

# AUTOEROTICISM OR SOCIAL FEELING AS BASIS OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

JAMES F. BRENNAN

*Western State School and Hospital, Canonsburg, Pennsylvania*

Beginning with 1912, Adler, through his work with neurotics, distinguished between two modes of thought: (a) an antithetical mode which perceives the world in terms of contradictions like good-bad and hot-cold, and (b) a scientific mode which organizes reality into "varieties . . . degrees on a scale, arranged in accordance with their approximation to some ideal fiction" (2, p. 229). It is apparent that Adler adopted such a distinction after having read *The Philosophy of 'As If'* by Hans Vaihinger (25), a celebrated neo-Kantian scholar. Vaihinger's distinction between dogmatic fiction and hypothetical fiction corresponds to Adler's distinction between antithetical and scientific modes of thought (2, pp. 76 & 84).

## CATEGORIZED VERSUS CONCRETE REALITY

The antithetical attitude of mind places more belief in the reality of its dichotomies than in concrete reality, while the second attitude gives priority to concrete reality by remaining aware of the hypothetical, heuristic character of its categories.

For Adler, the antithetical mode of thought characterized the neurotic attitude, and he traced it back historically to primitive peoples and ancient philosophers where the feeling of insecurity predominated, as in his neurotic patients (2, p. 229). He did not absolve himself from such thinking, for he recognized that his notion of "polar hermaphroditic opposites" emerged from this antithetical mode of apperception, as did Lombroso's "bipolar," Bleuler's "ambivalent," and Freud's "conscious-unconscious." According to Adler, the scientific view represented a mode of thought which emerged more from a common concern about the object of investigation than from a preoccupation with the certitude of one's thought (2, p. 229).

Lewin, some 20 years later, elaborated upon Adler's distinction between modes of thought stressing the historical character of such a cleavage in his paper on "Aristotelian and Galileian Modes of Thought" (18). He concerned himself with establishing the criterion of adequate theorizing in psychology and discovered that scientific

theory in general was progressing toward the homogenization of its conceptual dichotomies. He gave Freud as an example of a psychologist who resolved the dichotomies of normal and abnormal in psychopathology: "Freud's doctrine especially—and this is one of its greatest services—has contributed largely to the abolition of the boundary between the normal and the pathological, and the ordinary and the unusual, and hereby furthered the homogenization . . . of all the fields of psychology" (18, p. 22). Lewin, however, indicated that the dynamics of psychological motivation may be placed on a continuum of normal-abnormal and still abide by a more general antithetical Aristotelian orientation which separates man from concrete situations: "It is not the fact that direct quantities are employed in psychological dynamics that gives it its Aristotelian character, but the fact that the process is ascribed to vectors connected with the object of investigation, for example, with the particular person, and relatively independent of the situation" (18, p. 36).

Hence, although Freud did away with the dichotomy between normal and abnormal, most notably in his formulation that the infant is sexually perverse and the adult neurotic is negatively perverted (12, pp. 51 & 57), his conception of human development as originally autoerotic, presented dichotomies of self vs. others and of self vs. world which are historically rooted in an introspective approach to understanding reality.

The idea that man begins alone, as an isolated being, has its roots in Descartes' 17th century method of introspectively doubting the existence of all things in order to establish an epistemological ground for all knowledge. After an intensive interrogation of himself by himself as to what is certain, Descartes collapses back upon the interrogative method itself as the ultimate certitude: "I noticed that whilst I thus wished to think all things false, it was absolutely essential that the 'I' who thought this should be something, and remarking that this truth, '*I think, therefore I am,*' was so certain . . . that I could receive it . . . as the first principle of the philosophy for which I was seeking" (7, p. 101).

Such a radical starting point indicates that consciousness is originally and fundamentally consciousness of itself; mind is interiority or *res cogitans*. The things outside consciousness or thought must be inferred and their existence continually subject to doubt. Body and world are characterized by exteriority, they are *res extensae*, i.e., mere extension and thus fundamentally distinct from awareness

which characterizes mind. Within this view which has served as the foundation of philosophy and science for succeeding centuries, mind is originally separate from body, and thought fundamentally distinct from reality. This Cartesian duality between mind and matter which represents an example of an antithetical, Aristotelian mode of thought lies at the heart of modern-day psychology, particularly the psychoanalytic theory of development.

