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2 Social cognition and the social life of the child: stages as subcultures

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> Age-grades are recognized divisions of the life of an individual as he passes from infancy to old age. Thus each person passes successively into one grade after another, and, if he lives long enough, through the whole series – infant, boy, youth, young married man, elder, or whatever it may be.
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> Radcliffe-Brown (1929)

> All cultures must deal in one way or another with the cycle of growth from infancy to adulthood. . . . Discontinuity in the life cycle is a fact of nature and is inescapable. . . . Age-graded cultures characteristically demand different behavior of the individual at different times of his life and persons of a like age-grade are grouped into a society whose activities are all oriented toward the behavior desired at that age.
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> Ruth Benedict (1938)

Interest in age-related changes in social judgment and social concepts has increased dramatically in recent years (cf. Damon, 1977 a,b; Flavell & Ross, 1981; Howe & Keasey, 1978; Shantz, 1975). In interpreting these age-related changes, one approach has dominated. In fact, Damon (1977a) justifiably refers to this approach, inspired by the Piaget–Kohlberg perspective on social development, as a kind of "new look" in social development. Essentially, this "new look" interprets age-related changes in social cognition in terms of developmental changes in the cognitive operations and/or structures that underlie or mediate children's social judgments and concepts, changes with respect to such processes as role taking, classification, and compensation (or reversibility). This approach has contributed greatly to our understanding of the nature of social development and has increased our appreciation of the qualitative or stagelike character of this development. Unfortunately, like all powerful perspec-

tives, the "cognitive ability" approach has also diverted attention from the investigation of important additional mediating factors. That the cognitive developmental approach matches a common bias in explaining variation in behavior—the bias toward "dispositional" attributions (e.g., ability, skills) rather than "situational" attributions (e.g., social constraints and demands, task characteristics; cf. Heider, 1958; Jones & Harris, 1967; Ross, 1977)—has undoubtedly contributed to its salience as the major explanation of developmental changes. The general purpose of this chapter is to consider, in a preliminary, speculative fashion, a particular set of "situational" factors that ought to be related to systematic developmental change, specifically, age-related changes in the culturally prescribed social life, or subcultures, of children.

Children in all cultures pass through a series of age-related phases during development (Denzin, 1977; Keniston, 1971), although the amount of discontinuity across the life cycle varies cross-culturally (see Benedict, 1938). Each phase involves characteristic social concerns, activities, social situations and settings, expectations and rules for behavior, socially approved institutions, and so on. Moreover, the behavior of adults toward, and in the presence of, children varies in different phases. For example, the responses of adults to children who violate their personal space in a queue varies dramatically as a function of the child's age, ranging from smiles for 5-year-olds to frowns for 10-year-olds (Fry & Willis, 1971). Given that these periods are fairly systematic within any given culture, one can conceptualize each phase (e.g., infancy, preschoolers, juveniles, preadolescents, adolescents) as a subculture within the more general, adult-dominated culture. The cultural character of these phases is suggested by their historical emergence: "The world that we think proper to children—fairy stories, games, toys, special books for learning, even the idea of childhood itself—is a European invention of the past four hundred years" (Plumb, 1973, p. 153). That is, the modern phase of childhood is, at least in part, a cultural product (Aries, 1962; Kessen, 1979; Plumb, 1973). Moreover, as technological and scientific advances both increased the amount of education required to carry out many social roles and permitted a large segment of society to be unproductive by vastly increasing the productivity of those who did work, additional phases of development were introduced into industrialized societies, such as adolescence.

Certainly, the general influence of subcultural factors on social judgments and behavior has been well recognized, both in the social-learning approach (e.g., Bandura & Walters, 1963) and in the "new look" approach (e.g., Kohlberg, 1969; Piaget, 1965). The influence of subcultural

factors, however, has typically been considered with respect to demographic variation within a particular age phase of development, such as social class or ethnic differences in norms, values, and beliefs. Although the importance of social experience for social cognition is acknowledged, it is mainly with respect to speeding up or slowing down mental growth within a particular phase of development, providing opportunities for cognitive development, or affecting superficial content aspects of social cognition.

We are suggesting, instead, that variation in the characteristics of social life phases could be an important factor underlying the age-related changes in social cognition reported in studies using middle-class North American subjects. A similar point was made recently by Kessen (1979), who went so far as to speculate whether our current descriptions of age-related changes in children's behavioral patterns might not be a cultural artifact. Anthropologists, especially, have emphasized the importance of considering social environmental factors when interpreting differences in cognitions, rather than focusing on cognitive processing skills or intellectual level (e.g., Mead, 1932; Shweder & Bourne, in press). What they have suggested for cross-cultural comparisons, we are suggesting for comparisons across age phases.

Unfortunately, because the cognitive growth approach in developmental psychology has been dominant in recent years and because the preceding behavioristic era was largely adevelopmental in its focus, there has been little concern with the social life of the child and consequently it is currently impossible to estimate its possible effects. Moreover, there has been so little empirical research and theoretical analysis that a clear articulation of the range of social variables that might be important or of the possible mechanisms underlying their influence does not exist at present. For example, even such a dramatic shift in the social life of the child as going to school has received little descriptive or theoretical attention, even though major developmental changes in social cognition are reported as occurring approximately concurrently with this shift.

To prevent misunderstanding, it is important to clarify our strategy in this chapter. We are not advocating the position that qualitative change in the social life of children, by itself, underlies age-related changes in social cognition and social behavior. To deny the role of cognitive change in social development would, in fact, contradict our own previous descriptions of cognitive factors underlying social development (e.g., Higgins, 1981; Higgins, Fondacaro, & McCann, 1981; Parsons, 1974, in press, Parsons & Ruble, 1977). It is a useful exercise, however, to consider the extent to which the qualitative shifts in social development can be accounted for

simply in terms of qualitative shifts in social life phases.[1] Certain aspects of social development that are puzzling and appear to contradict the "cognitive ability" approach to social cognition may be due to social life factors. Consideration of age-related changes in social life could eliminate the need to account for all social-cognitive changes in terms of underlying cognitive changes, which could increase the predictive validity of the "cognitive ability" approach. In addition, by reducing the subcultural background noise, the search for those changes in cognitive operations and structures that do influence social development could be facilitated.

Our general purpose, then, is to consider the role of social factors in the development of social cognition. We will, however, also consider the interrelation between social and cognitive factors in this development. It is certainly not novel to suggest that social development arises from an interaction of social and cognitive factors. There are a variety of different "social × cognitive interaction" positions that one could hold, however. Neither the traditional social learning nor the "cognitive ability" approach has given much attention to the stagelike changes in social input that may contribute to the social × cognitive interaction. Moreover, those approaches that have focused on social-age phases, most notably the psychoanalytic approach, have typically not considered the relation between age phases and intellectual growth, and, in addition, have paid attention to only a restricted range of social variables (e.g., toilet training, modes of discipline, life crises).

Our chapter has four basic aims. Our first aim is to describe a set of social or cultural dimensions along which there is systematic variation as a function of children's age, such as changes in socialization agents (e.g., parents and siblings vs. teachers and peers) and changes in social position and roles (ascribed status and subordinate position vs. achieved status and equal position). Our second aim is to illustrate the usefulness of the "social life phases" perspective both for interpreting age-related changes in social cognition that are not easily explained by other approaches and for reinterpreting previously identified developmental shifts in social cognition. Our third aim is to consider cross-cultural and demographic variability in socialization in light of this perspective. Our final aim is to use this perspective to reconsider the nature of the "social × cognitive" interaction underlying social-cognitive development.

The social life of children at different age phases

It has been recognized for a long time that the social life of children changes at different phases in their development (cf. Benedict, 1938;

Brim, 1966; Erikson, 1963; Inkeles, 1969; Parsons, 1964; Radcliffe-Brown, 1929; Sullivan, 1953). In addition, the importance of considering children's social world has been emphasized in the literature (cf. Bandura & Walters, 1963; Barker, 1968; Kessen, 1979; Parke, 1974; Vygotsky, 1962). Lewin (1935), for example, describes the impact of the social world on the "boundary zones" and regions of a child's life space. Vygotsky (1962) discusses how socializing agents provide children with structure and regulatory systems. Bandura and Walters (1963) point out the critical role of social models on children's social development. There have also been suggestions that particular age-related changes in social behavior may be due, in part, to some age-related change in social input (e.g., Keniston, 1971; Kessen, 1979; Piaget, 1965). For example, age-related shifts in the prescribed moral code and in socializing agents' disciplinary tactics concerning children's behavior have been mentioned as possible causes of developmental shifts in children's moral behavior (e.g., Bandura, 1969; Bijou, 1976; Parke, 1974). Staats (1975) has suggested that children are especially open to learning speech when they are young because their dependency upon their parents increases the strength and variety of reinforcers the parents can use in training them. Hartup (1970) has suggested that age-related changes in peer interaction probably derive, in part, from changes in reinforcement for, and models of, particular behaviors. However, to our knowledge, there has been no systematic attempt to describe and contrast the general social life of children at different age phases or to relate the qualitative changes in the social life of children to the qualitative changes in children's social cognition.

Our major interest was to explore the latter issue. We were, thus, rather disappointed to find little discussion in the literature of how the social life of children changes from the preschool years through the early adolescent years. In fact, it was even difficult to find extensive, organized accounts of the social life of children during most of the age phases. It has been necessary, therefore, to construct our account of the social life of children at different age phases from information scattered across various sources, with the empirical basis, and even accuracy, of the descriptions often being unclear. Most features of each age phase, however, have been mentioned by more than one source. Nevertheless, to have to rely on this social life data base for drawing inferences about social-cognitive development is an unhappy state of affairs, however necessary. At this stage of our knowledge, our examination of this issue is clearly speculative and is meant mainly to be suggestive of variables to be given more serious consideration in the future.

It has been argued that to discover the nature of thinking and its

development it is necessary to analyze the settings and activities associated with the thinking, as well as the goals of the thinker and the environmental features relevant to each goal (cf. Brunswick, 1943; Cole, Hood, & McDermott, in press). If such environmental variables are important for cognition, they should be important for social cognition. Our purpose, then, is to consider some of the social environmental variables that may differentiate the social life of children at different age phases. Because our aim is to relate children's social life phases to the stagelike changes in their social-cognitive development, we will restrict our attention to those features of each social life phase that are relatively distinct and that emerge from, or undergo, rapid growth during a particular age phase. Of course, social life features common to different age phases could be important determinants of social cognition. For our purposes, however, it is the relatively distinctive and emergent features that are critical. Taking a sociological approach (Inkeles, 1969), we will also restrict our attention to those social life features in each age phase that are regular, recurrent, and socially structured aspects of the prototypic child's individual experience. Our description of each age phase will necessarily be sketchy, because little direct, systematic attention has been paid to this issue, but selective, because the potential sources of relevant information are overwhelming. The description will most closely resemble the phases for white, middle-class, urban/suburban children. This is appropriate, however, because this is the same demographic sample that studies of developmental social cognition have typically examined.

