Individuation and attachment in personality development: Extending Erikson's theory

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Abstract

The question of whether Erikson's theory of psychosocial development is a complete and coherent view of development in males and females is considered after a thorough review of Erikson's views on the role of sex in psychosocial development, the authors suggest that an important element is neglected in Erikson's account of personality development in both sexes. That is, due to his focus on issues of identity, Erikson does not account fully for the development of intimacy or other expressions of interpersonal attachment. The authors conclude that the major shortcoming of Erikson's theory is not, as some feminists have argued, that it is a male theory but that it fails to account adequately for the processes of interpersonal attachment that are essential to the development of both males and females. Preliminary elements of a two-path model of development are proposed.

In recent years, a major theoretical model for understanding life-span personality development has been that of Erik Erikson. Using psychoanalytic-psychosexual concepts as a foundation, Erikson (1963, 1964, 1968, 1977, 1978) traces the ego's progressive integration of the social world and the psychosexual experience of the individual. He describes personality development as an hierarchically ordered sequence of stages which progress from initial narcissistic involvement with oneself, through stages of identification and socialization, to increasing individuation and establishment of an individual identity. While Erikson emphasizes that this development occurs within an expanding network of significant persons, we believe that his theory does not account adequately for the development of various forms of interpersonal connectedness or attachments. While Erikson views identity and intimacy (the psychosocial "virtues" emerging from his stages 5 and 6) as equal in value, his...

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emphasis on the antecedents and consequences of identity to the neglect of the antecedents and consequences of intimacy means that his theory fails to do justice to the coherence and interrelatedness of both sets of processes in both sexes. It is our belief that a truly universal theory of personality development must provide an adequate account of the personality processes that are fundamental to both male and female development, specifically, a theory of personality development (as opposed to a more limited theory of a single personality component such as identity) must account adequately for both individuation and interpersonal attachment.

The principal purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that Erikson’s notion of a single developmental pathway does not account adequately for the life-span process of interpersonal attachment—a construct sometimes assumed to represent a predominantly female orientation or concern. Indeed, because attachment as a life-span developmental process, or pathway, is neglected in Erikson’s theory, violence is also done to the coherence of the construct of individuation, typically seen as a predominantly male orientation or concern.

A number of theorists have argued that fundamental to all human experience and development are two modalities—sometimes labelled agency and communion (e.g., Bakan, 1966), sometimes labelled individuation and attachment or connectedness. One major attack on theories and methodologies emphasizing “agentic” values such as autonomy and separateness, objectification and quantification, and hierarchical relationships comes from feminists (e.g., Carlson, 1972, Gilligan, 1979) who characterize such approaches as neglectful of half the human experience—that is, the communal, interpersonally connected part that is essential to the well-being of both males and females.

Because a number of feminist and other social scientists have criticized Erikson for his neglect or misportrayal of female experience, we believe that a thorough review of Erikson’s treatment of sex differences in psychosocial development is valuable. Some feminists consider Erikson’s positive allusions to the valuable features of women’s “inner space” to be just as insulting and stereotyping as Freud’s more negative focus on penis envy, however, it is hard to find a full treatment of Erikson’s views on the sexes in the literature. As will be seen, it is our position that the greatest limitation to Erikson’s rich and ambitious theory lies not in his mystification of the female’s “inner space” or in his presumption that identity precedes intimacy, but in his formulation of a single developmental pathway for the maturing male and female ego. This limitation prevents Erikson from achieving his goal of a universal theory of
human development, even though the eight "values" or "virtues" he attributes to his developmental stages (trust, autonomy, initiative, industry, identity, intimacy, generativity, integrity) can easily be translated into the two modalities of individuation and attachment which constitute the two-pathway model we are proposing. Indeed, the logical weaving together of Erikson's eight ego-elements into two pathways rather than one appears to be a useful way of accounting fully for male as well as female experience. After demonstrating that a mere elaboration of Erikson's classic epigenetic chart will not suffice to correct the areas of imbalance in his theory, we will propose a preliminary version of the form a two-path model of development might take.

**Sex Differences in the Developmental Stages in Erikson's Theory**

Erikson holds several basic assumptions concerning the relation of sex to psychosocial development—two of which are particularly relevant to our analysis. First, he assumes that the developmental crises are in the same sequence for males and females, and that the ego-strengths associated with resolution of each stage are also the same regardless of sex. Second, Erikson describes three interactive components in development: Soma (anatomy), Psyche (individual dispositions), and Polis (the socio-cultural context). These components enter into the crisis of each stage, the resolution and synthesis of which influences each subsequent stage. Because there are these three elements, it becomes possible that males and females bring to any particular developmental crisis a different "Soma" and "Polis," as a consequence, their experience of each crisis, as well as the way in which they resolve it, could be different. The ego-strengths stemming from adequate resolution of each crisis are, however, the same.

Many readers of Erikson have tried to grapple with the question of whether or not his theory has different implications for male and female development. Erikson addresses this issue when he asks "But how does the identity formation of women differ by dint of the fact that their somatic design harbors an 'inner space'?" (1968, p. 266). An analysis of his many books and articles reveals that Erikson provides no simple or clear cut answers to his own question. On the one hand, he warns (1974) against the overinterpretation and decontextualization of sex differences in his theory, on the other hand, he consistently emphasizes the necessity for acknowledging and affirming any uniqueness of experience associated with sex. Indeed, he has
sometimes suggested (Erikson, 1968) that although males and females are similar in many ways, it may be useful to explore women's identity separately from that of the male. A tension concerning sex and personality persists throughout Erikson's writing. In his theory, sex is sometimes treated as very important and sometimes as not important to personality, he believes that one must recognize and accept one's sex (e.g., in heterosexual relationships), yet in many spheres (e.g., cognitive functioning) sex makes little difference in how a person functions. In regard to the place of anatomy in his theory, Erikson (1968) perceives it as the physiological rock-bottom which must neither be denied nor given exclusive emphasis. For a human being, in addition to having a body, is somebody, which means an indivisible personality and a defined member of a group” (p. 285).

One way in which sex permeates personality, as conceived by Erikson, is in his notion that a woman is never-not-a-woman, a man is never-not-a-man. Erikson (1968) argues that there is a uniqueness in female identity, yet he waives when he has to pinpoint the extent of this uniqueness or the degree to which it changes any aspects of identity formation. It is possible to interpret Erikson (in particular, “Womanhood and the inner space,” 1968) as proposing major sex differences in personality; however, this interpretation is not supported by all of Erikson's writing.

In Erikson's theory, the importance of sex is most clearly articulated at certain points in the life cycle—particularly, in the Oedipal period, as well as the identity, intimacy, and generativity stages of development. In the following section of the paper we will review the stages in which Erikson delineates the place of sex in his larger developmental scheme.

**Trust vs mistrust, autonomy vs shame (oral and anal stages, ages birth-3)** Erikson's early stages parallel and build on those of Freud. Erikson, however, emphasizes the social context (connectedness) of the child and the evolving psychosocial skills—ego-strengths—that lay the foundation for later stages. According to both Freud and Erikson, psychosexually and psychosocially there should be no sex differences in the first two life stages—that is in the trust vs mistrust (oral) and autonomy vs shame and doubt (anal) stages. Erikson, however, does not elaborate on aspects of the young child's social context in this stage that may allow different behaviors for males and females (e.g., autonomy seeking may be restricted or encouraged in sex-related ways).

