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Editor
Joan G. Miller

ISSBD Newsletter
Institute for Social Research, RCGD
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan, USA 48106-1248
email: jgmiller@umich.edu

Associate Editor
Xinyin Chen

ISSBD Newsletter
Department of Psychology,
University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada N6A 5C2
email: xchen@julian.uwo.ca

The Transition to Adulthood in Socio-Cultural Context

Introduction

Xinyin Chen

Department of Psychology, University of Western Ontario, Canada
e-mail: xchen@julian.uwo.ca

and

Joan G. Miller

Institute for Social Research, University of Michigan, USA
e-mail: jgmiller@umich.edu

The transition to adulthood may be a significant experience in human development in most societies. The pursuit of educational and occupational opportunities, the development of new social relationships, and the acquisition of social and financial status may represent major aspects of this experience, accompanied often by feelings of achievement as well as stress. Adjustment to these new experiences may be more exciting and challenging in a society which itself is undergoing dramatic changes.

The breakdown of the social and political systems in the former Soviet Union and in Eastern European countries may represent rare historical events. However, the economic reforms, technological advances in communication, and globalisation that are occurring in many other countries, such as China, India, Mexico, and Vietnam, may also become an integral part of the life experiences of youth. These societal and historical changes bring new opportunities and hopes and, at the same time, they create particular constraints.

The investigation of youth experiences in social and psychological adjustment in changed or changing social environments is obviously an important task for developmental researchers. What specific aspects of youth life are particularly sensitive and vulnerable to the influence of dramatic societal changes? How are the contextual changes reflected in the process of transition, such as the timing of financial independence and marriage? Do social and economic transformations modify the development of individual beliefs and attitudes about personal goals, relations with others, and civic and political responsibilities in society? What psychological consequences may result from the experience of transition in particular historical moments? And, how do personal and situational conditions (e.g., individual coping styles, traditional family values) moderate influences of the circumstance on youth adjustment? The articles and commentaries included in this section tap these issues from different perspectives, and provide insights concerning how contextual forces may play a role in the transition processes of youth. We believe that the views, arguments and suggestions offered by the authors and the commentators will inspire further systematic investigation in this area, and may be helpful in developing social programs and services concerning youth employment, education, mental health, social welfare, etc., based on specific social and cultural circumstances.

The Transition to Adulthood in the Context of a Changed Germany

Rainer K. Silbereisen

Department of Developmental Psychology,
University of Jena
e-mail: sii@rz.uni-jena.de

Linda Juang

Psychology Department,
San Francisco State University
e-mail: ljuang@sfsu.edu

and

Matthias Reitzle

Department of Developmental Psychology,
University of Jena
e-mail: smr@rz.uni-jena.de

The fall of the Berlin Wall over ten years ago marked the beginning of a dramatic and abrupt societal change. The unification of East and West Germany was solidified one year later, engineered by the transfer of basic social institutions, such as parliamentary democracy, the legal system, and the capitalist economy, from the West to the East. For social scientists, this was a golden opportunity to investigate how broad societal changes touched and transformed an individual's life course in a relatively compressed amount of time.

One of the major focuses of our research program here at the University of Jena for the past decade has been on various aspects of young adults' lives in their transition to adulthood in a changed Germany. We have examined the timing of several important life course transitions, such as becoming financially self-supportive, leaving the parental home, getting married, and having children. We had a



particular interest in *developmental timetables* (e.g., at what age did the young adult get married, at what age did he or she have a first child), as they are known to show some plasticity under social change. From this perspective, we were able to take a closer look at how institutional change manifested itself in a change concerning the timing of important transitions to adulthood.

Concerning methodology, a cross-sectional cohort approach was used. Retrospective and current assessment data were gathered nationwide from several thousand young adults between the ages of 20–29 years old in 1991, and then independently, and as equivalently as possible, again in 1996. The 1991 cohort represented pre-unification circumstances, whereas the cohort in 1996 had faced dramatic social change amid their transitions to adulthood.

There are several distinct features of social change on development that have emerged through our studies. First, there are different *types* of change concerning the timing of certain transitions to adulthood that can occur. Over the years, there can be the following: 1) an acceleration or delay in the age at which the young adult moves into the developmental transition, 2) a broadening of variation in the timing of the transition, and 3) a change in what specific factors (e.g., individual and family factors) predict the timing of the transition in question. Second, we have found that there are important differences in the proneness for change, dependent on the constraints and opportunities in particular *ecological niches*. For example, differential change may be due to the gender of the young adult or the particular school track (e.g., vocational or academic) he or she chooses to follow. Third, the *proximity* of the institutional



A street theatre group performing on the occasion of the 42nd Congress of the German Psychological Society in Jena, Germany. Unification has brought marked socio-cultural changes, with former industrial sites transformed into modern centres that include high-tech industries and shopping malls, and with street life becoming more colourful and diverse than ever.

change to the specific transition is important to consider. The revamping of the educational and vocational systems in East Germany affected transitions tightly bound to this domain, such as becoming financially self-supportive. However, a transition that is more distal, such as leaving the parental home, is not as profoundly affected by these particular structural changes.

We now turn to several of our studies that have contributed to our understanding of how the transition to adulthood may be modified by social change.

Different types of changes concerning the timing of transitions

Becoming financially self-supportive is an important marker on the path to adulthood, as it may be a prerequisite for moving into other transitions to adulthood, such as marriage and parenthood. Among Eastern young people from vocationally oriented school tracks, this key transition occurred, on average, *later* after unification as compared to the pre-unification era. At least part of this average delay in financial self-support was related to the newly emerging educational options, paralleled by the new demands of developing high-tech and service industries. In addition, the comparably high risk of unemployment in the transformation of the Eastern economy also implied delay of self-support as compared to the situation in the former GDR. In sum, new opportunities, as well as formerly unknown drawbacks and obstacles, exerted an impact on the individual timing of transitions into adulthood, for example, by delaying them.

Opportunities and constraints demand individual planning, decisions, and coping strategies. Not everybody makes the same use of opportunities, accumulates education, or quickly responds to threatening unemployment. This trend towards an individualisation of pathways into adulthood among young Easterners is mirrored by an increased *variability* in the timing of career-related transitions, such as completion of training and the achievement of financial self-support. Before unification, the ages at which youth experienced these transitions were relatively homogenous in the East, namely, at 18 or 19 years. With the changed opportunities and constraints due to unification, the variability in the transition ages common in the East *increased* and thus approximated that observed in the West. Thus, another consequence of social change on the transition to adulthood is a change in the variability in the timing of transitions.

Concerning the leaving home transition, *factors predicting the timing* of this transition also changed during the course of unification. In 1991, the pattern of predictors of home leaving differed markedly for those in East and West Germany. In the West, individual-level factors successfully predicted the age of leaving home. In the East, however, macro-system factors, such as the limited availability of housing and strict housing regulations, seemed to diminish the effects of individual experience on home leaving. However, in 1996, individuals in East and West Germany demonstrated greater similarity regarding predictors of leaving home, suggesting that the two regions were converging, presumably as a result of the adaptation of West German institutions in East Germany.

Nonetheless, we did not observe that young adults in the East became strictly like their counterparts in the West concerning transitions to adulthood. For instance, in the

East in 1996, the variability in the age at which one became financially self-supportive had not yet reached Western levels, and the factors predicting the timing of leaving home were still not identical in the East and West. These findings indicate that social change trickles down rather slowly on individual biographies and development. For example, dramatic economic and institutional changes may not lead instantly to new behaviors, because young Easterners may have lacked role models among their parents' and teachers' generation for adaptive responses to formerly unknown opportunities and obstacles. Furthermore, individual differences in personal values, motivations, agency beliefs, etc., may also play an important role in determining how young adults react to social change. In sum, there are a multitude of possible mediating mechanisms (e.g., unemployment, further training, personal attributes, family relationships) that explain how macro level changes are linked to several types of individual-level changes concerning the actual timing of transitions to adulthood.

Ecological niche

The particular ecological niche in which transitions take place is also important to consider. When we examined how the timing of getting married and having children potentially changed during unification, we found that the impact of unification was quite "selective" in a sense. For instance, it was particularly Eastern women with lower education who delayed marriage and family formation, whereas women from the West and men in general maintained their sequence.

It has been suggested that females in the East were the hardest hit after unification. The reduced availability of daycare and supportive family-leave policies, lack of trust in the future, and unemployment (which hit women especially hard), created a situation where women were much less willing to take on the responsibilities inherent to marriage and parenthood. These findings indicate that some individuals, especially those within an ecological niche defined by limited resources, may be particularly vulnerable to the impact of profound societal changes.

Proximity of transition to social change structure

In a recent study, we demonstrate that only those transitions are affected which have a proximal, direct relation to the opportunity structures changed during unification. Again, the two different types of transitions we focused on were the achievement of financial self-support and leaving the parental home. The achievement of financial self-support represents a transition that can be conceptualized as being rather institutionally-bound—meaning, that its timing tends to be more heavily regulated by broader macro-level structures such as the educational system. It was precisely this system that underwent a complete transformation in the East as a result of unification. Leaving the parental home, however, is a more private life-course transition. Consequently, personal experiences, rather than the policies and structure of societal institutions, may play a greater role in the timing of this transition.

The findings indicate that specific unification-related events, such as experiencing unemployment, terminating an

occupational training program, or attending a retraining program, were linked to the developmental task of becoming financially self-supportive. These particular events, then, are examples of circumstances that mediated the changed social conditions with individual timetables. However, concerning the leaving home transition, the linkages are not proximal and specific enough. For a more private transition, such as home leaving, experiences while growing up (e.g., experiencing a parental divorce or engaging in deviant behaviour as an adolescent), were more useful in predicting the timing of this transition. In sum, timetables of transitions are prone to change only when a change in social conditions has a direct, proximal relationship to the particular transition in question. We believe that this specificity sheds light on the nature of the processes involved.

Where to go from here?

There is still much to discover concerning what social change will ultimately mean for German young adults and their transition to adulthood. We know very little about long-term effects, which include potential maladjustments that may emerge many years or even decades later than the time span immediately following unification. Gathering follow-up data would be a fruitful next step.

In our research we have also discovered that social change certainly does not affect all processes related to developmental transitions. For example, young adults who experienced a parental divorce tended to move out of their parent's home at an earlier age compared to their counterparts whose parents did not divorce. However, this finding applied only to young adults in the West, and not in the East, in 1991. Five years later, in 1996, this finding (divorce playing a role in leaving home for

Western but not Eastern youth) was replicated. The regional difference could have been due to several reasons. In the East, divorce and living in a single-parent family were not stigmatised (partially because divorce—historically and contemporarily—was much more common in the East), and were considered as acceptable alternative living patterns. Moreover, strong childcare policies and youth programs lightened some of the burdens on divorced parents; for example, by allowing single parents to continue working so they were not financially devastated. Thus, the adverse effects of parental divorce was mitigated in the East and did not increase the "risk" of leaving the home earlier for Eastern young adults. In sum, it appears that some developmental processes are rather resistant to change even under changed societal circumstances. Identifying transition processes that consistently hold across context and time is worthy of further investigation.

Although the changes concerning the timetables we noted thus far were rather focused and limited, we also want to acknowledge that the particular circumstance of the transition *itself* underwent change. For instance, the new economic conditions played a rather immediate role in the occupational *choices* of young people in the East above and beyond the timing effect. The structural changes that expanded job and career opportunities allowed young people to choose occupations that were not possible before. Thus, social change had an impact on the *content* as well as the timing of certain transitions to adulthood.

