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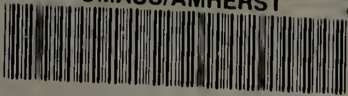
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OWNERSHIP IN YOUNG CHILDREN'S SOCIAL INTERACTIONS

A Dissertation Presented

By

PATRICIA G. RAMSEY

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

September 1978

Education

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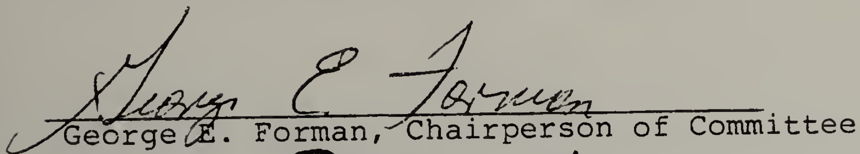

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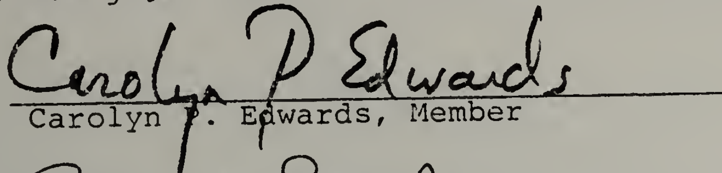

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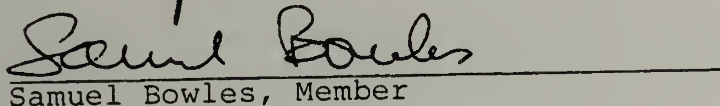

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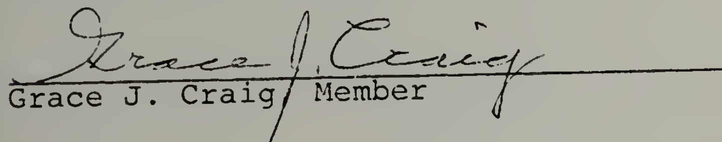

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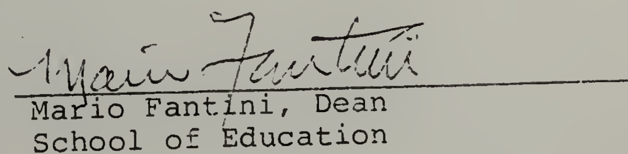

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ABSTRACT

Ownership in Young Children's
Social Interactions

September 1978

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Directed by: Dr. George E. Forman

Ownership is the right to exclude others from resources. This study which considers its prevalence and effect on young children's social interactions embodies the perspective that children's ownership behavior is a response to the economic and social environment. The agents and process of this aspect of socialization are described.

The central thesis of this study is that ownership behaviors exert an alienating influence on social relationships. Specifically, the ownership behavior of young children inhibits prosocial and affiliative behavior and stimulates aggressive and competitive behavior. The influence of ownership on other social behavior is examined from two perspectives: as a personality trait and as a situational variable.

The subjects of the study were 20 pre-school children at a campus day care center. The data included coded

naturalistic observations of children's social interactions, teachers' ratings and performances on a Prosocial Assessment Procedure.

The naturalistic data revealed that ownership behavior occurred in over half of the observed social interactions. The number of ownership involvements per child was distributed in a roughly normal curve. Certain environmental factors such as type and quantity of materials, type of activity and accessibility of space emerged as strongly related to the occurrence of ownership episodes.

The correlational analyses of the subjects' observed behaviors and the teachers' ratings revealed that children who were more often involved in ownership issues less frequently responded to their peers in a prosocial or affiliative manner and were more likely to act aggressively.

Then all the interactions were divided into two groups: ownership interactions and nonownership interactions. The occurrence of different social behaviors in these two conditions was tabulated. The results showed very consistent patterns of fewer affiliative and prosocial behaviors and more aggressive behaviors in ownership interactions than in the nonownership ones. An examination of subject scores revealed that these patterns were quite general, not simply reflections of a few individuals. Thus, ownership emerged as a significant influence on social behaviors, both in individual behavior patterns and as a situational factor.

In order to assess the relative strengths of the presence of individual subjects versus the presence of an ownership episode as predictors of other social behaviors, a series of regression analyses was done. Ownership episodes emerged as significant negative predictors for prosocial and affiliative behaviors and significantly positive predictors for aggressive behaviors. Individual subjects were also significant predictors for prosocial and aggressive behaviors, but not for affiliative behaviors.

Close scrutiny of specific interactions in the naturalistic data yielded some insights into the dimension of ownership behavior and the process by which it curbs prosocial and affiliative behaviors and stimulates aggression. The influence of the social and economic environment was also considered.

It was concluded that ownership is a frequent and disrupting occurrence in young children's social interactions. The behavioral correlations of ownership support the thesis that it negatively influences social behavior. While it is emphasized that these behavioral patterns are responses to the larger social and economic environment, some resulting implications for educational practice are suggested. Finally, further investigations focusing on this question are proposed.

