emphasized that the changing progression of events along these four dimensions is not always synchronized, and that the loss of synchrony at any time in a person's life results in conflict or crisis. Through the process of restoring the lost balance, the individual matures—is internally strengthened. Erikson (1968) described this concept of crisis not "as a threat of catastrophe, but a turning point, a crucial period of in-

creased vulnerability and heightened potential, and therefore, the ontogenetic source of generational strength and maladjustment" (p. 96).

Mehrabian (1968) described a cognitive-developmental approach to personality theory compatible with this view of growth through crisis resolution. He noted that little development takes place during the "steady state" of cognitive functioning, marked by the assimilation of information into existing cognitive schemes. Growth is catalyzed by crisis states of "cognitive inadequacy" that may involve a regression to earlier modes of functioning; these states are dominated by extremes of accommodation to novel contexts and an openness to new and alternative modes. Attempts at resolving the crisis are seen as transition states, during which the person strives to resynchronize the situational context with a new cognitive scheme. Transition implies a movement from old, maladaptive conditions to a hierarchically more mature "steady state," which may, in time, also become inadequate.

Development through crisis formation and resolution, as we have described it, implies a hierarchy of functioning along each of the dialectical dimensions; by attaining synchrony and successfully adapting to new contexts, people gradually broaden their repertoire of cognitive schemata and become increasingly capable of dealing with more complex situations. The nature and direction of this sequential hierarchy has been described in similar terms by different cognitive and ego-stage theorists, in particular Kohlberg, Erikson, and Loevinger. These theorists all describe a graduated process of inner psychological growth, mediated by an active interaction between the person and the environment, culminating in autonomous levels of functioning in which the person integrates once conflicting and differentiated aspects of his or her personality in a more complex, self-defined identity. Because these theorists have so directly influenced thinking about identity development, we turn now to a discussion of their work as it relates to gender-role identity development. The theoretical perspectives to be discussed are summarized in Table 1.

Kohlberg

Kohlberg's (1966, 1969) model is concerned with the overriding *structure* of people's views—the framework of their reasoning process, the style with which they reason about moral issues, and the developmental changes in these structures, rather than the *content* of people's thoughts. According to Kohlberg, moral reasoning

Table 1

Current Moral and Ego-Development Stage Models

Kohlberg	Erikson	Loevinger
Pre-moral	Trust vs. Mistrust	Presocial
Punishment and Obedience	Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt	Impulsive
		Self-Protective
Naive Instrumental Hedonism	Initiative vs. Guilt	Conformist
	Industry vs. Inferiority	Conscientious-Conformist
Good Relations and Approval	Identity vs. Role Diffusion	
	Intimacy vs. Isolation	Conscientious
Law and Order	Generativity vs. Stagnation	Individualistic
Social Contract Legalistic	Ego Integrity vs. Despair	Autonomous
Universally, Ethically Principled		Integrated

develops through three major stages: the *preconventional*, the *conventional*, and the *postconventional*.

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

Kohlberg hypothesizes, based on Piagetian stage theory, that adolescence marks the period of transition from the conventional to the postconventional stage. He notes that "the central phenomenon of adolescence is the discovery of the self as something unique, uncertain, and questioning in its position in life" (Kohlberg and Gilligan, 1971, p. 1052). It is in adolescence that a person is first capable of formulating autonomous moral principles, of reasoning in

a self-sufficient way apart from the encompassing authority of society. Since gender-role transcendence also depends on the separation of one's own identity from one's conformity to social norms, it seems that the transition into the postconventional stage may have its parallel in the transition from an identity based on conformity to the conventional gender roles of one's culture to an identity that transcends the conventional gender-role structure.

Erikson

Like Kohlberg, Erikson (1968) conceptualizes development as a series of stages, each stage representing a crisis created by a person's level of development and the socialization demands he or she faces. Optimal growth depends on the successful resolution of each of these crises. Unsuccessful resolution can lead to stagnation and a continuing functional preoccupation with the unresolved level. It is important here that this process reflects dialectical growth, in which a person is able to incorporate elements from lower stages into current schemata, even while forming new transcendent schemata.

Although Erikson posits the existence of eight stages, one in particular seems relevant for our understanding of gender-role development: identity vs. role confusion. It is during this stage that a person can develop a potentially stable self-schema that will guide subsequent role choices and goals. Central to this process will be the resolution of the gender-role identity crisis. To the extent that traditional gender-role definitions are incorporated into one's self-schema, then one's gender-role identity will be stereotyped. To the extent that a person does not rely on societal definitions of "appropriate" identities, he or she may move away from a culturally defined, traditional gender-role identity.

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

Is there any evidence that these two processes do emerge in an interactive fashion? Is it true that identity formation and moral reasoning move toward autonomy and integration, and away from conformity, in synchrony? Podd (1972) was one of the first researchers to attempt to answer this question. He related the

constructs of ego-identity and cognitive/moral stages through a series of interviews with male college juniors and seniors. Ego-identity status was operationally defined according to Erikson's four levels of ego development: (1) *identity achievement*—has gone through an identity crisis and made a commitment to a particular identity; (2) *moratorium*—is in crisis and has not yet made any commitments to specific identities; (3) *foreclosure*—has experienced no crisis, but has made commitments to goals and values of parents or other significant people; (4) *identity diffusion*—is not in crisis and has made no commitments. Social cognitive development was defined in terms of Kohlberg's six moral stages. About two-thirds of the "morally principled" subjects were described as having achieved a mature identity status. Furthermore, subjects transitional in identity formation were also transitional with respect to moral orientation; none of the morally transitional subjects had an identity achievement status, and very few had foreclosed identity questioning (Kohlberg and Gilligan, 1971). Other studies have reported similar associations among development levels in various social cognitive domains (e.g., Marcia, 1980; Noam, Hauser, Santostefano, Garrison, Jacobson, Powers, and Mead, 1984; Waterman, 1982). But work over the last ten to fifteen years also demonstrates that development is not characterized by smooth linear patterns. People can be at multiple stages at the same time; they move in and out of these stages depending on the situation. Regression to earlier stages is not uncommon, especially in times of transition or stress; development through the series of identity stages seems more cyclical than linear—particularly with regard to fluctuations between the identity diffusion, moratorium, and identity achievement sub-stages; and females and males show different developmental patterns (e.g., Adams and Fitch, 1982; Grotevant, 1985; Grotevant and Cooper, 1985; Mallory, 1989; Marcia, 1980; Mellor, 1989; Waterman, 1982).