Finally, we do not know whether the results can be generalised beyond the particular German situation to other transformation countries. It is possible that our results are confined to the particular circumstances of Germany. Nonetheless, further research is needed to test this. A country that has recently been in the news spotlight is Korea. With unification of North and South Korea as a distinct possibility, social scientists there may also have the opportunity to investigate the workings of social change on individual's lives. This will indeed make for an interesting comparison.

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The Development of Political Views and Civic Identities

Constance Flanagan
e-mail: cflanagan@psu.edu

With Luba Botcheva, Jennifer Bowes, Beno Csapo,
Britta Jonsson, Petr Macek, & Elena Sheblanova

The period between adolescence and adulthood is an ideal time in life to take stock: of oneself and of one's society. The former has had the lion's share of research, with attention to

the educational, vocational, and family formation decisions young people face. But the latter is focal as well if for no other reason than that, when facing choices, one faces the opportunities and constraints of the social order in which those choices are made. According to Mannheim (1952), it is during the transition to adulthood that youth experience a fresh contact with their society. Not yet saddled with responsibilities, not yet fully integrated into social roles, they are free to explore possibilities before setting down roots, free to experiment, search, and define their relationship to the social order.

Young people's views of their social order, or what we have dubbed the 'social contract', have been the focus of our comparative project. More than 5500 participants, ranging from 12–19 year olds, from seven countries, participated in the 1995 survey. Four of these nations (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Russia) have themselves been in transition—from command to market economies and from one party to multi-party democratic rule. The other three (Australia, Sweden, and the United States) are relatively stable democratic polities with market economies in place, but varying in the role that the state plays in providing social welfare. We were interested both in adolescents' attitudes about macro-level phenomena as well as in the relationship between these attitudes and more proximal experiences and beliefs. Thus, the survey included measures of such things as attitudes about the proper role of the state, perceptions about market justice and political justice, as well as items tapping personal value orientations (e.g., the degree to which self interest or social responsibility figured in individuals' value priorities), and individuals' own experiences (e.g., engagement in community or extracurricular activities at school).

By the social contract, we refer to the bargain that inheres between persons and their society and binds members of a polity together. Like other aspects of social cognition, we contend that these views are rooted in social relations and that, in the course of growing up, children construct an understanding of their social order and of the principles that make it "work." Borrowing from Easton's (1953) claim that



A teacher interacting with an engaged group of students in her classroom in the U.S. Across countries, reports of student solidarity and of nurturant school environments were more common among younger as compared with older adolescents.

politics is the authoritative allocation of values, we have examined how practices and norms in developmental settings reflect the principles of a social order. For example, in the capitalist nations, adolescents felt that it was appropriate to pay children for doing household chores, while youth from nations that were just beginning to adopt market principles said it was not. The perceived function of chores varied as well. Americans and Australians said that by doing chores children would learn to be responsible for themselves, whereas youth from nations with a strong social welfare contract said that doing chores taught children responsibility for the group (Bowes, Flanagan, & Taylor, 2000).

Ideas about fairness also reflected the economic principles and social policies of nations. Youth in the transitional societies were more likely to base their decisions about distributive justice on an individual's needs and to empathise with those whose performance was compromised by childcare responsibilities. In these societies, childcare was an entitlement provided by the state. Youth in the capitalist nations were more likely to attend to individual effort and to feel that equity was the fairest principle for allocating resources. They were not oblivious to people's needs, but were more sympathetic to individuals who tried but failed because they lacked ability.

Thus, their ideas about the deservedness of needy individuals were consonant with the principles of an equal opportunity society, where the playing field should be level (Flanagan & Bowes, 2000).

Political and psychological implications of the transition to adulthood

Many of the youth in our study were too young for the transition to adulthood. However, comparing the views of the 16–19 year olds who were approaching the transition with their younger compatriots suggests that some increase in cynicism may be an inevitable cost of a fresh contact with society at this stage. For example, in six countries (with Sweden the only exception), the older group was less likely to believe that they lived in a just society where opportunities for success were open to anyone who was willing to work hard. In all seven countries, the view of the state as a nurturing parent that should provide for her citizens, to borrow Lakoff's (1996) metaphor, declined with age. Not surprisingly, American youth were by far the least likely to hold this view. But the age trends across countries suggest that the political naiveté of the early adolescent years gives way during the transition as one discovers that the system is not perfect. Whereas younger adolescents can afford to be insulated from socioeconomic and political realities, older youth cannot. They have to hold down jobs and decide about directions in their lives. They may experience less nurturing, more competitive treatment as well. In our study, for example, the older youth were less likely to report that their schools were democratic environments or that their communities were places where people cared about and looked out for one another.

In terms of personal goals, commitments to the public interest or common good such as improving the community, serving society, or sustaining the environment, declined with age in the three stable polities. No such trends were

found in the transitional societies. But in all seven countries, commitments to public goals were far higher than were commitments to politics, a result that echoes other studies of this generation of youth. Typically, young adults are less interested in politics than are older adults. However, despite rising levels of education across the industrialised world, interest in politics is declining in younger cohorts. Trends among American adolescents and young adults point to increasing materialism, declining levels of social trust, and weakening ties to the political system (Rahn & Transue, 1998). This generation of young adults is cynical about government and has more confidence in their ability to effect social change via volunteer work in their communities.

Associational networks and civil society

Such trends increase the importance of young adult involvement in non-government organisations, community institutions, and extracurricular activities, which provide the social integuments of strong civil societies (Putnam, 2000). Although youth have been neglected in most discussions of Civil Society, it is the very properties of a strong civil society (trust, reciprocity, a dense network of community institutions, and caring adults) that promote their integration into the broader polity and increase their identification with the

common good. Retrospective studies of Americans find that adults who are engaged in the civic affairs of their communities were active in extracurricular activities and youth organisations (Verba, Scholzman, & Brady, 1995). The nature of this relationship needs more exploration but we believe that experiences of connectedness, of group solidarity, and social trust are implicated. The young people in our study were more committed to the common good (serving their country, improving their society, sustaining the environment) when student solidarity and caring were high at their school (Flanagan, Bowes, Jonsson, Csapo, & Sheblanova, 1998).

Trust is the social glue of a civil society and trust results when people have opportunities to get to know one another and to work toward common goals. With this in mind, we asked the young people in our study to tell us about their involvement in various activities that would connect them to others—at school, in their town, or in faith-based institutions. Compared to their compatriots who were uninvolved in such groups, those who were involved reported higher levels of social trust, altruism, commitments to the common good, and endorsements of the rights of immigrants to full inclusion in their society. In contrast, the uninvolved were more likely to endorse materialist values and self-interest.

To say that the institutions of Civil Society are a social glue does not imply that they maintain the status quo. Indeed, during the era when political parties were non-existent in Central and Eastern Europe, people managed to publicly challenge the state and voice dissent about the quality of their lives through environmental and other civic groups. And, as in most historical movements, youth played a prominent role. In fact, the transition to adulthood is an ideal stage to participate in this sector because identity and the search for ideologies are focal. In the life span, these years appear to serve as a political benchmark for defining

who we are and what we stand for (Schuman & Scott, 1989; Stewart & Healy, 1989).

Social change and the social contract

A primary objective of our study was to examine the implications of political and economic changes in the transitional nations and we found that perceptions of the changes varied for different groups of youth. For example, females and older adolescents were more concerned than their male and younger peers that economic disparities were increasing in their society. Youth, who endorsed liberal values and believed in the logic of market principles, i.e., that hard work and initiative would be rewarded, also felt that poverty was a just desert, part of the natural order. In contrast, youth who endorsed socialist values, i.e., that state policies should equalize outcomes, were concerned that disparities were increasing in their society (Macek et al., 1998).

Our data were collected at only one point in time and 1995 was a relatively early point in the transition process. Changes in the institutions and practices of these nations will occur over time. But even in these early years, religious and other civic institutions have replaced organisations such as the Young Pioneers to assume a greater role in the socialization of youth. Likewise, formal education has become more critical to economic success and thus choices made at the age of 14 about the kind of secondary school (vocational or gymnasium) one will attend have greater life long implications. And in an increasingly global environment, opportunities for youth at the transition to adulthood will, in part, be determined by decisions made beyond the borders of nation-states, such as those made about a nation's membership in the European Union.

Including civic and political indicators in research on the transition to adulthood

Research on the transition to adulthood often reflects our disciplinary biases. Typically, civic or political indicators are missing from studies with a human development focus. At the same time, work by political scientists and sociologists turns a lens on the political views of young adults and compares younger with older cohorts but provides sparse information about developmental correlates that might explain these views. This is unfortunate given the social issues future generations will face and in light of research indicating that the transition to adulthood is a politically defining period of life. Not only is it a time for personal growth, democracies may also benefit if young adults take the time to reflect on their lives and their societies:

To be sure, those who have had a youth—who have seriously questioned their relationship to the community that exists, who have a self and a set of commitments independent of their social role—are never likely to be simple patriots, unquestioning conformists, or blind loyalists to the status quo (Keniston, 1968, p. 272).

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The Indian Social Reality of Passage to Adulthood

Suman Verma
 Department of Child Development, Government
 Home Science College, Chandigarh, India
 e-mail: sverma@glide.net.in

In multi-cultural India, the connotation of "transition to adulthood" varies widely. Individual and socio-cultural forces shape trajectories followed during the transition from adolescence to adulthood. Culture, gender, level of education and family background are qualities that affect the opportunities and behaviour of individuals, their attitudes, and future life perspective. In this process of transition, the three major areas that I focus on are family, education, and work. Several forces impinge on these three areas and contribute to reshaping as the individual moves through young adulthood. This article highlights the impact that these forces have in charting the adolescent's journey into adulthood, and how, if at all, the young adults are prepared for full-blown adulthood.

Cultural notions

The psycho-social experience encountered by Indian children in the process of growing up is governed by the primacy of family and *jati* (caste) relationships. As Kakar (1996) elaborates, "from the beginning, participation and acceptance in this world entail strict observance of a traditional social order and the subordination of individual preferences and ambitions to the welfare of the extended family and *jati* communities" (p. 126). The notion of stages in life is inherent in Indian tradition. The Hindu model of *asramadharma* conceptualises human development in a succession of stages wherein developmental progress requires acquisition of each of the critical tasks of each phase in the desired sequence and time frame. The human life span is generally divided into childhood (*balyavastha*), youth (*yuvaavastha*), middle age (*praudhavastha*), and old age (*vridhavastha*). Youth or *brahmacharya* is the stage of apprenticeship, "characterised by industry and acquisition of competence, to be followed by the stage of the householder or *grahasthya*, equivalent to Erickson's stage of young adulthood and characterised by achievement of intimacy, gratification of sexual urges and acquisition of wealth" (Saraswathi, 1999, p. 214). Age as well as certain rites of passage are used as the criteria for identifying a person as in a particular stage of life. These *rites de passage*, as Gokulanathan (1976) observes, minimise the anxiety and conflicts which adolescents experience during the process of transition to adulthood and act as psychologically stabilising influences during periods of developmental change.

According to *Arthashastra*, the ancient Indian treatise on economics, a boy comes of age at 16 while a girl does so when she is 12. The following verse from *Bhagwata Purana*, a tenth-century treatise, finds its echo in many regional languages: "A son should be doted on for the first five years, he should be disciplined for the next ten years, when he is 16 he should be treated like a friend" (Dube, 1981, p. 187). This suggests that the age of 16 provides a cut-off point between childhood and youth and it also reflects the appropriate behaviour expected of a boy at different ages.



An Indian youth who works as a "rag picker" sifting through garbage to redeem small items to sell for menial pay. Young adults who lack education and related opportunities tend to experience a more difficult transition to adulthood.

