

Longitudinal research relating parenting styles and family climate to levels of moral reasoning suggests that Kohlberg was right (Pratt, Arnold, & Pratt, 1999). Parents' ability to identify, understand, and respond to children's and adolescents' less mature forms of moral reasoning seems to be particularly important to the development of moral reasoning. This ability on the part of parents is important because people of all ages have difficulty understanding and remembering moral arguments that are more advanced than their own level (Narvaez, 1998). Thus, a parent who can express her own moral views in words that reflect her child's level of understanding is more likely to be able to influence the child's moral development.

As an individual's capacity for moral reasoning grows, so does her ability to think logically about issues in other domains. For example, the complexity of an individual's political reasoning is very similar to the complexity of her moral reasoning (Raaijmakers, Verbogt, & Vollebergh, 1998). Further, attitudes toward the acceptability of violence also vary with levels of moral reasoning. Individuals at lower levels are more tolerant of violence (Sotelo & Sanrador, 1999).

Perhaps most importantly, teenagers' level of moral reasoning appears to be positively correlated with prosocial behavior and negatively related to antisocial behavior (Schonert-Reichl, 1999). In other words, the highest levels of prosocial behavior are found among teens at the highest levels of moral reasoning (compared to their peers). Alternatively, the highest levels of antisocial behavior are found among adolescents at the lowest levels of moral reasoning.

Learning Objective 12.9

How has Kohlberg's theory been criticized?

Criticisms of Kohlberg's Theory

Criticisms of Kohlberg's theory have come from theorists representing different perspectives.

Culture and Moral Reasoning Cross-cultural research provides strong support for the universality of Kohlberg's stage sequence (Snarey, 1985, 1995). Nevertheless, cross-cultural researchers have argued that his approach is too narrow to be considered truly universal. These critics point out that there are many aspects of moral reasoning found in non-Western cultures that do not fit in well with Kohlberg's approach (Eckensberger & Zimba, 1997). The root of the problem, they say, is that Kohlberg's theory is strongly tied to the idea that justice is an overriding moral principle. To be sure, say critics, justice is an important moral concept throughout the world, and thus it isn't surprising that Kohlberg's stage sequence has been so strongly supported in cross-cultural research. However, these critics argue that the notion that justice supercedes all other moral considerations is what distinguishes Western from non-Western cultures. As these criticisms would predict, research has shown that the responses of individuals in non-Western cultures to Kohlberg's classic dilemmas often include ideas that are not found in his scoring system (Baek, 2002).

For example, in many cultures, respect for one's elders is an important moral principle that often overrides other concerns (Eckensberger & Zimba, 1997). Thus, if researchers alter the Heinz dilemma such that the sick woman is Heinz's mother rather than his wife, Western and non-Western research participants are likely to respond quite differently. Such differences are difficult to explain from the justice-based, stage-oriented perspective of Kohlberg's theory. Advocates for the theory have argued that respect for elders as the basis of moral reasoning represents Kohlberg's conventional level. Critics, by contrast, say that this classification underestimates the true moral reasoning level of individuals from non-Western cultures.

Moral Reasoning and Emotions Researchers studying the link between moral emotions and moral reasoning have also criticized the narrowness of Kohlberg's justice-based approach. Psychologist Nancy Eisenberg, for example, suggests that *empathy*, the ability to identify with others' emotions, is both a cause and a consequence of moral development (Eisenberg, 2000). Similarly, Eisenberg suggests that a complete explanation of moral development should include age-related and individual variations in the ability to regulate emotions (such as anger) that can motivate antisocial behavior.

Likewise, Carol Gilligan claims that an ethic based on caring for others and on maintaining social relationships may be as important to moral reasoning as are ideas about

justice. Gilligan's theory argues that there are at least two distinct "moral orientations": justice and care (Gilligan, 1982; Gilligan & Wiggins, 1987). Each has its own central injunction—not to treat others unfairly (justice) and not to turn away from someone in need (caring). Research suggests that adolescents do exhibit a moral orientation based on care and that care-based reasoning about hypothetical moral dilemmas is related to reasoning about real-life dilemmas (Skoe et al., 1999). In response, Kohlberg acknowledged in his later writings that his theory deals specifically with development of reasoning about justice and does not claim to be a comprehensive account of moral development (Kohlberg, Levine, & Hewer, 1983). Thus, some developmentalists view Gilligan's ideas about moral development as an expansion of Kohlberg's theory rather than a rejection of it (Jorgensen, 2006).

Possible sex differences in moral reasoning are another focus of Gilligan's theory. According to Gilligan, boys and girls learn both justice and care orientations, but girls are more likely to operate from the care orientation whereas boys are more likely to operate from a justice orientation. Because of these differences, girls and boys tend to perceive moral dilemmas quite differently.

Given the emerging evidence on sex differences in styles of interaction and in friendship patterns, Gilligan's hypothesis makes some sense. Perhaps girls, focused more on intimacy in their relationships, judge moral dilemmas by different criteria. But, in fact, research on moral dilemmas has not consistently shown that boys are more likely to use justice reasoning or that girls more often use care reasoning. Several studies of adults do show such a pattern (e.g., Lyons, 1983; Wark & Krebs, 1996). However, studies of children and teenagers generally have not (Jadack, Hyde, Moore, & Keller, 1995; Smetana, Killen, & Turiel, 1991; Walker et al., 1987). Further, recent evidence suggests that such sex differences, if they exist, may be restricted to North American culture (Skoe et al., 1999).

Moral Reasoning and Behavior Finally, critics have questioned the degree to which moral reasoning predicts moral behavior (Krebs & Dexter, 2006). Researchers have found that moral reasoning and moral behavior are correlated, but the relationship is far from perfect. To explain inconsistencies between reasoning and behavior, learning theorists suggest that moral reasoning is situational rather than developmental. They point to a variety of studies to support this assertion.

First, neither adolescents nor adults reason at the same level in response to every hypothetical dilemma (Rique & Camino, 1997). An individual research participant might reason at the conventional level in response to one dilemma and at the postconventional level with respect to another. Second, the types of characters in moral dilemmas strongly influence research participants' responses to them, especially when the participants are adolescents. For example, hypothetical dilemmas involving celebrities as characters elicit much lower levels of moral reasoning from teenagers than those involving fictional characters such as Heinz (Einerson, 1998).

In addition, research participants show disparities in levels of moral reasoning invoked in response to hypothetical dilemmas and real-life moral issues. For example, Israeli Jewish, Israeli Bedouin, and Palestinian youths living in Israel demonstrate different levels of moral reasoning when responding to hypothetical stories such as the Heinz dilemma than they exhibit in discussing the moral dimensions of the long-standing conflicts among their ethnic groups (Elbedour, Baker, & Charlesworth, 1997). Thus, as learning theorists predict, it appears that situational factors may be more important variables for decisions about actual moral behavior than the level of moral reasoning exhibited in response to hypothetical dilemmas.