Roger was playing with the blocks and some small wooden furniture. Kimberly and Greg came over and started playing with the furniture. Roger yelled, "No! No! Kimberly! Greg! Those are mine!" He made growling noises and held his arms up in a 'monster' pose. Kimberly picked up a piece of the furniture anyway. Roger then said, "Can I see what it is?" Kimberly opened her hand and showed it to him. Roger grabbed it and Kimberly said, "No." Then Roger yelled, "I don't like you!" He turned to Greg, "We're not Kimberly's friends, right?" Then Greg took one of the pieces. Roger then pulled him down and grabbed it away and yelled, "That's mine!" Greg brought Roger another block. Roger threw it away and said, "What is this? It doesn't belong here." Greg asked, "Don't you need this? Roger replied, No, go away!"

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Ownership is the right to exclude others from resources. Things, space and people are all potential property and potential objects of ownership disputes and claims. Owners and nonowners are mutually exclusive groups and there is an inevitable conflict of interest between them. Owners protect and defend their property whereas nonowners are tantalized, yet frustrated by the inaccessibility of these resources. Ownership is a source of social power and prestige. It is the owners who determine the disposition of resources; the nonowners must work according to the terms of owners in order to gain access to the resources. In all cases the essential conflict exists between those who own and those who do not. In this society, where private ownership is the basic economic principle, children quickly learn to protect what is theirs and to struggle to increase their property. It is obvious, even to the very young, that only through ownership can one gain some measure of security and power. Consequently, given the exclusive nature of ownership, children's social relationships reflect the alienating and separating influence of ownership that is also evident in the broader social context.

My interest in this issue emerged from observations of the frequent occurrence and the disruptive effect of ownership disputes and claims in young children's interactions with the social and physical environments. The intensity that children expressed when involved in ownership issues was striking. I was also intrigued by the fact that children's statements and actions regarding ownership echoed the expectations and conflicts that occur in the broader social environment. It appeared that, not only had young children acquired a strong sense of the value of property, but also some of the social rules of ownership.

This study was designed to articulate the demensions of ownership behaviors and its correlation with other social behaviors. The central thesis is that ownership, a learned social behavior that is strongly supported by the economic and social environment, exerts an alienating influence on social behavior. While it stimulates antagonistic behaviors, it inhibits or disrupts nurturing and affiliative behaviors.

This chapter is divided into five parts. The initial section will discuss the economic and social emphasis on ownership in this society. The next section will describe factors in the development of ownership behavior in young children. The question of whether or not ownership is an inherent human characteristic will be addressed. Section three will consider the effect of a system of ownership on social relationships from a conceptual perspective. In

section four the discussion will move to the relationship between ownership and the other social behaviors that are examined in this study. This analysis will include both developmental and cultural considerations in the shaping of social behavior. Finally, the fifth section will describe the purposes of this study and will include the specific hypotheses of the study which are derived from the earlier discussion.

Economic and Social Emphasis on Ownership

In this country and other capitalist nations, the means of production are owned by a small elite group of the population. Everyone else must work according to the wishes of the owners in order to earn money that will secure the necessities for livelihood. This system has stimulated technological advancement and produced wealth; yet it has also created an elemental insecurity for most of the population. The majority of the people have no guaranteed access or control over the means of survival. The economic pressures that people experience are increasingly formidable. In recent years, with the deepening economic crises in all capitalist countries, the conflict between human needs and the requirements of a profit-based economy has intensified. Standard of living and democratic freedoms are being curtailed in the face of corporate pressures. Likewise, the tensions between the private sector

and the government regulatory agencies that are charged with protecting the environment and maintaining safe working conditions have deepened (Bowles, 1978). International, intergroup and interpersonal rivalries for more of the limited resources have increased. In response to this uncertainty and insecurity, people, very rationally, try to acquire and retain as much property in the form of personal wealth and consumer goods as they can. Obviously most people gain materials of consumption, not the means of production so, in fact, these acquisitions do not provide any real or permanent security. Moreover, the obvious inequality between people's means to gain these goods adds to the economic stress of this situation.

Aside from the economic pressures, the tantalizing and frustrating promise of 'affluence for all' creates a considerable amount of psychological pressure and distress. People are constantly exposed to goods and lifestyles that are inaccessible. Moreover, since social status depends largely on the amount of property one has, there is a continuous pressure to increase personal wealth even when one's basic needs are satisfied.

> Before the judgment of the market, the consumer stands condemned to scarcity, and so to a life-sentence of hard labor. Nor is there any reprieve in acquiring things. To participate in a market economy is an inevitable tragedy; what began in inadequacy will end in deprivation. For every acquisition is simultaneously a deprivation--of something else that could have been had instead. To buy one thing is to deny yourself another . . . (Sahlins, 1971, pp. 46 & 47)

The economic and psychological pressure that this powerful combination of insecurity and tantalization exerts on social relationships becomes even more evident when alternate economic systems are studied. The field of anthropology has provided evidence that ownership is not the sole means of distributing resources and meeting human and social needs.

One of these alternatives is described by Margaret Mead (1937) in her account of the Mountain Arapesh style of distributing resources. In these small communities all of the resources, including food, land, tools, homes and building materials, were collectively used through a system of reciprocal exchange. As an illustration of this process, in order to have timber more easily re-used by others, people did not cut it to exact size when they constructed their homes. Resources were viewed as communal, not only in terms of use, but also in terms of responsibility and maintenance. Everyone in the community had access to materials and helped to take care of them.

