

TEENAGE VALUES

NOTIONS ABOUT TEENAGERS TEND TO EMPHASIZE THEIR IDOLATRY OF POP SINGERS. THE FIRST OF A TWO PART REPORT ON AN ATTITUDE SURVEY REVEALS THAT YOUNG PEOPLE OF TODAY ARE MORE DOWN TO EARTH.

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As you can see, I can be like this person if I really try... 16 year old boy

In the current heated discussions on the morality of adolescents many views are proffered on what are seen to be the most potent influences in the development of young people's values. The range of suggested influences is wide, comprehending the "materialism" manifested by the mass media, family standards, and peer group pressures; prominent too is the suggestion that the characteristics of pop idols are greatly admired and emulated, with the result not merely of bizarre behaviour but of frustration arising from an unrealistic view of life and a straining after the unlikely. Very little factual information is available on just how strong these influences are and how they operate—a circumstance that may vitiate the debates, but seldom reduces their temperature.

One way of gaining some insight into this problem is to try to find out the sort of people used as models by adolescents, on the hypothesis that strong sentiments for people are likely to be or to become sentiments for what the people believe in or stand for. If a reasonably comprehensive picture of the model is provided then useful data on aspirations, values, and admired personality characteristics may be made available. The authors elicited information on the models of groups of young working people of both sexes (15-18 years) in London as part of a study of moral codes and sentiments. At various points in the research there are indications given of models and aspirations, but the most direct data are contained in essays written on the theme "The person I would most like to be like".

TO BE MYSELF

The most striking impression gained from the analysis of these essays is of the substantial proportion who declare they have no wish to be like anyone other than themselves. Approximately half the girls (52 per cent) and more than one third of the boys (37 per cent) state specifically that they enjoy their lives and are happy and contented. "I would just like to be myself." Some suggest minor modifications they would welcome in their personalities or life circumstances, but 25 boys and 42 girls are content to be themselves without qualification. The following are examples of these sentiments:

girls

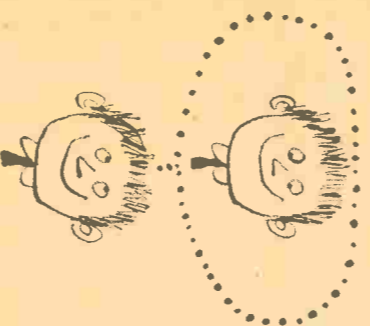
I would just like to be ME! So far I have had a very happy life.

I'm glad I'm me. My mum and dad are the two most wonderful people in the world, although we argue. I've got two terrible brothers but I love them enough to put up with their pranks and arguing.

I like being myself. I'm quite content with life really. I have brothers and sisters, a mother and father who are all very good to me. We have plenty to eat, a clean bed to sleep in. Many people throughout the world haven't got any of these good things.

I am quite happy as myself, in fact I couldn't wish for more at the moment. I have the most wonderful parents and there are people who are really worse off than I am.

I don't want to be like anyone else. I'm happy in just being myself. I'm happy at home with my family. I'm satisfied with my job and the people I work with. If you are not satisfied with what you have in life, think of the many people who are deaf and dumb or



Models Chosen	Boys (115)	Girls (115)	Total (230)
Self	43	60	103
Father	1	2	3
Mother	—	4	4
Siblings	—	1	1
Uncle	1	—	1
Friends	4	8	12
Other people	66	40	106
Occupations of Models			
No change	55	50	105 (46%)
Ordinary	15	26	41 (18%)
No work at all	5	7	12 (5%)
Glamorous	35	26	61 (26%)
Altruistic	5	6	11 (5%)

cripples, etc. and think how lucky you have been that you are not like them.

boys

I would like to be myself and nobody else at the moment. I am happy and I think that is all that matters really.

I am quite content with my own life. My life is no more nor less than any average teenager. I do an average amount of work and have an average amount of amusement. It is not a perfect life I lead but it is good enough for me.

I would not change the way I live for anything else. I have a good job which I enjoy very much... I am not very bright but I can understand most things which are put in front of me.

