



# **HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN A CHANGING SOCIETY**

James F. Adams

C91  
A1

7963522

# HUMAN BEHAVIOR IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

*edited by*  
**JAMES F. ADAMS**

*Temple University*



E7963522



**HOLBROOK PRESS, INC.**  
**BOSTON**

Copyright © 1973 by Holbrook Press, Inc.,  
470 Atlantic Avenue, Boston.

All rights reserved. No part of the material protected by this copyright notice may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any informational storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the copyright owner.

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: **72-90198**

Printed in the United States of America

**HUMAN BEHAVIOR  
IN A  
CHANGING SOCIETY**

*To my wife*  
*María Miranda de Adams*

## PREFACE

Traditionally, books on the topic of human adjustment problems have tended to approach the area from the viewpoint of integrating the known research literature on the subject. To some degree, this has dictated the topics covered. Topics which might be of great interest to the reader, but which had insufficient research coverage, were likely to be ignored. Further, as most of these books have been written by psychologists, it has been only natural that the viewpoints offered were somewhat limited by the interests, knowledge, and orientation of the writers.

Increasingly, more and more specialties within psychology are becoming too large for a single author to cover with comprehensiveness and integrity. It is also true that the many facets of the adjustment problems we face today are either found in, or shared with, other disciplines. Psychologists, psychiatrists, educators, sociologists, penologists, and politicians, to mention but a few of the helping professions, are all legitimately concerned with the adjustment problems found in our society and world. Therefore, it seemed reasonable to me that I would obtain the broadest possible coverage of the adjustment topic by enlisting the aid of professionals from a diversity of backgrounds.

The only bias I have knowingly inserted as the editor of this volume has been through the selection of the topics to be covered and through the individuals whom I have asked to write the respective chapters. I must admit that I don't personally agree with everything which appears in this book in terms of the approach used or in the opinions expressed. However, the book was compiled not to express my personal position but to elicit thought and stimulate discussion. A few of the chapters were chosen for their traditional importance, but the majority were incorporated into the book because they are of major concern in the critical age within which we live. The chapter authors were given encouragement to not only cover the topic assigned, but to feel free to expose their own views where it might seem appropriate. The reader will find that most have done exactly as instructed.

This book should have wide interest to a variety of different populations. Most certainly it is appropriate for use in university courses which have been traditionally taught under the rubrics of Mental Hygiene or the Psychology of Adjustment. A professor who has developed his own format of presentation may wish to use this book as a basic text to stimulate classroom discussion; others may view it as supplementary material for a more traditional text in the area.

The authors of this book were asked to write at a level which would be understood by individuals with a limited background in psychology. By and large, I believe they have been quite successful, although the level of difficulty does vary to some degree.

I would like to express my appreciation to my son Robert B. Adams, who has read many of the chapters in this book (with no background in psychology) and who has been quite helpful with his constructive criticism. He has encouraged me to believe that much of the book is relevant to the youth of today.

During the year in which I put this book into its final form, I was Visiting Professor of Psychology at Catholic University in Ponce, Puerto Rico. Without the friendliness, and the time to write and edit which the University provided, this book would not have come into existence. I am most grateful for the cooperation they have extended so freely.

*James F. Adams*

**HUMAN BEHAVIOR  
IN A  
CHANGING SOCIETY**



# CONTENTS



Preface	ix
1. ADJUSTMENT IN A TIME OF CRISIS <i>James F. Adams</i>	1
2. MALADAPTIVENESS <i>David J. Reynolds</i>	25
3. PHYSIOLOGICAL ADJUSTMENTS <i>Karl C. Garrison</i>	55
4. CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED YOUTH <i>William E. Amos and Charles F. Wellford</i>	81
5. RACISM AND ADJUSTMENT <i>James A. Bolden</i>	99
6. SEX-ROLE STEREOTYPING AND ADJUSTMENT IN THE FEMALE <i>Phyllis Chesler</i>	116
7. MILITARY ADJUSTMENT <i>Peter G. Bourne</i>	140
8. YOUTH INVOLVEMENT IN ADJUSTING OUR NATIONAL PRIORITIES <i>George S. McGovern</i>	157
9. ACTIVISM AND APATHY IN CONTEMPORARY YOUTH <i>Jeanne H. Block, Norma Haan, and M. Brewster Smith</i>	168
10. ADJUSTMENT AND THE COUNTERCULTURE <i>Herbert J. Cross and E. Lansing Pruyn</i>	206
11. OLD WINE IN NEW BOTTLES: BLUEPRINT FOR A HUMANISTIC ETHIC <i>O. Hobart Mowrer</i>	241

