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ABSTRACT

In order to understand the mechanisms of citizenship in the United States, people are required to study the interactions of ideology, education, and cultural pluralism as they are manifested in educational programs and in the processes of child development. The Citizenship Development Framework (CDF), a product of the Citizenship Development Study Project, was designed as a research theory that can serve as a guide for planning scientific inquiry into the socio/cultural influences that contribute to the development of an individual's citizenship behaviors. According to this theory, there are six stages of citizenship development in which social relationships contribute to the formation of the individual's perspective of his overall relationship with community and society. The six stages of development are: (1) birth to 3 years--infant dependency and maternal shaping; (2) 4 to 5 years--family citizenship and expanding kinship influences; (3) 5 to 9 years--the initiation of nonbiological dependencies; (4) 10 to 12 years--the development of social categories and group membership behaviors; (5) 13 to 15 years--horizontal social relationships within and between groups; (6) 16 years to adulthood--a search for accommodation and adult identity. Each of the stages is examined from the perspectives of: (1) primary characteristics; (2) critical relationships; (3) the nature of citizenship formation; (4) the extent of influence; (5) citizenship development; and (6) investigatory questions. (SM)

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**THE CITIZENSHIP DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK:  
A SIX STAGE SOCIO/CULTURAL THEORY**

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**THE CITIZENSHIP DEVELOPMENT STUDY PROJECT**

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## THE CITIZENSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

In recent years, the United States has been the scene of a tidal wave of immigration from every culture and society in the world. Languages and cultures are so numerous that they form a conglomerate of diversity that would swamp and paralyze most other societies. Assimilation is the test of the survivability of democracy, and it is a continuing process that contributes to the vitality of democracy. Historically, American citizenship has always consisted of a conglomerate of culture, but never to the extent that it exists today. Since the days of Jefferson, three fundamental factors have been used to forge diversity within the united pluralism. These factors have included a democratic ideology, a common educational experience that promotes a unity in the face of diversity, and a shared willingness to accept diversity as a perceived unified good in society. American citizenship can be seen as the by-product of three factors that include democratic government, public education, and a culture that can be described as a united pluralism. The interaction among these factors has produced a unique socialization process that is quite different from socialization processes found in other nations or societies. This interaction is what makes American citizenship different and vital. In order to understand the mechanisms of citizenship in the United States, we are required to study the interactions of ideology, education, and cultural pluralism as they are manifested in educational programs and in the processes of child development. The means and methods for understanding these complex social phenomena consist of intellectual and research processes. The capital goal of this inquiry is to explore the current status of citizenship education and come to an understanding of the dynamic social processes that influence its development.

**"THE CITIZENSHIP DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK: A SIX STAGE SOCIO/CULTURAL THEORY,"** was developed as a research theory which can serve as guide for the planning scientific inquiry into the socio/cultural influences that contribute to the development of an individual's citizenship behaviors. The preparation of this position statement required five years of initial study, including exploratory surveys with targeted populations of teachers and students. In 1985 the authors published their developmental statement entitled, "An Eclectic Approach to Citizenship: Development Stages." in the January/February issue of The Social Studies. This document is a revised and expanded version of the 1985 article

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| <b>INTRODUCTION</b>   | Page 1  |
| <b>DEVELOPMENTAL RATIONALE</b>  | Page 3  |
| <b>DEVELOPMENTAL ASSUMPTIONS</b>  | Page 5  |
| <b>THE SIX STAGES OF CITIZENSHIP DEVELOPMENT</b>  |         |
| <b>STAGE ONE</b><br>BIOLOGICAL CITIZENSHIP: INFANT DEPENDENCY<br>AND MATERNAL SHAPING   | Page 7  |
| <b>STAGE TWO</b><br>FAMILY CITIZENSHIP: EXPANDING KINSHIP<br>INFLUENCES   | Page 9  |
| <b>STAGE THREE</b><br>FORMATIVE SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP: THE<br>INITIATION OF NONBIOLOGICAL<br>DEPENDENCIES                        | Page 12 |
| <b>STAGE FOUR</b><br>STRATIFIED SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP: THE<br>DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL CATEGORIES<br>AND GROUP MEMBERSHIP BEHAVIORS | Page 15 |
| <b>STAGE FIVE</b><br>CHRONOLOGICAL AGE GROUP CITIZENSHIP:<br>HORIZONTAL SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS<br>WITHIN AND BETWEEN GROUPS     | Page 18 |
| <b>STAGE SIX</b><br>COMPLEX SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP:<br>A SEARCH FOR ACCOMMODATION AND<br>ADULT IDENTITY                           | Page 21 |

