"Kids'-Stuff Boys" and "Stuck-Up Little Madams": 13- to 16-Year-Olds in School and Peer Group

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1. Introduction

This article is concerned with relations between boys and girls during the transition from childhood to adolescence. At the end of the latency period and the beginning of puberty, 13- to 15-year-olds cannot be described accurately in terms of childhood but are far from being adult. Moreover, they are still very unsure of themselves when faced with the manifestations of juvenile culture; indeed, they are excluded from many of its attractive locations (e.g., commercial discotheques). They are, as Kieper (1984, p. 170) puts it, "an age group without status." At the same time, however, these adolescents have to cope with new tasks and find new orientations: Distancing from the parental home is accompanied by an increase in the significance of the peer group, which is also used as an area for making contact with the opposite sex. The "farewell to childhood" (Kaplan, 1984) referred to here usually begins at the age of 11 or 12, when the changes caused by puberty cannot be overlooked. At 16 at the latest, when the school-leaving age is reached, adolescents have finally left childhood behind them.

The following paper is concerned with the relationship between the sexes in this phase: How do boys and girls of 13 to 16 approach each other; what relationships are established between the sexes among people of the same age during this period? Which are the particular problems facing girls and which boys? In order to answer these questions, the results of West German research on schools and juveniles in the 1970s and 1980s have been examined. These findings are reported and interpreted here.

2. The Initial Situation

Before the questions formulated above can be examined, the initial conditions relating to them must be described: On the *ontogenetic* dimension, an outline is given of the way the sexes deal with each other in the preceding phase of childhood. On a *structural* dimension, I describe the conditions created for communication between peers by their being bound to school and their families.

The "Separate Worlds" at the End of Childhood

Looking further back in childhood, one can observe that the world of 6-year-old boys and girls is not yet divided. In particular, Oswald et al. (1986, p. 572) have demonstrated, in their observation study in Berlin elementary schools (Grades 1-6), that when they start school, children are still very open in their dealings with the opposite sex. Thus they also express their affection physically, for instance, by sitting on one another's laps, leaning on each other, or comforting others by caressing them. However, as soon as children have entered the latency period (from the age of about 6 onward), they are no longer seen touching each other in this loving and tender fashion. In the fourth year of school, among 10-year-olds, we find a completely different picture: Children of the opposite sex are no longer counted among their particularly close friends. The peer groups formed among 9- to 12-year-olds are now clearly made up of children of the same sex (see Petillon, 1982, p. 415). Although children of this age have to deal with each other day in day out, "the worlds of girls and boys" are still "clearly separated from each other" (Oswald et al., 1986, p. 563). At the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 13th year of life—as puberty sets in—this rigid division begins to become more relaxed. However, this first takes place only in the wishes and in the imaginations of the children: In the 6th year of school, about half the girls may claim to be friends with boys, but no mixed-gender groups could be detected at this age. What happens is that boys and girls still form separate groups, but they now

> . . . like to find opportunities to parade in front of each other, trying to impress each other. Thus there still exists a clear border between the sexes among 12-year-olds. Segregation has not yet been abolished, but, for a minority among the boys and girls, it is beginning to be relaxed. (Oswald et al., 1986, p. 564)

In other words, most 12- to 13-year-olds are still moving in circles made up of friends of the same sex, but they clearly express the wish for this to change (see Schlaegel et al., 1975, p. 208). This can also be recognized in the changing way that boys and girls treat each other from about the age of 11 onward:

> In almost one third of their interactions, the girl is regarded as a girl and the boy as a boy. They tease, make insinuations, and play with proximity and distance. The boys take the initiative more often, but the girls certainly also take part actively. (Oswald et al., 1986, p. 576)

This gives an outline of the situation at the end of childhood: The "separate worlds" are dissolving, interest in the opposite sex is turning into groping and uncertain forms of making contact; anxious yet, at the same time, inquisitive.

Life in School and in the Family

It can be said of almost all the 13- to 16-year-olds with whom this chapter is concerned that they live with their parents in their own families and attend normal secondary schools. This brings us to the two central areas of activity of adolescents: (a) the family, which provides emotional and material security, but of which they now have to take leave step by step; and (b) school, in which, at the end of the middle school, the decision is made on which certificates should be taken; which opportunities in life should be attained by their own achievements. Both these areas of activity will be considered briefly in the particular light of the relationship between boys and girls.