Loevinger

Loevinger's (1966, 1976) stage model of ego-development is similar to the models of both Kohlberg and Erikson. Her formulation of the direction that development may take is strikingly similar to the others in terms of changes in a person's conception of norms, values, role-taking, and the self—all of which are encompassed by her concept of *ego*—"the unity of the personality, individuality, method of facing problems, opinion about oneself and the problems of life, whole attitude to life, and schema of life" (Loevinger, 1976, p. 9). Her stage approach is compatible with the other models discussed thus far in

that it is characterized by the same assumptions: an invariant hierarchical sequence of irreversible structural and qualitative change. Furthermore, these stages imply a discontinuity in the progression marked by particular turning points she calls "milestones" and uses to characterize each step in the sequence (Loevinger, 1966, 1976). Moving from milestone to milestone involves a dialectical process, and thus must be intepreted in terms of all the interacting dimensions as they go from change to constancy. Finally, her model also points to adolescence as an important period for the movement away from a conforming ego identity.

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

In conclusion, then, each of these models points to adolescence as a key period in the developmental timetable. But, most important for this chapter, each of these theorists points to adolescence as a critical period in the formation and solidification of a postconventional identity—an identity not based on socially prescribed roles, but reflecting one's own goals and experiences. In addition, each of these theorists points out how few people actually achieve the status of postconventionality. Many people remain, more or less, at the conventional level of development or in the transitional space between the conventional and postconventional levels of social development. Apparently, the social milieu necessary to support movement into the postconventional level is not part of the life space of many people in this culture.

The importance of adolescence is made even more salient if one considers it with reference to Riegel's dialectical model. Viewed from this crisis resolution model, adolescence can be seen as a period in which the simultaneous changes occurring in all levels create great potential for either rapid growth or regression. On the inner-biological level, adolescence begins with the first glimmers of

puberty. Among the many other rapid physiological changes in this period, the appearance of secondary sex characteristics and the maturation of the primary sex organs transform the young adolescent into a fully sexual being; it is in adolescence that the power to have sex emerges most dramatically to influence thoughts and to direct purposive behaviors (Sorenson, 1973). As with other elements of growth, the development of sexuality is a mixed blessing. With sexuality, strong and distinct conflicts between points of view can produce a major identity crisis in the adolescent.

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

In addition, adults may change the messages they give adolescents about acceptable behavior as the adolescents' bodies become more adult. According to Hill and Lynch (1983), parents and teachers, as well as peers, respond to the physical changes associated with puberty with increased pressure to act in the traditional gender-role stereotypic way. Girls, in particular, may come under pressure at this point to give up their "tomboyish" ways for a more "feminine" and refined manner. They may be told that it is time to begin thinking about what it will take to get a good mate and to orient themselves to the needs of others (cf. Gilligan, Lyons, and Hammer, 1990). Such pressure may well precipitate an identity crisis for girls as they have to reconcile the freedom they have been allowed during their middle childhood years with the new messages regarding the importance of "femininity" and preparation for the traditional female role. Similarly, boys may come under increased pressure "to act like a man," especially if they have more stereotypic feminine interests such as art or dance. Signs of "femininity" may

now be reacted to as if they were indicators of the boys' sexual orientation, leading to increased pressure to avoid interests or personal characteristics associated with femininity as the boys move into, and through, adolescence.

But adolescent development in sexuality is influenced by forces that extend beyond the family and the peer group into the perceived cultural milieu. Adolescents are concerned with shaping their rapidly developing identity into a "socially acceptable" role. And at this sociocultural level, gender roles are also likely to surface as a major determinant of social acceptability during this period. Stereotypic gender roles are likely to influence adolescents' beliefs about how one "should" walk, talk, shake hands, eat, dress, laugh, cry, compete, work . . . and even think. For the adolescent, placing one's own sense of a physically male or female body into a socially acceptable package is what developing gender-role identity is all about.

Whether a particular adolescent discovers that his or her society's ideal of masculine and feminine traits may not apply to what she or he wishes to become will depend on the adolescent's subsequent experiences. Empirical work on both social cognitive development and change in political attitude highlight the importance of the sociocultural context to this type of development. Kohlberg (1969), for instance, provides an excellent example of how the culture influences the developmental course of people's understanding of the nature of dreams. In most cultures, young children believe that dreams are real. As they grow up, their understanding of dreams changes; but the nature of this change depends on the culture in which the child lives. In Western cultures, children come to view dreams as mental pictures they generate themselves. In cultures that believe dreams can contain messages from spirits, children appear to follow a developmental trajectory similar to that of Western children (i.e., their view of dreams shifts from the belief that dreams are real events to a belief that dreams are internally generated mental pictures) but then return to a belief that dreams can be generated by influences outside the dreamer.

Similarly, studies of political socialization have shown that major transgenerational shifts in political attitudes come about when adolescents are placed in a sociocultural environment that confronts them with new beliefs and provides normative support for attitude change (Sears, 1969). For example, Newcomb and his colleagues, in a study of political attitude change, found that attending a liberal college did induce a change in young adults' political attitudes—they become more liberal while attending the college (Newcomb, Koenig, Flacks, and Warwick, 1967). These newly

acquired liberal attitudes, however, persisted only if the young adults moved into a liberal community after they left college. Thus, it is clear that the sociocultural milieu in which adolescent growth takes place will influence the course of that development.

