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CHILD REARING IN BROKEN AND INTACT HOMES

by

MARY ANN PHILLIP

A professional paper submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree

of

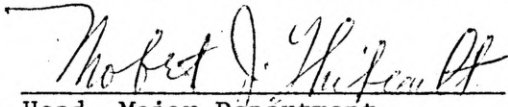
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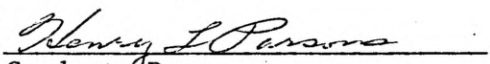
with concentration in

Counseling

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Bozeman, Montana

December, 1974

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Sincere appreciation is extended to Dr. Richard K. Horswill for his presevering guidance throughout my studies. Further gratitude is extended to my husband Don for his patient tolerance of many study hours, to my parents for support, and to my faithful friend Barbara for her sharing of feelings, ideas, and miles.

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ABSTRACT

The importance of this study centers in the prevalence of, and interest focused upon, divorce as a dysfunction in American society. The nature of the investigation is exploratory because of the apparently novel approach to specific areas of the topics.

An extensive review of literature revealed emphasis on the importance of discipline as an influential factor in the home. Familial attitudes and home atmosphere were further stressed, and the importance of having a father figure present was intertwined with related areas of need.

Following that line of interest, this researcher personally interviewed a cluster of married and separated mothers as to specific child rearing techniques used in their homes.

As anticipated, findings did not indicate distinctly group-typical opposites. Group trends did, however suggest worthwhile conclusions. The most strongly indicated conclusion is that the personality of the mother maybe the construct of most profound influence in the interaction of a father-absent family. It is further suggested that the personality characteristics which tend to make these mothers less effective disciplinarians may be closely related to those which lead to the broken condition of their homes. Apparently less complete communication patterns displayed in formerly married homes may be reflections of previous marital communication, the absence of a marital partner may adversely effect the functioning of a mother.

Most generally, the formerly married mothers seemed to indicate more difficulties and less satisfaction in their task of child rearing than did presently married mothers.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history it seems men have shown concern for the youth of their era. Children have been seen as the resources of tomorrow, but also as products of the past and victims of the present. In recent times, behavioral scientists have become increasingly able to shed light on factors pertinent to the development of an upcoming generation. Since the family unit is the most common institution for child raising in the United States, attention to influences exerted on children is frequently shifted to focus on that primary unit of child rearing. A widely recognized function of the family is socialization of the children. Many groups even define this as the main purpose for the existence of marriage and the family. Traditionally, the family is headed by married partners, who give birth to offspring, and subsequently center their attention on facilitating the maturation of these offspring. Although methods have varied from the ruminating caps of John Watson to Spock's Age of the Baby, the varieties have generally stressed the importance of interaction by two parents. The large majority of family tasks devolve upon the parents. The extent and complexity of these tasks place great importance on the presence of two parents (Glasser, 1956: 657).

In recent years, however, the United States has manifested a continuing increase of a divergence from the traditional family

structure, the fragmentation of the family by the absence of one parent. Sociologists term such divergence from the norm, a family dysfunction, since it interferes with the performance of traditional roles key to family interaction (Goode, 1956: 309).

Concern is often voiced about the effect of the one-parent family on children, and therefore, on society (Gruenberg, 1950: 44). It is in that area of concern, that a study is here proposed to compare child rearing practices in one and two parent homes. The study is to be done in recognition of the importance of the family as a socializing unit, and with attention focused on the possibilities of dysfunctional influence on society of the one-parent home frequently attempting to perform tasks traditionally designated to the two-parent unit.

Statement of the Problem

As one parent families become more prevalent, questions are often raised as to the effects they are exerting on the offspring involved. This study is designated as a probe into that area of uncertainty.

The problem of this study will be to compare child rearing practices of mothers in one parent homes with those of mothers in two parent homes, as reported by mothers in Helena, Montana.

Need and Purpose of the Study

The importance of this study centers in the importance of the family as the primary unit of Western society. Past generations have valued the family as critical to society. Presently, however, there is increasing concern for the fate of the family unit. Students speculate on questions of whether the family as an institution is doomed in the throes of a rootless, mobile society. In 1966, Stroup (570) predicted that the 70's would mark 400,000 children per year affected by divorce or other separation. In actuality, this decade is witnessing family fragmentation on all socio-economic levels, as a common and acceptable course of action.

Since a child's lifelong personality is primarily formed in the years in which he spends most of his time at home, the parents in charge of that home have a deciding effect on their child. Each child, in turn, affects others with whom he comes into contact, and society as a whole. Futurists are presently calling for realization of the social turmoil ahead. They warn of tremendous shock to systems that are unable to cope psychologically. They emphasize the need to teach "copability" to the young, and to supply them with the psychic strength necessary to face a 1984 world (Toffler, 1970).

Despite such cries for improved preparation of the young, high numbers of one-parent families raise questions as to whether copability

will be increased or decreased. Children seem to need benefits from resources of two parents (Sears, 1957: 4).

It is quite possible, however, that the specific nature of parent-child interaction is of a more determining nature than specific presence or absence of bodily figures (Goode, 1956: 317). Solution to their dilemma could have vast effects in helping students of the family to know where to focus future attention. The question of whether family fragmentation must be avoided, or whether partner-less parents should merely be aided to function beneficially should be largely determined by the fact of whether marked differences typically occur between child rearing practices of parents in one parent families and those of parents in two parent homes.

It is to begin groundwork for further study, and major decisions in the family sciences, then, that this exploratory study exerts value.

Limitations and Delimitations

Child rearing practices constitute a concern of world wide proportions and implications. They tend to be influenced by innumerable conditions in areas such as socioeconomic, region, religion, education, and so on. To get a picture of nationwide implication, it would be necessary to sample the population of the entire United States. Due to extreme limits of time, economic resources, and the personnel of a single researcher, this study has been vastly narrowed from a nearly

infinite area to the practical area of Helena, Montana. Cataloguing a list of families within Helena becomes a further area of concern. Since Parents Without Partners, Inc. is an established group of one parent families, this group provides a very workable roster of names. This choice, however, carries extensive delimitations.

Since parents in this group have organized to seek help and companionship, they may be unique among a population of single parents, all of whom have not sought such incorporation. The sample population in focus of this study, then, is both small and unique, making implications of the study directly applicable only to the peculiar group.

Attempts at pairing two-parent households by means of referral, similarly limits that group to a unique sample. Mothers in group A, the single group, may be likely to refer married mothers who are their friends and therefore, probably more similar to themselves than a randomly chosen mother.

Interviewing entails some area of delimitation from objectivity, as mothers may report through their selective eyes. Small numbers of subjects do not allow wide inferences. As Rothney (1959: 266) had indicated, however, such "objectivity" is not entirely the ideal.

Furthermore, Helena, a small city in Montana, would probably not be representative of dissimilar areas, such as a large metropolis.

A major area of delimitation is that factors such as personalities, home atmosphere with and without fathers present, attitudes

toward children, employment of the mother, are difficult to measure. Though some interview questions will touch on these areas, each could present a study, and an area of influence all its own. For example, it is quite possible that the personalities and home situations responsible for the original fragmentation of the families could be stronger factors of influence than the present measurable actions.

Definition of Terms

Key concepts under consideration in this study are familiar areas of knowledge, but should be specifically defined to facilitate particular understanding.

Child rearing refers generally to "all the interventions between parents and their children (Sears, Maccoby, Levin, 1957: 13)."

A one parent family or a parent-absent family, as considered here, is a family where the father is said to be permanently absent as a result of divorce, separation, or death.

A two parent family, or an intact home, is one in which both mother and father are generally present and participating in their parental roles.

A family or home situation is considered as a "unit of stimuli operating within the confines of the family circle, and organized in relation to the person or object which serves as the focal point in the particular case being considered (Bossard and Boll, 1954: 29)."

Personality will be defined as "the sum total of an individual's behavior in social situations. Behavior includes not only overt acts but inward feeling tone produced by the situation as interpreted by the individual through introspection (Traxler, 1945: 100)"--to the extent that this can be measured in this study.

Attitude may be seen as "a complex of feelings, desires, fears, convictions, prejudices, or other tendencies that have given a set or readiness to act, to a person because of varied experiences (Traxler, 1945: 105)."

Communication refers to a social relationship between individuals, in which messages from one member of the relationship may enable another member to reduce his 'uncertainty' in the sense of reducing the number of alternative interpretations open to him (Carroll, 1958: 80)."

Summary

This study is rooted in the defined value of the family as a child rearing institution. Concern stems from past evidence, focuses on present conditions, and looks toward future results. As family fragmentation has increased, questions as to its effects have arisen. Influenced by such interest, this investigation is designed to compare child rearing practices of mothers in one and two parent homes, to determine whether characteristic differences appear to exist.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Background

In recent times, behavioral scientists have become increasingly able to shed analytical light on factors pertinent to the development of an upcoming generation. A focal point for any such interest is the family unit. The recognized function of the family group, headed by the parent figure, is that of socialization or child rearing. Based on clinical studies of disturbed children and experimental observations of normal ones, Sears (1957: 4) has documented good reasons for interest in child rearing. He has indicated that there are a number of important causal relationships between mothers' child rearing practices and the behavior of their children. Sears states that some personality characteristics of adults appear to be extensions of the effects of early life experiences. He concludes that since a child's earliest interpersonal experiences are with his mother, there is good reason for examining the mother's behavior.

A family dysfunction frequently seen in our society is the broken home. Homes are generally and officially broken by death, divorce, and separation. William J. Goode (1956), studied the children of divorce to determine how they fared the change. He reported that the major differences in socialization patterns--and thus differential effects on children--must be measured by differences in the steadiness

of warmth and love, in understanding, rather than by the simple structural differences to be found between broken and unbroken homes.

Following the cues of such research, this study has been initiated to investigate the actual practices and problems of child rearing in broken, as opposed to intact, homes. As it seems that this specific phase is vast, an exploratory study has been undertaken here. Sellitz (1959: 2) has pointed out that when there has been much speculative writing on a topic, an exploratory study is often the most meaningful approach.