## INTRODUCTION

**"The Citizenship Development Framework"** contains the important elements of a theoretical position pertaining to the social and cultural influences that contribute to the shaping of the individual's citizenship behaviors and habits. According to this position, there are six stages of citizenship development in which social relationships contribute to the formation of the individual's perspective of his overall relationship with community and society. This cultural/sociological orientation credits the development of citizenship behaviors directly to the domain of social relationships.

The six stage theoretical position is organized around specific chronological age categories. These age categories are the product of socio/cultural patterns of experiences that directly influence the child. These patterns are the product of both child--rearing practices and school experiences in which the individual is subjected to new and expanding social relationships and cultural norms and values--relationships that require adjustments within an ever--expanding set of social environments.

The organizational format of the six--stage citizenship development theory presented in this document contains six descriptive subsections for each developmental stage. They include these:

**Stage of Citizenship Development:** The specific chronological age range in which the individual establishes a particular citizenship perspective.

**Primary Characteristics:** The identification of the socio/cultural influences affecting the individual's citizenship development.

**Critical Relationship:** The type of relationships that make a significant contribution to the individual's perspective of citizenship.

**The Nature of Citizenship Formation:** A description of the socio/cultural environment in which critical social relationships are encountered.

**The Extent of Influence:** An estimate of the effect of critical relationships on the individual's citizenship behaviors.

**Citizenship Development:** A description of interrelated socio/cultural conditions that work together in the shaping of the individual's citizenship perspective.

**Investigatory Questions:** A list of proposed inquiries related to each stage of citizenship development.

## DEVELOPMENTAL RATIONALE

Citizenship is considered a social or cultural phenomenon that is the product of critical social relationships. These critical social relationships provide important influences that are used in the shaping of an individual's perspective on how society works and on his place in society. Each society provides a series of shared social experiences which become the cultural denominator of experiences for that society.

These shared social experiences consist of interactions between individuals and groups that give symbolic meaning to the individual's social world. At the beginning of life, the individual is biologically and socially dependent upon the family, particularly the mother or primary nurturing caretaker. As the individual ages and matures, he comes in contact with an expanding social and physical world. As time passes, critical social relationships are expanded to include individuals and groups outside the immediate family.

The effect of these changing social and cultural experiences is to form a distinct social pattern that becomes characteristic of a particular society. This distinct social pattern consists of individual's performing roles guided by norms and values that contribute to the operation of society. Individuals look to a variety of groups that provide criteria which can be used as a bases for judging and classifying all human conduct according to standards of appropriate and inappropriate behavior. These criteria serve as a source of influence for the individual's social interactions with others and his orientation to society as a whole.

The sources of citizenship behavior are the critical social relationships that emerge as the child experiences an ever--expanding social world. This social world has a profound influence on the individual's acquired understanding of his role as a member of society. For individuals growing up in the United States, there are six stages in which important social relationships dominate the citizenship development process. Each stage challenges the individual's ability to achieve acceptance and status within a social relationship setting. In addition, each of the six stages of citizenship development is characterized by changes or modifications in the previously dominant critical social relationship. It also is characterized by the emergence of a more complex set of social contexts.

While the individual continues to modify his citizenship orientation throughout life, the years of birth to twenty-one are considered the formative period of citizenship development for American youth. It is during these years that the individual is required to move from one set of

social relationships to another in accordance with the demands of American society.



## DEVELOPMENTAL ASSUMPTIONS

The six stage development theory is based on the following assumptions:

1. Human motivation is a derivative of the individual's culture.
2. Each individual seeks to exert self through cultural outlets unless these outlets have been blocked by negative primary relationships.
3. Each individual can be encouraged to attain higher levels of accomplishment, provided that they are not in conflict with the immediate reference group or community.
4. Standards for appropriate and inappropriate behaviors are culturally based, and these same standards serve as the basis for judging the individual's citizenship behavior.
5. Human behavior is the product of the experiences and habits established during the six stages of citizenship development.
6. The critical ingredient at each stage of citizenship development centers on the nature of the "primary" social relationship currently in effect.
7. Because the individual cannot escape the consequences of culture, each individual passes through the same stages of citizenship development at approximately the same chronological age.
8. Patterns of social relationships vary from culture to culture with the exception of the universal influences of puberty changes.
9. The formation of a culturally positive citizenship can be interrupted, retarded, or destroyed during any one or more of the stages of citizenship development.
10. A critical determining factor of citizenship development is the extent to which positive and negative social experiences affect the individual in light of the primary relationship at that stage of development.