Socio-economic and cultural changes have resulted in changes in family structure, life styles and life experiences. However, the core elements of the Indian traditional culture persist in the form of religious ceremonies, rituals, and social controls, with interdependent family patterns giving high priority to collectivist values (Sinha, 1988). In the patriarchal structure of the family, roles and responsibilities and control of resources are largely determined by gender, age, and generation (Desai, 1994). Attainment of puberty confers maturity on a girl. For girls, the period between the onset of puberty and marriage is viewed as some sort of liminal period during which the girl needs special protection. This is the period when she is capable of becoming, but must not become, a mother (Dube, 1981). A *rite de passage* known as the *kettu kaliyanam* (pseudo marriage ceremony) is conducted in Kerala, South India when girls attain puberty. This brings about changes in the dress code, greater restrictions in mingling with the opposite gender, and assumption of responsibility in childcare, cooking, and housekeeping. Boys this age are initiated into study of the scriptures, administration, and the skills required for adult life (Gokulanathan, 1976).

Demarcation of life stages according to age in no way negates the experience of continuity. On the contrary, continuity is built into the Indian way of life. In traditional societies, training in most skills begins much before adolescence, be it in music, dance, weaving, pottery, or other traditional occupations. Small boys are sent away as apprentices or taught at home. Various studies on rural, urban poor, and tribal communities indicate that there is considerable convergence in the ways that the scope of children's activities is progressively widened, the kind of assistance that children provide to parents, and the overall role of children in the household economy (Anandalakshmy & Bajaj, 1981; Dube, 1951; Saraswathi & Dutta, 1988).

Although boys and girls in the 12–14 year old age group have acquired the capability of doing most adult work, they are not considered adults. They do not get the authority and decision-making powers of adults, any more than they get control of their or the family's resources (Dube, 1981). Deference to the family hierarchy and power structure is paramount (Kakar, 1978).

The developmental transition process

Indian society is in transit, with the dwindling size of landholdings leading to an exodus to urban areas. Thriving democracies, the trend towards greater education of women, an increasing general awareness of public events driven by the free media, and migration to the urban centres are realities, as are the consequent changes in social values. Joint families of the past are slowly disappearing. Yet, the family's role in the growth process of adolescents remains intact. Western models of adolescence emphasise the process of disengagement and re-negotiation of relationships with parents as a normative pattern and a central developmental task. However, evidence suggests that cultural changes in India (especially in the middle class) have not altered adolescents' family relations "to include the processes of individuation, daily disengagement that occurs in the West" (Larson, Verma & Dworkin, in preparation). In her review paper on the nature of Indian adolescence,

Saraswathi (1999) argues that the process of transition to adulthood is gendered and class based, and that there is greater continuity between childhood and adulthood in traditional settings, especially where there is similarity in life course and continuity in expectations from childhood to adulthood. However, this transition is marked by a discontinuity between childhood and adulthood in the contemporary Indian society, especially in the case of the middle and upper class adolescents. Some exemplars of the continuity and discontinuity experiences in adolescence based on gender and class are given below.

This experience of child-adult continuity is most clearly evident in girls. The girl child, cutting across class-barriers, is socialised early in childhood into the role of wife, mother, and householder (Saraswathi, 1999). Urban-rural differences persist in the level of education and age of marriage. Overprotection and restrictions make her setting extremely hierarchical. Her parents define her boundaries when she is young, her husband and his parents do it when she is an adult. Autonomy, however limited, comes along with authority, in the areas of home management and child-rearing (Ramu, 1988). Those girls who have access to education and work opportunities grow into women with dual roles and responsibilities.

The "continuity" experience in moving from childhood to adulthood is visible in boys in families involved in traditional occupations. Young adults here will have been apprenticed into the trade or occupation from early childhood. These families tend to question the relevance of formal education in the trade or occupation that the young adults will eventually enter (Saraswathi & Dutta, 1988). This attitude denies the young adults formal education and acquisition of contemporary skills, and therefore acts as an impediment to them breaking new ground, and tapping fresh opportunities.

The fragmentation of landholdings and declining return on investments in agriculture has forced sections of the young male adults in rural India to look for alternatives in urban settings, with education as the ladder to a prosperous future. But inability to find jobs, suitable ones at that, results in frustration and alienation. Unable to lead a normal, independent life of an adult, by working, marrying and raising a family, they are easily exploitable.

Youth who have been denied access to higher education, on account of family background and constraints on their resources have a more difficult path to adulthood before them. The inability to find work, particularly at a meaningful level and wage, (because they have not acquired the requisite education and skills), leaves them with menial and dead-end jobs and low wages. The adults in their community are likely to be unemployed. Some of them would be deprived of worthy role models, resulting in them being thrown into a well of vice and crime. Though not monetarily capable of supporting a family, marriage often works as a vent for their frustration, and the new member is seen, not as one more mouth to be fed, but as having a pair of hands to work—albeit in menial jobs. Child labour telescopes into unskilled labour in the young adults. Adolescents who are disconnected from family, school, work, community, or plans for the future face a similar situation.

In contrast, for the middle and the upper strata of society, the path to adulthood is not generally marked by continuity. It is a mosaic of experiences and experimentation. Transition to adulthood has changed with the social changes, particularly affecting the urban, educated, middle and upper middle class. Modernisation has altered the structure of these families. Life styles have changed, as have the methods of parenting, making for greater democracy within the family. Gender sensitisation has played its role, resulting in a somewhat more egalitarian approach when dealing with children. The transition to adulthood is relatively easy for the college bound youth of this category, given the resources and alternatives available to them. These youth consciously postpone marriage and child bearing, preferring to acquire specialised education and to look for lucrative jobs and satisfying careers (Saraswathi, 1999). But their path is not devoid of stress and strain, in the form of great parental ambitions in a highly competitive academic and job environment. Often they find that their education is not relevant to the jobs available. Their search for greener pastures takes them out of their hometown or country, where their adult life begins from scratch in terms of adjusting to the changed socio-cultural environs.

Despite the pressures of growing up, countless Indian adolescents emerge relatively unscathed from the crucial years between childhood and adulthood. Many emerge even stronger for having negotiated dangers and temptations and many more—rich and poor—emerge sound in body and mind because they have been guided and supported by caring adults at home, in school, in youth organisations, and within the community. Strong family ties and social support system provide emotional strength and act as a buffer in crisis situations. Millions of these adolescents know how to take advantage of the choices open to them and turn them into opportunities for healthy adulthood.

Challenges of the 21st Century

The post-liberalisation phase of the Indian economy has brought with it new challenges as well as new opportunities. The existing patterns and processes of skill-acquisition at a young age, however, no more lead to satisfying jobs as adults. The education, competencies, and resources required in a globally competitive era are of a much higher order, putting many sections of young adults at a disadvantage. High population growth has added to the competition and unemployment rate. Individuals, families, and societies have to tap resources beyond their confines. Networking and reaching out have suddenly become more important. All this contributes to a painful process of transition from adolescence to adulthood.

There have been considerable changes in the opportunity structure in India in the last two decades (Parikh, 1997), with widespread economic and educational development, extension of access to education for females and those from lower social strata, increase in socio-economic measures linked to health, education, reduction of gender-gap in access to rights and opportunities, and, to an extent, employment. Although these changes have not substantially eroded the opportunities of the higher socio-economic classes, they have not greatly enhanced them. But they have

Child-adult continuity is most clearly evident in girls

severely restricted the opportunities of people with limited or no economic resources. Some youth still have good chances of succeeding in work and family formation, others, particularly the lower socio-economic strata, face an uphill task. Their ability to succeed in work and family formation is as important to the nation, as it is to them. If success comes only to a minuscule minority, it is the country's loss.

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COMMENTARY: Historical Moments, Culture, and Development from Adolescence to Adulthood

Lorrie Sippola
University of Saskatchewan, Canada
e-mail: Lorrie.Sippola@usask.ca

As I sit down to write this commentary, I am surrounded by the news of the death of Pierre Elliot Trudeau, former Prime Minister of Canada. Accolades pour in from around the world—for the man if not for his politics. For better or for worse, depending upon one's political views, Mr. Trudeau had a profound impact on Canadian society, particularly in shaping our national identity. Although a consummate statesman, he redefined the role. He was non-conforming and irreverent; performing pirouettes behind visiting royalty, challenging the press to "watch me" during the FLQ crisis, and making obscene gestures from a train window. However, throughout his years in politics and even in retirement, he was uncompromising in his vision for Canada. For many of us, he epitomised the Canadian ideal—confident, articulate, sophisticated, intellectual, and fiercely independent while maintaining a firm commitment to the duties of Canadian citizenship.

Insights into Mr. Trudeau's developmental experiences during the transition to adulthood derived from the numerous essays emerging in the national newspapers provide the context for this commentary on the essays by Silbereisen, Flanagan, and Verma. In this commentary, I will focus on three major issues emerging from these papers.

Markers of the transition into adulthood

The articles in this series reflect the challenges inherent in defining markers of the transition into adulthood—a task made even more complex by the consideration of the socio-cultural context in which this transition occurs. Two different perspectives are presented. Silbereisen, Verma, and their colleagues focus attention on readily observable indicators of the transition, such as rites of passage, financial independence, marriage, or childbearing. In contrast, Flanagan and colleagues suggest that developmental research should focus on understanding civic or political indicators of this transition. Although the markers identified by Silbereisen and Verma are appealing from a methodological perspective, Flanagan's description of the quest for understanding of self in relation to society is conceptually appealing. Reminiscent of Erikson's theory, Flanagan suggests that the transition into adulthood involves exploration of political beliefs resulting in personal growth and development. The result of an active exploration of civic and political identity during this transition period is the development of "...a self and a set of commitments independent of...social role..."; this development is viewed as beneficial for the community and for the individual.

Flanagan argues persuasively that the transition into adulthood is a "politically defining period of life". In the period prior to marriage, childbearing, and commitment to career, the individual has relative freedom from responsibility and has acquired the intellectual resources to engage in active exploration of beliefs and values. This exploration may provide the foundation for future engagement in the political process and for development of civic responsibility. As a young man, Mr. Trudeau spent several years travelling and exploring different cultures before returning to Canada to immerse himself in politics. These years helped Mr. Trudeau refine his sense of self as a citizen and had a profound impact on his policies regarding multiculturalism in Canadian society. Thus, to understand Trudeau's commitment to Canada, one must understand the impact of these

experiences on his development. However, understanding the political and civic indicators of the transition to adulthood called for by Flanagan present a greater methodological challenge for developmental researchers, in contrast to research which examines the correlates between socio-cultural contexts and more easily observable markers such as marriage and parenting (which occurred much later in life for Mr. Trudeau). In spite of the challenges, Flanagan's approach provides a rich, textured analysis of an important developmental period. One hopes that they adopt a longitudinal design for their study.

The cultural/historical moment: Contexts for the transition into adulthood.

The articles reviewed highlight the challenges inherent in studying the impact of sociocultural context at particular historical moments. Whether it is a major political event, such as the fall of the Berlin wall, or more gradual changes, such as increasing educational opportunities for women, historical events impact the cultural beliefs and values that influence development. However, the nature of developmental research is such that the socio-cultural context is often confounded with the historical moment. With the rapid changes occurring in Eastern block countries, an examination of both the historical moment and the cultural context has only recently been clearly evident in research. While this research makes an important contribution to our understanding of human development, a more thorough analysis of the historical mechanisms influencing socio-cultural and individual change is required. Thus, to understand Mr. Trudeau's development during the transition into adulthood, one must understand not just the cultural context for his development (i.e., born to an Anglophone mother and a Francophone father in Quebec) but also how the historical moment of his coming-of-age (i.e., World War II) influenced the life choices available to him and the choices he selected. As implied by Flanagan, this understanding will require greater interdisciplinarity in developmental research.