The description of each life phase is organized in terms of the following set of factors: socializing agents, activities and tasks, social position and roles, social contact and relationships, social restrictions and privileges, social motives and concerns. Although these factors reflect different aspects of the social life of children, they are clearly not independent because together they constitute an interconnected and integrated whole, with the different aspects interpenetrating and reinforcing each other. The major, general sources for our descriptions of the social life phases are Brim (1966), Campbell (1969), Clausen (1968), Jersild (1963), Parsons (1964), Parsons, Olds, Zelditch, and Slater (1955), Sullivan (1953), and our own personal observations.

Preschool to juvenile (from 3–5 to 6–9 years of age)

Socialization agents. With entry into elementary school, the juvenile comes under the influence of two new sets of socialization agents: specifically, the classroom teacher and related school personnel, and peers.

Classes are generally organized with a single teacher, typically female, in charge of 20 to 30 same-aged students. The role of the teacher necessitates less personal attention and nurturance than was received by the juvenile from parents and more peer socialization than was true at home. In addition to these school-related shifts in socializers, the juvenile may also be exposed to other adult socialization agents, including recreational directors, Sunday-school teachers, and a large array of peers, some of whom are of equivalent age and status and some of whom are older and more powerful.

Activities and tasks. The tasks that juveniles are exposed to in school differ from the typical preschool task in that they involve increased focus on intellectual skills where success and failure on the task is, at times, not obvious without outside evaluation. There is also an increase in the requirements to master tasks imposed on one by an authority figure in a specified time period. Age segregation makes regimentation of tasks across individuals possible and consequently increases the likelihood of comparative judgments of the speed of mastery. Children also are faced with abstracting and learning the new social-behavioral code associated with the "student" role. Recent data (Blumenfeld et al., 1979) suggest that the "curriculum" in the first years of school is more concerned with a child's acquisition of the "student" role than academic skills.

Social position and roles. When juveniles enter elementary school they have the collective status of new recruits compared to their individual status at home. Whereas previously they had one major role – the ascribed role of son or daughter in the informal organization of their home – they now have both ascribed and achieved roles as students within two major social structures, namely, a formal social structure associated with the school system and an informal social structure associated with the peer culture. Because status in both these social structures is determined in part by social skills and achievement rather than primarily by ascribed status, entry into school introduces children to achieved roles. The role of student is a task-oriented role in which performance is systematically evaluated with regard to pre-set performance standards of excellence, normative progress, and acceptable style. As such, children will vary in their status within that role depending on their performance. Further, segregating the children into grades based primarily on age, as is done in most North American schools, focuses the attention of both the teacher and the students on these status variations, making competition and social comparison probable events.

Age segregation also influences the child's position in the peer culture.

In contrast to the hierarchical status characteristic of the home and the school environment, age-segregated peer groups are often characterized by a homogeneous status structure. Most children in age-segregated groups have equivalent status. Piaget has argued that it is only within this age-segregated peer culture that consensus-based moral codes can develop. Because age segregation also narrows the power differential, the status hierarchies that do emerge within these peer groups are influenced by personal characteristics as well as ascribed characteristics. A wider range of roles and their associated status is available to the child than is true within the family. Children can select a role for themselves from among this range. In addition, juveniles within their peer groups first encounter superiority–inferiority relationships that are based on achieved characteristics. Children who interact on a regular basis will recognize that they have different statuses, that their play groups are hierarchically arranged, and that their status may vary across different groups. All these characteristics of the peer culture can serve to focus children's attention on individual differences in personality, in social skill, and in personal liabilities and strengths.

In addition to age segregation, juveniles are subject to increased sex segregation and additional pressure to assume sex roles. Separate washrooms and separate athletic events reinforce the segregation of the sexes started during the preschool period. Along with these institutionally segregated structures, the children themselves increasingly segregate their play groups by sex and put increased social pressure on children who may deviate in their playmate choices.

Social contact and relationships. Social exposure increases dramatically when juveniles enter elementary school. There is increased exposure to representatives of various statuses (e.g., sex, religion, ethnicity), as well as to a variety of adult social roles and peer personality types. Juveniles have much greater contact with peers who have a variety of personal styles to which they must accommodate. They also have the opportunity to observe how authority figures judge the behaviors and personalities of their peers, focusing attention on issues of equity. By interacting with various teachers over the early elementary school years, juveniles learn to relate to different people occupying the same role, whereas in the family the same people occupy the role of mother and father over time. In addition, children are exposed to a wider range of expectations regarding their behavior from the increased numbers of both adults and peers. Juveniles begin to participate in wider social circles that are not organized in terms of kinship. Peer relationships, unlike family relationships, are not preordained, permanent, or institutionally ascribed. Members of peer

groups are responsible for maintaining control and providing nurturance within the relationship. Because peer groups are often organized according to sex, exposure to, and active interaction with, both sexes may decrease. Finally, the salience of group memberships either through uniforms or through social labeling may lead juveniles to identify with their social groups (e.g., a "bluebird," a "member of Tom's team") and to begin limiting their social network to members of their own social groups.

The ratio of children to adults changes dramatically when juveniles enter school. In addition, because of the greater chance of peers staying together from year to year than of students being with the same teacher from year to year, cohesion within the peer group is promoted. Finally, contact with peers allows juveniles to observe how other peers respond to a variety of different authority figures and different personality types.

Social restrictions and privileges. Entry into school increases both the juveniles' individual freedom and the demands for greater control of their behavior. On the one hand, juveniles are given greater freedom over their mobility, as reflected in their riding bicycles to school and taking buses alone to and from school. They are also provided with their own personal desk and chair. In addition, the interactions among peers are, to a much greater extent than earlier, outside the orbit of parental control. On the other hand, children must sit quietly for long periods of time and are expected to show restraint within the classroom and to learn a whole set of procedural rules associated with their various roles. They become subject to universalistic, common standards of dress and deportment as well as new expectations for personal conduct. These rules, however, need no longer be followed by virtue of their ascribed status, as in the family, but involve common subjection to general rules. Children are also exposed to an increase in the variety of privileges given to different students. They may become aware for the first time that the same adult gives different privileges to different children of the same age.

Social motives and concerns. Because the child has to acquire the new role of student, there is a great pressure on juveniles by both parents and teachers to be a "good boy" or "good girl" at school; the child is expected to learn respect for the teacher, consideration and cooperativeness in relating to fellow pupils, and good "work habits" (Blumenfeld et al., 1979). At the same time, peer acceptance is a major concern of the child. As a consequence of these two sets of demands, juveniles must learn to accommodate to different individuals in a variety of situations in and out of the classroom and must learn to handle conflicting goals, such as the

potential conflict between the task goals that are the teacher's primary concern and the social goals of the peer group. Children also are exposed to a distinction between the obligation to be "nice" to everyone and loyal to members of one's own group (e.g., family, friends, classmates) and to the notion that one should be proud of one's own goals.

Juvenile to preadolescent (from 6–9 to 10–12 years of age)

Socialization agents. During the preadolescent period children are exposed to yet another increase in the types of socialization agents: coaches of Little League sports, instructors of dance or ballet, music teachers, camp counselors, leaders of Cubs and Brownies, directors of various classes at youth organizations such as the YMCA, YWCA, and so on.

Activities and tasks. The range of activities available to children greatly increases from the juvenile to the preadolescent period, as reflected in the increase in socialization agents. Children spend more time in activities outside the home and school in various kinds of organized activities at town centers and youth organizations, such as the YMCA and YWCA, cubs, brownies, church activities, and summer camps. In addition, there is an increase in activities for children to learn particular skills, such as learning to play a musical instrument, learning artistic skills, crafts, and dancing. There is also a sharp increase in the exposure to competitive sports for boys, providing additional social-comparison information on individual differences in skills in a wider variety of activities and situations.

Social position and roles. Whereas juveniles are the youngest age group in the elementary school, the preadolescents are the older age group in the elementary school. Thus, in the age hierarchy of the school, preadolescents have higher status. In addition, preadolescents have a greater awareness that the power of the teacher is more circumscribed than the power of their parents. During the preadolescent period, structures of prestige and power emerge within the classroom and the informal peer groups.

Social contact and relationships. The increased activities allow an increase of association with same-sex peers. Preadolescents can now drift into and out of "voluntary associations" that have relatively fluid boundaries. The strength of the peer bond relative to the teacher bond increases in this period, in part because by the later elementary school years the students

have spent many years together, whereas only one year is spent with any particular teacher. Their experience with different teachers over the years also provides preadolescents with an opportunity to compare teachers and thus discover their relative merits and demerits and to discover the arbitrariness of classroom rules. The children will also have had increasing opportunities for exposure to information that can disconfirm the various stereotypes they may have formed. The peer groups during this period form into something like corporate groups that inculcate a strong sense of solidarity. The peer groups themselves develop a differentiation of roles, particularly with respect to leadership. Preadolescents develop strong relationships with the same-sex peers, and children begin to form "chum" or "bosom" relationships.

Social restrictions and privileges. During the preadolescent period the range of independent behavior increases. Generally, there is a decrease in detailed adult supervision, and, in particular, less and less of children's physical and social environment is under the direct surveillance and control of their parents. Children may also be asked to assume greater responsibilities around the school, their home, and in the organizations of which they are members. They may also acquire a job and consequently an independent source of income.

Social motives and concerns. Preadolescents seek to contribute to their chums' happiness, and they become sensitive to what matters to other people. There is a beginning of a "we" feeling that is more than just cooperation and involves collaboration in the sense of adjustment to others' needs in pursuit of mutual interests. During this period, parents, teachers, and a variety of coaches or group leaders emphasize comparison in intellectual achievement as well as in social and athletic activities. The motive to excell relative to others increases (Veroff, 1969), especially in boys.

Preadolescent to early adolescent (from 10–12 to 13–16 years of age)

Socialization agents. In contrast to elementary school students, junior and senior high school students generally have different teachers for various subjects each year and teachers of both sexes. This greatly increases the opportunities for adult influence. In addition, the significant others and reference persons for adolescents are more likely to include adults whom they have never actually met, such as glamorous or famous media figures.

Peers increase in importance as social activities and clubs take on a more formal nature. Opposite-sex peers take on a new power as socializing agents. Also, because junior and senior high schools are usually bigger than elementary schools, adolescents meet and must accommodate to a wider, more diverse set of peers.

