9
Identity Status in Late Adolescents: Scoring Criteria

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Introduction

The scoring criteria presented in this chapter are intended for use with late adolescents, aged 18 to 22.[1] The dual processes of exploration and commitment are the primary scoring considerations. The criteria are somewhat more stringently applied for this age than for early and middle adolescence. The reasons for this difference are directly related to the developmental theory of identity formation. Early adolescence may be seen as a period of *destructuring*, wherein previous cognitive, psychosexual, and physiological accomplishments undergo transition to a more pre-adult form. Middle adolescence can be construed as a *restructuring* phase in which new organizations of old and new skills are formed. Late adolescence, in contrast to the two earlier periods, is seen as a period of *consolidation*, of discernible identity composition, and of testing in the world the newly constructed identity. Hence, late adolescence is the period in the life cycle when for most persons identity "gets done" for the first time.

The four identity statuses are based upon the presence, absence, and degree of two processes: exploration (once called "crisis") and commitment. The areas or domains within which these variables operate are less important than the underlying processes. The assumption is that genuine exploration of personally meaningful alternatives followed by selection of a general direction for one's interests and abilities is the basic indicator of identity formation. A further assumption is that the structure formed as a result of this process will be adaptively assimilative for a limited time, after which it will become disequilibrated and another exploratory period will ensue, to be followed by subsequent commitment (accommodating). Hence, the variables of exploration and commitment are intended to account for identity formation, change, and reformulation.

The Meaning of Exploration and Commitment in Late Adolescents

Exploration

In late adolescence, exploration is both cognitive and behavioral, although the cognitive aspect should always be observable in some behavioral manifestation. A person may say that he or she "thought about" alternative religious views while pursuing the childhood faith, but continued to practice undeterred. One would expect a genuine exploration to have had disruptive effects such as decrease or cessation in religious ceremonial observation, questioning of religious authority figures, and discussions, perhaps disputes, with family and friends. Even if exploration were primarily cognitive, the respondent should be able to discuss, in some depth, the alternatives weighed, and be able to refer to some hiatus in traditional religious observance. Following are some criteria to be used in assessing the presence, absence, and degree of exploration.

Knowledgeability

By late adolescence the individual should have made a fairly accurate assessment of personal needs and abilities and have a realistic picture of available societal opportunities. A college student who is committed to going into the law ought to know that most of the first year in law school is spent in the library, not the courtroom, and that few lawyers have practices like that of Perry Mason. A psychology major ought not to expect to hang out a psychotherapy shingle upon completing the B.A. with a psychology major. One is looking for more than a superficial understanding of the details in the education or apprenticeship necessary to a vocation as well as some knowledge of day-to-day activity in the vocation. Similarly, for the ideological areas of religion and politics, a mere label (e.g., Protestant, Liberal) is insufficient to indicate exploration of the domain. The interviewer is looking for knowledge of alternatives as well, and, beyond that, for some information about comparisons and contrasts that indicate a respondent's thoughtfulness about the ideas underlying the labels.

Activity Directed Toward Gathering Information

Here we are assessing essentially the legwork necessary to obtain information about alternatives. Knowing for certain that one wants to be a dentist because that is what one's parent does, or being certain about one's views on sexuality without ever having been in a relationship where sexuality is an issue, does not indicate much explorative activity. On the other hand, speaking with representatives of several vocations, discussing alternative religious views with proponents of those views, self-directed reading about nontraditional sex-role alternatives—all indicate explor-

ative activity. The important matter here is some self-initiated, in-depth searching.

Considering Alternative Potential Identity Elements

Most persons as they grow through childhood become aware of different aspects of themselves, each of which, if pursued, would take them in different life directions. Adolescence is the period in the life cycle during which, at least for some persons, experimentation is tolerated and sometimes encouraged. Not to exploit such an opportunity is to purchase a small measure of security at the price of a large measure of self-restriction. At late adolescence, the time remaining before confronting the harder realities of adulthood dwindles, and the world begins to become less patient with the adolescent's experimentation and active consideration of alternatives. When one speaks with late adolescents at age 22, then, one is most likely to probe for previous consideration of alternatives; by contrast, 18-year-olds may be in the middle of such considerations. Whether one looks at present or previous considerations, the primary issue is the authenticity of that consideration. It is one thing to remain ensconced in a childhood vocational or ideological niche while peering out for an alternative: it is another to leave the niche and to actively explore different paths commensurate with one's interests and abilities. Whether or not the original directions are returned to is not relevant for the determination of identity status; the relevant aspect is that attention has been paid to alternatives and that the consequences of their pursuit have been weighed.

Desire to Make an Early Decision

Direction is an especially important facet of exploration in *late* adolescence. The goal is not exploration for its own sake, as it may well be earlier in adolescence, or even during subsequent identity crises in adulthood. The goal of exploration in late adolescence is to determine the best-fitting vocational, ideological, and interpersonal alternatives with which to begin young adulthood. One type of individual, characterological Moratorium, seems able to maintain the tension of active struggle, especially among ideological and interpersonal alternatives; however, this person requires a fairly rarefied supportive environment, and not everyone can work in a university. In general, then, one expects emotionally directed exploration, not just careless "fooling around." The former would characterize a Moratorium; the latter, an Identity Diffusion.

In summary, exploration may be nonexistent, previous in time, or current; and it may vary in the breadth of alternatives considered and the depth of consideration. The issue of the extent of exploration is particularly important in discriminating between Foreclosures and Identity Achievements.

Commitment

Commitment becomes more important in late adolescence than it was during earlier periods. Before one can really *be* an adult, one must assume the role and its associated behaviors: entering or preparing for a vocation, espousing some coherent view of oneself in the world (a "philosophy of life"), and deciding how one is going to define one's adult sexual relationships. No one pretends that this first version of adulthood is the real thing—that one's grownupness is much more than skin deep. But one must begin somewhere. And that first constellation of vocational, ideological, and interpersonal commitments at late adolescence is a beginning. The meaning of commitment is close to what Erikson describes as the virtue of this psychosexual stage: Fidelity. Commitment, like fidelity, refers to a definitive choice among possibilities and adherence to the chosen direction in the face of distracting and inviting alternatives. This choice does not mean imperviousness to change, but it does mean reluctance to abandon easily a path set out upon. Following are some criteria for assessing presence, absence, and degree of commitment.

Knowledgeability

Stated simply, the adolescent who is committed knows what he or she is getting into. This knowledge is based upon the results of behavior consistent with one's stated commitments. One mistrusts the depth of a respondent's commitment when he or she claims to want to go into business, yet has taken no commerce courses nor engaged in entrepreneurial enterprises. The wish to make money is not enough to warrant commitment; one must have explored and been able to articulate how one intends to go about it, and why. Knowledgeability is related to articulateness. One usually has difficulty speaking clearly about something of which one knows little or has thought little. An additional assumption is being made: if one is knowledgeable and thoughtful about an area, one will talk about it in an identity status interview. Are we claiming that Identity Achievement is a function of one's ability to articulate one's story? Yes. One may have a Foreclosed identity without being able to articulate the details in its formative process. However, to have achieved (constructed) an identity means to have thoughtfully examined aspects of one's life; and in most instances the results of this thoughtfulness will be orally communicated in an identity status interview.

Activity Directed Toward Implementing the Chosen Identity Element

To know what one is getting into, one must acquire relevant experience; one can do only so much in one's head. Hence, one aspect of commitment involves behavior in commitment-related areas. For example, one may espouse nontraditional sex roles, but unless one has actually tried behaving

in nontraditional ways, that commitment is suspect. Similarly, one may claim to adhere to a political philosophy, right or left, that clearly calls for activism; yet, if no evidence is found of direct political activity, commitment is assumed to be minimal. In assessing the activity aspect of commitment, one is asking in what ways the respondent is "making it real." Having stressed activity, a clarification should be made. Often, much identity work gets done internally with few visible signs. The general scoring rule is that if almost all the work is internal, then the person tends toward Moratorium; if some external indications of exploration and commitment are evident, then the person is likely to be an Identity Achiever; if there are obvious behavioral indications of commitment, but exploration is questionable, then a Foreclosure categorization is given. In other words, behavioral indicators are important, but well articulated beliefs, betokening significant internal work, are good evidence for at least a beginning of Identity Achievement.