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Direction of influence: Conditions for change

Implicit in the articles reviewed is the notion of bi-directional developmental influences. Verma and Flanagan suggest that opportunities provided to youth of various cultures at a particular historical moment provide the foundation upon which the individual can influence concurrent and future historical events. These events will, in turn, influence further individual development. Again, the transition to adulthood may be a unique period for these processes. The relative freedom from responsibility and accountability inherent in this transition period may combine with a strong sense of idealism and conviction to beliefs. This merging may then provide the impetus for involvement in social and political activities, enabling the individual to influence social and political institutions. In turn, these experiences are likely to contribute to the development of the beliefs and values of the adult. So, for example, while the foundation for Mr. Trudeau's values and beliefs may have been laid in a somewhat privileged childhood and adolescence, his travels and experiences during the transition to adulthood provided important opportunities for involvement in world affairs. These opportunities contributed to the development of Trudeau's vision and to the security in his beliefs to endure the trials of a public, political life. These were the tools needed to effect the change in Canadian society that has had a profound influence on the development of numerous individuals following Trudeau.

COMMENTARY: Can Adolescents Construct their Life Transition?

Keiko Takahashi
Department of Psychology, University of the Sacred Heart,
Tokyo, Japan
e-mail: keiko-ta@fb3.so-net.ne.jp

The three papers offer a remarkable opportunity to revisit the transitional shift from adolescence to adulthood through socio-cultural lenses. The evidence described in the papers consistently replicates earlier findings that this developmental transition is definitely linked to social context, including the historical-cultural background and economic status of individuals (Elder, Modell & Parke, 1993). In this commentary, I will focus on the following three issues that the authors have inspired.

What changes in the transition?

The central theme in the transition from adolescence to adulthood can be universally defined as the development toward becoming a mature adult who has a sense of individual freedom and also an awareness of responsibility as a member of society. For establishment of the psychological freedom and the exercising of societal responsibility, adolescents and young adults in the transition prepare for achieving physical maturity, reorganising and enriching knowledge of themselves and society, and establishing their own living place both physically and financially. In order to go through this life transition in a valid, lasting way, adolescents, by themselves without their parents to shield them or act as a filter, must confront a variety of constraints including biological, cognitive, socio-emotional, and environmental.

Especially relevant, as the present authors clearly suggest, are the economic and political conditions that surround the youth, and the morals and customs adhered to in their family that accelerate or slow down the pace of the transitional shift. For instance, we learn that economic affluence definitely helps adolescents to experience the transition, by offering chances to attend schools, to be free of money problems, and to leave the parental house. Even in a society that has maintained a traditional family and social system, such as India, educated middle- and upper-middle-class parents offer resources to their adolescents to attend college and to promote their independence.

In this vein, I believe it is important to know what kinds of socio-cultural conditions can guarantee human rights among adolescents, particularly adolescents, in any society, who are experiencing life's disadvantages. For example, the present papers suggest that education can open the door to freedom for girls who have been commonly trapped by a traditional system and morality. We need further research to understand why and how education can have such power for women and for the so-called minorities in society.

Adolescents as active agents in the transition

For developmental psychologists, the most important research question in the transition will be how adolescents construct their own way of living through interactions with historical and economic conditions. In other words, although socio-cultural factors will surely constrain the developmental shifts, each adolescent need not be so easily overwhelmed or swayed by those factors. Instead, through coping with various constraints, each person somehow fulfils her or

his desires and in so doing actualises youth culture, thereby becoming a functioning young adult.

However, the present papers have not focused on the active role of adolescents in the transition. I am curious, for example, how adolescents in East Germany are coping with political and economic changes and construct their own living style, although Silbereisen and his colleagues have been mostly concerned with the physical and economic shifts among adolescents after the unification. Moreover, I wonder how Indian adolescents who are living in the caste system establish their independence. Based on the idea that adolescents are highly motivated to become independent from others, if researchers in India can cast light on each adolescent's endeavour for autonomy, they will be able to document how their adolescents establish independence through their negotiation with socio-cultural constraints.

Adolescents as future world citizens

Flanagan and her colleagues remind us that adolescents are situated in an ideal stage to develop societal understanding, because 'identity and the search for ideologies are focal' in this kind of development. Consistent with previous research (Furth, 1980; Jahoda, 1981; Takahashi & Hatano, 1994), their paper indicates, however, that adolescents have limited societal knowledge. Their careful analysis of how young people are so naive in their development is very suggestive. As it is assumed that ignorance of and indifference to politics among young people will be derived from their limited chances of everyday participation in society, some researchers have tried educational intervention and showed its effectiveness in promoting understanding of social systems (e.g., Holden & Clough, 1998; Youniss & Yates, 1997). On the planet Earth, the most urgent issue will be whether we can cultivate a sense of global citizenship among the youth, the future world citizens.

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COMMENTARY: Creating Democracies: Socio-Cultural Contexts for Adolescent Development

Anne C. Petersen
W. K. Kellogg Foundation
e-mail: anne.petersen@wkkf.org

Times of social change provide an opportunity to accelerate movement in particular directions, especially because they have amplified impact on adolescents, those who are about to become adults. It is important, therefore, for societies to be aware of the direction of

social change in terms of its impact on the orientation of adolescents, to learn what kind of future leaders and citizens they are creating. Momentum in directions that will not sustain society is obviously a risk to nations.

These three articles focus on the effects of social change, or more broadly, the socio-cultural context, on adolescent development. Because adolescence is the phase of life in which the developing individual is expected to learn about roles to take in the society, development during this period is thought to be more responsive to the socio-cultural context than is development in other age groups (e.g., Mannheim, 1952; Petersen, 1998). Or, as Flanagan and colleagues describe it, "Not yet saddled with responsibilities, not yet fully integrated into social roles, they are free to explore possibilities before setting down roots, free to experiment, search, and define their relationship to the social order (p. 4, this issue)."

Each article in some way demonstrates that social change does indeed affect adolescent development. For example, Verma describes the effects of reduced opportunity to inherit land on the transition to adulthood of young men in India, leading to unemployment for many lower class youth. For middle and upper class youth in India, social change requires higher educational attainment, that may result in occupational opportunities away from home, and perhaps in another country, as well as to delayed marriage and parenting. In another article, Silbereisen and colleagues describe their findings on the effects of the integration of formerly East and West Germany on the nature of transitions to adulthood of former East German adolescents. Their results demonstrate that social structures can provide or limit opportunities. As an example of a previous social structure that provided opportunities, affordable day care and supportive family-leave policies afforded earlier marriage among young women from the East before integration compared to after integration. As an example of limitation on opportunity, scarce available housing in the East before integration served to keep young people in their parental homes longer compared to after integration.

Each article also sends loud alarms, in this writer's view, about the need for each society, or more specifically, the adults in a society to pay attention to and shape, if needed, the experiences that adolescents can have as they explore the opportunities of adulthood. The article of Flanagan and colleagues especially clarified the risks to a society of not attending to its own future. In their study of adolescents' views of the social order in seven countries, four in transition (Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Russia) and three relatively stable democracies (Australia, Sweden, and the United States), the authors find increased cynicism of older adolescents relative to their younger counterparts about their society's social contract. The authors conclude, "This generation of young adults is cynical about government and has more confidence in their ability to affect social change via volunteer work in their communities (p. 5). But they go on to note the research that shows that adults who are engaged in the civic affairs of their communities were active in youth organisations and extra-curricular activities as adolescents (Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). Flanagan and colleagues found that those adolescents who were involved with groups connecting themselves to others in school, their communities, or faith-based institutions, "reported higher levels of social trust, altruism, commitments to the common good, and endorsements of the rights of immigrants to full inclusion in their society (p. 5, this issue)." Those young people who were uninvolved with such groups were more likely to endorse self-interest and materialistic values.

Continued on page 14

Scenes from the 16th Biennial Meeting of ISSBD, Beijing, July 11-14, 2000



A short reception before the Opening Ceremony between the host, Professor Zhihong Xu, President of Peking University (sixth from left), Dr Quicheng Jing, the former Vice President of the International Congress of Psychology, (seventh from left), Professor Zhaolan Meng of Peking University (far right) and various members of the Executive Committee of ISSBD.

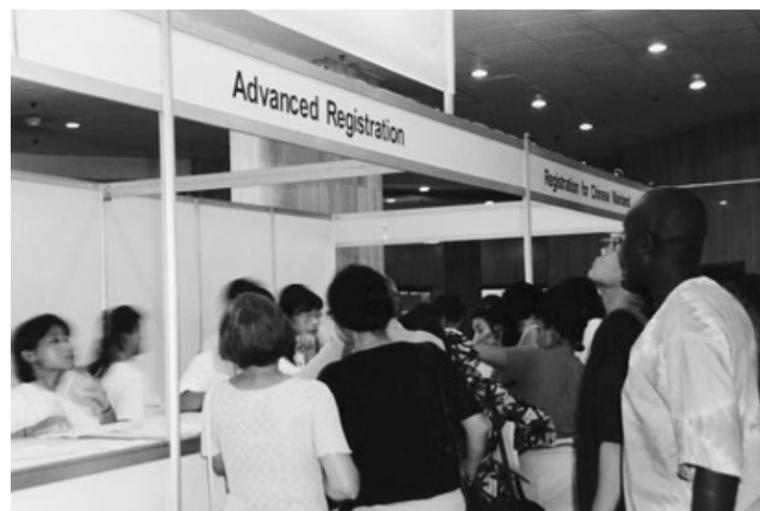


The Opening Ceremony of the Conference



South African delegates meeting in the hall, from left to right are: Professor Debo Akande, Potchefstroom University, and Professor Osaggie, Vaal School of Behavioral Science.

Speakers from left to right at the Opening Ceremony of the 16th Biennial Meeting of ISSBD, Beijing, July 11-14, 2000 are: Professor Quicheng Jing, Chair, Institute of Psychology, Chinese Academy of Sciences; Professor Zhihong Xu, President of Peking University; Dr Zhihai Chang, Vice Director of the China Association for Science and Technology; Professor Kenneth Rubin, President of ISSBD; Professor Zhaolan Meng, General Chair of the ISSBD Beijing Meetings, Department of Psychology, Peking University.



Delegates registering for the Meeting.



The Conference Reception, from left to right are: Rainer Silbereisen, Eva Schmitt-Rodermund, Zhihong Xu, and Zhaolan Meng.



Delegates to the Conference visiting The Forbidden City, from left to right: are Paul Hastings (Concordia University, Canada), David Caranfa (University of Maryland), Charissa Cheah (Yale University), Julie Wojlawowicz (University of Maryland), Miao Li (Beijing Normal University), and Amy Kennedy (University of Maryland).



Professor John Hagen, Department of Psychology, University of Michigan, talking with Professor Zhaolan Meng, Department of Psychology, Peking University.



Professor Nandini Manjrekar, (centre), Maharaja Sayajirao, University of Baroda, talking with colleagues.

Continued from page 11

If we believe that it is important to produce a next generation who will sustain and even repair the social fabric, we must provide opportunities for young people to give service to others. Service learning involves volunteer activities that are accompanied by an educational experience that teaches young people about what they can expect from giving service. Research on service learning demonstrates that it may lead to self-enhancement and career exploration, while increasing understanding of self and world, as well as enhancing appreciation of volunteering, and providing constructive use of time, away from potential dangers (Stukas, Clary, & Snyder, 1999). Thus, there are many benefits of giving service, especially when accompanied by an educational experience, beyond the development of a habit of volunteering to enhance the common good.