The scope of this paper is to show first that the Cartesian attitude, which is actually solipsistic, persists within Freud's theory of development; such an attitude fosters antithetical conceptualizations which separate man from others and from the world. Once having done this, the theory of Adler will be discussed in terms of social feeling, a concept which depicts development as humanization or growth of interpersonal relatedness. Adler's emphasis upon the fact that the infant matures in relation to others in a social world will serve as a corrective to the Freudian notion that the child develops in a vacuum, i.e., autoerotically. Finally, it will be demonstrated that the evidence from some empirical studies of infant development is more easily reconciled with Adler's concept of social feeling than with Freud's concept of autoerotism.

#### DEVELOPMENT AS AUTOEROTIC: FREUD'S SOLIPSISM<sup>1</sup>

Given even the Cartesian influence on Western thought, we may still ask why Freud could not go beyond such a contemplative dissection of man and world, since unlike Descartes' solitary philosophizing, Freud's thinking fed off the me-you relation of psychoanalytic therapy. The answer to this question involves the confrontation of the general atmosphere structured by the psychoanalytic method—the unseen psychoanalyst sitting behind the supine analysand.

This atmosphere detached Freud from the mutual, face-to-face encounter. He achieved a distance from the immediate human concerns of his patient's suffering which ordinarily evokes reciprocal anguish and concern or social feeling. By structuring the analytic session along impersonal, non-social lines, Freud was able to relate to his patient as if he were an object of scientific investigation which never confronts you directly with its gaze, nor addresses you personally. The consequences of this objectification of the patient achieved

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<sup>1</sup>In this section assistance and encouragement were given by D. Smillie, Duquesne University.

for Freud what *la belle indifférence* obtained for his hysteric patients: interpersonal detachment and non-participation, affording both parties freedom from the anguish and concern of social feeling.

### *Origin of the Theory*

This non-social, emotionally detached structuring of therapy forms the fountainhead of Freud's clinical data which by their very nature argue for a solipsistic view of man which stresses the priority of abstract representation over man's concrete dialogue with the world and others. The author believes that Freud's commitment to solipsism even conditioned his choice of the free association method, rather than the method determining his basic philosophical posture. Such a priority of inner thought over outer reality was adopted by Freud after he learned to his surprise that his patients' alleged sexual assaults in childhood were fantasies instead of facts. As Strachey pointed out, in 1897 Freud was forced by concrete evidence to abandon his seduction theory in favor of the idea "that sexual impulses operated normally in the youngest children without any need for outside stimulation. With this realization, Freud's sexual theory was completed" (12, p. xiii).

In the mutually detached atmosphere of the psychoanalytic session, it seemed likely that Freud's experience of the analysand and himself influenced his concept of autoeroticism. For instance, he perceived the neurotic as living out his sexual impulses through his symptoms: "As I have put it elsewhere, the symptoms constitute the sexual activity of the patient" (12, p. 54). This split experienced between himself and the analysand seemed to have provided the ground for his reasoning back to infancy and his conception of autoeroticism with its implied man-world split. He stated that in infantile sexuality, "it seems probable that the sexual instinct is in the first instance independent of its object; nor is its origin likely to be due to its object's attraction" (12, p. 36). Some years later, in 1920, he was more conclusive in his statement: "In childhood, therefore, the sexual instinct is not unified and is at first without an object, that is autoerotic" (12, p. 138).

### *Primary versus Secondary Autoeroticism*

The primary autoeroticism represented a modification of Freud's theoretical writings prior to 1905 in which autoeroticism was a secondary phase initiated by the infant's loss of the mother's breast. Freud stated: "At a time at which the first beginnings of sexual

satisfaction are still linked with the taking of nourishment, the sexual instinct has a sexual object outside the infant's own body in the shape of his mother's breast" (12, p. 124). Such a notion leads him to regard puberty as a time of reunion: "There are thus good reasons why a child sucking at his mother's breast has become the prototype of every relation of love. The finding of an object is in fact a refinding of it" (12, p. 125).

The theoretical shift of conceiving autoeroticism as a primary instead of a secondary phase, suggests that as Freud continued to perform therapy, the detached structure of the analytic session took on more and more reality while everyday living appeared less and less real.