12.	THE EMOTIONS AND SEX EDUCATION FOR YOUTH	268
	<i>Thomas F. Staton</i>	
13.	MARITAL AND SEXUAL ADJUSTMENT	294
	<i>Robert R. Bell</i>	
14.	FAMILY ADJUSTMENT	313
	<i>Jacqueline P. Wiseman</i>	
15.	VOCATIONAL ADJUSTMENT: PREVENTION OR CORRECTION EMPHASIS?	350
	<i>Jerry L. Davis and Roy B. Hackman</i>	
	<i>Name Index</i>	373
	<i>Subject Index</i>	378

# 1. ADJUSTMENT IN A TIME OF CRISIS

James F. Adams

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing the world today is in adjusting to the knowledge that mankind may not survive. If this book had been written even ten years ago, it is not likely that the same note of urgency would have been sounded. However, today we know that the resources of the world have been most badly treated. Our earth's minerals will disappear in the foreseeable future; water resources have become limited; and exploding populations threaten the future of mankind. Our air is polluted, as are our cities, streams, lakes, and oceans. An Italian group of scientists (*Time*, 1972) has estimated that within a short fifty years, humans will have made the world unfit for habitation. A newly born child can look forward to a relatively short life span if man does not reorder his priorities and attempt to salvage Mother Earth.

At the same time we have been destroying our environment, the world's knowledge has been increasing at a fantastic rate of speed. It has been estimated for the child who is born today, that by the time he graduates from college the fund of the world's knowledge will have increased fourfold. When this same child reaches fifty years of age, the world's knowledge will have increased thirty-two times, and 97 percent of everything known will have been learned since he was born (Toffler, 1970). Is it not ironic that it is during this very same period of the time that we may destroy the world? In our attempts to keep pace with the commercial changes of our society and world, we have become blinded to, and blinded by, the by-products of our exploding economies, our exploding populations, and the ecological disaster which may soon present unresolvable crises (Ehrlich, 1968; Ehrlich and Ehrlich, 1970).

Not only have we been unaware of the imminent doom facing

*James F. Adams* is a Professor of Psychology and Educational Psychology at Temple University. In addition to this book, he has edited or written *Problems in Counseling: A Case Study Approach*; *Counseling and Guidance: A Summary View*; *Understanding Adolescence: Current Developments in Adolescent Psychology*; and numerous journal articles on such topics as counseling, adolescent psychology, psychological testing, and the history of psychology.

the earth, but running to keep up with the advances of science and knowledge, we have lost our perspective toward our fellow man. In short, we have been so overwhelmed by the speed of societal change (Toffler, 1970) that only a very few, mainly the young, have raised a voice of protest against the rape of man's consciousness (Reich, 1970), and the rape of nature. And frequently they have been labeled *maladjusted*.

In the first chapter of a book devoted to the topic of adjustment, I shall attempt to accomplish two goals: first, I shall consider the topic of adjustment within the ecological threats we are facing and attempt to make a case for reconsideration of its popular connotations; secondly, I shall consider a number of reasons why youth may have difficulties in adjusting. A number of these latter considerations will be developed in some length by other authors within this book.

## THE CONCEPT OF ADJUSTMENT

We must credit the concept of adjustment to biology. The term comes from "adaptation" which was basic to Darwinian theory (Lazarus, 1969). Darwin's theory was that those organisms which could adapt, survived; those which could not, perished. Actually, it is probably unfortunate that the term adjustment has this etiological connotation. It has meant, to many, that if one does not adapt himself to the demands of society, that he is *maladjusted*. It does not take into consideration that certain types of adaptation for humans may, in fact, be a disastrous process. The Germans who adapted to Hitler contributed to the massacre of six million Jewish people. Or consider the individual who comes home to find his house on fire. He can adapt to the heat by progressively removing his clothes but he will perish in the process.

## A Search for Self-understanding

Part of the process of adjustment is found in man's search for self-understanding. The ancients looked to the stars in their search for self-understanding. They next turned to nature—and failed again (Alexander and Selesnick, 1966). Modern man has looked to science, to industry, work, and to his fellows in an attempt to find meaning, adjustment, and he still fails in his quest. Psychologists know that man must turn inwardly in his search for meaning; for it is only within one's self that meaning and serenity can be found. Adaptation to society may or may not be a process which will

facilitate adjustment. It has as much potential for maladjustment as it does for adjustment. Roberts (1968, p. 78) has said:

Self-awareness, self-identity, self-acceptance, self-respect, self-satisfaction—these are the core conditions of mental health. To come to terms with ourselves is basic to our mental health. To come to terms with the selves of our neighbors is basic to a healthy society.