The current research on service learning and developing young people who will contribute to civic society is yet incomplete. And we need to learn what can be done to enhance youth trust in government. But there is enough evidence now to conclude that democracies may not thrive with generations of young people who are materialistic and self-focused. Without critical masses of young people who learn to contribute to the common good as adolescents, we are likely to lack the adults needed for sustaining civic society essential to the democratic functioning of nations.

As put so eloquently by Federico Mayor, Former Director General of UNICEF, "The world we leave our children depends on the children we leave our world." (Mayor, 1997).

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Commentary: Changing Opportunity Structures: Changing Identities?

John Bynner
Centre for Longitudinal Studies, Institute of Education,
London
e-mail: eks135@cls.ioe.ac.uk

Laboratories are rare in studies of young people. The closest we usually get to them is when the opportunity arises to compare and contrast young people's experiences between different societies and at times of social change. In their different ways, the three papers exploit such 'natural laboratories' admirably, telling us about both the continuities of transition processes and the changes that are occurring in them in response to social change.

An important theme to emerge, first introduced by Silbereisen, Juzng, and Reitzle; is that whether or not transition

processes are affected by social change depends on whether they are *proximal* in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) sense, to the *opportunity structures* that are changing. Such changes may be part of long standing evolutionary social processes or reflect more radical ruptures with the past of the kind associated with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Here the broad divide is between the opportunity structures proximal to entry to employment as opposed to those identified with the more distal biologically driven move to independence and family formation; though both types of transition are of course related.

With respect to the transition to work, in Germany, Silbereisen et al. report post-unification opportunities related to the changing labour market and the impact of education on entry to it. The loss of the command economy and the 'social guarantees' of communism, especially in relation to provision of childcare, also affected labour market opportunities, especially for women. This, in turn, affected the transition to an independent family life, but more indirectly, and generally lead to postponement of the commitments bound up with partnerships and parenting. Similar effects were evident in the societies reviewed by Flanagan that were moving away from communism. But all of the societies were changing: marriage was becoming less stable and was occurring later; having children was postponed. In India, as Verma reports, such changes are also apparent, but there the tension is more between the external world of changing employment opportunities in urban settings, and the deeply based traditions enshrined in and reproduced through family life. Thus in India, the family is both a source of support and repression, especially for girls. In contrast, in the societies of the West, it has more of an ambivalent role: an ever-weakening influence on young people as they get older, while offering a basis of 'intergenerational solidarity' against the traumas associated with radical social change (Bynner & Silbereisen, 2000).

In all societies, but especially those based on the principles of western capitalism, the indications are that under the pressures of technological change and globalisation, transition routes to the adult world are becoming increasingly *individualised*. Personal and family resources are at a premium and there is increasing experience of *risk* in relation to the choices made. This hits hardest the more vulnerable groups in society: now increasingly those lacking the educational credentials to gain access to the new and more limited range of occupations available. It is not surprising that, as Flanagan reports, growing cynicism exists everywhere towards the political process and institutions of the state, which increases with age. As people are forced more and more onto their own resources, government may be seen as presenting obstacles rather than offering opportunities for a fulfilling adult life.

Social change therefore may not halt transition processes but it can affect their timing (Crocket & Silbereisen, 2000). The biological pressures, post-puberty, towards reproduction and family life, continue to ensure that young people do proceed along the domestic career path and that families continue to be formed. However, the timing of the critical choices becomes increasingly variable, as the better educated postpone commitment, while the least educated continue to take it on early. Thus the coming generation society reconstructs itself, but still on the foundations supplied by cultural heritage and the structural differentiation that prevails everywhere.

These articles give us fascinating insights into changing transition processes across a wide and diverse range of societal contexts and are an excellent contribution to the literature on youth transitions.

The research on which they are based, however, uses cross-sectional surveys to monitor the effects of social change on young people's transitions. The next step must be to disentangle these effects at the individual level, by means of longitudinal data. Who is benefiting and who is losing out under new circumstances and what can be done to halt the processes of exclusion?

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COMMENTARY: Socio-Cultural Influences Mediating the Transition to Adulthood in Different Contexts

Mary Louise Claux
Department of Psychology, Pontifical Catholic University of Peru
e-mail: mclaux@pucp.edu.pe

Transition to adulthood in socio-cultural context is the central subject of all three-target essays; nevertheless, each essay emphasizes different aspects of development. Silbereisen, Juang, and Reitzle focus their research on the developmental transition timetable changes in two contextual moments, before and after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The focal point of the essay of Flanagan, Botcheva, Bowes, Csapo, Jonsson, Macek, and Sheblanova is to compare the political identity development of youth in terms of their views of the "social contract", within four Eastern/Central European nations which are in a process of transition towards democracy, with that of youth from three other Western democratic countries. Finally, Verma discusses change and continuity within traditional Indian culture regarding developmental rites of passage and other personal and family factors, as a result of Western influences.

Several points of discussion come to mind when analysing the essays. First, all of the articles share the life-span approach, in the sense that they emphasize ideas regarding human plasticity in developmental processes. Nevertheless, some early learning and private life-course experiences are identified as crucial elements later in adulthood, in coping with change and responsiveness demands.

A second element of discussion is that development is partially affected by systematic and predictable changes, such as human factors and economic systems, and partially by undetermined or coincidental factors, such as external events or geography. The analyses in these studies comprise mainly systematic changes.

The continuity-change argument is also present in the essays. Do socio-cultural or contextual changes alter the developmental life course? Flanagan's study places emphasis on change in identity development due to the impact of both contextual and society characteristics as well as due to commitment to public goals or politics. On the other hand, Silbereisen et al.'s and Verma's research results

are related to the developmental issue of continuity and change. They affirm that social change does not affect all developmental processes, and, if it does, the impact will differ according to mediating variables. For example, Verma remarks that continuity is clearer in girls, especially in family roles, although boys may also show continuity if their families are involved in traditional occupations.

Overall, the studies make reference to mediating variables that will buffer or increase the impact of socio-cultural influences in the transition to adulthood. In an integrated synthesis, I can distinguish three types of mediators: 1) proximal and individual related variables, 2) private life-course experiences, and 3) macro-system factors.

Among individual characteristics, Silbereisen et al. identify important mediators of social change influences in the path to adulthood, such as coping and planning strategies, personal values, motivation, and beliefs regarding agency. Moreover, they found that in West Germany, autonomy and the timing of leaving home are related to individual characteristics.

Gender and age are also mediating factors of developmental transitions discussed in Verma's and Silbereisen et al.'s studies. Both found that women are particularly sensitive to the impact of social change. In the first case, women showed slow changes characterised by the continuity of traditional culture. In the second case, a strong impact was shown to occur through a delayed transition timetable, especially in less educated women.

Private life-course factors are a second source of mediators. Some important factors mentioned are generation characteristics, socio-economic status, financial self-support, and educational levels. Silbereisen et al. emphasize that personal trajectory affects new job and career opportunities and educational and training completion. These factors, together with the quality of family relations, influence the timetable of financial autonomy and leaving home. On the other hand, family background, context, and caring responsiveness are also relevant in Verma's and Flanagan et al.'s studies. Generation is also considered a private life-course factor. Flanagan et al. found that recent young adults are committed more to public goals than to political ones.

The third kind of mediating factor is the macro-system variables. The two main mediators discussed are: tradition and cultural roles, as well as reliable political, social, and family contexts. Silbereisen et al. found that in East Germany, macro-system factors, such as housing availability and regulations, as well as the educational systems, are important in predicting the timing of the transition to adulthood.

The individual/macro system discussion is explicit in Flanagan et al.'s study. Social macro-system contexts are found to allocate different values and resources. Consequently, young people who are exposed to a civil society characterised by trust, reciprocity, solidarity, network of community institutions, and caring adults develop more commitment to common goods. In the same way, young people exposed to economic principles and social policies acquire ideas of fairness that favour the development of a strong sense of social commitment. Among the macro-system factors, Verma focused on the influence of traditional culture on stages of developmental transition and gender-differentiated roles.

In summary, according to the three essays, development does not occur in the same pattern because socio-demographic characteristics vary in different societies. In some, changes will occur but at the same time cultural traditions will be preserved. In others, changes will be more generalised.

Notes from The President

In this report, I describe the activities of the President since the publication of the Spring 2000 *ISSBD Newsletter*.

During this period, the President chaired the annual Executive Committee (EC) meetings, as well as the General Business meeting of the Society. In July 2000, the EC met twice in Beijing, China during the Biennial Conference of the Society. The Minutes of these meetings are published in this issue of the *Newsletter*. There were many highlights of these meetings. To begin with, we welcomed the President-Elect, Rainer Silbereisen (Germany) and two of the three newly elected members of the EC—Avshalom Caspi (UK) and Suman Verma (India). Rainer Silbereisen has had a long history of active membership in the Society. He is currently the Editor of the *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, and has previously served the Society as its Secretary. Suman Verma has been an Ad Hoc member of the EC, representing Asian countries. In addition, she has, and will continue to serve the Society as our representative to the World Health Organisation. Unfortunately, the third newly elected member of the EC, Patricia Greenfield (USA), was unable to attend the meetings. The Society also welcomed William Bukowski (Canada) as the newly appointed Editor of the *International Journal of Behavioral Development*. Bill has had extensive editing experience, having served on several editorial boards of archival journals and having edited several important research compendia. He will begin his office as Editor in 2002.

Of course, the election of new members to the EC means that several of its members are retiring. On behalf of ISSBD, I sincerely thank Lea Pulkkinen, Anne Petersen, Anik de Ribaupierre, and Richard Tremblay for their wonderful contributions to the Society. As you all know, Lea Pulkkinen was most recently the Past President of ISSBD; in this regard she played a most welcome and helpful role as advisor during my first two years in the office of President. Lea also served as the Chairperson of the Nominating Committee and was a strident force in initiating our workshop series in Africa. Anne Petersen, of course, has helped the Society enormously through her efforts to obtain Kellogg Foundation support for travel to our conferences and workshops by ISSBD members from Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa. Richard Tremblay was co-Chair of the Biennial Meetings of the Society in Quebec City and will continue on as Chairman of the Nominating Committee during the next biennium.

As noted above, the EC meetings were held in Beijing. Prior to the meetings, I served in an advisory capacity to our most able Chair of the highly productive Beijing meetings—Meng Zhao Lan and to Wang Lei, Local Arrangements Chairperson. I also worked with Co-Chairs Qi Dong, Yinghe Chen and Xinyin Chen in the organization of the highly successful pre-conference workshop on 'Cultural and life-span perspectives on human development'. The conference held in the Beijing Convention Centre, provided all the amenities necessary for a successful conference. And the extraordinarily beautiful campus of Peking University served as the venue for the workshop. The Conference included a memorial symposium in honour of Harry McGurk, the previous President of the Society. This symposium, chaired by Jesus Palacios (Spain) and Sara Harkness (USA) was entitled

"Cultural strategies for children's successful development". The presenters included scholars from six countries on three continents ... as such, it was a memorial truly representative of Harry's contributions to both the Society and the international study of behavioural development. In addition, just prior to the meetings, I learned from Bill Hartup that Jan de Wit, the second President and first Treasurer/Secretary of the Society had passed away. I immediately requested that the EC give permission to add a memorial address in the honour of Jan de Wit. When they graciously did so, I asked the Chair of the Biennial meetings to change my keynote address to a memorial address in honour of Jan de Wit.