It is little wonder that his patients' detached world view, permeated with thoughts of self-destruction, should finally be elevated to a scientific theory of a death instinct. Now the roots of aggression, whether directed inwardly or outwardly, are no longer traced to external frustration but to an instinct internal to man. With this antithetical conceptualization, Freud totally committed himself to the belief in the isolated man connected only to the impersonal flow of organic evolution: "After long doubts and vascillations we have decided to assume the existence of only two basic instincts, *Eros and the destructive instinct*. . . . We may suppose that the final aim of the destructive instinct is to reduce living things to an inorganic state. For this reason we also call it the death instinct" (13, p. 20). Apparently, Freud grasped human phenomena according to an abstracted cosmic scene of life and death filled with prehistoric episodes traceable to the evolvment of life and its return to inert matter, rather than grasp human events in terms of the evolvment of social feeling.

### *Elimination of the "Other"*

Returning to Freud's notion that perversions are manifestations of infantile sexuality, we meet his notion of man's psychosexual development as a function of maturing erotogenic zones of the body. This implies that man from the very beginning is registering pleasure instead of relating to objects external to himself. For Freud, "sexual life comprises the function of obtaining pleasure from zones of the body" (13, p. 26). Thus, by broadening the concept of sexuality to include more than genital activity, he de-emphasizes the interpersonal dimension of sexuality and essentially eliminates the "other." Clara Thompson makes these comments about Freud:

The sexual act itself as part of creative productive love is a concept not found in his writings. Nowhere is there any intimation that sex can be the expression of the best in human relationships. Sex according to Freud, is chiefly important as a relief from tension. One does not get much indication of its being part of an interpersonal experience (23, p. 134).

In line with Freud's antithetical splitting of man from others, his idea of erotogenic zones which appeared in 1915 successfully eliminated the problem of the other in sexual matters.

In the place of the concrete, personal other, Freud wrote about a pregenital organization of sexual energy which focuses upon the functioning of certain bodily areas: the oral, anal, and genital parts. He insisted that the nursing infant's satisfaction contains the core of sexual satisfaction in adult life while ignoring the question of the infant's experience of the mother and its relation to later sexual expression: "No one who has seen a baby sinking back satiated from the breast and falling asleep with flushed cheeks and a blissful smile can escape the reflection that this picture persists as a prototype of the expression of sexual satisfaction in later life" (12, pp. 76-77). Likewise, the satisfaction obtained in defecating represented an internal sexual stimulation of the anus, while the impact of how mother changes and diapers the infant went unnoticed:

Children who are making use of the susceptibility of erotogenic stimulation of the anal zone betray themselves by holding back their stool till its accumulation brings about violent muscular contractions and, as it passes through the anus, is able to produce powerful stimulation of the mucous membrane (12, pp. 81-22).

The actual involvement of the genitals in sexual play and stimulation is, for Freud, a late arrival: "Among the erotogenic zones that form part of the child's body there is one which certainly does not play the opening part, and which cannot be the vehicle of the oldest sexual impulses, but which is destined to great things in the future" (12, p. 83). Nonetheless, Freud is compelled to attend to the interpersonal implications which the everyday conception of sexuality connotes. Sexuality immediately brings to mind a "me" and a "you," at least a fantasied "you." Thus Freud deals with the me-you aspect of sexuality through a somewhat little-used notion, that of component instincts. He writes:

It must, however, be admitted that sexual life, in spite of the preponderating dominance of erotogenic zones, exhibits components which from the very first involve other people as sexual objects. Such are the instincts of scopophilia, exhibitionism and cruelty, which appear in a sense independently of erotogenic zones; these instincts do not enter into intimate relations with genital life until later, but are already to be observed in childhood as independent impulses, distinct in the first instance from erotogenic sexual activity (12, p. 88).

Apparently, component instincts refer to the sensory-motor impulses which do not originally involve the erotogenic zones but presuppose locomotor maturation. However, Freud places primary emphasis upon the erotogenic zones and their development and never elaborates, with any clarity, how the notion of component instincts fits into his essentially solipsistic theory of man.

#### ADLERIAN THEORY OF SOCIAL FEELING

We now turn to Adler's concept of social feeling in order to portray how development appears when man and others are conceived as a unity of reciprocal relatedness.