Moral Development and Antisocial Behavior

The consistent finding of low levels of moral reasoning among adolescents who engage in serious forms of antisocial behavior has been of particular interest to developmentalists (Aleixo & Norris, 2000; Ashkar & Kenny, 2007; Cheung, Chan, Lee, Liu, & Leung, 2001; Ma, 2003). Delinquency is distinguished from other forms

Learning Objective 12.10

What are the moral reasoning abilities and other characteristics of delinquents?



Adolescents who commit crimes are less advanced than their peers in moral reasoning because they lack the ability to look at situations from others' points of view.

of antisocial behavior, such as bullying, on the basis of actual law-breaking. Thus, the term **delinquency** applies specifically to adolescent behavior that violates the law. Serious forms of delinquency, such as rape and murder, have increased dramatically in the United States in recent years. Attempts to explain this phenomenon have resulted in research that has led to a more comprehensive understanding of youth violence.

Delinquents appear to be behind their peers in moral reasoning because of deficits in role-taking skills. For example, researchers have found that teenagers who can look at actions they are contemplating from their parents' perspective are less likely to engage in delinquent behavior than adolescents who cannot do so (Wyatt & Carlo, 2002). Most delinquent teens also seem

to be unable to look at their crimes from their victims' perspectives or to assess hypothetical crimes from the victims' perspectives. Thus, programs aimed at helping delinquents develop more mature levels of moral reasoning usually focus on heightening their awareness of the victim's point of view. However, few such programs have been successful (Armstrong, 2003; Moody, 1997; Putnins, 1997). Consequently, psychologists believe that there is far more to delinquency than just a lack of role-taking and moral reasoning skills.

First, it appears that there are at least two important subvarieties of delinquents, distinguished by the age at which the delinquent behavior begins. Childhood-onset problems are more serious and are more likely to persist into adulthood. Adolescent-onset problems are typically milder and more transitory, apparently more a reflection of peer-group processes or a testing of the limits of authority than a deeply ingrained behavior problem.

The developmental pathway for early-onset delinquency seems to be directed by factors inside the child, such as temperament and personality. In early life, these children throw tantrums and defy parents; they may also develop insecure attachments (Greenberg, Speltz, & DeKlyen, 1993). Once the defiance appears, if the parents are not up to the task of controlling the child, the child's behavior worsens. He may begin to display overt aggression toward others, who then reject him, which aggravates the problem. The seriously aggressive child is pushed in the direction of other children with similar problems, who then become the child's only supportive peer group (Shaw, Kennan, & Vondra, 1994).

By adolescence, these youngsters may exhibit serious disturbances in thinking (Aleixo & Norris, 2000). Most have friends drawn almost exclusively from among other delinquent teens (Tremblay, Masse, Vitaro, & Dobkin, 1995). Of course, this situation is reinforced by frequent rejection by nondelinquent peers (Brendgen, Vitaro, & Bukowski, 1998). Many of these adolescents have parents with histories of antisocial behavior as well (Gainey, Catalano, Haggerty, & Hoppe, 1997). Early-onset delinquents are also highly likely to display a whole cluster of other problem behaviors, including drug and alcohol use, truancy or dropping out of school, and early and risky sexual behavior, including having multiple sexual partners (Dishion, French, & Patterson, 1995) (see No Easy Answers).

For young people whose delinquency appears first in adolescence, the pathway is different. They, too, have friends who are delinquents. However, associating with delinquent peers worsens their behavior, while the behavior of early-onset delinquents remains essentially the same, whether they have antisocial friends or are "loners" (Vitaro, Tremblay, Kerr, Pagani, & Bukowski, 1997). Moreover, the antisocial behavior patterns of adolescent-onset delinquents often change as their relationships change (Laird, Pettit, Dodge, & Bates, 1999). Consequently, peer influence seems to be the most important factor in the development of adolescent-onset delinquency.

Parenting style and other relationship variables seem to be additional factors in this type of antisocial behavior. Most of these teens have parents who do not monitor them sufficiently; their individual friendships are not very supportive or intimate; and they are drawn to a clique or crowd that includes some teens who are experimenting with drugs or mild law-breaking. After a period of months of hanging out with such a group of peers, previously

delinquency antisocial behavior that includes law-breaking

NO EASY ANSWERS

Preventing Youth Violence

Surveys showing that 20% of all violent crimes in the United States are committed by individuals under age 18 have increased public awareness of the growing problem of youth violence (National Center for Injury Prevention and Control [NCIPC], 2000). Public officials have turned to psychologists in the hopes of finding ways to reduce the incidence of youth violence. However, few programs designed to change aggressive and violent behavior in adolescents have been successful (Armstrong, 2003).

A number of psychologists have contributed to the development and evaluation of a promising program called the Fast Track Project, which involves several hundred aggressive elementary school children in four different U.S. cities (Conduct Problems Research Group, 2004). The children are divided into experimental and control groups. In special class sessions, children in the experimental group learn how to recognize others' emotions. They also learn strategies for controlling their own feelings, managing aggressive impulses, and resolving conflicts with peers.

Teachers in the program use a series of signals to help children maintain control. For example, a red card or a picture of a red traffic light might be used to indicate unacceptable behavior. A yellow card would mean something like "Calm down. You're about to lose control." Parenting classes and support groups help parents learn effective ways of teaching children acceptable behavior, rather than just punishing unacceptable behavior. In addition, parents are encouraged to maintain communication with their children's teachers. These strategies decrease the frequency of aggressive behavior among participants and enable them to manage their emotions more effectively and to get along better with their peers (Conduct Problems Research Group, 2004).

Clearly, such interventions require a considerable commitment of time and resources. Furthermore, they aren't effective for every child. However, they represent the best options developmentalists have to offer at this point. When balanced against the suffering of the half million or so victims of youth violence each year in the United States or against the personal consequences of violent behavior for the young perpetrators of these crimes, the costs don't seem quite so extreme.

Take a Stand

Decide which of these two statements you most agree with and think about how you would defend your position.

1. When adolescents behave aggressively, they should be referred to programs such as the Fast Track Project rather than punished.
2. Programs such as the Fast Track Project should not take the place of punishment, both punishment and emotional management skills are important in helping violent teenagers learn to behave less aggressively.

nondelinquent adolescents show some increase in risky or antisocial behaviors, such as increased drug-taking (Berndt & Keefe, 1995a; Dishion et al., 1995; Steinberg, Fletcher, & Darling, 1994). However, when parents do provide good monitoring and emotional support, their adolescent child is unlikely to get involved in delinquent acts or drug use even if she hangs around with a tough crowd or has a close friend who engages in such behavior (Brown & Huang, 1995; Mounts & Steinberg, 1995).