The sociocultural milieu of adolescence affects development in another important way. Adolescence is a time when people in this culture make important choices that influence the adult roles they will enter in their twenties. Adolescents make choices regarding marriage, course enrollment, high school and college major, careers, personal moral codes, and perhaps political ideology. Each of these choices will influence the social milieu they are likely to inhabit as adults. And because these decisions influence a person's adult sociocultural milieu, life choices made in adolescence and new attitudes formed during adolescence tend to become permanent throughout the adult years (Newcomb et al., 1967; Rogers, 1972). All in all, then the dialectical products of adolescence are decisive in forming and shaping the adult-to-be and in supplying the impetus for growth beyond the level of conformity. Equally important, the dialectical products of adolescence also increase the risk for "regression" and the rigidification of an identity based on the culturally defined, conventional gender-role structure.

Gender-Role Development

As we have seen, the theoretical similarities between the cognitive- and ego-developmental approaches to adolescent growth and psychological maturity are quite striking. Each has presented a model of development that characterizes the person as moving through the following idealized sequence: (1) preconventional orientation dominated by the desire to both avoid punishment and gratify impulses; (2) a period of rigid conformity to, and defense of, perceived societal norms; (3) a questioning period of ambivalence and conflict between once-accepted norms and new self-evolved beliefs; and (4) a period of more integrated resolution and identity based on self-determined principles and values.

Eccles (Parsons) and Bryan (Parsons and Bryan, 1978), Pleck (1975), and others (e.g., Rebecca, Hefner, and Oleshansky, 1976) have suggested that a similar sequence might characterize the modal course of gender-role development in this culture, or any other culture in which gender roles are salient. Empirical data have provided some support for the suggested utility of extending a cognitive-developmental perspective to the development of gender-role identity. For example, Haan, Smith, and Block (1968) evaluated the adjec-

tive Q-sort self-descriptions of male and female college students across the levels of moral reasoning to see if people at higher levels of cognitive-moral maturity were also more androgynous (i.e., described themselves using both agentic and communion terms); they were. The adjectives checked by both men and women at a preconventonal, opportunitistic level were similar in that both sexes endorsed primarily agentic characteristics. Subjects who scored at the conventional level of moral reasoning chose adjectives stressing conformity to the traditional gender role associated with their sex. In contrast, among the subjects who scored at the postconventional level of moral reasoning, the males endorsed more communal, but not fewer agentic, self-descriptors than conventional males, whereas females showed a greater acceptance of both agentic and communal adjectives than conventional females.

In a similar study based upon level of ego maturity as measured by Loevinger's (1976) Sentence Completion index method, the same pattern emerged (Block, 1973). Impulse-ridden high-school males and females concerned with the instrumental satisfaction of personal needs described themselves primarily in agentic terms. Among the high schoolers scoring at the conformity level of ego development, males and females described themselves in terms of the gender-role stereotypic characteristics associated with their sex. And, among adolescents scoring at the highest level of ego development, the males endorsed terms like "idealistic," "sensitive," and "sympathetic," as well as the more agentic terms. Similarly, the young women endorsed both female-stereotyped adjectives such as "sensitive," "altruistic" and more male-stereotyped adjectives such as "self-centered," "restless," and "effective."

Extensions and Developmental Models

Two groups of researchers have proposed stage models of gender-role development: Pleck (1975) and Rebecca and her associates (1976a, 1976b, 1978). Four investigators have extended either Kohlberg's or Loevinger's model of development to gender-role development: Kohlberg (1966); Ullian (1976); Eccles (Parsons, 1978; Parsons and Bryan, 1978); and Block (1973). Both Kohlberg (1966) and Parsons (1978) focused, for the most part, on early childhood and therefore will not be discussed here. Each of the other models will be reviewed briefly, focusing attention, where relevant, on their discussion of the adolescent period. The models are summarized in Table 2.

Pleck. In one of the first published developmental models of androgynous gender-role development, Pleck (1975) outlined three

Table 2

Extensions of Stage Models to Gender-Role Development

Block	Pleck/Rebecca Hefner and Oleshansky (1976)	Rebecca Oleshansky, Hefner, and Nordin	Ullian	Parsons and Bryan
Development of gender identity, self-assertion, self-expression, self interest	Undifferentiated Gender Role	Undifferentiated Sex Role	Biological Orientation Level I: Masculinity and femininity conceptualized in biological terms and seen as biologically based.	Undifferentiated Gender Role
Gender role as extension of self, self-enhancement	Gender Role Polarization	Hyper-differentiated Sex Role Stage IIA: Transitional Stage 1—Some sense of sex roles but no differential value attached. Children are forced to comply with their knowledge of sex differences.	Level II: Masculinity and femininity seen as separable from biology.	Hyper-Gender Role Differentiation
Conformity to external role, development of sex-role stereotypes, bifurcation of sex role		Stage IIB Children come to accept differentially valued view of traditional sex roles. Masculinity and femininity seen as mutually exclusive, polar opposites.	Societal Orientation Level I: Masculinity and femininity seen as inherent in social role and as essential for maintanance of social order.	Gender Role Differentiation
Examination of self as sex-role exemplar relative to internalized values.		Stage IIC: Transitional Stage 2—Androgyny Individual moves away from rigid conceptualization of sex roles. Masculinity and femininity, while still salient, are not seen as mutually exclusive prescriptive roles.	Level II: Growing awareness of arbitrariness of social roles.	Transition, Phase I
Differentiation of sex role, coping with conflicting masculine-feminine parts of self	Transition to Androgyny		Psychological Orientation Level I: Masculinity and femininity, while not biologically based, are essential to mental health.	Transition, Phase II
Achievement of individually defined sex-role	Gender Role Transcendence	Sex Role Transcendence Sex roles become irrelevant social categories.	Level II: Rejection of Level I and endorsement of personally defined identity.	Gender-Role Transcendence

stages of growth and pointed out the concern as to whether all persons will continue to grow into the third and final stage of androgyny. To quote:

> In the first phase of gender-role development, the child has amorphous and unorganized gender-role concepts, including confusion over the child's own gender. In the second phase children learn the "rules" of gender role differentiation and are motivated to make others and themselves conform to them. Such learning represents a great cognitive advance beyond the earlier stage, but in this intermediate stage persons are most rigid and intolerant of deviations from gender-role norms in themselves and others. In the third and final stage of gender-role development, individuals transcend these gender-role norms and boundaries, and develop psychological androgyny in accordance with their inner needs and temperaments. . . . The analogy drawn here between masculinity-femininity development and moral development suggests that though there is a developmental phase of traditional masculinity-femininity development, peaking in early adolescence, its role in the life cycle is limited. The great risk in development is not that persons may fail to reach this stage, but that they may never leave it. (Pleck, 1975, pp. 172–73)