*Gemeinschaftsgefühl* translated as "social feeling" or "social interest" represents "the most distinguishing concept of Adler's Individual Psychology," in the words of Ansbacher (4, p. 114) who recently summed up the general meaning of social interest as "an interest in the interests of mankind" (5, p. 148). He further characterized social feeling in terms of three developmental stages. Each of these, in our opinion, reflects a distinct philosophical meaning, namely, the ontological, the transcendental, and the phenomenological meaning.

##### *Ontological Meaning*

Following Adler, Ansbacher states, "The initial form of social interest is an aptitude for contact and cooperation" (4, p. 114). Within this context social feeling assumes an ontological status in that it answers the primordial question so aptly put by Heidegger: "Why is there anything at all, rather than nothing?" (15, p. 1). The answer to this question is that man and world exist through social feeling. The essential nature or essence of man is to be understood according to his primordial relatedness to others, conceptualized as social feeling. This fundamental being-with-others is precisely why man is at all, both in an evolutionary and psychological sense. Ansbacher again addresses this idea: "No child could survive without having experienced some social interest on the part of others and without having cooperated on his part to some extent" (4, p. 124). One need look no further than to the Spitz study (22) of early infant deprivation to crystalize this notion into a fact.

This seems to be the reason which led Adler to equate reality with the social, for he clearly expresses such an equation in the following phrase: ". . . with the demands of reality — i.e., with society"

(1, p. 103). The implication here is that reality is a communal enterprise; the real is a human reality. Within this view, to be human is to be in contact with others, and in cooperating with them reality emerges in the form of common sense. What has been implied in this conclusion serves as the point of departure for the transcendental conception of social feeling, i.e., the essence of man is to be beyond himself, to be for others in the most fundamental sense of the verb "to be," to be at all or not to be.

### *Transcendental Meaning*

In emphasizing the development of one's aptitude for contact and cooperation through training, Adler in fact stresses the transcendental character of social interest, i.e., to be human is to transcend one's self-involvement for the other. Following Adler, Ansbacher writes: "Through training it becomes a proficiency or ability . . . expressed as relating to others in a useful way, contributing to the common welfare, behaving as a part of mankind, understanding others, identifying with them, empathizing with them, being reasonable, showing common sense" (4, p. 114).

Clearly, social feeling in its transcendental character cannot be properly understood under Aristotelian, antithetical categories, like instinct vs. social taboo; rather, it can only be properly grasped by recognizing that the basis of human society and individuality is founded upon the possibility of man's self-transcendence through mutual relatedness to others and his world. Individuality is a by-product of this self-transcendence and mutual relatedness. In this sense, transcendental meaning does not refer to Kant's (16) *a priori* forms of reason, for the concept of social feeling, unlike the scholastic concept of God, can only be understood through man's concrete dialectic of being-with-others, not through contemplative thought. It does not, in the Kantian sense, mean the transcendence of concrete reality via powers of abstraction; instead, it means to transcend one's own reified categories of thought which delimit the reality of the other by dealing with him in terms of one's own closed categories of thought.

Social feeling implies that we remain open to the other and welcome him as a host would a guest, according to his own meanings, whose life is respected as equally valid as one's own. From such a ground of openness and mutual respect, common sense is generated and individual identity nurtured. Paradoxically, transcendence of



self constitutes real self-identity in that preoccupation with one's self-seeking goals and ideas actually undermines a true sense of identity (who am I?) and reality (what is life about?).

### *Phenomenological Meaning*

This brings us to the question of what method of analyzing human experience is available to us once we abandon the notion that man's experience is solipsistically structured by autoeroticism. The answer seems to lie in a phenomenology of human interaction conceived as social feeling. The last developmental step characteristic of social feeling which Ansbacher describes contains the phenomenological facet: "The developed social skills and abilities become something the person likes to exercise; they become active interests and positive attitudes. There will be an interest in others, a striving for an ideal community, and a feeling of belongingness, of being at home on this earth, and of harmony with the universe (4, p. 114).