Activities and tasks. In general, many more formal, structured activities occur in junior high school than in elementary school: athletic activities, such as wrestling, field hockey, archery, and volleyball; specialized clubs, involving such activities as photography, debating, international affairs, choral singing, and the student newspaper. Typically, adolescents are granted greater autonomy in directing school clubs and organizations. The early adolescent also has an opportunity to engage in a broader range of activities outside the school, such as joining organized clubs and formal groups in the YMCA and YWCA. As a consequence of this increase in social options, the early adolescent is faced with the need to make choices among the various alternatives. Adolescents spend more time simply having conversations with one another. There is a sudden increase in dating, "going steady," and "falling in love." Thus, the adolescent must learn new skills for interacting with the opposite sex. The adolescent is much more absorbed in the world outside the home and pursues various hobbies and personal interests that can differ from those of their parents. There is also an increased likelihood that they will have a paying part-time job outside their home. School work requires an increased amount of time, with homework assignments penetrating to a greater extent into their home life.

Social position and roles. Early adolescents are in the process of becoming an adult. Their status is marginal and varies, depending upon whether they compare themselves to younger children or older adults (see Lewin, 1939). They are not permitted to maintain childish behavior, but at the same time they are isolated from the workings of adult society. Although their role as student is increasing in importance, its transiency is also becoming more obvious; school takes on the quality of a training center for their future adult role. Although they can have part-time jobs, they are prevented from having full-time employment.

The informal peer associations during this period involve much sharper prestige stratification. Because there are more activities and a wider array of peers, status hierarchies based on activities as well as status hierarchies within groups emerge and become salient. Cliques emerge that confront adolescents with pressures to choose which way they will develop. Ado-

lescents begin to recognize that their position or status in society does not depend simply upon their family's judgment. As the range of the early adolescents' associations widens, not only does both their capacity for getting along with different kinds of people and their repertoire of roles increase, but their awareness of group and individual differences and similarities also increases.

Most early adolescents have various positions and statuses in the different formal groups to which they belong. Consequently, they are forced to engage in a diversity of social roles. On the one hand, this diversity prepares the adolescent for future adult roles and the demands of such roles. The very diversity of roles that the adolescent must occupy, on the other hand, increases the probability of experiencing conflict among the demands of the different roles and thus forces the adolescent to develop strategies for managing role conflict.

Social contact and relationships. Early adolescence is a period of dramatic increase in the amount of contact with the opposite sex: More positive cross-sex relationships emerge both within and outside the classroom. Having a good time becomes important, and a strong hedonistic quality in social activities involves both sexes. To compete effectively in this new social domain, adolescents must learn new skills and test them in a new social arena.

Because junior and senior high schools are larger than elementary schools and draw from a wider geographical area, adolescents are exposed to individuals from a much wider range of demographic statuses and from backgrounds not encountered in their own neighborhood. Opportunities to meet and form friendships with a greater number of peers also increases. Adolescents spend much more time with their peers. In fact, the junior and senior high schools provide a population mass that is sufficiently dense to make possible the development and maintenance of an autonomous adolescent social system. The high school, especially, is the adolescent's world to a large extent, and high school activities and events have great personal significance for them. Peer associations during this period become collective organizations to satisfy and channel mutual interests. Many adolescents join clubs and gangs and become members of "crowds" and "cliques." Within these associations, adolescents have the opportunity to compare different social standards and rules, as well as share experiences that question their parents' or teachers' pronouncements. This, in part, arises from the great diversity of the members' backgrounds in peer associations and in the variety of courses they take in school.

Social restrictions and privileges. Junior and senior high school students generally have many more privileges than elementary school students. They have more control over their social life and can influence the moral climate, dress, lingo, rules of etiquette, and so on of their social life. Adolescents have greater freedom to select their friends and activities and consequently play more important roles in defining their rights and privileges. Parents are much more reluctant to constrain the social activities of their adolescent children and may even ask them what rules seem most appropriate given what the parents of other adolescents are permitting, such as how late they can stay up, how much allowance they should get, and when and how often they should date. Such responsiveness by the parents greatly increases the freedom of adolescents to control their social life. Their freedom is also increased by earning their own money, further reducing their parents' control over them. In school, they are asked to select the courses they will study and are asked by counselors, teachers, and parents to begin planning for a vocation or career and to think seriously about what their adult roles will be.

In general, then, adolescence is a period marked by inconsistencies. On the one hand, the adolescent is allowed greater freedom from adult surveillance. As a consequence, adolescents have an opportunity to practice responsibility in human relations without supervision and to learn to accept the consequences of their behavior. On the other hand, early adolescents are not permitted to participate in a variety of adult activities and decision making. Typically, they are not allowed to be self-supporting or to vote, cannot go into bars or buy hard liquor, and are not permitted to marry without adult consent. Parents themselves have conflict between the desire to give the adolescent freedom and the desire to reassert control. Finally, most adolescents recognize that a great deal of power is still vested in adults, especially in teachers, principals, counselors, and juvenile officers; thus they are reminded that their ultimate responsibility is still to an external authority.

Social motives and concerns. In early adolescence there is a high value placed upon autonomy, initiative, identity formation, and idealism, with explicit, overt acceptance or approval of adult-sponsored interests and discipline being negatively valued. There is a strong norm not to be under the control of parents and to abandon familial dependency.[2] Adolescents are motivated to gain some financial independence and to attempt to achieve self-direction and emancipation. Although, on the one hand, some aspects of adolescent culture emphasize fun and adventure, other

aspects of adolescent culture emphasize career preparation and serious work toward long-range goals. There is a greater flirtation with boundary areas between propriety and immorality, with various offenses, such as staying out late, drinking, and sexual behavior, often being encouraged by the peer group.

Adolescents are concerned with the world's view of both themselves and their family and devote a great deal of energy to trying to assess what others think of them. They have a need for personal security, intimacy, and meaningful collaboration with peers. Adolescents care more about social and personal issues, political events, and religious issues. A major goal of adolescents is to make decisions about, and prepare for, future adult tasks, roles, and occupations. Preparation for one's future career is a critical aspect of this period; this, in turn, increases competition among peers for the symbols of adult status, such as positions of responsibility within student government, scholarships, or outstanding athletic performance. Adolescents are also expected to acquire and practice the social skills of adults, to experiment with what they are in relation to others, and to "try on" new behaviors and experiences. In other words, they are expected to begin the process of attaining a somewhat coherent, permanent answer to the questions "Who am I?" and "What will I become?"

Social-life phases and social-cognitive development

The purpose of this section is to provide some examples of the possible relation between changes in the social life of children and changes in their social concepts, social information processing biases, and social predictions. Our discussion of this relation is meant only to be suggestive, as our knowledge of the social life of children during different periods, as mentioned earlier, is incomplete, selective, somewhat anecdotal, and of unknown accuracy.

Some aspects of the social life of children could affect the development of their social concepts. For example, when juveniles enter elementary school they adopt the new role of "pupil" in the formal organization of the school. This role demands that certain common standards of dress, deportment, and personal conduct be followed; both parents and teachers emphasize the importance of being a "good boy" or "good girl" at school. During the preadolescent period, children are supervised by a number of different authority figures and must learn to follow the rules of various formal organizations in which they participate but over which they have little power or control. These aspects of the social life of juveniles and preadolescents should impact on their moral judgments and

beliefs. With respect to Kohlberg's (1964, 1969) stages of moral development, in particular, one would expect that during the juvenile period there would be a sharp increase in Stage 3 moral judgments (i.e., the interpersonal concordance or "good boy–nice girl" orientation) and that during the preadolescent period there would be a sharp increase in Stage 4 moral judgments (i.e., orientation toward authority, fixed rules, and the maintenance of the social order). In fact, there is evidence (Kohlberg, 1964, 1969) of a sharp increase in Stage 3 moral judgments between 7 and 10 years of age (the juvenile period) and a sharp increase in Stage 4 moral judgments between 10 and 13 years of age (the preadolescent period). Of course, we are not arguing that social life changes are sufficient for shifts in moral judgments; cognitive factors also play an independent and interactive role (as discussed later). Thus, we would only predict a sharp increase in the proportion of children at a higher stage after a shift to a later life phase, *not* that a majority of children in the later phase would necessarily reach the higher stage.

Changes in their relationships with those in power could also lead to a change in the children's conceptions of authority during the juvenile and preadolescent periods. Preschoolers are mainly under the authority of their parents; in contrast, juveniles are under the control of a wide variety of authority figures. These individuals provide each child with much less personal attention and nurturance than parents, and their authority resides in either institutional roles or their acknowledged expertise. If preschoolers associate authority with their parents and juveniles associate authority with a range of adults, one might expect preschoolers to associate authority with the particular characteristics of their parents, with attachment, and with fulfillment of their personal needs; in contrast, juveniles would be expected to associate authority with social power, formal status, and expertise. Damon (1977a) has found a shift from the preschool to the juvenile period in the tendency to give Level 0 authority knowledge responses (i.e., authority is legitimized by the personal link between the authority figure and the self or by physical attributes of the authority figure that the child considers to be descriptive of persons in command) versus Level 1 authority knowledge responses (i.e., authority is legitimized by attributes that enable authority figures to enforce their commands).

Preadolescents interact with the same peers in a variety of situations that provide them with the opportunity to notice that variation in the power and performance of their peers is a function of the situation. In addition, the selection of leaders within their informal peer groups is based upon the achieved, rather than the ascribed, status of the members;

leaders are selected on the basis of their ability to lead the group effectively. Thus, one might expect a shift during adolescence to Level 2 authority knowledge responses (i.e., authority is legitimized by the authority figure's ability to lead and command better than subordinates, and this ability is believed to vary across different situations), which has, indeed, been found by Damon (1977a).

In his study of preschoolers' and juveniles' authority knowledge responses, Damon (1977a) also found an age-related difference in whether a peer story-dilemma versus an adult story-dilemma yielded higher level responses. The peer story-dilemma focused on a child–child authority relation (i.e., the authority relation between the captain and other players on a team) and the adult story-dilemma focused on a child–adult authority relation (i.e., the authority relation between a mother and her son or daughter). Damon (1977a) found that the preschoolers gave higher level authority knowledge responses on the adult story-dilemma, whereas juveniles gave higher level authority knowledge responses on the peer story-dilemma. As Damon (1977a) suggests, this developmental difference is probably due to differences in the social life of preschoolers and juveniles. Preschoolers do not participate regularly in formal, organized games or social activities with peers in which there is a hierarchy of power and prestige; they do, however, have frequent exposure to parental authority. Juveniles, on the other hand, have regular contact with peers in hierarchially organized activities, especially in games in which the captain is distinguished from other team members.

