Psychological development
Mahler (Separation/Individuation) :
According to Mahler, successful completion of the developmental stages in the first few years of life results in separation and individuation. Separation refers to an internal process of mental separation from the mother, while individuation refers to a developing self concept.

- Autistic (first month)
- Symbiosis (2-5 months)
- Differentiation (5-10 months)
- Practicing (10-16 months)
- Rapprochement (16-24 months)
- Object constancy (“object” as a psychological other, 24-36 months)
  - note different from object permanence of Piaget
Mahler: Autistic

- Autistic phase
  - 1st month of life
    - behavior is instinctive and serves only to satisfy biological needs
    - infant is unaware of “outside”
    - infant and mother are “one”
Mahler: Symbiotic

- Symbiotic Phase
  - 2nd through 5th month
  - infant develops dim awareness that needs are met outside of self
  - social smile develops
  - John Bowlby observed this in greater detail in his study of attachment
    - social smile for all comers
Mahler: Differentiation

- Differentiation
  - 5th through 10th month
  - compares what is, and what is not mother
  - infant separates from caregiver by pushing away
  - infant develops *stranger anxiety*
    - more common in babies with one caretaker
    - fear at the approach of a stranger
Mahler: Practicing

- Practicing subphase
  - 10 through ~16 months
  - the infant explores the environment (now able to independently crawl/walk)
  - caregiver serves as “home base”
  - separation anxiety occurs during this time (but requires object permanence)
    - anxiety at physical separation from mother, especially if mother no longer visible
Mahler: Rapprochement

- Rapprochement crisis
  - 16-24 months
  - child torn between wanting mother’s soothing support (dependence) and not wanting help (omnipotence)
  - “terrible two’s” where sometimes the child has temper tantrums of frustration
ATTACHMENT

Theory Begins:

Harry Harlow
Ethologist
1905-1981
Harry Harlow and the Rhesus Monkeys

- Studied infant monkey behavior: what are the most important features of a mother?
  - Two “mothering” options for infants:
    - terry cloth covered wire surrogate without food
    - wire only surrogate with food
  - Infants instinctively prefer the “comfort contact” of terry cloth over food
- Monkeys raised without mothers and peers are socially incompetent
John Bowlby

1907-1990

Used ethology to inform human development
What is Attachment?

- An enduring emotional bond uniting one creature with another, manifested through efforts to seek proximity and contact with the ‘attachment figure’, especially when under stress
- **Reciprocal** relationship gradually built over time
- Not the same as bonding, which is the mother’s feeling for her child
Bowlby’s Attachment Theory

- Attachment behavior (proximity seeking, eye contact, smiling) gives an evolutionary advantage by motivating caregiving.
- Attached children may have stayed closer to their mother, and therefore were less susceptible to predators or getting lost.
- Attachment behavior continues to maturity.
  - tendency to seek family/friends in anxious situations.
Attachment Timeline

- 0-7 months: generalized social behavior, somewhat specific to parents
- 8-24 months: Attachment to parents with stranger anxiety and protest at separation
  - depression if separation prolonged
- 2-12 years: Parents remain primary attachment figures, but network broadens
- 12-adult: Peers, romantic interests, and eventually children may become primary
Psychosocial Implications of Attachment Theory

- Attachment relationships become the template for social relations throughout the life span.
- Therefore, the emotions and expectations arising from the infant-parent relationship are the basis for conceptualization of self and others in later years.
  - anticipating soothing from others leads to ability to self soothe (security)
Dangers of Disrupted Attachment

- Increased separation anxiety, avoidant personality disorder, depressive disorders, delinquency, failure to thrive, learning disorders
René Spitz: Attachment Applied

- Studied infant behavior/health
- Observed 123 infants living in a nursery/shelter with mother as primary caretaker
- Babies lived there for 2 years
- 45 developed depressive type symptoms
  - developed over a 3 month period, beginning age 6-8 months (no earlier)
Spitz’s Depressive Syndrome

- 5 Stage process
  1. Sadness, crying, anxiety
  2. Withdrawn, rejecting of attention
  3. Motor retardation, decreased responsiveness
  4. Loss of appetite and weight (FTT?)
  5. Insomnia, facial rigidity (marasmus)
Why did they get sick?