Critical Thinking

1. How might Kohlberg's views and those of his critics be integrated to explain variations in moral behavior among adolescents?

Social Relationships

Fifteen-year-old Sheronnah's mother told her long ago that she would not be able to go out on a date until she was 16. Recently, however, a boy at school has begun to pursue the girl, and she has spent untold hours debating the issue with her mother. However, the mother has refused to relent and, as a result, Sheronnah is giving her mother the "silent treatment." According to the progression in children's and adolescents' understanding of social conflicts that is described in Table 12.2 on page 358, Sheronnah is likely to expect that the division that has developed between her mother and herself over the dating issue is a temporary one. Nevertheless, Sheronnah's predicament illustrates the growing importance of peer relationships in adolescence, a trend that is shown in Figure 12.6 on page 358.

Relationships with Parents

Teenagers have two, apparently contradictory, tasks in their relationships with their parents: to establish autonomy from them and to maintain a sense of relatedness with them. As a result, the frequency of parent-child conflicts increases. This trend has been documented by a number of researchers (e.g., Flannery, Montemayor, & Eberly, 1994;

Learning Objective 12.11

What are the features of adolescents' relationships with their parents?

Table 12.2 Children's and Adolescents' Comments about How to Solve Disagreements Between Friends

Age	Comments
5-Year-Olds	■ Go away from her and come back later when you're not fighting.
8-Year-Olds	■ Well, if you say something and don't really mean it, then you have to mean it when you take it back.
14-Year-Olds	■ Sometimes you got to get away for a while. Calm down a bit so you won't be so angry. Then get back and try to talk it out.
16-Year-Old	■ Well, you could talk it out, but it usually fades itself out. It usually takes care of itself. You don't have to explain everything. You do certain things and each of you knows what it means. But if not, then talk it out.

(Source: Selman, 1980, pp. 107–113.)

Laursen, 1995; Steinberg, 1988). In the great majority of families, these conflicts center around everyday issues such as chores or personal rights—for example, whether the adolescent should be allowed to wear a bizarre hairstyle or whether and when the teen should be required to do chores. Teenagers and their parents also often disagree about the age at which certain privileges—such as dating—ought to be granted and about the amount of parental supervision teenagers need (Cunningham, Swanson, Spencer, & Dupree, 2003; Dekovic, Noom, & Meeus, 1997).

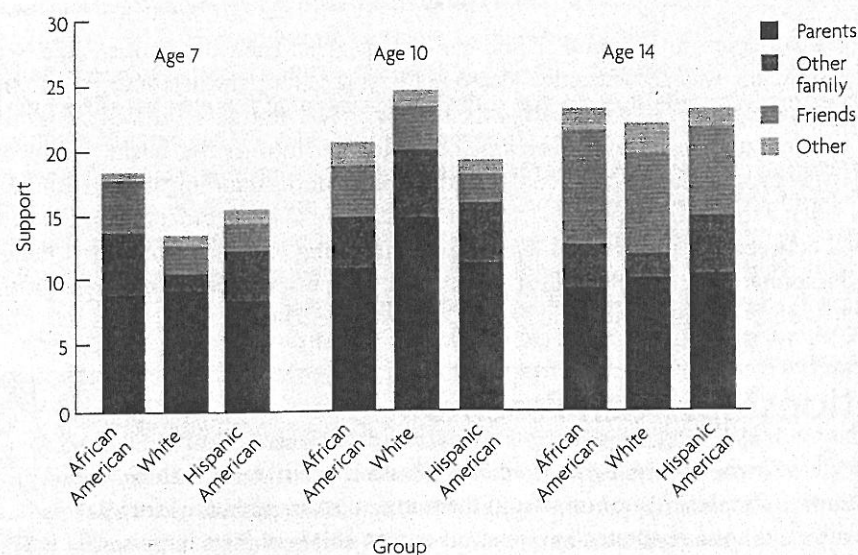
Individual traits of teenagers themselves may contribute to conflicts with parents. The adolescent's temperament, for example, contributes to the amount of conflict. Those who have been difficult from early childhood are the most likely to experience high degrees of conflict with parents in adolescence (Dekovic, 1999). Teens' pubertal status may be a factor as well. Among girls, conflict seems to rise after menarche (Holmbeck & Hill, 1991). Moreover, as noted earlier, cultural factors affect both the degree of parent-teen conflict and perceptions of its meaning.

Despite these conflicts, teenagers' underlying emotional attachment to their parents remains strong on average (see Figure 12.6). A study in the Netherlands suggests that the teenager's bond with her parents may weaken somewhat in the middle of adolescence (ages 15 and 16) and then return to former levels (van Wel, 1994). But virtually all the researchers who have explored this question find that a teenager's sense of well-being or happiness is

Figure 12.6
Sources of Support
for Adolescents

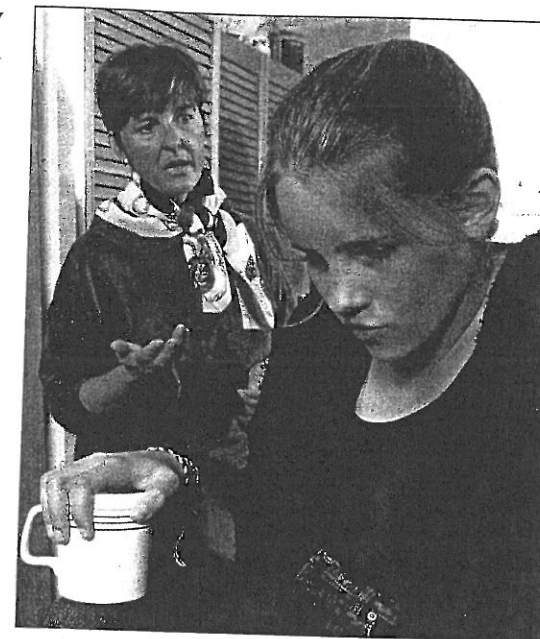
Children and teens from different ethnic groups were asked about the amount and type of support they received from various sources. Note that for teens, friends become more significant sources of support, but parents do not become less important.

(Source: Adapted from Figure 2, p. 815, "Convoys of Social Support and Early Adolescence: Structure and Function" by M. Levitt, N. Guacci-Franco, and J. Levitt, from *Developmental Psychology*, 29. Copyright © 1993, by the American Psychological Association. Adapted with permission.)



more strongly correlated with the quality of her attachment to her parents than with the quality of her relationships with peers (e.g., Greenberg, Siegel, & Leitch, 1983; Raja, McGee, & Stanton, 1992). Moreover, research findings regarding the centrality of parent-teen relationships have been consistent across a variety of cultures (Claes, 1998; Okamoto & Uechi, 1999).