I would like to be like myself because I have no worries and I enjoy life. I am happy at my work... and have no need for extra money as I lead a fairly happy life. I don't mind what I do. I am well liked and have plenty of friends who are all my own age.

I am quite content to be myself and do not intend to model myself on some other body. Of course I want to better myself but I never wish to do and behave like my friends. I think to be an individual is not carried too far ("No man is an island unto himself") is a great asset... At certain stages I am fed up with myself but in the end I am glad that I am still me!

Among those who would like to be like themselves are a number who specify modifications they would wish including such things as more money, promotion, better education, greater maturity, for example: *I would like to be richer than I am... but in person I would like to stay myself.*

I would like to be a bit more wealthy. I don't think I get enough money a week and I always find that I am broke by Tuesday.

I would much rather be myself. I would like a bit more money, but as long as I have my health and strength to work then I am satisfied.

I would have liked to have had a better education. Also I would like security in my job and to enjoy more work to the full. I wouldn't like to actually be anyone else, I want to be the same old me but I would like to have a better job.

I don't think I'd like to be anybody else, although I'd like to make a few changes to myself. My temper is too quick and I can be very curt if something goes wrong.

I do not think I would wish to be anyone else but I would certainly like to change a few of my ways. For instance I get quite disturbed if asked to do something

which will alter my routine greatly and which is arguing with my Grandma

It is clear that the majority of the particularly those who express satisfaction in life, are firmly rooted in reality time to dream foolish fancies", for and done. I prefer to be ME as God

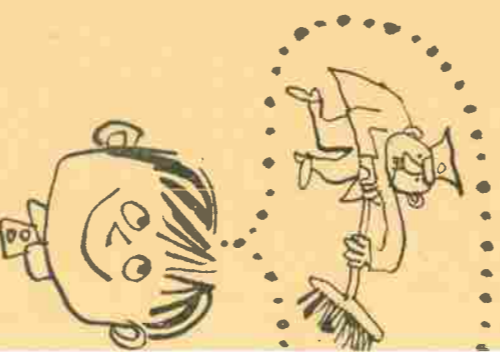
The spontaneous discussion they reasons for wishing to remain there on the things they value and on sorts in adolescent adjustment. The contented subjects, particularly their attitude to a happy family life glowing praises of "the most wonderful standing parents in the world." A lot of good friends, of both sexes. Some discuss their enjoyment of work and a picture of these "contented" as themselves. Many of them clearly at a different life, but are prepared to

It's funny when you are asked to sit an essay on who you would like to be you don't find it as good as you thought. I would like to be myself at my own pace quite naturally as I hope I'm a long eyelashes... 17 year old typist.

FATHER

Of the 127 subjects who wish to other than themselves, very few cite their own family, only 2 boys and 7 must be laid the number of "content pay tribute to parents and other families). Those who evince such sentiments express themselves with cons

The person I should most like to be because he's understanding, loving, great personality. My father has a way. When he was a child his family made up his mind his family would he didn't. This he has succeeded and respect my father and if I can



him, I should thank God. My father about 5 ft. 7 in., is 46 and still has his children and his wife. He has annoyed at times... Now that he's started buying household luxuries home. To me my father is perfect 15 year old boy.

The person I am writing about is a who is 6 feet tall and weighs 17 a eight children, the youngest being 1 eyes there couldn't be a happier father has not only brought his children but he has worked all through the that they could have little luxuries very much about this man as I co

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faults is arguing with my Grandmother . . .

It is clear that the majority of the subjects, and par-
ticularly those who express satisfaction with their
lot in life, are firmly rooted in reality. They have "no
time to dream foolish fancies", for "After all is said
and done, I prefer to be ME as God created me."

The spontaneous discussion they provide of their
reasons for wishing to remain themselves throws light
on the things they value and on some important fac-
tors in adolescent adjustment. The vast majority of
contented subjects, particularly the girls, attribute
their attitude to a happy family life, sometimes with
glowing praises of "the most wonderful and under-
standing parents in the world." A minority talk also
discuss their enjoyment of work and of leisure.