Appropriate to the consideration of methods to be used in this study was an idea originally directed toward counseling circles, the important factors are interpersonal interests and the need to understand the persons involved, rather than supposedly objective statistics (Rothney, 1959: 266). It is for this reason that standardized tests were not used in this study. The importance and personal nature of the problem seemed to require special subjective effort and verbal communication. Eisner (1959: 69) has further stressed that many feelings and attitudes must be detected through nonverbal cues. Consequently, personal contact in an interview setting was selected as the most satisfactory means for study proceedings. The specific type of interview required further consideration. Having explained the strictly quantitative interview as too unreliable, and the highly structured polling interview as failing in achievement of depth, Goode and Hatt (1952:

185-186) strongly supported the qualitative interview directed by the interview guide. They explained such a method as requiring certain items of information about each respondent but allowing the interviewer to rephrase the question to help the respondent understand. Further, the interviewer may pursue a question, and record subjective reactions.

Arthur E. Traxler (1945: 26) has supported this method as the most satisfactory technique for obtaining information in the less tangible areas.

Goode (1956: 316) has voiced caution about accepting all responses at face value, particularly when they seem to minimize the effects of the family separation. He suggests that the adjustments made by each party may preclude his ability to clearly see such issues as the detrimental effects of divorce. Goode indicates that mothers lose conception of what the children might have been like without the divorce and of whether the children are in a better or a worse position.

Nevertheless, the very nature of this study is such that much of the information cannot be quantified. Rather, mothers have been personally interviewed in order to acquire a view of situations as they see them. An attempt at objective evaluation of reality would be an entirely different plan, which should possibly render a less meaningful body of results.

While obvious differences exist between various means of home division, only the divorce and the widowed were represented in the

available population. These two groups have been considered together for certain reasons. Hunt (1966: 5) has indicated that in most respects the two groups are basically alike and should be considered together. He finds that an emotionally genuine separation constitutes the death of a marriage, and divorce is merely its burial.

Previous Studies

Some studies have been conducted in areas related to the specific concentration of this study. William J. Goode, for example, studied Women in Divorce (1956) and After Divorce (1965) in great depth. He found that most divorces are urban, occur while the couple is young, and most divorcees remarry. Since a high proportion involves children, he finds that to be the question of most practical importance.

Good has analyzed the process by which mothers in an ambiguous social situation in which the social structure does not specify their role obligations or their rights, are gradually shifted into a new role position. He sees it as an analysis of status sequences, of phases in role interaction (1956: iii).

In 1950 Goode gathered interview data from some four hundred divorcees who were mothers. His conclusions were tentative, but he did question the assumption that divorce leads to poorer adjustment in children. He indicates that other types of separation also seem related to child problems, and poses the question of whether it is the divorce

or the marital conflict that does the real damage. He also suggests that it may be the different types of parent-child relationships more than the marital conflict which creates the damage. Goode found that almost all mothers worried about the effects of divorce on their children, but that almost all remarried mothers subsequently thought that the children's lives had improved after divorce.

Dr. James Plant, psychiatrist, stated that legal divorce is preferable to separation without divorce insofar as the adjustment of the children is concerned (Nye, 1957: 434).

Juston Landis (1955) compared the attitudes of college students from happy unbroken homes, unhappy unbroken homes, and broken homes, toward marriage and the family. In all cases he found children from happy unbroken homes have the most positive attitudes. The attitudes of students from broken homes and unhappy unbroken homes were rather similar, but the attitudes of those from broken homes were more positive by some criteria than those from unhappy unbroken homes.

Sears, Maccoby, and Levin (1957: 20) studied patterns of child rearing by interviewing 379 mothers with regard to their actions and reactions with their children. The focus was on specific actions of the children, merely to learn the actual practices. This procedure offers findings relevant to three kinds of questions. (1) What are the customary practices and how much variation is there in a suburban group ranging widely through lower and middle class status? (2) What effects

do certain types of child-rearing practices have on some of the personality dimensions of young children? (3) What kinds of mothers engage in what kinds of child-rearing practices?

Langdon and Stout (1952) conducted interviews with parents of "well-adjusted" children for three years. Parents were asked many questions about their own ideas and practices. Reports of the study listed interested but vastly varying opinions.

Maccoby's studies of the learning of social roles are also pertinent. She describes the process by which children learn roles through role taking in childhood, and tests hypotheses about the influence of the parental model on the child's tendency to be a rule enforcer in activities involving peers. She found that if the mother had been generally restrictive in her early dealings with a boy child, her boy would tend to be a rule enforcer. For girls, the relationship was not the same, but punishment was related to rule-enforcement behavior (Sewell, 1963: 324).

Another important study using the role and social-structure idea is Elder's (1963) research on parental power legitimation. He found that adolescents are more likely to use their parents as role models if the parents explain their rules when asked to do so. Further, the attractiveness of parents as role models is less among both autocratic and permissive parents than among democratic parents.

McCords' (1958) study of the effects of parental role models found that the influence of a criminal father on the criminality of the son is dependent on the explicit values of the parents and the affectional and control structure of the family system.

Discipline

The means of child socialization within which all the advised actions can be practiced is generally called "discipline." This is an area filled with many opinions, much conflicting advice, and no proven absolutes. Bernhardt (1964: 14) has reminded us that areas of human thought which are deficient in factual information are often characterized by pendulumlike swings from one extreme to the other. In such circumstances we are presented with false choices or dilemmas. This is especially true in the field of child training where some of the swings have been rather extreme, posing unnecessary dilemmas in which many parents have been caught. Choices are often made between equally undesirable and unacceptable alternatives.

However, tenets which might be beneficially considered in viewing or choosing disciplinary methods have often been advanced. For example, English and Foster (1951: 50) have said that the house where all members accept discipline for the good of the whole is the only home in which everybody can have fun and belong because he is learning to share and cooperate with the rest. Discipline is not synonymous with

punishment. It is a considered plan for teaching a child how to live usefully and happily with others and himself. Its eventual goal is not prohibitions, restrictions, and frustration. In time it becomes the self-imposed control that bespeaks maturity and permits the only true freedom because it releases the individual from a preoccupation with self.

Bernhardt (1964: 13) has suggested a very positive view of the entire area. He says that "training" is not the word we want. Rather, it is a planned program in which we provide the kinds of experiences the child needs in order to learn how to live and to enjoy living. We should think of discipline as arranging conditions for healthy learning and living. It should be a process of helping the child to develop his own unique individuality, but in the context of the culture to which he will have to adjust.

Still, Bernhardt cautions, every parent has to decide what is to be required of the child, what are the boundaries he must not violate, what are the necessary, reasonable demands that should be made of the child. No two parents will have the same requirements, but if the parent is too different from the rest of the community he will have difficulty making the demands seem reasonable.

Not only must the parent make such decisions, but he must also establish a certain scheme of discipline. "No plan or haphazard kind of hit-or-miss plan will lead to inconsistencies, and . . . consistency is

the core principle of an adequate scheme of discipline (Bernhardt, 1964: 37)."

For various reasons, however, parents may find it difficult to remain firm, and adhere to a plan. Auerbach (1964: 28) has noted that parents may feel uneasy when they face the need to punish. Perhaps they are afraid that their angry feelings, once expressed, might get out of hand and cause them to go further than they had ever intended. Often, too, without being aware of it, their role as the punisher weakens memories of their own childhood when they were punished, and the confused feelings connected with those early experiences are stirred up again. Then it is difficult for them to see the situation for what it really is.

The disciplinary area might be the factor of most influence upon findings for a study such as the one here undertaken, according to Winslow (1969: 53). He has stated that the quality of parent-child relations is a more important factor than child relations. The consistency, "fairness," and strictness of parental discipline are among the most important family variables related to delinquent behavior.

Accordingly, if a scheme of discipline is important, then, its recommended criteria might well be examined. Rossen (1964: 313) has stated that the anxiety associated with early training is not enough to produce value similarity. The child must also have developed a need for parental love and support, the continuance of which comes to appear

uncertain as a result of frustrations associated with early training experiences. To some extent, the child's earliest experiences with parental affection and displeasure are associated with the sanctions which parents employed to enforce their socialization demands. Rossen further suggests that whether positive or negative, these sanctions do more than force compliance to parental demands. They also contribute critically to the transmission of parental values. After the child has complied with parental expectations and internalized their values as a way of handling the anxiety associated with child training, he must receive love and protection as a reward. If these are not forthcoming his efforts to win over the parent through internalization of her values and a general modeling of his behavior upon hers will seem futile.

Similarly, Kirkpatrick (1915: 97) has posed that the power motive to the child is to gain self. He believes that the individualistic instinct will be the basis of intelligent training, either for good or for evil. Good training will lead the child to discover that he can get the most for himself in the long run by being kind and helpful to others. If it is bad training, it will lead the child to the belief that he gets the most when he disregards others, and gets all he can for himself.

Kirkpatrick (1915: 354) further stressed that punishment should be adopted to the individual. Similarly, Bernhardt (1964: 21) stressed that in developing a plan of discipline the following factors must be taken into account: (1) the nature of the child, (2) the kind of world

in which the child is living, (3) the results we hope to achieve, and (4) the best techniques available.

Specific disciplinary actions entail certain impressions and consequences. For example, a slap given to a small child who has annoyed you unbearably is simply a quick response to provocation. Generally, it is understood as just that. It is possible, though, that a child may consider it an affront to his dignity, and respect you less because you behaved this way. A spanking given in the spirit of hitting back is likely to be more damaging. It tends to make a child either sullen and resentful or defiant and determined to hit back even more (Auerbach, 1964: 33).

Further comment by Auerbach has indicated that rewards, too, may help if they are given in appreciation or recognition of something well done, not as payment for a bribe. Even threats can have value if they help a child see the logical result of something he wants to do and shouldn't. All these devices fail, however, if they are overdone or become the basis for bargaining and bickering. If any of them become routine, they will cease to be effective.

Although the "do's and don'ts" may be simple to describe, they can be difficult to put into action. However, every child, like every adult, needs limits and rules to live by. The teenager especially craves reassurance that his parents are interested enough to try to keep him from getting into trouble. All youngsters need discipline that

will enable them to direct their energies into creative channels. All of us have developed the behavior patterns of those who cared for us as children. We, in turn, are providing our children with their behavior patterns (Wilkerson 1967: 188).

