It has always been a basic thesis of psychoanalysis to comprehend human behavior at any stage in relation to preceding and current events, or to view it as an instant in a continuum of experience. This evolutionary concept has thrown light on those complex processes of adolescence which in earlier days remained isolated observations linked solely to the advent of sexual maturation. The genetic approach made adolescent behavioral phenomena tell something about their nature by revealing something of their history.

The "Three Essays" (6) established once and for all the broad sequential pattern of psychosexual development; it furthermore brought into focus the biphasic nature of sexual development as characteristic of man. The early phases of drive development and zonal organization have been explored in detail and have lately become more precisely coordinated with the formation of psychic structure. It is noteworthy to mention that the second broad phase in psychosexual development, namely puberty, while explored in its larger aspects, still awaits a comprehensive theory and the elaboration of sequential patterns. It is far from me to make up for this lack. In the material which I shall lay before you I will attempt, however, to integrate observation and theory in a small sector of adolescent psychology, namely preadolescence.

The familiar cliché which speaks of adolescence as a "second edition" or a "recapitulation" of early childhood has meaning only as far as it emphasizes the fact that adolescence contains elements of preceding phases of development in much the same way as any other phase of psychosexual development is significantly influenced by preceding drive and ego development. A prerequisite for entering the adolescent phase of drive organization lies in the consolidation of the latency period; otherwise the pubescent child experiences a simple intensification of prelatency needs and exhibits infantile behavior of arrested rather than regressive nature. It would be of interest to delineate those essential attainments of latency which represent the preconditions for a successful advance to adolescence. In the analytic work with adolescents—mainly young adolescents—whose latency has never been satisfactorily established, we are accustomed to supplement or preface analysis with educational methods in order to bring about some essential latency attainments.

Example

In the case of a well-developed ten-year-old boy who showed learning difficulties, social inadequacy and bizarre thinking, there appeared abruptly at the age of ten an expressed desire to sleep in his mother's bed and keep his father away from her. Demands for embraces and kisses alternated with the wish to be picked up by the mother like a child or to be allowed to sit on her lap. The mother had the tendency to yield to the child's wishes. It seemed essential that the mother at the very beginning of the child's analysis develop a resistance to her son's sexual advances and learn to frustrate him while offering substitute gratifications. The fact that it was the mother who restrained him actively from the realization of his oedipal wishes influenced the child's reaction in a decisive way.

The boy reacted to the mother's prohibitions with repression of his oedipal wishes and with a show of sad resignation. He became compulsively preoccupied with schoolwork; he would fill workbook after workbook with his answers, checking them incessantly. This compulsive behavior served as a defense against anal retaliatory fantasies directed at the prohibiting mother; the fantasies were acted out in relation to the mothers of his schoolmates. Only after this regressive behavior was worked through there appeared oedipal material in the analysis, castration anxiety became prominent by denial, projection and confused thinking. The boy's interest turned to castration themes derived mainly from the Bible: the killing of a male lamb at Passover; the Lord who...
“will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt”; Herod's

WARNING! This text is printed for the personal use of the subscriber to PEP Web and is copyright to the Journal in which it originally appeared. It is illegal to copy, distribute or circulate it in any form whatsoever.

slaying of the little children of Bethlehem; fear of a wild bull near the boy's house in the country. I believe that without the preparatory employment of educational methods the analysis of this boy would have been impeded.

Let us now turn to the stage of preadolescence in its typical appearance, signaling the termination of the latency period. It is a well-known fact that in early puberty¹ we observe a totally different psychological development in boy and girl. The dissimilarities between the sexes is striking; descriptive psychology has paid extensive attention to this period and has accumulated a mass of relevant observational data. What strikes us in the boy is his circuitous route via pregenital drive cathexis toward a genital orientation, while the girl turns far more readily and forcefully toward the other sex. Only with reference to the boy is it correct to say that the quantitative increase of the instinctual drive during preadolescence leads to an indiscriminate cathexis of pregenitality. In fact, the resurgence of pregenitality marks the termination of latency for the male. At this time we observe in the boy an increase in diffuse motility (restlessness, fidgetiness), in oral greediness, sadistic activities, anal activities as expressed in coprophilic pleasures, "dirty" language, the disregard of cleanliness, the fascination of odors and the skillful production of onomatopoetic noises. A fourteen-year-old boy, who started analysis at ten, put it aptly when he said retrospectively: "At eleven my mind was only on filth, now [age fourteen] it is on sex; it is very different."