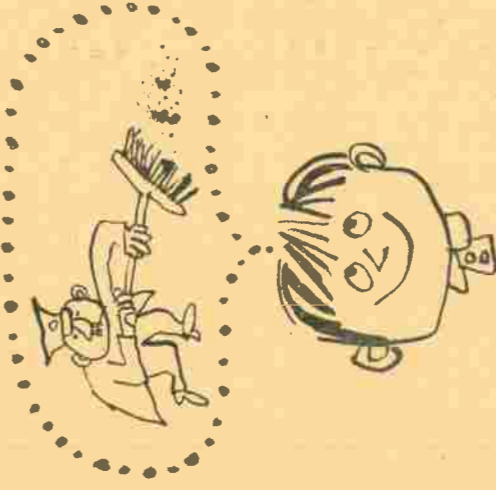
Very few of these "contented" adolescents present
a picture of arrogance, smugness, or illusion about
themselves. Many of them clearly are able to imagine
a different life, but are prepared to settle for reality.

It's funny when you are asked to sit down and write
an essay on who you would like to be like, you find
you don't find it as good as you thought . . . Most of
all, I would like to be myself at my age now and grow
up quite naturally as I hope I'm doing with lovely
long eyelashes . . . 17 year old typist.

FATHER IS PERFECT

Of the 127 subjects who wish to be like someone
other than themselves, very few choose a member of
their own family, only 2 boys and 7 girls (against this
must be laid the number of "contented" subjects who
pay tribute to parents and other members of their
families). Those who evince such strong family senti-
ments express themselves with considerable feeling.

The person I should most like to be like is my father,
because he's understanding, loving, gentle and has a
great personality. My father has a very strong charac-
ter. When he was a child his family were poor, he
made up his mind his family would have everything
he didn't. This he has succeeded in doing. I love
and respect my father and if I could be the same as



him, I should thank God. My father is not very tall,
about 5 ft. 7 in., is 46 and still has long jet black hair.
He is extremely young in his appearance, and loves
his children and his wife. He has no temper, but gets
annoyed at times . . . Now that he has educated us
he's started buying household luxuries . . . and a nice
home. To me my father is perfect in every way . . .
15 year old boy.

The person I am writing about is a retired policeman
who is 6 feet tall and weighs 17 stone. He has had
eight children, the youngest being 18 years . . . to my
eyes there couldn't be a happier family . . . This man
has not only brought his children up the right way,
but he has worked all through the night for them, so
that they could have little luxuries . . . I cannot say
very much about this man as I couldn't possibly do

it all in the time, it would take pages and pages. As
you probably guessed this man is my DAD . . .
18 year old girl.

If I really had to choose someone, I think I would
choose my mother. She is very kind and always helps
any one who needs it, she is the dearest person in the
world, I would like to be like her, more than anyone
else. . . . girl of 17

I should just like to be an ordinary person, happily
married with my husband and children around me. In
fact if I could be just that, then I would be my mother
all over again. She is content with her life, and being
her daughter, I should like to be my mother . . .
girl of 17.

I would like to be like my elder sister because through
her life of 20 years she has had to work, but she has
got somewhere. She has a very nice personality and
character, with good looks. She has a very good job
and a nice husband with lots of friends, and money
and brains to go with it . . . girl of 15.

My idol is my 40 year old uncle. My first reasons are
he has a wonderful sense of honour . . . Also if I like
to talk to him about any subject he nearly always
gives me a reasonable answer and always has time
to listen . . . When I am older I hope that I am at
least half the man he is . . . 16 year old boy.

In view of the emphasis laid by some on the im-
portance of a teenage subculture, it is interesting to
note that whereas many references are made to the
wish to have lots of friends (and clearly these young
people attach great importance to friendship), only
12 subjects, 4 boys, 8 girls, chose friends as their
models. Sometimes the motive is admiration, some-
times it reveals a complex network of values and
aspirations which are mirrored in the friends they
wish to emulate.

A GOOD MATE

I would like to be like John. He is big and he is a
good mate . . . 16 year old boy.

The person I would like to be like is not anybody
famous but a good friend of mine. She has a wonder-
ful vivacious personality and a natural instinct to
make you laugh. She has money and plenty of
clothes, but is not spoilt. She is pretty and has a regu-
lar boy friend. . . . She would never cause an argu-
ment . . . 16 year old girl.