Wilkerson (1967: 81) spoke with the reformed delinquent son of a rich man. The reformed delinquent had an idea that he let off steam as a teen-ager not only in an effort to communicate his need for love and attention but also to demand discipline that he never did receive. "I think parents should show their love for their children by holding a strong hand over them so they don't go astray or become wild."

Strecker and Lathbury (1956: 113) pointed out that the family is a mutually cooperative society. If mistakes are not recognized chaos will result. The girl who gets all the benefits of the cooperative, and none of the blame is unfit to take her place in adult personal and social life. Children should be punished if they seriously misbehave. A small amount of anxiety should be developed in children. Perhaps the correct amount is that which results from the necessity and insistence upon conforming to minimal social standards, respecting and adjusting to the rights of others. A normal amount of anxiety is protective and stimulates us to do something constructive about our problems.

Punishment in itself, however, is not enough. Certain positive modifications are necessary if it is to be meaningful. Often punishment

leaves the child in a quandry. He learns what not to do but not what to do. Unless punishment is accompanied by some signs suggesting what behavior is acceptable, the child has difficulty substituting new behavior for the old. In that case, he is in danger of reverting to the undesirable behavior when the momentary effects of the punishment have worn off (Sears, Maccoby, & Levin, 1957: 359).

If a plan is to work, the children must understand the rules when punishment is given hastily and thoughtlessly, it may only make a child sulky instead of sorry. Denial of privileges can be done in such a way that a child sees he is being treated according to the immature way he has acted (Your Child From 6 to 12: 12).

Even ideal concentration on specific actions, however, cannot perfect child rearing, for many other factors come into play. For example, the plan of discipline adopted by a parent will depend on the kind of values, childhood memories, and goals most prominent in his own experience. The actual techniques he uses will be colored by his attitudes, prejudices, and scale of values. What one is is truly more important than what one does as a parent (Bernhardt, 1964: 36-37).

It is difficult to overemphasize the importance of the intangible but real atmosphere that finds its expression in the relationship between parent and child. It is this atmosphere that determines the effectiveness of what the parent tries to do with the various techniques and details that make up a scheme of discipline. It is not so much what

the parent does that is important as how, and the context of attitudes, feelings, and meanings in which it operates (Bernhardt, 1964: 34).

Divorce

If atmosphere and attitude are important, it seems to follow that a broken home could have definite effects. The father and mother each give different sets of skills and attitudes to the child, and the absent parent cannot fill this role. The child with a missing parent lacks an observational model which he needs in learning the roles of future adulthood and complementary sex roles. This lack might leave some gaps in his effective action and understanding throughout his life. Moreover, the second parent serves the important function of reinforcing most moral injunctions expressed by the first parent. It is also a physical and psychic energy boost for one parent to have the support of another (Goode, 1956: 309).

Parent-educators and school teachers, mothers, and fathers have learned that children need fathers just as they need mothers. They need the experience of knowing two adults in a warm, intimate relationship of loving and being loved by two grownups rather than just one. They need to know a man as well as a woman, if they are to have a balanced view of the world (Gruenberg, 1950: 44).

Furthermore, the majority of tasks for which a family is responsible center upon the parents. When the nuclear group is limited

to one parent a reduction in the tasks performed and/or a reduction in the adequacy of performance. The threat also exists that if the one parent should be incapacitated, dissolution could befall the group (Glasser, 1965: 657).

In his study of children of broken homes, Goode (1956: 309) found specific negative effects. He sees a child as needing a father at every developmental phase of childhood, as an object of love, security, identification, even as a figure against whom to safely rebel. When the absence of the parent is caused by divorce and not death, the psychodynamic structure is further complicated by hostilities, guilt, feelings of abandonment, and guilts from divided loyalties.

The main danger in a broken home according to Bernhardt (1964: 157) is that the children will miss and feel cheated out of what other children have. They may feel insecure, indifferent, even inadequate. They may be jealous of other children. The remaining parent often tries to make the children feel the emotional vacuum left by the departed parent. Anxieties and worries are often communicated to the children. Consequently, the children not only experience a loss of a parent but also suffer strain and stress of an abnormal situation.

Visitation contact with missing parent do not begin to fill the gap. The occasions are often times of considerable tension for all involved. The knowledge that separation will soon occur again nags throughout the contact. Very rarely does a young child see any

reason for the separation of his parents, and therefore, the haunting suspicion of abandonment usually gnaws at the enjoyment of the visits (Goode, 1956: 322).

Threats of such negative impact do not seem to be overlooked by most parents contemplating divorce. For many, understanding of the realities is present, but the reasons for divorce seem irreversible. This aspect has been discussed from many angles.

Parsons (1965: 44) believes that divorce is an index of the severity of the burden placed on the marriage relationship in modern society, and on the importance of its functions. He does not believe it is correct to treat it simply as a symptom of "decline," except the decline of older patterns of social organization. Those older patterns perhaps do not fit well with other principle features of modern society anyway. The same can be said of failures in the socialization of children. Modern child training is strenuously difficult and demanding on both parents and children.

However, not all family disruptions are attended with bitterness or followed by aggravated personal problems for those involved. There are couples who are divorced with a minimum of ill feeling. Also, some marriages are a tribulation for all concerned. In such cases, the child is often the scapegoat. The termination of such families, and possibly the new deal of another family setting may mean the stimulus of better conditions and new opportunities for all (Bossard & Boll, 1954: 426-427).

In many ways, the effects on children are due more to surrounding atmosphere and personalities than to the separation itself. "Children suffer from a divorced home chiefly because the two parents so often continue their conflicts (Gruenberg, 1950: 197)." Also, "the data show that families in turmoil and conflict are even more likely to produce children with problems than are divorced couples" who have resolved their conflicts (Goode, 1956: vii).

After studying 4,000 cases, Healy and Bronner concluded that excessive quarreling in the home is one of the conditions that has been cited both by delinquents and relatives as making directly for bad conduct (Bossard & Boll, 1954: 407).

The question may be raised, then, whether children are affected because their mother is divorced, or because her personality was of a certain type. Bossard and Boll (1954: 294) report that "a much higher percentage of parents who are more dominant than their spouses is reported to have conflict relationships with their children."

This possibility that the critical factors lie outside of the divorce itself has found definite support. For instance, Landis (1947) studied adolescent adjustment in over 4,000 farm, urban, and metropolitan high school seniors in the state of Washington. In the study, it was clear that children from unbroken homes had fewer problems in several main areas of life adjustment than did those from unbroken homes. The data further suggested, however, that children of divorce may not on

the average have a higher number of problems than children from separated or widowed homes.

The presence of problems in homes separated by means other than divorce further supports such an idea. Referring to various areas he studied, Goode (1956: 310) stated that various factors fail to differentiate sharply the cause of the family separation. He stresses that the child of divorce usually has a more difficult, though not necessarily a more painful experience than other children enduring a split. Goode finds that the divided home and the bitter conflicts which led to the divorce are the factors directing the tendency toward deviant behavior.

Hunt (1966: 4-5) sees separated and divorced sectors of society as having a unique set of norms that guide their interaction, customs, values, and coping methods.

Related Factors

Several critical factors seem to be of definite importance to the proper socialization of a child. It is possible that it is the presence or absence of these factors, rather than the legal status of the home, that have the most profound influence on a child. Understanding of the child's own nature seems to hold an important key.

D'Evelyn (1957) has analyzed the young child as a creature of emotion with strong desires toward comfort and happiness. A child

learns early that certain actions bring adult approval while others bring disapproval. If the child's earlier experiences are with loving, helpful parents, it becomes important to him to have their approval. Still, by being restricted, children become somewhat frustrated in the expression of their wishes and feelings. This tends to arouse some feelings of resentment toward adults.

Kirkpatrick (1915: 140) has illustrated voluntary imitation is a primary source of instruction of children. Rogers (1961: 34) has gone on to stress that a parent should exercise genuine acceptance toward children, in open understanding of the child's nature and tendencies.

The greater part of the family's role in child rearing, however, is achieved through indirection, in ways that are unconscious, as a by-product of family routine. The child learns much by absorption of the way the family lives and acts around him (Bossard and Boll, 1954: 230).

A basic factor affecting family interaction is the attitudes of the parents toward parenthood and children. Further, the family life in which one grows up consists to a considerable extent of a series of habit patterns. Most of the patterns are unconsciously absorbed. The constant interaction between family members constitutes one of its developmental features and gives it such great importance in the development of the personalities of its members (Bossard & Boll, 1954).

The parents and the home in themselves seem to have profound influence. Stucker and Lathbury (1956: 233) have elaborated, saying that through suggestion children gain or fail to gain the same attitudes of personality that are acquired by imitation. Through unwise suggestion, infact, their personalities may be burdened with harmful or crippling personality traits. Suggestion is a strong psychological shaper of personalities. It should be used with discretion.

In studying juvenile delinquency, Wilkerson (1967) stressed the need for a male figure and also the quality of the mother figure. He identified six basic essentials of parenthood: love, supervision, discipline, communication, companionship, and religious education. However, if you love your children and can communicate with them, the other qualities will come naturally (p. 178).

Wilkerson studied well known, successful men in an attempt to identify the home characteristics of non-delinquency. He concluded that there was usually a strong guiding figure and a lot of love (1967, 175). Finally, Wilkerson declared the most effective method in child rearing to be the security of a well-adjusted, rewarding home life with family ties made strong by love. A youth must have confidence in his entire family, and they must have his confidence.

Similarly, English and Foster (1951: 39) have found that the friendly, outgoing, stable, comfortable young ones, who are confident in themselves and their world, have made three important discoveries.

They have learned that they are loved at terms they can understand at each age level; they are respected as individuals, and they generally have the approval of their parents. Also, they have had the opportunity to assume increasing responsibility, geared to their abilities, and thus have acquired enough competence in handling their affairs to trust their own judgment and skills.

There is much evidence to suggest that it is the role of the mother which is most critical in either a broken or an intact home. She is usually the one who is on hand during most of the child rearing process and who makes most of the on-the-spot decisions required. Too much feminization of child rearing however, may have adverse effects on the children (Bossard and Boll, 1954: 328).