Another example of an alternative system of distribution of resources is provided by the Iroquois society (Mead, 1937). While the tasks of clearing and cultivating the land could easily have been done individually in terms of the work and tools involved, the Iroquois did them as organized, cooperative activities. Land was the most important resource for this agricultural group, but "ownership in our sense did

not exist" (Mead, 1937, p. 248). Lands were defined by rights of use and there was no sharp distinction between those who owned and those who did not. Interestingly, many of the resources, products and tasks that Mead described were similar to those found in accounts of the European settlers in America, but there was a striking contrast between the communal efforts of the Iroquois and the isolated and competitive ventures of the Europeans.

The economic and psychological pressures to own are obvious in all facets of our society. Children growing up in this society need to learn how to own and what rules regulate this process. The following discussion articulates the specific environmental factors that influence this development.

The Development of Ownership Behavior in Young Children

Origins of Ownership. Is the tendency to own a universal and inherent human trait, or is it a reflection of the economic and social milieu of children and their families? Characteristically, social sciences take the present economic and social structures for granted and assume that they are natural and unchangeable. Theories of child development that have been authored in the Western world often assume that ownership and possessiveness are inevitable characteristics that emerge as part of everyone's personality and growth. Some writers in the earlier part

of this century referred to the "instinct of possession" (Davidson, 1928; Pallares, 1939). Ethologists have described territorial behaviors of humans as an aspect of ancient primate heritage (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1974). They point to evidence that humans and animals show strong tendencies to defend individual and group territories and to keep strangers at a distance.

As another example, some psychoanalytic theorists have supported the notion that ownership is inevitable. Isaacs (1972) claims that the urge to own, "one of the irreducible 'instincts' of original human nature" (p. 225), is rooted in the helplessness of infancy or the oral stage. The need to consume, the inability to control the environment and the subsequent denial of satisfaction is the source of the "imperious need to own" (Isaacs, 1972, p. 225). Having experienced the dependency of infancy, children feel compelled to find safety and security in owning.

Generally, psychoanalysts claim that during the anal stage the child's sense of ownership is strengthened and refined. During toilet training a child learns the power of holding and releasing (Erikson, 1963). While he develops a sense of autonomy, the child also learns that the choice of holding and releasing gives him power over the parents. According to psychoanalytic theory, the course of events at this stage determines the child's attitudes

towards possession. The roots of generosity and miserliness are established at this time (Baldwin, 1967).

While psychoanalytic theorists maintain that the characteristics of these stages are universal and inevitable (Baldwin, 1967), it is also possible to interpret them as a function of the social environment. The insecurity and helplessness that the infant feels during the oral stage (Isaacs, 1972) may be, in part, culturally specific. The isolation that most children in this society experience is noteable and may contribute to this insecurity. While providing an infant with his or her own room, bed, space and possessions is considered a positive outcome of our affluence and necessary for adequate child rearing (Spock, 1968), it does involve separation from other people. This isolation is dramatically different from the physical closeness that children in other cultures experience (Mead & Newton, 1967). Cross-cultural research offers evidence to support the notion that isolation may stimulate possessiveness. Hong and Townes (1976) found in their comparative study of children in the United States and children in Korea that the former demonstrated a much higher attachment to inanimate objects. The writers noted that the attachment to objects appeared to be inversely related to the amount of physical contact with the child's caretaker. Accounts of the Arapesh child rearing style also supports this possibility. The Arapesh infant is continuously held and

carried. In contrast to recommended child rearing patterns in this country (Spock, 1968), both parents sleep with the child until it can walk. All of the other people in the village are introduced and commended to the child as a source of warmth, food and affection. This mode of child rearing contrasts sharply with the isolated experience of American infants and may contribute to the differences in attitudes towards property between the two groups. With less reassurance, comfort and companionship available from human beings, Western children may become more attached and protective of inanimate objects and space. Social relationships may thus become secondary to involvement and concern with one's physical possessions.

The anal stage, as described in psychoanalytic literature, may also be culturally specific. According to Erikson (1963), a psychoanalytic theorist, the intense focus and power struggles that surround toilet training in this country are not common to all cultures. In fact, these struggles may be a function of the concern about control that most people feel in response to economic insecurity. If the parents feel that their economic well-being is not in their control, their subsequent anxiety may emerge as a high need to control their children's elimination processes. The anal stage appears quite differently in cultures less concerned about issues of control. In his account of the Sioux child rearing styles, Erikson

describes how the children autonomously reached gradual compliance with the social expectations without any shaming and power struggle with their parents. Erikson relates this phenomena with the fact that the Sioux do not value property except for the minimum equipment needed for survival. Property has no inherent goodness and giving is highly approved (Erikson, 1963). While Erikson supports the notion that a child's attitude towards property is derived from the anal stage, he points out the the resolution may not necessarily be possessiveness and need to own.

The opinion that ownership develops not as an inherent tendency but as a result of the interaction between the maturational process and the social environment was argued in a symposium held in 1935. A group of social scientists met at this time to discuss property and possessiveness. It is interesting to note that this symposium, which is one of the very few appearances of these topics in the psychological literature, was held during a time of economic depression. As previously discussed, many social scientists have simply assumed that these traits are innate human qualities. However, perhaps as a result of the Depression and the accompanying human hardships and social upheaval, some social scientists at this time cast a few critical looks at this economic system and its social relationships. The participants at the symposium, which was held jointly by the British Psychological Society and the Institute of

Sociology, were Ian Suttie, Morris Ginsberg, Susan Isaacs and T. H. Marshall. They addressed two major issues: how did the urge to possess develop and was it ultimately beneficial to people?