School. In our society, the transition from childhood to youth is linked more closely than ever before with one's existence as a schoolboy or schoolgirl: Practically all 13- to 15-year-olds and, by now, more than 70% of all 16-year-olds attend school full-time—in most cases, a general secondary school (see BMBW, 1988, 1989, p. 26). Here, two consistent characteristics of the school system—the division into school years and co-education—determine the central conditions for the communication fields of the sexes: In school, boys and girls of the same age meet each other day in day out; it is there that they have to deal with each other and can try out various ways of approaching each other and of creating distance. Whereas the classes are extremely homogeneous as far as age is concerned, the school as a whole offers more scope. As students from older and younger classes are present, there is the opportunity to establish relationships with (somewhat) older or (somewhat) younger boys and girls. Now school is not officially meant to be a "contact market," but a purpose-designed institution for carrying out instruction. Yet, for the students, it has just this dual function: From their subjective point of view, it is not only a matter of "learning and achievement," but also of finding social recognition, receiving an emotional echo, and satisfying communicative needs. This aspect gains significance to the extent that the peer group becomes more important to the 13- to 16-year-old and, contact with the opposite sex is sought increasingly: school as a place where friends are met, in which communication tinged with the erotic also takes place, a place to arrange the clique's after-school activities (see Gaiser et al., 1979, p. 155).

Now the same holds good for school as for other areas in society: that it is tied up in the system of bisexuality determined by the patriarchy (see Tyrell, 1986). Students (boys and girls) and teachers (men and women) alike always behave in their sex role, *too,* and male dominance and female second-ranking is experienced daily as being normal. Whereby it must be said that, officially, equal treatment of girls and boys is required, so that the mechanisms of privilege and disadvantage tend to take effect subconsciously (see Horstkemper, 1990). In this field, several studies have demonstrated clearly that the "established" relations between the sexes tend to be reproduced more strongly in the students' cliques

than actually in lessons (see Brehmer, 1982).

The family. More than 80% of the juveniles attending school at present live in their own families with a mother and a father; of these, about 20% grow up as an only child, about 50% have one brother or sister, while almost 30% have two or more siblings (see Behnken et al., 1991, p. 112; Jugendwerk, 1992, Vol. 4, pp. 10, 143; Popp & Tillmann 1990, p. 565). The first thing these figures demonstrate is that, in spite of a variety of trends that tend to undermine stability, the "complete" family has retained its dominant position as the place in which juveniles live. In the "internal" relationship between the sexes, these families are still organized along patriarchal lines. This applies as much to the distribution of work and power between fathers and mothers as to the different ways of bringing up sons and daughters (see Tillmann 1992). The figures mentioned above also reveal that the "merry crew" of brothers and sisters has long since disappeared out of the lives of modern juveniles: Father, mother, and two children is the statistical norm in the German family, and about half of all juveniles grow up in this constellation, whilst another 20% are only children. This also means that only a minority of boys grow up with a sister; only the minority of girls grow up with a brother. Thus a truly "classic" opportunity for juveniles to approach the opposite sex has disappeared: The friends of brothers and sisters, who play a significant role in the diaries of juveniles up to and into the 1950s (e.g., Küppers, 1964), are now mentioned considerably less often. In short, the (extended) family as a place in which young people can make contact with members of the opposite sex of their own age scarcely functions any more. Thus, first friendships between boys and girls are formed more frequently outside the family than they used to be, and many juveniles consciously keep this new experience out of reach of their parents. Increasingly, they are regarded as "one's own territory," to be shared with friends of one's own age, but not with parents (see Fend, 1990, p. 100). Now this wish for independent experience that cannot be pried into by adults often collides with the parents' ideas, because they see their responsibility for bringing up their children and base their claim to information and control on this. The problem is often exacerbated when the first friendship with a member of the opposite sex is formed: Then the parents' checks on the juveniles' movements and coming-home times, which are still exercised much more strictly where girls are concerned, collide with the young people's wish to be together as often as possible and with the least possible supervision. The kind of relation-ships that develop between boys and girls under these circumstances—and how these are embedded in the society of their peers—will be outlined by means of some representative data.

3. The Peer Group

In their representative time comparison study, Allerbeck and Hoag (1985, p. 38) found that, between 1962 and 1983, the incidence among juveniles of belonging

to a clique had risen from 16% to 57%, and that, during this development, the girls had caught up. Now these results were obtained among 16- to 18-year-olds, but other studies confirm that this development has also taken place among younger juveniles. Thus in the "Brigitte" survey, half the 15-year-old girls stated that they belonged to a clique, and 70% of these members of cliques met at least twice a week for activities together (see Seidenspinner & Burger, 1982, Table 73). Similar values are reported by Engel and Hurrelmann (1989, p. 57) and by Jugendwerk (1992, Vol. 4, p. 199) in the case of 13- to 16-year-olds: 65% meet more or less frequently to spend their leisure time in a clique. The vast majority of these circles of friends (70%) are of mixed sexes. Other studies reveal that the mixing of the sexes in cliques increases appreciably between the ages of 12 and 15 (see Fend, 1990, p. 177). In all, about half the 14- to 16-year-olds are particularly active in a circle of friends of their own age. The others are seldom or never involved in such relationships. As far as the involvement in cliques is concerned, there is little difference between the sexes, and yet two points are conspicuous: Girls prefer smaller groups (up to six persons), whereas boys often move in larger circles of friends (see Engel & Hurrelmann 1989, p. 58); and among those who meet their cliques with particular frequency (daily), there are perceptibly more boys (see Fend 1990, p. 224). This involvement of juveniles in a peer group must not by any means be confused with participation in conspicuous juvenile styles (punks, rockers, skinheads, etc.). The adolescents do know these group styles, and they have their opinions on them and occasionally also come into contact with them (e.g., at football matches), but scarcely anyone actually participates in "the scene" at this age (see Allerbeck & Hoag, 1985, p. 45; Sander & Vollbrecht, 1985, pp. 226-227). So here it is not a matter of conspicuous groups in the juvenile subculture, but rather of inconspicuous cliques formed at school and in the neighborhood.