Matters are complicated by the fact that mothers are constantly being influenced by numerous past and present factors. Her family of procreation is dynamically and intimately linked with her family of orientation (Parsons, 1965: 39). Sociologists have also become aware of the interdependence between the family and the status systems in American society (Hollingshead, 1965: 153).

After divorce, a mother may feel additional negative influence and some tension and unhappiness is invariably communicated to the child (Goode, 1956: 321).

Finally, Hoffman (1961: 358) studied the very real consequence of a mother working outside the home. His over-all pattern of findings

suggests that the working mother who likes working is relatively high on positive affect toward the child. She tends to use mild discipline and avoid inconveniencing the child with household tasks. The working mother who dislikes working seems less involved with the child altogether, and obtains the child's help with tasks.

Following such indications of other authors, an exploratory study has been here undertaken to examine the possible existence between the ways children are typically raised in broken and intact homes.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The design of the study here undertaken is exploratory, since data on the specific areas investigated does not appear to have been previously collected. Since the intent was to explore possible areas of group-typical differences, standardized tests or scaling according to predicted categories did not seem practical. Consequently, personal interviewing, according to a semi-structured interview guide was chosen as the means of data collection. Guiding questions were incorporated because they were directed toward aspects of the problem deemed to have possible relevance.

Sampling was done according to a purposive non-random plan, because of the scope and resource limitations of this study. Helena's Parents Without Partners group provided the initial list of formerly married mothers. Attempts were made to contact mothers there listed who had at least one child between the ages of two and thirteen years. Because that sample fell two mothers short of the proposed quota, two divorced non-club members, that had been mentioned by club members, were contacted. The sample of presently married mothers was moderately matched to the group of the formerly married, in an attempt to get a relatively comparable representation of socio-economic factors. This was done by having each of the formerly married mothers make two references of mothers in her neighborhood, with whose children her

own children play. Attempts were made in all cases to contact the first referral.

The researcher, with some previous training and experience in interviewing and casework, did all of the interviewing. Mothers were met at their doors with an introduction to the interviewer and a general explanation of the research problem. In their homes, they were asked the questions in the interview guide. When necessary, elaboration was given after the initial question had been read. The interviewer recorded their replies on the form. After the visit, the interviewer recorded comments about factors pertinent to the situation.

Data was coded and hand tabulated by the researcher. Limitations of the data made statistical analysis impractical. This is true because gross number of subjects, and comparative categories in each section were too small to be amenable to Chi-square analysis, and many important specifics would have been lost in collapsing the categories to meet requirements for application of binomial laws. Numerical and percentage representations in themselves are clear and sufficient to express group tendencies.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Results

All interviewed mothers were first asked for personal data. Current ages of presently married mothers were said to be: 50, 44, 42, 36, 35, 33, 32, 30, 28, 28. These numbers represent ages of formerly married mothers: 42, 41, 38, 37, 36, 30, 30, 29, 24. Members of the presently married group listed Montana as birthplace 6 times, 4 were born out-of-state, but within the United States. Montana was the birthplace of 5 of the formerly married, other states were listed by 2, Canada by 1, Phillipine Islands by 1, and Washington, D. C. by 1. National backgrounds were quite generously, but not indicatively, mixed in both groups. All mothers were caucasian. Years of education were listed by the presently married as 17, 16, 14, 14, 12, 12, 12, 12, 11, 5. In all cases, post-high school work was done in colleges or universities. These levels of education were listed in the formerly married group: 13, 13, 13, 13, 13, 12, 12, 12, 12, 9. Here, thirteenth year meant business college for 2, colleges or universities for 4. The ninth year of education for 1, was training in a Vocational Technical center. Religions of the presently married were indicated as: Catholic (4), Protestant (3), Methodist (2), Latter Day Saints (1). The formerly married listed these religions: Lutheran (4), Catholic (2), Salvation Army (1), Latter Day Saints (1), Methodist (1),

Presbyterian (1). Occupations of married mothers were: 6 housewives, 1 babysitter, 1 day care home supervisor, 1 sales clerk, 1 secretary. Formerly married mothers listed their occupations as 4 secretaries, 2 stenographers, 1 lab technician; 1 LPN, 1 bookkeeper, 1 housewife. Numbers of siblings in married mothers families of orientation (including self) were the following: 13, 12, 6, 5, 5, 4, 3, 3, 2, 1. The same question brought these figures from the formerly married: 7, 7, 6, 6, 5, 5, 4, 2, 2, 1. Mothers of intact families listed these as the ages at which they were married: 29, 24, 22, 22, 21, 21, 19, 19, 18, 18. Ages at the time of their first marriages were these for the formerly married: 27, 24, 22, 22, 21, 20, 20, 19, 17, 15. All presently married mothers had been married only once. Of the formerly married, 3 had been married 2 times, 7 had been married 1 time. Year of marriage for the presently married were reported: 30, 20, 20, 15, 11, 11, 10, 9, 9, 8. Lengths of last marriages for the formerly married were: 18, 10, 8, 8, 7, 5, 4, 4, 3, 1. Reasons for termination of these marriages were divorce 8 times, death of the husband 2 times. Of those who had been married twice, 2 cited divorce as reason for both terminations, 1 cited divorce for first, and annulment for her second.

Family sizes in intact homes were: 2, 2, 2, 3, 3, 3, 4, 5, 5, 7. Sizes of broken homes were: 1, 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 4, 5, 5, 10. The presently married mothers had children of these ages: 6 weeks, 1, 3, 3, 4, 5, 5, 5, 5, 6, 6, 6, 6, 7, 7, 7, 8, 8, 8, 9, 9, 10, 10, 11, 12,

12, 12, 13, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 19, 19. The following were the ages of children of the formerly married: 2, 2, 3, 3, 4, 4, 5, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 6, 7, 7, 8, 8, 8, 8, 8, 11, 12, 12, 12, 13, 13, 14, 16, 16, 16, 17, 18, 18, 19, 19. The presently married had 13 male children, 23 female children. The formerly married has 23 males, 16 females. In total, presently married mothers spoke of their 36 children, while the formerly had 39. In all interviews, focus was placed upon toddler to teen years, here including the specific ages of 2 to 13 years.

Mothers were asked to give brief personality descriptions of their children. Presently married mothers most typically used these six descriptive adjectives: quiet (7), outgoing (4), happy (3), responsible (3), sensitive (2), precocious (2). These descriptions were most often used by formerly married mothers: spoiled (4), independent (4), quiet (3), happy (3), hard to get along with (3), problem (3), sensitive (3), problem tempered (3), stubborn (2), easy to get along with (2).

"What things do your children do that you consider to be 'wrong' or 'naughty'?" was the next question put to the mother. These offenses were reported for children of the presently married: disobey (9), yell at you (7), hit you (3), use bad language (6), give trouble getting them to do their jobs (5), give trouble getting them to eat (4), fight (7), excessively display temper (6), give trouble getting them to bed on time (5), go too far from home without permission (3), sass

(1), act rude (2). The formerly married reported these actions for their children: disobey (8), yell at you (7), hit you (3), use bad language (5), give trouble getting them to study (2), give trouble getting them to do their jobs (8), give trouble getting them to eat (8), fight (9), excessively display temper (7), give you trouble getting them to bed on time (6), go too far from home without permission (7), lie (1), sass (2), act rude (3).

Insight is offered by comments related to the mothers' statement of whether or not their children perform a given action. Of the 9 presently married mothers mentioning disobedience, 6 stressed that occasions of the offense were seldom. In each group, 7 mothers reported that their children yell at them. In the formerly married group, 5 mothers explained the offense as "partly my fault" or "I yell at them so much, they yell back." Two of these mothers stressed that their children do so "only in frustration." Only 2 presently married mothers offered similar excuses: "I think it's my fault," and "If they're upset, it's good for them" Presently married mothers said that affirmative answers with regard to hitting were based on the fact "that each one tries it" in all 3 cases. "Only once" qualified the affirmative answers of formerly married mothers in 2 of the 3 cases. All 6 presently married mothers saying their children use bad language pointed out that "They try it when they hear it, but don't usually continue after we talk to them about it." Of the 5 formerly married

mothers relating this problem, 3 excused it because someone else had taught the children to use such language. Excessive displays of temper were excused in one of the three formerly married cases as "a product of the situation."

When asked "What do you do when your children do something of which you disapprove?" the following list of reactions was related, in specified frequency by married mothers: discuss it with them (1), yell at them (9), ignore them (7), threaten them (6), take away privileges (9), slap them (6), spank them (7). The formerly married reported these punishments: discuss it with them (10), yell at them (10), ignore them (7), threaten them (7), take away privileges (10), slap them (10), spank them (9). Realism of the picture conveyed, again depends largely upon comments which qualified the mothers' answers. Listing "discuss problems with children," for instance, meant "always" to 4, "yes" to 4, and "we try to" to 2, presently married mothers. Formerly married mothers said 6 times that they "try," 3 times "yes," and 1 time that it "depends on the situation." Situational differences for threatening a child vary also. "A threat is enough, so I never have to carry it out" reported 2 presently married mothers; 4 stated that they always carry out their threats. On the other hand, 2 formerly married mothers said they seldom carry out their threats, and 3 said they always do so. A notable comment made by one formerly married mother when asked about taking away privileges from her children is

that "It works better than spanking: it lasts longer." Not only did the frequency of slapping differ between the groups, but 2 of the 6 presently married mothers who do slap their children, stressed that they do so only occasionally. Such qualification was not true of the counter group. Spanking was also qualified as "only occasionally" by presently married mothers, but not by formerly married mothers. Only one of the presently married said that she spansks with anything other than her hand. In this case, the utensil was a wooden spoon. Four of the formerly married names a stick (2), a paddle (1), and a piece of rubber (1) as their aids.