**Initiative vs guilt (phallic stage, ages 4-5)** In Erikson's theory, sex differences become polarized in the resolution of the Oedipal crisis.
at the end of the phallic stage (initiative vs guilt) In his treatment of the phallic stage, Erikson is still closely tied to a Freudian framework and to Freudian assumptions concerning the significance of Oedipal crisis resolution for subsequent personality development.

Erikson, however, adds two elements to the phallic stage, these additions change some of the ramifications of the Oedipal crisis and are particularly pertinent to sex differences. The first element, socialization, concerns the impact of the child's social context on his or her ego-development. The second element, which Erikson calls 'inner space,' is a positive addition to the Soma of the developing girl.

The major socializing context of children in the third stage of psychosexual/psychosocial development is the family, both parents and siblings are significant figures who can contribute to the socialization of the child. It would appear that the extent to which the family emphasizes sex differences and gender roles in the child's expression of initiative could have a significant impact on gender identity and personality. It is clear in Erikson's theory that both girls and boys display initiative in this phase, the extent to which this initiative is stifled hinges both on the child's social experiences and resolution of Oedipal issues.

Erikson's delineation of the impact of Polis on the initiative vs guilt stage child helps to clarify the role of nonbiological forces in shaping sex differences. Erikson also suggests, however, that biology (Soma) should shape society (Polis), in Polis, claims Erikson (1968), "the influence of women will not be fully actualized until it reflects without apology the facts of the 'inner space' and the potentialities and needs of the feminine psyche" (p 290). What then is the contribution of Soma to the initiative vs guilt stage? Erikson's description of the boy's experience of the initiative vs guilt stage closely parallels the Freudian analysis of the phallic stage, in which the combination of phallic intrusiveness and successful identification with the father provides the foundation for the active/masculine roles expected in adulthood. The outcome of the phallic stage for the girl is less optimal than that of the boy in Freudian theory, due to her "lack" of a penis and the complexities of her attachment-identification issues. According to Erikson (1963), in psychoanalytic theory:

Girls have a fateful experience at this stage in that they must comprehend the finality of the fact that although their locomotor, mental, and social intrusiveness is equally increased and as adequate as that of the boys', they lack one item: the penis.
While the boy has this visible, erectable, and comprehensible organ to attach his dreams of bigness to, the girl’s clitoris cannot sustain dreams of sexual equality (p 88)

In Eriksonian theory, by contrast, an “inner space” (that is, female reproductive organs) counteracts the negative impact of the girl’s recognition that she is missing a penis. Femaleness, according to Erikson, neither produces a sense of inferiority and lack of purpose nor causes regression to earlier phases of development, rather, it carries its own sense of having something, a “fullness, warmth, and generosity the existence of a productive inner-bodily space set in the center of the female form” (Erikson, 1968, p 267) Erikson theorizes that owing to the sense of “inner space,” the female has (a) a sense of being sexually equal but different—a sense of having something (as opposed to lacking a penis), (b) a basis for positive identification with her mother, and (c) a sense of purpose arising from her ability to be (or become) productive. According to Erikson (1968), the girl’s desire for a baby is not necessarily a longing for a penis or penis-substitute as in Freudian theory, rather, it is a fulfillment of her inner space, her “procreative drive.” Erikson’s strong emphasis on motherhood in women, however, is not paralleled in his discussion of the male’s experience of his anatomy. Moreover, it appears that positive psychosocial development in women occurs at the expense (or theoretical avoidance) of female sexuality, pleasure from genital sensations and phallic intrusiveness is sacrificed for the more abstract “procreative drive.”

With Erikson’s theoretical modification of the Freudian Oedipal crisis—where “penis envy” is supposed to have a regressive impact on female development—the girl is seen as experiencing an inner space which allows her to resolve Oedipal issues with as much potential as the boy for further healthy ego-development. Erikson does suggest that the dangers of this stage may be sex related, thus, phallic-aggressiveness and overinvestment in initiative can be as problematic for the boy’s development as can be the girl’s potential passive-dependency for her development. In addition, a social system that overemphasizes gender-related identifications and activities also hinders the potential for psychic wholeness in either males or females.

For Erikson the anatomical functions of males and females, while not constituting the totality of the personality, provide an unavoidable basis for further development, he holds that, “boys and girls are differentiated not only by differences in organs, capacities and roles, but by a unique quality of experience” (Erikson, 1963, p 91) The
unique quality of the female’s experience is her disposition for care, warmth, and generosity through which she can express initiative.

Erikson also suggests that the basic elements of the generativity (adult) stage first become apparent in the initiative vs. guilt (phallic) stage when the potential for productivity emerges in a way that is sex differentiated—that is, oriented towards work in males and towards procreation in females.

Despite the addition of the inner space concept, Erikson’s analysis of the age 4–5 period is clearly based on Freudian assumptions concerning the phallic intrusiveness of pre-Oedipal girls and the pre-Oedipal relationships of children to their mothers as well as the assumption of the necessity of the Oedipal crisis for later development. Erikson is not willing to diverge from the Freudian viewpoint—as have numerous others, e.g., Chodorow (1974), Horney (1973), Mitchell (1974), Strouse (1974)—to analyze female development systematically. In consequence, in Erikson’s theory the model for psychosocial development is still that of the male. Erikson does not question the assumptions and consequences of applying that model to female development. If a “phallic” girl is aware of and proud of her “inner space,” it would appear to us that the sequence of the Oedipal complex initiated by penis envy need not occur as such. Thus, on the one hand, Erikson postulates what he believes is a more positive developmental sequence for females than that of Freud, on the other hand, Erikson accepts many of Freud’s assumptions regarding sex differences and does not thoroughly reanalyze early development in light of the addition of socio-cultural influences and the concept of the inner space.

In Erikson’s theory, the resolution of the Oedipal crisis at the end of the initiative vs. guilt stage is a crucial time in the child’s differentiation of self as male or female. The resolution, moreover, has long-term consequences for personality. Erikson concludes that despite differences in experience of Soma and Polis, males and females can successfully resolve the psychosexual and psychosocial issues of the stage. Thus, individuals of each sex can emerge with a sense of purpose expressed through initiative—that is, the sense of being able to satisfy oneself and others. Is this initiative, however, expressed in different ways, based on anatomical differences? Is the initiative of a young girl expressed only in caring-oriented imaginative play, imitation, and role anticipation, or is her expression of initiative less Soma-linked? Although Erikson supports the latter view, it is clear in his writing that unique aspects of a girl’s experience of inner space—warmth, caring, generosity, fullness—permeate her developmental path.
Extending Erikson's theory

*Industry vs inferiority (latency stage, ages 6–12)* Sexual differentiation during latency (the industry vs inferiority stage) appears to play a minor role in Erikson's theory. From the perspective of socialization and identification, however, the roles and skills a child learns during this period can have a significant impact on his or her later life choices. For example, Erikson holds that the internalizations of earlier developmental lessons in the adolescent identity stage have a foundation in what the latency stage child thinks she or he can do or be. Karen Horney (1926/1973), elaborating on the cultural sources of anxiety and inferiority in women, cites the fact that men have the satisfying and prestigious jobs in Western cultures, leaving women with few, inferior, and inadequate life-options. To the extent that Horney's observation has a validity in our culture, the choices of spheres of competence a girl thinks she has for later life will affect her expression of industriousness significantly. Polis is not independent of Soma for Erikson, in entering the realm of Polis, women—Erikson believes—should not have to mimic male roles, rather, women should be able to bring their femaleness into society either in the jobs they choose or by adapting male jobs to themselves.