The results available make it possible to estimate approximately the significance of relationships between *two* juveniles within (or parallel to) the clique structure. Research by Engel and Hurrelmann (1989, pp. 60-61) shows that almost all those questioned named a person of the same sex as their "best friend"; in three out of four cases, this was a friendship formed within the same school or the same kind of school. Other studies point out that, at this age, friendships between girls are much more frequent and much closer than those between boys (e.g., Breyvogel, 1983; Strave, 1984, p. 46). As far as a pair relationship with the opposite sex is concerned, the first uncertain attempts begin between the ages of 13 and 15. "Steady" friendships often last only a few weeks, and are nearly always integrated into clique structures and activities. The pairs do not meet alone but in the presence of peers of the same sex, who give a sort of "reassurance." For this reason, meetings are arranged together in such a way that pairs can—without leaving the group completely—still withdraw from it a little, perhaps into a bush, so that they remain partially in sight and hearing and can resume contact with the group at any time (Projektgruppe, 1975, p. 110).

This and other qualitative studies make it clear that, at this age, the clique functions as a "training ground" for romantic attachments. The clique is at one and the same time a reservoir of friends. When friendships break up, one can return to the (common) clique and form new friendships with members of the opposite sex. However, the clique also fulfils the function of a "chaperone." Romantic attachments do not only develop in the clique, but are at least partially lived there. (see Sander & Vollbrecht, 1985, p. 227)

About 22% of the 13- to 16-year-olds state that at the time of questioning, they have "a steady boyfriend" or "a steady girlfriend" (see Jugendwerk, 1992, Vol. 4, p. 199), whereby the girls are clearly in the lead: 37% of the girls but only 27% of the boys had been in love by the time they were 14 (see Jugendwerk 1981, Vol. 1, p. 177), and girls of this age are accordingly more frequently "going steady": 29% of the 15-year-old girls state that they have a steady boyfriend at the moment; at the same time, 41% of them say they have "not yet" gone steady. These "not yet" figures must be about twice as high where boys of the same age are concerned (see Allerbeck & Hoag, 1985, p. 43; Seidenspinner & Burger, 1982, Table 74). Thus it becomes clear that at this age, in the case of both sexes, the "steady boy- or girlfriend" is the exception rather than the rule: Shorter phases in which a boy or (more likely) girl "goes steady" frequently alternate with longer phases without such a relationship. Accordingly, the great majority of 15-year-old girls, too, spend most of their leisure time with a (female) friend (68%) or in a clique (32%); only 23% of the 15-year-old girls state that they frequently spend their leisure time with a boyfriend. A year later—among the 16-year-old girls—the (girl)friend is still in first place, but the boyfriend (33%) has now caught up with the clique (33%) as far as time is concerned (Seidenspinner & Burger, 1982, Table 72). Initially, the sexual activities involved in these relationships between boys and girls scarcely go beyond "kissing and cuddling" and "petting." Surveys made at the beginning of the 1970s and at the beginning of the 1980s put the number of 14-year-olds with "coitus experience" at 5%, the number of 15-year-olds at 20%, and among 16-year-olds, it then rises to 35%. Whereas far into the 1970s, the girls had their first experience of coitus later than the boys on average, these differences have now largely disappeared (see Jugendwerk, 1985, Vol 1, Table 205; Schlaegel et al., 1975, p. 210).

All these data together make it possible to outline social relationships within the peer group as follows: Between the ages of 12 and 14, the cliques composed hitherto of members of the same sex give way to groups of friends that, in more and more cases, are of mixed gender. About half the juveniles of this age, both boys and girls, see themselves as belonging to such cliques and spend a great deal of their leisure time within them. "Best-friend" relationships with a member of the same sex are widespread at this age and occur more frequently and with more intensity between girls than between boys. At this age, the first pair relationships with members of the opposite sex occur, whereby they are mostly of short

duration and, on average, earlier and more frequent among girls than among boys. These friendships involve the first, on the whole tentative, sexual experience. The fact that girls embark on such relations with the opposite sex earlier and more frequently points to an important aspect of relations between the sexes at this age—the quicker development of the female—the social and psychological effects of which are considered more closely in the following pages.