She is a very pleasant girl and seldom gets annoyed
or moody. She is very understanding and I can always
rely on her for good advice, if I need it. Like me she
is a shorthand typist. . . . We have been good friends
now for about nine years. . . . Her parents are not
rich, but decent working class people. She has almost
the same interests as me . . . 16 year old girl.

Incidentally among the personality qualities most
admired in friends, and in others, especially by the
girls, are vivacity, enthusiasm, and a capacity for
good social relationships.

There have been many indications throughout this
research of the deep interest these young people
have in the quality of personal relationships. Further
light is shed on this by a consideration of the sex
of the models and the many incidental comments on
relationships between the sexes.

While all the boys choose people of their own sex,
seven of the girls choose male subjects. Two of
these girls wish to be like their fathers, and one like
Adam Faith, not specifically for his masculinity, but
because "he has a lovely personality and lots of
people like him". Four girls express a wish to belong
to the opposite sex. The reasons they give throw light
on possible tensions between the sexes that may arise
from differential treatment and opportunity. A few
boys support the view that they have more privileges
as members of the male sex, for example:

I like to be a boy. In my opinion they have an easy
life and don't have to do much work in the home.
Also being a boy would give more chances of meet-
ing people, because a boy can always go up to a girl

Teenage values

and start talking to her, but if a girl did this they would think she was cheap . . . clerical worker, 15 years.

But the great majority of the girls and boys identify themselves with members of their own sex, sometimes expressing a wish to amend certain norms of behaviour, for example,

One thing is that I wish it was the done thing for girls to ask boys out as well as boys ask girls out writes a 15 year old machine operator.

LOVE AND MARRIAGE

About one quarter of the subjects make specific references to relations with the other sex, either in the boy/girl friend context or with reference to marriage.

The role of boy friends and girl friends is seen in various ways, for example, someone to share leisure activities, someone to trust and confide in, someone to satisfy vanity—"with a bird on my arm", and someone with whom to prove sexual prowess. The relationships outlined therefore range from the realistic idea of having "a steady" to the glamorous and extravagant involving several girl friends or boy friends and being "the centre of attraction". There are some hints of the conflicts with parents:

I would like to be able to see my fiance as often as I like without having to tell lies about my whereabouts . . . typist, 16 years.

. . . Would have a nice good looking boy friend whom all the other girls envied. She'd go out a lot with him as they both liked the same sports and were good at the same thing . . . telephonist, 15 years.

I wouldn't like to be like any other girl I know. They're all catly and they always seem to think I'm trying to steal their boy friends, which I usually am, but of course if their boy friends really liked them they wouldn't let me take them away would they? . . . telephonist, 15 years.

I would like a steady girl friend so that we could have a good time together . . . 16 year old boy.



References

The investigation has been carried out for The Youth Studies and Research Foundation of The Van Leer Trust. 230 adolescents were involved, and a variety of techniques used, including some projection tests. Other aspects of the study have been reported in:

"Connotations of Morality", E. M. & M. Eppel, *Brit. J. of Sociology*, Sept. 1962.

"Adolescent Values", E. M. Eppel, NEW SOCIETY, 28 March.

"Moral Beliefs of Young Workers", E. M. Eppel, *Brit. J. of Sociology*, Sept. 1963.

"The Adolescent and Changing Moral Standards", E. M. Eppel, in *Moral Education in a Changing Society*, Ed. W. R. Niblett, Faber, October 1963.

BOYS

He has many girl friends, but although at 21 he has no possible thought of marriage, he thinks 25 is an ideal age . . . 16 year old.

After I've seen as much as possible I would marry a decent girl about 22 years old and settle down to married life . . . 17 year old.

. . . plenty of parties, plenty of women, up to the age of 25 to 30 years. Then begin to settle down with a nice wife, own house in suburbs, later on to have children . . . 17 year old.