Emotional Tone

Essentially, one finds five predominant affective tones among the identity statuses: the solid self-assuredness of the Achievement; the inflexible self-righteousness of the Foreclosure; the struggling, intense, somewhat anxious demeanor of the Moratorium; the breezy insouciance of the playboy /playgirl Diffusion; and the sad, wistful, or remote quality of the more isolated Diffusions. Just as no one of these characteristics (i.e., knowledgeability, activity, and so on) is, by itself, sufficient to indicate presence, absence, or degree of commitment, neither is emotional tone. Some Achievements may seem smugly inflexible; some Moratoriums are not really suffering. But in general, the presence of commitment seems to produce poised self-confidence; and its absence appears to lead to self-doubt, as well as the extremes of loquaciousness and taciturnity.

Identification with Significant Others

The presence of significant role models as ideal figures is less important at late adolescence than at early adolescence because by this time the ego ideal has already undergone its major modification. At late adolescence, significant figures have a direct and realistic role as teachers, mentors, validators, and exemplars of the possible consequences of vocational or ideological decisions. In other words, what important others do with and for the late adolescent individual in *reality* is more important than who they are or what they stand for in an idealized sense. Usually, the more identity work an adolescent has done, the less he or she wants to be "just like" a role model, and the more he or she can discriminate positive (emulatable) and negative (avoidable) aspects of significant others. The less identity work has been done, the more the individual either wishes to copy exactly an admired figure or despairs of ever living up to a model

(projected) standard. In short, identification at late adolescence passes from idealization to realistic, self-interested appraisal.

Projecting One's Personal Future

As in the preceding section, the emphasis is on realistic projection of one's personal future. One of the hypothesized criteria for identity development in early adolescence is "the ability to construe alternative futures" (Marcia, 1983) with little emphasis on the realistic aspects of those futures. At late adolescence, however, the result of thoroughgoing exploration and firm commitment should produce a somewhat reasonable five-year plan. One interview area especially sensitive to this issue is that of sex roles, for here one may deal with questions of career versus marriage priorities, child-rearing values, and spousal division of labor. Realistic projection into the future relates directly to commitment. Firm commitment to a particular direction should lead to behavior consistent with that direction, and the resulting accumulation of experience should produce some ideas about what is and is not possible and/or likely to occur. Lack of commitment leads to either truncated experience or scattered, diffuse experience—"kicks."

Resistance to Being Swayed

"What would happen if something better came along?" the interviewer asks. "What do you mean, something better?" the respondent replies. "What would be better in your terms?" the interviewer rejoins. This bit of dialogue occurs repeatedly in identity status interviews. Responses range from willingness to enter almost any field, endorse any belief, and consider any sexual–interpersonal alternative, to rigid insistence upon one vocation, one belief system, and one set of sexual standards. Between the easy vacillation of the Diffusion and the intransigence of the Foreclosure lie the strong flexibility of the Achievement and the bound uncertainty of the Moratorium. A response that indicates advanced identity formation usually has three aspects: (1) acknowledgment of the possibility of change, (2) linkage of possible change to the individual's abilities and societal opportunities, and (3) reluctance to change except under fairly pressing circumstances. As a rule, the respondent high in identity can articulate some of the conditions under which a change would occur, but usually shows little enthusiasm for it.

In summary, commitment is a crucial element of identity formation in late adolescence. For many late adolescents, the problem is not saying "yes" to one direction, but saying "no" to others. There is an Italian saying that "he who leaves the old life for the new one knows what he leaves but not what he enters." To a certain extent, this is the predicament in adolescent commitment, and many Foreclosures and Diffusions would prefer to "bear those ills they have, than fly to others they know not of."

Foreclosures, because they are committed, may seem inappropriately included in the comment above. Foreclosures do not *make* commitments, however, any more than do Diffusions. Foreclosures simply are, or find themselves, committed in an almost inexorable movement from their past to their present.

Scoring Complications for Late Adolescents

Validity of Exploration

Determining whether or not a genuine exploratory period has occurred within an identity domain is probably the most difficult scoring issue. It is also where the interview method is at its strongest and questionnaire methods at their weakest. The problem here lies not so much in the scoring as in the interview procedure. The interview gives flexibility to probe, and it is this area concerning the validity of a crisis that the interviewer almost always has to probe, sometimes rather creatively. One cannot score what is not recorded on the tape, and so an interviewer must be sufficiently cognizant of the scoring criteria before entering the interview to ensure that sufficient questioning is undertaken to determine the validity of exploration.

During identity formation, having undergone an exploratory period, one can return to an initial commitment. Hence, the presence of the same commitment content in an individual in early and late adolescence is not prima facie evidence for Foreclosure. Nor is a change in commitment content prima facie evidence for Identity Achievement. In the former, alternatives must have been actively and effectively considered; there should be evidence of a behavioral departure from the initial direction before a subsequent return to it. In the latter case, one must be certain that the changed commitment content is not just a reflected-upon variation on a childhood theme. For example, moving from a parentally encouraged Marxist political view to a strong socialist position without much consideration of alternatives does not indicate sufficient exploration. If the Marxism had been temporarily abandoned, though, some real-life experiences had intervened, the person had reflected on the discrepancies between experiences and previous beliefs, and *then* arrived at a committed socialist position, an Identity Achievement score would be indicated.

Multiple Status Scoring of Areas

Very few persons are in the same identity status across all domains. Most will be in the same status in at least several areas, thus making most overall status decisions nonproblematical. There are no specific scoring rules for arriving at an overall status given an unclear split among the

domains (e.g., Identity Achievement in two domains, Moratorium in two, and Diffusion in one). Here, one must rely on the overall tone or flavor of the interview. However, one scoring method that yields additional information employs a subsidiary status indication for each domain. Just as few persons are in the same identity status across all domains, similarly, identity status within each domain may not be "pure." One may decide that an individual is Diffusion in, say, religion, but that there is also a possibility of Moratorium. Recording the alternative status for a particular area preserves this information. One way of preserving it is the following: a predominant status for a domain is scored, for example, F (Foreclosure); an almost equally strong possible status as F, say IA (Identity Achievement), combined with the F would yield F, IA. To reiterate, if one is fairly certain that the individual is, say, Foreclosure in a domain, score F alone. If the person is likely to be Foreclosure, but may very well be Identity Achievement, score F, IA. If the person is very likely to be Foreclosure, and Identity Achievement is only a possibility, score F(IA). In the example above, the 2–2–1 split could be much less problematic if the scoring by domain were A,M; A(M); M; M(D); D(M). Here, the decision to call the respondent Moratorium overall is clear.

The Importance of Process over Content

Most persons giving identity status interviews are likely to have a broadly common outlook. Most will be in the social sciences and will tend to have similar liberal and nonauthoritarian values. Hence, identity status interviewers may begin with a bias as a result of the content of their own identity formation process. Sometimes it is quite difficult to see a traditional, highly authoritarian respondent as in a high identity status, although this may be the accurate designation. Even more difficult is scoring a nonauthoritarian, liberal respondent as low in identity. Interviewers must keep in mind that it is the *process* of identity formation, not the content, that is being assessed. There may be a relationship between process and content; going through an identity formation process may make certain content more likely and other content less likely. However, we have no research on that subject as yet, and until we do—even, perhaps, when we do—we may always be on safer ground to keep the issues of process and content separate and to score the process alone.

Identity in Males and Females

In general, women appear to have interpersonal issues more in hand than do men. The sexes are comparable in commitment to occupational issues. Women seem a bit more advanced in religion, men a bit more in politics. Also, men tend to take a more serial approach to identity issues—one domain at a time. Women tend more to try to make an organized whole

from many elements. Hence, the commitment pattern for males is often characterized by intraindividual scatter among the areas. The commitment pattern for females is frequently marked by integration of commitment among several domains. Bearing these expectable differences in mind, the researcher should be somewhat stringent in scoring exploration, a process that definitely should have taken place in the past seven or so years of the adolescent's life. The researcher should be somewhat more lenient in scoring commitment, a newer arrival on the identity formation scene.

The Identity Status Domains

The process of establishing values, beliefs, and goals can be assessed in many areas of an individual's life. During late adolescence an individual may be examining self-definitional attributes in domains such as vocational choice, ideology, sexuality, family roles, and/or sex-role preference. Three potentially salient domains are addressed in this chapter to exemplify scoring status by domain issues. The domains discussed are vocational choice, religious beliefs, and family–career priorities.