*Identity vs role-confusion (adolescent/genital stage, ages 12–18)* The next stage in which Erikson emphasizes a crucial role for sex differences is the adolescent stage of identity vs role-confusion. Erikson, like Freud, describes the male adolescent as successfully identifying with the father, repressing related hostilities and fears, and maintaining an affectionate relationship with his mother. The male adolescent's latent bisexuality is now oriented toward the masculine/active pole so that he can engage in "appropriately" heterosexual relationships. He is experiencing the pain and pleasure of puberty. The possibility of being an adult genitally brings the social demands of adulthood and requires, according to Erikson, a new level of ego-synthesis and integration unlike any prior resolution. An expanded social context introduces adolescents to new identifications, roles, rules, demands, and opportunities for growth and change.

The process of identity formation in Erikson's scheme of development is not a simple additive function of childhood experiences, biological maturation, and ego-growth, it is rather

an evolving configuration—a configuration that gradually integrates constitutional givens, idiosyncratic libidinal needs, favored capacities, significant identifications, effective defenses, successful subliminations, and consistent roles. All of these, however, can only emerge from a mutual adaptation of individ-
Thus, adolescent identity resolution is neither a complete break from nor total continuity with the past. Gender is one significant element, among many, to be integrated into a new personality configuration. For a woman, gender-related issues include both the recognition of an inner space—child-bearing capacities and responsibilities—as well as the integration of this self-knowledge into an identity and life-choices.

In Erikson's theory, the female adolescent finds her experience of her anatomy particularly salient in resolving her identity: "Inner space," however, is only one aspect of identity formation. The adolescent female, like the adolescent male, can experience a time of moratorium in which careers and ideological concerns are pondered and pursued. The female's moratorium, like that of the male, ends when she chooses a path which integrates her abilities, social responsibilities, and anatomy. In the woman's case, however, many of her life-choices may be intertwined, since one aspect of a woman's social responsibility, in most cultures, is motherhood. According to Erikson (1968),

But since a woman is never not-a-woman she can see her long-range goals only in those modes of activity which include and integrate her natural dispositions. As an individual person, finally, she utilizes her (biologically given) inclinations and her (technologically and politically given) opportunities to make the decision which would render her life most continuous and meaningful without failing the task of motherhood and citizenship (pp. 290–291).

It is remarkable to us that Erikson implies that motherhood is an indispensable element in women's identity struggle, yet barely mentions fatherhood as a male identity issue. Rewording the above quotation for the male—that is, that the man "make[s] the decision which would render [his] life most continuous and meaningful without failing the task of [fatherhood] and citizenship"—we would complain either that (a) Erikson's theory has not led us to an adequate explanation or understanding of the relation between the male identity crisis and male sexuality, or (b) that a consideration of fatherhood in the context of a discussion of adolescent identity is somehow absurd. The quotation appears to reflect a case of values and attitudes toward women permeating the theory and/or a theory failing to account equally for the life-experience of both sexes.
In Erikson’s theory, the male is no less embedded in the dictates of anatomy and history than is the female, both male and female development can be hampered or enhanced by these dictates. Erikson himself seems bewildered by the impact of sex on psychosocial personality development in our society.

But it is clear where in girls a certain inner directedness and, indeed, a certain self-contained strength and peace was cultivated, they were also forced to abandon (and sometimes later overdo) much of the earlier locomotor vigor and the social and intellectual initiative and intrusiveness which, potentially girls share with boys, while most boys in pursuing the male role beyond what comes naturally have to dissimulate and to disavow what receptivity and intuitiveness they shared with the girls.

How each sex overdeveloped what was given, how each compensated for what it had to deny, how each managed to get special approbation for a divided self-image, and to what extent “oppressor” and “oppressed” (beyond the blatant arrangements for political and economic dominance) colluded with each other in enslaving each other and themselves—that is what I mean by the deals which men and women must learn to study and discuss (Erikson, 1974, pp 382–383).

It is interesting that Erikson appears to be describing two major orientations here, one focused on intrusion and individuation, the other on receptivity and attachment, and that he sees the abandonment of either orientation by members of a particular gender as a ‘deal’ and a form of enslavement. As we shall demonstrate later, these two orientations and their relation with gender are not effectively handled within the theory.

Although males and females may focus on different areas of concern in adolescence, identity formation, in Erikson’s view, is more closely related to a process of questioning and synthesizing than to the actual content of the deliberation. Nevertheless, sex differences in the content of adolescent experience need to be analyzed in terms of their implications for Erikson’s theory as it is currently elaborated. Gilligan (1982), in a critique of Eriksonian (and other) theories, suggests that

From the different dynamics of separation and attachment in their gender-identity formation through the divergence of identity and intimacy that marks their experience in the adolescent years, male and female voices typically speak of the importance of different truths, the former of the role of separation as it
defines and empowers the self, the latter of the ongoing process of attachment that creates and sustains the human community (p 156)

Although Gilligan is oversimplifying when she equates Erikson's concepts of identity and intimacy with the more general notions of separation and attachment, she does provide a clue to an important unelaborated element in Erikson's scheme—the epigenesis of attachment Erikson's "person" exists in an expanding social context to which she or he is always connected, this connectedness, which for Erikson is an important component in development, does not adequately convey the relational aspects of attachment. However, the "connections" which Erikson emphasizes (except, perhaps, in his treatment of the trust and intimacy stages) are to an expanding series of "institutions"—the family, school, society, etc. While Erikson locates development clearly within a social "niche," he does not provide a clear picture of how individuals become progressively able to form intimate dyadic bonds characterized by openness, reciprocity, and sharing. Thus, Erikson's theory provides a framework for understanding how successful identity development produces adults who are productive citizens with commitments to the institutions of their society, however, the theory, through its neglect of attachment issues, does not provide a framework for understanding how the individual moves from the dependency of the trust/mistrust stage to the mature interdependence of the intimacy stage.

Transition to adulthood According to Erikson, "ideal" identity stage resolution for both males and females advances them toward becoming and functioning as well-adjusted adults—that is, toward becoming creative, productive, and procreative, as well as being concerned for the well-being of the next generation. The key contribution of the identity stage to the later stages is the sense of fidelity. The capacity to give fidelity to work, to beliefs, and to other persons arises from the ability to make choices based on an awareness of one's own self, the female's choice of a husband or a career necessitates the same kind of ego-resolution as males achieve. Stereotyped interpersonal relationships or overinvestment in social, artistic, or occupational tasks reflect inadequate identity-resolution for either sex and hamper the formation of truly intimate and generative relationships.

The healthy adolescent, in Freudian terms, is becoming the genital adult with the capacities for love and work. Erikson argues that genitality—as defined by the capacity for heterosexual mutually orgasmic sexual relations—is too narrow a concept to account for
Extending Erikson's theory 235

the experience of adult intimacy and generativity. Erikson believes that development beyond genitality is necessary to ensure the nurturing of the following generation. Identity is turned toward an "other" in the intimate relationship, and, in turn, develops into concern for the next generation.