Changes in the social life of juveniles, preadolescents, and early adolescents should also affect their conceptions of friendship. First, juveniles' friendships should be based more on their subjective evaluations of others' personal characteristics than are preschoolers' friendships because, as described later, their social life promotes an increase in dispositional, personal judgments of others. There is, in fact, considerable evidence that between 7 and 10 years of age the establishment of friendships shifts from being based on situational factors (e.g., common activities, proximity, frequent encounters) to admiration of another person's dispositions or traits (e.g., Berndt, 1981; Damon, 1977a). Preadolescents have greater freedom to move into and out of "voluntary associations"; they interact in more activities and organizations with large numbers of different peers; and they have more control over their social relationships. Social interaction within large groups of peers, most of whom are strangers or acquaintances, should increase the need and desire for loyal support from some peer (or peers) who can be regarded as a friend. Many studies have found that the nature of friendship does shift in these

directions during the late juvenile and preadolescent periods (cf. Damon, 1977a). During preadolescence, trust and loyal support become defining attributes of friendship (cf. Berndt, 1981; Selman, 1976a), and notions of "kind" acts in interpersonal relations increasingly include helping and aiding others (cf. Youniss, 1975).

The marginal status of early adolescents and the conflicting demands placed upon them create tension in their life. The pressure to achieve, to prepare for, and decide upon, future adult roles, to discover who they are, and to get along with a wide variety of different types of people create additional problems. One might expect early adolescents to experience a need to find people with whom they can share their fears, aspirations, and beliefs, and to whom they can turn when they feel overwhelmed by their tensions and problems. There is, consequently, an increase during this period in the tendency to consider as friends people who share their innermost thoughts and feelings and who assist one another with their psychological problems (cf. Damon, 1977a). Early adolescents have much greater control over their selection of friends and over the activities in which they and their friends participate. In addition, they are very aware of the eventuality of marrying an opposite-sex peer. As one might expect, early adolescents are more likely to consider friendships as relatively long-term relationships (cf. Damon, 1977a).

Other changes in the social life of children could underlie the observed developmental changes in social information processing biases. For example, certain aspects of the social life of juveniles should promote changes in the nature of their person perceptions. Social exposure increases dramatically when juveniles leave elementary school. Juveniles interact with various adults other than their parents (e.g., teachers, recreational directors) and have much greater contact with peers of different demographic status (e.g., sex, religion, ethnicity) and different personalities. They can observe how authority figures judge the behavior and personalities of their peers. Such social exposure should increase the early adolescent's tendency to describe others in terms of personal traits. Sullivan (1953) suggested that the very speed with which juveniles are exposed to people of different types would make it difficult for juveniles not to create classification systems for people. Age-segregated classrooms should further enhance this tendency, as age is removed as one of the possible and highly salient classification categories, thus shifting attention to other classifications. There is, in fact, a sharp increase between 6 and 9 years of age (i.e., the juvenile period) in the tendency for children to describe others in terms of their personal traits rather than their superficial appearance or possessions and to explain others' behaviors in terms

of their underlying dispositions rather than situational factors (cf. Chandler, 1977; Livesley & Bromley, 1973; Peevers & Secord, 1973; Shantz, 1975).

Juveniles are also more under the influence and control of adult and, especially, parental sanctions and norms than pre- and early adolescents. Thus, it would not be surprising if adult sanctions and norms had a greater impact on juveniles' judgments when they are relevant to the judgmental task. Indeed, Costanzo and his colleagues found in a series of studies that developmental changes in various kinds of social judgments are better interpreted in terms of age-phase changes in sensitivity to the particular norms prevalent in the child's social context rather than in terms of cognitive deficits. In fact, when adult prohibitions or norms were irrelevant to the judgmental task, juveniles gave more "mature" social judgments, such as the use of information about intentions (see Costanzo et al., 1973; Costanzo, Grumet, & Brehm, 1974; Farnill, 1974; see also Costanzo & Dix, this volume).

Other evidence suggests that the general developmental shifts in children's weighting of intent versus outcome information when making judgments of others reflect shifts in children's social life. Using the familiar Piagetian intent/outcome moral-judgment paradigm (Piaget, 1932), Parsons (1974) provided children with a description of an event sequence and asked them to reward or punish the actor. Like the classic Piagetian studies, the sequences varied along two basic dimensions: the actor's intent and the outcome. In addition, the situational context varied with respect to the competitiveness of the situation. The competitive stories depicted situations in which an individual either performs a solo task on which few either succeed at the peak level or win while the majority either perform only adequately or fail (e.g., taking an exam, swimming in a race) or in which persons compete as team members on similar types of competitive tasks (e.g., a baseball game, a team spelling bee). The noncompetitive stories depicted situations in which an individual either completes a solo noncompetitive task (e.g., building a model plane, putting together one's scrapbook) or helps another person complete a noncompetitive task (e.g., helping a friend build a kite, watering the lawn for one's mother). Figure 1 illustrates the developmental patterns associated with the use of outcome (left graph) and intention (right graph) as evaluative cues to determine the competitiveness of the situation.

The first finding worth noting is the differential developmental patterns in the use of outcome and intent associated with the different situational contexts. If the development of evaluative judgments was primarily a function of intellectual development—that is, an age-related substitution
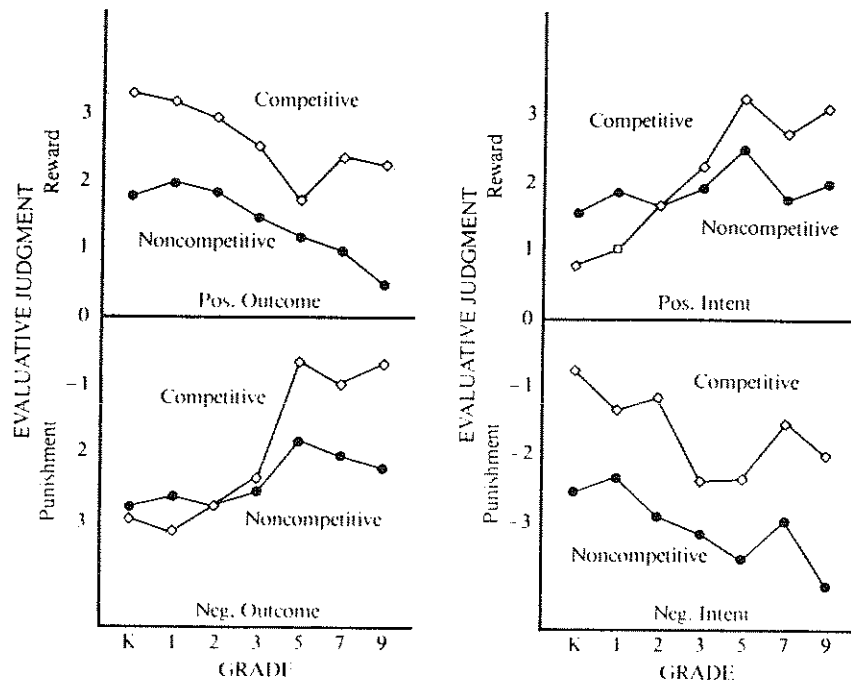
Figure 1. Evaluative judgment as a function of intent, outcome, and competitiveness of situation.

of evaluations based on internal, inferred intentions for more simplistic judgments based on concrete, observable outcomes – the curves would be more similar, differing, perhaps, in a pattern reflecting décalage, or developmental lag. That this is not the case is evidenced by the weighting of outcome, for example, which clearly varies across situations, ages, and outcomes. Why, for instance, do negative outcomes in noncompetitive situations continue to be punished, whereas negative outcomes in competitive situations lose their evaluative significance? The recent investigations of both Blumenfeld and her colleagues (1979) and Parsons (in press) suggest that classroom dynamics may be responsible for this pattern. Teachers punish consistently for misbehavior and failure to follow prescribed norms. In contrast, they rarely punish a child directly for poor academic performance. In interviewing fifth-grade children, Blumenfeld and her colleagues found that children's assessments of the relative importance of failure in these domains reflect their teachers' reinforcement patterns. The children said that it was much worse to violate a behavioral

rule or to misbehave than to do poorly on an exam. Clearly, the children's evaluative judgments are being influenced markedly by the cultural norms around them.

Other studies using the Piagetian intent/outcome moral judgment paradigm have also found that the situational context has a major impact on developmental patterns. In an earlier study, Weiner and Peter (1973) found results similar to the Parsons (1974) findings in a comparison of achievement and moral contexts, and in a cross-cultural follow-up study, Salili, Maehr, and Gillmore (1976) also documented the impact of situational context on the development of evaluative judgments. Interestingly, the situational effects Salili and his colleagues found in Iran differed from the effects found by Weiner and Peter (1973) and Parsons (1974) in American samples.

The second relevant finding is the developmental shift in the use of both outcome and intent occurring at the seventh-grade level. In competitive situations at the seventh-grade level, the importance of outcome increases (i.e., positive outcomes are rewarded more and negative outcomes are punished more), whereas the importance of intention decreases (i.e., positive intent is rewarded less and negative intent is punished less). The percent of variance accounted for by each variable demonstrates this shift even more dramatically; the percent of variance accounted for by outcome jumps from 13% to 23%, whereas the percent of variance accounted for by intention drops from 29% to 17%. Interestingly, Weiner and Peter (1973) found a similar shift at the seventh-grade level in the weighting of outcome and intent (i.e., effort) for their achievement story.

What accounts for this shift? Although neither study can provide the answer directly, it may be due to the situational environment of the seventh-graders. They had just begun junior high school, and the transition from elementary school to junior high school is a critical social event marked by significant changes in the expectations and social situations confronting the child. Whereas elementary school teachers may have been willing to reward achievement efforts to support strong achievement motivation, junior high school teachers may be less willing to let grades reflect effort. Junior high school is the time, after all, to get down to business in school, the time to take one's education seriously. This shift in attitude will undoubtedly be reflected in the attention paid to outcome versus effort. For example, in several school districts with which we are familiar, letter grades are first given in the seventh grade. Prior to that time, children's performance is evaluated in terms of their progress and not in terms of their relative performance. In junior high school the focus

shifts. Parents may also be placing more emphasis on outcome as entry into college and other occupational training grounds is now at stake.[3] Additional evidence for our hypothesis is provided by the Salili, Maehr, and Gillmore (1976) Iranian study. They did not find the shift in importance of outcome at adolescence and explained this discrepancy in terms of the stress placed on effort over outcome in the Iranian ethics of achievement; that is, whereas adolescents are judged by their products in North America, they are judged by their effort in Iran.

A study by Simmons and her colleagues provides additional support of the impact of the junior high school environment on children's social cognitions (Simmons, Rosenberg, & Rosenberg, 1973). These investigators compared the self-concepts and person perceptions of two groups of 12-year-olds: one group in elementary school and one group in junior high school. They found a marked difference between these two groups that could not be explained by biological changes, maturational rates, cognitive levels, or relative physical size. They concluded that the difference was primarily a consequence of differences in the social environments associated with elementary and junior high schools. In other words, changes in the children's social environments had a greater effect on the social cognitions measured than did the developmental changes associated with maturation.