Among the duties of the President is the solicitation of bids to host the biennial meetings of the Society. I had earlier approached Barry Schneider (Canada) to host the 2002 meetings in Ottawa, Canada. In concert with his two co-chairs, Rob Coplan (Canada) and Xinyin Chen (Canada), Barry has arranged to host the 2002 meetings in the Chateau Laurier, a lovely old hotel in the capital city of Canada. A Program Committee meeting was held prior to the beginning of the biennial conference. During that meeting, members of the program committee suggested a list of names of potential keynote speakers and learned that much of the "business" of evaluating poster and symposium submissions will be carried out "on-line." We look forward to being in Ottawa in August 2-6, 2002 for the XVIIth Biennial Meetings of ISSBD. It was during the Beijing meetings that I learned of two prospective bids to host ISSBD meetings. There are possibilities of receiving bids to host the 2004 meetings in Oslo, Norway and another to host the 2006 meetings in Adelaide, Australia. Please note, however, that formal proposals to host the 2004 and 2006 meetings have not, as yet, been received. **The deadline for receipt of proposals to host the 2004 meetings is February 2001.** The EC will evaluate all such proposals at its next meetings in April 2001 in Minneapolis, USA.

In addition to conferences, the office of the President receives proposals to host workshops in various regions of the world. The Society will entertain proposals if they will be locally organised, focus on significant areas of research and policy, and bring new members to the Society. Further, the EC has deliberated to increase the annual Workshop budget of the Society to a maximum of \$16,000; it is expected that no more than two workshops will be supported each year. Our workshops in 2000 were held in Beijing, China and in Kampala, Uganda. The latter workshop, chaired by Peter Baguma (Uganda) took place in late September and was well attended by African scholars. Reports from both the China and Africa Workshops appear elsewhere in this *Newsletter*. In 2001, our workshop series moves to Peru (July 2001) and the Middle East (June 2001). **Workshop proposals for 2002 must be received by February 2001** in order to be evaluated by the EC at its meetings in April 2001. As with the Conference proposals, please address all such material to my office (see below).

It is important to note than when the Society discovers that there are areas of scholarship or regions in the world that lack representation on the EC, deliberate efforts are made to fill these voids. Thus, for the 2000-2002 biennium,

the following individuals have graciously accepted invitations to join the EC as Ad Hoc members: (a) *Medicine*—Eric Fombonne (UK); (b) *Africa*—Bame Nsamengang (Cameroon); (c) *China*—Yinghe Chen; (d) *Latin America*—Silvia Koller (Brazil); (e) *Russia*—Tatiana Yermolova. Further, W. Andrew Collins (USA) will chair the *Membership Committee*. Please note that the names and addresses of all EC members may be found on the Society's web page, www.issbd.org. The web-page includes information on the history of the Society; access to the ISSBD constitution and by-laws; access to the *Membership Directory* and to present and past issues of the *Newsletter*; and applications for membership. In addition, members of ISSBD can link to our principal publication—*The International Journal of Behavioral Development (IJBD)*.

Lastly, our membership now approximates 1,000. This represents a significant decrease from our "hey-days" in 1996 following the Biennial Meetings in Quebec City when

membership reached close to 1,300. Given the international significance of the Society, and given the attractiveness of both our journal and biennial conference to researchers the world over, it seems that the time is ripe to initiate a membership campaign. In this regard, I would greatly appreciate it if every one of you, as members of the Society, sends me the name and address of one or two researchers who you believe should be a member of ISSBD. I will then take it upon myself to contact these people early in 2001 and invite them to join us. It is through membership that we are able to support our conferences and workshop series. It is through membership that we are able to publish an influential journal. And it is through membership that we can build a strong international community of Developmental Science. I urge you to send me a name or two ... let's work together to maintain and strengthen our status in the fields of life-span and cross-cultural developmental science.

ISSBD Pre-Conference Workshop in Beijing

The 2000 ISSBD Pre-Conference workshop was held on July 9-11, at Peking University. The theme of the workshop was "Cultural and life-span perspectives on human development". Topics that were discussed included theoretical and methodological issues in cross-cultural research, attachment, emotion and emotion regulation, aggression and delinquency, peer relationships, parenting and family relationships, developmental psychopathology, and life span development. Joe Campos, Xinyin Chen, Michael Lewis, Mary Luszcz, Ken Rubin, Richard Tremblay, Avi Sagi and Harold Stevenson gave presentations and led discussions on these topics. Approximately 90 junior scholars from Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America and Western and Eastern European countries attended the workshop.

The feedback we have received from the participants has been very positive. Participants found the presentations and discussions interesting and stimulating, and they appreciated the opportunity to communicate with the presenters and to exchange their views with peers from different countries on cultural and life-span issues. The informal discussion sessions appeared particularly appealing, thought provoking and sometimes even intense. In addition to the presentations and discussions, the participants enjoyed

other activities organised by the local hosts. The campus of Peking University was a magnificent setting for the workshop. The reception dinner hosted by the university was extraordinary!

On behalf of the entire ISSBD membership, we would like to express our gratitude to Professors Zhaolan Meng and Lei Wang for their leadership, organisational efforts, and warm reception in the organisation of the pre-conference workshop. We are also thankful to the faculty and staff members and the students at Peking University and Beijing Normal University, who expended a great deal of effort and time in helping with the organisation of the workshop and the arrangements for accommodation and travel.

Finally, we thank the Kellogg Foundation and the Johann Jacobs Foundation, for their financial support of the participant scholars from Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Xinyin Chen
Yinghe Chen
Qi Dong
Jianlian Shen

The Organising Committee

POSITION OPENINGS

The Psychology Department at the UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN Invites applications for three tenure-track positions in the area of **Culture and Human Development**. The three new tenure-track faculty members will contribute to the development, implementation, and integration of a new interdisciplinary graduate program with existing strong PhD programs in Clinical, Applied Social, and Basic Behavioral Sciences. All candidates must have a PhD and an active program of research. Each candidate must clearly

demonstrate how his/her program of research and teaching expertise would fit within a program on Culture and Human Development. We especially encourage applicants with an interest or expertise in aboriginal cultures. Applicants should have clearly demonstrated expertise in qualitative, ethnographic, or other cultural-specific research methods and/or expertise in longitudinal design and analysis. For further information about the three "Culture and Development" positions see the psychology department website at

www.usask.ca/psychology. Applicants should submit a curriculum vitae, preprints/ reprints of publications, copies of teaching evaluations, and arrange to have three letters of reference sent to: Dr. Linda McMullen, Head, Department of Psychology, University of Saskatchewan, 9 Campus Drive, Saskatoon, SK, Canada S7N 5A5. e-mail mcmullen@sask.usask.ca. **The deadline for applications is November 30, 2000, although applications will be accepted until the positions are filled.**

Minutes of the ISSBD Executive Committee Meeting and General Business Meetings

Beijing, Peoples Republic of China, July 2000

Times: Executive Meetings (EC) July 11th and 13th; General Business Meeting (GBM) July 13th.

Members of the EC present: Anna Silvia Bombi, Roger Dixon, Willem Koops (Secretary), Brett Laursen (Treasurer and Membership Secretary), Jari Erik Nurmi, Anne Petersen, Candida Peterson, Lea Pulkkinen (Past-President), Ken Rubin (President), Richard Tremblay.

Editors present: Rainer K. Silbereisen (IJBD), Rohays Perry (representative of Psychology Press).

Ad hoc advisors present: Bame Nsamengang.

Newly elected members of the EC present: Avshalom Caspi, Rainer Silbereisen (President-Elect), Suman Verma.

Apologies for absence received from: Carolyn Zahn-Waxler (Chair Publications Committee), Patricia Greenfield, Peter Noack (Chair Membership Committee), Robert Plomin, Anik de Ribaupierre, Jacqui Smith.

In attendance for particular items: William Bukowski (publications), Xinyin Chen (Newsletter; China Workshop), (Middle East Workshop), Verona Christmas-Best (IJBD), Anna Von der Lippe (XVIIIth Biennial Meetings), Joan Miller (Newsletter), Rohays Perry (IJBD), Avi Sagi (Middle East Workshop), Barry Schneider (XVIIth Biennial Meetings), Rachel Seginer (Middle East Workshop), Meng Zhaolan (XVIth Meetings)

1. Opening

The President, Ken Rubin, welcomed the EC members, in particular the newly elected members Avshalom Caspi, Rainer Silbereisen, and Suman Verma.

2. Remembrance Minute

The President proposed to commemorate the death of Jan de Wit, one of the founders of ISSBD, its first Secretary/Treasurer (1969–1975) and its second President (1975–1979); George Butterworth, The Secretary and Treasurer of ISSBD from 1981–1985; and five of ISSBD's eminent members: Robert Cairns, Robbie Case, Beverly Fagot, Paul Mussen, and Hanus Papoucek. The President described these members' various activities within the Society and then proposed a Remembrance Minute in their memory.

3. Minutes of the E.C. Meeting in 1998

The Minutes of the EC Meeting in Albuquerque, USA, 1999, April 13 and 14, 1999, published in the *Newsletter* 2/99, Serial No 36, pages 12–14 were approved unanimously.

4. President's Report

The President reported the following activities:
 —met with Dr. Zahn-Waxler to identify a successor to Jutta Heckhausen, Editor of the *ISSBD Newsletter*. Joan Miller was appointed as the new Editor of the *Newsletter*. Joan Miller's Associate Editor is Xinyin Chen. The Society is grateful to Jutta Heckhausen and to the Max Planck Institute in Berlin for their outstanding support of the *Newsletter* over the years
 —met with Dr. Zahn-Waxler to identify a successor to Rainer Silbereisen, Editor of *IJBD* (see item 7.1)
 —was in frequent communication with Meng Zhaolan or Wang Lei concerning the ISSBD meetings and workshop in Beijing 2000
 —met in Ottawa with Barry Schneider and his local Programme Committee and also was in regular contact

with the two co-Chairs of the Ottawa conference, Xinyin Chen and Robert Coplan
 —has communicated often with Peter Baguma, Chair of the African Workshop to be held in Uganda in late 2000. The President spent time organising the budget lines, and editing the proposal for funding the workshop
 —met with Avi Sagi and Samia Dawud-Noursi about the organisation of a Middle East Workshop (see item 9)
 —was in receipt of information from the International Union of Psychology and has filed reports to them
 —communicated with Reed Larsen, re: collaborating on a workshop with the Society for Research in Adolescence, "Adolescence in the 21st Century", which has since taken place.

The President states as his personal goal a 20% membership growth in each of the next 2 years, and invites all members of the EC and ad hoc advisors to send a list of minimally 15 names and addresses of colleagues who should be members of ISSBD. The President will then send these individuals personal invitations to join the Society.

Several members of the EC are retiring by rotation (Lea Pulkkinen, Anne Petersen, Anik de Ribaupierre, Richard Tremblay). Likewise, the two year terms of the Ad Hoc Advisors Qi Dong, Suman Verma and Andrei Podolskij, have ended. The President thanks all of them for their cooperation and for their extensive commitment to and work for the Society

The report of the President was approved unanimously.

5 The Secretary's Report

5.1 Operations of the Secretary in general

The Secretary produced the Minutes of the EC meeting in Albuquerque, April 1999. He furthermore communicated intensively with the organizers of the XVth Biennial Meetings, Meng Zhaolan and Wang Lei, in particular, to assist in forwarding e-mail messages to several members

and participants in the XVIth meetings. As usual the Secretary received several requests for information regarding the Society and its activities.