**Intimacy vs isolation (young adulthood)** The intimacy of the young adult stage of intimacy vs isolation, according to Erikson, involves an ability to make and keep commitments to relationships, with the recognition that these commitments will involve "significant sacrifices and compromises" (Erikson, 1963, p 263). Love, the ego-strength of this stage, is expressed by mutual concern and commitment. To the extent that it can bridge the adolescent polarization of maleness and femaleness, love is the achievement that facilitates a full expression of sexuality. Intimacy, for both Freud and Erikson, implies a valuing of genital, heterosexual experience. True intimacy involves recognition of, allowance for, and enjoyment of genital differences as well as a willingness to risk the ego-synthesis of the identity stage to form a new, joint identity with another person. Intimacy, then, involves not only relationships with others but intimacy with oneself—in the sense that a knowledge of and security with oneself (identity) is a necessary consolidation prior to intimacy with others. Love, according to Erikson (Erikson & Erikson, 1981), is not found through "intimacies" (sexuality, relationships) when those "intimacies" are an attempt to gain a sense of one's own identity.

A controversial issue for Erikson and readers of Erikson (e.g., Chodorow, 1974, Gilligan, 1982, Janeway, 1971, Millett, 1970) is the relation between identity and intimacy in women. From a careful analysis of Erikson's writing on identity, it is clear that he believes that resolution of identity issues prior to intimacy issues is as crucial for women as for men. Excessively early commitments to another person prior to identity resolution would have profound (negative) implications for negotiating later adult issues. Erikson (1980) emphasizes that, for women, being in a relationship and having children (which have in the past been labeled by some authors as forms of "intimacy") is not the same as being able to care for children in the context of a loving, faithful relationship. Neither does male occupational commitment ensure the capacity to be intimate. Women, like men, must develop fidelity in order to become truly intimate and generative.

Erikson's statements regarding such issues as woman's inner space, his ties with psychoanalytic theory, and his vagueness concerning woman's identity (including remarks to the effect that women find
their identity through relationships) are identified by his critics as evidence that Erikson says either that (a) women have less adequate identity resolution than males, or (b) that there may be a separate developmental sequence for females in which intimacy precedes identity. The key to the validity of either of these conclusions lies in the concept of “inner space.” As we have stated earlier, Erikson believes that the positive development of females through the psychosexual and psychosocial stages is made possible by the “inner space.” The concept of “inner space,” when combined with Erikson’s stress on autonomous ego-functioning, allows for a theoretical argument that females can and do adequately resolve their identity issues. Even if women (or men) are involved in or overly concerned with adolescent relationships, these relationships, according to Erikson, are identity-seeking and are qualitatively different from the type of intimate relationships that follow identity resolution. Once again, although adolescents may differ in the content of their identity issues (due to such factors as individual experiences of Soma and Polis and differently evolving Psyches), the process (questioning) and the outcome (virtue) of the identity stage is similar. The ideal stage sequence whereby identity precedes intimacy is the same regardless of sex.

What is problematic for women’s identity, though, is the cultural support (or lack thereof) for adequate resolution of earlier developmental issues. Although many men also struggle through identity issues without satisfactory resolution and may be unable to be intimate or generative, it may be that as a group women have, in their identity resolution, suffered from more obstacles than men. Female development becomes more complicated when one considers society’s expectations for the particular roles the female is to fulfill. Erikson (Evans, 1967) comments:

All this is a little more complicated with women because women, at least in yesterday’s cultures, had to keep their identities incomplete until they knew their man. Yet, I would think that a woman’s identity develops out of the very way in which she looks around and selects the person with whose budding identity she can polarize her own. Her selection is already an expression of her identity, even if she seems to become totally absorbed in somebody else’s life (p. 49).

A woman’s disposition to care or to value relationships does not preclude her involvement in a career or ideological involvements. Erikson (1974) admits that exploitation of and prejudice against women exists yet suggests that the solution is not that women take
on men's roles Erikson claims, instead “it is as yet unpredictable what the tasks and roles, opportunities and job specifications will be once women are not merely adapted to male jobs in economics and politics but learn to adapt jobs to themselves. Such a revolutionary reappraisal may even lead to the insight that jobs now called masculine force men, too, into inhuman adjustments” (p 361)

In summary, intimacy stage issues involve sex differences in a number of ways—(a) the possibility of a premature step into intimacy (without adequate identity resolution) by women because of cultural norms for motherhood and wifehood, (b) the importance of the recognition of sex differences in order for heterosexual, mutually orgasmic relationships to occur, (c) an emphasis on heterosexuality, showing disregard or disavowal of singleness or homosexuality as acceptable forms of adulthood, (d) the division of sexual activity by sex, which may be extended into a division of other roles by sex (e.g., household, work, etc.) Such a sex differentiation of roles, according to Erikson, prepares the intimate couple for the next life-stage, that of generativity

**Generativity vs stagnation (adulthood)** Erikson's concept of generativity, like intimacy, embraces Freud's notion of what the normal person should do well—love and work. However, Erikson's (Evans, 1967) description of generativity goes beyond genital love and work productiveness to focus on the ego-strength of caring "I use 'care' in a sense which includes 'to care to do' something, to 'care for somebody, to 'take care of' that which needs protection and attention, and 'to take care not to' do something destructive (p 53) The caring of the generative adult is a unique ego-synthesis of psychosexual and psychosocial demands beyond genitality, identity, or intimacy

Erikson (1963, 1968) suggests that the generativity stage is a psychosexual as well as a psychosocial stage, he believes this notion is supported by psychobiological observations of nonhuman, mammalian parents as well as by the disposition of children to play at caretaking (e.g., girls playing with dolls). As already noted, the roots of a girl's generativity can be found in her awareness of her 'inner space' in the phallic stage Erikson (Erikson & Erikson, 1981) assumes that males also have a disposition for generativity, even though he does not locate its biological roots. Although female anatomy is most clearly relevant to the productivity of bearing children, to Erikson males as well as females are libidinally oriented to care for their own or others' children

At the generative stage, one's own life-cycle becomes enmeshed with the life-cycle of the next generation, which is dependent on the
older generation for sustenance—physical, social, psychological, emotional. The generative adult must be ready to "feed"—literally and figuratively—the younger generation. The care expressed by the generative adult can take many forms. In Erikson's earlier writings (1963, 1968), it appeared that females were more likely to express procreative generativity, while males were more likely to express productive and creative generativity. It becomes apparent in Erikson's later writing (1974, Erikson & Erikson, 1981) that both work and procreation can occur with or without generative caring, it is not so much the form generativity takes that is crucial to development but the internal orientation to be caring. Development, for males and females, is a matter of integration and reintegration of stage-relevant issues into the ever evolving personality, in adulthood, this might include reintegration of different aspects of identity—work, sex, politics, or religion—so as to reflect the changing demands of one's life-situation (that is, parenthood).

The generative stage, like the identity stage, can reflect what Erikson (1974) calls "collusions"—the "deals" which men and women have made with each other—ostensibly to meet individual needs. One of these collusions is expressed in society's overemphasis, historically, on sex specific roles, functions, traits, and identities which limit the female's generativity to procreation and the male's to work productivity. Blocks to generativity—whether as a result of problems in earlier stages of development or current problems with the issues of generativity—result in stagnation, self-absorption, and, ultimately, the passing on of problems of development from one generation to the next.

Erikson states that the core issue of a woman's identity commitment stems from the libidinal demand to bear and care for the offspring of a chosen man. This commitment constitutes the core issue, whether or not it is combined with a career or actual children. Erikson's conceptualization of identity (fidelity) in women can be understood as assuming that part of the identity struggle of women (not men) includes the integration of women's unique ability to bear children. However, he also appears to assume that the problem—for personality theory—is to account for the developmental, psychological, and sociological meaning of the biological capacity for care.