Changes in the social life of children may also underlie some of the developmental changes that occur in the attributional biases of children. In a recent study by Ruble, Feldman, Higgins, and Karlovac (1979), 4- and 5-year-olds, 8- and 9-year-olds, and college students watched a target actor select a preferred item from an array of either animals, colors, cartoon characters, or cars and four other actors either agree or disagree with the target actor's choice. Subjects were asked why the target actor selected the chosen object: Was it because of the actor's own personal tastes (a person attribution) or was it because the object was really good (an entity attribution)? This basic procedure was then replicated in another study with 5- and 6-year-olds, 7- and 8-year-olds, 9- and 10-year-olds, and high school students, except that subjects chose their own favorite item in each array and answered the person/entity attribution question for themselves. These studies found that 4-, 5-, and 6-year-olds were more likely to make entity than person attributions for both a target actor's choices and their own choices, whereas by the age of 9 children were more likely to make person than entity attributions. This developmental shift in attribution bias was again found in a recent study by Higgins and Bryant (in press).

From a cognitive-development perspective, one might interpret this

developmental shift in attribution bias as reflecting young children's tendency to focus on concrete, observable features of the environment (i.e., the chosen object's physical properties) rather than on more abstract, covert features of the environment (i.e., the target actor's dispositions or personal tastes). Although there may indeed be a developmental shift in the attention paid or weight given to entity-based versus dispositional-based determinants of choice behavior (cf. Ruble et al., 1979), it is *not* the case that the youngest children were incapable of making dispositional attributions. Even the 4- and 5-year-olds made significantly more person attributions for the target actor's choice when the other actors unanimously disagreed with the choice (i.e., low consensus) than when they unanimously agreed with the choice (i.e., high consensus). Thus, the developmental shift was not due to a change from concrete to abstract thinking (see Piaget, 1962a; Werner, 1957).

Another explanation for the entity/person attribution shift is that children's beliefs about the causes of actions and events may initially involve little sense of personal responsibility or control over outcomes and that children's sense of personal causation increases with age. As Ruble and her colleagues (1979) point out, this explanation is consistent with evidence of both an age-related increase during this period in internal locus of control (e.g., Lifshitz, 1973) and a shift during this period in mastery orientation in achievement situations (e.g., Veroff, 1969). This change in children's sense of personal causation may, in turn, reflect a change in children's actual control over their personal lives during this period. There is, after all, a dramatic increase from the preschool to the juvenile period in children's mobility, freedom to select activities and playmates, and opportunity to function without constant adult supervision and direction.

The role of social exposure, more generally, in increasing person attributions is also suggested by the results of our most recent study (Higgins & Bryant, in press). Consistent with our previous studies, 8- and 9-year-olds and college students had a general person attribution bias when making judgments of a peer target actor. There was no person attribution bias, however, when the target was a nonpeer (e.g., a college student target for the 8- and 9-year-old subjects). Thus, 8- and 9-year-olds and college students displayed a person attribution bias only when the target was a member of a familiar age group. Presumably, frequent contact with members of one's peer group, such as in age-segregated activities, would increase one's knowledge of the variability in responses among peer group members, which, in turn, would increase one's recognition of the role of personal factors (e.g., personal taste) in behavior. Consistent with this reasoning, as one might expect, preschoolers make entity attributions

even when making judgments of self and peers because their relatively limited peer contact makes them less aware of the variability in peer responses (Higgins & Bryant, in press; Ruble et al., 1979).

Finally, there are some shifts in the social life of children that could affect their predictions of others' responses and behavior. For example, in two recent studies (Higgins, Feldman, & Ruble, 1980) illustrations of separate arrays of snacks, meals, and activities were presented to 4- and 5-year-olds and 8- and 9-year-olds. They were asked to select their personal preference, the preference of their peers, and the preference of nonpeers (i.e., "grown-ups"). The 8- and 9-year-olds (juveniles) were more accurate than the 4- and 5-year-olds (preschoolers) in predicting the preferences of grown-ups; the 4- and 5-year-olds were more accurate in predicting the preferences of peers than the preferences of nonpeers.

From a traditional cognitive-development perspective, this developmental pattern would most likely be interpreted as the transition from "egocentric" to "nonegocentric" judgment (e.g., Piaget, 1965). That is, the 4- and 5-year-olds, being egocentric, would tend to select their personal preference when judging the preferences of others, which would lead to accurate judgments for similar others (peers) but inaccurate judgments for dissimilar others (grown-ups). In contrast, the 8- and 9-year-olds, being nonegocentric, would not tend to assume similarity when making judgments of others. The results of the studies, however, cannot be explained in terms of this cognitive-developmental shift. First, most of the 4- and 5-year-olds did not select their own preferences when predicting the preferences of either peers or grown-ups. Moreover, neither the 4- and 5-year-olds' accuracy in predicting peers' preferences nor their inaccuracy in predicting grown-ups' preferences could be accounted for by those subjects who did select their own preferences when making predictions. For example, only 22% of the 4- and 5-year-olds who made inaccurate predictions of grown-ups' preferences selected their own personal preference when predicting for grown-ups.

Higgins, Feldman, and Ruble (1980) describe a number of developmental differences in social experience that could underlie the developmental difference in accuracy. In terms of the present "social life phases" framework, a possible cause of the developmental change is the sharp increase in exposure to various adults (i.e., "grown-ups") that occurs when juveniles enter elementary school and begin to participate in community activities outside the home. As exposure to adults increases, the accuracy of children's knowledge about adults naturally increases.

Social experiences could also provide an alternative explanation for the shift in children's use of past achievement-related outcomes in predicting

subsequent performance. Parsons and Ruble (1977) found that 3- and 5-year-old children do not make use of failure information in predicting future performance, whereas children 7 years of age and older do. Using a cognitive-development framework, they attributed this developmental change to a specific shift in the children's cognitive capacity, namely, to an increase in the child's capacity to integrate a series of past outcomes in the formation of a stable concept of one's abilities. Basing one's predictions for future performance on past performance, however, also requires that one consider the past performance as relevant and heuristically valuable. Thus, the developmental change reported by Parsons and Ruble could reflect a shift in the perceived relevance of one's past outcomes rather than a shift in the children's cognitive capacity. Preschoolers, because they are acquiring so many physical skills so rapidly, have frequent experience with failure followed by subsequent, and often dramatic, improvement. Consequently, their own past experiences provide them with little reason to conclude that past failures are predictive of future failures. Other aspects of the social environment of preschool children would support their belief in the instability of both outcomes and ability. First, because parents of preschoolers are aware of the rapid changes in the physical capacity of their children, they encourage their children to continue to try despite failures. Second, because the home environment is not age stratified, children have the opportunity to compare their performances with both older and younger people and thus observe the striking shifts in abilities that occur as one gets older. These social environmental factors should lead preschool children to perceive abilities as rather unstable and more like skills to be learned than like entities that are stable characteristics of individuals.

Recent results (Eccles-Parsons, 1982) obtained in Parsons's laboratory provide support for this interpretation. On a modified version of the procedures used by Parsons and Ruble (1977), preschoolers were just as likely as older children to attribute their outcomes to ability, but when asked to predict future performance, the younger children's attributions were unrelated to their predictions, whereas the older children's predictions were. In addition, when asked why they made their prediction, older children were more likely to cite past performance or stable ability, whereas young children were more likely to cite learning how to do the task as the causal explanation for their predictions.

In conclusion, then, there may be little in the social life of preschoolers that would lead them to conclude that performance reflects stable, underlying abilities. Entrance into elementary school alters several of these dynamics. First, classes are age stratified. Consequently, juveniles are

exposed to a dramatic increase in information regarding individual differences and individual consistency across time. Second, their own maturation level will have slowed considerably. And third, as discussed earlier, it is very probable that parents' attitudes regarding the stability of performance undergo a shift at about this time. Each of these shifts should increase the perceived relevance of past performance for predictions of future performance.

Cultural and demographic variation in social-life phases

Our earlier account of social-life phases was intended to represent the sequence of life phases for a typical middle-class child in North America as it was to be related to the social-cognitive development of the typical North American middle-class child. The sequence and features of children's social life, however, undoubtedly vary greatly as a function of social class, ethnicity, sex, region, and culture. Such variation could permit a test of the hypothesis that social-life phases contribute to social-cognitive development and provide an answer to the "chicken and egg" question; that is, could the shifts in social-life phases simply reflect socialization agents' recognition of the qualitative changes in children's cognitive capacity? Certainly some changes in children's social life arise from such recognition. For example, it has been suggested that parents' use of verbal rationales, or induction, to train their children in moral behavior depends upon the parents' judgments that their child has reached a sufficient level of verbal understanding (Parke, 1974; Rosenthal & Zimmerman, 1978). Nevertheless, lower-class mothers tend not to use verbal rationales even when their children are capable of understanding them (Hess & Shipman, 1968), and lower-class children continue to use reward/punishment rationales for school performance well after middle-class children have started using "higher" level rationales (Blumenfeld et al., 1979).

It is also quite likely that some changes in children's social life are due to physical maturation. For example, the sudden changes during puberty in physical size, strength, speed, and coordination, as well as sexual strivings, obviously influence adolescents' activities, social relationships, privileges, and so on. There may even be a maturational influence on basic emotional needs and life-phase "crises" (cf. Erikson, 1963). It has been argued, however, that the nature of adolescence is due to the influence of adult values and role expectations for youth rather than physiological maturation (e.g., De Vos & Hippler, 1969; Mead, 1961; Simmons, Ro-

senberg, & Rosenberg, 1973) and that the role of psychological maturation has been overemphasized (see Bandura, 1964).

It is clearly important to determine whether social-life phases influence social-cognitive development independent of such intellectual and maturational factors, and cultural-demographic comparisons are one possible way to examine this issue (see Mead, 1932; Shweder & Bourne, in press). Assuming that requisite maturational level and cognitive skills could be controlled for or matched, one could examine the relationship of temporal entry into a particular life phase or of the specific features of a particular life phase and social-cognitive development. For example, although children generally move from a non-productive (i.e., not expected to contribute to the goods and services of the society) to a productive role phase, cultures differ as to when and how abruptly this shift occurs, which could influence an individual's sense of social responsibility, social position, and relationship to others.