4. The Earlier Development of the Female

The fact that girls can be seen to develop ahead of the boys between the ages of 11 and 14 has frequently been demonstrated on the evidence of the biological changes (e.g., growth, pubic hair, reproductive maturity) that take place (see Oerter & Montada, 1982). At this age, girls are, on average, 1 or 2 years ahead of the boys as far as physical maturity is concerned; whereby it must be remembered that there is considerable individual variety within the groups of the sexes, which I shall deal with in more detail later. The result is that especially in the 6th to 8th year of school, the physical development of the children in one class varies enormously: Childish boys and tall young men, boyish girls and "real young ladies" are sitting next to each other at their desks, so that these classes often make a "groteque impression" (see Fend, 1990, p. 140) on the beholder. However, one consistent feature is the gap in development between most of the girls and most of the boys: Thus, in the 6th year, 80% of the girls but only 20% of the boys are in the middle of puberty; it is not until the 8th year that an approximation takes place (see Petersen, 1987).

Here it is not the biological facts that are of interest so much as their social and psychological significance. Oerter and Montada (1982) demonstrate that although there is practically "no direct causal relationship between physical changes and psychological experiencing and behavior" (p. 260), significant *secondary* effects can be observed: As the juveniles—and also the people surrounding them—perceive these physical changes, evaluate them, and react to them, the social situation changes, giving rise to new problems for the psyche to cope with. Thus a quicker physical development leads to an early acquisition of sexual attractivity. The experience of oneself as attractive, in turn, gives more self-confidence where approaching members of the opposite sex is concerned. Partnerships that arise out of such situations can be a source of a variety of experience for reflection on oneself and others, so that an acceleration of psychological development can also take place. Such an interpretation would explain not only why the girls, developing earlier physically as they do, also generally embark on "steady" friendships with the opposite sex at an earlier age (see Table 1) but also why certain psychological events in adolescence occur on average 1 or 2 years earlier in girls than in boys: Whether it is a matter of a drop in self-acceptance, a rise in self-reflection, or a greater detachment from parents,

the 13-year-old girls already have to cope with these problems, whereas they do not start bothering the boys until they are approaching 15 (see Fend, 1990, p. 85).

Although the figures on "steady friendships" differ from study to study (see Table 1), the tendency is clear: Girls enter into such relationships earlier, and then much more frequently than boys; and this difference persists beyond the age of 15. However, the girls do not look in the direction of their peers in their own classrooms, but focus on older boys within and outside school: Only 19% of the girls who are "going steady" have a boyfriend of their own age (or even someone younger); but 71% have a boyfriend who is already between 16- and 18-years-old (see Seidenspinner & Burger, 1982, Table 74). It is true there are no comparison data available for boys, but here the reverse conclusion seems obvious:

Table 1:   Going Steady Among Boys and Girls

	Girls			Boys	
	1	2	3	2	3
15-year-olds	29%	-	-	-	-
16-year-olds	41%	27%	41%	1%	24%
17-year-olds	53%	32%	-	21%	-
18-year-olds	61%	43%	-	21%	-

Note.   1: Seidenspinner and Burger (1982, Table 74). 2: Allerbeck and Hoag (1985, p. 43). 3: Fend (1990, p. 183).

When boys—mostly one or two years later—start "going steady" with a girl, then she must almost always be younger. This age shift, with which the hierarchy of the sexes is reproduced, can be attributed to two causes: On the one hand, as a result of the girls' being ahead in their development, most boys in their own class are not regarded as physically attractive enough. On the other hand, the principle of male superiority also holds good here: For the girl, a boyfriend is (literally) someone "to look up to"; the boy wishes to feel and appear superior. Both these needs are satisfied most easily if the boy is a year or two older.

As a result of this staggered age structure of erotic attractivity, boys and girls in their 7th to 9th years at school may occasionally spend their leisure time together (at the swimming pool or skating rink), but apart from that, their paths separate after school. The boys would in fact like to undertake some activity with the girls in their class, but these boys often appear to the girls "to be stupid, childish, boastful" (Gaiser et al., 1979, p. 156), so that a rift occurs in the class. This can

be seen very clearly from the following conversation with boys in their eighth year at school, now at a secondary school:

> *Us*: What sort of girls have you got in your class? What are they actually like?
> *Wolfgang*: Hm, well, let's say they're stuck up.
> *Pele*: Yes, yes, I think the girls in our class aren't interested in the boys in our class.
> *Us*: Are they interested in boys from other classes?
> *Several answers*: Yes.
> *Us*: Or aren't they interested in boys from school at all?
> *Pele*: They'd prefer to go to the other class.
> *Pele*: I'd say that our class, well, our class seems to me to be a bit inferior beside the other classes. The others are much bigger and older. (Projektgruppe, 1975, p. 11)