Research in several countries has also found that teens who remain closely attached to their parents are the most likely to be academically successful and to enjoy good peer relations (Mayseless & Scharf, 2007; Turnage, 2004; Weimer, Kerns, & Oldenburg, 2004; Zimmermann, 2004). They are also less likely than less securely attached teens to engage in antisocial behavior (Ma, Shek, Cheung, & Oi Bun Lam, 2000). Further, the quality of attachment in early adolescence predicts drug use in later adolescence and early adulthood (Brook, Whiteman, Finch, & Cohen, 2000). Teens who are close to their parents are less likely to use drugs than peers whose bonds with parents are weaker. Thus, even while teenagers are becoming more autonomous, they need their parents to provide a psychological safe base.



While it is true that the physical changes of puberty are often followed by an increase in the number of conflicts, it is a myth that conflict is the main feature of the parent-adolescent relationship.

Friendships

Despite the importance of family relationships to adolescents, it is clear that peer relationships become far more significant in adolescence than they have been at any earlier period. For many, electronic communication devices that are available today serve as hubs around which their social networks revolve. Many teenagers have one group of friends with whom they communicate by phone, another with whom they exchange online instant messages and e-mail, and yet another with which they associate through online communities such as myspace.com (Foehr, 2006). As a result, teenagers have a wider range of acquaintances than their parents did in adolescence. However, they do not necessarily have more close friends.

Teens' friendships are increasingly intimate, in the sense that adolescent friends share more and more of their inner feelings and secrets and are more knowledgeable about each other's feelings. Loyalty and faithfulness become more valued characteristics of friendship. However, the ability to display intimacy, loyalty, and faithfulness in the context of a friendship doesn't come automatically with age. In fact, teens vary considerably in these interpersonal skills. The variation may be the result of individual differences in temperament and personality or of teens' experiences with family relationships (Updegraff & Obeidallah, 1999).

Adolescent friendships are also more stable than those of younger children (Bowker, 2004; Degirmencioglu, Urberg, & Tolson, 1998). In one longitudinal study, researchers found that only about 20% of friendships among fourth-graders lasted as long as a year, whereas about 40% of friendships formed by these same youngsters when they were tenth-graders were long-lasting (Cairns & Cairns, 1994). Friendship stability probably increases in adolescence because older teens work harder than younger teens and elementary school children at maintaining positive relationships with friends through negotiation of conflicts (Nagamine, 1999).

In addition, teens often choose friends who are committed to the same activities they are. For example, many teens, especially boys, report that peer companionship is their primary motive for playing computer and video games (Chou & Tsai, 2007; Colwell & Kato, 2005). Some studies suggest that shared video game-playing experiences promote the development of a masculine gender role among male teens (Sanford & Madill, 2006). Some

Learning Objective 12.12

What are the characteristics of adolescents' friendships?

developmentalists also argue that playing these games in group settings helps male adolescents learn to channel aggressive and competitive impulses into socially acceptable ways of expressing them (Jansz & Martens, 2005).

Finally, adolescents' reasons for ending friendships reflect the influence of individual differences in rate of development of social skills. For example, a change in identity status from a less mature to a more mature level often leads to acquisition of new friends (Akers, Jones, & Coyl, 1998). Likewise, girls seem to prefer friendships with other girls whose romantic status is the same as their own—that is, girls who have boyfriends prefer female friends who also have boyfriends. In fact, a girl who gets a boyfriend is likely to spend less time with female peers and to end long-standing friendships with girls who haven't yet acquired a romantic partner (Benenson & Benarroch, 1998; Zimmer-Gembeck, 1999). For boys, differences in athletic achievements can lead to the end of previously important friendships.

Learning Objective 12.13

How do peer groups change over the teen years?

Peer Groups

Like friendships, peer groups become relatively stable in adolescence (Degirmencioglu et al., 1998). Adolescents typically choose to associate with a group that shares their values, attitudes, behaviors, and identity status (Akers et al., 1998; Mackey & La Greca, 2007; Urberg, Degirmencioglu, & Tolson, 1998). If the discrepancy between their own ideas and those of their friends becomes too great, teens are more likely to switch to a more compatible group of friends than to be persuaded to adopt the first group's values or behaviors (Verkooijen, de Vries, & Nielsen, 2007). Furthermore, teenagers report that when explicit peer pressure is exerted, it is likely to be pressure toward positive activities, such as school involvement, and away from misconduct.

The structure of the peer group also changes over the years of adolescence. The classic, widely quoted early study is that of Dunphy (1963) on the formation, dissolution, and interaction of teenaged groups in a high school in Sydney, Australia, between 1958 and 1960. Dunphy identified two important subvarieties of groups. The first type, which he called a **clique**, is made up of four to six young people who appear to be strongly attached to one another. Cliques have strong cohesiveness and high levels of intimate sharing.

In the early years of adolescence, cliques are almost entirely same-sex groups—a holdover from the preadolescent pattern. Gradually, however, the cliques combine into larger sets that Dunphy called **crowds**, which include both males and females. Finally, the crowd breaks down again into mixed-gender cliques and then into loose associations of couples. In Dunphy's study, the period during which adolescents socialized in crowds was roughly between 13 and 15—the very years when they display the greatest conformity to peer pressure.

More recent researchers on adolescence have changed Dunphy's labels somewhat (Brown, 1990; Brown, Mory, & Kinney, 1994). They use the word *crowd* to refer to the

reputation-based group with which a young person is identified, either by choice or by peer designation. In U.S. schools, these groups have labels such as "jocks," "brains," "nerds," "dweebs," "punks," "druggies," "toughs," "normals," "populars," "preppies," and "loners." Studies in American junior high and high schools make it clear that teenagers can readily identify each of the major crowds in their school and have quite stereotypical—even caricatured—descriptions of them (e.g., "The partyers goof off a lot more than the jocks do, but they don't come to school stoned like the burnouts do") (Brown et al., 1994, p. 133). Each of these descriptions serves as what Brown calls an *identity prototype*: Labeling others and oneself as belonging to one or more of these groups helps to create or reinforce the adolescent's own iden-

tity (Brown et al., 1994). Such labeling also helps the adolescent identify potential friends or foes.

Through the years of junior high and high school, the social system of crowds becomes increasingly differentiated, with more and more distinct groups. For example, in one mid-western school system, researchers found that junior high students labeled only two major crowds: one small high-status group, called "trendies" in this school, and the great mass of lower-status students, called "dweebs" (Kinney, 1993). A few years later, the same students named five distinct crowds: three with comparatively high social status and two low-status groups ("grits" and "punks"). By late high school, these students identified seven or eight crowds, but the crowds now appeared to be less significant in the social organization of the peer group. These observations support other research that finds that mutual friendships and dating pairs are more central to social interactions in later adolescence than are cliques or crowds (Urberg, Degirmencioglu, Tolson, & Halliday-Scher, 1995).