The feeling of belonging to the community, the earth, moon, and stars has its roots in the everyday matter-of-fact experience of the other: I experience you as different from me (feeling), yet in a more fundamental sense the same (social). This is a feeling of being at home with others, a welcoming of another as a host would a guest. Such an experiential or phenomenological characterization of social feeling in terms of a psychological structure of our experience promises to expand, in a more concrete sense, the meaning of social feeling as it conceptually spans the distance between "you" and "me." This approach is not a phenomenology of one's mind and its content of thoughts, but a phenomenology of human interaction, i.e., what you and I do to each other in thought, word, and deed.

With such understanding we may confront the other more fully as a unique person, like ourselves, rather than as an alien object to be used with indifference, and we may come to relate to the world more totally as our "external metabolism" (14) to be utilized with care rather than as so much natural resources to be exploited.

Such an interpretation of social feeling along phenomenological lines attempts to clarify man's experiential relationship to others in terms of both dehumanized forms of detachment and humanized modes of relationship commonly referred to as mature love, friendship, and cooperation. This humanized way of relating to others is not adequately provided for in Freud's solipsistic conception of man as autoerotic, except as a socially more appropriate means for

satisfaction of one's basic drives. On the other hand, Adler's conception of social feeling accounts for both modes of being when conceived developmentally as a growth process involving both dehumanizing and humanizing potentialities.

#### HUMANIZATION AS DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL FEELING

Human development in terms of social feeling can be conceived as humanization. This consideration leads us to the insight that the infant is to be properly understood in his dialogical relationship to others, and not in an autoerotic or monological fascination with himself. According to Adler, initially the mother and child are reciprocally related to each other:

The child and mother are dependent on each other; this relationship not only arises out of nature, but is favored by it. When other schools of psychology maintain that the child comes into the world a complete egoist with a "drive for destruction" and no other intention than to foster himself cannibalistically on his mother, they overlook in the relationship the role of the mother which also requires the cooperation of the child. The mother with her milk-filled breasts and all the other altered functions of her body (not to mention the new emotional development of her love for her child) needs the child just as the child needs her. They are dependent on each other by nature. The potentialities for social interest take on life, become tangible first in the relationship between mother and child (3, p. 256).

However, within this fundamental mutuality of mother and child, the Beechers indicate that the maternal mode of relating is predominantly one of giving while the infantile mode is one of getting, in the sense of manipulating the adult: "At a very early age, he finds that crying brings adults into his service when he is wet, hungry or bored. He also finds that smiling holds the attention of the adults who have the power to bring him benefits. He smiles when they pick him up and cries when they put him down. Thus . . . begins . . . the habit of manipulating people" (6, p. 35).

Development of social feeling conceived as humanization is living with others in ever wider circles of dialogical human encounter, with ever increasing empathic ability and common sense; whereas, the lack of adequate social feeling conceived as dehumanization is withdrawing from the cooperative enterprise of everyday living for the monological fascination of one's thoughts. Humanization is openness to reality, the unfolding of reality or common sense; dehumanization is the closing off of reality or private sense, i.e., a low level of social feeling.

Children's humanization potentiality is developed, according to Dreikurs (9), by having parents and teachers relate to the child empathically, i.e., as an experientially equal member of the family and community, which naturally calls for training in independence and self-reliance. If I experience you as my equal, meaning the same as myself in terms of basic human worth (not in ability or responsibility), there is little chance of my doing for you what you can do for yourself or doing something to you that I would not appreciate being done to me.

Adler clarifies how a lack of social feeling or empathy in our dealings with others affects our experience of them: "If I expect everything from others without giving anything to them, then others are, for me, necessarily nothing more than objects" (3, p. 257). Within this getting mode, the young infant, the pampered child, and the infantile adult operate without a strong sense of belonging as if living in a foreign sometimes hostile land. In their attempt to belong within an overly permissive or suppressive atmosphere, they may try to live out what they think others think of them, positively conforming, or negatively conforming through rebelliousness. In fact all psychopathology could be reinterpreted as abortive attempts to gain a sense of belonging and a feeling of being at home, e.g., compulsivity as manufacturing sameness or belongingness through free-floating repetitious thoughts.