We believe that Erikson has had some success in liberating his theory from some of the "anatomy is destiny" shackles of the theory that fathered his own (that is, psychoanalytic theory). However, Erikson's theory remains incomplete—not so much because it is a male theory as because it fails to explain adequately how an individual can become truly intimate and generative through the identity
Extending Erikson's theory 239

pathway of development. Erikson has seen human development from the perspective of adolescence and individuation, yet in that exclusive focus he has neglected the important growth of the capacity for attachment. One could even argue that Erikson's theory represents progress from an extremely masculine sex typed orientation (in Freudian theory) towards a more androgynous perspective, but that instead of integrating "masculine" and "feminine" concerns Erikson juxtaposes them by focusing on individuation in his childhood stages and attachment (intimacy and generativity) in his adult stages. This lack of integration appears to be related to Erikson's difficulty in resolving the implications of sex for his theoretical constructs (and vice versa). The goal of the remainder of this paper is to begin the discussion of gender in personality again by pursuing one issue—the possibility of a developmental pathway for attachment that parallels and interacts with the pathway of identity described by Erikson. Our analysis constitutes an attempt to synthesize into Erikson's theory what has been considered a female mode of development (attachment).

Individualization and Attachment Modifying Erikson's Theory

Erikson, in a 1974 critique of his earlier (1968) paper on "Womanhood and the inner space" wrote to Jean Strouse, the editor of a psychoanalytic anthology on women:

You may remember the Vermont farmer whom I quote as saying to a motorist what critics often say less succinctly. 'Well now, if I wanted to go where you wanted to go, I wouldn't start from here.' With your anthology in hand like a map, it is clearer why I couldn't possibly be anywhere else and that, considering where I came from, I was doing all right being where I was (p. 367).

In one sense, Erikson believed his personality theory had made major advances beyond psychoanalytic theory through the synthesis of concepts such as psychosocial crises, life-span development and ego-autonomy. His construct of the "inner space" made a positive, healthy female development possible within a modified psychoanalytic framework, anatomy was relegated to one aspect of a tripartite system—anatomy plus personality (ego) plus history is destiny. This system, however, still contributes to the maintenance of sex stereotypes. On the other hand, we believe that inadequacies in Erikson's theory become apparent through an analysis of his views on sex. Erikson's theory is most complete as a description of the process of
identity development whereby a person's ego becomes increasingly individuated, the theory is most clear, perhaps, when it deals with male ego-development. Although this process of individuation occurs within a social context providing a form of connectedness, we argue that the forms of connectedness Erikson describes are forms associated with an orientation toward individuation rather than toward attachment. When we think of the demands and positive outcomes of the early stages of development—autonomy, initiative, industry, and identity—in relation to the demands and virtues of the adult stages—intimacy (to love) and generativity (to care)—we might well ask “Can you get there from here?”

To answer this question, it is important to understand Erikson’s notion of the epigenetic principle. In discussing the classic “epigenetic diagram” of his eight stages of personality development, Erikson (1968) notes the following: “(1) that each item of the vital personality is systematically related to all others, and that they all depend on the proper development in the proper sequence of each item, and (2) that each item exists in some form before ‘its’ decisive and critical time normally arrives” (p. 93, 95).

The clear implication of this position is that intimacy and generativity, like the components of personality that emerge before them, and integrity, which emerges subsequently, exist from the beginning. Indeed, if we take Erikson’s approach seriously, every state preceding the stages of intimacy and generativity represents a step in the evolution of intimacy and generativity, with their attendant virtues of love and care. Again, the question is, “Can we get there from here?”

We believe that Erikson’s portrayal of the path to generativity is incomplete. It is clear from Erikson’s theory that to achieve generativity, one must have successfully resolved both the identity crisis of adolescence and the intimacy crisis of young adulthood. The evolution of identity has been described by Erikson in detail. That is, much of his theorizing has focused on how, true to the epigenetic principle, the developmental stages that begin at birth lead up to and influence the outcome of the adolescent identity crisis—and how that crisis recapitulates the crises of earlier stages. Very little attention has been paid, however, to the precursors of the processes of attachment that would seem essential to intimacy and generativity. In Erikson’s epigenetic sequence, there is very much the implication of a single developmental path whereby the healthy personality or ego begins by being trusting and then becomes autonomous, initiating, industrious, committed to an identity, intimate, generative, and finally having integrity. Although Erikson asserts that each compo-
Extending Erikson's theory

ponent of the personality and each vital ego-strength or virtue has its own developmental history as well as its own time of ascendance, the only developmental pathway described in real depth is identity formation. Considering whence he began, we agree with Erikson's feeling that "he was doing all right being where he was" (particularly in his elaboration of a heuristic approach to the life-span), at another level, however, we think there is a long way to go before Erikson's theory can be seen as complete. One step in this direction is to formulate a description of the intrapsychic development of attachment.

Modifications of Erikson's Epigenetic Chart

Perhaps one solution to problems with Erikson's theory is simply to fill in a row and column (which he suggests is possible) of his classic epigenetic chart so that processes of attachment receive as much emphasis as processes of identity-formation. Erikson has discussed the antecedents of generativity in terms of the libidinal instinctual urge to procreate—as is expressed by the female's early discovery of her "inner space" and the concomitant predisposition to care, the "sense of generativity" is, as we discussed in the preceding pages, present from early in development. Building on Erikson's own statements about generativity, as well as his description of the "social modalities" associated with each stage, we have tentatively modified one version of Erikson's epigenetic chart to include material on attachment which parallels Erikson's material on identity formation (See Figure 1).

In Figure 1, the diagonal (from top left to bottom right), the fifth column and the fifth row are all traditional components of Erikson's portrayal of the epigenetic cycle—representing, in turn, the eight psychosocial stages (on the diagonal), the forms which the "sense of identity" takes during each of these life stages (the fifth column) and the antecedents and consequences of the identity vs identity diffusion crisis during the other stages (the fifth row). These components are classic features of Erikson's epigenetic chart, designed to illustrate his notions about the epigenetic process of identity formation. To the Eriksonian diagram we have added material in the seventh row and seventh column to illustrate the forms which the "sense of generativity" takes in other life stages as well as the antecedents of generativity.

A brief overview of representative Eriksonian statements about early forms of attachment should help clarify our expansion of the identity pathway to include elements of generativity. These state-
**Figure 1** Adaptation of Erikson's epigenetic chart to illustrate developmental pathway of intimacy and manifestations of sense of intimacy in other psychosocial stages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age periods during which normative psychosocial crises occur</th>
<th>Stage Issues Characterizing Each Age Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Infancy</td>
<td>Trust vs Mistrust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unipolarity vs premature self-differentiation</td>
<td>Acceptance and Primitive Identification vs Rejection of Generative Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II Early Childhood</td>
<td>Autonomy vs Shame, Doubt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bipolarity vs Autism</td>
<td>Secure Attachment vs Narcissism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III Play age</td>
<td>Initiative vs Guilt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play Identification vs (Oedipal) Fantasy Identities</td>
<td>Imaginative Playfulness and Identities vs Inhibition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV School age</td>
<td>Industry vs Inferiority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Identification vs Identity</td>
<td>Secure Sense of Extendable Self and Comradeship vs Duty Dependence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreclosure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage</td>
<td>Time Perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Adolescent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>Young Adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Adulthood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>Mature age</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note* — Italicized terms represent the authors' additions of the early forms and antecedents of attachment to Erikson's epigenetic chart.

Adapted from *Identity and the life cycle* by Erik H. Erikson with the permission of the publisher W W Norton & Company Inc.

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ments, however, are not theoretically elaborated or integrated by Erikson into his stages or identity sequence, they merely suggest or hint at the importance of attachment.