. . . travelling around the world . . . I think this would . . . straighten a person out, and on returning home would be able to settle down more easily. On returning I would find a job with security, like the one I have now, get married, settle down for a peaceful married life . . . A sort of restlessness . . . 17 year old.

girls

The girls who discuss marriage seen less concerned with the conflict between adventure and security than do the boys, although there are a few hints about "enjoying" themselves . . . e.g. 15 year old:

I would like to meet the right man for me and settle down and get married. I am not getting married too early so that I have not seen any life but would like to get married when I am about 21 years of age, when I consider I would have seen all the life I would like to.

On the other hand some indicate a wish for early marriage: "I would like to be 18 years old so that I could get married next year instead of in three years' time," wrote a 16 year old typist.

Some express a wish to be competent in their jobs, perhaps work part time when they first marry, but firmly reject the idea of a permanent career:

I do not want to be a career girl for the rest of my life but to have a home and family . . . 17 year old.

. . . but when the children arrive she will be a full time housewife as she believes in a family upbringing for children . . . 16 year old.

The picture of marriage drawn by these girls almost always includes children. Only one subject, a 15 year old girl, rejects the role of motherhood:

I would like to love children, which I know I never could. I dislike them immensely and would hate to have any of my own.

Occasionally a girl may decide to settle for marriage after glamorous fantasies, as this 15 year old typist:

The person I would like to be like is Elvis' girl friend and be the envy of all the other girls . . . but he wouldn't have much time for me, because he would be thinking about his career most of the time . . . But really I would like to be a happily married woman with about four children and a beautiful house with a handsome husband to love me.

The stereotype of the ideal family occurs often:

I would like to get married when I am about 20 to a man who would love me for the rest of my life. I would hope to have four children, and I'm sure we would be very happy together . . . 15 year old clerk.

In conclusion it appears that the expectation of being "a plain housewife" is deep rooted in these girls who discuss marriage, expressed once and for all, in a matter of fact way, by this 17 year old clerk:

Of course I have the usual ambitions to be a wife and mother. And I expect I shall have been sorted out by then. At least I hope so.

It should be emphasized that in spite of the publicity given to teenage promiscuity and teenage marriage, only a small minority refer in these essays to sex (11 per cent) or marriage (13 per cent). These young people are not obsessed with the subject.

THE POLICE ARE UNDER FIRE
THEY MIGHT ACHIEVE BET
PREVENTING JUVENILE CR

The policeman is now more than expert: in crime detection methods, and a variety of other useful arts, with the increasing importance of the semi-scientific component in the job gone a steady decline in what might "human element". This may be partly why there has been some feeling in relationships between the police and not what they were. They may not be as approachable, as they used to be, make suggestions that our policeman social work role for themselves so likely. Nevertheless, some current make it necessary to consider that seriously.

For many years, some forces have right to issue formal cautions to offenders bringing them before the courts. This to have no basis in law. It is no statute or by any recognized principle of law. At the same time it is in practice, and it has occasionally been to the police in Home Office circuit has even been indirectly acknowledged in Section 2 of the Street Offences which women, unfairly cautioned could appeal to the court for the caution from police records. Caution impeccably legal (some lawyers argue in failing to prosecute, are guilty of felony"), but it is almost certainly an end, it is only the police who can judge have enough evidence to prosecute, sometimes on the grounds that the caution rather than prosecution

This itself, however, raises some issues. Should the police be allowed to suggest to citizens whom they admit prove to have been guilty of an offence this makes nonsense of the traditional doctrine that the individual is assumed until the contrary has been proved. But cautioning has not, by any means, been confined to those cases in which evidence is lacking. A more positive, welfare-orientated policy, involving the use of the device, often being made of the device. Officially cautioned, in many cases, because that it would be in their interests and to do this instead of prosecuting the offender, committing an offence which stable at any rate feels to be rather given a dressing down, and solemnly prosecution next time, in the home bring him to court may do him more. The police are thus still assuming the and jury in their own cases; and they to this a claim that they are experts in who know what is most likely to prevent from getting into trouble in the future would matter so much if it occurred fact, as the table overleaf shows, it is considerable, and an increasing scale.

This table refers only to indictable offences, the more serious offences which require a jury. In view of this it is surprising to realise that almost one in seven of