- Departure of mother from nursery between age 6-8 months in each case
- No children with mothers present developed depression
- Condition resolved with return of mother
- Conclusion: syndrome is result of loss of primary caretaker (mother)
  - “anaclitic depression” (Harlow observed this in monkeys as well)
  - thus a disorder of attachment
Mary Ainsworth: Laboratory Assessment of Attachment

- Colleague of John Bowlby
- 1913-1999
- Studied attachment behavior in Africa, Toronto, England, and Baltimore
  - believed attachment behavior universal
- Developed “Strange Situation” test to assess attachment behavior
Mary Ainsworth
Johns Hopkins University

The Strange Situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ep 1</th>
<th>M, B</th>
<th>2 min</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ep 2</td>
<td>M, B</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ep 3</td>
<td>M, B, S</td>
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<td>Ep 7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ep 8</td>
<td>M, B</td>
<td>3 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mary Ainsworth’s “Strange Situation”

- 21 minute test with 8 steps:
  1. Introduction
  2. M + C
  3. M + C + S
  4. C + S
  5. C + M
  6. C
  7. C + S
  8. C + M

- Primary outcome measure is child’s reaction on reunion with Mother (Steps 5 + 8)
Attachment Classification

- Secure: Proximity seeking, pleasurable reunion; “I’m glad to see you”

- Insecure type
  - Avoidant/Anxious: Turn away, ignore, or offer mixed signals; “I don’t need you”
  - Resistant/Ambivalent: Anger, hostile, passive; “I hate you”
  - Disorganized: Incoherent, confused, or inconsistent behavior “I don’t know you”
Secure Attachment

- Known as Type B
- 60-70% of low risk sample
- Characteristics
  - share positive affect with caregivers
  - seek proximity on reunion
  - return to independent play easily
  - theorized to expect comforting from parents when they show distress
Insecure Avoidant Attachment

- Avoidant/anxious, or Type A
- 15-25% of low risk sample

Characteristics

- share little positive affect with caregivers
- tend to ignore on reunion, make only brief contact
- theorized to anticipate rejection from caregiver, thus they inhibit displays to avoid negative outcomes, instead distract themselves
Insecure Resistant Attachment

- Ambivalent/resistant, or Type C
- 10-15% of low risk sample
- Characteristics
  - preoccupied with caregiver’s presence, play little
  - extended distress on reunion, showing anger and proximity seeking along with resistance
  - theorized to anticipate inadequacy from caregiver, thus they are chronically activated, expressing at a low threshold at high intensity
Insecure Disorganized Attachment

- Disorganized, or Type D
  - added to classification scheme late
- 10-30% of low risk, up to 80% high risk

Characteristics

- demonstrate contradictory behavior: in fearful situation (caregiver gone) -
  - typical: ↓ exploration, ↑ attachment behavior (distress at separation, proximity seeking)
  - abnormal: ↑ exploration with parent absent, with little distress
Type D, continued

- Other characteristics
  - stereotypies, mistimed movements, freezing, stilling, or slowed movements
  - theorized to fear the caregiver, and lack an overall strategy of behavior
Freud Recognized Attachment:

“Psychoanalysis has taught us that the individual’s emotional attitudes to other people, which are of such extreme importance to his later behavior, are already established at an unexpectedly young age. The nature and quality of the human child’s relations to people of his own and the opposite sex have already been laid down in the first six years of life. He may afterwards develop and transform them in certain directions but he can no longer get rid of them… All of his later choices of friendship and love follow upon the basis of the memory-traces left behind by these first prototypes”.

Some Reflections on Schoolboy Psychology, 1914
Temperament

- Innate behavior style
  - primarily genetically mediated
- New York Longitudinal Study (Chess and Thomas) of upper/middle class families
Describing temperament

- 9 Dimensions measured include
  - baseline activity
  - rhythmicity
  - approach or withdrawal
  - adaptability
  - threshold of responsiveness
  - reaction intensity
  - baseline mood
  - distractibility
  - attention span or persistence
Temperamental Clusters

- Easy: 40% of sample, predominantly happy and easy to care for
- Slow to warm up: 15%, have a “shy” personality
- Difficult: 10%, tough on caretakers
- Undifferentiated: 25%
Temperamental Clusters

Mood
Rhythmicity
Intensity
Adaptability
Approach

Easy
Difficult
Slow to warm up
Conclusions from Temperament

- The temperament of the child affects the behavior of the caretaker
  - difficult temperament may generate frustration, anger, guilt, and more negative parenting styles
  - easy temperament may be rewarding, generating positive feelings in parent, positive parenting
  - exemplifies genes affecting the environment
- “Goodness of fit”: the match between the child’s temperament and the parent’s personality and parenting skills
Transactional Model of Development

- “Nature v Nurture” too restrictive
- Focuses on interaction between genes and environment
  - light exposure required for sight to develop
  - relevance in conduct disorder
- Keep interaction in mind as other theories considered
"I've decided that I'd like to be the only child of sensitive, kindly patients with an indulgent grandmother and several rich and influential uncles."

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Developmental Milestones
Physical (average age attained)

- 1 month
- 6 months
- 7 months
- 10 months
- 12-15 months
- 18 months
- 24 months
- 36 months
- 48 months
- Lift head
- Sit unassisted
- Roll over
- Crawl
- Walk
- Walk up steps
- Jump in place
- Ride tricycle
- Hop on one foot