11. In the United States the individual's experiences within the school community have a direct bearing on four of the six stages of citizenship development.

## BIOLOGICAL CITIZENSHIP: INFANT DEPENDENCY AND MATERNAL SHAPING

### STAGE ONE -- BIRTH TO THREE YEARS

**Primary Characteristics:** The infant is dependent on the mother or primary caretaker for basic biological and social needs.

**Critical Relationship:** The critical relationship is mother to child. There are some developing important relationships with other family members.

**The Nature of Citizenship Formation:** The social behavior of the child is the product of the relationship between mother and child. The mother shapes the child's behavior through routines and emotional interactions.

**The Extent of influence:** The influence of the mother is a primary determining force in the life of the child, and the child has no other realistic option but to accept the nature of his relationship with his mother.

**Citizenship Development:** Citizenship development is determined by the nature of the mother's interactions with the child. The quality and the quantity of that relationship is judged as either "good" or "bad," depending on the individual and on the social and cultural norms of the family and the community. The child learns to cope with the mother/child relationship and, as a by-product of this experience, forms basic generalizations about social relationships. These generalizations become the foundation of future social relationships. The child develops a framework of expectancies as a result of the mother/child relationship. It becomes the child's subjective measure of the value to be placed on future relationships with others, both within and outside the family. This framework becomes the foundation for the development of citizenship in terms of behaviors and expectations.

### Investigatory Questions:

1. What effect does mother/child separation have on the child's citizenship development?

2. What effect does a positive mother/child relationship (as defined by the broad norms of the community and society) have on the child's citizenship development?
3. What effect does a negative mother/child relationship have on the child's citizenship development?
4. What role does consistency of mother/child relationship play in the child's citizenship development?
5. What role does inconsistency of mother/child relationship play in the child's citizenship development?
6. What effect does a strong positive paternal role have on the child's citizenship development?
7. What effect does a strong negative paternal role have on the child's citizenship development?
8. What effect does the absence of a paternal model have on the child's citizenship development?
9. What effect does discipline have in the development of the child's citizenship development?
10. What effect does reward and recognition have in the development of the child's citizenship development?
11. What role does parental education play in the development of the child's citizenship development?
12. What role does parental stability play in the development of the child's citizenship education?

## FAMILY CITIZENSHIP: EXPANDING KINSHIP INFLUENCES

### STAGE TWO -- FOUR AND FIVE YEARS OF AGE

**Primary Characteristic:** As the infant grows and matures, his social relationships expand to include other members of the immediate family. The family generally serves as the child's primary social unit and comes to play a key role in the shaping of behaviors associated with kinship groups and later with other social groups.

**Critical Relationships:** Citizenship behaviors are seen in terms of relationships within the family and include other relationships in addition to the mother/child relationship. While the mother remains as a primary influence, other family members become an important source of citizenship behavior. Even when a child is raised in a single parent family, other family members tend to enter the child's world and contribute to the child's understanding of social relationships and social interactions.

**The Nature of Citizenship Formation:** As a social unit, the family is organized around an informal social structure that functions according to the rules, values, and norms of social interactions. The child is taught these rules, values, and norms as he comes to have more encounters with other individuals within the family or individuals who enter the family. In addition, the child learns to interact with the family as a social unit. In order to do this, the child must learn to make use of social conventions associated with his family group. Citizenship is perceived in terms of family relationships, and the norms of citizenship behavior are the accepted norms for this social unit. Children who are enrolled in pre-schools or who are placed in day--care environments come to adopt the rules, values, and norms of this environment, keeping in mind that the family makes the critical decisions and choices regarding the day--care facility.