Romantic Relationships

Heterosexual and homosexual teens follow somewhat different pathways. For both, the ups and downs that are associated with early romances are an important theme of development during adolescence.

Learning Objective 12.14

How does interest in romantic relationships emerge among heterosexual and homosexual teens?

Heterosexual Teens Most teens display a gradual progression from same-sex friendships to heterosexual relationships. The change happens gradually, but it seems to proceed at a somewhat more rapid pace in girls than in boys. At the beginning of adolescence, teens are still fairly rigid about their preferences for same-sex friends (Bukowski, Sippola, & Hoza, 1999). Over the next year or two, they become more open to opposite-sex friendships (Hartton & Latane, 1997; Kuttler, LaGreca, & Prinstein, 1999). The skills they gain in relating to opposite-sex peers in such friendships and in mixed-gender groups prepare them for romantic relationships (Feiring, 1999). Thus, although adults often assume that sexual desires are the basis of emergent romantic relationships, it appears that social factors are just as important. In fact, research suggests that social competence in a variety of relationships—with parents, peers, and friends—predicts the ease with which teens move from exclusive same-sex relationships to opposite-sex friendships and romantic relationships (Theriault, 1998).

By 12 or 13, most adolescents have a basic conception of what it means to be "in love," and the sense of being in love is an important factor in adolescent dating patterns (Montgomery & Sorel, 1998). In other words, teenagers prefer to date those with whom they believe they are in love, and they view falling out of love as a reason for ending a dating relationship. In addition, for girls (but not for boys), romantic relationships are seen as a context for self-disclosure. Put another way, girls seem to want more psychological intimacy from these early relationships than their partners do (Feiring, 1999).

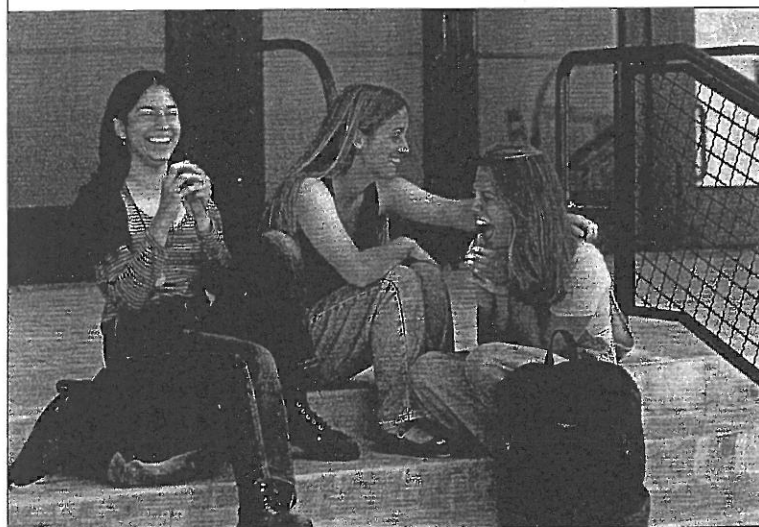
Early dating and early sexual activity are more common among the poor of every ethnic group and among those who experience relatively early puberty. Religious teachings and individual attitudes about the appropriate age for dating and sexual behavior also make a difference, as does family structure. Girls with parents who are divorced or remarried, for example, report earlier dating and higher levels of sexual experience than do girls from intact families, and those with a strong religious identity report later dating and lower levels of sexuality (Bingham, Miller, & Adams, 1990; Miller & Moore, 1990). But for every group, these are years of experimentation with romantic relationships.

Homosexual Teens Romantic relationships emerge somewhat differently in the lives of homosexual teens. Researchers have found that homosexual teenagers are more comfortable about revealing their sexual orientation to their parents and to their peers than was true in past cohorts (Floyd & Bakeman, 2006). Consequently, developmentalists have learned a great deal more about the development of a homosexual orientation in the past couple of decades. One thing that researchers have learned is that homosexual teenagers become aware of same-sex attraction at around age 11 or 12, roughly the same age when their heterosexual

clique four to six young people who appear to be strongly attached to one another

crowd a combination of cliques, which includes both males and females

In the early teen years, same-sex peer groups predominate.



Critical Thinking

1. Think back to your own high school years and draw a diagram or map to describe the organization of crowds and cliques. Were those crowds or cliques more or less important in the last few years of high school than they had been earlier? In what ways did the formation of romantic relationships disrupt or reinforce crowds and cliques?

peers begin to notice their attraction to the opposite sex (Rosario, Scrimshaw, & Hunter, 2004). In contrast to heterosexual teens, boys notice and act on same-sex attraction at somewhat earlier ages than girls do (Grov, Bimbi, Nanin, & Parsons, 2006). However, girls who ultimately commit to a homosexual orientation express more certainty about their sexual identity than boys do (Rosario, Scrimshaw, Hunter, & Braun, 2006).

There are many boys and girls, however, who experience some degree of attraction to both sexes prior to self-identifying as gay or lesbian. Thus, many homosexual teens go through a period of sexual discovery that begins with experimentation with heterosexual relationships. Shortly thereafter, these teenagers begin to experiment with same-sex relationships. By age 15 or so, most have classified themselves as primarily heterosexual or committed to a gay, lesbian, or bisexual orientation (Rosario, Scrimshaw, & Hunter, 2004). Many of those who are gay, lesbian, or bisexual participate in clubs and extracurricular activities that are designed to help sexual minority youth form social connections. In the company of these like-minded peers, gay, lesbian, and bisexual teens meet potential romantic partners and find important sources of social support (Rosario, Scrimshaw, & Hunter, 2004).

SUMMARY

Theories of Social and Personality Development

Learning Objective 12.1 What happens during Erikson's identity versus role confusion stage?

- According to Freud, adolescents are in the genital stage, a period during which sexual maturity is reached. Erikson viewed adolescence as a period when a person faces a crisis of identity versus role confusion, out of which the teenager must develop a sense of who he is and where he belongs in his culture.

Learning Objective 12.2 How does Marcia explain identity development?

- Building on Erikson's notion of an adolescent identity crisis, Marcia identified four identity statuses. Research suggests that the process of identity formation may take place somewhat later than either Erikson or Marcia believed.

Self-Concept

Learning Objective 12.3 In what way does self-understanding in adolescence differ from that in childhood?

- Self-definitions become increasingly abstract at adolescence, with more emphasis on enduring, internal qualities and ideology.

Learning Objective 12.4 How does self-esteem change across the teenage years?