Certain offenses seem to merit special punishment. A unique punishment used by one presently married mother when her children yell at her, is "red pepper on the tongue." Two formerly married mothers wash their children's mouths out with soap for using bad language. Of the 3 presently married mothers who said their children hit them, 1 hits them back, 1 talks to them, 1 ignores it. In the formerly married group, 2 said it happened only once, 1 said she ignores it. When they have trouble getting their children to do their jobs, 2 presently married mothers reduce allowances, 1 campuses the children, and 2 "make them do it." The final remedy was mentioned by only 1 formerly married, while 3 yell, 3 "let them go." In reaction to children's fights, 4 presently married mothers separate them, 4 ignore them, 1 hollers. Only 2 of the other mothers "make them quit," which 7 "ignore them

until they get out of hand, and then intervene." Having trouble getting their children to eat was reported by only 4 married mothers; all 4 said they make their children eat part of the meal. This problem was listed by 8 formerly married. Of these, 4 will let the children have something else, 3 do not force them to eat, and 1 makes them eat part of it. To cope with excessive displays of temper, 5 presently married mothers discuss it with the children, and then punish them, 1 ignores them. To 4 formerly married mothers this category meant "tantrums," Of these, 3 ignore such action, 1 got medication for her child. "Crying and oneriness" was the connotation for 3 of these mothers. Punishment was the reaction of 2 of them. "Lecture and give in" was typical for 1 mother. All 5 presently married mothers having trouble getting their children to bed on time said that they just firmly "see that they go." Of the 6 of the formerly married here included, 4 punish to make them go; 2 ignore them. When their children go too far from home without permission, all 3 of the married mothers "spank or holler." Here, 4 of the involved formerly married punish, 2 ignore, 1 talks to them.

Frequency with which spankings are required shows some difference. Spankings are so seldom required by children of 2 married mothers, that they could not remember the last ones. For each child of 2 of these mothers, spankings are necessary 4 times per month, for 1, 2 times per month, for 2, they are required 1 time per month.

Formerly married mothers reported spanking to be required more often. For 1 mother, 20 spankings per month are common, for 1, 16 per month, 2 listed 12 per month, 2 spank 8 times per month, 3 spank 4 times per month, and 1 does so only 1 time in 3 months.

When asked if they punish each child the same way, 7 of the presently married said no, 3 said yes. In the formerly married group 4 said no, 5 said yes (1 had only 1 child). While more of the presently married reported differentiation for different children, reasons given by members of both groups stressed that "Each is an individual," "Different things work for different ones," and "You should gear it to their personalities."

Rewards for being good were said to be given by 7 married mothers, not given by 3. They are given by all 10 in the formerly married group. For 3 of the first group that meant an occasional gift or toy, for 2, extra allowance, for 2, extra praise. For 2 of the formerly married, it meant buying something extra, for 4 it meant money, and for 4, "praise" or "extra love."

Expressive comments were made in both groups. Presently married mothers or 3 families stressed that they have "never really had to punish" because "We've set the rules and they keep them" or "We always sit down and try to reason with them; if they see why something's right, they'll do it." Comments by formerly married mothers were more numerous, as we see from the following:

I have to be quite stern: make them follow.

I let everything go so long--they know how far they can press me.

I don't believe in spanking--Even with the little one, I Just say "no, no."

I make them sit on a chair anywhere from five minutes to an hour. They prefer to be spanked.

I'd like to tell them what to do and have them do it. If they want to be nagged to get them to do something, though, I'll nag. Sometimes you can talk forever, so you have to hit them.

I tell them to do something twice; then they get paddled.

Mothers were next asked how their children reacted, when punished. Presently married mothers listed that they pout (7), cry (7), get angry (4), and scream (3). Formerly married mothers listed that their children pout most frequently, or 9 times, get angry (8), and scream (4). Presently married mothers made several explanatory comments about punishment, and children's reactions to it.

It usually improves the situation.

They're immediately sorry--almost too sorry. You'd make robots out of them if you weren't careful.

R_ becomes more outgoing, wanting to improve the situation.

They're very sweet and loving after a while.

Similar comments of formerly married mothers are less numerous.

They want to be loved after. They get exceptionally well-behaved after.

He retaliates with threats, or not going to school.

When asked why they think their children act as they do, 4 presently married attributed reactions to normalcy based on personalities, 3 explained being just as the cause, and 3 said the children understood

the punishment and wanted to please the parent. A "normal reaction" was mentioned by 5 formerly married mothers, 2 said they didn't know, 1 said the children understand the punishment, and 1 said the children did not understand reason for punishment. The mothers of intact families mentioned many specific comments in answer to this question.

They're sullen, because sometimes they feel we're infringing upon their rights, but always we talk, and they know we understand.

Their feelings are hurt.

They want to please us so much, because they know we love them, and they're secure.

They know they're wrong, but they have hate to be told.

Because S_ is sensitive; K_ is quick tempered.

Because of their individual personalities.

They know they need it, and they appreciate it.

Mothers of the formerly married group included different comments, such as those while follow.

It's natural fury, but it wears off fast because they feel loved.

A lot stems from the fact that I'm divorced. M_ had a different dad.

They know they have it coming, but they naturally resent authority.

The reactions are natural, but wear off fast.

D_ thinks he should get his way, because he's the oldest. M_'s always been that way--doesn't like roughness.

They think I'm mean.

D-'s behavior confuses me--there may be a real problem there.

I just don't know--that's a real problem.

Because I scream at them all the time.

Because they know they're wrong.

Presently married mothers were asked if they believe certain problems are caused by the fact that two people are raising the same children; 6 said no, 4 said yes. When asked if they and their husbands ever differ in their convictions regarding child rearing, 8 said sometimes, 2 said no. Several responses were typical explanations of the instances in which differing occurs.

Seldom

Not seriously.

Just in the way we react, and how fast we react.

Four said;

My husband is too strict sometimes.

I'm tougher on them than my husband is.

He teases, and he thinks I get too involved in outside things.

Frequency with which they differ was listed as 3 times per year by 1, 2 times per year by 1, 1 or 2 times ever by 1, and 4 said it happens so seldom they could not remember the times well enough to estimate. When asked how the parents show the disagreement, 6 said they settle it alone (i.e. away from the children), and 2 said they yell at each other even if the children are present. To the question "How does it affect your children?" 5 said they did not believe their children were aware of strife, 2 said "they get uptight and scared if we fight in front of them" and 1 said "they try to take advantage of it when they detect it." When asked which party's ideas usually govern, 6 said neither takes precedence, because they work together, 2 said the husband's, and 2 said their own. Both who said the mother's ideas govern most specified the reason for that as being "because my husband

is gone a lot." All mothers said their children do not play one parent against the other, but 5 said they try, even though they are not successful. All 10 mothers said their husbands help them in enforcing their decisions; none said they hinder. The advantages of having two parents to raise the same children were listed by 6 as the fact that "you need a husband to back you up." That children need a father, and deserve mutual governing of two people's ideas was listed by 4 mothers. Reportedly most of the discipline problems are handled by the husband in only 1 home, by the wife in 9. All mothers of the latter category, however, stressed that this is true "because I'm there more."

Accordingly, formerly married mothers were asked if they believe certain problems are caused by the fact that they raise their children alone. Affirmative answers were received from all 10 mothers. Need for male discipline was the biggest problem cited by 5 mothers, problems caused by material needs were mentioned 3 times, and personal need for a father was listed by 1 mother. Explanations for this repeatedly echoed the need for male discipline.

There's no firm hand, they try to take advantage of me.

With no iron hand of a father, they know they can get to you.

A man carries more authority. Kids get used to a mother yelling all the time. A father's word usually makes them snap to it.

It's harder for a woman to discipline because she feels she has to make it up to the kids for having only one parent.

They're more apt to listen to a father.

They're looking for a daddy terribly.

You have no one to back you up.

Three areas related to material needs were explained:

It's not fair for them to have a babysitter.

The biggest problem is that I don't have time to spend with each child because I'm working, and have a big house and yard.

They should be able to have more privileges, but there's not enough money.

Need for a father was expressed in this way:

With no father, there's no one for her to run to.

When asked if they find it difficult to remain firm in their convictions, 8 mothers said yes, 2 said not. Those saying they do, gave many explanations:

I give in to them.

I threaten, but don't carry through.

That's one of the biggest problems.

I'm not consistent.

They know they can get to me.

When asked, 5 mothers said their children take advantage of them because they are alone; 4 said their children do not; 1 said she did not know. The question "Do you find it difficult to enforce your decisions?" solicited 7 affirmative and 3 negative answers. When asked to identify the most serious problem for them in raising children alone, 6 mentioned troubles with discipline, 3, the burden of sole responsibility, and 1, not being able to be with the children enough. Clarifying statements were somewhat typical:

Not letting them get the upper hand is my biggest problem.

I'm too easy going on them.

The responsibility of it all--having to make decisions alone is worst.

I can't be home during the day.

Mothers were next asked if they believe there are any advantages to raising children alone. . . "No" the response of 8: "yes" was the response of 2. Both of the latter-mentioned mothers, however, explained their answers as being contingent on their personal situations, where their husbands had caused only trouble. When asked whether it is easier to be sole authority, the mothers unanimously answered "No." Children of 6 mothers are not believed to give her extra consideration because she is alone; children of 4 are believed to do so, "in little ways, usually." All 10 mothers again concurred, here affirmatively, that they think their children would be less "naughty" if they had husbands to help raise them. "How do you think your single position affects your children?" was the next question. That the children miss their dad and the benefits of family life was told by 6 mothers; 2 said the children have accepted it; 1 said they take advantage of her; 1 said the children are hindered by finances. When asked if they think their children resent the fact that they are alone, 6 said no, 4 said yes. Being asked whether they think their children are harder or easier to handle now than they were before the divorce, caused 4 mothers to say "easier," 4 to say "harder," and 2 to be unable to say. Of the ten mothers, 3 said they are not considering remarriage, 7 said they would if the right man came.

Noteworthy comments were voiced by both groups throughout this separately geared section. Presently married mothers made various statements.

I couldn't do it alone; he backs me up.

I don't think a women can raise boys. I couldn't discipline them alone.

Children really need two parents. The kids are much better when he's home.

I can't imagine doing it alone. He helps me in the authority area.

He helps back me up.

I couldn't do it alone. You have to have a father to back you up.

I don't know what I'd do alone. They're better when he's around.