Vocational Choice

Whether the late adolescent is in college or in the workplace, we are looking for a psychosocial meshing between an individual's capabilities and needs on one hand and society's demands and rewards on the other. The individual is expected to have assessed his or her abilities and interests, investigated possible societal opportunities, and made a commitment that is being acted upon. This commitment may take several forms: domestic (homemaking, childrearing); vocational (secretary, plumber); or educational (apprenticeship, college major). These forms may also be combined. But the person must have accomplished the transition from a receptive (child) to a productive (adult) orientation, and have done so in a self-reflective manner accompanied by a behaviorally consistent lifestyle.

There is a problem with the occupational area as a criterion for identity formation. Social conditions can limit, sometimes severely, educational and vocational alternatives. In difficult economic times, just getting a job—any job—is important, with the result that exploration and commitment become luxuries. If there is not much room for variability within an identity interview area (e.g., political ideology in a totalitarian state), then that area becomes disqualified as an indicator of Identity Achievement—not as an indicator of identity, per se. The achievement or construction of an identity requires important life areas in which choice is

possible. If no such areas exist in a society, or if the only areas available are relatively trivial, then the modal identity status for that society will be, at best, Foreclosure, at worst, Diffusion.

Another issue that has arisen with respect to vocation, and may arise again, is the possibility that ideological commitment will preclude a vocational one. During the Vietnam war era in the United States, many young people became committed to an ideology of nonparticipation in the majority culture. A part of that ideology was that to occupy a vocational niche in society was to lend support to an establishment that was acting immorally; hence, no "vocation," as typically defined, was acceptable. These individuals were called "Alienated Achievements" and the quality of their performance on dependent variables was similar to, and in some cases exceeded, the more conventional Identity Achievements. The general point is that identity, at its most meaningful level of conceptualization, is organizational, synthetic, and gestaltlike. Domains may be scored separately, and one may speak of a "vocational identity," but ego identity, which this research began as an attempt to measure, refers to a more or less organized whole. Interviewers should be watchful for integrating themes running through the individual domains. For example, there are vocations that a Marxist could not legitimately choose; and there are beliefs about sex roles and sexuality that an Orthodox Jew could not espouse. Yet both of these persons may have an overall Achieved Identity. Sometimes it is useful, after one has scored the separate domains, to reflect upon the whole person who has just been listened to and attempt to summarize with one of the identity statuses the overall tone or flavor of the individual's identity structure.

Identity Diffusion

There seem to be three types of Diffusion in vocation. The first might be called the "opportunist." This individual will latch on to whatever looks profitable and not too difficult at the moment; if computers are in, then it is computers; if ergonomics is the field of the year, then ergonomics it is. The enthusiasms are short-lived and a declaration of commitment in the interview is fairly easily swayed by an astute interviewer who can suggest equally attractive, and possibly more easily achievable, vocational directions. A second type of vocational Diffusion seems to be just drifting, waiting for some occupation to choose them. Such persons tend to make other pursuits their immediate focus; such as "partying." There is a naive faith (with, perhaps, an underlying despair) that something will happen, something will come along. A third type of Diffusion in vocation reflects some psychological disturbance. Here, the vocational choice is based upon a rather megalomanic fantasy, incommensurate with the reality of the individual's achievements or occupational preparation. Aspiring to be a clinical psychologist in private practice with a "C" average in under-

graduate psychology courses, or setting out for a career in ballet at age 21, are examples of the fantasy-based approach.

All these types of Diffusions have in common a lack of commitment, or, at least a lack of realistic commitment that leads to vocation-relevant behavior. They may or may not have experienced an exploration period. If they have done so, it is usually superficial and brief.

Examples[2]

A. (female)

Interviewer (I): Why did you come to SFU?

Respondent (R): It's close; that's about it.

I: Why did you choose English as a major?

R: It's the easiest course there is.

I: What do you plan to do with it?

R: Teach.

I: How willing do you think you would be to change your plans if something better came along?

R: Yeah, I'm all willing. Not all willing, but I don't really know what I'm interested in, so if I find something else really interesting I'll go into that. It depends how well I'm doing in the course.

B. (male)

I: How did you happen to come to SFU?

R: They don't have a first-year language requirement. That's it.

I: What do you plan to do with a degree in psychology?

R: God knows. I don't know. I want to instruct in a prestigious university and do research and write books . . .

I: What seems attractive to you about that career?

R: You make lots of money, relatively large sums of money. . . . A lot of prestige.

C. (female)

I: Why did you pick the area of business or commerce?

R: Well, it's got to do with career sorts of things and money expectations, where people are hiring. And I really didn't know what was left, that kind of thing. 'Cause you've got your basic areas, for me anyway, as far as business and that goes.

I: What are you getting out of your education right now?

R: I think I'm basically here because I know I want a university education and I don't really want to work right now. And I guess I really don't know what else to do, where else to go.

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[2] The following are interview fragments selected from recent full transcripts. They illustrate either exemplary or problematic types of responses. Often, too little information is included in a fragment to make a valid rating. After reading a number of responses, however, the reader should have a clear enough idea to be able to begin to score identity interviews.

D. (male)

I: How did you happen to choose economics as a major?

R: Because of my surroundings, I guess. Surroundings such as meeting the kind of students that are sort of streamlined into one field. And they happen to be in economics. So I had an association with my friends who were in before I started my post-secondary education. I picked up the goal from them.

E. (male)

I: So, did you ever seriously consider anything else or did this [criminology] always seem most interesting to you?

R: Well, I've never considered anything else. But being in university now—well, I'm on academic probation right now—I'm finding it tough. And if things don't improve considerably, I'm thinking of, we'll say, taking a couple of years off.

I: Do you know what you might do?

R: No. Just, I guess, labor work probably, maybe for a while.

I: If you decide to take a year or two off, would it be with the intention of coming back or would it be up in the air?

R: It's hard to say. It's hard to say what job—it depends on the job. And if I was satisfied with the work I was doing, I don't think I'd come back. But today you either have to have an education or a trade, one of the two. Well, that's the way I feel, anyway. And with the job selection now, they're picking the cream of the crop. Or actually, it's who you know too, which helps me quite a lot.

Comments

A. This person chose to attend a particular university and selected a particular major as a matter of convenience. If something else appears that is both interesting and easy, she will probably go in that direction.

B. B also chose to attend the university as a matter of convenience. What attracts him about his current major does not seem to reflect a thoughtful integration of his abilities and some potential vocation, but the (unrealistically) perceived prestige and power of that vocation.

C. This individual wants to get a job, and thinks she will get a better one if she goes to a university. She is probably right, but it is the marketplace that will vocationally define her, not herself.

D. This is a fairly good example of a vocation finding a person. There is a Foreclosure quality to the response; but it is so offhand, and is occurring so relatively late in adolescence, that one suspects the depth of commitment. It is likely that if there were new friends, there might be a new major.

E. There is a possibility here of a development out of Diffusion. The academic probation may result from the kind of lack of motivation that can change with some experience in the work world. There is not a sufficient sense of struggle to call the respondent a Moratorium, but the

willingness to accumulate experience and the general tentativeness suggest possible future movement.

Foreclosure

The Foreclosure is certain about vocational direction, and this has been an important identity element for him or her for a number of years. Usually, a discernible parental or other authority's influence is in the background. Even if one cannot determine a specific figure, if the vocational direction was determined very early, and little thought was given to alternatives, then Foreclosure is the only appropriate designation. The assumption is that any vocational decision made during latency is heavily influenced by adults, and that if this effect continues unmodified into late adolescence, the work of identity construction has not taken place.[3]

Examples

A. (male)

I: How did you decide on law as a career goal?

R: I grew up on law. I've always had an interest for it. I guess I've grown up with it. (His father is a lawyer.)

I: Did you ever consider going into to something other than law?

R: Ya—there's all sorts of things I've considered, but they're not really plausible for me. Law is the only thing that I've seriously considered.

I: Is that wrapped up with the fact that your father is in law?

R: Most definitely. Of course, he'd like to see me get into it, but I don't think that's necessarily the reason I'm doing it. I think he would be happy whatever I did.

I: Do you have any ideas of what branch of law you'd like to go into?

R: No, I'm fairly easy on that.

B. (female)

I: Did your parents have any career plans for you, something they'd like to see you go into?

R: No, but I think they're really happy with what I'm doing now.

I: What if they said, "No, [accounting] is a terrible profession and you'd be unhappy at it." How much weight would that have?

R: Probably quite a bit because we're a pretty close family. So I probably would have sat down and really thought about it

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[3] Foreclosure on an occupation does not mean that the individual will necessarily be less successful in that occupation than one who is in the Identity Achievement status in the same field. This qualification particularly applies to the arts; Mozart comes to mind.

then [to decide] if that's really the right . . . thing for me. But they didn't do anything like . . . that.