He is quite correct. If we cannot come to accept ourselves, it is most improbable that we will be able to accept or be accepted by others. On the other hand, even though we have learned to accept ourselves, we have no guarantee that we will be accepted by society; and, in our very quest for acceptance, we may develop maladjustment within ourselves. What I am saying is that if the standards of society are unacceptable, if the selves of our neighbors are oriented in destructive directions, then we may not be able "to come to terms with the selves of our neighbors." At this point we should recognize that we do not have a healthy society and work to change its priorities. The difficulty is in insuring that the fault, truly, does not lie within ourselves but within society.

## The Disillusionment of Youth

Our generation of young people, who have not yet faced the necessity of specialization, or of being overwhelmed by the vast frontiers of knowledge, or of earning a living, may well be far more conversant with the major problems facing humanity than are we—their elders. Their concerns are focused on a human level, which is an admirable characteristic of their age.

The problems facing this generation are problems with which no other generation has been forced to cope: the environmental destruction of the earth. Ecology, as yet an infant science, is already being called upon to salvage a world which is being destroyed, beyond comprehension, by a mankind which is largely unconcerned.

Youth look to the priorities which have been set by their elected leaders and conclude that those who elected them are equally unconcerned. They observe President Nixon and realize that ideals, moral qualities and principles are mostly secondary to expediency (Adams, 1972a). Their major concerns of: *Peace*, *Pollution*, *Population*, and *Poverty* are sacrificed for an artificial prosperity. The poor starve, racism abounds, and education is for the middle and upper classes, not for the minorities who are denied equal opportunity. The United States has become a country where values are computed on a cash register. Youth observe the money invested in wasting our resources through war and in interfering with the destinies of other nations; through going to the moon, and they wonder. They pro-

test, not always reasonably, but they do not find a reasonable world.

Some youth turn to *activism*, some look to the *counterculture*, some withdraw into themselves or into drugs; and society labels all of them freaks and misfits. Perhaps it is time we reassessed the question of who or what is maladjusted.

## SELF-ADJUSTMENT AND SELF-ACTUALIZATION

The emphasis or stress on adjustment should be placed inside of man. This would not imply that man can or should live in isolation. It does mean that unless man knows, develops, and accepts himself, he will not be able to create a society which has meaning for tomorrow or which will survive for more than fifty years.

Many philosophers, theologians, scientists, and others have written about the nature of man. Indeed, we can learn from all of these resources. However, for the purposes of our considerations I would like to briefly turn your attention to two individuals who have done much to influence the thinking of psychologists today.

### Abraham H. Maslow

For Maslow, the orientation of science had too long moved in a direction not conducive to understanding man. To paraphrase his words slightly (Hall, 1968), he wished to prove that human beings are capable of something greater than war, prejudice, and hatred; to make science consider all the problems that nonscientists had been working with—religion, poetry, values, philosophy, and art.

The concept of *self-actualization* comes from Maslow's studies of highly functioning individuals. The self-actualizer is able to make his own decisions in the face of contrary public opinion. He is generally conventional about things such as clothes, language, etc., yet he becomes quite independent and unconventional when he feels that basic principles are involved (Maslow, 1962; Goble, 1971). Such an individual does not need fame (although he may earn it) or praise or prestige. He may seem remote or detached, for while he enjoys people, he does not need people to support his feelings of security. He is secure. This healthy man's motivation is in his need to develop and actualize himself to his greatest potentialities and capacity. Maslow found that actualized individuals disregard such superficial things in others as class, education, religion, national background, and appearance. They are not threatened by the unknown but enjoy it. They have a genuine desire to help humans, a deep feeling of kinship with the human race. Finally, the self-actualized person needs less love from others, enjoys his own company

but at the same time is able to give more love. He is a loving person. Maslow sees self-actualization as a goal but does not find it present to a high degree in many individuals. As he says (1962, p. 151):

This means for us that that which the person is and that which the person *could be* exist simultaneously . . . thereby resolving the dichotomy between Being and Becoming. Potentialities not only *will be* or *could be*, they also *are*. Self-actualization values as goals exist and are real even though not yet actualized. The human being is simultaneously that which he is and that which he yearns to be.

## Carl R. Rogers

Perhaps the greatest influence of Carl R. Rogers has been on the areas of counseling and clinical psychology. Because he has spoken so clearly concerning his beliefs on the positive growth attributes of man, he is of interest to us. Rogers has seen that what is desirable in a therapeutic relationship is but an extension of what would be profitable in all human relationships (1958). If it were present in human relationships, it is likely that much of the manpower in the helping professions could be eliminated. Rogers speaks strongly for certain qualities as being necessary for the therapeutic (human) relationship. The first of these is *genuineness*. By this he means that the therapist should be open and without facade. In addition, he should view his client in a positive manner. The client is not rejected because of his personal qualities or beliefs. He is viewed with *unconditional positive regard* and seen as a valuable human being. Lastly, the counselor should develop or possess the quality of *empathy*. This is to understand life as it is seen through the eyes of one's client or fellow man; to be able to assume another individual's frame of reference. For a vital interaction to occur between the individuals, each of the two must at least minimally perceive these qualities in the other. In a therapeutic relationship, the client must perceive these qualities in his counselor (1957).