- Self-esteem drops somewhat at the beginning of adolescence and then rises steadily throughout the teenaged years.

Learning Objective 12.5 What are the gender role concepts of adolescents?

- Teenagers also increasingly define themselves in terms that include both masculine and feminine traits. When high

levels of both masculinity and femininity are present, the individual is described as androgynous. Androgyny is associated with higher self-esteem in both male and female adolescents.

Learning Objective 12.6 How do minority, biracial, and immigrant teens develop a sense of ethnic identity?

- Young people in clearly identifiable minority groups, biracial teens, and teens in immigrant families have the additional task in adolescence of forming an ethnic identity, a process that appears to have several steps analogous to those in Marcia's model of identity formation.

Moral Development

Learning Objective 12.7 What are the features of moral reasoning at each of Kohlberg's stages?

- Kohlberg proposed six stages of moral reasoning, organized into three levels. Preconventional moral reasoning includes reliance on external authority: What is punished is bad, and what feels good is good. Conventional morality is based on rules and norms provided by outside groups, such as the family, church, or society. Postconventional morality is based on self-chosen principles. Research evidence suggests that these levels and stages are loosely correlated with age, develop in a specified order, and appear in this same sequence in all cultures studied so far.

Learning Objective 12.8 What are some important causes and effects in the development of moral reasoning?

- The acquisition of cognitive role-taking skills is important to moral development, but the social environment is important as well. Specifically, to foster moral reasoning, adults must provide children with opportunities for discussion of moral issues. Moral reasoning and moral behavior are correlated, though the relationship is far from perfect.

Learning Objective 12.9 How has Kohlberg's theory been criticized?

- Kohlberg's theory has been criticized by theorists who place more emphasis on learning moral behavior and others who believe that moral reasoning may be based more on emotional factors than on ideas about justice and fairness.

Learning Objective 12.10 What are the moral reasoning abilities and other characteristics of delinquents?

- Delinquent teens are usually found to be far behind their peers in both role-taking and moral reasoning. However, other factors, such as parenting style, may be equally important in delinquency.

Social Relationships

Learning Objective 12.11 What are the features of adolescents' relationships with their parents?

- Adolescent-parent interactions typically become somewhat more conflicted in early adolescence, an effect possibly linked to the physical changes of puberty. Strong attachments to parents remain so and are predictive of good peer

relations. Authoritative parenting continues to be the optimal style to use with adolescents.

Learning Objective 12.12 What are the characteristics of adolescents' friendships?

- Susceptibility to peer-group pressure appears to be at its peak at about age 13 or 14.

Learning Objective 12.13 How do peer groups change over the teen years?

- Reputation-based groups, or *crowds*, as well as smaller groups, called *cliques*, are important parts of adolescent social relationships.

Learning Objective 12.14 How does interest in romantic relationships emerge among heterosexual and homosexual teens?

- Heterosexual teens gradually move from same-sex peer groups to heterosexual couples. The feeling of being "in love" is important to the formation of couple relationships. Many homosexual teens experiment with heterosexual and homosexual relationships before committing to a gay, lesbian, or bisexual orientation in mid-adolescence.

KEY TERMS

clique (p. 360)

conventional morality (p. 351)

crowd (p. 360)

delinquency (p. 356)

ethnic identity (p. 347)

foreclosure (p. 342)

gender role identity (p. 346)

identity (p. 341)

identity achievement (p. 342)

identity crisis (p. 341)

identity diffusion (p. 342)

identity versus role confusion (p. 341)

moratorium (p. 342)

postconventional morality (p. 352)

preconventional morality (p. 351)

role-taking (p. 353)

TEST YOURSELF

Theories of Social and Personality Development

12.1 According to Freud, what is the stage during which psychosexual maturity is reached?

- anal
- phallic
- latency
- genital

12.2 What is the pivotal transition of adolescence, according to Erikson?

- the development of a libido
- the development of sexual fixations
- an identity crisis
- commitment to ideological, occupational, or personal goals

12.3 According to James Marcia, adolescent identity formation has two parts, _____ and _____.

- puberty; sexual maturation
- intimacy; industry
- crisis; commitment
- autonomy; conformity

12.4 Bob has thought about numerous career options. He has had internships in some of the fields he was considering. After all his exploration, he decides to commit himself to a career in sales. James Marcia would describe Bob's status as

- identity achievement.
- moratorium.
- foreclosure.
- identity diffusion.

Self-Concept

- 12.5** When asked "Who are you?", which of the following individuals would be most likely to say "I am a liberal Democrat who opposes the death penalty"?
- Chris, age 9
 - Pat, age 12
 - Lou, age 15
 - Hillary, age 18
- 12.6** Which of the following is an accurate statement about self-esteem during adolescence?
- Across the teenaged years, girls consistently have higher self-esteem than boys.
 - Most teens have high self-esteem at the beginning of adolescence but experience a steady decline in self-esteem during the teenaged years.
 - Self-esteem typically drops at the beginning of adolescence, but then rises throughout the teenaged years.
 - Cross-cultural research shows that in all societies, girls who adopt masculine or androgynous characteristics are more popular and have higher self-esteem.
- 12.7** According to conceptualizations of gender role identity, an individual who has developed high dimensions of masculinity and high dimensions of femininity would be described as having a/an _____ sex-role orientation.
- androgynous
 - ambivalent
 - undifferentiated
 - transgender
- 12.8** Which of the following is *not* an aspect of the development of an ethnic identity, as identified by Jean Phinney?
- an unexamined ethnic identity
 - an ethnic identity search
 - an ethnic identity rejection
 - achievement of an ethnic identity

Moral Development

- 12.9** Which of the following is *not* a level in the stages of moral development proposed by Lawrence Kohlberg?
- preconventional morality
 - formal operational morality
 - conventional morality
 - postconventional morality
- 12.10** The civil disobedience carried out by the American civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s is an example of which stage of moral reasoning?
- naïve hedonism
 - interpersonal conformity
 - social contract orientation
 - universal ethical principles
- 12.11** Kohlberg would say that persons who assume personal responsibility for their actions based on fundamental universal principles, such as justice and basic respect for all people, are using _____ as the basis for their moral reasoning.
- interpersonal conformity
 - social contract
 - instrumental purpose and exchange
 - universal ethical principles
- 12.12** Which of the following is least important in the development of moral reasoning?
- increased ability to see the perspective of others
 - a social environment that provides opportunities for meaningful, reciprocal dialogue about moral issues
 - parents' ability to express moral views in words that reflect a child's level of understanding
 - a foreclosure identity
- 12.13** Which of the following statements best describes the relationship between moral reasoning and moral behavior?
- There is no correlation.
 - There is a perfect negative correlation.
 - There is a perfect positive correlation.
 - They are correlated, but the relationship is far from perfect.
- 12.14** According to Gilligan, the two distinct moral orientations involved in moral reasoning are
- justice and empathy.
 - justice and care.
 - honesty and sincerity.
 - right and wrong.
- 12.15** According to researchers, what are the two forms of delinquency among adolescents?
- vandalism and law-breaking
 - male peer-directed and female peer-directed
 - childhood-onset and adolescent-onset
 - internal and external
- 12.16** Which of the following is *not* a factor in the developmental pathway for childhood-onset delinquency?
- child-specific influences, such as personality and temperament
 - parents' lack of ability to control the child
 - rejection by nonaggressive peers and gravitation toward peers with similar behavior
 - peer influence
- 12.17** The Fast Track Project with aggressive elementary school children has resulted in all of the following except
- better recognition of emotions.
 - lower ratings of aggressiveness.
 - better academic performance.
 - more competence in social relationships.