When we have a little time alone, things get out of hand, and we find out neither of us could do it alone.

We can talk things over and get two sides to the story.

We talked so much about our ideas before we had children, that now we think pretty much alike. He's more persevering than I, though, so he helps a lot.

For the mothers who have not only had to be able to "imagine doing it alone," but to actually do so, comments were quite different.

They try to walk over me.

Sometimes I'm wrong, so I admit it if I am.

It's a democracy here, with give and take (of screaming too). I'm too easy going--they don't mind well.

They criticize me and disagree with me.

They don't take me seriously, because there's no one to back me up. Their dad used to, so that problem wasn't there when he was.

They're deaf when you tell them to do something.

Within the group of the formerly married, 4 said that children should be given more time than they give them. "More strictness" than their children experience was admired by 3, "firm discipline" was mentioned by 2, and 2 merely said "as I do it." When asked if they think you should have to punish children, 8 married mothers said yes, 2 said no. Formerly married mothers replied yes 9 times, no 1 time. The question of whether they would like to be more or less strict with their children than they are, solicited the reply from all 10 of the presently married, that they are satisfied with the methods they use. In the formerly married group, 5 would like to be more strict, 4, less strict, and 1 reported satisfaction. Both dissatisfied factions expressed the belief that their preferences could be achieved through the help of a husband. When asked if they wish they did not have to punish their children as much as they do, 6 married mothers said no, 4 said yes. Here, 3 formerly married said no, 7 said yes.

Next mothers were asked "How do you think you might improve relations between you and your children?" "More talking" was listed by 4 presently married mothers, "developing more worthwhile friendship relations" was mentioned by 2, having "more time" was listed by 1,

having "more patience," by 1, and 2 said that their relations are as good as they could ever be. "More time" was the answer of 5 formerly married mothers. Other responses were "more patience" by 4, "more talking" by 2, and 2 reported satisfaction. One of those in the final section said that this satisfaction became true only when she quit work.

Giving a brief personality description of herself was the next request made of each mother. Presently married mothers listed the following adjectives with the indicated frequency: quiet (3), happy (2), like people (2), easy going (1), stubborn (1), sensitive (1). These were the adjectives mentioned by the formerly married, the specified number of times: stubborn (3), independent (3), little self confidence (3), impatient (2), shy (2), happy (2), dependent (1), sensitive (1), easy going (1).

Finally, all mothers were asked for brief personality descriptions of their husbands, or last ex-husbands. Presently married mothers listed "dynamic and determined" 3 times, "happy" 2 times, "quiet" 2 times, "sensitive" 2 times, and "conservative" 1 time. Of their ex-husbands, or late husbands, formerly married mothers said "immature" 3 times, "self-centered" 3 times, "mean-tempered" 2 times, "a drinker" 1 time, "a good man" 1 time.

The interviewer noted surrounding factors and occurrences pertinent to the given situations. Personal appearance of each mother

was the first of such factors. In neither group, however, were appearances outstanding. All mothers were relatively neat and clean, dressed in casual attire. Residential areas tended to be slightly less desirable for the formerly married group, but no exceptional tendencies were apparent. Generally, housing ranged from the Stewart Homes complex through less than choice, to slightly better than average areas. Since respondents were contacted in somewhat residentially matched pairs, the moderate gamut was rather equally covered by both groups. Condition of the home within was noted to some apparent distinction. The homes of presently married mothers were neat and clean on the inside in 9 cases, slightly cluttered in 1. Formerly married mothers had 6 neat and clean homes, 4 terribly cluttered. Mother-child interaction was viewed in 8 intact homes. In 5 of these cases, the children were present for all or part of the interview, but were quiet, polite, and did not bother the mother or interviewer at all. On 3 occasions, the mother gave her children a direction, and firmly saw to the fact that her order was obeyed. Likewise, such interaction was viewed in 8 homes of the formerly married. In 3 homes, the children whined for attention, and were consequently coddled. In 1 home, the children whined a little, but obeyed an order given by the mother. In 4 cases, the mother gave an order, but then gave in or otherwise failed to have it obeyed. The most extreme case of the final category was one of utter havoc. To all appearances, the mother had no control of her children. Despite

the fact that the mother gave many orders, for the children to do such things as leave the room, she met only continued noise and harassment. At times the mother laughed or expressed dismay, but mostly she ignored the confusion. All mothers seemed to be quite honest, opened, and anxious to be of assistance. In 2 cases, formerly married mothers were loquacious to the point of hampering tight adherence to interview topics, but even in these cases, the necessary areas were generously covered. Children of 2 married mothers were present throughout the interview, but in neither case did the mother seem to mind being straightforward, for both seemed to have honest, understanding relationships with their children. Children were continuously present in only one home of a formerly married mother. In this case, the talkative mother did not seem to casually mind talking openly in front of the children. Here, the constant confusion challenged concentration, but the well-conditioned mother did not appear to be hindered.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Specific personal data indicate that in most areas pertinent to this study, mothers of the two groups were sufficiently similar to render the groups comparable in the intended ways. Current ages of the mothers, for instance, varied by 22 years in the presently married, and 18 years in the formerly married group. In the married group, mean age was 35.8, and median age, 34. Among the formerly married, the mean

age was 33.7, and the median, 30. On the whole, then, the presently married mothers happened to be slightly older than the formerly married group. Montana was the most popular birthplace for members of both groups. While this state was claimed by only 5 formerly married, as compared to 6 presently married, and 3 of the formerly married were not born in the United States, no direct implications pertinent to this study seem to exist. National backgrounds were sufficiently mixed to appear to be free of group-typical significance. The fact that all mothers were caucasian was coincidental, but happily averted any possible racial differential, and makes this a more monogamous sample. Range of educational differences for the presently married was 12 years, and for the formerly married, it was 4. Mean number of years for the presently married was 12.5, median was 12, mode was 12. For the formerly married, the mean was 12.2 years, median was 12.5, and mode was 13 years. Although the college backgrounds for the presently married, and business college years for the formerly married might further differentiate, on the whole, the groups were educationally comparable in years. Both groups were primarily of Protestant faith, with a Catholic representation of 40% in the presently married, 20% in the formerly married group. Differences in occupational status of the interviewees were marked, and made far-reaching influences in group differences. Within the presently married group, 6 did not have occupations other than housewives, 2 did child care within the home,

and only 2 had occupations outside the home. All but 1 of the formerly married, on the other hand, had jobs outside of the home. This differentiation might be expected, in view of material needs, but should be carefully noted in attempts at establishing causative explanations for any relationships. The mean number of children in the married mothers' families of orientation was 5.4, the median was 5. On the other hand, mean in the families of the formerly married was 4.5, the median was 4.5 also. Group typical differences, then will not be directly attributed to original sibling number influence. Age at marriage for the two groups differed slightly, with mean of 21.5 for the married, and of 20.7 for the formerly married. The range and mode for the married was 12 years, and 21 years, while for the formerly married, they were 12 and 20.5 years. It is interesting, and perhaps suggestive of tendencies toward presence or absence of family serenity that all presently married had been married only once, while 3 of the formerly married had seen the dissolution of 2 marriages each. As might be expected, years of marriage for the presently married were longer, with mean of 14.3 years, range of 22 years, and median of 11 years. Mean for the formerly married was 6.8, range was 17 years, and median, 6 years. Of special significance, is the fact that 2 of the formerly married were widows, rather than divorcees. Because the responses of the widowed mothers did not seem to typically differ from those of the divorced mothers, however, their cases have not been separated into a distinct group. The number

of children included in each group differed by only 3. The presently married group included 36 children, 29 of whom fell in the below 13 age group which is of concern here. The formerly married claim 39, 30 of which are 13 or younger. The mean ages for children of both groups was 9.7 years. Median age for children of married mothers was 8, the bimodal ages were 6 and 5. In the formerly married group, the median was 8, the mode, 6. Numbers of children in a family ranged from 2 to 7 for the presently married, with a mean of 3.6, a median of 3. For the formerly married, this range was 9, from 1 to 10, and had a mean of 3.9, a median of 3.5 children. Presently married mothers listed 23 female, 13 male children. For the formerly married, the count was 16 females, 23 males. This apparently coincidental difference may have influence on child-rearing problems, for it was in the homes lacking male authority that the most male children were being raised.

Descriptions mothers gave of their children's personalities provide some interesting suggestions. Based on contextual use of their words, and on common connotations of the descriptive words, the descriptions have been here categorized as (1) positive; (2) negative; and (3) neutral character. Positive characteristics are those which tend to be desirable to fellow men, and advantageous to parents in fostering smooth relations with their children. Negative characteristics are those which more typically tend to cause friction within the home, and are less desirable in interpersonal relations. Neutral

characteristics may be pleasing or displeasing, but do not typically tend to affect personal or family relations. According to such designations, positive characteristics include outgoing, happy, precocious, responsible, easy to get along with, independent. Negative characteristics are the following: stubborn, hard to get along with, problem, spoiled, problem temper. The following characteristics are neutral: quiet, sensitive. Of the six typical descriptions used by presently married mothers, 4 were positive, 0 were negative, and 2 were neutral. That is, in describing their children, presently married mothers mentioned positive characteristics 66 2/3%, negative characteristics 0%, and neutral characteristics 33 1/3%. In contrast, of the ten typical descriptions used by formerly married mothers, 3 were positive, 5 were negative, 2 were neutral. For this group, then, only 30% of the mentioned characteristics were positive, 50% were negative, and 20% were neutral. These reports might indicate frankly, that the children in intact homes have more positive personalities than do those in severed homes. They might, however, further suggest such things as the possibility that the children with both parents are better behaved and therefore more pleasing to the parent, or that they have better relations with the parent, or that the presently married parents have a "brighter outlook" and therefore see their children, and possibly the greater world, as more positive, than do mothers who have been separated from their husbands.

Reported "naughty" actions of the children may be best comprehended through obvious separation. Here, then, is a tabulation reporting actions, their total frequencies, and the frequency with which each group reported them.