**The Extent of Influence:** Because the child normally cannot escape the realities of family life, including the day--care environment, he is required to accept the standards and values of the family and to accommodate them to a greater or lesser degree. While the family unit is a unique component of society, its values may be somewhat different from those of society as a whole. As a result, the child may have difficulties

later on when attempting to deal with non--kinship--based social units that are encountered once the child ventures forth into the community. The day--care experience may help the child deal with non--kinship relationships at an earlier age than otherwise might be the case.

**Citizenship Development:** Family citizenship tends to establish the internalized or subconscious standards of conduct that are acceptable in group situations. Through family experiences the child learns about social roles, social status, proper and improper social behavior, and a host of other standards that guide group interactions and group behaviors. The child comes to learn that he is not the center of social focus and must submit to others and to the social functions of the social unit. He learns that he must work within a social unit structure which requires a degree of reciprocity and compromise in order to gain individual desires. Family citizenship or social unit citizenship means cooperation, accommodation, mutual support, sacrifice, and a whole set of values that work against purely selfish desires. The child must learn the give and take required by an existing social unit. The child comes to accept the idea that one's own needs and desires can be fulfilled through indirect means associated with group interactions. The child is beginning to assess his own importance in terms of group values and group relationships. Therefore, the family plays a key role in establishing the idea of group norms. These norms are a fundamental source of influence for helping the child understand and deal with citizenship values and behaviors. The family establishes the foundation of citizenship development that will continue outside the home.

### **Investigatory Questions:**

1. Can families be categorized or classified according to the type of citizenship behaviors that they produce in their children?
2. What effect does a closely united family have on the child's citizenship development?
3. What effect does an disintegrated family have on the child's citizenship?
4. What social conditions within the family cause the child to accept or reject family standards, values, and norms?
5. How important is the day-care experience in the formation of the child's citizenship development?
6. What day-care conditions are most conducive to the child's citizenship?

development.

7. When a family's values and standards are contrary to the citizenship standards of society, can the child cope with these differences?
8. What interpersonal training methods are most effective in helping the child deal with his membership in a social unit?
9. Is the child's ability to deal with social unit helped or hampered by the single parent family?
10. What effect can siblings (or the lack of siblings) have on the child's citizenship development?
11. What effect do non-kinship (step-parents) family relations or interactions have on the child's citizenship development?

## FORMATIVE SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP: THE INITIATION OF NONBIOLOGICAL DEPENDENCIES

### STAGE THREE -- FIVE TO NINE YEARS OF AGE

**Primary Characteristic:** The child begins to develop social relationships and behaviors in connection with his interactions with nonbiologically related individuals and groups especially within the school setting.

**Critical Relationships:** The primary relationships continue to include the family, which in most cases serves as a protective retreat for the child in light of his new experiences and the new demands for social accommodation. The child's classmates make up the child's first formalized peer group that will have an important influence on the child's citizenship development. This peer group begins to test the ability of the individual to form nonbiological alliances and to earn a degree of social status within a formalized social unit setting. While some children experience these new social relationships in a day--care setting, the demands of the school experience are somewhat different. The teacher serves as a model of adult behavior--an authoritative figure who gives structure and direction to the organized class. The teacher is a source of information pertaining to the child's perspective of himself as a group member. In addition, the teacher serves as the judge of appropriate and inappropriate behavior in the classroom during this stage of citizenship formation.

**The Nature of Citizenship Formation:** The classroom for many is a new social environment in which group standards of behavior are an influential source of conduct for the child. The child is expected to adjust his individual behaviors to group standards in order to find social acceptance within the group. When social group standards directly conflict with family standards, the child must come to grips with a crisis situation and find a way of accommodating both sets of standards without openly violating either set in an arbitrary way. The boundaries of individual conformity must be resolved as an important aspect of cultural adjustment. This type of cultural adjustment is directly associated with the child's social concept of citizenship. The crisis for the child is to deal with his new social group in such a way that he can find expression for his own unique personality without coming into conflict with other members of his family and social group. In addition, the child must learn to



anticipate reliable social expectancies that originate as a result of his behavior and to realize that some social reactions will be mainly unpredictable and beyond his control.