The preadolescent girl does not show the same features as the boy; she is either a tomboy or a little woman. The preadolescent boy will shy away from the young Diana, the Goddess of hunting, who seductively displays her young charm while roaming through the wilderness with a pack of hounds. The mythological reference is used in order to point to the defensive aspect of the boy's

¹ The term "puberty" is used to denote the physical manifestation of sexual maturation; e.g., prepuberty refers to the period just preceding the development of primary and secondary sex characters. The term "adolescence" is used to denote the psychological processes of adaptation to the condition of pubescence; e.g., the stage of preadolescence can continue overly long unaffected by the progression of physical maturation.

WARNING! This text is printed for the personal use of the subscriber to PEP Web and is copyright to the Journal in which it originally appeared. It is illegal to copy, distribute or circulate it in any form whatsoever.

preadolescent drive cathexis, namely his avoidance of the castrating woman, the archaic mother. From fantasies, play activities, dreams and symptomatic behavior of preadolescent boys, I have come to the conclusion that castration anxiety in relation to the phallic mother is not only a universal occurrence of male preadolescence but can be considered as its central theme. Is this recurrent observation possibly due to the fact that we see in analysis so many young adolescent boys with passive strivings who come from families with strong and domineering mothers? This consideration certainly requires careful scrutiny.

Example

In several dreams of an eleven-year-old boy (obese, submissive, inhibited, compulsive) there repeatedly appears the naked woman with lower body part not well remembered and vaguely seen; the breast is replacing the penis, either as an erectile or excretory organ. The dreams of this boy were always prompted by experiences in a co-educational school where the competition between boys and girls offered him endless proof of female malice, her foul play and her predatory viciousness. The compulsive reassurance by masturbatory activity, when interpreted in the abovementioned context, led to a sleep disturbance with the prevalent idea that his mother might kill him during the night.

Castration anxiety which brought the oedipal phase of the boy to its decline raises its ugly head again with the onset of puberty. In the first, the preadolescent phase of male puberty castration anxiety is related to the phallic mother. Passive strivings are overcompensated and the defense against them receives a powerful recourse from sexual maturation itself (4). However, before a successful turn toward masculinity is effected the employment of the homosexual defense against castration anxiety represents the typical stage of male preadolescence. It is precisely this solution which we witness in the young adolescent boy; descriptive psychology has labeled this typical group behavior the "gang stage," and dynamic psychology refers to it as the "homosexual stage" of preadolescence.
dissimilarity in male and female preadolescent behavior is foreshadowed by the massive repression of pregenitality which the girl has to establish before she can move into the oedipal phase; in fact, this repression is a prerequisite for the normal development of femininity. The girl, in turning away from the mother due to the narcissistic disappointment in herself and the castrated woman, represses those instinctual drives which were intimately related to her care and bodily ministrations, namely the total scope of pregenitality. Ruth Mack Brunswick (2), in her classical paper on “The Preoedipal Phase of the Libido Development,” states: “One of the greatest differences between the sexes is the enormous extent to which infantile sexuality is repressed in the girl. Except in profound neurotic states no man resorts to any similar repression of his infantile sexuality.”

The girl who cannot maintain the repression of her pregenitality will encounter difficulties in her progressive development. Consequently, the young adolescent girl normally exaggerates her heterosexual desires and attaches herself to boys in often frantic succession. “Paradoxically,” Helene Deutsch (3) remarks, “the girl’s mother relation is more persistent, and often more intense and dangerous, than the boy’s. The inhibition she encounters when she turns toward reality brings her back to her mother for a period marked by heightened and more infantile love demands.”