Action	Total #		
	of Times Mentioned	Mentioned by FM	Mentioned by PM
Disobey	17	9	8
Yell at you	14	7	7
Hit you	6	3	3
Use bad language	11	6	5
Give trouble getting them to study	2	0	2
Give trouble getting them to do their jobs	13	5	8
Give trouble getting them to eat	12	4	8
Fight	16	7	9
Excessively display temper	13	6	7
Give trouble getting them to bed on time	10	5	6
Go too far from home without permission	10	3	7
Lie	1	0	1
Sass	3	1	2
Act rude	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
	134	58	76

While reported differences on specific actions are not noticeable, the total percent of "naughty" actions attributed to each group is important. The presently married mothers accounted for 43% of the complaints, while formerly married mothers related 57% of them. The statements mothers offered to qualify their responses shed supplementary light. The way in which the presently married mothers stressed many listed actions as occurring only seldom suggests that a single affirmative answer by a formerly married mother may actually represent

many more occurrences of the listed action than does the equally tabulated response of a presently married mother. More numerous in the formerly married group, too, were attempts to excuse the listed actions of their children, often, by taking a large part of the blame themselves. Such attempts might be indicative of any number of conditions. Formerly married mothers may more genuinely understand their children's behavior, or this behavior may in fact be "a product of the situation." On the other hand, these mothers may be typically overprotective of their children, and therefore, want to act as buffers when any judgment is passed on their children. They may also feel somewhat responsible for, and therefore guilty about, undesirable actions of their children. Disciplinary measures in both groups seem to differ more in general and specific frequencies of use than in differences of types used. Such indications may be seen in tabular form.

Reaction	Total # of Times Mentioned	Mentioned by PM	Mentioned by FM
Discuss it with them	20	10	10
Yell at them	19	9	10
Ignore them	14	7	7
Threaten them	13	6	7
Take away privileges	19	9	10
Slap them	16	6	10
Spank them	<u>16</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>9</u>
	117	54	63

Here, the greatly important factor seems to lie in the frequency of physical means of punishment, specified as "slapping" or "spanking." Such means were mentioned in 32 cases. Presently married mothers account for 13, or 40% of the mentioned cases, while the 19 responses of the formerly married comprise 60% of the occurrences, of physical punishment. Simple numbers of disciplinary techniques used varies with slight characteristic tendency. Of the 117 actions, presently married mothers claim 46% or 54, and the formerly married are responsible for 54% or 63. In relation to the characteristic percentages of "naughty action," these percents may appear to suggest that the children of formerly married mothers require more disciplinary action than do those whose fathers still are in the home. Actually, however, little more than variety of techniques can be positively read from these figures. It may also be that the formerly married, having more trouble enforcing their decisions, are more desperate in their needs for means of assistance, as use of utensils in spanking may suggest. Either of these factors, of course, could be dependent on the other. Specific comments in this area imply that of the cases listing discussion of actions, actual use of this technique is regularly more frequent in the intact homes. Of the mothers there-included, for instance, 4 specified that they "always" discuss, 4 said simply "yes," and only 2 implied conditional differences, by saying that they "try." No formerly married mothers indicated absolute use of discussion, 3 said "yes," 6 "try,"

and 1 specified situational variation. These differences may of course be due to such factors as time limitations of the working mother, but it may also be due to the average personality of the formerly married mother. Conditions surrounding delivery of threats to a child would seem to be of vast importance. Only 43% of the formerly married mothers consistently carry out their threats, according to their reports. Presently married mothers reported that they do so in 67% of the homes. For 2 of the presently married, a threat serves as the only means of recourse needed, so that carrying out the threats is unnecessary. This difference may be determined by certain factors of the situations, and (or) responsible for others. Reactions of mothers to children who fail to do their jobs suggest a more characteristic "firmness" or "determination" among the presently married mothers, that was not here manifested by the formerly married. This is said, because merely yelling, or letting the children go is certainly different than making them do the job, or directly punishing. Presently married mothers also step in more often to control fights among their children and more often require their children to eat meals. "Excessive display of temper" had much stronger connotations for the formerly married, yet they exercised less authority in reaction to these displays. Ignoring the children was mentioned more frequently by formerly, than presently married mothers. In general, it seems that married mothers take disciplinary measures against more actions, and use more firm means

when doing so, than do formerly married mothers. Despite this tendency, or possibly because of it, they report use of fewer disciplinary techniques. This observation is further supported by the frequency with which both groups administer spankings. The average number of spankings given in the homes of presently married mothers is 2.4 per month. Formerly married mothers average 9.8 spankings per month. Of the month's total of 100 spankings, presently married mothers deliver 12%, while the formerly married account for 88% of the same.

As greater tendency to discuss, and less frequent use of punishment might suggest that some type or degree of something that might be called "understanding" or "more rational communication" may be present in the intact homes, and not present in the separated homes, so might the individualization of punishment suggest the phenomenon. Using different shadings of disciplining was affirmed by 70% of the married mothers, and by 40% of the formerly married. The mothers themselves who fall into this category explained the reason for differentiation to be recognition of distinct personalities. General comments about discipline offer additional indications that children of the formerly married might require more punishment than do children of the presently married. Negative reactions of children to punishment were also more numerous among the formerly married group, for they listed 58% of the reactions, which the married listed 42%. Strongly

hostile-appearing reactions were related by only 1 mother, who was a widow. Reactions listed by the married were slightly more numerous and more positive than were those of the formerly married. This may be slightly indicative of the "Greater understanding" phenomenon, which could tend to foster more positive relations.

Answers given by mothers to the question of why they think their children react as they do to punishment would support the idea that the presently married tend to have a better understanding of their children. Of the presently married, 30% said their children understood punishments. The formerly married said this was true in only 10% of the cases, while specific lack of understanding was pointed out 10% and 20% of the mothers said they did not understand the children's reactions. While specific comments in both groups intimated some understanding and security, and some lack of understanding, more of the formerly married related negative reactions of children.

That married mothers said they and their husbands differ somewhat in their child-rearing ideas would seem natural. Elaborations upon initial affirmations make it appear that in the homes of the interviewed, such differentiation is not generally detrimental, and in some cases, may even be beneficial. Mean number of disagreements occurring per year was listed as about 2, and these were usually qualified as minor differences. Only 25% of the parties said they openly show such

disagreement, and 25% said the children were negatively affected by it, with 13% having potentially detrimental reactions.

That differentiation between the groups might be entirely based on the disciplinary actions of a husband would be supported by only 20% of the married mothers who said their husband's ideas usually take precedence, and only 10% said the husbands handle most of the disciplinary problems. The combination of ideas was rated by 60% of the mothers, but 90% said they as mothers handle most of the problems. In this area, then, it would seem that the theoretical backing as well as his enforcement assistance of a husband would be his most noticeable quality for setting apart the group of married mothers.

Based on those indications, the formerly married mothers' explaining the need for a father as a theoretical help to the woman herself may be the most valid explanation for the problems caused by absence of a male parent, while the heart of the problem may lie somewhere in the personal needs of the mother, it may also have a connection with some awareness of paternal authority on the part of the children. It is also possible that the behavior of fatherless children reflects certain father-needs that those children might have. Lack of ability to remain firm in convictions might support the first of these possibilities, for 80% of the formerly married said that they do have problems remaining firm with their children. This in itself may be a "feminine tendency." That 70% of the mothers mentioned having trouble

enforcing decisions might support any of the three ideas. It is interesting that the question of enforcement earned 10% fewer affirmations than did the question of remaining firm in convictions. A mother who had trouble remaining firm in convictions, yet not in enforcement might again support the idea that it is the mother who needs the husband more for moral support than the children who need a father as a disciplinary figure. Listing discipline as the main problem in singly raising children could be supportive of any of the suggested ideas. While 60% listed that area, a noticeable 30% specifically classified having sole responsibility as their biggest problem. Feeling this as a burden, need not be necessarily feminine, but might reflect an individual's need for personal support. It seems to follow, then, that no mothers preferred being sole authority.

That 60% of the children of single mothers do not give them special consideration might support the idea that mutual understanding is lacking within these homes. This could be an additional reason why the mothers' personal needs are not met. To the extent that the father is needed for authority or for the personal needs of mother or child, it would seem to follow that mothers would predict their children to be less naughty if a father were present. Direct indication that the children's needs for a father are not met was given by 60% of the formerly married mothers when asked how their single position affects the children. The children's resentment present in 40% of the homes

would not only support this theory, but could certainly magnify the mother's personal needs.

Specific comments by mothers of both groups seem to indicate the idea of authority needs, and personal needs of both mother and child. The presently married feel that they "couldn't do it alone," and that "children really need two parents." The formerly married frequently pointed out that the children walk over them, but often that this was not the case when the father was present.

That 89% of the answering presently married mothers said their parents had seldom found it necessary to punish them might be suggestive and could even be causative of the possibly distinctive personality characteristics that might be present in the presently married. Whether or not that may be the case, if some mutual understanding is present in those homes, sustaining marriage, and summoning positive relations from the children, it is reasonable to find that it may also have been present in the homes of these parents' orientation. A higher frequency of spankings given to the formerly married's children interestingly correlates with the higher frequency given by them. To an extent this correlation may be due to the fact that the mothers may be simply practicing the methods that they learned. Even if that is the cause, however, it cannot be forgotten that the formerly married mothers listed punitive judgments for more actions, not a tendency to ignore, or be less strict. The respectful acceptance of punishment recalled by

50% of the married, and the anger and resentment mentioned with the same frequency by the formerly married, again closely parallels the reactions of their own children. This could reflect upon methods practiced, or attitudes fostered. That 40% of the presently, and 20% of the formerly married list use of the same techniques their parents used would support the attitudes more strongly than the methods theory. It is interesting that 40% of the married are more strict, 10% less strict than their parents were. Of the formerly married, 70% are less strict, 10% more, which would further suggest the similarity of attitudes, as it suggests divergence of methods. The possible cause for such a phenomenon, of course, could be the needs of the mother or the children, or the absence of understanding. None could be positively indicated, but it seems reasonable to suggest that the underlying attitudes, and absence of understanding might be intertwined in existence and chronology.