**Citizenship Development:** The challenge of the classroom is to gain acceptance and to be able to operate effectively within the classroom, situation. The child is not automatically accepted in the classroom nor is he given informal social group membership in the same way that he was given family membership. Like adult citizenship, classroom citizenship is dependent on reciprocal interactions that lead to degrees of social status and varying degrees of influence within the group setting. The social relationships that emerge from the classroom usually are not permanent or lasting relationships, nor do they exert the influence on the child that kinship relationships exert on family members. The child, however, cannot escape the realities of group dynamics that are ever present within the classroom setting. Most parents require that the child master the educational and social requirements of the classroom and have expectations that their child will achieve some degree of success in connection with the school. Citizenship development is seen in terms of the child's adjusting to the classroom. The child must work out his relationships with his classmates, the teacher, and other adult figures associated with the school. Citizenship is developed and measured in terms of what are perceived as appropriate and inappropriate behaviors. The child's family has standards for appropriate social behavior, the child's peer group have standards for appropriate social behavior, the child's teacher and school have standards for appropriate social behavior, and the child must come to grips with these multiple sets of behavioral standards. The child is expected to be flexible and to know which behaviors are appropriate according to the set of standards that are in play at a given time or place. The measure of citizenship for Formative Social Citizenship include peer relations, student--teacher relationships, the ability to follow rules and directions, a willingness to cooperate and to contribute to the welfare of the group, a desire to excel in the perceived values associated within the current group situation. Knowing when to exert one's desires or issues pertaining to self--interest and when to suppress these desires in light of group requirements is the master lesson of this stage of citizenship development.

### **Investigatory Questions:**

1. How does citizenship development differ for the child who attends as compared to the child who does not attend school?
2. How are the standards for appropriate behavior within peer groups

affected by social and economic differences, and how do these differences affect citizenship development?

3. How do different teacher practices affect the citizenship development, and are some teacher practices more appropriate for the development of democratic citizenship?

4. What personal abilities or resources are needed by the child to resolve conflicts that arise because of family, peer, and classroom differences, and how do these abilities and resources affect the child's citizenship development?

5. Do the organization and operation of the classroom during the early years of the child's life have a lasting effect on the child's citizenship development?

6. Are the organization and operation of most classrooms compatible with the values and behaviors that are appropriate for a democratic citizenship?

7. How much influence do the family, the peer group, and the classroom as separate entities contribute to the development of citizenship at this stage?

8. Can the most important influences of citizenship in the school be identified and used as the basis for a citizenship development program?

9. Do children who have had positive encounters with the family, the peer group, and the classroom experience greater growth in citizenship development than students who have had negative encounters?

10. Can the schools play a more direct role in citizenship encounters and thereby assure a more positive citizenship development for each child?

## STRATIFIED SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP: THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL CATEGORIES AND GROUP MEMBERSHIP BEHAVIORS

### STAGE FOUR -- TEN TO TWELVE YEARS OF AGE

**Primary Characteristics:** The child strengthens his association with social groups that are stratified basic categories including the family, formal social groups, and informal social groups. While the individuals who comprise these groups are of the same approximate chronological age, each group differs according to the values of the individuals comprising the group and according to the functional purpose that justifies the group's existence. These newer groups require strong loyalties and behaviors. These behaviors are more clearly specified and more rigorously enforced than at any of the earlier stages (with the exception of behaviors associated with family influences).

**Critical Relationships:** The child is able to prioritize his multiple group affiliations according to categories. He recognizes a social hierarchy that includes groups outside the family, groups that have a growing influence on the behavior of the child. They include the formal and informal social groups that are a source of citizenship development for the child outside the home. Formal groups include Scouts, Sunday school classes, sport teams, bands and squads, the classroom and the school. Informal groups include neighborhood friends, school friends, cliques, children of family friends, and so on. Each child comes to value each group according to his personal needs and according to the circumstances of his life.

**The Nature of Citizenship Formation:** The stratified groups have established standards of individual and group behavior that must be accommodated. These standards of behavior help to direct the behavior of the individual child.

**The Extent of Influence:** Each group contributes to the child's concept of citizenship because groups require some degree of organization and structure. Consequently, some required social behaviors which focus on group loyalty, roles and status, rights and privileges, and even a measure of self--sacrifice for the welfare of the group. These groups tend to establish standards that relate to fairness and social justice. Each group is more or less governed by an unspecified group ethos which is understood

by every group member.