While Susan Isaacs supported the psychoanalytic view discussed previously, the other members of the panel, Suttie, Ginsberg and Marshall, focused on the interaction between social milieu and motive to acquire. They agreed that the desire to own was a composite of inherited elemental tendencies that are influenced by the mode of upbringing. The primary drives are shaped by the possibilities that the social and economic environment offers. Also, since social standing in this society is primarily dependent on the amount of property that one has accumulated, it is not surprising that there is a preoccupation with possible loss or gain of material possessions.

The question of whether or not the urge to acquire and possess is inherent may never be definitively answered. It is, however, important to challenge the assumption that it is an inevitable human characteristic. Because ownership underlies all of our social structures, it is difficult for us to articulate and examine it as a cultural influence. Certainly, all children experience the extreme dependency of infancy and the later need to regulate their elimination processes. However, societies differ in their responses to these phases of maturation. Caretakers tend

to act in accordance with their own experience and thereby train children to conform to the expectations of the society. Thus, it is reasonable to suppose that, in this society, children's behavior is influenced by the social and economic pressures to own.

"Economization" of Young Children. In this country children are born into a world of property. They learn about the importance of possessions at home, in the community and at school. Families who are at all able to afford it provide each child with his or her own bed, own room, own toys and own clothes. Lack of these accommodation constitute a "deprived environment." Even eating utensils, chairs at the table, and seats in the car are often designated as belonging to a particular member of the family. In their neighborhoods and at the playground, children learn not to give their toys away, nor to take those belonging to others. Moreover, children spend many hours watching television and are exposed to commercials which display attractive products and imply that one's happiness and self-esteem depend on possessing certain products. The recent Federal Trade Commission Report (1978) raised the concern of the effects of advertising geared towards convincing children to eat "junk" foods. The report documents the impressive volume of advertising directed towards children and the findings indicating that children are very easily impressed and swayed by such efforts. It is important

to consider that, aside from the quality of the products, children are being pressured to consume in general. Recent exposes of advertising practices have revealed the extensive efforts of producers to develop children's need for consumption. As one advertiser said, "If you get them young, you keep them" (Chagall, 1977).

In the community, early economic experiences include shopping trips where children are tantalized by fascinating, brightly colored objects, yet deprived of the chance to explore because the objects of interest do not belong to them. It is easy to see how thwarted curiosity and desire to explore readily evolve into the wish to own. Children quickly learn that owning is the most effective and feasible way to control the environment and gain satisfaction.

The role of education as a supporting and training process for the economic system has been well documented (Bowles & Gintis, 1976; Bronfenbrenner, 1970; Gumbert & Spring, 1974; Karabel & Halsey, 1977; Leacock, 1969; and Morgan, in press). Many studies have demonstrated the extent to which the schools function as a selection process that maintains the existing class structure. Obviously, the value of property is imbedded in curriculum and teaching practice. Children are explicitly instructed to "respect property" and "take pride in their own work." The rules of the classroom discourage sharing of resources and cooperative efforts (Dreeben, 1977). Generally, materials and

space are distributed so that each child has his or her own. A very common theme of children's books and dramatizations is a child's wish and efforts to acquire a particular object. Mathematics lessons often involve the theme of acquiring various amounts of property. Traditional classroom activities, such as "Show and Tell," reflect and support the economic reality that ownership and property are sources of self-esteem, popularity and power.

> The crippling of individuals, I consider the worst evil of capitalism. Our whole educational system suffers from this evil. An exaggerated compulsive attitude is inculcated into the student, who is trained to worship acquisitive success as a preparation for his future career. (Einstein, 1949, p. 14)

Summary. Private ownership is a basic characteristic of our social and economic system. As indicated by anthropological studies, it is not a universal means of distributing resources. However, the dominance of ownership in our society means that it permeates our relationships to the physical and social environment. Members of this society are constantly exposed to inaccessible resources and promises of affluence. At the same time, they have no guaranteed access to the means of production and survival. This tantalization and lack of security create insatiable needs and deeply felt anxieties.

Given the pressure of this environment, it is not surprising that children incorporate the value of ownership from their very earliest moments. Their world is organized

by property; they learn at an early age what they have access to and what they are denied. The frustration of not having access to many resources that they see on television and in stores further stimulates the desire to own. The educational system in turn promotes property orientation by evaluating children on the basis of their possessions and by covertly and overtly instilling a belief in ownership. While some theorists might argue that the desire to own is an inevitable human characteristic, it can also be viewed as a rational response to a property oriented society.

The Impact of Ownership on Social Relationships: Conceptual and Theoretical Considerations

In the preceding sections the prevalence and power of ownership has been established. Now the focus of the discussion will move to a consideration of how this acquisitiveness affects social relationships.

In 1844, Karl Marx wrote the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts which included discussions on the relationship of private property and alienated labor. In this work, Marx developed the argument that the structure of private property alienates man from nature, from himself, from his spiritual life and from other members of his species. Tawney (1920) pointed out that the "Acquisitive Society," his term for Western industrialized societies, promotes a preoccupation with the accumulation of wealth in which social concerns and obligations are relegated to low

priorities. People are encouraged, and, in some cases, forced, to focus on their own ends and desires with no regard for the welfare of others.