There is, of course, a substantial literature on culture and personality concerned with the relation between parental practices and personality development (cf. Hess, 1970; Hsu, 1961; LeVine, 1970; Zigler & Child, 1973). This literature, however, has typically related general differences in child training to general differences in personal dispositions (e.g., achievement motivation, dependency) or cultural beliefs and customs (e.g., beliefs concerning illness, mourning customs). Possible cultural differences in the sequence and features of successive life phases in childhood have not been examined nor have such differences been related to differences in the social relationships and social judgments of children. There is even some question as to whether a solid body of evidence concerning cross-cultural variations in child development has been collected yet (LeVine, 1970). But there is a growing awareness of the need for just such data in evaluating the validity of our descriptions of, and causal explanation for, developmental change (cf. Super & Harkness, 1980). Harkness (1980) has argued recently that our reliance on a monocultural data base has blinded us to the impact that our reliance on a monocultural data base has blinded us to the impact of social variation in development and has led to our heavy reliance on maturational theories in developmental psychology.

Ideally, one could wish to obtain evidence that variations along particular social life dimensions are associated with variation in social cognition. At present, the information available simply does not permit such an analysis. Thus, this section will be restricted to providing examples of cultural and demographic variation in life phases that appear to be, or could be, related to differences in social cognition.

It is well recognized that ecological, technological, economic, and po-

litical factors can all influence socialization practices through their impact on social relationships within and outside the family and on the aims of the socialization agents (cf. Aberle, 1961; Clausen, 1968; Inkeles & Levinson, 1969; Super & Harkness, 1980). The nature of the tasks imposed by a society's technology, for instance, affects the age at which societal members first engage in serious economic activity, with such activity occurring later if the tasks are dangerous, highly complex, or performed far from home (Aberle, 1961). Among the Samburu (Kenya), for example, the abrupt initiation from boyhood into the adult phase of Moranhood occurs when males are between 13 and 20 years of age. During the Moranhood phase of life, males live as bachelor warriors in the bush away from the settlement. When they are 30 years of age or older, they enter the next adult phase of elderhood in which they live in the settlement, marry, and become decision makers (Spencer, 1970). In contrast, in the village of Kau Sai (Hong Kong), children have a production role from a very early age, with adult skills and functions being acquired gradually at home. Although the marriage ceremony formally confers adult status, adult roles are assumed gradually (Ward, 1970).

The adolescent period in North American society is quite different from either of these cases, even though the biological transition at puberty is likely to be quite similar. Compared to the Samburu, entry into and exit from the adolescent phase is much more age-related in North American society (i.e., 12 to 14 for entry, 18 to 21 for exit). The broad range of ages for entry into and exit from Moranhood among the Samburu suggests that factors other than cognitive or maturational level determine when the shift occurs in that culture. In Kau Sai there is no distinct adolescent period in which children must abruptly shift from childhood to adult roles. In fact, Kau Sai pubescents have no life choices to make because they are offered no alternatives (Ward, 1970), and Kau Sai pubescence appears to generate less conflict than does North American adolescence (Ward, 1970). It is interesting in this regard that Chinese-American adolescents who take on adult functions sooner and with less choice than Anglo-American adolescents and learn more of these functions at home react less to authority than Anglo-Americans during this period (Gardner, 1978). Similarily, Hsu (1961) and his colleagues in a study comparing youth growing up in Chicago with Chinese-American youth growing up in Hawaii attributed the low rate of rebellion among the Chinese-American youth to the clear expectations and social roles set out for children within the Chinese-American cultures. Mead (1961) has argued that forcing our adolescents to choose from a wide-ranging, ill-defined set of options is responsible for the

conflicts and difficulties associated with adolescence in this culture. One can only speculate on the impact of this forced choice on the shifts in a variety of social-cognitive domains, such as moral reasoning, person perception, and identity formation.

The link between social experiences and cognitive-development patterns is also evident in the domain of competition and sensitivity to social comparison information. Ethnic groups vary in the value they place on competition. For example, whereas the Sioux Indians emphasize independence and competitiveness, the very idea of competition contradicts the Hopi Indians' sense of what they are or most want to be. Similarly, Mexican-American parents are less likely to socialize competitive behavior in their children than are Anglo-American parents. One might expect, therefore, that the developmental increase in achievement-related social comparison and competitiveness that generally characterizes development among Anglo-American children would be less evident for Hopi Indians and Mexican-Americans. Indeed, McClintock (1974) has found that competitiveness does not develop in Mexican-American and Anglo-American children at the same pace.

The goals parents have for their children and parental beliefs regarding the stability of various child behaviors offer additional examples of the cultural variations that impact on social development. In a new line of research, J. Goodnow (personal communication, 1980) asked parents in Australian-Australian and Lebanese-Australian families when they think various behavioral patterns become stable. Australian-Australian (largely of English descent) parents think that most behavioral patterns, including academic performance, are fairly stable across the years from 6 to 12. Lebanese-Australian parents, on the other hand, think that most behavioral patterns are not stable across time. It is very probable that middle-class North American parents hold beliefs similar to those of Australian-Australian parents. North American parents start asking the school for social comparison information on their children's intellectual abilities soon after they enter school. Interestingly, North American youths develop a stable concept of ability (Nicholls, 1975) by 8 and 9 years of age, and there is a dramatic shift in North American children's use of past outcomes to predict future performance between the ages of 5 and 8 (Parsons & Ruble, 1977). Are North American children's beliefs regarding the stability of intellectual abilities a consequence of their parents' attitudes? And, if so, will Lebanese-Australian children view ability as unstable for a longer development period? If our argument has merit, one would have to predict so. One would also have to predict that the devel-

opmental patterns for Australian-Australian and North American children would be similar. Goodnow's research will provide us with some very important answers.

Another important feature of modern, industrialized society that is not found in every culture is formal schooling. Great cross-cultural variation is found in adult functions learned in formal school situations with non-kindred teachers and peers and those learned at home with parents and siblings (Gardner, 1978). The formal schooling common to Western modernized societies instills in students an individual modernity, that is, a complex set of interrelated attitudes and values, including a desire for autonomy, a decreasing concern with traditional authority figures, an increased sense of personal control over one's life, and an openness to new people, experiences, and ways of doing things (cf. Inkeles, 1974; Suzman, 1974). Acquisition of such aspects of individual modernity should influence, in turn, children's social cognitions. Developmental models that chart social-cognitive growth toward a set of values based on autonomy and universal justice, such as Kohlberg's, may reflect the orientation of children toward the Western value system rather than toward some universal, culture-free sequence. If this is true, one would expect differences in sequencing and in the final end state of the social-cognitive development of children from modernized and nonmodernized societies, as well as differences among children from the same society who vary in their degree of exposure to formal Western schooling.

Socialization practices can also vary within the same society as a function of social class, gender, and so on. With respect to social class, for example, there is evidence that lower-class children, especially, participate less than middle-class children in formal organizations and extracurricular activities within the school and community (Hess, 1970). Thus, lower-class children are exposed to a smaller range of socialization agents and experience less opportunity for performing different kinds of social roles (e.g., holding office in a club) and for working cooperatively with adults. This restriction in social experience could account, in part, for the tendency of moral judgments of lower-class children to differ from those of middle-class children. There is, in fact, evidence that children who participate in social clubs and organizations tend to give more advanced moral judgments than those who do not, regardless of social class (Hess, 1970; Keasey, 1971).

The social life of lower-class children also differs with respect to the mode of social control exercised by their parents (position-oriented vs. person-oriented) and the goals that are emphasized in interpersonal communication (Bernstein, 1970). Lower-class parents are more likely than

middle-class parents to respond to their child on the basis of the child's ascribed status or position (e.g., age, gender) than on the basis of the child's personal characteristics (e.g., needs, motives, skills). Lower-class parents are also more likely to emphasize social solidarity in interpersonal relationships, and, thus, compared with middle-class parents, the communication goal of reinforcing social bonds is given more weight than the communication goal of accurate transmission of the speaker's personal beliefs, attitudes, and so on (Bernstein, 1970). Although these social-class differences do not appear to affect communication style to the extent claimed by Bernstein (cf. Higgins, 1976), they could contribute to social-class differences in referential accuracy by reducing both the mental resources the lower-class children allocate to accurate information transmission versus interpersonal maintenance (cf. Higgins, Fondacaro, & McCann, 1981) and the attention they allocate to the individuating characteristics of their listener. However, as with participation in formal organizations, it is the social life of children rather than social class per se that is critical (cf. Higgins, 1976). Thus, Bearison and Cassel (1975) report that middle-class children whose parents use a person-oriented mode of social control communicate more effectively than children whose parents use a position-oriented mode of social control.

Gender differences provide yet another opportunity to explore the possible impact of social life variation on social cognitions. Two specific examples seem especially relevant: one related to achievement behaviors and one related to moral reasoning.

Henrig and Jardin (1977) argue that women are not as good as men at the role of "team player" and that, consequently, their ability to survive and prosper in the business community is thus compromised. Although we basically disapprove of theories that blame the victim, their point has some interesting implications for our position. They attribute this difference to the effect on social perceptions of one critical sex difference in preadolescent and adolescent social experiences, namely, participation in competitive athletics. They argue that participation in competitive team sports teaches cooperative, team-oriented behavior and the acceptance of collective responsibility for outcomes; these skills, they argue, are essential for survival in the corporate structure. Although no direct test has been made of their hypothesis, it is the case that many successful corporate executives have had a long history of active participation in competitive sports. Sex-differentiated participation in competitive sports could also account for sex difference in inferences concerning academic successes and failures. Girls are more likely than boys both to attribute their academic failures to lack of ability and to lower their expectancies follow-

ing failure (cf. Parsons, in press; Frieze et al., 1978). High rates of failure and experiences with improvement may reduce the significance of failure for one's sense of one's abilities. Given the low probability of success each time one is up at bat in baseball or runs for a touchdown in football, and given the rapid improvements children experience in their athletic skills over the juvenile and preadolescent periods, boys may have more experiences that teach them to see failures as less a function of inability than of bad luck or inexperience than do girls. Because girls, until recently, have been denied such experiences, they are less likely to develop an unstable, experience-dependent view of ability.

Moral reasoning is a second domain in which sex differences in social life could influence the development of social cognition. High school girls score an average of one stage (Stage 3) lower than high school boys on Kohlbergian scales (Gilligan et al., 1971; Holstein, 1976; Turiel, 1973). The female sex role may be responsible for this difference. Because Stage 3 reasoning relies on interpersonal concordance and because interpersonal orientation is the hallmark of the female sex role, one should not be surprised to find the majority of women "stuck" at Stage 3. Gilligan (1977) recently has proposed another social life explanation; specifically, she argues that the sequence proposed by Kohlberg is based on a male orientation toward development in which optimal growth is directed toward autonomy, independence, and universal justice. Gilligan argues that female development follows a different course and turns on different developmental issues. Consequently, a new model for the development of moral reasoning that is more appropriate to the realities of female social life changes is necessary. Gilligan has proposed such a model, which, like the first explanation, points to the importance of differences between the social lives of boys and girls as the critical mediating factor.