**Citizenship Development:** These stratified groups help the individual learn to deal with society in terms of its multiple group affiliations. As a result, the child is able to recognize and categorize groups in terms of their importance to his unique needs and desires. The child cannot avoid group affiliations; therefore, he must become efficient in group relationships as a basic requirement of daily life. The child tends to categorize each affiliate group according to the following criteria: (1) its importance in terms of his needs and desires; and (2) the social distance or the amount of contact that he is required to have with the group by the natural conditions of daily life. An example of social distance can be seen by comparing the requirements of the school with the requirements of the Sunday school class. The child's school classmates comprise a group that is socially closer to the child because of his required daily attendance. During these years, citizenship development is critical in terms of the values and attitudes that come to be associated with appropriate and inappropriate group behaviors. Groups have become important sources of the individual's self-concept; therefore, the individual rates himself in terms of his status within the groups to which he holds membership. In the future, the individual will categorize all new groups according to his past experiences. He will either be attracted or repelled by group affiliations to some extent depending on his previous experiences with group membership, and this action will affect his ability to become an effective citizen.

### **Investigatory Questions:**

1. Is there an optimum balance between stratified group memberships that will encourage citizenship development?
2. What effect does group membership have on citizenship development?
3. Which type of group (family, formal, or informal) has the greatest influence on the individual's future citizenship development?
4. What effect does a negative social group, a group that expresses values and behaviors that violate community standards, have on the individual's citizenship development?
5. What social skills are important for acceptance within formal and informal groups, and how do these relate to citizenship skills?
6. How are the standards of appropriate and inappropriate behavior

communicated and enforced within the informal social group and how do these relate to citizenship development?

7. What skills, processes and/or criteria does the individual use in evaluating groups within his sphere of association, and what factors are used to determine the individual's reaction to these groups?

8. How much influence can school officials exert on the individual's criteria for evaluating and selecting groups within the school?

9. Can school officials help to modify the membership and/or behaviors of individuals who have identified negative group affiliations and negative citizenship tendencies?

10. How can school citizenship goals and goals of out--of--school formal groups be mutually reinforced?

**CHRONOLOGICAL AGE GROUP CITIZENSHIP:  
HORIZONTAL SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS  
WITHIN AND BETWEEN GROUPS**

**STAGE FIVE --- THIRTEEN TO FIFTEEN YEARS OF AGE**

**Primary Characteristics:** Peer group relationships exert an extraordinary influence on the citizenship development of the individual, especially in light of a sexual identity.

**Critical Relationships:** Chronological age groups, made up of classmates and friends, contribute to the citizenship values and behaviors of the individual in either a positive or a negative way.

**The Nature of Citizenship Formation:** The individual is concerned about how he is perceived by his peers. This perception affects his social status within both formal and informal groups. In addition, the biological developments associated with adolescents give rise to a citizenship based on the sexual status of the individual within and between gender groups. The standards associated with group sexual standards become a measure of the individual's self-worth.

**The Extent of Influence:** Chronological peer group relationships based upon shared value norms exert a great influence on the individual in terms of language, dress, fashion, and mutual interest. These become the symbols or emblems of the adolescent subculture and are shared by a vast number of individuals at this chronological age. Group standards of conduct tend to stress conformity within peer groups, and this conformity may be, in some cases, outside the standards of appropriate behavior of the family or the culture as a whole.

**Citizenship Development:** Citizenship development is influenced and determined by the individual's peer group affiliations. Peer groups are unique and different in terms of social standards which have consequences in terms of social behaviors. As a consequence of the individual's concern for group acceptance and group status, he is willing to re--examine the values and ideologies that have governed his past behavior, including the values and ideologies that originated within the family. More important than peer social standards is the degree to which the individual is able to gain acceptance and status within his chronological age groups. Since the individual is associated with more than one chronological age group, his

experience will vary from group to group. With the general biological changes that accompany adolescence, the individual is also influenced by his sexual status both within and between gender groups. This concern will be at the forefront of his interpretation of his self--worth as a valued group member. The attitudes that are formed as a result of these experiences will have a future effect on the individual's citizenship in connection with his group activities, group efforts, and the degree to which he is willing to participate in the affairs of society.