Ullian. Using a clinical inteview format similar to that used by Kohlberg in devising his model of moral development, Ullian (1976) asked seventy boys and girls ranging in age from six to eighteen about their gender-role conceptualizations. She predicted (1) that there would be "age related changes in the mode of conceptualizing male and female differences," resulting from cognitive and social development; (2) that it is necessary to distinguish between the descriptive and prescriptive functions of gender-role judgments in tracing the developmental shifts in these judgments; and (3) that gender-role development can proceed through a stage of social conformity to a stage analogous to "androgyny." Based on her interviews she suggested the developmental stage model summarized in Table 2.

Block. Block (1973) has extended Loevinger's model of ego development to include the person's conceptions of gender role at each stage (see Table 2). Since we are primarily interested in adolescence we will focus on Block's discussion of the passage from the "conformity" to "integrated" stage. According to Block, *conforming* persons are most concerned with accepting the ways of their social order first, and understanding them later. Thus, their behavior is influenced by the prescriptive function of gender-role stereotypes. At the *conscientious* level, a person is more concerned with the growing differences between these traditional gender roles and their changing set of values. Block (1973) explains that at this level

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

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

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

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

Summary. Each of these models suggests that the more mature stages of gender-role development are characterized by some form of transcendence from the culture's traditional gender-role structure. Like the models from which they grew, however, these three extensions have understated the importance of the vast array of sociocultural forces that are impinging on the adolescent, and have not dealt sufficiently with the period of transition and the forces that must be present to ensure development to a "higher" stage. Cognitive and ego-developmental stage theories describe the optimal pattern for development. Cognitive maturational changes may be necessary for the emergence of a postconventional, self-defined gender-role identity—but are they sufficient? A dialectical analysis suggests not. Growth and development depend upon several conditions, maturational change being only one. While cognitive maturity may make gender-role transcendence a possibility, cognitive growth on the content level depends on the availability of "discrepant" input that would lead to accommodation of existing stereotypic schemata. In addition, the person's life situation must be such that gender-role transcendence is a better alternative for the adolescent than gender-

role conformity. If gender-role transcendence does not offer an attractive alternative, or if the adolescent sees no conflict between his own abilities and goals and the behaviors and goals prescribed by a stereotypic gender role, or if the stereotypic gender role is not important to the person, then no conflict will be engendered and growth may not occur. Again, sociocultural conditions influence the likelihood of each of these events. As such, they must be key factors in one's development toward gender-role transcendence. The importance of sociocultural conditions also makes it unlikely that growth will follow a smooth, linear pattern. Shifts in sociocultural experience are likely to stimulate continued cycling through the identity formation process—leading to regression at times, followed by a reassessment of one's self-schema and possibly the creation of a new identity system. Given both the theoretical arguments presented above and the supporting empirical evidence, it is surprising that more attention has not been given to the issue of transition from a conventional gender-role identity to gender-role transcendence and to the sociocultural factors that influence transition. It is these issues that the next two models have tried to address explicitly.

Models emphasizing the importance of experience

Rebecca, Oleshansky, Hefner, and Nordin. Becoming dissatisfied with androgynous models and with the oversimplification of the gender-role differentiated period, Rebecca et al. (1976a) modified the basic Pleck model. Their model added an additional stage to the developmental sequence: gender-role transcendence. It also divided up the hyper-differentiated phase into three periods: a transitional period in which gender-role schemata are not yet rigid cognitive structures that motivate behavioral compliance: a solidified period in which gender-role schemata have become rigid standards for self evaluation; and a second transitional period in which gender-role schemata lose their prescriptive function, allowing the person greater behavioral latitude.

Rebecca et al. (1976a, 1976b) argued that development does not necessarily reflect a linear progression from undifferentiated to differentiated to undifferentiated. They also pointed out the importance of the social milieu in determining changes in the rigidity of one's gender-role schemata. Furthermore, they noted the importance of the early adolescent subculture in producing an increase in the rigidity of the gender-role schemata during Stage II B. Their stress on the role of social forces in interaction with individual development provides one of the first clear articulations of the processes that may accelerate or impede gender-role identity development.

Eccles and Bryan. Eccles (Parsons) and Bryan (Parsons and Bryan, 1978) proposed a stage model of gender-role development that is similar in format to those of Kohlberg (1966), Block (1973), Pleck (1975), Rebecca et al. (1976b, 1978), and Ullian (1976). It differs from these other models in its focus on the sociocultural conditions that should influence the development of gender-role identity at the individual level. Heavily influenced by the works of Piaget, Kohlberg, and Loevinger, by the dialectical proposition espoused by Riegel, and by the work in social psychology, their model stressed the importance of the social context both as a precursor of change and as the environmental element that supports change once it has occurred. It also stressed the importance of questioning, self-evaluation, and psychological conflict. Finally, it focused on adolescence as a period of transition because during this period of life, a person has both sufficient cognitive maturity to engage in the process of self-reflection and sufficient role flexibility to experiment with alternative selves.

They based their model on the following assumptions:

1. Growth is multiply determined and is based on a conflict between the various forces impinging on a person across the life span. Although not exhaustive, the forces suggested by Riegel (1975) and enumerated in the introduction to this paper are key to understanding development.

2. Adolescence is a period in which the following three forces are almost inevitably in conflict: biological (both cognitive and sexual maturation), psychological (emotional and moral), and sociocultural. It is also a period in which adult social roles are still being chosen and, therefore, one's future life is still flexible. Consequently, it is likely to be one of the periods in one's lifetime when the possibility for the emergence of gender-role transcendent thinking and the commitment to a self-defined gender-role identity are at a maximum. However, given the nature of the gender-role conflict likely to characterize this period, it is also a time when regression to a conventional gender-role identity is also most likely. The developmental trajectory a person ends up on will depend on the sociocultural milieu the person is in during this period of heightened sensitivity to gender-role identity development.