Social Relationships

- 12.18** Which of the following is *not* an accurate statement about the role and influence of parents during adolescence?
- If teens are to successfully achieve autonomy, parents must be eliminated as the teens' primary source of emotional and psychological support.
 - Researchers have found that teens' sense of well-being or happiness is more strongly correlated with the quality of attachment to parents than with the quality of relationships with peers.
 - Teens who remain closely attached to their parents are more likely to be academically successful and less likely to engage in antisocial behavior.
 - Lack of parental involvement in school and extracurricular activities is associated with conduct or behavior problems on the part of teens.
- 12.19** A teenager's sense of well-being is most positively correlated with
- the quality of her relationships with peers.
 - the quality of her attachment to her parents.
 - her academic success.
 - the quality of her relationships with siblings.
- 12.20** Among adolescents, membership in a/an _____ means identification with a reputation-based group of peers with a label such as "jocks," "brains," or "toughs."
- clique
 - crowd
 - prototypical identity
 - achievement identity
- 12.21** Which of the following does *not* predict the ease with which heterosexual teens move from same-sex friendships to romantic relationships?
- social competence with parents
 - sexual desires
 - skills in friendships with the opposite sex
 - whether the teen has opposite-sex siblings
- 12.22** Jeri is a 12-year-old girl who is sexually attracted to both males and females. Which of the following statements best corresponds to what research would predict about the development of romantic relationships in Jeri's life?
- Her romantic relationships will be influenced by the fact that attraction to others of the same sex and self-identification as a homosexual occur simultaneously.
 - Jeri will probably experiment with both heterosexual and homosexual relationships before committing to a sexual orientation.
 - She is more likely to hide her attraction to same-sex peers than teenagers in earlier cohorts did.
 - Jerry will avoid associating with gay and lesbian teens, because they might try to persuade her to commit to a homosexual orientation.

Are You Ready for the Test?

Students who use the study materials on MyDevelopmentLab report higher grades in the course than those who use the text alone. Here are three easy steps to mastering this chapter and improving your grade...

Step 1

Take the chapter pre-test in MyDevelopmentLab and review your customized Study Plan.

One of the ways in which friendships change from childhood to adolescence is that friendships

- in adolescence are more temporary and fleeting.
- become more stable and long-lasting in adolescence.
- in childhood are more loyal and intimate.
- in adolescence emphasize complementarity, not similarity.



Simulate: Identity Status

Step 2

Use MyDevelopmentLab's Multimedia Library to help strengthen your knowledge of the chapter.

Learning Objective 12.2

How does Marcia explain identity development?

Identity Status

Case #1: Antigone

Antigone has changed her college major three times and is still uncertain about what to pursue. She is extremely interested in animals, so she considered pre-veterinarian training, but also loves to write and would enjoy being an English professor. Antigone has also a creative psychology, as she really wants to help people, but not sure she could be very successful as a counselor. In order to help her make a decision about her own career, Antigone figures that it is a good idea to interview people about their jobs. So whenever Antigone meets someone new, especially an adult with a job she is unfamiliar with, she often asks the person if she can ask them a few questions about their work.

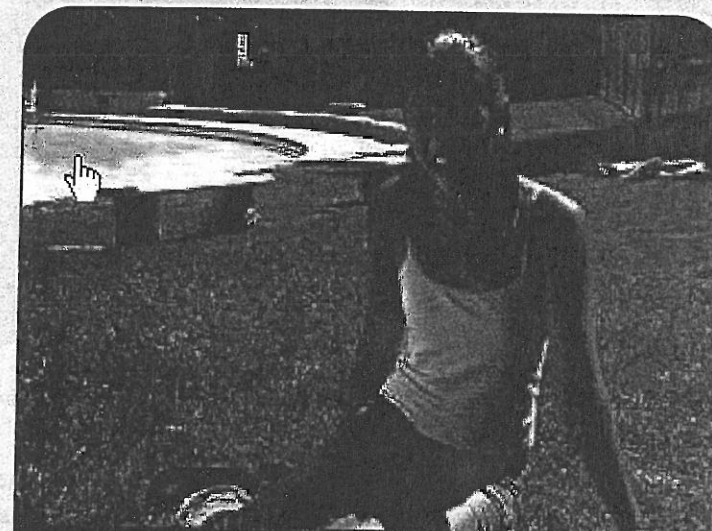


According to Marcia's theory, what identity status is Antigone best classified as?

- Identity Diffusion
- Identity Foreclosure
- Identity Moratorium
- Identity Achievement

Did you know? MyDevelopmentLab comes with access to Research Navigator, which helps you with every step in the research paper writing process, from gathering sources to final paper formatting.

Watch: Adolescence: Identity and Role Development and Ethnicity

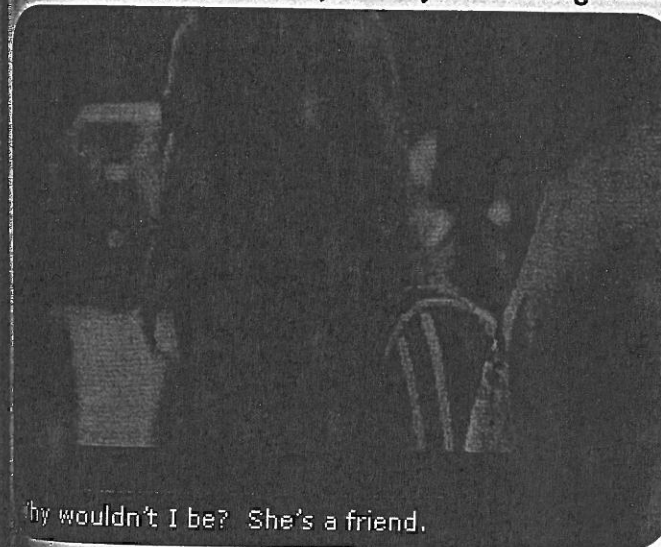


Learning Objective 12.6

How do minority, biracial, and immigrant teens develop a sense of ethnic identity?