Eric Fromm (1976) echoed those thoughts in his work, _To Have or To Be?_ He describes two potential modes for interacting with the social and physical world: the "having mode" and the "being mode." The "having mode," which Fromm sees as dominant in the present social and economic system, is a reflection of the underlying conviction that "I am what I have." In this orientation, people respond to the world in terms of consumption, desire to control, fear of loss and drive to compete. The "being mode," in contrast, reflects the underlying conviction that "I am what I am" and is characterized by inner motivation to actively explore and enjoy the environment. Since one is not driven by fear of loss, one can participate in the social world in a sharing and concerned way. The "having mode" separates people and creates conflicts; the "being mode" is a unifying influence. Fromm feels that the acquisitive thrust of the capitalist societies has brought humankind to the edge of ecological and psychological disaster because it forces people to relate to the natural and social world in an exploitive manner.

These concerns were also echoed in the 1935 panel discussion described earlier. Suttie, Ginsberg and Marshall all referred to "social anxiety," the fear of isolation and

powerlessness, as the internal force that stimulates the need to own. However, they all agreed that the competitiveness of the present system diminished any security that one might derive from one's property. Suttie pointed out that in the present system one sought to secure social standing with others by obtaining and maintaining the power to give or withhold resources. He pointed out that this system forces people to want not only what they need, but also what others' need, too. In contrast, the collectivist, according to Suttie, seeks social security through social integration. All three panelists talked about the fact that this system of private property diminishes trust and cooperation among people.

The exclusive nature of ownership inevitably creates conflict. Interpersonally, one individual's gain is another's loss. Similarly, on a larger scale, the advancement of one group is at the expense of another. Each individual is engaged in a struggle for ownership as it is the only means to control one's environment. This inherent conflict limits the unifying and caring aspects of social relationships and stimulates the hostile, aggressive and competitive aspects of relationships.

Ownership and Other Social Behaviors

The discussion will now move to a closer analysis of the specific behaviors that will be studied. The point that ownership inhibits unifying social behaviors and stimulates alienating ones has been established in the preceding sections. In order to investigate these patterns empirically, it is necessary to identify specific behaviors that they manifest.

The five types of social behavior that are the focus of this study are ownership involvement, prosocial behavior, affiliative behavior, aggression and competition. Ownership involvement includes behaviors that are means to defending, claiming or disputing exclusive rights over property. Prosocial behavior, which includes sharing, helping and comforting, is used as an indicator of awareness and responsiveness to others' needs and feelings. Affiliative behavior, comprised of social reciprocity, inclusiveness and affection, is a measure of involvement, enjoyment and interest in interpersonal contact. In this study, prosocial and affiliative behaviors are considered the unifying elements in social relationships. Aggression, defined as physical and verbal efforts to hurt or intimidate others, is a measure of hostility and disregard for the well-being of others. Competitive behaviors, attempts to achieve recognition or mastery at the expense of another child, are measures of rivalry and opposition among the

children. Aggression and competition are considered alienating and separating elements in human relationships.

Prosocial Behaviors and Ownership. In recent years there has been a surge of research on altruism and prosocial behavior, both in children and adults. Prosocial behavior is defined as actions that benefit others while usually requiring some form of self-sacrifice from the actor (Midlarski, 1968; Staub, 1971).

The concept of altruism as an element in human nature is not new. In 1902, Kropotkin wrote Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution in which he traced the existence of mutual aid throughout the animal kingdom and the different periods of human civilization. Current ethological research has also supported these findings (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1974). Kropotkin (1955) maintains that, despite the efforts of employers, the state and the industrial complexes, mutual aid and group solidarity are still evident. Krebs (1970), who has reviewed the current literature on altruism, echoes this notion in his assertion that the existence of altruism challenges the assumptions that mankind is essentially egoistic which underlie the reinforcement, psychoanalytic and evolutionary theories. The idea that there is the potential for human beings to develop prosocially has stimulated a great deal of investigation about relevant environmental and personality factors in this development.

Most of these studies have occurred in laboratory settings and have attempted to identify personality traits and conditions that are conducive to prosocial behaviors. Conditions that have been studied include the affective states of the donor and the beneficiary, the effects of modelling, preaching, role-playing and social approval. Developmental considerations, such as the level of role-taking skills, the cognitive sense of self and the maturity of moral judgment, have also been studied. Personality variables, such as assertiveness, need for social approval and dependency, have been investigated. Many of the results have offered contradictory evidence, but a few major trends have emerged. Of particular interest here is the fact that, while children tend to become more altruistic as they grow older--as one would expect from the development of their capacities to understand others' point of view (Flavell, 1974; Flavell, Botkin & Fry, 1968; Piaget, 1932)--they also incorporate social attitudes that mitigate against altruistic actions. The ethics of reward deservedness and competition may attenuate prosocial behaviors despite the increased abilities to recognize others' needs (Bryan, 1975). Ironically, individual reward systems and token economies that are designed to promote positive social behavior, but are competitively administered, may, in fact, be working against the development of cooperation, sharing and helping (Bryan, 1975). No studies have yet directly examined the

relationship between ownership and prosocial behavior. However, there are suggestions that the highly individualistic, competitive and acquisitive social climate of the United States may stifle the development of prosocial behaviors, despite educational efforts and social sanctions (Bryan, 1975; Hoffman, 1975; Yarrow, Scott & Waxler, 1973). These indications support the prediction that ownership is negatively correlated with prosocial behavior.