It is, perhaps, easier to understand why the girls in their own class are described as stuck up, if one takes a look at what these girls have to say about their male classmates:

> *Us:* Do you sometimes meet boys, to go somewhere together or anything like that?
> *Birgit:* Hm, hm (meaning "no").
> *Doris:* You can't do that with our boys, I mean the boys in our class, they're just babies, I mean really. (interruption for loud laughter)
> *Birgit:* They are, really.
> *Sigrid:* Well, you can't do anything with them. (Projektgruppe, 1975, p. 114)

Whether boys of the same age are described as "babies" or "children that you can't take seriously" (Hübner-Funk & Müller, 1981, p. 177), the girls always give this as the reason for being interested in older boys. They make no secret of the fact that occasionally it is also partly motivated by the car in which they are driven to the disco at the weekend (see Hübner-Funk & Müller, 1981, p. 182). The problems this gives rise to from the point of view of the boys emerge from the conversation with Werner (aged 15):

> *W.:* Well, if you want to go with a girl and she doesn't want to, well that's really difficult sometimes. Yes it's a problem.
> *I:* Have you got a particular example in mind, when it was like that?
> *W.:* Well, it was like that with Beatrice, well, she didn't want to know about me. That was clear to me, that it's only for the evening. But I thought she was terrific, and so good looking it was wicked. And then I had got it into my head that I might make it. But that was really only a

dream, nothing that you could put into practice.

I: And why not?

W: Well, really it was because I was too young for her; in my opinion, it was because of the age gap. 'Cos I heard from my friend that she said she quite liked me, it was just that I was a bit young. And most girls don't like that. Girls are basically 2 years ahead of the boys in their development. And, well, it's understandable. She'd rather go out with older boys. For her it would be embarrassing like . . . . (Kieper, 1984, pp. 184-185)

Since here grave doubt is cast on the male claim to superiority, the boys have considerable trouble coping with it as far as their own image and behavior is concerned. They have—as Kieper (1984, p. 176) puts it—to take account of the "maturity lag" in their behavior strategies, while "at the same time not denying themselves as a sexual subject." The ways the individual boys come to terms with this vary considerably: Male bragging with more or less fabulated sexual adventures must be the best-known form. However, in fact, very few of them have the confidence to face the competition from older boys and court the attention of their female peers. Instead, physical approaches to the otherwise "unattainable" girls in their own class are often made in the form of aggressive sallies (see Projektgruppe, 1975, pp. 119-120). Then again, other boys can be found abandoning the struggle and fending off all heterosexual claims from within and without: The fear of approach clearly outweighs their own urges (see Kieper, 1984, p. 178), so that self-confidence is sought in other areas of activity altogether—especially in sportes (see Projektgruppe, 1975, p. 59). Such defence strategies are frequently combined with the attempt to label female peers as "decadent." Thus Frank (aged 14) declares that he knows a few girls in his own class and "they've only got one thing on their minds." When he is with them, he feels "practically like a pimp" (see Kieper, 1984, p. 176).

Whether, at this age, the boys are more likely to withdraw or to approach the girls has in turn, among other factors, much to do with their physical development: If 14- to 15-year-old boys still make a rather childish impression, they do not as a rule belong to a mixed-gender clique, neither have they (as yet) a "steady" girlfriend (see Projektgruppe 1975, p. 155). This serves to remind us that there are very different paths of development within the same sex as well, and these are of considerable relevance for the relations between the sexes. This is dealt with in the following pages.

5. Paths Through Adolescence

Most studies—whether qualitative or quantitative—make it clear that juveniles of this age have widely differing attitudes to relations with the opposite sex and to participation in subcultural activities. This difference can be demonstrated very clearly with the portraits of two girls as sketched by Sander and Vollbrecht (1985):

Anke (just turned 14) is in the eighth year of school, attending a "Realschule." She lives with her sister and their mother, who is bringing them up alone. Anke is in a permanent state of war with her mother, from whom, as far as possible, she keeps all information about her activities outside the home. Anke says that her clique is "more like home than my family" (p. 61), that she feels she is understood there; she spends her time with them in the afternoons and evenings. This clique, which consists mainly of 16- to 18-year olds, is the setting for her relationship with Stefan: "I'm always with Stefan. Stefan knows me pretty well, I know him pretty well . . . and we also always know what to do" (p. 64). Anke's leisure activities are pleasure-oriented; for her they consist of conquering the places and entertainments that are actually reserved for older juveniles: visiting discos and bars, smoking, drinking alcohol, presenting herself in an erotic light. Anke is very proud of receiving recognition from people who are a few years older (see p. 43).