Well, what do you think about this? Do you agree with it, or how do you think you'll

Watch: Lipstick: Emily's Story of Coming Out



Learning Objective 12.14

How does interest in romantic relationships emerge among heterosexual and homosexual teens?

Why wouldn't I be? She's a friend.

Step 3

Take the chapter post-test and compare your results against the pre-test.

Eileen has several people in her family who are teachers, so she is going to be a teacher also. She never really thought about doing anything else, so she is in Marcia's identity status of

- identify diffusion.
- foreclosure.
- moratorium.
- identity achievement.



Should Video Games Be Regulated by the Government?

Most people agree that children and adolescents should be protected from potentially harmful experiences. Disagreements arise, however, in the context of discussions about who should be responsible for protecting them. Generally, parents are responsible for protecting their children, and legal authorities step in when they fail to do so. In some cases, though, the government shares this responsibility with parents through its power to regulate businesses. For example, parents are responsible for strapping infants into their car seats, but the government sets standards for their manufacture to ensure that the seats work as they are supposed to when an accident occurs. But what happens when an item that may be harmful to children is a creative work, such as a video game?

Regulation of Creative Works

In the United States, the production of creative works and consumers' right to have access to them are protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution. However, children do not have the same right to access creative works that adults do. Numerous court rulings have established the government's authority to set age limits on children's access to works that are of an obscene nature. A work meets the legal test for obscenity if it has no purpose other than to produce sexual arousal (Silver, 2003). Can a similar standard be applied to works that have no other purpose but to evoke visceral reactions to graphic depictions of violence?

Advocates of video game regulation answer this question affirmatively. They cite the gory scenes and callous characters that are found in many violent video games in support of their argument that the purpose of these games is to elicit hostility in players, just as the aim of obscene material is to cause sexual arousal. In support of their argument, advocates cite studies showing that playing violent video games produces feelings of hostility, increases the incidence of aggressive behavior, and desensitizes players to both real-world and fictional acts of violence (Bartholow, Bushman, & Sestire, 2006; Bushman, 2006; Bushman & Huesmann, 2006).

Those who support regulation of video games further argue that, like viewing obscene material, playing violent video games can develop into an obsession, or even an addiction (Ng & Wiemer-Hastings, 2005). They point to studies showing that teens who become involved in obsessive gaming sometimes skip school in order to continue playing (Khan, 2007). Moreover, these teens' game-playing habits are a frequent source of conflict with their parents and siblings. Some have even suggested that obsessive gaming is a prelude to horrific crimes such as the shooting spree that occurred on the campus of Virginia Tech in 2007 (Benedetti, 2007). Thus, proponents say, society has an obligation to protect its



youngest members from being unwittingly drawn into an activity that may permanently alter the developmental trajectory of their lives.

These arguments have been the basis upon which regulation proponents have lobbied legislative bodies throughout the industrialized world over the past two decades. Their goal is to convince governments to develop standards and regulatory strategies for violent video games that are

similar to those that exist for obscene material. How successful have these campaigns been?

Video Game Regulation Around the World

Thanks to the efforts of regulation advocates, most nations have passed laws that limit access to violent video games, but the strictness of these laws varies greatly from one country to another. In Greece, for example, electronic games of all kinds were banned in 2002 (Smith, 2004). The government eventually reversed the ban with regard to in-home gaming but left its prohibition against playing games in public places, such as internet cafés, intact. In the People's Republic of China (PRC), violent video games must include programming that limits players' access to weapons after three consecutive hours of play and forces them to quit the game for several hours after playing for five hours ("China imposes online gaming curbs," August 25, 2005).

Regulations are far less restrictive in Japan, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and in most European countries (Electronic Frontiers Australia, 2002). In these nations, review boards are authorized to rate games on the basis of sexual and/or violent content and to limit minors' access to those that they deem inappropriate. These boards may also ban extremely violent games, but they seldom do so. Instead, review boards use their power to ban games as a means of forcing game manufacturers to reduce the amount of sexual or violent content. For instance, in 1997 regulators in the United Kingdom refused to allow *Carmageddon*, a game in which players intentionally run down pedestrians, to be sold in their country until the game's publisher substituted zombies for human pedestrians (Malvern & Robertson, 2007).

In the United States, the efforts of regulation advocates have led to the passage of several local and state laws (Thierer, 2003). In the 1980s, these laws limited minors' access to video game arcades. In the early 1990s, legislators focused on in-home game systems. As Internet access grew in the late 1990s, regulations on computer usage in public libraries and other venues where children might be in attendance were aimed at restricting patrons' access to violent online games. However, all of these laws have been overturned by U.S. courts that have consistently held that such restrictions violate the First Amendment (Thierer, 2003). Thus, say regulation advocates,

children and teenagers in the United States, in contrast to their counterparts in most of the rest of the world, are not protected from the potentially detrimental effects of violent video games. Are they right?

Self-Regulation of the Video Game Industry

While continuing to argue that the First Amendment protects their products, video game industry officials state that they share parents' and public officials' concern about the potentially damaging effects of violent video games on young players. In 1994, industry representatives created a system of self-regulation in which the Entertainment Software Rating Board, an independent organization, reviews video games with regard to their appropriateness for players of various ages and makes recommendations about how they should be labeled (see esrb.org). Manufacturers voluntarily include the board's recommended ratings (e.g., "T" for teens; "AO" for adults only) and content advisories (e.g., Warning: Graphic violence) on video game packaging materials. Self-regulation, regulation opponents say, empowers parents to make informed choices about the games that their children are allowed to play (Thierer, 2003). Moreover, video game labels are regulated just as those on all products in the United States are, and manufacturers have had to pay stiff fines for inappropriately labeling games.

Critics of self-regulation are skeptical. They argue that the financial motives of the multi-billion-dollar gaming industry render industry representatives incapable of self-regulation and point out that manufacturers apply the ESRB ratings so

inconsistently that parents cannot rely on them (Glaubke, Miller, Parker, & Espejo, 2001). Thus, regulation advocates continue to press for government intervention and to try to persuade judges that violent video games, like obscene material, should be viewed as a special category of creative work to which youngsters' access can be limited without fear of violating the First Amendment.

Your Turn

- Research the history of video game regulation in your city and state.
- What do your classmates think about this issue?
- Compile a list of websites such as commonsense-media.org where parents can find detailed information about the content of all kinds of media, including video games.
- Several lawsuits have been filed in the United States and in other countries against video game publishers in which it has been alleged that a game caused a player to commit a crime. Use your Internet skills to find out how most such suits have turned out. Note any differences in outcomes in different countries.