The unanimous satisfaction with their child rearing methods might add the shadings of a certain contentment, and even self-satisfaction to theories about the presently married. Certainly the qualifying adjectives they mentioned, such as "fairs," "talking," "interest," "discussion," might confirm the suggestions of admirable attitudes and possibly the tones of communication. Only 20% of the formerly married feel that their methods are ideal, and 50% implied or stated the need for more discipline despite the already more

numerous spankings they administered. The need for more time, related by 40% of the formerly married might suggest that attitudes and understanding could be improved if circumstances would permit. That 90% of the formerly married work outside the home, while this is true of only 20% of the presently married, is pertinent to recall. When 50% of the formerly married said that they would like to improve relations with their children by having more time, this problem was further illustrated. Of the 20% reporting satisfaction with their relations, 10% said hers had been achieved only when she quit work. The married mothers listed more interpersonal means of improvement which could again suggest that special condition of a certain understanding, and concern with communication. Here it is noticeable, however, that the presence or lack of such virtue may be strongly related to circumstantial, rather than entirely personal, causes.

Adjectives of self-description have been categorized, as was done with words describing children. Those classes as positive are: like people, easy going, happy, independent. Negative characteristics are: stubborn, dependent, impatient, little self-confidence. These traits are neutral: quiet, sensitive, shy. Of the six descriptions typically used by the presently married, 50% were positive, 33 1/3% were neutral, and 16 1/3% were negative. The formerly married used 9 typical descriptions, of which 33 1/3% were positive, 22 1/3% were neutral, and 44 1/3% were negative. Thus, it seems that the presently married have

prevailing positive self-concepts, while those of the formerly married are negative. Again, then, support is given to the idea of the more beneficial attitudes, in the intact homes, as well as to the idea of the unmet feminine needs in the separated households.

Conditions of the homes offers interesting insight. Only 10% of the intact homes were slightly cluttered, while 40% of the homes of the formerly married were shockingly cluttered. This condition might be contingent upon that certain satisfaction, and consequent pride in surroundings. It is not surprising, however, that a woman keeping house for a man might be more positively motivated than would one with no man to care or appreciate. The observed mother-child interaction is highly suggestive of more positive interpersonal relations, stronger authority, and obedience roles in the intact homes. Challenging and consequent undermining of authority in the homes of formerly married was unmistakable. As has been true of other symptoms, this observation may be cause of effect, but is probably both. Generally, it appears that certain child-rearing differences do exist between the homes of studied presently married mothers, and formerly married mothers. Specifically defining the actual nature of such differences would be a very complex problem which could certainly not be undertaken without extensive further study. Mere identification of indications of differences is extremely difficult from the findings of this study. An attempt is made, however, because the data does seem to be strongly

indicative of several questions that might be beneficially answered by further research. It appears that a certain phenomenon exists which manifests itself in the fact that presently married mothers seem to have more positive interpersonal relations with their children. They seem to have more positive views of themselves and their children. With their children, they seem to have a certain understanding or communication. The presently married seem to demand more admirable behavior from their children, yet need less forceful means to achieve such action, even though it is the mothers rather than the fathers who handle most of the disciplinary situations. The reasons for noticeable differences may be rooted in the time deficit of working mothers, who are more frequently the formerly married. The fact that the parents of these mothers seemed to be in many cases much the same in their child-rearing, and the fact that two of the presently married work, however, suggests deeper explanations. The fact that the husbands do not actually handle many disciplinary cases, might raise the question of the actual influence that a husband might have on the noted conditions within a home. The formerly married regularly, though maybe idealistically, speculated that a husband would help in, or solve, their disciplinary problems. The presently married praise the assistance of their husbands, yet numbered their times of actual control as few. Having a husband to "back her up" may help a mother in the dominant image he presents to the child; yet, it seems he must

do something more, perhaps less, but certainly something else. The clue to this function might lie in the complaints of mothers about being "sole authority." The lead, then, would be found in the more negative images the formerly married mothers presented of themselves. The possibility here indicated is that mothers seem to have deep needs of their own, which are not met when there is not a husband in the home. A consequence of these unmet needs is reflected in the relations that these mothers foster with their children. Another possibility is that children themselves have deep needs for a father, and when those are not met, the behavior of the children is accordingly affected. The third way that a father may affect mother-child relations is that his very role creates in the children an awareness of paternal authority that influences them to behave more properly. Associated in this area, might be the negative affect that a child's resentment of a mother's single position might have upon her disciplinary effectiveness.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The importance of this study centers in the prevalence of, and interest focused upon, divorce as a dysfunction in American society. The nature of the investigation is exploratory because of the apparently novel approach to specific areas of the topic. Methods were dictated by resource limitations as well as the requirements of the study. As expected, findings did not indicate distinctly group-typical opposites. Group trends were, however, sufficiently apparent to suggest worthwhile conclusions. Unfortunately, narrowness of scope of this study is a seriously limiting factor. Because the sample was small and non-random, complex statistical analysis is inappropriate, and generalizations may be directly valid for only this group. Contacting subjects through Parents Without Partners initially limited the group represented to a unique few of the formerly married. Members of the group are among the select few who have sought and received some counseling and support in their single state. Many mothers mentioned the great help the club has been to them in learning to cope with their personal and family problems. It might then be true that problems found to be typical among the formerly married may be quite moderate in comparison to those found among the formerly married who have not sought such fraternal assistance. Such an idea might well be proven through further study. It is interesting that the two non-member

mothers did not appear to diverge from norms seen among members. Still, those mothers, too, are comparably unique, by nature of their association with club members.

There are many factors not studied here, that almost certainly have a pronounced effect on family functioning. The previous and present attitude of the mother toward the absent father, for instance, quite often exerts a profound influence on families relations. The former and present relations between the divorced father and his children, and the role that he played in the home can be most important. Dynamics of the separation also leave their mark and may hold a clue for interpretation of various behavioral indications. Personalities of involved individuals may be a paramount pathway to conclusions. Such factors, unfortunately, were judged to be too personal and emotionally involved to be meaningfully relayed in an interview setting. While the researcher hoped to obtain some leads in this area by asking the mothers for descriptions of their husbands, answers were all too vague and noncommittal to be of assistance. The influence of such factors might be beneficially studied by in depth investigations and repeated observation of family interaction. Longitudinal studies of families from marriage to separation would be ideal.

Despite its limitation, this study has discovered distinct trends which raise questions for further research. One of the most important questions deals with the fact that the formerly married

mothers typically worked outside of the home, while the presently married did not. Because the three mothers here studied who differed from that norm still seemed to follow most of their groups' trends, this study suggests that the fact of whether or not a mother works is of less importance than her personal child-rearing tactics and attitudes.

The most conclusive hypothesis suggested by this study is that the personality of the mother is the construct of most profound influence in the interaction of a family where the father is absent. It is further suggested that the personality characteristics which tend to make these mothers less effective disciplinarians are closely related to those which lead to the broken condition of their homes. This idea is suggested by several findings. First, the presently married had all been married only once, while three divorced mothers had dissolved two marriages each. The less positive outlooks of the formerly married may also be a causative factor. The apparently less complete communication patterns exercised between the formerly married mothers and their children may be reflections of marital communication weaknesses which may have provoked separation.

The absence of strongly different tendencies among the widows, suggested a more complicated explanatory hypothesis. This more probably explanation is that a home cannot function to the fullness of its potential without the interaction of a male figure as husband and father. The absence of such role-fulfillment may negatively affect the

functioning of the mother. The findings have suggested that a mother needs active male fulfillment and support in order to most completely live her role as mother. It is possible that such fulfillment was similarly absent when the husbands of the presently divorced women were in the home. If such were the case, actions of the involved children may not observably be altered. Such indications might be beneficially studied through further research.

APPENDIX

Interview guide used at all visits

Sex	Occupation
Age	# of siblings
Birthplace	Age at marriage
Nationality	# of marriages
Race	Reason for termination
Education	
Religion	

Children (ages, sexes, descriptions)

1. What things do your children do that you consider to be "wrong" or "naughty?"

Disobey
Yell at you
Hit you
Kick you
Use bad language
Refuse to study

Fail to do their jobs
Fight
Refuse to eat
Throw temper tantrums
Refuse to go to bed on time
go too far from home without permission

2. What do you do when they do something of which you disapprove?

Discuss it with them
Yell at them
Ignore them
Threaten them

Take away privileges
Slap them
Spank them
Hit them

How often do you do these things?

Do you punish each child the same way?

Do you give your children rewards for being good?

3. How do your children react when you punish them?

correct

slap

spank

get angry

pout

scream

cry

Why do you think they react that way?

- 4a. Do you believe certain problems are caused by the fact that you raise your children alone?

What ones?

Do you find it difficult to remain firm in your convictions?

Do your children tend to take advantage of you because you are alone?

Do you find it difficult to enforce your decisions?

What is the most serious of these problems for you?

Do you believe there are any advantages to raising children alone?

Is it easier to be sole authority?

Do your children give you extra consideration because you are alone?

Do you think your children would be less "naughty" if you had a husband to help you raise them?

How do you think your single position affects your children?

Do your children resent the fact that you are alone?

Do you think your children are harder or easier to handle now than they were before your divorce?

Are you considering remarriage?

4b. Do you believe certain problems are caused by the fact that two people are raising the same children?

Do you and your husband ever differ in your convictions regarding child rearing?

In what instances?

How seriously?

How often?

How do you show this disagreement?

How does it affect your children?

Which party's ideas usually govern?

Do your children play one parent against the other? How?

Does your husband help or hinder you in enforcing your decisions?

What is the most serious problem of two parents raising the same children?

What are the advantages?

Do you or your husband handle most of the discipline problems.

5. How did your parents punish you when you were young?

How did you react?

How did it make you feel?

6. Ideally, how do you think children should be raised?

Do you think you should have to punish children?

Would you like to be less strict with your children than you are?

Do you wish you didn't have to punish your children so much?

Do you think it would be better if you could always discuss problems with your children, and never had to spank them?

7. How do you think you might improve relations between you and your children?

Please give descriptions of the following people: (i.e., temperament, personality, attitudes, out-look on life, etc.)

Self

Own parents

Mate

Interviewer will note:

Subjects's appearance

Living conditions

Residential area

Other members of family present

Factors pertinent to the situation

Important occurrences of the situation (interview)

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