**Infancy (0–16 months)** Erikson has noted that the groundwork for later generativity is established in the very first life stage (trust vs mistrust). Specifically, he states “in getting what is given and in learning to get somebody to give what is wished for, the infant also develops the necessary ego-groundwork to, some day, get to be a giver” (Erikson, 1980, p. 23, emphasis his). Indeed, in one discussion of his epigenetic chart, Erikson himself has posed the question “How could anything like generativity appear?” in the row associated with infancy. His answer is that “after all, if this is infancy then the infant depends on the mother’s generativity first and must experience from the very beginning, even if in a most rudimentary way, a very basic identification with that person who cares about and for it” (Erikson & Erikson, 1981, p. 252). Thus, the sense of generativity is experienced by the child both internally (libidinal) and externally (from the mother). (A future discussion of generativity needs to analyze the deficits and long term consequences of the over- or undergenerative mother.)

Drawing from Erikson’s statements, we can tentatively formulate some descriptors of the “sense” of generativity during the first stage as “acceptance and primitive identification vs rejection” of the generative parent (Figure 1, row 1, column 7). [Although Erikson refers to an early form of identification here, we think that the term identification has too many conceptual links to later developmental processes and use of the term would lead to confusion if used here.]

The antecedent to mature generativity (Figure 1, row 7, column 1) from this stage is a type of mother-child mutuality which could be labeled “symbiosis and interdependence vs withdrawal.”

**Toddlerhood (17–36 months)** According to Erikson, the second life stage is characterized by a severe test of the processes of mutual regulation between parent and child. In reference to the social modalities associated with this stage, Erikson notes that “to hold” can be a destructive and cruel retaining and restraining or a pattern of caring (as captured by the phrase “to have and to hold”). Moreover, the related modality, “to let go,” can involve an unleashing of destructive forces or a relaxed attitude of “letting pass” or “letting be.” Erikson sees this stage as decisive for the ratio between loving good will vs hateful self-insistence and between cooperation and willfulness. We have transposed these stage 2 issues into a generative sense of secure attachment vs narcissism (row 2, column 7) and an antecedent to generativity in the form of the child’s “beginning
pleasure in and desire for social relations vs self insistence” (row 7, column 2)

**Early childhood** Associated with stage 3 in Erikson’s theory are the sexual and social modalities of intrusion and inclusion—both of which are seen by Erikson as “developmentally essential for both boys and girls” (1980, p 35) The inclusive mode—for both sexes—can be expressed through taking care of oneself and younger children, receptivity and tender identification According to Erikson, the inclusive mode may also express itself in the often surprising alternation of aggression (associated with the intrusive mode) and readiness to form “tender and protective relationships” with peers and smaller children In this stage the child develops the prerequisites for the later differentiation of roles that Erikson attributes to generativity as well as finding an arena for exuberant imaginative playfulness in the company of peers “Imaginative playfulness and identifications vs inhibition (self-restriction)” (row 3, column 7) seem to be early manifestations of the sense of generativity while “a sense of equality of worth and companionship vs jealousy and rage” (row 7, column 3) can be seen as stage 3 antecedents to generativity

**Childhood** In discussing stage 4 (industry vs inferiority), Erikson puts considerable emphasis on mastery of the technology of a society Although this stage is distinct from earlier stages in its lack of psychosexual upheaval, it is “socially a most decisive stage” which can provide a “lasting basis for cooperative participation in productive adult life” (Erikson, 1980, p 93) A successful entry into the realm of school, peers, and new adults with concomitant new attachments is based on the child’s previously developed trust and a recently developed sense of self that can be safely extended into this broader social world In Figure 1 we have identified “secure sense of extendable self and comradeship vs duty-dependence” as early forms of the sense of generativity and “cooperation in a world shared with others vs excessive self-restraint” as the stage 4 antecedents of generativity

**Adolescence** Erikson himself identified “leadership polarization vs authority diffusion” as the form which the sense of generativity takes during the adolescent stage (stage 5) Along with his emphasis on values of individuation, Erikson (1968) acknowledges “tolerance” and interdependence as attributes of a “democratic identity” which he counterparts to the “simple and cruel totalitarian doctrines” which may have appeal to young people from countries which have lost (or are losing) their group identities This tolerance for others is based on the young person’s capacity for self-tolerance, “it is difficult to be tolerant if deep down you are not sure that you are a man (or a
woman), and that you will know how to make the right decisions.

(Erikson, 1968, p. 98) This capacity for tolerance or democratic interdependence is an orientation of the self toward others and becomes a core aspect of the potential for mutually satisfying relationships (sexual and otherwise). For the adolescent antecedent of generativity we would suggest, then, “tolerance and interdependence vs. totalitarianism.”

Adulthood In his discussions of generativity, Erikson makes frequent reference to the issues of identity and intimacy which directly precede the crisis of generativity vs self-absorption. As we already noted, the connections between intimacy and generativity appear most obvious and coherent. To round out our expansion of the epigenetic chart, we have identified “communality vs pseudo-intimacy” as the antecedent to generativity and “embeddedness in social networks vs solitariness” as the prior sense of generativity. Finally, we find support in Erikson’s writings for the notion of “human connectedness vs rejection of humanity” as the consequent of generativity in the final life stage.

Such an expansion of the Eriksonian model might contribute a great deal to our understanding of how well-functioning adults become capable of both love and work, how they become both attached and individuated. We believe that many committed Eriksonians would see such an elaboration as all that would be needed to provide a complete account of a developmental history of attachment which complements the epigenesis of identity. However, we also believe that this expansion does not solve the limitations in Erikson’s model. One problem stems from the fact that there is a single diagonal, a single developmental path composed of the eight strands representing the eight fundamental human conflicts, a single developmental path in which strands of individuation (autonomy, initiative, and industry) predominate through childhood, only to relinquish their predominance, somehow, to the adult expressions or achievements (love and care) of a connectedness which seems to imply vital attachments. Erikson does not convince us that the developmental path to identity will also prepare the young adult to be intimate.

A second problem is that Erikson’s treatment of the content of the adult stages also seems to be incomplete. Leaving aside the issue of integrity (the crisis of old age), more is missing in Erikson’s discussion of intimacy and generativity than a full description of their antecedents, consequences, and expressions (“part conflicts”) in all the other stages. Acknowledged but scarcely developed are intimacy as sharing, openness, and caring, and generativity as part of a vital, trans-
Extending Erikson’s theory

actional family process. Virtually omitted are alternative forms of intimate sexual relationships and nonsexual intimate relationships such as friendship. To account adequately for intimacy and generativity as major adult developmental tasks, Erikson needs, we believe, not simply to fill in another vertical and horizontal in his chart, but to elaborate a second developmental strand, that of attachment, which has its own birth to death history. Attachment, in addition, is a part of the development of personality that is decisive for and essential to adult identity (cf. Mahler). We propose that a two-strand “double helix” model of development can be formulated drawing primarily on the constructs of Erikson but also incorporating concepts from other theorists where Erikson is most incomplete. It may be argued that an eight-path model—one for each stage—could rightfully be developed, however, we believe that the two types of development—individuation and attachment—can account for most of the intrapersonal life-span change.