Susanne (aged 15) is in the 10th year, attending the Realschule, and lives with her parents and an older brother. She gets on well with all three; she feels secure in her family. In the evenings, she is often at home, reading or listening to music. Often her friend Karin comes round, and Susanne can discuss personal matters with her. Susanne's clique are the scouts and guides—a mixed-gender group in which she is very active. She spends a lot of her leisure time in the girls' group, where there is plenty of contact with boys, but she has no "steady" boyfriend. Susanne can grow up without marking it "with the symbols of adulthood: smoking, drinking alcohol, and staying out late" (p. 205).

Although Susanne is almost 2 years older than Anke, she still lives much closer to her family, she is nothing like so fascinated by the locations of the juvenile scene, and relations with the opposite sex are not so important to her. In short, the two girls are moving along very different "developmental paths" leading out of childhood and into the area of heterosexual relationships. In their observations among juveniles in the 8th year of school, the Projektgruppe Jugendbüro (1975) came across very similar differences: A distinction is drawn between a majority of "family-oriented" and a minority of "subculture-oriented" juveniles. The girls and boys whose lives revolve round the family spend a lot of their leisure time

within the family context, in which friendships with young people of the same sex are often integrated. Relationships with the opposite sex probably exist in the form of secret wishes, but not in reality.

> They still have so many inhibitions with each other that the sheer internal tension of it turns every attempt at an approach into a major exertion. In this way, their relations, if they do not in fact avoid each other, always quickly turn into quarrelling. (Projektgruppe Jugendbüro, 1975, p. 113)

These "family-centred" students are distinguished from those in the eighth grade who clearly approach each other in mixed-gender groups: 19 out of 75 boys and 13 of 61 girls are members of a mixed clique, which, in this study, is described as a "subculture." Their dealings with each other are most clearly seen in a description of the activities at their favorite leisure location, the open-air swimming pool:

> If possible, they want to remain here among themselves and undisturbed all day, in their circular "camp," with the cassette recorder on, giving their attention to members of the opposite sex, passing round a bottle of schnaps. In the water, they are not concerned with improving their swimming performance. They seek opportunities for friendly horseplay, making the others laugh with clownish diving, inventing games for several players. The surroundings of the swimming pool provide the subculture with a welcome opportunity for slightly erotic activities such as looking and displaying their own scantily dressed bodies. The physical proximity of the opposite sex is more likely to be sought as if by coincidence or in the guise of aggression, such as pushing and shoving, holding on, swiping at legs with knotted towels. (Projektgruppe Jugendbüro, 1975, p. 71)

Most juveniles in the subculture speak of having a boyfriend or girlfriend they are going out with at present. As a rule, these pair relationships do not last more than weeks and then give way to other constellations. The rivalries, hurt feelings, and comforting involved form the stuff of conflicts that have to be worked on in the subculture.

On the question of what conditions lead to these secondary school students behaving in a "family-centred" or a "subculture-centered" way, the authors came across three factors: Apart from physical development, the family situation and performance at school were decisive factors. As far as physical development is concerned, the significance for boys is very great indeed: anyone who is too small, who still looks too "childish," is not admitted to the subculture; for their group identity depends on publicly displaying the erotic and physical attributes of

adulthood (see Projektgruppe Jugendbüro, 1977, p. 155). This would be asking too much of "small" boys, besides, they would be damaging to the clique's image. Whereas in the case of boys, it is the (as yet unattained) physical size that functions as a sort of exclusion criterion, among girls it is very important to "look good"; if they come particularly near to fulfilling the ideal (slim and well-proportioned), then that does a lot to help their position in the subculture (see Projektgruppe Jugendbüro, 1975, p. 54). Now it is, however, by no means the case that all juveniles with the physical qualifications described show the appropriate subcultural orientation. On the contrary: At this point, other social-psychological factors come into play: An atmosphere in the family that the juvenile perceives as negative and poor performance at school apparently lead the adolescent to seek support for his or her identity in subcultural cliques very early. The experience of a positive relationship with parents and success at school support a development that takes place outside the subculture (see Projektgruppe Jugendbüro, 1977, p. 157).