In considering the dissimilarity between male and female preadolescence it is necessary to remember that the oedipal conflict in the girl is not brought to such an abrupt and fateful termination as is the case in the boy. Freud (7) states: “The girl remains in the Oedipal situation for an indefinite period, she only abandons it late in life, and then incompletely.” Consequently, the girl struggles with object relations more intensely in her adolescence; in fact, the prolonged and painful severance actions from the mother constitute the major task of this period. “A prepuberal attempt at liberation from the mother that has failed or was too weak can inhibit future psychologic growth and leave a definitely infantile imprint on the woman’s entire personality” (3).

While the boy in preadolescence struggles with castration anxiety (fear and wish) in relation to the archaic mother and consequently turns away from the opposite sex, the girl defends herself against the regressive pull to the preoedipal mother by a forceful and decisive turn toward heterosexuality; in this role the preadolescent girl cannot be called “feminine” because she so obviously is the aggressor and the seducer in the game of pseudo love; indeed, the phallic quality of her sexuality is prominent at this stage and affords her for a brief period an unusual sense of adequacy and completeness. The fact that the average girl between the ages of eleven to thirteen is taller than the average boy of the same age only adds at this stage and affords her for a brief period an unusual sense of adequacy and completeness. The fact that in “pre-puberty of girls, the attachment to the mother represents a greater danger than the attachment to the father” (3). In female delinquency, which broadly speaking represents sexual acting-out behavior, the fixation on the preoedipal mother plays a most decisive role. In fact, female delinquency is often precipitated by the strong regressive pull to the preoedipal mother and the panic which such surrender implies. It is my opinion that the girl’s turn to heterosexual acting out which at first sight seems to represent the recrudescence of oedipal wishes proves on careful scrutiny to be related to earlier fixation points lying in the pregenital phases of libidinal development; frustration or overstimulation or both had been experienced. The pseudo heterosexuality of the delinquent girl serves as a defense against the regressive pull to the preoedipal mother. This pull is so frantically resisted because it would bring about a fatal rupture in the development
of femininity by falling back on a homosexual object choice. A fourteen-year-old girl when asked why she needed ten boy friends at once, answered with righteous indignation: "I have to do this; if I didn't have so many boy friends they would say I am a lesbian." The "they" in this sentence comprises the projection of those instinctual urges which the girl endeavors to contradict so vehemently by her demonstrative behavior. A rupture in the girl's progressive emotional development brought about by the advent of puberty constitutes a more serious threat to personality integration than this is the case in the boy. The following case abstract illustrates a typical delinquent breakdown of the female preadolescent drive organization, and lays bare the crucial emotional task which the girl normally has to accomplish at this stage before she can advance to adolescence proper.

Example

Nancy, age thirteen was a sex delinquent. She had indiscriminate sexual relations with teen-age boys, tormenting her mother with the tales of her exploits. She blamed her mother for her unhappiness; she had experienced feelings of loneliness since childhood. Nancy believed that her mother never wanted her and she made incessant and unreasonable demands on her. Nancy was obsessed by the wish for a baby; all her sexual fantasies pointed to the "mother-baby" theme and basically, to an overwhelming oral greed. She had a dream in which she had sexual relations with teen-age boys; in the dream she had 365 babies, one a day for a year from one boy whom she shot after this was accomplished.

The sexual acting out ceased completely as soon as Nancy had developed a friendship with a young, married promiscuous pregnant woman of twenty who had three children. In the friendship with this girl-friend-mother Nancy found the gratification of her oral and maternal needs while protected against homosexual surrender. She played mother to the children and took care of them while their mother walked the streets. From this friendship Nancy emerged at fifteen as a narcissistic rather prudish person interested in acting and pursuing the necessary training. She failed to progress to heterosexual object finding.

In normal female development the phase of preadolescent drive organization is dominated by a defense against the preoedipal mother; it is reflected in the many conflicts which arise between mother and daughter during this period. A progression to adolescence proper is marked by the emergence of oedipal feelings which are first displaced and finally extinguished by an "irreversible process of displacement," aptly designated by Anny Katan (8) as "object removal." This phase of adolescent development lies outside the scope of this communication.