Referring to several communication difficulties and misunderstandings in the past, the Secretary proposes that the Society develops a written scenario for future organisers of ISSBD Biennial Meetings, in which several important items are specified, among them: the division of organisational and financial responsibilities among the Local Organising Committee, the Programme Committee, and the Executive Committee; the composition and tasks of the Programme Committee; the outline of a three-year schedule, in which the time periods for several activities, such as the evaluation of the symposia and abstracts are specified. The EC invites the Secretary to prepare such a document.

5.2 Elections

The Secretary prepared and executed the Election process, together with the chair of the Election Committee, Lea Pulkkinen. The results of this year's elections for a President-Elect and for three regular members of the EC were as follows.

175 ballots were received; from these 7 were invalid, either because of missing signatures, or in two cases because they came in far beyond the deadline of March 1st, 2000. From the remaining 168 ballots only 146 contained votes for regular members. Votes were counted according to "The rules for counting ballots in private elections under the Hare System of Proportional Representations". The outcome of this counting process was the election of Rainer Silbereisen as the President-Elect, and the election of the following candidates as EC members: Patricia Greenfield, Avshalom Caspi, and Suman Verma. The elections were tight elections, which shows that we had excellent candidates, very much appreciated by the membership. The EC will try to find ways to engage the non-elected candidates in the organisational work for the Society.

The report of the Secretary was approved unanimously by the EC. The EC as well as the membership (present at the General Business Meeting [GBM]) approved the report of the elections unanimously.

Lea Pulkkinen's work as chair of the Nomination Committee was greatly appreciated by the EC. Her term ends in 2000; Richard Tremblay was appointed as her successor. Tremblay, together with the Deputy Chair, Willem Koops, and the members of the EC will prepare the next Elections of the Society.

6. Report from the Treasurer/Membership Secretary

6.1. Membership Secretary

Table 1 provides an overview of paid ISSBD membership by membership category for 1996, 1997, 1998 and 1999.

Category	1996	1997	1998	1999
Full	831	659	741	627
Regional	262	266	217	235
Student	112	35	65	40
Spouse	23	21	23	25
Emeritus	32	29	30	31
Totals	1260	1010	1076	958

ISSBD membership fluctuates from conference to non-conference years, so 1997 (a non-conference year) is a better point of comparison for 1999 membership than 1998 (a conference year). Total paid membership in 1999 was 958. This represents a decrease of 11.0% (n=118) over 1998 total membership, and a decrease of 5.1% (n=52) over 1997 total membership.

The conclusion is that membership in all categories stagnated or declined from 1996 to 1999. Of particular concern is the erosion in full membership, which has important financial repercussions for the Society. A concerted effort to expand all categories of membership is needed and plans to achieve this end should be given the highest priority.

The EC thanked Brett Laursen for his dedication, and expressed gratitude to the home University of Brett Laursen, Florida Atlantic University, for continued substantial financial and personnel support. In particular the Society owes a debt of gratitude to Dr Charles White (Dean) and Vice-President Dr Mary McBride. Ms. Carly Sacher served as the Administrative Assistant; her efforts are greatly appreciated. Thanks also to Ms. Debora Rothmond, for record-keeping and clerical assistance.

The membership secretary's report was approved by the EC as well as by the GBM.

6.2. Treasurer

Table 2 provides a summary of ISSBD finances. The following narrative contrasts revenue and disbursements from 1999 with that from each of the previous years. Because finances fluctuate considerably from conference to non-conference years, 1997 (a non-conference year) provides a better point of comparison for 1999 finances than 1998 (a conference year). All figures are given in US dollars.

The primary sources of regular (i.e., non-grant) revenue were member dues, royalties and publication rights from the *International Journal of Behavioral Development*.

The two largest categories of expense were stipends for officer and publication offices, and member subscriptions for the *International Journal of Behavioral Development*.

A new membership dues structure for 1999, designed to encourage biennial membership, was adopted at the 1998 Business meeting in Bern, Switzerland. Full members dues were \$85 for 1999 or \$150 for 1999 and 2000. Spouse, Emeritus, and Student Non-journal member dues were \$30

	1996	1997	1998	1999
Opening balance	\$104,002.91	\$137,734.24	\$166,000.03	\$251,277.21
Revenues	\$146,237.44	\$93,726.79	\$166,204.04	\$156,485.28
	\$250,240.35	\$231,461.03	\$332,204.07	\$407,762.49
Disbursements	\$(112,506.11)	\$(65,461.00)	\$(80,926.86)	\$(98,563.89)
Closing Balance	\$137,734.24	\$166,000.03	\$251,277.21	\$309,198.60

for 1999 or \$46 for 1999 and 2000. Student Journal members were \$47 for 1999 or \$80 for 1999 and 2000.

As of this year, all members receive the journal and, for the sake of consistency, it was therefore suggested in Albuquerque, 1999, to raise Spouse and Emeritus fees (and Student Non-journal members) to the same level as those for Students: \$47 per annum or \$80 for two years. The EC approved this proposal already in 1999, pending a vote of the members at the Business Meeting.

ISSBD finances are in excellent shape and the investment strategy being implemented has markedly improved the long-term fiscal stability of the Society. The next step in the Society's development should be the creation of an infrastructure befitting a major international nonprofit scientific organisation.

The report of the Treasurer, Brett Laursen, was approved unanimously by the EC; the GBM approved the suggested fee-structure, and upon recommendation of the EC the GBM also unanimously accepted and thus signed as correct the Treasurer's report, the annual account for 1999 and the (current and budgeted) account for 2000.

7. Publications

7.1 International Journal of Behavioral Development

The extended, informative, and detailed report of the Editor, Rainer K. Silbereisen, was approved unanimously by the EC. Again, the EC congratulated Rainer Silbereisen for his most successful work for the Society's Journal and again expressed its gratitude to the University of Jena for providing accommodation, technical, secretarial, and assistant support for the Editor.

The accept/reject rate for the period between May 1, 1999 and April 30, 2000 has been 46% accept, 54% reject. When the accept/reject rate for the whole editorship (i.e., for all manuscripts submitted and handled since July 1995) is calculated, results show an overall acceptance rate of 36% and a rejection rate of 64%. The Journal remains truly international. The 112 manuscripts submitted during this reporting period have come from across the world; in all from 28 different countries. Although submissions are predominantly from North America and Western Europe, submissions from Eastern Europe, Asia and the Middle East have increased. However, submissions from Africa and South America are still much lower than could be hoped for. It should be noted, however, that the geographical distribution tends to resemble ISSBD's own membership distribution.

IJBD's excellent lead times have been maintained during this reporting period. The number of days taken from first submission to final editorial decision "accept" have, however, increased, being on average 239 days (approximately 8 months). This is mainly due to *IJBD's* policy of giving extra support to new and sometimes inexperienced authors. This increases the number of revisions called for, especially minor revisions to "polish" papers once they have been provisionally accepted. Time taken for manuscripts to receive the first editorial decision, Revise and Resubmit (r&r) during this period was an average of 64 days. This is in keeping with lead times to first decision reported by other leading journals, such as *Human Development* and *Child Development*, which were 70 and 60 days respectively.

Three issues of *IJBD* published during the reporting period have included a Special Section. Guest Editors, in collaboration with the Editor, have overseen their production. Papers were solicited both by Calls for Papers placed in *IJBD* and the *ISSBD Newsletter*, and occasionally by individual invitations to scholars working within the given field. Special Sections typically comprise an introductory paper, 6 papers on various aspects of the topic, and a concluding paper.

The new-style *IJBD* has been well received and now is more in line with journals of a similar status. However, the new larger, two-column layout was expected to absorb more manuscript pages than in reality it has done. This, plus *IJBD* being a "victim of its own success" in attracting submissions, has caused some concern about a possible delay in papers being published. After preliminary discussion between the Editor and the Publishers, the strong recommendation was to increase *IJBD* to six issues per volume rather than excessively enlarging the four issues. This increase in issues would allow more flexibility in article selection; it would speed up the publication of papers; and it would bring *IJBD* in line with other leading journals, who also publish bimonthly. The Publisher proposes to combine this with adding an extra of 10%, 21% or 29% additional pages (without extra costs for the Society).

The EC decided, after ample discussion, to accept the offer of the Publisher (and the Editor) to move to six issues per volume, and to accept an extra 29% pages. However, in an addendum to the contract, it should be stated that two years after the move to six issues comes into being, that is in 2003, when the new Editor will be in charge, he will be free to adopt this number of pages, or to reduce it to the minimum of 10% over the present number of pages.

Carolyn Zahn-Waxler, Chair of the *IJBD* Search Committee, submitted a Report on the Committee's identification and recommendation concerning the best qualified individual for the position of Editor of *IJBD*. The Committee (members: Ken Rubin and Rainer Silbereisen) recommended that the EC endorse Professor William Bukowski as the next Editor of *IJBD*, as of 1-1-2002, when Rainer Silbereisen's term as Editor ends.

The EC unanimously approved the report and enthusiastically appointed William Bukowski as the next Editor of *IJBD*. This decision was immediately communicated to Professor Bukowski, who then attended the EC Meeting for an informal conversation with the EC about the future collaboration.

7.2 ISSBD Newsletter.

The Report of the Editors of the *Newsletter*, Joan Miller and Xinyin Chen, was approved unanimously by the EC.

A goal of the new Editors is to enhance the degree to which the *Newsletter* serves as a forum in which Society members can exchange ideas and information. The first *Newsletter* issue completed under the new editorship appeared in June, 2000 (v. 38, no.1) and includes a Special Section on the topic of "Indigenous approaches to developmental research". The December *Newsletter* will include a Special Section on "The transition to adulthood in sociocultural context". An excellent working relationship has been developed with Psychology Press and with its *Newsletter* Production Editor, Kirsten Buchanan. The Press has been able to increase the number

of pages in the *Newsletter* and has done a superior job in its production.

8. Biennial Meetings

Meng Zhaolan (General Chair of the XVIth Biennial Meetings) reported that approximately 700 people registered for the conference. The programme comprised in total: 21 invited addresses, 73 symposia, 442 individual paper abstracts framed into 27 poster symposia. Furthermore, 96 young scholars attended the Pre-Conference Workshop and the main Meetings. Financially the Meetings are in good shape. Participants from developing countries received financial support from the following Foundations: The William T. Grant Foundation; The Johann Jacobs Foundation; The Kellogg Foundation; and The Third World Academy of Sciences. Thanks to these Foundations 12 persons from Africa, 24 from Asia, 21 from Eastern Europe and Russia, 13 from Latin America and 18 persons from China could be included in the Meetings. A full report on the Meetings is not yet available.

Barry H. Schneider, General Chair of the XVIIth Biennial Meetings of ISSBD in Ottawa, from August 2-6, in the year 2002, offered information on the progress of the preparations. He explained the general outline for the programme as well as the location (The Chateau Laurier Hotel), and described the procedures for communicating with the members of the Programme Committee. The programme Committee consists of the following members: Barry Schneider (General Chair), Rob Coplan and Xinyin Chen (co-chairs), Gerald Adams, Avshalom Caspi, Willem Koops, Brett Laursen, Bame Nsamenang, Anne Petersen, Ken Rubin, Avi Sagi, Rainer Silbereisen, Tiia Tulviste, Marcel van Aken, Meng Zhaolan.

Anna von der Lippe presented a preliminary offer to host the XVIIIth Biennial Meetings in Oslo, Norway. She described the attractiveness of the location and the potential support of experienced professional Norwegian congress organisers. A final bid will be sent to the EC by November 1st.

The EC and the GBM welcomed the offer by Anna von der Lippe and look forward to receiving a final bid. A final decision about this and other bids will be made by the EC in April 2001.

