

much of the Ik's land into a national park. The government then resettled the Ik on barren land. Faced with insufficient food sources, the Ik's social structure soon collapsed. In frustration, the Ik turned on each other.

Today Ik children are generally thrown out of their homes at the age of three. They survive by forming age bands—groups of children of the same general age. These bands, which serve as protection against older children, are short-lived. By the time a child reaches the age of 12 or 13, he or she has formed and broken several protective alliances and has decided that in most instances acting alone is better. Parents do not help their children, and adult children do not assist their aged parents. Only the strongest and most clever Ik survive. The culture of the Ik influences the personality of Ik children.

How we experience our culture also influences our personalities. For example, our experiences may differ depending on whether we are born male or female. Boys and girls are treated differently almost from the moment of birth. As they grow, male and female children are often nudged in different directions. Areas of difference include fields of interest, clothing, types of activities, speech habits, and ideas. All of these cultural differences in attitudes, expectations, and behavior affect the personalities of male and female adults.

Regardless of gender, subcultural differences also affect personality development. Growing up in an Italian American family provides an experience different from that found in a Polish American family. Both of these differ from the experience of growing up in an American family in which there is no clear ethnic pattern. Similarly, the region of the country or the type of neighborhood in which an individual is raised also affects personality.

## Isolation in Childhood

Remarkably, several recorded instances exist in which children have been raised without the influence of a cultural environment. In a few cases, these **feral children**—wild or untamed children—were found living with animals. In other instances, the children were isolated in their homes by parents or family members so that no one would know of their existence. Regardless of the circumstances, these children had few human characteristics other than appearance. They had acquired no reasoning ability, no manners, and no ability to control their bodily functions or move about like other human beings. Sociological studies of feral children point strongly to the conclusion that our personality comes from our cultural environment.



**INTERPRETING VISUALS** Research conducted in the 1950s and 1960s by Dr. Harry Harlow found that even baby monkeys need social and physical contact in order to thrive. *Why might this monkey believe that the doll is its mother?*

**Anna and Isabelle** Kingsley Davis's studies of Anna and Isabelle provide evidence of the devastating effect of isolation during childhood. Anna was born to an unmarried woman, a fact that enraged the woman's father. At first forbidden to bring the child into the house, Anna's mother attempted to place her in a children's home. When this plan proved too expensive, Anna was moved to a series of foster homes. Finally, at the age of six months, the child was returned to her mother. Because of the grandfather's hostility, Anna was confined to an attic room where she was given only a minimum of care. She was undernourished and emaciated and received almost no human contact. She was not spoken to, held, bathed, or loved.

Anna was finally discovered by a social worker in 1938. At six years of age, Anna was little more than a skeleton. She could not walk, talk, or feed herself. Her face was expressionless, and she showed no interest in other people. Over time, though, Anna made some progress. She learned to walk, feed herself, and brush her teeth. She could also talk in phrases and follow simple directions. However, Anna died at the age of 10, probably as a result of her earlier isolation.

The story of Isabelle has a somewhat happier ending. Isabelle, whose mother was also unmarried, was found at about the same time as Anna. The child's grandfather kept her and her deaf mother confined to a dark room. Although deprived of a normal cultural environment,