Having defined the preadolescent drive organization in terms of preoedipal positions, I want now to relate my remarks to the first analysis of an adolescent girl, namely Dora (5). (Dora was sixteen when she first visited Freud and eighteen when she started treatment.) At the end of "The Clinical Picture" Freud introduces an element which he confesses "can only serve to obscure and efface the outlines of the fine poetic conflict which we have been able to ascribe to Dora. For behind Dora's supervalent train of thought which was concerned with her father's relations to Frau K., there lay concealed a feeling of jealousy which had that lady as its object—a feeling, that is, which could only be based upon an affection on Dora's part for one of her own sex" (p. 60). We could paraphrase this sentence by saying: which could only be based upon an affection on the girl's part for her mother. It is with great fascination that we read Freud's account of Dora's relationship to her governess, to her girl cousin, and to Frau K., which had a "greater pathogenic effect" than the oedipal situation which "she tried to use as a screen" for the deeper trauma of having been sacrificed by her intimate friend, Frau K., "without a moment's hesitation so that her relations with her father might not be disturbed" (p. 62). Freud continues in his last conclusion to point out "that Dora's supervalent train of thought, which was concerned with her father's relations with Frau K., was designed not only for the purpose of suppressing her love for Herr K., which had once been conscious, but also to conceal her love for Frau K., which was in a deeper sense unconscious" (p. 62).

The observation is familiar that oedipal strivings are more conspicuous and loud in adolescence than the preoedipal fixations.
which indeed are so often of more profound pathogenic import. In the case of Dora the analysis had come to an end "before it could throw any light on this side of her mental life." The adolescent conveys to us again and again that he desperately needs a foothold on the oedipal level—a sex-appropriate orientation—before earlier fixations can become accessible to analytic investigation. In this connection a reference to a young, passive adolescent boy seems relevant. During three years of analysis (age eleven to thirteen) he stubbornly maintained an image of his "milk-toast" father as the strong and important man in the family. The powerful father served this boy as a defense against preoedipal castration anxiety. This boy never permitted himself to criticize, doubt or question the analyst: the analyst had to be always right. He would not allow himself to look at the clock for fear to insult the analyst. Finally, the analysis of the transference brought to light the boy's fears of the analyst; his fear of retaliation and injury. The analysis of oedipal castration anxiety then opened the way to the far more disturbing anxieties in relation to the preoedipal mother. The working through of these earlier fixations resulted in a realistic if disappointing evaluation of the father. The maintenance of an "illusory oedipal" situation seems to mask a strong preoedipal fixation.

I have concentrated in this brief communication on the preadolescent drive organization. From here the road leads to shifts in drive organization which are progressively and more firmly rooted in the biological innovations of puberty, namely the establishment of organic pleasure. This biological innovation necessitates a hierarchical arrangement of the multitudinous residual childhood positions which, due to individual reasons, remained cathexed and press for continued expression and gratification. This arrangement results finally in a highly personal pattern of forepleasure. The concurrent ego development takes, as always, its cue from the existing drive organization. Consequently, we can observe in adolescence the tendency toward a hierarchical arrangement in ego organization as well; in fact, whenever this fails to occur, a general aimlessness and shiftlessness will follow which in many cases prevents a stable vocational adjustment from taking shape. It has been my experience that in these cases the pathology of drive organization deserves careful scrutiny; this might require a long period of preparation. I shall leave this thought before it carries me beyond the boundaries of my paper. If I focused on one small aspect of the total problem of adolescent psychology, it was done in the belief that in turn the larger issues and trends of adolescence will become better understood. Since the days of the "Three Essays" (6) psychoanalytic insight into adolescence has grown steadily. However, Freud's words from "The Transformations of Puberty" are still worth repeating: "The starting point and the final aim of the process are clearly visible. The intermediate steps are still in many ways obscure to us. We shall have to leave more than one of them as an unsolved riddle." Today as then it is the problem of the "intermediate steps" which clamors for our attention.

REFERENCES
Brunswick, R. M. The preoedipal phase of the libido development Psychoanal. Q. 9:293-319 1940
Freud, S. New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis 1932 New York: W. W. Norton, 1933
Katan, A. The role of "displacement" in agoraphobia Int. J. Psychoanal. 32:1-10 1951