9. Workshop Programme

The EC adopted a Workshop Programme that comprises the following 4 workshops:

- Uganda 2000 (organizer: Prof Peter Baguma); this workshop is the Fifth African Workshop of ISSBD to be held in Uganda. Several uncertainties made it impossible to ascertain the probability of a successful workshop. The President indicated that he would contact Peter Baguma for clarification.
- Lima, Peru (organizers: Professors Margarita Azmitia; Mary Louise Claux and Brett Laursen). This workshop on "Families, Peers and Schools as Developmental Contexts" was approved by the EC in 1999. It was decided that this workshop would be moved to July 2001, while at the same time the loan of the ISSBD will be raised to \$10,000
- Haifa, Israel, June 2001 (organizers: Avi Sagi, Rachel Seginer, and Samia Dawud-Noursi). This workshop on:

"Middle East Children in the 21st Century: Parenting and Parent-Child Relationships in a Life-Span Perspective" was proposed to the EC by Avi Sagi and Rachel Seginer, and enthusiastically accepted by the EC. ISSBD will provide \$6000 to support this workshop.

10. Ad hoc advisors

The terms of the Ad hoc advisors from Asia (Qi Dong and Suman Verma) and Eastern Europe (Andrei I. Podolskij) end in 2000. The EC is grateful for their work.

It was decided to reconsider the structure of the group of Ad hoc advisors, and not only to consider the geographical dimension but also the dimension of the scientific domains.

The President will, in communication with the Steering Committee, prepare a proposal for the appointment of new Ad hoc advisors.

11. Ad hoc Membership Committee

A written report of the Chair of the Membership Committee, Professor Peter Noack, was approved by the EC. It was concluded that the Committee does very important work resulting in recruitment of new members and in providing opportunities for members to get in touch with their Society. The EC thanks Peter Noack and his Committee for the important work they did for the Society. Because the term of this committee ends in 2000, a new Committee has to be composed. The president indicated that he would approach Professor W. Andrew Collins as a potential Membership Chairperson.

12. Report on ISSBD-WHO Collaboration

Suman Verma, ISSBD representative to WHO, reported about the proposals she had sent to the WHO representative to ISSBD. Her proposals comprise ideas about dissemination of information, technical exchanges, and network mechanisms.

The EC approved her report.

13. Other relevant business

It was decided that the next Meeting of the Executive Committee will be in Minneapolis, Sunday, 22nd of April, 2001, the day after the closing of the SRCD meeting.

14. Close of Meeting

The President closed the EC meeting (and GBM) by thanking the members for their time and dedication.

Willem Koops
General Secretary



Makerere University Institute of Psychology Hosts the 5th African Regional ISSBD Workshop

This workshop was held from 25th to 30th September 2000, at the Faculty of Science, Makerere University. This workshop is one of the series of workshops organised by the ISSBD. The last one (the 4th) was held at the University of Namibia in 1998 during which Uganda was chosen to host the next workshop. Dr Peter Baguma from the Institute of Psychology was charged with the duty of organising it.

The theme of the workshop was "Life Course in Context: The Application of Cross-Cultural Methodology". By this we mean that human development is continuous; influences that arise at an earlier stage of human development can have far reaching consequences on later behaviour; and these influences vary from culture to culture.

The sub-themes centred around contexts that influence human development, (e.g., family settings and roles, peers, media, school, health, and wartime crises). The main emphasis was on youth, although development throughout the life-span was considered. Social and personality development were of special interest. The contexts of development, demands, and challenges differ among cultures and nations and these have different impacts on human life-span development. The theme was therefore timely and relevant. In all, 35 scientific papers were delivered.

Recently, there have been political and socio-economic problems in the Great Lakes region, which have had a serious impact on the human development process. This workshop led to increased understanding of how these factors have impacted on human development.

This workshop also enriched the participants in terms of skills necessary for developmental research. Individual and institutional linkages were forged at the workshop. Plans were made to establish an African regional Consortium on higher education and applied research in human development, which will share ideas and coordinate efforts within the region.

Progress was also reviewed on the formation of a regional African group on Psychology. This body is aimed at sensitising Africans about the role of scientific psychology and the need to have the African region adequately represented at International events. In this connection, Prof. Mzobanzi Mboya, a Dean of Mamelodi Campus, Vista University, South Africa was charged with the duty of organising the group.

Makerere University and the rest of the world will benefit from the book to be edited from papers presented at this workshop. This will serve as a reference and as teaching material. This workshop fed directly into the objectives of our University. These, in part, include the training of high-level manpower in all fields of human endeavour and carrying out advanced research. Makerere is undergoing both administrative and academic changes that may have an impact on human development. Through this workshop, participants acquired more skills and tools to handle such challenges. Papers on research methodology were presented.

Resolutions:

At the end of the workshop the following resolutions were made:

1. The participants were impressed by the tremendous progress made by the government and people of Uganda in turning the tide on the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and appreciated the role played by the various sectors of Ugandan Society, especially the counselling services and programmes.
2. Resolved that the government of Uganda and relevant educational authorities institute a system of minimum standards for counselling in order to ensure appropriate public protection and continued victory in positive behavioural change that continues to build and develop the Ugandan society to its fullest.
3. The science and practice of psychology must be accorded their rightful professional status alongside other fields of human endeavour.
4. African scientists should create a culture of African Psychology based on research and publication for Africa by Africans, so that we can connect with the rest of the world. We should form a web site that will keep all of us informed of what progress is taking place and provide international exposure for African scientists and their research. The South Africa Psychological Association pledged to support the web site.
5. Resolved to extend gratitude and appreciation to Makerere University for hosting the Workshop and express the hope that it will continue to encourage the field of psychology.
6. Urged all participants to enroll themselves, and to recruit other African scientists, as members of the ISSBD.

The Participants:

The workshop was opened by the Minister of State for Higher Education, Mr Abel Rwendire and closed by the University Secretary, Mr Avitus Tibarimbasa on behalf of the Vice Chancellor. Other participants came from Uganda, Cameroon, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Austria, Britain, Sweden, and the USA.

Sponsorship:

The workshop was supported by the ISSBD, Johann Jacobs Foundation, International Association for Cross-Cultural Psychology, and Makerere University. *We build for the future.*

Peter Baguma
Institute of Psychology
Makerere University
PO Box 7062
Kampala, Uganda

Workshop on Research and Social Policy: Families, Peers, and Schools as Developmental Contexts

Sponsored by the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development, the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, and the Johann Jacobs Foundation

During the summer of 2001, the International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development will host a summer workshop entitled "Research and Social Policy: Families, Peers, and Schools as Developmental Contexts". The workshop is designed for promising junior scientists who have recently finished or are about to finish their graduate studies, and who hold appointments with significant research and/or public policy commitments. We expect to have 25 scholars in attendance: 15 from South and Central America and 10 from North America.

The workshop will be held at the Cultural Center of the Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Peru in Lima. It will begin Monday evening, 9 July 2001, and conclude Saturday morning, 13 July 2001. English will be the official language of the workshop. The workshop will consist of four single-day sessions on research and social policy led by different senior scholars, poster presentations by workshop participants, discussions on research issues and career development with senior scholars and workshop participants, and opportunities for collaborative activities and network building among workshop participants.

The workshop will be chaired by Professors Margarita Azmitia, Mary Louise Claux, and Brett Laursen. Professors Terezinha Nunes, Jesus Palacios, Harold Stevenson and a fourth individual to-be-announced will participate as senior scholars. The workshop is modeled on prior events sponsored by ISSBD in Africa, Europe, and North America. It promises to be a stimulating and challenging developmental experience.

Workshop participants will present their research in poster format during the workshop. Each day, one hour will be set aside for a group of different scholars to present posters. These poster sessions will be followed by a one-hour discussion with other workshop participants and senior scholars.

One of the goals of the workshop is to promote successful career development among new scholars. To this end, small groups of six or seven participants will be created. The goal of these small groups is to create cohesive networks of junior scholars who can enlist one another in necessary career development support functions. We will set aside time for these networks to meet informally to discuss scientific and academic careers, and perhaps initiate collaborative research activities. Each network will be assigned a mentor from the senior scholars presenting during the first part of the workshop.

Applications are now being accepted to attend the summer workshop. Successful applicants will receive local transportation, and food and accommodations in Lima for four days and five nights during the workshop. Participants from South and Central America will be reimbursed for a maximum of \$750 (USA) in travel expenses. Participants from North America are expected to fund their own travel.

Applicants should submit a letter of application, a statement of career and research goals, a one page poster abstract, one or two scientific reprints (in English), and a letter of recommendation from a senior scientist. Applications must be received by Professor Margarita Azmitia no later than 15 January 2001. Mail applications to Prof. Azmitia at the Department of Psychology, University of California, Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz, CA 96054, USA.

Email inquiries may be directed to:

Professor Azmitia (AZMITIA@CATS.UCSC.EDU)
Professor Claux (MCLAUX@MACAREO.PUCP.EDU.PE)
or Professor Laursen (LAURSEN@FAU.EDU).

Additional information will be posted at the ISSBD website (www.issbd.org) as it becomes available.

Comment Section of Newsletter

Since the publication of the last *Newsletter*, we have received feedback from readers indicating their interest in follow-up discussion of some of the issues raised in the Special Section. To facilitate such discussion, we are initiating a new "Comment" section. Readers are encouraged to submit essays that communicate views and opinions that are relevant to the themes presented in the Special Section. The essays for the Comment section should be generally no longer than 1000 words, and must be addressed to the themes of the Special Section in the last two issues.

Announcing

JACOBS FOUNDATION INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE FELLOWSHIPS

To enhance the effectiveness, scale, and sustainability of youth-serving programmes:

A New Graduate Training Initiative of the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development Tufts University

Across the world, thousands of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) deliver quality programmes that positively influence millions of children and adolescents. However, many more millions are not reached by such programmes, making the need to increase the scale of effective and sustainable youth-serving programmes an issue of global geopolitical and humane significance. To expand their reach, NGOs will have to respond to increasing pressures to demonstrate that their programmes are working effectively to enhance the life chances of youth.

In order to help create an indigenous capacity in NGOs to design, bring to scale, and sustain community-based programmes effective in promoting positive youth development, the Jacobs Foundation has provided resources to the Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development at Tufts University to begin to recruit applications to its graduate programmes from individuals who have experience and/or interest in youth-serving NGOs in developing nations and eastern Europe. The goal of the programme is to enhance students' understanding of contemporary child and adolescent development theory, research, and methods; promote skills in programme evaluation; and increase the ability to promote public policies promoting positive child and adolescent development.

Fellowships provide full tuition, a graduate assistantship stipend, and funds to help support dissertation research expenses. For information about the Eliot-Pearson graduate programmes and application materials, please contact:

Susanna Barry
 Eliot-Pearson Department of Child Development
 105 College Avenue
 Medford, MA 02155.
 (617) 627-2038
susanna.barry@tufts.edu
 or find out more on the web at: ase.tufts.edu/epcd

Editorial

Editor
 Joan G. Miller

Correspondence Address:
 ISSBD Newsletter
 Institute for Social Research, RCGD
 University of Michigan
 Ann Arbor, MI, USA 48106-1248
 email: jgmiller@umich.edu

Associate Editor
 Xinyin Chen
 ISSBD Newsletter
 Department of Psychology
 University of Western
 Ontario
 London, Ontario, Canada
 N6A 5C2
 email: xchen@julian.uwo.ca

Production:
 Psychology Press
 27 Church Road
 Hove
 BN3 2FA, UK

Distribution:
 Journals Customer Services
 Taylor & Francis Ltd
 Rankine Road
 Basingstoke
 Hants
 RG24 8PR, UK