"Social × cognitive" interaction

At present little direct evidence is available concerning the role of social-life phases in social-cognitive development, and even less evidence is available concerning the interaction of social-life phases and cognitive skills in shaping social-cognitive development. The scarcity of empirical evidence on these issues is, in part, a reflection of the current domination of social development by the Piaget–Kohlberg "cognitive" perspective. The "cognitive-developmental" approach, of course, does not suggest that social-cognitive development is influenced by cognitive factors alone. The interaction between the cognitive structures of the child and input

from the social environment is stressed (cf. Kohlberg, 1969; Piaget, 1965). But the impact of the child's level of cognitive development on the child's response to the social environment is emphasized; social inputs are seen primarily as providing opportunities for cognitive growth (e.g., role-taking opportunities) or as important influences on the rate of cognitive development (see Kohlberg, 1969; Selman, 1971). For example, the development of role taking has been linked to the adjustments that occur during peer group conflict (e.g., Feffer, 1970; Maitland & Goldman, 1974; Piaget, 1926b; Selman, 1971).

Nevertheless, as Maccoby (1968) points out, the cognitive-developmental approach has generally led researchers to look for the determinants of cognitive growth in social development, such as correlations between level of social development and measures of cognitive ability. Indeed, positive correlations between level of social development and IQ have been taken as support for the cognitive-developmental approach (e.g., Emmerich, Goldman, & Shore, 1971; Kohlberg, 1969). Similarly, Keasey (1971) interpreted the positive relation between social participation and moral development in terms of the cognitive mediating variable of role-taking ability.

The social-life phases approach suggests a different interpretation of the role of cognitive factors in social development. For example, the positive correlation between level of social development and IQ could be due to the influence of IQ on the speed of socialization into one's current social-life phase. Similarly, the positive relation between social participation and moral development could be a consequence of the impact of social participation on moral development. After all, if a child has entered a new subculture (social-life phase) that emphasizes a higher moral level, the greater the child's participation in this new subculture, the greater will be the child's exposure to the new moral knowledge.

In this section, we will discuss various ways that social-life phases might interact with intellectual development to produce stagelike changes in social cognition. In so doing, we will consider some general issues concerning the role of cognitive factors in social-cognitive development.

One general issue concerns the interpretation of the co-occurrence of change in cognition and social cognition. From the "cognitive" perspective, the change in social cognition would be interpreted as a result of cognitive change. There are a number of problems with this position, however. First, there is no a priori reason to assume that co-occurrence involves any causal relation at all. The intellectual and social-life changes could be due to independent factors that are active concurrently, with only the social-life changes influencing social cognition. Alternatively,

some social-cognition changes could be due to cognitive changes, whereas others could be due to social-life changes. In fact, the independent influence of social-life changes could explain, at least in part, why the myriad of social-cognitive changes occurring during the shift from the preschool to the juvenile phase (i.e., the preoperational/concrete operational shift) cannot be adequately accounted for by the emergence of particular cognitive skills (e.g., role taking). Second, even if a cognitive change influences social-cognitive change, it need not be the cognitive change that is co-occurring with the social-cognitive change; that is, a cognitive prerequisite for a social-cognitive change may develop in an earlier period, with its subsequent application requiring an impetus from the social world (e.g., new social relationships and activities). Damon (1977b), in fact, has described cases in which the cognitive capacity necessary for a particular level of social cognition is present for a period before its utilization. In such cases, the social-cognitive change depends on the presence of both the prerequisite cognitive acquisition and the appropriate social input. Furthermore, in these cases it is the change in the child's social life that is the immediate cause of the change in the child's social-cognitive system.

This brings us to the related issue regarding the social × cognitive interaction, namely, the kinds of intellectual changes that must occur to allow children to move from one social-cognition phase to the next. What exactly are the cognitive prerequisites at each phase? Although a detailed discussion of this issue would carry us beyond the scope of this chapter, an understanding of the role of social-life phases in social-cognitive development requires that some attention be given to this issue.

The types of intellectual change underlying social-cognitive development most often mentioned in the literature involve qualitative changes in reasoning, conceptual integration and organization, and cognitive operations (e.g., reciprocity, role taking). However, most intellectual changes during childhood are basically quantitative in nature. Social-cognitive development, to a considerable extent, may reflect these quantitative changes; in particular, the increasing social knowledge and routinization of operations that comes from experience and practice with social events. Children's knowledge of the social world is likely to increase with exposure to the social world and direct instruction about the social world (from parents, peers, teachers, the media, etc.), just as their knowledge about the nonsocial world increases with experience (e.g., their knowledge about different types of cars, flowers, and animals). Such increased knowledge could, by itself, result in developmental differences in social cognition. Higgins, Feldman, and Ruble (1980), for example, argue that the developmental increase in children's accuracy in predicting nonpeers'

preferences can be explained by the increase in children's exposure to nonpeers, an exposure that would inevitably increase the children's knowledge base.

Comparable developmental increases in knowledge undoubtedly occur in a variety of social content areas. For example, the developmental increase in the weighting of intentions relative to consequences (Austin, Ruble, & Trabasso, 1977; Parsons, 1974; Piaget, 1965) and the developmental increase in the tendency to judge others' in terms of dispositions (cf. Shantz, 1975) could reflect a developmental increase in knowledge about different kinds of intentions and dispositions and how they relate to behavior. After all, the superior accuracy of a clinician as compared to a physicist in judging a mentally ill patient is more likely to reflect differences in knowledge of possible symptoms and dispositions than differences in reasoning ability. Younger children may simply know less about the possible intentions and dispositions of others, just as they know less about music, sports, or any other content area.

Exposure to more situations should lead to an increased understanding of situational norms and social scripts. Grusec (this volume), for example, suggests that children learn situation-behavior scripts from teachers in school. The developmental increase in appropriate social behavior could arise from this gradual increase in knowledge of different types of situations and the behaviors associated with each. Similarly, increased knowledge about the relation between particular facial features and particular emotions and about the emotions appropriate to particular situations could also underlie the developmental increase in the ability to identify emotions accurately from facial expressions and situational cues (cf. Deutsch, 1975; Feshbach & Roe, 1968; Izard, 1971). In fact, learning correct "definitions of the situation" and situation-appropriate behaviors could be one of the most critical aspects of social-cognitive development.

In general, there may be a lot less going on than meets the eye in both children's and adult's social judgments and behavior. In fact, it may be that the Piagetian perspective is less guilty of underestimating young children's social-cognitive skills than of overestimating adult's social-cognitive skills. In fact, current interpretations of adults' social cognition do not reflect the rational, deductive, complex thinking that Piaget has ascribed to adults.

Another relatively quantitative intellectual change that could contribute to social-cognitive development is the routinization of cognitive operations that results from practice. Shatz (1978) and Case (1978) have suggested that one factor underlying developmental increases in task performance is older children's greater experience with aspects of the task. Increased

practice with an operation is assumed by these theorists to lead to increased routinization, thus reducing the mental effort required for its execution. This savings in mental effort, in turn, allows a greater proportion of a child's limited mental resources to be directed toward other aspects of the task. Such routinization has been suggested as an important factor underlying developmental improvement in interpersonal communication (Higgins, Fondacaro, & McCann, 1981; Shatz, 1978). It may underlie developmental differences in other areas of social cognition as well. With respect to moral judgment (Piaget, 1965), for example, children learn first about the consequences of their behavior because parents are concerned about their safety (not to mention the safety of plants, pets, dishes, etc.). Thus, processing information about consequences is well practiced, becoming routinized and relatively automatic. It is not surprising, therefore, that young children process consequence information more quickly and remember it better when later asked to make judgments.

Because both routinization and social knowledge increase steadily with experience, these factors alone cannot account for the qualitative, "stagelike" nature of social-cognitive development. The interaction between these cognitive factors and social-life phases, however, could account for at least some "stagelike" changes in social-cognitive development. Children who enter a new social-life phase are likely to be exposed to new, and often quite different, information about their social world, information that either was not available in their earlier social environments or was purposefully hidden from them. Information about different types of peers, for example, is generally more available to juveniles than to preschoolers, and information about heterosexual relations is generally more available to early adolescents than to juveniles or preadolescents. Thus, one would expect qualitative "stagelike" leaps in social knowledge when children enter elementary school or junior and senior high school, analogous to the leaps in knowledge about mathematics, history, and chemistry that occur when children are first exposed to these academic fields.

Entry into a new social-life phase (or subculture) may also provide the first opportunity for extensive practice in processing certain kinds of social information and using specific kinds of operations, leading to the routinization of these operations. When children enter elementary school, for example, there is a dramatic increase in the number of occasions in which they must communicate to someone with whom they share little background information. These children, therefore, must provide additional information to their listener more often than was necessary in their previous, family-based subculture. As a consequence, the probability is increased

that the operations necessary for such message modification will become routinized and implemented with increasing ease and automaticity.

The opportunity to interact with and judge a variety of peers who differ in their intentions should also have an effect on the character of children's social and moral judgments. Several studies have found that preschoolers use intention information when making moral judgments of themselves even when they do not do so in making judgments of others (e.g., Costanzo, 1970; Keasy, 1977; Piaget, 1965; Rotenberg, 1979). During the preschool years the experiences children have with social judgments revolve primarily around their parents' judging them in situations in which they are associated with some negative event. The children also experience variations in their own intention and the fact that negative outcome can occur independent of, or despite, one's intentions. Finally, the preschooler learns that parents are less likely to punish accidental than intentional negative outcomes. All these experiences, especially the social significance associated with the distinction between one's own accidental versus intentional wrongdoings, should increase the likelihood that the preschool child will use intention information in making self-judgments. Children as young as 3 use this knowledge, protesting that they didn't "mean to do it" when their parents threaten punishment for a negative outcome. Similar social meaning is not attached to the intentions of others. Rarely is the preschool child called upon to judge someone else's intentions. Thus there is less need to distinguish between the intentions and outcomes of others. And because preschoolers use a limited cognitive processing space to deal with a wide array of information and problem-solving tasks, it seems reasonable that they will use a more primitive judgment algorithm in judging others, especially if there is no social significance pressuring for a more sophisticated evaluation. As children enter elementary school, they become more actively involved in judging their peers. Furthermore, distinguishing between the accidental and intentional acts of others takes on an increasingly important social significance in that peers vary more both in their intentions and in the probability of accidental negative outcomes than do parents and the other supportive adults that dominate children's preschool subculture.

It must be emphasized that we are not proposing that the "qualitative-social × quantitative-cognitive" interaction is sufficient to account for social-cognitive development. First, there are developmental changes that appear to reflect qualitative changes in cognitive operations. For example, the development of moral judgments from judgments derived from only the consequences of a stimulus person's behavior to judgments

derived from both intentions and consequences probably reflects in part a development of the general ability to consider more than one factor simultaneously (see Higgins, 1981).