This observation study in secondary school, which was carried out at the beginning of the 1970s, has now been confirmed by an up-to-date longitudinal section in the 1980s: In a random sample of 12- to 16-year-olds, Fend (1990, p. 212) finds two different "paths" through adolescence, which he defines as "adult- and performance-oriented" (23%) and "peer-oriented" (35%). The decisive characteristic that distinguishes these groups "is the early distancing from child-hood and the 'speed' at which the interim phase of adolescence is passed through" (p. 213). Whereas for the peer-oriented early developers, adolescence is an extremely difficult time, the family- and performance-oriented "late developers" remain to a large extent free of the dangers and conflicts typical of youth. The distinctions referred to can be summed up as follows:

Early developers detach themselves perceptibly from their parents at the age of 12, they discuss their problems less and less at home, and, at the same time, they demand unchecked freedom of movement (e.g., going out in the evenings) very early. They have a marked inclination toward opposition to teachers, frequently coupled with absenteeism from school. The clearest distinction between the two groups lies in the question of integration in a clique and meeting friends daily. "These differences already exist at the age of 13 and they increase until the age of 15" (p. 230). Whilst late developers more frequently cherish a friendship with a single member of the same sex within the school context, the early developers are oriented toward clique activities outside school. The early developers orientation toward the pleasures of the adult world can be seen in frequent smoking and drinking even among 15-year-olds, in an absence of limitations on going out, and in the disposable pocket money. (pp. 165, 218). It is in this context that we must see the much earlier beginning of relations with the opposite sex (p. 214), which again is embedded in attractive situations in the juvenile scenario: Discotheque, earning money, cars and motorbikes are the central topics of conversation among

the early developers (p. 216). It is from these connections, from these activities, that the early developers draw their self-confidence: They consider themselves to be much more competent socially than the late developers, and they have a far more positive concept of themselves where their own appearance is concerned (p. 215).

If the general developmental lead of the girls and the different developmental paths (within the sexes, too) are viewed together, the following picture emerges: 15-year-old juveniles sitting together at school are often "miles apart" where their heterosexual experience and the acquisition of the adult gender-specific role are concerned. The greatest gaps are to be found between the female early developers and the male late developers. Thus, there are 15-year-old girls who have steady relationships with 20-year-old men, some even living together; these girls "are not afraid of the sexual demands arising from this situation nor of their own sexuality" (Kieper, 1984, p. 182). In the same class, there are boys whose fantasies may be concerned with girls, but who are clearly afraid of actually approaching them. They keep their distance and defend their world of boys' friendships "against premature assaults by girls and the examples of the older boys" (Kieper, 1984, p. 178).

"Early development" is described by Fend as a "risky path" through adolescence; for such adolescents discard the "good things of childhood" too soon, to seize the "bad things of adulthood" too quickly (Fend, 1990, p. 231). This risk involves, on the one hand, the danger of slipping into a fringe position in society (failure at school, drugs, criminality), but it can also concern the factor of reflexivity toward social norms and values (including the roles of the sexes); for the quickest possible "conquest" of adult sexual pleasures is, as a rule, linked with an orientation toward "macho" and "feminine" stereotypes. At least, it is particulary unlikely that a critical detachment from predominant sexual roles will be acquired along this path of development.

6. Relations Between the Sexes and Juvenile Identity

I shall close with an attempt at summing up the results reported here to draw general conclusions: What new tasks face juveniles at this age in the matter of relationships between the sexes, what paradoxes and difficulties are involved in coping with these tasks—and, of course, which distinctions can be made that are specific to the sexes?

At this age, boys and girls alike find themselves in the situation of having to understand themselves an new: Their childhood role as a boy or a girl now takes on an erotic note, peers of the opposite sex become interesting as potential partners for sexual activities, and their self-esteem becomes dependent to no

small extent on their own sexual attractivity. This opens a new, and, at the same time, tense and extremely intimidating dimension—and one that is still to some extent the subject of taboos. From about the age of 13 onward, both boys and girls are subjected to claims from within and without that challenge them to become sexually active (see Neubauer, 1990). Here, social pressure toward heterosexuality as "normal" certainly plays just as important a role as the need of the adolescent to conquer this area of adult experience (as one that also promises to be pleasurable). As far as the claims from without (i.e., the expectations of their social environment) are concerned, they do not all point in the same direction: Whilst among their peers, "success" with the opposite sex boosts their prestige considerably, parents' expectations are somewhat contradictory: Particularly in the case of very young juveniles, and then especially with girls, heterosexual friendships are often repressed and controlled. Yet, at the same time, it is true to say that parents start worrying if their daughter still has not got a boyfriend at the age of 17 (see Horstkotte, 1985, p. 40). Thus, whilst social pressure among peers is quite straightforward, parents' expectations vary considerably according to their moral concepts and according to the age and sex of the child. Many juveniles—but by no means all of them—find themselves caught up between contradictory expectations from their peers and their parents.