3. The relationship between sociocultural milieu and development is interactive; that is, while the sociocultural milieu influences development, one's developmental level also influences the sociocultural milieu to which one is exposed. As a consequence, people may choose to expose themselves to challenging social/cultural environments. Such challenging milieux are often created through political-historical changes. Such externally generated, historically based changes can alter a person's immediate sociocultural milieu in ways that initiate a conflict between that milieu and the person's psychological frame (or gender-role identity).

4. Because so many forces influence development, the surface manifestations of growth will be much less regular than suggested by either the cognitive/developmental or the ego-development theorists. For example, with the potential for change comes the potential for regression to early modes of thought, especially at periods of transition (Mehrabian, 1968). Also given the role of social milieu, change in this element can reignite developmental change at different points in the life cycle.

5. Growth depends on a sociocultural milieu that provides both the basis for conflict to emerge and the supports needed for growth to a higher level of functioning.

6. The potential for growth, once it has emerged, continues to be present despite apparent rigidification of the system. That is, growth potential, while optimal in adolescence, is not lost once one enters "adulthood." Continued adult development is inhibited more by the rigidity of the social roles one finds oneself in than by the passage to another developmental stage. Consequently, major shifts in social roles, like the children leaving home, or divorce/widowhood, should have an effect on the course of gender-role identity development somewhat comparable to the effect of adolescence. The outcome of this renewed crisis will again depend on the person's sociocultural milieu at the time of the crisis. Similarly, major changes in the sociocultural milieu (for example, the advent of the women's movement) can precipitate a reevaluation of one's gender-role identity, particularly if one's personal circumstances allow one to explore new alternatives.

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

8. Much of gender-role acquisition is based on self-socialization—the self-motivated acquisition of behavior patterns and personal characteristics driven by the desire to be a competent person in one's social milieu.

Based on these assumptions, and on the issues discussed up to this point, Parsons and Bryan proposed the following heuristic model of gender-role identity development. Evidence reviewed by Huston (1983) and Carter (1987) supports the hypotheses laid out for Stages I–III. Less relevant evidence is available for the hypotheses laid out for Stages IV–V. Some of this evidence is reviewed later in this paper.

Stage I. *Undifferentiated gender roles* (approximately ages 0–2 years). The child is unaware of gender as a social category and has not learned or developed gender-role stereotypic beliefs.

Stage II. *Hyper-gender-role differentiation* (ages 2–7 years). Gender becomes an important and very salient social category. Children actively seek to learn their culture's gender-role system, and, in so doing, generate their own gender-role stereotypes that are quite consistent with the commonly held stereotypes in their culture. Belief in gender constancy emerges late in this period, along with rather rigid stereotypes regarding the proper and normative gender distribution of activities, dress, and social roles, and some personal characteristics such as strength and power. Gender-role conceptualizations are both descriptive and prescriptive, and the distinction between gender identity and gender-role identity is not clear. But, because preschoolers do not integrate their cognitive beliefs with their behavior, gender differences in behavior will not be as great as one would expect based on the rigidity and the prescriptive nature of their gender-role belief system.

Stage III. *Gender-role differentiation* (ages 7–11 years). Cognitive maturation has laid the groundwork for the differentiation of gender identity from gender-role identity. The child is now capable of separating external manifestations and changes from internal stable constructs like gender identity. Consequently, the child comes to realize that girls and boys can do many different things without altering their sex. But the emergence of conventional moral thought and a growing awareness of social roles may lead the child to maintain his or her belief in the prescriptive nature of stereotypes, particularly if this view is reinforced by the social actors in the child's life. For boys, this belief is reinforced not only by their peers' and parents' strong negative reactions to feminine gender-role stereotyped be-

haviors but also by the cultural value structure. Boys' stereotypic behaviors are both more fun and more prestigious. For girls, however, adherence to the female stereotype is neither as much fun nor as prestigious. In addition, for females, engaging in behaviors typically associated with the male gender-role is less likely to be punished than engaging in female-stereotyped behavior is for boys. Consequently, conflict is created for girls, and the sociocultural environment is supportive of alternative behavioral solutions. Girls should then begin questioning the prescriptive nature of gender roles during this period, may engage in behavior stereotypically associated with both males and females, and may begin to move toward androgyny in their own gender-role identities.

Stage IV. *Transition Phase I* (12–16). Cognitive maturation has now opened the possibility of considering a new social order and of distinguishing at a more complex level between the descriptive and prescriptive functions of gender-role stereotypes. Major sociocultural and physiological changes also begin taking place. The child is expected to become a sexual being and to begin relating to members of the other gender. The basis for social approval and popularity shifts from acceptance by one's own gender peer group to acceptance by both gender peer groups. Parents, teachers, and other adults may also increase efforts to socialize traditional gender-role values and goals. There may also be an increase in the extent to which both adults and peers treat girls and boys differently (cf. Hill and Lynch, 1983). To the extent that one's self-esteem becomes tied to this newly emerging social system, an identity crisis will be induced by the need to acquire, rapidly, the behaviors necessary for acceptance by the other gender. Young adolescents may lose confidence in themselves (cf. Gilligan et al., 1990). Given the absence of clear models of behavioral alternatives, the lack of sophistication of the peer group, and the link of social acceptance to gender roles, early adolescents may well "regress" to gender-role conceptualizations they had formed during Stage II and Stage III. Thus, despite the cognitive capacity to transcend the prescriptive functions of stereotypes, sociocultural forces may produce a rigidification of gender-role schema and a re-emergence of confusion between gender identity and gender-role identity. This process should be especially evident in the adolescents who place great importance on social success with their peers of the opposite sex. Since many females perceive their primary role in life to be that of wife and mother, they are particularly likely to fall into that group of adolescents for whom gender-role salience becomes especially high during this period. In addition, parents,

peers, and teachers may respond to the physical changes associated with puberty by increasing the pressure they exert to reinforce conventional gender-role stereotyped behaviors, values, and personal characteristics. This intensification of pressures for gender-role socialization should increase the likelihood of "regression" to a more rigid and conventional gender-role identity.