### **Investigatory Questions:**

1. How do an individual's poor peer relationships affect his citizenship development?
2. Does an individual's membership in a low status peer group affect his citizenship development?
3. How is the individual's citizenship development affected by membership in a chronological age peer group that accepts, exhibits, or promotes value standards that are considered inappropriate by most members of society?
4. What effect does the individual's social status within and between peer groups have on his citizenship development?
5. What effect does the individual's sexual status within and between gender groups have on his citizenship development?
6. How important are shared peer values and standards of behavior to the citizenship development of the individual?
7. What role does chronological age peer group conformity play in citizenship development?
8. How is the individual's citizenship development affected by his failure to gain acceptance or status within or between chronological age peer groups?
9. What role does the chronological age subculture (including language, dress, fashion, symbols, emblems, and objects of mutual interest) play in citizenship development?
10. How is citizenship development affected by the individual's rejection of traditional family values and ideologies in favor of chronological age

peer group values and ideologies?

11 To what extent is the individual able to accommodate different standards of behaviors that exist between two groups that are deemed equally important to his social well-being?

12 To what extent do chronological age peer group relationships affect individual/adult relationships?

13. To what extent do chronological age peer group relationships affect the individual's adult citizenship?

14 Is the biological status of the individual more important within gender groups or between gender groups in terms of its influence on citizenship development?



## COMPLEX SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP: A SEARCH FOR ACCOMMODATION AND ADULT IDENTITY

### STAGE SIX -- SIXTEEN TO ADULTHOOD

**Primary Characteristics:** The individual's quest for a personal order and identity, both within and between groups, slowly evolves into a unique and complex social world for the individual

**Critical Relationships:** The individual's personal perspective combined with a conglomerate group membership are the significant influences that guide the young adult to an acceptable set of citizenship behaviors.

**The Nature of Citizenship Formation:** The individual begins to abandon most of his chronological age group affiliations as he gains the status of an adult. New group affiliations based on occupation, education, leisure and recreation, social--political--economic ideologies and purposes become important to the individual as a new adult member of society. The individual goes on to form complex social group relationships which include groups that consist of age, occupation, gender, racial, religion, and cultural differences. Because the values and goals of groups vary, the individual must maintain a balance between conflicting goals and values in order to maintain a sense of harmony within his own personal life. The individual develops strategies and behaviors for coping with inconsistencies, conflicts, and controversies that arise because of his complex social group affiliations. These strategies are the result of the individual's experiences combined with the individual's unique attributes in dealing with individual and group situations. While most societies share many of the same normative citizenship behaviors, there are refined differences that result from subculture differences.

**The Extent of Influence:** The personal quest for status in adult society is important to the individual's feeling of self and public worth. These are important concerns because they provide the individual with an orderly and structured life in which his personal goals and purposes become important. Personal goals and purposes help to guide and direct the individual's public and private behaviors and they become directly affiliated with the individual's concept of proper citizenship. The quest for a unique self-identity and opportunities for gains in social status within the adult society are important factors that help to determine major differences between societies and cultures, and these two factors are the basis for

the cultural definition of citizenship.

**Citizenship Development:** The individual attempts to adjust his personal citizenship behavior to the purposes and values of his complex social groups in order to gain his own personal goals and to achieve a degree of social status. Because the individual belongs to more diverse and complex social groups, he has more to accommodate in terms of a broader value perspective. Citizenship development consists of the individual's accommodation with complex social group affiliations. Accommodations include the compromises that are made between the individual's ideological perspective and the requirements of groups associated with the necessities of his daily living.

### **Investigatory Questions:**

- 1 Does the individual have control over the choices to be made in determining his social group affiliations?
- 2 What role does the individual's personal and ideological perspective play in the selection of social group affiliations?
- 3 When determining a citizenship issue, which is more influential - personal perspective or the influences of one's social group affiliations?
4. To what extent do chronological group affiliations tend to influence the individual throughout life (youth, middle age, old age)?
- 5 What behavioral strategies are used by the individual to deal with inter-group conflict?
- 6 How different are social group affiliations from one society to another, and how do these differences affect the citizenship behaviors of individuals?
- 7 How do different combinations of social group affiliations affect the citizenship behavior of their individual members?
- 8 When an individual is a member of several social groups and one is considered a culturally negative group, how much influence will this one group have on the citizenship behavior of the individual?
9. How does the individual's perspective of self--worth affect citizenship behavior?

10. What strategies do individuals use to gain social group support for personal goals and ambitions, and how must these personal goals and ambitions be presented in terms of group values?

11. What effect do the perceived opportunities for social mobility have on the individual's citizenship behavior?

12. Does membership in a large number of social groups compared with membership in a small number of social groups have the effect of strengthening the individual's commitment to society?