C. (female)

I: What would you like to do with [a bachelor's degree in nutrition]?

R: I'm in the area of dietetics and so I would be working as a dietician, preferably in a hospital.

I: When did you decide upon that as a career choice?

R: Last year.

I: What about prior to that?

R: Prior to that, I knew that I liked working with food and . . . I also was looking for something. Something science-oriented and I just more or less combined the two and figured that was what I wanted.

I: In high school, did you have any set career plans?

R: No, I just more or less knew that I wanted something . . . science-oriented, so I took the sciences.

I: What about your parents? What kinds of jobs or careers have they been doing?

R: My mom's a nurse and my dad's a dentist.

I: Was there [any] influence about the health sciences as . . . you were growing up?

R: There was no direct influence . . . but there more or less was the influence, if not directly, it was indirect, just . . . by their being who they were.

I: Was there ever a time when you felt a fair degree of indecision or conflict about your interests, academic . . . and professional?

R: Yeah, there was. There was a time when I wasn't too . . . sure whether I wanted to go and get a linguistics degree . . . preferably leading to audiology and speech sciences. I took a few linguistics courses, but I found that it . . . wasn't what I wanted to [do] . . . take a program. I wouldn't have wanted three or four years of it. So I decided that I should return [to] something that I was initially interested in.

I: What attracts you to being a dietician?

R: First, it's a helping profession and that in itself is one of the major things that attracts me to it . . . the degree part of it attracts me, too. It could lead to further programs. . . .

I: What other things do you think you might possibly diverge to?

R: If I had to? I would think microbiology and . . . maybe medicine. I've also always wanted to get my music degree, which is something I may work on next year or the year after.

I: How certain or tentative are [your] plans?

R: About 70 percent.

I: What about staying within the sciences, health sciences in particular?

R: Very certain. I would always look for something in that area.

Comments

A. A is an almost classic example of a Foreclosure. Although he says he considered "all sorts of things," the ease with which this idea is dismissed, as well as its nonspecificity, disqualify it as a statement indicating exploration. Frequently, Foreclosures, like this person, deny that they are going into an area because of their parents' wishes. It is not especially fashionable to admit this choice. However, when an exploratory period is absent, and the individual's choice is strongly similar to the parents' wishes, then Foreclosure can be assumed.

B. This segment is presented because it illustrates two things: some creative probing by the interviewer, and the tendency of the Foreclosure individual to lapse into the first person plural ("we") when speaking of herself or himself.

C. Example C presents a difficult scoring issue. Was there a genuine exploratory period in linguistics? Did taking courses in this area represent a real divergence from earlier parent-supported childhood directions? Two aspects of this interview fragment lead to a scoring of Foreclosure: the individual's statement about her parents' "indirect" influence, and her persistence in health sciences—even linguistics would have led to audiology and probably to speech therapy. (The music area should have been pursued further by the interviewer.) Based upon this fragment, a scorer would be wise to record a possible element of Identity Achievement. Hence, the suggested scoring is F(IA).

Moratorium

Moratoriums are engaged in exploration, which their tendency toward greater verbalization reflects. Often, one has the feeling of watching a conceptual tennis match as one alternative gets played off against another almost equally attractive option. Especially at late adolescence, however, Moratoriums are usually not all over the occupational map; they tend to be committed within a general area. Nor are they always intensely struggling; sometimes they are simply rationally considering alternatives and attempting to reach a resolution. Nevertheless, to be called Moratorium, they must appear concerned and they must be actively exploring alternatives with the aim of arriving at a vocational commitment.

Examples

A. (male)

I: Do you have a clear goal of what you want to do?

R: Not a specific goal. It's broad. I haven't narrowed it down and determined it, but part of going to university was to try to determine what I want to do. I have specific interests—I've declared a major in communications. So I think I'm going to

stick with that. I have a real interest in things like public relations and advertising right now. I'm also doing this 100-level psychology course and have developed an inkling of an interest in psychology. And so, who knows, I may pursue a minor in psychology or may even switch over and do that. I can't determine that just yet. I want to be in the academic environment, at least through my under-division classes, and then by the time I get into third and fourth year, I'll have a clearer objective in mind in terms of what I want to get out of university.

Comments

A. Moratoriums' responses tend to be lengthy. This fragment is taken from an eighty-minute interview. This example has most of the features of the Moratorium in vocation. He is vaguely committed within the general area of social sciences; he has some notion of the major leading to a future vocation; and he has constructed the broad outlines of a relevant plan. He is undecided, which one can observe in his back-and-forth style of response.

Identity Achievement

Identity Achieved persons will have seriously explored at least one viable alternative to their chosen occupation and will have begun to think of themselves as a *something* (e.g., a teacher, an engineer). They are not merely "going into" a field; their chosen occupation will have begun to be part of their identity, their self-definition. They emphasize more what they are going to *be* than what they are going to *do*. As a rule, this change is manifested in their already having sought work or volunteer experience in their vocational field.

Examples

A. (female)

I: When did you decide on your plans to take a master's degree in social work?

R: Last year.

I: How did that happen? How did you make that decision?

R: Just by volunteering and working in the social-work field. I have my social-work certificate, just from a B.A. level. I was in retail [sales] for a while and decided to go back into social work.

I: What has your experience been in that field?

R: I worked on a crisis line for about 3 years and I've done some marriage counseling and therapy, and I've also worked in a senior citizens' house for about a year now.

I: And so you feel fairly happy with that as a choice?

R: Yeah, pretty competent. It's just a matter of getting in and getting accepted now, and that's it.

I: Do you think your career plans now are very different in their goals than perhaps they were in high school?

R: Yeah, they are. They've changed a lot . . . they've changed from the sciences; I was going to go on for lab technician, and I was going to study biology—now I'm going into a helping profession just because of the experience I've had in it.

I: What led you to those experiences—that is, volunteering for a crisis line and other jobs?

R: I heard about it through college when I was first taking university transfer courses at the college level, about their needing people, and I just wanted to fill in maybe an extra eight hours a week . . . and then I really enjoyed it.

B. (female)

I: When did you decide to pursue computer technology?

R: I'm 30 years old now. . . . When I was 25 I started saving avidly to return to school. I realized I didn't want to be a secretary for the rest of my life. Working as a secretary, I had opportunities to learn various word-processing systems. In fact, I've learned four. I'm now teaching on a system that's quite sophisticated—a shared-resource system with a central processing unit. And so it's more than just word processing; it provided me with an introduction to microprocessors. And I seem to have an aptitude for it. And I thought, well that's a step if I do go back to school to do a business degree—a natural major may be computer science. . . . Another thing you have to consider when you go back to school late is that you have to pursue something that's going to be marketable. I can't afford the luxury of obtaining a degree in Canadian history or something. That's unfortunate.

I: Was there any planning or ideas from your parents to do something like this?

R: No. Unfortunately, my parents were of the school that a woman graduates from high school, gets married, and has babies. And so education wasn't necessary. It's unfortunate that I didn't get much encouragement from them, and that led me to go into secretarial college and become a secretary, because they more or less pushed me in that direction.

I: What do you envision doing in the future?

R: Well, I thoroughly enjoy teaching. I enjoy teaching a technical subject. I think that, given the growth of this technology, there will be room for people who enjoy teaching others how to operate various systems. For instance, I could see myself working for a vendor such as IBM or Xerox as, not a salesperson, but as a marketing support person.

Comments

Both A and B are examples of individuals who have made career decisions based upon experience with both their chosen career and alternatives. They are somewhat older than the usual upper-level college student; hence, they have had more opportunity to garner real-life experience. The elements of the Achievement process remain the same, however: a significant departure from earlier directions and a subsequent commitment, manifested behaviorally, in either a new direction or an old, reformulated one.

Religious Beliefs

Neither religion nor politics, per se, are the primary issues in this portion of the interview. These areas were chosen because they were the most likely to provide access to an individual ideology. One of the assumptions in psychosocial developmental theory is that as one moves from being a "taker" (childhood) to being a "caretaker" (adulthood), a shift in ideological framework occurs. Religious and political beliefs formulated in childhood are assumed to be relatively nonfunctional in adulthood. Even primitive societies provide rites of passage whose function is to update and confirm an earlier imposed identity. One can have an ideology that does not include religious *beliefs* but that resolves *questions*, such as the existence of God and standards for deciding moral issues. Asking questions about religious beliefs is a fairly easy entrance into the ideological realm; and responses indicating thoughtfulness about religious issues are taken as evidence for the ideological construction assumed to accompany identity formation. However, having or not having a religion is not the criterion for Identity Achievement; considering ideological issues in some depth is the criterion.