Second, there are social developmental changes that probably involve an interaction between qualitative changes in both social and cognitive factors. For example, the ability to control the self when making judgments of others appears to increase in a stagelike manner, with each stage requiring increasingly complex operations (cf. Higgins, 1981). This cognitive growth in the ability to control self-intrusion, however, probably interacts with social-life phases as each phase places new demands on children to control self-intrusion. For example, when preschoolers enter elementary school they meet many more people whose beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, and so on are different from their own, and control of self-intrusion thus becomes increasingly important for accurate judgments and social acceptance. Then, as elementary school children move from the early to the later grades and social comparison becomes increasingly important, children must learn the more difficult task of controlling self-intrusion even though the self is part of the comparative judgment.

In sum, most previous explanations of the stagelike nature of social-cognitive development have emphasized stagelike changes in cognitive development. Recently, however, there has been an increasing concern with the general role of stagelike changes in social input (cf. Blyth, in press; Bronfenbrenner, 1977; Cole, Hood, & McDermott, in press; Serafica, in press), as well as with the interactions between intellectual and social change (cf. Damon, 1977a; Shantz, in press) that could underlie social-cognitive development. Our analysis suggests that stagelike changes in social-cognitive development could be due to qualitative changes in social input (i.e., social-life phases), qualitative changes in cognitive operations (e.g., the number of factors that can be simultaneously coordinated), as well as a number of possible social × cognitive interactions, including a possible qualitative-social × quantitative-cognitive interaction.

Conclusions

No one seriously questions that social experience is a major factor underlying social development. There is less consensus, however, concerning the exact role of social experience in social development. In the traditional social-learning approach to social development, social experience in the form of social observation and social reinforcement is the central factor in social development. In contrast, the cognitive-developmental approach posits cognitive growth as the central factor, with social experi-

ence being regarded as providing opportunities and impetus for cognitive growth. Interestingly, there is a commonality between these approaches in that qualitative shifts in social experience during different social-life phases are only rarely given serious attention. Traditional notions of socialization also portray children as slowly acquiring the ways, skills, and customs of their society through basically uniform and continuous adult intervention and training (cf. Zigler & Child, 1973). Although this perspective on the role of social experience has predominated, an alternative perspective has received some attention in the literature, particularly from sociologists and anthropoligists. This perspective emphasizes the qualitative stagelike changes that occur in the social life of children. The purpose of this chapter has been to develop this "social-life-phases," or age subculture, perspective and to consider its implications for developmental changes in social cognition.

For a social-life-phases perspective to be reasonable or useful, there must be at least some preliminary evidence that children's social lives do change at different age phases. Although there is a definite need for more systematic, detailed research in this area, the literature does describe rather dramatic changes in the social life of children as they move from the preschool period through the juvenile, preadolescent, and early adolescent periods. In fact, at each life-phase juncture, there are qualitative shifts along a number of different dimensions of social experience. For example, entry into elementary school greatly increases children's exposure to different peers and different socialization agents, as well as their individual freedom and their responsibilities.

The changes in children's social lives during different age phases appear to be related to concomitant changes in various aspects of their social cognition. For example, increased exposure to a wide variety of peers and adults with varying personalities and statuses could contribute to the increased tendency of juveniles during this period to describe others in terms of their personal traits and to base friendships on admiration of another person's traits. Furthermore, some social-cognitive changes that occur within particular periods are more easily interpreted in terms of social-life changes than in terms of intellectual or maturational change. For example, the increased weight given to outcome versus intent information in the achievement-related judgments of seventh-graders as compared with sixth-graders probably arises from the different emphasis given to grades in junior high school as compared to that in elementary school.

Finally, to the extent that cross-cultural and demographic differences in the social-life phases of children are related to differences in social-cognitive development, a social-life-phases perspective would seem to be par-

ticularly useful and necessary. Unfortunately, little research has been concerned with cross-cultural or demographic differences in the social-life phases of children, and even less research has related such differences to differences in social-cognitive development. Nevertheless, the little evidence available does suggest that variability in social experience can account for differences in social-cognitive development. For example, social-class differences in participation in social clubs and formal organizations and in the mode of social control exercised by parents are reflected in social-class differences in moral judgments and communicative performance, respectively.

We are not suggesting, of course, that social-cognitive development is determined solely by social-life variables. Cognitive and maturational variables are clearly important, both as independent factors and in interaction with social-life variables. Greater attention, however, must be directed toward social-life variables that could influence social-cognitive development. At present, social-life phases have received, at best, benign neglect by developmental psychologists, probably in part because developmental psychologists rarely receive training in those research methodologies most relevant for obtaining such information, such as field observational methods. If the social-life-phases perspective is to be useful, however, some preliminary fact-finding or descriptive stage is necessary, including cross-cultural and demographic comparisons. It would be interesting, for example, to compare the social-cognitive responses of seventh-grade students, where grade seven is the last grade of elementary school and where grade seven is the first grade of high school. In fact, Blyth and his associates (1979) report that the relation between early maturation and self-esteem for seventh-grade boys and girls varies depending upon whether they are still in elementary school or have begun junior high school. Experimental research should also examine the effects of varying social exposure, social practice, and social demands on children's social cognition. For example, the effect of social exposure on social cognitions could be tested by giving preschoolers the opportunity to participate in aspects of juvenile (or even preadolescent) social life.

A detailed comparison of the social life of children in different age phases, in fact, might suggest the presence of developmental differences in aspects of social cognition that have not even been considered. For example, adolescents have much greater opportunity than younger children to enact various kinds of social roles, both within formal peer organizations and in part-time or summer employment, and, in addition, must seriously consider and prepare for future adult roles. Adolescents also have greater freedom to select those roles they wish to embrace and have

more experience with different individuals fulfilling the same role. These social-role experiences should increase both adolescents' conception of the general nature of social roles and their knowledge of various kinds of, and techniques for resolving (e.g., role distance), role conflict (e.g., self-role and interrole conflict).

Our discussion of social-life phases was restricted to the preschool, juvenile, preadolescent, and early adolescent periods because most research on social-cognitive development has been concerned with this age range. The social-life perspective, however, is clearly relevant throughout the life-span. This perspective, in fact, has been applied to both preschool and postadolescent periods. Bronfenbrenner (1977) and Cole, Hood, and McDermott (in press), for example, have discussed the implications of the physical and social environment for infant and toddler development. The social-life-phases perspective has also been applied to socialization in adulthood, most notably by Brim (1966) and Levinson (1978).

Our account of social-life phases has also been restricted to fairly general features of each age phase. There are many other features of the social life of children that probably influence their social-cognitive development, such as family structure (e.g., family size, sex composition and age distribution of siblings, number and sex of caretakers) and interaction style (e.g., directive vs. nondirective, formal vs. informal). Moreover, some features can change during the course of development (e.g., family size, sex composition and age distribution of siblings). There is probably greater variability across children for such features than those features we have considered. Nevertheless, identification of the typical, or at least modal, family structure and interaction style at different age phases could further contribute to our understanding of the role of social-life phases in social-cognitive development.

Finally, it should be noted that the social-life-phases perspective is concerned with why rather than how children's social cognitions change. That is, this perspective is concerned with the social-life changes that contribute to social-cognitive change, but not specifically with the mechanisms involved in acquiring or modifying social-cognitive responses. Other models, in contrast, are concerned with these issues. In particular, behavioral-learning (e.g., Bijou & Baer, 1961; Staats 1975), social-learning (e.g., Bandura, 1969), and cognitive-developmental (e.g., Kohlberg, 1969; Piaget, 1965) processes have all been proposed to explain the acquisition and modification of social-cognitive responses.

In sum, the social-life-phases perspective of social-cognitive development is restricted in scope and highly speculative as many pieces in the puzzle are missing. This chapter has been conceived to provide a rough

framework to guide the search for the missing pieces. Admittedly, once the numerous gaps are filled, we may find a different picture from that imagined. It is clear, however, that the current picture of social-cognitive development only partially represents, and occasionally misrepresents, the nature of children's changing social reality.

Notes

1 We are not suggesting, of course, that the effects of social factors are independent of cognition. Clearly, as Turiel (this volume) points out in his commentary, cognition is involved both in processing social input and in the mental representation of those changes induced by social input. Social factors can have no effects on social judgments and behaviors unless they result in some cognitive change (e.g., increased social knowledge). However, rather than being stimulated by some general shift in intellectual skills or reasoning ability, it is possible that the shift in social cognition could be stimulated by the social environment.

2 This is not to say that early adolescents totally reject their parents' values or standards or that independence from parents has not begun prior to early adolescence. Parental influence remains strong during this period, especially with respect to career-related decisions, and dependence upon adults gradually decreases throughout development (see Bandura, 1964). There is a shift between the juvenile and early adolescent periods, however, in the relative orientation toward peers versus adults, in part reflecting a shift in children's perception of the source of their need satisfaction (see Floyd & South, 1972).

3 It may also be that junior high school teachers cannot monitor their students' efforts as effectively as elementary school teachers because of the greater number of students under their supervision.

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3   Beyond the information processed: socialization in the development of attributional processes

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According to the cognitive dynamics of attribution theory, our understanding and evaluation of persons and behavior are mediated by causal analysis (cf. Jones & Davis, 1965; Jones & McGillis, 1976; Kelley, 1967, 1972). This analysis is believed to be distinctly rational and guided by formal rules of inference. Its emphases are (1) on human action and social contexts as information, (2) on individuals as natural and logical information processors, and (3) on attributions, the inferences about the causes and characteristics of social life that are the result of this information analysis. Although the rules and devices of attribution theory were proposed as descriptive tools to allow an idealized portrayal of interpersonal reasoning, the current theoretical and research literature has tended to reify them. This trend is particularly evident in the burgeoning literature on the development of social cognition. In this literature the child's acquisition of structures for the apprehension of personal conduct is increasingly being viewed as coextensive with the acquisition of formal information processing heuristics. Thus, it is currently common to research the development of such formal analytic structures as the augmentation principle, the consensus principle, and the schemas of multiple sufficient and multiple necessary cause (cf. DiVitto & McArthur, 1978; Dix, Herzberger, & Erlebacher, 1978; Ruble et al. 1979; Shultz et al. 1975). Although such research is important and interesting, its centrality to current efforts to understand the development of social perception is disconcerting on two counts. First, it tends to assume that phenomena such as trait labeling and moral appraisal are contingent on secondary processes of cognitive elaboration rather than on the primary and immediate processes that accompany naive social observation. Its characterization of social perception as logic relegates to a secondary position the acquisition of beliefs and standards through socialization. Second, as a