#### DEHUMANIZED AND HUMANIZED SEXUALITY

Now we turn to Adler's analysis of two phases of sexual functioning, to demonstrate that social feeling accounts for both dehumanized and humanized sexuality, as psychological structures of experience which differ as to degree even though they are poles apart experientially. In no sense are these two forms to be understood as antithetical opposites or rigid dichotomies. Rather, dehumanized sexuality represents a low, infantile level of social feeling, humanized sexuality a highly developed, mature level of social feeling.

##### *Primary Sexual Phase and Dehumanization*

According to Adler (3, pp. 221-222), the primary phase of sexual functioning consists of the first erogenous awakenings, i.e., those automatic sexual impulses experienced concomitantly with the tickling sensations which bring about turgescence and erection. At this

stage sexual function is initiated through maturation of inherited physiological structures. Touching arouses the mature sexual organ producing a pleasurable tickling sensation which leads to masturbation. The frequency of masturbation is dependent upon the child's amount of social interest or personal involvement with others, i.e., he will masturbate more frequently if he "likes to go his own way and is more inclined toward wish fulfillment than toward cooperating, as this characterizes the pampered child" (3, p. 221).

At this stage of development, the primary sexual phase as a function is exploratory, curiosity-bound, impulsive, and self-satisfying; it is not primarily interpersonal nor humanized but predominantly impersonal and dehumanized. Even initially, however, the sexual function has some private designs on the "other," for despite it being a mastery of a newly found bodily function, it always also implicates the other. Erotic fantasies come into stronger focus later, but these images involve an imaginary other who is used by the masturbator like a plaything. The essential meaning of masturbation is mastery of a bodily function and of a fantasized interpersonal situation involving the other as an object of one's thought, a free-floating abstraction characterized in experience as feeling different, unique and lonely.

According to Adler (3, pp. 222-223), all forms of sexual psychopathology represent but varieties of masturbation, i.e., fixations upon the primary phase of sexuality with its underdeveloped social feeling. In cases of perversion, prostitution, promiscuity, and sexual deficiencies, humanization is lacking; sex is reduced to masturbating a plaything; the sexual partner is dehumanized. The fetishist reduces the other to a lock of hair or piece of clothing and in turn is reduced to a thief; the prostitute objectifies her partner as a customer and in the process is reduced to a piece of merchandise; the promiscuous partners only regard each other as playthings; and the impotent man and frigid woman treat the other as something without attraction, personal value, or dignity and experience themselves in the same way. In cases of neurotic sexual deficiencies, the other-centered, humanized phase of sexual functioning is avoided while in cases of perversion, prostitution and promiscuity, the primary, self-centered phase of sexuality is maintained by the adult as an imaginative play at being passionately alive while actually feeling lonely, an experience continually nurtured by routine, automatic masturbation.

Shoben describes this same phenomenon: "They often are re-

morseful and dissatisfied with compulsive sexual conquests and romantic involvements that are ultimately 'empty' or 'meaningless' " (21, p. 22). Also Tournier in speaking of automated dehumanized sexual union states: "Both feel uneasy; both have a vague sense of being determined by their complexes, and thus of not being free, of betraying their persons instead of being personal. That this is so is shown by their constant need to reassure and justify themselves" (24, pp. 221-222). Dehumanized sexuality reduces the person's subjectivity and dignity to objectified organ parts: one is just a vagina or a penis. Such objectified relationships represent gross abstractions devoid of mutual understanding and respect.

### *Secondary Sexual Phase and Humanization*

Adler's secondary sexual phase is a function of the mature personality. It includes not only attraction and passion between a man and a woman (sexual potency), but also a mutual relationship permeated with concern and respect for each other and their fellowman (social potency), and the performing of some useful work (economic potency). The child's movement from self-centered sexual functioning to the secondary phase is helped along by expanding his sphere of friends and preparing him for a worthwhile livelihood. The individual who fails to develop friendship relations and does not prepare for an occupation is no doubt hopelessly enmeshed in his erotic fantasies expecting all of his needs to be attained through minimum effort.

The secondary phase of sexuality is based upon mutual understanding, respect, and satisfaction. This relationship is between persons and not things, i.e., it is humanized, other-centered, dialectical, and openness to reality is characterized in experience as a feeling of belonging, sharing the same basic goals and interests.