Rogers sees each of us as having positive growth attributes which, for some of us, need releasing. Our society has turned many of us away from vital, honest, relationships and we may need professional help in our search for realizing our potentialities. This is the process of becoming and being; or, as Rogers says (1961, pp. 175-176):

It seems to mean that the individual moves toward being, knowingly and acceptingly, the process which he inwardly and actually is. He moves away from being what he is not, from being a facade. He is not trying to be more than he is, with the attendant feelings of insecurity or bombastic defensiveness. He is not trying to be less than

he is with the feeling of guilt or self-depreciation. He is increasingly listening to the deepest recesses of his physiological and emotional being, and finds himself increasingly willing to be. . . .

Essentially, what both Maslow and Rogers are discussing is not new. It has been said by philosophers from time immemorial: *know thyself*. What is relatively new is in their moving psychology away from a pessimistic, mechanistic, Freudian model concerning the nature of man, and in their couching their considerations in positive, understandable, and relevant concepts for today. Almost one hundred years ago, William James had essentially the same effect on psychology (Allen, 1967). The antithesis of the *meaning* and *being*, which Maslow and Rogers are discussing, is that which occurs at cocktail parties and in the daily dialogues we have become so accustomed to hearing. Human beings do need meaningful interactions with others (and with themselves).

Traditionally, society has defined adjustment in terms of the capacity of the individual to conform with the established laws or norms of society. It has not stressed the need for man to *be* or to *become* what is within man; to discover his potential, to find himself. Perhaps this is why historically man has seemed to have had about the same amount of happiness or unhappiness, the same amount of adjustment or maladjustment. Only a few have looked within; the masses have looked externally for their meaning. There are, of course, dangers in becoming too inner-directed. But this is usually an unhealthy type of inner-directiveness where the individual retreats and withdraws from the real world; and it would seem to me that the dangers of never becoming self-actualized should more than compensate for this risk. It is also probable that there are individual differences in the degree of inner-directiveness which is profitable for each person; and stages in life where more or less is desirable. In the final analysis, the security which one receives from knowing himself should turn him outward to make a contribution for the welfare of others. Most certainly this inner-directiveness does not interfere with the rights, privileges, and welfare of others; nor does it make one incapable of self-management or isolate one from his responsibilities as a human being.

As most of the readers of this book will be youth, I shall attempt to concentrate in the next section on those adjustment patterns which youth encounter in their searches for meaning and identity. I have already said that the youth of today are more aware of our poorly developed priorities than are their elders. By the same token they have also had more leisure time to be introspective and to search for life's meanings. This has led them in some directions which have been positive; some not so positive. Let us examine a number of the issues which enter into the patterns of adjustment.



## PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT PATTERNS

During the adolescent years, which we might loosely define as extending from twelve to twenty years of age (sometimes beginning earlier, sometimes lasting longer), there are a number of tasks which each of us must resolve. Havighurst (1956) has found that these tasks are derived from three sources: our physical maturation; cultural expectations and pressures, and our individual aspirations. The tasks must be mastered if the individual is to achieve success and happiness, and if he is to master those tasks which occur at a later time. Havighurst (1953) enumerates these developmental tasks under ten headings which may be paraphrased as follows:

Achieving mature relations with age-mates of both sexes.

Achieving socially approved masculine and feminine roles.

Accepting and using one's body effectively.

Achieving emotional independence from parents and other adults.

Achieving economic independence (knowing that one could make one's own way if necessary).

Selecting and preparing for an occupation.

Preparing for marriage and family living.

Developing the intellectual skills and concepts necessary for civic responsibilities.

Desiring and achieving socially responsible behavior.

Acquiring a set of values and an ethical system.

Any or all of these developmental tasks could cause adjustment difficulties. As the reader can refer to Havighurst, or numerous child and adolescent books for more information (for example, Horrocks, 1969), I shall refrain from presenting a detailed discussion; instead I shall pick out several overlapping and related areas where our modern age would seem to be causing particular difficulty.

### Idealism

The young person stands on the threshold of adult responsibility. He is beginning to think for himself and to question his parents' wisdom. He finds there are major issues in the destiny of the world with which his parents are relatively unconcerned. He attends a sit-in on the pollution problems facing the world and