Stage IV. *Transition: Phase II* (16–22). The adolescents have established a more stable place in their peer culture and should have worked through some of the conflicts generated in Phase I. The need to solidify life plans introduces the potential for a careful examination of who one "is" and a rethinking of one's identity. Since the necessary cognitive structures are available and social roles are still quite flexible, late adolescence marks the prime opportunity for gender-role transcendence. If the sociocultural milieu provides the necessary stimuli and the adolescent has not committed her or himself to a traditional gender role, she or he can transcend the traditional gender-role identity as one element of the resolution of his or her identity crisis. Although the potential for transcendence remains with people throughout their lives, selection of adult social roles on the basis of conventional gender-role differentiation can effectively obstruct this developmental path, at least for a while.

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

Stage V. *Identity and Gender-Role Transcendence.* The ambivalences and crises of Stage IV have been resolved into an integration of masculinity and femininity that transcends gender roles. The person is characterized by postconventional, self-principled thought and action. This stage essentially coincides with Stage III in the Rebecca et al. model.

As should be apparent, this model is most similar to the Rebecca et al. (1976a, b) model. It differs primarily in the elaboration of early development, in the suggestion of at least two periods of hyper-rigidity of gender-role schemata in self-identity, and in the focus on the identification of specific social and personal conditions that impinge on the course of one's development.

Empirical Evidence

There has been extensive research on the development of gender-role related beliefs, self schemata, and behavior during the early and middle childhood periods. In general, this work supports the hypotheses laid out in this model for these age periods (see Carter, 1987; Huston, 1983; Ruble, 1988). In contrast, there is not a lot of research appropriate for evaluating the last stages of this model. Changes in gender-role identity beyond early and middle childhood have not been studied extensively, especially using broad role-related conceptualizations of gender-role identity like those used in this chapter. Many of the most relevant studies have looked for age differences in gender-role identity and gender-role belief systems in an attempt to document greater flexibility in beliefs and identity or self-schema among older subjects than among younger subjects. Although evidence like this is somewhat relevant, it does not address the central components of the model; namely, the importance of crisis in developmental change, the importance of the matching between particular sociocultural contexts and individual developmental trajectories, and the importance of particular life periods such as adolescence as pivotal junctures in those facets of life course development linked to gender roles. In this section, we focus on two lines of promising research: work related to the issue of gender-role intensification during adolescence and work on the joint impact of sociocultural experiences and personal development in the emergence of gender-role-related behavior patterns, self-schema, and role choices.

Gender-role intensification during adolescence. Although the evidence is not totally consistent, several studies suggest that something special is going on during adolescence with regard to gender-role development. For example, if the salience of gender-role-appropriate behaviors intensifies at puberty, then adolescents should come under increasing internal and external pressure to invest time in the stereotypic activities considered appropriate for their sexes. In support of this suggestion, older girls in Goff-Timmer, Eccles, and O'Brien (1985) reported spending more time socializing with friends

than younger girls, and older boys spent more time playing organized sports than younger boys. Similarly, in a longitudinal study of early adolescent development, Eccles and her colleagues have found that pubertal stage affects the amount of time both girls and boys spend on sports and socializing with the opposite sex (Eccles, Miller, Reuman, Feldlaufer, Jacobs, Midgley, and Wigfield, 1986). As one would expect, more physically mature seventh-grade boys spend more time playing sports than less physically mature seventh-grade boys; in contrast, more physically mature seventh-grade girls spend less time playing sports than less physically mature seventh-grade girls (see Figure 1). Similarly, Eccles et al. (1986) found that more

Figure 1: Pubertal level and father report of time spent on sports in the seventh grade.

Time Spent on Sports
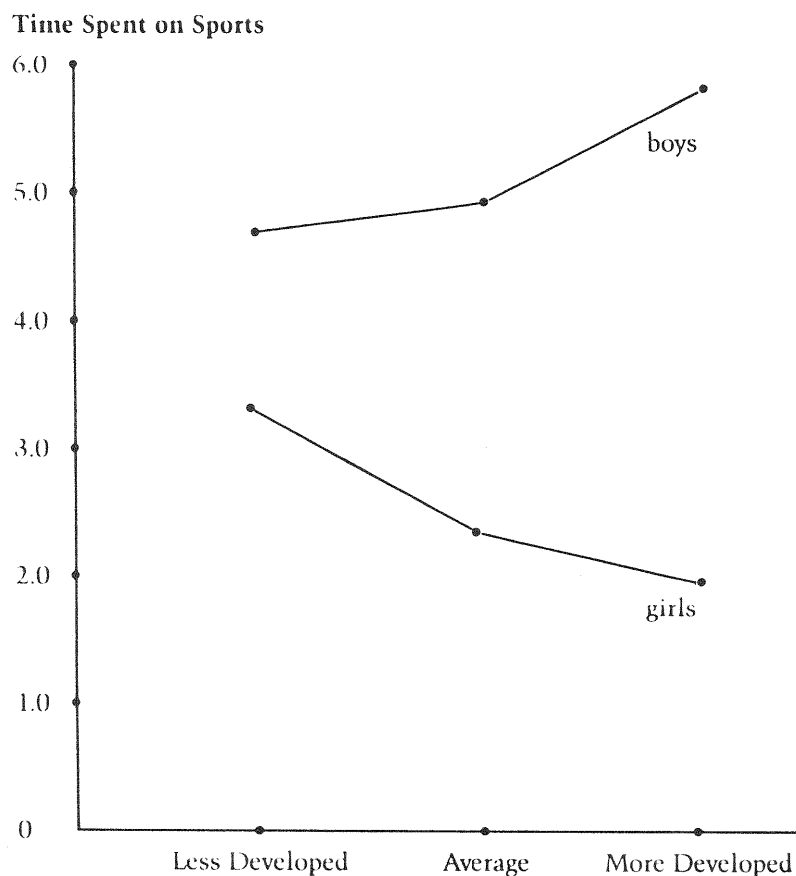
physically mature seventh-grade boys and girls spend more time socializing with the opposite sex than less physically mature girls and boys. This effect was especially true for the girls. These findings suggest that pubertal development does affect what adolescents do; furthermore, the effect, on the average, leads to an increase in gender-role stereotypic behaviors.