Now if one asks in what way this situation presents itself differently to girls and boys, two connections must be pointed out: dual morality, which still persists, though it does not manifest overtly so much as implicitly, and the phenomenon of the "earlier development" of the girls. These two factors taken together cause a particularly difficult, paradox situation, indeed, one that is frequently fraught with conflict: Parents, too, now expect their daughters to become "womanly," to develop beauty, grace, and female attractions, to find "her place within the 'erotic culture' " (Elger et al., 1984, p. 100). At the same time, however, it is precisely this development that they view with concern: Their daughter could "get carried away" with her nascent female sexuality; she could "throw herself away," could be suspected of immorality. So, at the same time, girls are required to keep their "morals": They should be attractive but not show too much sex appeal; they should develop and display their sensuality within the limits of "decency" (see Ziehlke, 1993, p. 199). In the network of juvenile relationships, it is precisely this that is made more difficult: Because they physically develop sooner than boys, they find, from a certain point onward, that they are perceived as erotically attractive by older boys; that their femininity is interesting for (prestigious) older boys. Therefore they are given invitations and opportunities to step into the field of heterosexual activity comparatively early—and, as a rule, they will be urged by their older boyfriends to exceed (their own) moral limits. The main problem that girls of this age have with the new definition of their female role seems to be how to remain "decent" when confronted with these invitations, when faced with these expectations. There is extensive reporting on how this problem is dealt with in the case study of the Projektgruppe (1975). The girls watch each other

very closely, to see, for instance, that nobody goes too far with her clothing. They are constantly maneuvering between the wish on the one hand to "go the whole hog" erotically; on the other hand, however, they studiously avoid anything that could jeopardize their reputations. (p. 58)

This problem of balancing is also the subject of discussion among the "subculture girls": They consult each other on the subject of what "is still decent" when meeting boys (p. 109) and what not. The whole problem is all the more pressing, as the "decency" thus defined is not expected only by parents (teachers), but also because the boys use the same system of evaluation with a certain duplicity: On the one hand, they are fascinated by attractive girls, but, at the same time, they are quick to label these girls "whores" (see Kieper, 1984, p. 177). For the girls, this means that they have to curb their own curiosity, have to manage their newly acquired attractions prudently, have to limit their relationships with boys, and must not change boyfriends too frequently—in order to preserve their "reputation." This is the balancing act required of 13- to 14-year-old girls in particular, when they enter the new phase of relations between the sexes.

If this is compared with the boys' situation, the problem can clearly be seen to be of a different nature: They, too, are challenged to approach the opposite sex, to demonstrate sexual success, but they are hardly subjected to the limitations of "decency." Frequent changes of girlfriends, early and "advanced" sexual experience do not jeopardize the reputation of the male—on the contrary, they enhance his image. In conjunction with orientation toward these values, which is kept up particularly among male peers, the boys are also under pressure to be successful, and many have great trouble coping with this. Then again, these problems are interwoven closely with the matter of the girls' developing ahead of them; for the sexual activities of the boys are not limited by the moral demands of "decency," but by a lack of opportunity to find the appropriate partner for their wishes. Fourteen-year-old boys may wish for a "steady" friendship with a girl, including heterosexual experience, but this wish remains unfulfilled in most cases: Their female peers are occupied with older boys; the younger girls "haven't got that far yet." The boys seldom find the partner they wish for in their imagination for the fulfillment of their own basic urges; for the interaction with the opposite sex that they would wish for. For this reason, many boys have at this age to cope with the experience of being ignored on account of a lack of physical attraction. Such a situation contradicts the general male claim to superiority, and the boys have to work on coming to terms with the cognitive and emotional dissonances this gives rise to. Many 13- to 15-year-old boys therefore have to walk the tightrope between their need to satisfy instinctive urges, form relationships, and gain prestige, on the one hand, and the experience of their own inadequacy, on the other. The various strategies boys resort to have been outlined above. These "lean years" (both sexually and as far as support for their identity is concerned) usually come to an end at the age of 16 or 17, when, in a first "steady"

relationship with a (younger) girl, male superiority seems to be established once more.

Girls—this analysis suggests—are, despite the fact that between the ages of 12 and 15 their situation is fraught with conflicts, in possession of far better means of supporting a positive image of themselves. For they are not only much more successful than their male peers on an erotic dimension within their age group, but also, on average, perform better at school (see Horstkemper, 1987), and thus are "officially" more successful. It is, then, all the more astounding that in this phase the girls are unable to put their "successes" to use for the benefit of their self-esteem. When it comes to their own image of their performance or of their talents, or to the force of their egos, the boys achieve the better results, the higher scores, even at this age (see Fend 1990, p. 124; Horstkemper, 1987, p. 111). Judging by this, the female lead at this stage and their erotic and academic "success" do not seem to suffice to compensate for a sex-role socialization, which, in this society, is generally tuned to female inferiority.

Notes

1. This secondary analysis takes into account all representative West German studies since the 1970s and all such qualitative (case) studies in the same period as are relevant to the subject. Whereby the (by no means unproblematic) assumption is made that, in spite of the historic changes that took place in this period, all these studies can be related to each other and pieced together to create a whole picture.

2. Here the terms "early" and "late developer" are not to be (mis)taken biologically. They are rather intended to describe the early/intensive and the late/detached entry on the "juvenile scene."

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