In humanized, sexual relationships the other is not treated as an extension of one's own hand which excites one's own sexual apparatus. On the contrary, masturbation is transcended in a humanized, sexual relation, for the other is recognized as a self-determined person like oneself. The focus of sexual activity for each partner resides in the other and not the self, making mutual satisfaction the goal of each. Dreikurs states: "If one-sided, sexual satisfaction is always a misuse of the partner, not much different from rape. Love is a mutual task; sex a mutual understanding" (8, p. 163). Lazarsfeld also exemplifies this point though in a negative way as she discusses the male's sexual failure: "At all events, the usual behavior of women in such a situa-

tion must be considered as thoroughly wrong, as no one-sided failure is possible in matters of sex" (17, p. 127). The development of social feeling leads "beyond success and failure" (6), for we are paradoxically both the invited and the inviter, the welcomed and the welcomer, and the loved and the lover in the mature human encounter.

#### SOME EMPIRICAL STUDIES

It seems worthwhile to mention a few empirical studies, the findings of which are more easily reconciled with Adler's concept of social feeling than with Freud's notion of autoeroticism.

The idea that the infant is solipsistic, being dominated by instinctual impulses, was not supported by White. After reviewing studies of both animal and infant behavior he concluded that "contact with the environment seems to be sought and welcomed, in which raised tension and even mild excitement seem to be cherished, and in which novelty and variety seem to be enjoyed for their own sake" (26, p. 328). A study by Schaffer and Emerson (20) demonstrating that the very young infant seeks proximity with others not only for need satisfaction but also for attention, argues against a drive-reduction model of infant development. Wolff (27), in a study of attention in infancy, discovered that infants were attentive to others and environment only after their bodily needs were satisfied, just the reverse of what one would expect if the infant were truly autoerotic, i.e., oblivious to reality when satiated. A study by Rheingold (19) demonstrated that institutionalized infants who had one mother or caretaker learned more easily and were more responsive to human contact than infants raised by multiple caretakers. Escalona's investigation (10) into infant feeding disturbances revealed an apparent empathic linkage between mother and child which even involved food preferences. Even such negative effects as lowered intelligence, depression, and early mortality in institutionalized infants were observed by Spitz (22) and related to the absence of the concerned other in the infant's life.

Ideally, researchers in the future will utilize the concept of social feeling in order to understand the infant, the other, and the communal world as unified fields of meaning reciprocally related to each other. This shift from viewing the infant in isolation, to seeing the infant in relationship to others has already been made by some researchers, most notably by Escalona:

Few would doubt that what happens to young babies as they perceive the mother and other people has profound consequences, not only for the development of the all-important first relationship to another human being (that with the mother), but also for the set of expectations and feelings that will dominate their orientation to the environment as a whole and toward themselves and their place in the scheme of things. The child's experience during contact with other human beings is probably the most important of our dimensions (11, p. 47).

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The problem of conceptualizing the human growth process, from infancy to adulthood, is discussed in terms of a criterion of adequate theorizing. It replaces rigid categories of thought with more flexible, hypothetical ones; antithetical concepts with scientific ones according to Adler; Aristotelian with Galileian modes of thought according to Lewin. Freud's theory of man's development in terms of autoeroticism represents an antithetical, Aristotelian concept in that it depicts man as basically separated from others and creates the dichotomies of self vs. others and man vs. society. Adler's theory of man's development in terms of social feeling as an aptitude for humanization represents a scientific, Galileian concept which describes man as fundamentally related to others and his world, creating the holistic notion of man-other-world unity of reciprocal relatedness.

Autoeroticism is a solipsistic, monological concept which identifies reality with private thoughts or instinctually determined symbols, considers concrete interpersonal relations as irrelevant to the understanding of man, and believes human experience to be instinctually structured thus independent of others and world.

Social feeling is an other-centered, dialogical concept which defines reality in a primordial way as common sense, depicts interpersonal relations as concretely defining man's essence and considers experience to be fundamentally structured by concrete "me-you" encounters.

The concept of autoeroticism is unable to account adequately for such humanized phenomena as real love, friendship, and cooperation; whereas, the concept of social feeling takes such phenomena into account and also brings understanding to such dehumanized phenomena as sexual psychopathology which the concept of autoeroticism claims to explain so adequately.

Finally, some empirical studies of infant development are presented, the findings of which are more adequately accounted for in terms of social feeling than autoeroticism.

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