Somewhat similar results emerge in the work of Eccles and her colleagues on self-concept of ability and subjective task value. Girls develop a more gender-role-stereotyped view of their academic competencies and of the value of particular academic subjects, as they move into and through secondary school (Eccles, 1984). This effect is illustrated in Figures 2a and 2b. Girls in grades ten to twelve show greater differentiation in the view of their math and English abilities and greater differentiation in the value they attach to the two subjects than younger girls. Furthermore, before the eighth grade, there is no evidence of a differentiation in the girls' view of these two subjects. Finally, there is no evidence either in this study to suggest that the girls actually have more ability in English than in math: they have earned equivalent grades in the two subjects and have done just as well on standardized tests in both throughout their school careers. These results suggest that some girls are incorporating this culture's stereotype regarding the "natural" distribution of academic skills into their self-concepts during their adolescent years despite objective evidence to the contrary. Given the perspective in our model, it will be important to determine which of these girls end up on a traditional gender-role developmental trajectory and which girls are able to form more individualized identities as they get older. This work is currently being done.

It should be noted that evidence of this type of gender-role stereotypic change in self-perception and value is not universally found across studies. For example, in a longitudinal study of junior high school age adolescence, Galambos, Almeida, and Petersen (1990) found no evidence that girls become more gender-role stereotypic in either their self-perceptions or their attitudes toward the appropriate roles of men and women. In contrast, the boys in their study did show evidence of gender-role intensification in both their self-perceptions and their attitudes toward the appropriate roles of women and men. Similarly, in a longitudinal study of adolescents, Simmons and Blyth (1987) found no evidence of a pattern of increasing divergence between girls and boys in their future work and educational plans, academic performance, and school problem behavior as they moved through adolescence.

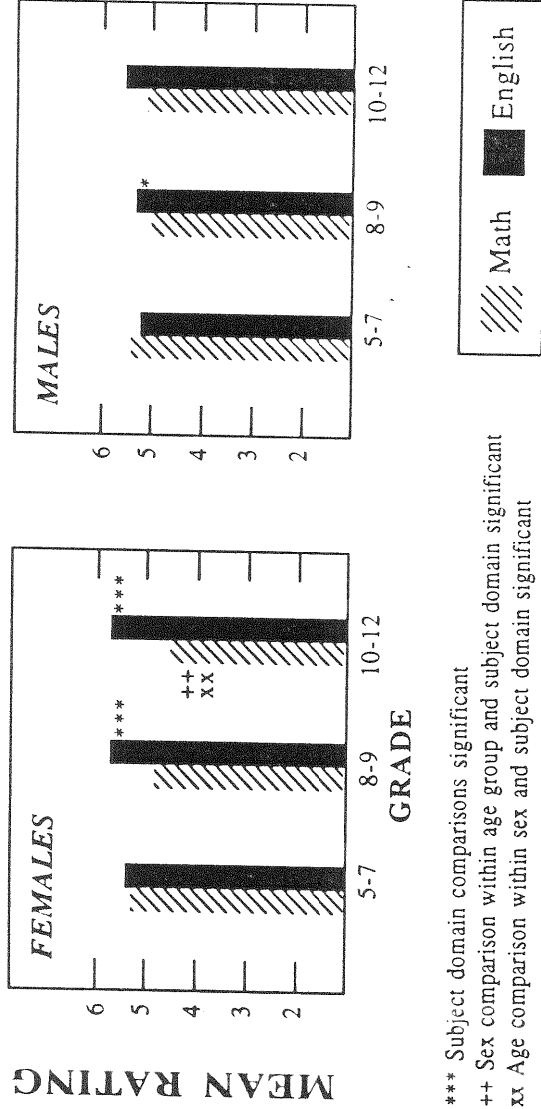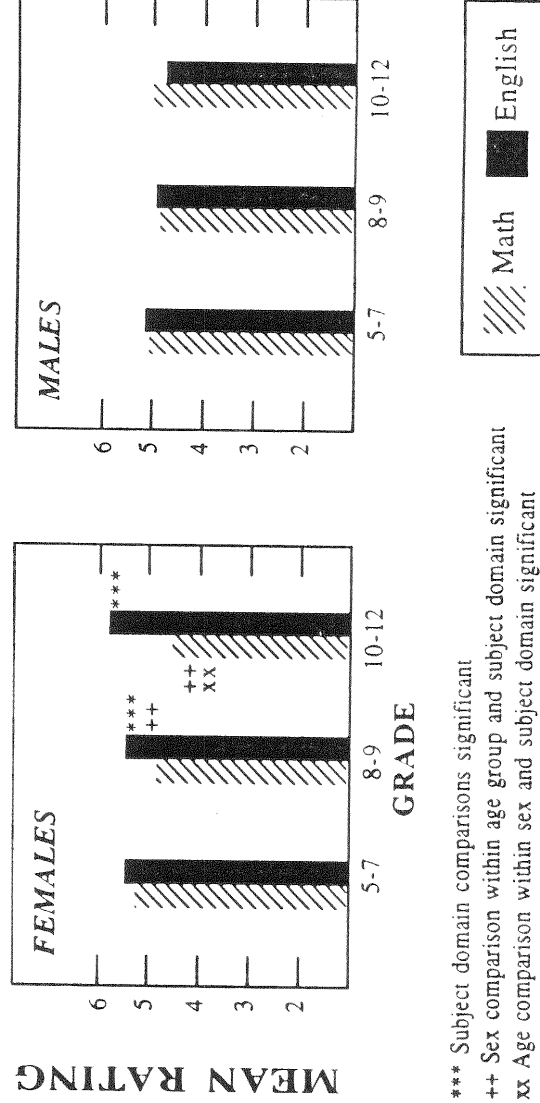**Figure 2a. Adolescents' rating of their ability in math and English as a function of both sex and grade level.**

*** Subject domain comparisons significant
++ Sex comparison within age group and subject domain significant
xx Age comparison within sex and subject domain significant

Figure 2b. Adolescents' rating of the value they attach to math and English as a function of both sex and grade level.