Evidence from cross-cultural psychological research offers some support to this notion. In an observational study of Kibbutz children in Israel, Faigin (1958) reported that, in this collective environment where personal property was minimal, the children themselves emphasized the need to share. She noted a striking contrast between the admonishments of Israeli children to share and the American children's attitude of "That's mine, I had it first!" (p. 123).

In the Whitings' Children of Six Cultures (1975), which was also based on naturalistic observations, the American children sought help and attention much more frequently than their counterparts in other cultural groups. Moreover, they less frequently offered support, help and responsible suggestions than the other groups in the study. These findings are probably indicative of the kinds of responsibilities and expectations the adult world has of the children. Unlike their counterparts in other societies, children here are not expected to take care of their younger

siblings. Rather, they are expected to compete and achieve in school in preparation for succeeding in the world of work. Also, they face an impersonal, large scale society, not a close and familiar social environment. In order to gain support and recognition under these circumstances, they need to actively seek help and attention. Again, the training required to gain a foothold in this economic system embodies the conflict and competition with others; whereas helping and supporting others are clearly secondary considerations.

The educational practice and school behaviors in Cuba sharply contrast with this school achievement orientation (Leiner, 1974). Collectivism and social relationships are emphasized; individual attention and a feeling of superiority are considered damaging to one's personality development. The key elements of Cuban education are sharing and developing a collective conscience, a sense of responsibility, a capacity for self-discipline and a respect for work. Children are constantly admonished to consider the welfare of the group.

Emphasis on individual achievement, competition and exclusive ownership inhibits children's capacity to help, share and show concern. Prosocial behaviors require a mutuality of interest; ownership on the other hand embodies a conflict of interest.

Affiliative Behavior. Affiliative behaviors are actions and words that intend to draw one person closer to another. Unlike prosocial behaviors, they are not premised on one person attempting to meet the emotional or physical needs of another. Rather, they are expressions of desire or willingness to participate in sociable play or work.

The effectiveness of one's sociable efforts is, in part, a function of role-taking skills and social knowledge as indicated by various studies (Rardin & Moan, 1971; Rothenberg, 1970). In general, higher levels of role-taking were related to higher ratings of popularity. However, this is not a linearly causal relationship (Rothenberg, 1970; Rubin, 1973). In fact, rather strong indications that the relationship between social knowledge and social effectiveness is a reciprocally interactive one emerged in a study done by Jennings (1975). Another related influence is the level of social skills, which includes, besides role-taking abilities, knowledge about how to make friends and the willingness to give positive reinforcement to others (Gottman, Gonso & Rasmussen, 1975). While social effectiveness depends largely on maturation and social experience, affiliative intentions must arise from feelings of affection, anticipation of pleasure in the interaction and trust in the other person or people. As discussed previously, the struggle to possess creates a conflict of interest that isolates and alienates people from one another.

When one is feeling protective and concerned about potential loss, other people appear threatening and intrusive. Affection is displaced by fear; anticipation of pleasure becomes a preparation for defense; and a trusting attitude becomes a threatened stance. Likewise, when one wants to gain at the expense of another, the target person is regarded as an impediment and/or a potential object of exploitation. Association with the other is viewed, not as a source of mutual pleasure, but as a struggle.

One expression of ownership in relation to affiliation is the concept of possessing other people. This tendency is more pronounced in our society than many others (Baldwin, 1967). In an open-ended observational study of Polynesian and European pre-schools in New Zealand, Graves (1974) found that Polynesian children tended to be more inclusive in their relationships with their peers than their European counterparts. The former group made efforts to incorporate others into a play situation; whereas the latter expressed the feeling of "You can only be <u>my</u> friend." One observation of a Polynesian boy playing with a European girl in a predominately European setting highlights this contrast. As the boy invites others to join their play, the girl pushes them away and bars them from entering a shared box. Then, when he agrees to be friends with two European children, they, in turn, vie for the exclusive right to his friendship. In her descriptions Graves noted

that the teachers and parents from the different cultural groups were clearly encouraging the two different modes of interaction, both in their explicit instructions and in the style of social interactions that they themselves modelled. The distribution of materials in the two settings both reflects and supports the respective social goals for each group. In the European setting, the children had their own cubbies that held their personal possessions, wash cloths and towels. For snacks each child served him or herself at a small table, picking out his or her own designated glass from a tea tray. In contrast, the Polynesian center had a common basin and towel that all the children used and snack was served during a group singing time.

Some groups have a clearly articulated goal to promote group interests and solidarity. In terms of their educational practice, a major consideration has been the prevention of ownership orientation. In Bronfenbrenner's (1970) comparison of American and Soviet child rearing styles, based on observations and interviews, he described how Soviet teachers ignored struggles over materials and lavishly praised children who were sharing. The Hutterites, the largest family-type communal group in North America, depend for their existence on strong group loyalties and the ability to work together (Hostetler & Huntington, 1967). One of the most rigorous aspects of their child rearing practice is their kindergarten which characteristically has no

equipment or toys at all. The Hutterites feel that toys cause fighting and break down group relationships; the children are expected to learn how to work and play together during their early years (Hostetler & Huntington, 1967). Descriptions of pre-schools in China and Cuba are rich in descriptions of activities and teaching practice that support group and cooperative involvement (Karlson, 1977; Leiner, 1974). Space, materials and equipment are not distributed to individual children but are available to be used communally. The primary emphasis is on group activities, such as plays and team sports, rather than individual work with materials. Consideration for the welfare of the group is far more supported than individual efforts and accomplishments and development of group cohesion is stressed.

