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# Teenage Pregnancy: The Interaction of Psyche and Culture

*Anne L Dean*

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**Teenage Pregnancy: The Interaction of Psyche and Culture** Anne L Dean
Unwed teenage pregnancy is a national problem - and a puzzle for clinicians and social psychologists. For how are we to understand a pattern of behavior that is strongly motivated and yet likely to end in unfortunate outcomes? Moreover, why does the pattern of unwed teenage pregnancy repeat in successivegenerations in some families, despite education and previous experience, whereas in other families the pattern is broken?

Reporting on intensive social and psychological research in a rural African American community in Louisiana, Anne Dean offers a compelling view of this phenomenon that integrates historical and economic analysis with a sensitive psychological inquiry into the minds of mothers and daughters and the patterns of communication between them.

*Teenage Pregnancy: The Interaction of Psyche and Culture* transcends earlier investigations by going beyond conventional research strategies to test psychodynamic theories about the formation of internal worlds. Drawing on the work of Erik Erikson and Hans Loewald, Dean not only finds empirical justification for psychodynamic theories of psychic structure, but also extends the scope and methodology of attachment research in an exciting new direction. Specifically, her analysis reveals how different kinds of attachment relationships between mothers and daughters manifest themselves in adolescence as internal working models that become the templates for interpreting, and acting upon, contradictory economic, social, and familial expectations.

In demonstrating how social factors and cultural schemas interact with psychodynamic motives and structures, *Teenage Pregnancy* has widespread applicability to social science research in general. And it offers psychodynamically oriented clinicians working with adolescents the opportunity to become better acquainted with the ways in which mother-daughter relationships gain expression in the identity choices of teenage girls.

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