A Two-Path Model of Development

Erikson has suggested that his epigenetic chart might best be expressed as a helix—that is, a “three-dimensional curve that lies on a cylinder or cone and cuts the elements at a constant angle, any spiral form or structure” (Webster, 1979, p. 527). Other theorists (e.g., see Kegan, 1982) have also used such a model to describe development. We believe, however, that to account fully for “healthy” human development, even in Erikson’s own terms, the field might better be served by the model of a double helix in which two separate but interconnected strands of psychological individuation and attachment ascend in a spiral representing the life-cycle. Each stage represents an intrapsychic developmental change in both individuation and attachment, experiences in any one realm will have ramifications for the other. Like the twisted strands making up a rope, tension on one strand will pull the other.

Building directly on concepts derived from Erikson’s model, we have constructed a tentative preliminary model of a two-path model of life-span development. If one accepts Erikson’s notion that there are eight stages of development, each defined by a particular psychosocial crisis and contributing to the evolution of a particular psychological virtue (or ego-strength), then a model with two strands or threads could take the form outlined in Figure 2. As can be seen in Figure 2, the crises characterizing the individuation strand are generally the same as those described by Erikson, except for intimacy and generativity, which have been shifted to the attachment strand.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individuation Pathway</th>
<th>Infancy</th>
<th>Early Childhood</th>
<th>Play Age</th>
<th>School Age</th>
<th>Adolescence</th>
<th>Young Adulthood</th>
<th>Adulthood</th>
<th>Old Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust vs Mistrust</td>
<td>Autonomy vs Shame, Doubt</td>
<td>Initiative vs Guilt</td>
<td>Industry vs Inferiority</td>
<td>Identity vs Identity Diffusion</td>
<td>Career and Life-style Exploration vs Drifting</td>
<td>Life-style Consolidation vs Emptiness</td>
<td>Integrity vs Despair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attachment Pathway</th>
<th>Infancy</th>
<th>Early Childhood</th>
<th>Play Age</th>
<th>School Age</th>
<th>Adolescence</th>
<th>Young Adulthood</th>
<th>Adulthood</th>
<th>Old Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trust vs Mistrust</td>
<td>Object &amp; Self-constancy vs Loneliness &amp; Helplessness</td>
<td>Playfulness vs Passivity or Aggression</td>
<td>Empathy and Collaboration vs Excessive Caution or Power</td>
<td>Mutuality vs Interdependence vs Alienation</td>
<td>Intimacy vs Isolation</td>
<td>Generativity vs Self-absorption</td>
<td>Integrity vs Despair</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
New crises have been identified as characteristic of the individuation path during the young adult and adult stages, and of the attachment path during most of the other stages.

This preliminary and very tentative outline of a stage model comprising two threads of development represents the introduction of concepts drawn partly from Selman’s (1981) work on interpersonal competence and from object-relations theory (Horner, 1979, Mahler, 1968, Mahler & McDevitt, 1980, and McDevitt & Mahler, 1980) into a framework drawn primarily from Erikson. All three approaches cite and indeed draw upon the developmental notions of Jean Piaget to reinforce their own conceptions of development. Moreover, in all three approaches, it is assumed that psychological structures evolve through an ongoing transactional process between organism and environment—including, especially, the interpersonal environment. It is primarily because Erikson has not specifically developed a separate eight-stage pathway for attachment that we needed to draw on other frameworks for notions concerning the development of attachment relationships during infancy and childhood. While Selman provided a useful framework for conceptualizing sociocognitive development (Selman, 1976) and the development of interpersonal negotiation strategies (Selman, 1981) from the grade school years on, he, like other sociocognitive and ego-developmental theorists, treats the earliest years of life as a stage zero—that is a stage characterized more by the absence of any capacity for relatedness than by core elements of the capacity for relatedness that will develop. Object-relations theory, by contrast (particularly object-relations theory as it has been developed by such psychoanalytic thinkers as Horner, 1979, Mahler, 1968, Mahler & McDevitt, 1980, and McDevitt & Mahler, 1980) has a good deal to say about infantile relationships and their role in development. Thus, these two frameworks together, despite some important differences in general theoretical assumptions, were a source of constructs drawn for their consistency with Eriksonian theory and relevance to preadult relationships.

**Infancy (0–16 months)** In turning to object-relations theory to find a foundation for attachment in infancy, we are not suggesting that object-relations theory provides the only or even the best starting point for the elaboration of a second strand of development. However, the approach does provide a fairly well-elaborated starting point, it is a framework in which considerable attention has been given to the intrapsychic aspects of relationships, particularly during the earliest years of life.

While Erikson and the object-relations theorists often use a very
different language they seem to be in considerable agreement that the first 16 months of life are characterized by the emergence of attachment and the roots of identity-formation. In particular, the infant moves from a period of normal autism to normal symbiosis in which the child experiences a partnership with its mother which provides relief and gratification of needs. Mahler and McDevitt (1980) use Lichtenstein's expression that the child now "becomes the child of his particular mother." For the next 10 months the child's internal experience of separation and individuation of the self occurs with mother as the central framework for differentiation. The child's successful attempts at autonomy (e.g., playing away from the mother) occur in the context of the reliable availability and accessibility of the mother. McDevitt & Mahler (1980) note, for example, that an adequate degree of trust and confidence, and successful early identifications from this period, are essential prerequisites for the later emergence of both object-constancy (a stable love object) and self-constancy (a solid sense of self) and, ideally, a sense of self-esteem.

Comparing Erikson's approach with that of Mahler and McDevitt, it is evident that both approaches emphasize the importance of a close, secure relationship between mother and child at this stage. The descriptor of the attachment crisis as well as the individuation crisis of the first stage of life remains "trust vs mistrust" (Figure 2).

Early childhood (17–36 months) Paralleling Erikson's early childhood stage of autonomy vs shame and doubt, one finds, in object-relations theory, the emergence of self- and object-constancy. According to McDevitt and Mahler (1980), libidinal object-constancy implies (a) a primarily positive attachment to a maternal representation, (b) an integration of "good" and "bad" (including, we suggest, "trustworthy" and "untrustworthy") components of the maternal representation, and (c) the achievement of a maternal image which is intrapsychically available to the child in the same way as the actual mother is available—that is, for sustenance, comfort, and love. This libidinal object-constancy, according to McDevitt and Mahler (1980), "has its origins in infancy, begins to be attained in the third year [that is, 24 to 36 months]" (p. 408).

Using the language of McDevitt and Mahler, we will identify the second stage in the attachment pathway as the crisis over object-constancy. McDevitt and Mahler indicate that a successful resolution of this crisis in the third year of life provides relief from the "threats of helplessness and loneliness" as well as "a close relationship with love objects" combined with "autonomy, individuation, self-constancy, and cohesiveness of the self" (p. 420). The child's rela-
tionship with the primary care-giver (love object) later in life provides a basis for mature relationships in which the other person is esteemed, valued, and treated with consideration (McDevitt & Mahler, 1980) The crises of this stage represent particularly well the interlocking relation between the attachment and individuation pathways. The toddler must have a new type of attachment to the mother or care-giver in order to separate and become autonomous. Later in life both the autonomy and the lessons of attachment contribute to the adult capacities for love and work. McDevitt and Mahler (1980) describe object-constancy as a process which, though becoming functionally available by the age of three, "continues to develop throughout childhood and adolescence, and in all probability is rarely completely attained" (p. 408) The crisis of this phase may extend into the third year of life and interfere with resolution of Oedipal issues. As a result, we see object-constancy as overlapping two stages in Erikson's model—early childhood (stage 2) and play age (stage 3).