Here, as in other areas of the interview, content is not relevant for determining identity status. Whether or not one has a religion, per se, or what the content of that religion is, is not relevant for judging identity. The relevant issue is the depth and breadth of consideration the individual has given to ideological matters. Without a rationale, however, an individual is rated as higher in identity if he or she can specify a religious belief. When one listens to the religious portion of the identity status interview, the questions to be asked are: "Does this person have a coherent belief system?" "Is it identical with the one he or she adopted as a child?" "Has there been an exploration period—a time of weighing alternative outlooks?" "Is the person's current life behaviorally consistent with the stated beliefs?"

Sometimes, the individual interviewed grew up in a kind of ideological vacuum. A general decision rule says that if you spent your childhood in a diffuse context and you are currently diffuse, then you are scored Diffusion,

not Foreclosure. There is also a possibility that an individual coming out of a diffuse context may "get religion," in some form, around late adolescence. How this change is seen depends upon the person's knowledgeability and commitment. If the respondent is both knowledgeable and committed, then a rating of either Achievement or Foreclosure is given depending upon the degree of rigidity shown. For example, if there has been no exploration of alternatives and none can be genuinely contemplated, then a rating of Foreclosure is given; however, if there appears to be a willingness to explore alternatives and the beliefs are somewhat flexibly held, the individual is scored Identity Achievement.

Another issue that arises about religion is the difference between a belief system and a cultural tradition. This distinction becomes especially important with respondents whose religions are closely tied to ethnic origins. If you say you are Jewish, the appellation can refer to religious beliefs, to ethnic origin or allegiance, to adherence to traditions, or to any combination of the three. The interviewer must determine what "being Jewish" (or being "Ukrainian Catholic") means to the subject. Even if the religious ideological aspect is missing, adherence to ethnic traditions may be sufficient to provide a sound basis for an identity.

Identity Diffusion

Diffusions are notable for their lack of thoughtfulness about the whole ideological realm. Often, they tend to see philosophy-of-life issues as a waste of time. They find nothing in the contemplation of such matters to be gratifying—thinking about the meaning of life is not much fun. Often Diffusions will have constructed a façade of an ideological system that they would like others to believe they espouse. That is, the stated ideology becomes a kind of currency they exchange for signs of respect and even affection from others. When this belief system is challenged by an able interviewer, however, its shallowness becomes obvious.

Typically, Diffusions' responses to questions in the religious domain are notable for their brevity. Often the interviewer will try to push to elicit more content, only to find that, in fact, "nobody's home." Another Diffusion pattern is a kind of oral smokescreen, throwing out complicated pseudo-sophisticated jargon ("I'm a pantheistic humanist."), in hopes of having it taken for knowledgeability. An interviewer must always ask for the content of a belief system and not just a label.

Examples

A. (male)

    I: Do you have any particular religious affiliation or preference?
  R: No.
    I: Do you ever think about religious kinds of issues?
  R: Occasionally.

I: Do you talk to people about it?

R: No, hardly ever. Unless there's some reason. I've taken a couple of philosophy courses, philosophy of religion. Just for interest, though. Not . . .

I: Did that answer any questions for you at all?

R: No, but it gave me a way to sort of think about it.

I: How does it come together for you, then?

R: I don't really have a belief or anything. Just—I don't know.

B. (female)

I: Do you have any particular religious views or philosophy of life?

R: No, it's hard to say. I'm taking a social psychology course right now that covers that. I'm not sure. I haven't really . . . I'm not against it, either. Like, I . . . really respect people with— people's religious views. . . . And, um, I don't know. I'm just kind of actually trying to decide for myself what—if I have any particular beliefs or not. Nothing that I know of. I like to keep an open mind, though, and kind of look at everything.

C. (male)

I: Were you brought up in the church?

R: Yeah, I was brought up in the Lutheran Church. . . . I went through confirmation and all that stuff when I was 14—at 14 you get confirmed—I was boarding and I was allowed not to go; I didn't have to go any more. And so that was just great; I didn't bother going any more. I don't have strong beliefs at all.

I: Did you ever have any particular feel for the whole thing?

R: I'm not religious at all. I know lots about it. . . . I have friends who are "born again" and all that. I've always kept a pretty open ear to it. If someone wants to be religious, that's fine with me . . . just don't knock at my door.

I: If you had children . . . ?

R: Oh, I'd probably put them through the Sunday-school program just to let them know a little bit of what's happening, rather than other people I've known who've grown up never having gone even to Sunday school, who are just total airheads on the whole.

Comments

A. Those unacquainted with identity status interviews may find the paucity of A's responses hard to believe in a college student. This type of ideologically impoverished response is much more frequent than one would like to believe.

B. This subject's emphasis on "openness" reminds one that the word can mean "empty" as well as "receptive."

C. C had the ingredients for a Foreclosure or Achievement, in that some early structure was provided. However, his current diffidence indicates Diffusion.

Foreclosure

Where Diffusions tend to be vacant on ideology, Foreclosures, especially in religion, are usually firm believers in the faith of their childhood. Almost all committed persons, Foreclosure or Achievement, say that their beliefs are different from their parents' and different from the beliefs they held as children. It is up to the interviewer to determine the validity of these claimed differences. If respondents say their beliefs have changed significantly since they were younger, then they should be able to articulate major departures. If a Roman Catholic has decided that the Virgin Birth is questionable, this choice does not indicate a major shift. However, if you were brought up Roman Catholic and have questioned the church's social policy and find yourself favoring birth control, abortion, a Marxist political stance, but denying the Pope's authority, then these positions do indicate a significant shift. Similarly, if a respondent says that his or her beliefs are different from the parents' beliefs because the respondent is more "liberal," this statement does not indicate a significant departure. An individual who can cite a period of major difference from the parental faith, such as disbelief or commitment to another religion, however, would not be scored Foreclosed.

Sometimes, one finds a respondent claiming the same religious beliefs as his or her parents held, but with very weak commitment. Here, as in the preceding section, the lack of commitment takes precedence over the lack of an exploratory period and the individual is called Diffusion, not Foreclosure.

Examples

A. (female)

I: Are you active in the church right now, in any type of religion?

R: Yeah, I'm Roman Catholic, and before I went to UBC I'd be going [to church] once every week.

I: Is your Catholic faith an important part [of your life]?

R: Yeah, it is... and I wouldn't give it up, and if I had any children I would hope that they would be religious. I guess I couldn't push it on them, but I would... try to influence them. I think it leads the way to a right way of life, better living.

I: You were exposed to the church when you were young and went to the catechism?

R: Yeah, for six years.

I: Are your parents still fairly religious right now?

R: My Mom is more religious, if you can measure religion at all, than my Dad. My Dad is Anglican and my Mom is Roman Catholic. She was an orphan when she was younger and was brought up in a convent... my Dad is religious; he attends church and doesn't say much about

it. My Mom will say something about it if something needs to be said.

I: Was there ever a time when you seriously questioned or rejected your religious beliefs, the Catholic Church, and so on?

R: If I ever did reject my religious beliefs, I wouldn't be very happy with my life. I wouldn't have that focus or that basic ground. I have questioned it in a way.... I've always ended up criticizing [others'] points of view [on religion]. I don't think I'd ever give up my religious point of view.

I: Is there much indecision or conflict right now [about your beliefs]?

R: There's no conflict. I'll always believe that way. I will always be stable ... you can't measure or judge some things. Some things have to be experienced. Some things just are, and there's nothing that you can do to say "this isn't right," because you can't actually see or measure [them]. Some things just are.

B. (male)

I: Do you have a particular religious preference or belief system?

R: Yes, I've been brought up in the Lutheran Church since I was little. I was in a church school in elementary school. And I did catechism and confirmation, and everything. I've been brought up and so that's my preference. Just because of the way I was brought up.

C. (female)

I: Do you have any religious preferences or beliefs?

R: I'm Roman Catholic by birth.

I: What does that mean to you?

R: I believe mostly everything that they teach me in my faith (although) there are some things that I'm kind of doubtful on ... a few little technical things like they say that during the Mass the bread that they have is changed actually into the body of Jesus Christ, and I'm not so sure about that.

I: What do you do when you have these kinds of questions or you feel skeptical about some issues? Do you try to resolve the issues or just keep them in mind?