*** Subject domain comparisons significant
++ Sex comparison within age group and subject domain significant
xx Age comparison within sex and subject domain significant

But, from the perspective outlined in this chapter, the critical issue is not primarily one of mean level changes over time; instead, it is one of identifying which adolescents experience a crisis between their own identities and the gender-role prescriptions they believe they are supposed to follow, and then assessing what factors shape the course of their gender-role identity development as they attempt to resolve this crisis. Evidence from biographical studies of women in nontraditional occupations suggests that some young women respond to this crisis by consciously rejecting the traditional gender-role script for themselves, choosing instead a more androgynous or gender-role-transcendent identity for themselves (e.g., Barnett and Baruch, 1978; Kaufman and Richardson, 1982; Kerr, 1990; Rivers, Baruch, and Barnett, 1989). In general, consistent with our model, these women were able to choose a more innovative identity because they had strong social support for the choice.

Perhaps some of the most striking evidence in support of the gender intensification hypothesis is coming out of the recent work by Gilligan and her colleagues (Gilligan et al., 1990). Using an intensive, interview-based, longitudinal design, they have been studying a group of girls as they move from middle childhood into and through adolescence. They are finding consistent evidence of major psychological changes as the young females move into adolescence. As the girls make this transition they report feeling less secure in their identities; they seem especially concerned about how to integrate the values associated with both agency and communion into their identities. They also report less certainty about what is expected of them and a greater need to hide their true feelings and aspirations. Finally, they report being confused about sexuality and its link to moral behavior. Several of these issues are linked to the types of dialectical dilemmas we outlined earlier as typical of the first phase of transition into gender-role transcendence. As we suggested, these dilemmas are likely to lead to confusion and to an initial retreat into safer, more traditional modes of behavior. What we find especially interesting in these reports is the possibility that the girls who appear to be most conflicted during the early and middle adolescent periods may well have the greatest chance of developing a gender-role-transcendent identity, provided they live in an environment that supports exploration and identification with alternative life scripts. They may also be at the greatest risk for regression into a conventional gender-role identity, depending on the sociocultural milieu in which they find themselves.

Joint influence of the individual and the social milieu on gender-role-related development. There are now several good lon-
gitudinal studies that document the joint influence of individual characteristics and the social milieu on gender-role-related development. We review only two: a longitudinal study of gifted females in the United States and a longitudinal study of a representative sample of females in Sweden. Each of these studies illustrates the importance of both the social milieu and the individual's developmental trajectory in shaping gender-role-related behavioral choices.

The first study is the longitudinal study of Terman's sample of gifted girls and boys. These people were adolescents during the decade from 1910 to 1920 (Sears and Barbee, 1977; Tomlinson-Keasey, 1990). Several things about these women's lives are consistent with the perspective outlined in this chapter. First, many of the women lived lives that were basically consistent with this culture's traditional gender role for women, e.g., they spent most of their time and energy being wives and mothers and little time and energy on careers or other male-dominated achievement activities. Second, these women talked about choosing this life-style very early in life without much consideration—nothing in their lives at that time had made them feel conflicted about this choice. Third, the women who lived more nontraditional lives (relative to gender roles) either "selected" this alternative life-style during adolescence or moved into it after major crises in their lives. Finally, the women who selected a traditional life-style did not feel conflicted about their decision until the women's movement of the 1960s made it clear that they could have made a different choice. Now on retrospective reflection (induced by the increased salience of alternative life choices), they express regrets about not having invested more time and energy in themselves and their talents. These results are quite consistent with our model in the following ways: These women went through adolescence at a time when the traditional female role was not being questioned; therefore they experienced little conflict over this choice—conflict emerged only when the sociocultural milieu changed. Women who did experience personal conflict related to gender roles, either because of a crisis in their adult lives, or because of their own personal identities while they were adolescents, did reevaluate the appropriateness of the traditional gender role for themselves.

The second study (Stattin and Magnusson, 1990) illustrates quite dramatically the joint influence of personal development and experience on gender-role-related development. Stattin and Magnusson (1990) reported on the longitudinal life paths of a group of females who were classified as either early, on-time, or late maturers. On the average, by their mid-twenties, the early maturing

females were more likely to be mothers and were less likely to have gone to college than the on-time or late maturing females. In other words, they were more likely to end up in the traditionally stereotypic female role in their twenties than their peers. But this difference was true of only the early maturing females who had begun associating with older adolescents (especially older male adolescents) who reinforced traditional female gender-role behaviors and goals. Associating with these older adolescents gave these young women a very different social experience from that of their female peers who were associating with age mates. As a consequence of these experiences, this subset of early maturing females was more likely to end up in traditional female roles than their other female classmates. Whether this difference persists should depend on their subsequent life experiences. But, since the current social context is so critical, change toward gender-role transcendence will be more difficult for women already in the traditional female roles of wife and mother.

Concluding Remarks

The theories and research we have reviewed regarding adolescent development and gender-roles are encouraging, but by no means conclusive. When first examining them, we were intrigued by their promise but were left somewhat dissatisfied with what we found. Careful longitudinal studies of gender-role development across the life span are badly needed. Theory has proliferated much more rapidly than empirical evidence, and, as Emmerich noted in 1973, there is still a need for research clarifying the effects of hypothesized influences. In particular, little work has been done on how conceptions of gender roles change over adolescence and adulthood. Most of the existing work comes from particular theoretical perspectives, and bears the advantages, shortcomings, and biases of its approach. The result is a current state of more controversy and confusion than clarity.

The model of adolescent gender-role identity development presented here is, in substance, a synthesis of the theory and findings in an area that works *around*, but not specifically *with* our topic. In approaching it we have chosen a cognitive- and ego-developmental orientation, integrated contributory elements of several approaches, rejected others, and justified these choices. Large gaps exist in the study of gender-role development, and all of the areas surrounding it must be considered before the emerging picture can be completed.

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