Cooperation and Competition. Cooperation is a reciprocal interaction in which a common goal supersedes individual aims. Competition, on the other hand, is a rivalrous relationship in which the success of the individuals is paramount. In team efforts, such as sports, intragroup cooperation and intergroup competition often occur simultaneously.

As with other affiliative behaviors, the effectiveness of one's efforts to cooperate depends in part on the level of role-taking skills and level of social knowledge (Flavell et al., 1968; Hudson, Peyton & Brion-Meisels, 1976).

However, the desire to cooperate emerges from attitudes of trust in the other person(s) and a willingness to subordinate one's own gain to the group effort. Competition arises from the desire to outdo another person; to gain at the expense of another. As previously discussed, the urge to own often evokes competition and rarely stimulates cooperation. One cannot simultaneously gain exclusive control over an object and use it conjointly with another.

Several studies have been done on the dimension of cooperation and competition. Many of these studies have involved having groups of children play games or complete tasks under varying conditions. The fact that this dimension of behavior is malleable emerges in both the theoretical and empirical literature. Several studies have indicated that, for both adults and children, the condition of group rewards increases the affection and cooperation among members of the group. Individual rewards, on the other hand, increases competition (Crockenberg, Bryant & Wilce, 1976). Therefore, it is expected that societies that place group gain over individual gain would produce children that are more cooperative in group situations. In a comparison of Mexican children and children of the United States, Kagan and Madsen (1971) demonstrated that the U.S. children compete more readily even when the situation is structured so that they "lose" when the compete and "win" when they cooperate. In a study of Polynesian and European groups,

using the Madsen Cooperation Board, Thomas (1975) found that the former were more cooperative than the latter. The Polynesian children appeared to approach the task with a readiness to assume a cooperative, trusting social orientation. As previously described, the explicit and implicit directions of the teachers and the distribution of materials in the Polynesian classrooms supported more inclusive and collective interactions, which probably contribute to this capacity to cooperate.

While cooperation and competition are dichotomies, they do occur simultaneously in cooperative competition. Team sports and other forms of group competition illustrate this phenomenon. In a classic study of the formation and functioning of group structures (Sherif & Sherif, 1956), it was found that a common goal solidified groups even though the previous attachments were to children outside of the groups. When two close-knit groups were brought into contact, the high level of rivalry and negative stereotyping between the two groups was striking. While young children's relationships tend to be fluid rather than solidified, rudiments of this pattern occur in the cooperative exclusion of others.

Aggression. The origins of aggression are the subject of considerable debate. The psychoanalytic view is that aggression is instinctive (Freud, 1959), and therefore an inevitable trait that must be inhibited by training. This

theory is supported by some of the ethological studies. Lorenz (1966) describes the "fighting instinct" in both animals and humans. Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1974) points out that aggressive tendencies develop in the widest possible variety of educational and child rearing circumstances. However, he emphasizes that they are developed to a greater or lesser extent according to social controls and expectations. The social learning theorists, on the other hand, claim that aggression is socially determined (Bandura, 1973). People learn to be aggressive because it is valued, rewarded and modeled by their social group. The social learning theorists point to the different temperaments of various social groups as support for their view. In some societies interpersonal aggression is discouraged, and the people live peaceably. In other groups aggression is valued and children are raised to be warriors. The amount of fighting, threatening and killing in these groups is high. The differences among Native American groups provide an illustration of this point. The Apache and the Comanche tribes raised their children as warriors; whereas the Hopi and Zuni people were peaceful and reared children with gentle dispositions (Bandura, 1973).

In many cases aggression is related to ownership concerns. If two people or two groups are struggling to gain control over a particular resource, overt or covert aggression quickly becomes employed in order to intimidate

or eliminate the rivals. Unequal distribution of resources often evokes frustration which, in turn, has been linked to aggression (Berkowitz, 1962; Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer & Sears, 1939). The ethologists, despite their conviction that aggression is innate (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1974), partially concur as they see a causative relationship between deprivation and increased aggression. Bandura (1973) notes that it is the combination of inequitable deprivation and the belief of rightfully deserving that is most conducive to aggressive actions. The riots of the late 1960's illustrate this point. When poor people realized the extent to which they had been unfairly excluded from the nation's resources, they reacted with violence. It is important to note that deprivation alone is not a particularly strong predictor of aggression. It is most highly associated with increased expectations and subsequent loss or disappointment (Bandura, 1973). This finding supports the notion that the constant tantalization by inaccessible goods, which is characteristic of the market economy, may contribute significantly to the level of agression in this country.

In sum, the behavioral measures examined in this study include prosocial and affiliative behaviors that imply unification among people and aggression and competition that indicate and create separation. How these types of behavior relate to ownership concerns is the primary question in this study.