R: I just keep them in mind. I [sometimes] discuss it with my friends [but] most of them are really strong R.C. and they think that I'm silly for even thinking about things like [that]. Sometimes I discuss religion with my parents; they're really strong R.C.s too, and so if I go into anything in any detail at all, they get nervous.

I: Are those issues very important for you, or are they very minor issues?

R: They're minor issues.

I: Are you very active in going to church?

R: I go to church every Sunday and I do volunteer work with my church.

I: Do you think that your views are the same as they've always been?

R: Yeah . . . there's not been much change at all.

D. (male)

I: Do you have any particular religious beliefs?

R: We're Sikhs.

I: Has there ever been a time when you questioned [your beliefs] or thought about doing something else?

R: No, I haven't thought about doing something else.

I: If you had children, how would you bring them up?

R: I guess I would teach them the same things I learned in my religion.

I: Do you think there's any chance that in the future you'd start to question [your beliefs] or change your mind about them?

R: No.

Comments

A. Although somewhat lengthy, A is included because her "absolute" beliefs are typical for Foreclosures. "Believing" is equated with "stability"— probably referring to psychological health.

B. B illustrates the embeddedness of the Foreclosure in his or her family. To be a member of this person's family is to accept their brand of Christianity: not accepting that might lead to ostracism from the family.

C. C furnishes a picture of what Foreclosures do if they have religious questions. First, the questions are not especially major (such as transubstantiation here); second, doubts are usually discussed with adherents of the same religion, so that one is fairly certain of a supportive rather than a confrontational audience.

D. D is included because of the respondent's immediate lapse into the first person plural when the question calls for an answer in the first person singular.

Moratorium

It is probably in the ideological area that the intensity of the Moratorium's struggle is most evident, and the interview is almost always interesting, although sometimes wearing. The possibilities considered can become fairly esoteric ("flaky" is a more accurate, though less kind, description). But one can usually distinguish the seriousness of the Moratorium's endeavor from the verbal smokescreen thrown up by an articulate Diffusion. Again, there should be *some* boundaries around the belief system and a movement toward resolution in the future.

Examples

A. (female)

I: Do you have any particular religious affiliations or preferences?

R: No, a particular nonaffiliation perhaps. I don't really believe in churches. It's funny, but religion to me all through our time has been the cause of the greatest conflict in the world. And for that reason I almost don't believe in it. (But) . . . I think people need, I think people naturally create their own beliefs, just for security. I think everybody sort of fears what's going to happen. So if they don't believe in God, as in whatever their church says God is, people tend to make up their own image of some sort. . . .

I: How does your own belief system work?

R: It's sort of . . . um. Well, it's very confused actually. And it's sort of always changing. Within my family, my brothers and sisters and that, we discuss it a lot . . . but I guess there is an all-over spirit, but it's not an "it." And it's within, it's ourselves. How to explain this? And so we are all part of this spirit.

I: Do you think your ideas will continue to change?

R: I think they'll probably continue to change. Every once in a while I think that what I think is so far out, probably compared to a lot of other people's religious beliefs. And therefore, I haven't completely formulated it and therefore, it's sort of combinations of discussions rather than reading. But I don't think I'll ever adopt a "Christian" religion.

B. (female)

I: How would you describe your spiritual beliefs?

R: Well . . . they don't at all conform with those expounded by most churches.

I: What are your beliefs?

R: It's hard to pin them down and get them out. It's a lot of a mixture of Zen with some . . . basically, it's more a belief in humanity rather than God. I don't think there is [a God], I think there's a certain degree of fate, but there is no "grand Master" up there playing us like a chess game and that you basically get what you deserve; that there must be some kind of tabulation going on as to how well or how poorly you are as an individual, how bad you are, and that you eventually pay for it in some direction or another. As to hereafter or heaven or whatever, I don't believe in any kind of a wonderful ending to it all, pie in the sky kind of thing. But I think there is some continuum after life. I don't think this is "it." I don't think it can be "it."

I: How did you decide that?

R: Just reading and speaking with people with strong religious beliefs, especially Christians.

I: So your parents' beliefs would be different than yours? Would they be more traditional?

R: Yes.

I: When did you start thinking about that or taking on that belief system?

R: It's been a gradual thing. You grow up with the Judeo-Christian ethic and you start to question it when you hit puberty; you find flaws in it . . . and then things have just expanded from there.

I: Do you feel confident in your position now, or are there still uncertainties for you?

R: I think there are areas of uncertainty but I'm confident that . . . I refuse to say that I'm right because there are so many religions that claim that they're right that I don't even think there even is one particular correct theory or view on religion. It's more or less a personal theory that you form yourself . . . but in what I believe, I think I'm fairly confident in it.

Comments

A. This is a fairly good example of a Moratorium in the midst of formulating a belief system. She has a vague idea about what it will look like when finished, and she differentiates it from Christianity. She is clearly involved in the exploratory process.

B. B is a bit further along than A in articulating a belief system. Both A's and B's ideas about religion have a do-it-yourself quality typical of Moratoriums. The in-process nature of the Moratorium is also evident in B's responses.

Identity Achievement

Persons who are called Identity Achievements have considered seriously at least one belief system different from their own, or have departed significantly from the belief (or no belief) position of their childhood, and have now located themselves within a definable structure to which they exhibit some behavioral commitment. They are not usually as definite about raising their children in their chosen faith as are Foreclosures. However, neither are they as laissez-faire as Diffusions or Moratoriums. They are not usually as interesting to listen to as Moratoriums; one hears more about the end of a process with Identity Achievements than about the process itself. There is a self-assuredness and comfortableness about their current position, but this is not the inflexibility or self-righteousness of the Foreclosure.

Examples

A. (male)

I: What do you believe in?

R: I definitely believe in the God of the Judeo-Christian Bible.

I: And your parents?

R: No particular belief—I suppose a humanistic world view, but not very consistently.

I: How did your beliefs come about?

R: I had rejected the whole tradition [as a young teenager]. At 18, I started going through some real questions about why I was doing what I was doing and whole-life issue questions . . . [such as]: "Where do we get our acceptance of others from?"; "How can we judge good and bad?"; and "Who am I?" My uncle presented me with the existential point of view. I was fairly attentive to the thinking I had unconsciously accepted as I grew up. Then I picked up the Bible and started reading it, and it seemed to be answering the questions that the other ones weren't.

B. (male)

I: Can you tell me about your religious beliefs?

R: I decided at this point that I'm agnostic. When people talk about God . . . and their belief in God, they deal with it in terms of a fear and I don't see it that way and I will continue to profess that, as Christians say God is supposed to be representative of love . . . you don't fear love. Until Christianity recognizes the inherent contradiction, I'm not prepared to accept it as my religion. It may even be a self-contradiction that even though I profess to be an agnostic, I believe that if, in fact, there is a God that we just have various levels of His acceptance of us or our acceptance of Him. I don't think that as Christianity preaches that if you don't accept Him as your eternal savior that you're condemned to the fiery depths of hell. If in fact God exists, He encompasses all people . . . I'm a very spiritual person, there's no question about it, but it's an individual or interpersonal thing.

C. (female)

I: Was there ever a time when you doubted or questioned your religious beliefs?

R: Yes, I would say by the time I was in high school I started questioning Christianity. . . . When you're a child, you think that Christianity is the only faith that exists, because in North America that is what is promoted. But then you find that half the population of the world follows some other kind of religion and you realize how relative it all is. I mean, does that mean that only the Christians are going to heaven, that the Moslems and so on are not? So you start asking a lot of questions about it. So for me, religion is more a guideline to being a good person and conducting your life in a brotherly fashion.

I: How did you resolve these questions?

R: Well, I did some reading. I read about the Moslem faith, and I did some reading about Buddhism. Then I realized that no one is going to know for certain what the right road to follow is, but that you can get something from them all. I think that

in life you can never go wrong adopting a certain code of ethics or morals that you can follow, and hopefully whatever God is up there—whether He be a Moslem God or a Christian God or whatever—is going to recognize that.

Comments

The examples presented illustrate three ways of arriving at an achieved position.

A. A had rejected traditional beliefs, and an "existential" authority figure, finally choosing what appears to be a fundamentalist, Bible-oriented position.

B. B defines himself as an agnostic, in opposition to establishment Christianity, but retains the ethic of Christian love. Defining oneself "in opposition" has a Moratorium quality to it; however, B. seems too committed to be scored as Moratorium. Probably an *IA(M)* scoring would be appropriate here.