**Play age (ages 4–5 years)** Mahler and McDevitt (1980) focus on the child's structural intrapsychic changes from birth to approximately three years. In order to develop the next few stages of the attachment pathway paralleling Erikson's identity pathway, we turn to the work of Robert Selman (1981) on interpersonal competence—a construct which goes beyond Selman's earlier work on sociocognitive development to account for the affects and behaviors that are part of the development of interpersonal competence. Drawing on Werner's (1964) orthogenetic approach and Piaget's (e.g., 1932) notions of structural developmental change, as well as his own field and clinical observations, Selman has identified four levels of interpersonal understanding and behavioral negotiations (following a stage zero). These cognitive developments, we believe, permit developments in the child's capacity for and experience of relationships. Thus, Selman's levels of the child's interpersonal competence can point the way to stages 3–6 of our attachment pathway.

During early childhood (corresponding to stage 3 or "initiative vs guilt" in Erikson's model), the child can understand that another person has thoughts, feelings, and intentions separate from his or her own. This differentiation includes and elaborates on the object-constancy achieved around age 3 in Mahler and McDevitt's analysis of child development. Although the child can recognize the other person as psychologically separate, the child's perspective on relationships is essentially egocentric. The change in the child's internal orientation toward self and others is manifested outwardly in the changes that occur in play behavior during this stage—e.g., the
capacities for role playing either adult roles or those of the “family romance” or the switch from parallel play to cooperative play. Thus, the cognitive shift allows for a new kind of relating. The playfulness of the child is not just an early attempt at “world” mastery (of what “I imagine I will be” [Erikson, 1968, p. 87]) but also who the child imagines she or he will be like and playfulness with other children. Thus, we can describe the attachment crisis of this stage as the capacity for playfulness vs aggression and/or passivity.

School age (ages 6–12) The school age period (Erikson’s stage 4 industry vs inferiority) corresponds roughly with Selman’s levels 2 and 3. In middle-childhood (level 2), the child goes beyond knowing that another person’s subjective experience is distinct from his or her own, to a recognition that the other person can think about the child’s own attitudes, feelings, and motives. The self and other each can be viewed as being self-reflective and reciprocal. Selman (1981) describes behavioral interactions at this level as manifesting a “tit-for-tat” self-interest. Level 3, interpersonal competence, includes the perspective-taking capacities of level 2, plus a new ability to see the other person as autonomous as well as related and interdependent. As a result of these new abilities, relationships can be collaborative and mutually beneficial, how one’s needs are met is based on communication and negotiation of “an equilibrated feeling between self and other” (Selman, 1981, p. 410).

These emerging capacities for mutuality, empathy, concern, and perspective-taking are not adequately accounted for in Erikson’s description of the “industry” stage crisis or its resolution. All of these capacities, however, appear to be crucial elements in adult intimacy and generativity. To summarize the elements of the attachment crisis in the fourth stage, we have chosen “empathy and collaboration” vs “excessive caution or power.”

Adolescence and adulthood Interpersonal orientation at Selman’s level 4 (Erikson’s stage 5 adolescence) integrates the aforementioned levels and includes a more sophisticated and complex knowledge of self and other as well as the interrelationship between the two. According to Selman (1981) “at level 4, affective and cognitive aspects of conduct are integrated by the self’s capacity to identify in self and other, the relation between action and underlying affect and motives. Higher levels reflect a [an observing] self that has the capacity to negotiate and communicate in ways that ultimately, over time, lead to the establishment of a mutual relationship” (p. 415). The adolescent functioning at higher levels is able to (a) facilitate negotiation, (b) tolerate a broad range of emotions, (c) give and take, and finally, (d) perceive accurately, understand compassionately,
Extending Erikson’s theory and take action on the feelings of self and others. Again, these developments in interpersonal understanding should allow for new forms of relationship with others. In keeping with Selman, possible labels of the attachment crisis in adolescence could be described as “mutuality/interdependence vs alienation.”

Erikson’s adult stages of intimacy and generativity follow nicely, we believe, on the earlier resolutions in the attachment pathway that we have just described. Now, when we ask the question “Can you get there from here?” the answer appears to be a clear “Yes.” Moreover, the adult achievements on the identity pathway also seem to follow more coherently from such early crises as autonomy and initiative than was true in Erikson’s original model. In addition, appropriate experiences of attachment foster individuation and vice versa. The proposed model also has the advantage of being conceptually consistent with Bakan’s (1966) conception of two life modalities, agency and communion, and with Parson’s notion (1964) that all social life is characterized by an instrumental/expressive division of function. While Bakan and Parsons, like Erikson, see one major modality (the intrusive, agentic, instrumental orientation) as linked with the male gender role and the other major modality (the receptive, communal, expressive orientation) as linked with the female gender role, all of the theorists acknowledge the possibility that both orientations can exist and be cultivated or suppressed in both sexes.

In research by one of the authors (White, Speisman, & Costos, 1983, White, Speisman, Jackson, Bartis, & Costos, in press), we have repeatedly found that gender role is more powerful than sex as a predictor of a number of individual and relationship variables. For example, we have found no statistically significant differences between men and women in either ego-development (related to processes of individuation) or intimacy development (related to processes of attachment). Moreover, even on measures of gender role, there are a dearth of sex differences while men have scored somewhat higher than women in agency (measured through an adaptation of Bem’s Sex Role Inventory), the genders do not differ on communion. Communion but not agency is related to intimacy maturity in both men and women. In a sample of married couples, communion in husbands is positively associated with intimacy maturity in their wives while communion in wives is negatively associated with their partner’s intimacy maturity.

Also of relevance is the fact that despite a general dearth of sex differences on major individual and relationship variables, patterns of relationships among variables do vary greatly by sex. For example, gender role identity (agency, communion, and androgyny) is pre-
dicted by level of ego-development in men but not in women and by parental socialization practices in women but not in men. Intimacy maturity is associated with ego-development in women but not in men, and with marital adjustment in men but not in women. All of these findings suggest the importance to us of going beyond a simple search for sex differences in psychological functioning to an examination of the ways in which processes of individuation and attachment may be related to other psychological issues.

We believe that in psychological research, psychological variables—such as attachment and individuation—are more valuable to the goal of understanding psychological processes than are static, summarizing variables such as sex. Whether psychological processes are rooted in biology or socialization or both, the explanatory variables are likely to be process variables that are poorly represented by such global designations as male and female. We are not advocating that the goal of identifying and understanding sex differences in psychological functioning be abandoned. Instead, we are suggesting that research questions be phrased so that the potential role of psychological processes such as individuation and attachment can also be assessed—both independently and possibly in interaction with sex.

In his brief discussions of adulthood, Erikson often refers to the division of labor between men and women as well as the complementarity they bring to their relationships. There may indeed be different—and complementary—orientations, experiences, and roles that traditionally have been associated with sex. Traditionally, and to some extent currently, the developmental pathway of individuation may have been most emphasized in males, with a corresponding neglect of the separate but interconnected pathway of attachment. In females, the reverse pattern may hold true. We would argue that if, with changing times and mores, attachment processes were to undergo fuller development in men and individuation processes were to undergo fuller development in women, sex differences might become more elusive than ever, but individuation and attachment would retain their power as psychological variables associated with other psychological variables in important nomological nets.

Finally, Erikson's theory of identity development has been attacked at times on the grounds that it is more descriptive of male than of female development (Gilligan, 1982). This criticism may be historically/culturally accurate, but we would argue, instead, that the more serious weakness of the theory is that it emphasizes the development of the individuated, socially connected personality at the expense of the attached, interpersonally connected, care-ori-
ented personality—and indeed, emphasizes one component of all personalities at the expense of the other component of all personalities.

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