

SOCIOLOGY

Find Key to Genius

The key to genius needs early recognition. Feeding, fighting and sexual activities are believed controlled by related nerve structures, Lillian Levy reports.

► THE KEY to genius is visible in the preschool child, but early recognition is urgent if this human resource is not to be wasted, Dr. Annette Rosenstiel, sociologist at Mills College of Education in New York, emphasized.

Only one percent of the nation's children may be classified as genius, she reported to the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in New York. U. S. Bureau of the Census statistics show that gifted children from five to 18 total 632,551. Under five there are approximately 200,000 gifted children.

"It is to this small group of one percent that we must look for the superman of the atomic age, and it is in the preschool group that we must concentrate to build for the future," she said.

Dr. Rosenstiel deplored the present tendency among adults to emphasize patterns of socialization and interpersonal relations rather than the development of mental ability in children.

"By the time a child goes to school, his early curiosity may have been blunted, his eager probings for knowledge thwarted, his questioning sidetracked, and his desire for learning dulled by what to him may appear to be adult disinterest and actual opposition," she noted.

Disturbed children often result from this adult rejection of the probing and questioning of a child. She said that the gifted child who is encouraged to develop his potential is "somewhat healthier and better adjusted than the average child."

Dr. Rosenstiel recommended nursery school experience as one way of providing an environment by which the child's general intelligence may be enriched. A child, however, should not be judged merely on his I.Q., which is based on cultural memory and on past achievements, but on his anticipated peak of development, what Dr. Rosenstiel calls his P.I.Q. or potential intelligence quotient.

P.I.Q. is based not only on demonstrated acquisition and achievement, by which I.Q. is measured, but on qualities such as curiosity, interest, determination, persistence and learning, and striving after higher goals.

Parents can do most to identify the gifted child, she said, and urged a "do-it-yourself" project for this identification, which has to be a joint undertaking of parents and the child.

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Eating, Fighting and Sex

► FEEDING, FIGHTING and sexual activity appear to be controlled by closely related nerve structures in the brain, Dr.

Paul MacLean of the National Institute of Mental Health, Bethesda, Md., reported at the American Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in New York.

Experiments with squirrel monkeys showed that an electrode passed over the transitional region of the brain mechanisms associated with these activities aroused simultaneously sex responses, hunger behavior and fearful, or angry-type behavior.

The close tie-in with oral and sexual manifestations together with anxiety, fear and aggression demonstrated in the squirrel monkeys may give some insight into human behavior, Dr. MacLean said.

"The findings would seem to shed some light on psychiatric observations that the acts of destroying, devouring, sustaining and procreating all seem inextricably tied to one another," he said.

He noted that Freud in his monograph on the theory of sex commented on "the sexually exciting influence of some painful effects such as fear, shuddering and horror."

Dr. MacLean observed that often first sexual impulses in young boys have occurred during wrestling and grabbing encounters.

Dr. MacLean's study of the squirrel monkey behavior also showed that the mere

act of one of the animals looking into the eyes of another arouses aggression and sexual response.

In disturbed humans, looking into the eyes has been observed to arouse panic, particularly in schizophrenic patients. The looking impulse is particularly evident in children, who unselfconsciously contemplate their bodies and the nakedness of others. In adults, looking at the human body often arouses sexual impulses.

Dr. MacLean said also that in man there appears to be a direct relation between feeding, sexuality and altruism. He believes there is evidence that altruism such as is expressed in the concern for the welfare of others, the good deed, and even such work as is done by scientists to keep human progeny from suffering and dying is related to sexuality.

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Classroom Discipline

► CLASSROOM DISCIPLINE is the number one school problem practically everywhere, but it is more acute in United States schools, a University of California at Los Angeles educator reported following a six-month study tour of 14 European and Middle Eastern countries.

The causes and solutions vary from nation to nation, Dr. Lawrence E. Vredevoe told the annual meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in New York.

Students may be cheered by the news that caning and paddling, well-applied remedies for breach of class-room discipline, are becoming less respectable. However, in at least one private European school, parents



PLANT GROWTH ROOM—Control of plant growth is the practical aim of basic research conducted in this room at the U. S. Department of Agriculture's Research Center, Beltsville, Md. Growth characteristics of seeds and plants, the effectiveness of fertilizers, weed killers, anti-insect chemicals and disease are tested in the growth room provided with General Electric fluorescent lamps and 100-watt bulbs.