C. C is a little vague about her final resolution, which sounds somewhat Universalist-Unitarian, although not labeled as such. However, it is clear that she has left her childhood position and that she does not seem to be struggling to achieve a resolution. In the absence of more information about the structure of her belief system, one might score this fragment *IA(D)*.

Family/Career Priorities

Due to the recent upsurge in dual-career families, three additional identity domains have been developed (Archer, 1985a,c). These pertain to the roles of (1) spouse, (2) parent, and (3) the priority of family versus career. With extensive outside employment for women, changes in attitudes and behavior have been demanded of both sexes. As a consequence, these three domains have heightened salience for both males and females of this age as they invest in career preparation and romantic intimacy. The domain of family versus career prioritizing is elaborated here.

Because the majority of individuals in our society plan to be parents and the majority of women, while parenting, now work as well, the conflict of juggling these two time-consuming major life activities has created intense identity issues. Neither sex can easily evade the potential dilemma, because a conflict for one partner will lead to consequences for the other. The issues are whether one plans to pursue family and career goals, and, if so, do they have equal value? Or one goal, and if so, which one? What happens if one's partner has different values pertaining to the priorities of these goals? Because responses typically are very different when confronted with conflicts between being a spouse and having a

career, and conflicts between being a parent and having a career, the interview was designed to ask these questions separately. The researcher has a choice: (1) score these two identity domains (spouse/career; parent /career) separately, (2) score one conflict only, or (3) use the more sophisticated of the two scorings if they differ. In essence, there is flexibility in the use of the family/career priority domain, affording a number of research questions about this area.

Commitment requires a clear statement of priority, which can be to (1) spouse/parent *or* career or (2) a dual priority of spouse/parent *and* career. One can use the knowledge obtained from the separate, more detailed spouse and parenting domains as well as vocational choice to enhance accuracy of scoring. Inconsistencies between what is said in this domain relative to the three domains mentioned earlier should be carefully recorded. The interviewer should have recognized and probed any lack of congruence among the areas. For example, the content of a respondent's parenting domain may be filled with examples of planned dedication to children. And yet, the content of the subsequent family/career priority domain for the same respondent may reveal career priority with expectations that the children will cope somehow.

Priorities should be supported with knowledgeable statements about the effort to be invested in each of the domains. Respondents should be able to project into the future how they will live out their priority. Although implementation of these priorities may not be feasible in the present, their activities in preparing for adulthood should be consistent with the expressed priorities. Furthermore, although some uncertainty may remain about their ability to carry through with their plans, they should be basically satisfied with the priority chosen.

Exploration is exemplified by activity in the present directed to acquiring knowledge in order to understand and choose realistic priorities. Respondents should at least be able to provide a sketchy outline of perceived conflicts. Again, the emotional tone should denote genuine desire to resolve this dilemma in the near future.

Scorers should keep the naiveté of the respondents in mind. Lack of experience in most of these domains easily results in unrealistic notions about implementing several goals at the same time. Also, egocentrism of youth may result in unrealistic and unfair assumptions about the roles a partner may pursue that would negate the necessity of conflict.

Identity Diffusion

Males are more typically Identity Diffuse in this area than are females. Usually, no sense of possible conflict between the roles is articulated. For those who recognize the potential for conflict, the assumption arises that it is the partner's problem, not theirs. For the most part, Diffusion in this domain takes the form of apathy.

In some instances, there may be marginal concern. If these areas are not to be dealt with directly for a number of years, however, the issues may not prompt investments of energy relative to other more immediate life concerns and goals.

Examples

A. (male)

> I: Do you think there will be any conflict between being a husband and pursuing a career?
> R: No.
> I: If you were confronted with a conflict, which would you give priority to?
> R: Whichever mattered more at the time.
> I: Would it be difficult to decide which mattered more?
> R: No.
> I: How about between parenting and career?
> R: Same thing goes.
> I: How much concern have you had about this?
> R: None.

B. (female)

> I: Do you think there will be any conflict for you between being a parent and having a career?
> R: No, a job is a job. And I don't know if I want kids or not.
> I: If you were confronted with a conflict, what would you do?
> R: Depends. If I have to work, I have to work. If the kid's real sick or something, then I have to take care of him.
> I: Would it be a difficult decision?
> R: No. You do what you have to do.

C. (male)

> I: Do you anticipate any conflict . . . ?
> R: Why should there be conflict? She does what I expect and there's no problem. I'm the breadwinner and she'd better take care of the kids. They're her problem.

Comments

A. The cursory answers with no attempt at elaboration make the apathy of the respondent apparent.

B. This respondent lacks enthusiasm for either role. She intends to do what is most necessary at the time.

C. Occasionally an Alienated Diffusion emerges. In this case, there is no genuine discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of different perspectives. Rather, the respondent dictates demands, placing all responsibility for undesired tasks elsewhere. We hear no acknowledgment of the potential consequences of expectations.

Foreclosure

This is perhaps the most common approach to the conflict domain for both sexes. The commitment typically comprises placing the highest priority on children. However, some adolescents choose either a dual, spouse, or career priority. Significant others often play an important role in this domain. Typically, a spouse or potential spouse, as well as the adolescent's parents' perceived approaches to such conflicts strongly influence the respondent's choice.

For Foreclosures, conflict is rarely anticipated because a priority has been determined and will be honored. That priority has never been questioned by the respondent. Playing devil's advocate as an interviewer seems to annoy many Foreclosures about this domain. As they project their plans into the future, there is no wavering from the perceived plan. Interestingly, potential barriers are simply not acknowledged or tolerated. The tendency is to shrug them off.

Examples

A. (female)

I: Do you think there will be any conflict between being a wife and having a career?

R: No.

I: If you were confronted with a conflict between your responsibilities as a wife and your work responsibilities, which would you give priority to?

R: My husband because he's more important than my job.

I: Have you ever been concerned that there might be such a conflict?

R: No.

I: Do you think there will be any conflict between being a parent and pursuing a career?

R: No, that will be my career.

I: How would you compare your ideas with those of your parents?

R: About the same. They always thought we came first.

I: How do you feel about that?

R: Your children should come first. If they don't, you shouldn't be a parent.

I: How does the person you're presently in a relationship with feel?

R: The same.

B. (male)

I: If you were confronted with a conflict between your responsibilities as a husband and your work responsibilities, which would you give priority to?

R: My wife. A job is a job and there's always one out there. I can switch from field to field, but my wife is, she's it.

I: . . . conflict between being a parent and pursuing a career?

R: Not yet, no.

I: Do you foresee any?

R: I really couldn't say.

I: How would you compare your ideas with those of your parents?

R: My mom was always there. The family comes first, she always said. The roof over the head has to be there and food always has to be in the stomach. I always agreed with that.

C. (female)

I: Do you think there will be any conflict for you between being a wife and pursuing a career?

R: No, because R stays home now and takes care of the house-work. I know that if we both worked, we would share things that had to get done around the house. I don't think he would ever object to me having a career.

I: Do you think there will be any conflict between being a parent and pursuing a career?

R: If I got to that point, that R . . . gave me an ultimatum between being his wife or having a career that I wanted, I think I would choose the career. I have my own mind and I know I would never stop him from having the career he wanted and I feel he should do the same for me.

I: How have you arrived at this conclusion?

R: Just by always getting my own way and knowing that I'm my own person. I have just as many rights as anybody does to make decisions for myself.

Comments

A. This is a very typical Foreclosure dialogue. Straightforward, clear objectives are stated without hesitation. No conflict is anticipated. This is no surprise because she is surrounded by people of similar perspective.

B. Although B seems to sense a possible conflict upon the arrival of children, he has no intention of pursuing that potential thought. Also, it is interesting that family comes first, yet the content agreed to is "roof over the head and food in the stomach." Considerations about the extent of time spent on family versus job to make money for the roof and food isn't even generated. As with Respondent A, the voice is firm and determined. Again, we find agreement with significant others, namely the parents.

C. This female expects remarkably smooth sailing. This is what I want, what I typically get, and that's the way it will continue to be. She assumes reciprocity—that is, if I don't interfere with your plans, you won't interfere with mine. Notice that, when asked the parenting question, she heard it as a spouse issue.

Moratorium

Females are more likely to be in Moratorium about this conflict than are males, particularly upper-class females. As the realities of career and

family appear, females are more likely to begin to plan a timetable for various goals. Male college professors who are fathers appear harried infrequently. But the female college professor model, juggling career and family, typically does. Also, female models are more likely to openly discuss these kinds of difficulties with students than are male models. Furthermore, students are more likely to address such concerns or curiosities to married professional women. It is a conflict addressed in Psychology of Women and Sociology of the Family courses. Therefore, it appears to be a female issue.

In the context of home, working mothers are still more likely than fathers to be seen cooking, cleaning, *and* doing their homework if they have returned to school. They are also likely to complain and resent their exhaustion. Men who are attempting equitable sharing of parenting and home responsibilities exemplify similar pressure but, unfortunately, they continue not to be the norm.

The typical conflict is, "Can I do it all?" Without having experienced "all," it is difficult to realistically judge this conflict. The knowledgeability demonstrated by youths about this area is therefore typically unrealistic. Those whose mothers have dual priorities sometimes better understand the juggling. But it is interesting how little youths appear to attend to their parents' activities and difficulties.

As indicated, primary activity directed toward gathering information includes talking with individuals who have chosen different priorities, taking such courses as Psychology of Women or Sociology of the Family, reading articles on the topic, and observing individuals who are in the situation.

To be scored Moratorium, individuals should be able to discuss the elements of the priority issues that concern them. As in the other domains, a decision in the near future should be desired. The primary concern is typically between parenting and career. Spouses can manage on their own, but children are dependent on you. Some concern is also expressed about the quality of day care. Once children are in a regular school program, concerns for them decrease dramatically. For example, latchkey issues are addressed among adults today but atypically by late adolescents.

Spouses, too, can be of concern to this age group. Remember that many males and females, as youths, are trying to establish successful intimate relationships. They may express concern about jeopardizing such partnerships for the sake of careers that they have not yet begun.

Examples

A. (male)

I: Do you think there will be any conflict for you between being a husband and pursuing a career?

R: I have been in conflict about that for some time. It's the kind of thing in which I have to decide which is more important. If

something good came along now, would I decide to get married right away and jeopardize my career or would I go on with my career and hope that something else came along?

I: How do you think it will interfere?

R: I really don't have any concrete answer for that yet. But other people keep talking about it so it's got me worried. I'm not one for getting married today and finding myself divorced tomorrow because of my career.

I: Do you think there will be any conflict between being a parent and pursuing a career?

R: I don't think there would be much of a problem with parenting and a career. To be a parent, I would pretty much have to be a husband.

B. (female)

I: Do you think there will be a conflict between being a spouse and pursuing a career?

R: No. You're both adults. You know you need the income from both of you. I might have to compromise and take a lesser job if a problem arose like relocation. But I think he would help me find work that suited me. He knows how much I enjoy art advertising.

I: Do you think there will be a conflict between being a parent and pursuing a career?

R: Lord, yes! I'm petrified. Who's going to take care of a little baby, so helpless and dependent on you. I don't think I could bear to leave it. And yet I don't want my career jeopardized if I found something I really liked. You see, I figure by the time I have a baby, I'll be well into my career. I've probably invested three or four years of my life in it. I can see taking maternity leave. I'd like that. But then what? Day care, nursery schools? Am I a rotten mother? Suppose he cries when I try to leave him off. I've seen my sister's child try to cling to her. She puts her down, says good-bye, goes out to the car, and cries. I dread this.

C. (female)

I: Do you anticipate any conflict between being a parent and having a career?

R: Well, I'm a mother now. And yes, there is a lot of conflict. I love my son. When he grins up at me, no matter how ornery he's been, my heart melts. But frankly, I'm going crazy home all the time. I take a course here or there. But I don't want to stay home forever. I really want a career like I had originally planned.

I: How do you think you'll resolve this conflict?

R: I don't know yet. I mean, I'll probably have one or two more kids. Where do I fit in school or work? Stopping and starting gets you all messed up. But I'll be so old by the time I'm ready for a career, who would take me? Do you know how hard it is to juggle school and a kid? I listen to other 21-year-

olds. Boy are they in for a shock. And if there are more kids . . .

I: When do you think you'll resolve this issue?

R: I'm not sure. But I need to soon. I've got to plan carefully if I'm really going to try for both. I just don't know. . . .

Comments

A. This male respondent's anticipated conflict is between spouse and career but not between parent and career. His statement, "it gets me pretty worried" is a sign of Moratorium. However, the scorer should then look for activity directed toward resolving that dilemma. The "other people keep talking" could be construed as one such sign of his listening to the problem for possible resolutions.

B. This female has the reverse conflict. Her sister is apparently functioning as a dual-priority model who experiences stress over the process. As the respondent projects into her future, the conflict arises over a young infant-preschooler's care once her career is well established. She seemed willing to negotiate with her husband about relocation but perhaps she is reflecting flexibility early in the relationship, which decreases as career involvement increases. Interestingly, she identifies no support system for her future.

C. This mother has realistic information because she is already juggling parenthood and part-time school. Does she push her schooling and opt for a career and/or have more babies? As she assesses her timetable, she is overwhelmed about her ability to fit it all in. Notice that she, too, volunteers no support system to help her.

Identity Achievement

To be Identity Achieved in this domain, respondents should be able to discuss knowledgeably the pros and cons of the alternatives that have been considered and justify the option they chose as most personally expressive. They should be engaged in behavior that is congruent with this option, even though the priority may not be implemented until some later time. The emotional tone should be somewhat relaxed, although if a dual priority is chosen, there may be apprehension about its feasibility. Respondents should also be able to project their plans into the future, revealing the time line for the occurrence of whichever priorities are chosen.

Models may play a significant role in the choices, but assessment of alternatives is essential to Achiever status scoring. In other words, doing as advised by a model, without considering options, would generate Foreclosure status scoring.

Examples

A. (female)

I: Do you think there will be any conflict for you between being a wife and pursuing a career?

R: No.

I: If you were confronted with a conflict between your spouse and work responsibilities, to which would you give priority?

R: Except in cases of illness, my career. I've realized that I must marry someone of like mind, i.e., career oriented, or I won't marry.

I: How did you arrive at this decision?

R: Actually, I was in a muddle for a while. My parents were hassling me about marriage and kids. I was expending energy on my courses, talking about my plans to become president of a corporation. For a while they had me feeling guilty and selfish. But when I really looked at myself—what I enjoy, what I'm good at, it fell into place. Marriage and children are their priority, not mine. I was really relieved when I figured that one out. Now I just ignore my parents and am happily preparing for my career.

B. (male)

I: Do you think there will be any conflict between being a parent and pursuing a career?

R: I didn't use to think so. In fact, I didn't give it a thought. I just planned to do what my folks did. But here at the college, a couple of my professors, some of the guys, have been talking about parenting/career conflict. Two of them even brought their little kids to class. At first it ticked me off. But then I kind of got into seeing their pleasure with the kids. They even canceled class when their kids got sick, explaining that their wives stayed home last time and it was now their turn. Hearing the girls talk, appreciating what these profs were doing, made me sort of reverse roles and think from their perspective. At some frat parties, we actually got into heated debates about who's responsible for what.

I: How much concern do you have about this?

R: Lots. I realize now that the only way having a career wife is going to work is if I pull my weight at home. I expected to do some cooking and cleaning. I do that now. But it's a lot more than that. I don't want to be bored with a housewife. My mom doesn't do anything. Dad sits in front of the TV. No, that won't do now. I'm even rethinking my career goals. I mean if I get really invested, keep reaching, I could lose everything. I've got to find the right balance of things. It looks tricky.

I: When do you think you might have this conflict resolved?

R: Well, outside of figuring the balance out, I know what the priorities are going to have to be. I've got to make time for

my wife and kids. I'd like my wife to stay home with the kids when they're real little, but if it would hurt her career, we've got to work out some compromises like my profs have.

Comments

A. This college woman has chosen to make career her priority. Her own parents triggered her conflict over marriage and parenting versus career for her. "For a while they had me feeling guilty..." and "I was really relieved..." signal the conflict and its resolution. Her introspection, "really looked at myself..." exemplifies appropriate activity. She now projects into the future with a positive and enthusiastic emotional tone.

B. This respondent should receive a primary scoring of Achiever although there are secondary elements of Moratorium. He has resolved the major issue of priority, "I know what the priorities are going to be..." but he has continued concerns about implementation, which may include some minor identity issues yet in another domain—"If I got really invested, keep reaching...." Initially, he had opted for his parents' approach. Models of a different perspective caused dissonance. He engaged in activity to assess the pros and cons, such as "heated debates" and has subsequently changed his orientation.