Purposes of a Study of Ownership in Young Children's Social Interactions

The central purpose of this study is the empirical examination of the dimensions of ownership and its behavioral correlates in a microcosm, in this case a classroom of young children. Because pre-school children are experiencing their initial school experience and, usually, their earliest extensive peer relationships, they are the obvious subjects for a study of the development of ownership and its role in very early social relationships. As children make the shift from the family environment to the school one, they need to learn about the social rules and expectations and the negotiation of space, objects and people. What are their early ownership behaviors; how prevalent are they in social interactions and how do they relate to other social behaviors are the questions this study attempts to answer.

Types and Frequencies of Ownership Behavior in Young Children. The various forms and frequencies of ownership behavior have been examined in order to gain some understanding of the overall dimensions of this phenomenon. The outcomes of ownership episodes have also been tabulated to determine the kinds of social behavior ownership stimulates.

The distribution of ownership behaviors over the whole sample has also been analyzed. The question of

whether there is a fairly normal distribution of ownership involvements over the sample or a dichotomous distribution of highly ownership oriented children and less ownership oriented children has been considered.

Environmental factors have also been examined. The data have been studied for environmental indices that appear to have a particularly high number of ownership events associated with them. Factors such as location, type of activity, number of other children and amount and type of materials have been considered.

There are two types of questions regarding the behavior associated with ownership. First, what are individual differences among the sample and are there personality traits that are associated with high or low ownership orientation? Secondly, the question of how ownership episodes function as situational factors is considered. In other words, to what extent does ownership orientation define personality types and what is the association between ownership episodes and other immediate social behaviors?

Behavioral Patterns Correlated with Level of Ownership Orientation in Individual Children. As previously argued, ownership issues promote antagonistic social interactions and inhibit unifying social responses (Fromm, 1976; Marx, 1967; Suttie et al., 1935). Therefore, it has been hypothesized that these behavioral patterns would emerge in

individual children in the following ways:

1. highly ownership oriented children less frequently respond to others' needs in a prosocial manner;
2. highly ownership oriented children make fewer affilitative overtures and are less sociable than other children;
3. highly ownership oriented children show more aggression in social interactions than low ownership children;
4. highly ownership oriented children are more competitive in their interactions than low ownership children.

There are some empirical studies that support these hypotheses. In one investigation, children (aged 11) revealed a significant correlation between high self-gratification and low social sensitivity (Fry, 1976). The correlation between ownership and competition was suggest in Rutherford and Mussen's (1968) study in which they found under laboratory conditions that "nongenerous" boys displayed more competitive behavior than the "generous" boys. The present study predicts the same constellation of behaviors in naturally occurring events.

Variation by Age. Since all the subjects are pre-school children, the age range is limited. Thus, little or no difference between the younger group and older group has been predicted. The frequency and type of prosocial behaviors is not expected to differ by age. In one study

(Yarrow & Waxler, 1976) with a broader range of ages (3.0 - 7.6) it was noted that there was no significant change in prosocial responses according to age. Those authors speculated that, while older children had more skill to react prosocially (competence, capacity for role-taking, etc.), this development was countered by the social and cultural emphasis on individual achievement and competition.

Likewise, given the small age range, it has also been predicted that there will be no significant variations in frequency and types of ownership behavior between the older and the younger groups. In Dawe's study (1934) she noted that between the ages of 18 months and 5 years there was a shift from quarrels over possessions to quarrels over social adjustment (ownership of people). It has been predicted that there might be a slight shift from ownership of objects to ownership of people between the early and late 3 year olds, but not one of significance.

Variations by Sex. It has been hypothesized that girls demonstrate significantly more prosocial behavior than boys. One review of the literature (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974) concluded that, in terms of prosocial behaviors, there were no significant differences between the sexes at the pre-school age. However, many studies demonstrate a tendency for girls to have a higher frequency of prosocial behavior than boys. A series of cross-cultural studies (Whiting & Edwards, 1973) revealed a consistent pattern of girls

responding more prosocially, particularly in cultures where they worked as sibling caretakers. While in this country children rarely assume the caretaking role, girls are overtly and covertly encouraged to become prepared for parenthood, which requires skills in nurturing. Likewise, boys are influenced to become more aggressive and dominant in order to succeed in the competitive business world (Mischel, 1970). It is reasonable to suppose that the expectations of these future roles increase prosocial behavior in girls and decrease it in boys.

As a corollary, it has been predicted that boys initiate more ownership disputes than girls. Again, if future work roles are considered, boys are generally expected to be dominant and aggressive. Since ownership is a means to gain control, it is logical to assume that it would appear more frequently in boys. Some empirical evidence supports this prediction. In Dawe's study (1934), more of the boys' quarrels involved possessions than the girls' quarrels did.

Behavioral Differences in Ownership and Nonownership Interactions. Because of the alienating effect that ownership has on social relationships, it has been hypothesized that all the subjects, whether or not they are highly ownership oriented, are less friendly and concerned and more antagonistic in interactions that involve an ownership episode. Conversely, all subjects are more prosocial

and affiliative and less aggressive and competitive in interactions that do not have any ownership episodes. In other words, an "ownership state of mind" influences the immediate behavior. When children become involved with obtaining particular objects or feel threatened by possible loss, they are likely to respond less sociably and more antagonistically. Thus, it has been predicted that the following relationships exist:

1. in interactions that involve an ownership episode children show proportionately fewer prosocial behaviors than in nonownership episodes;
2. in interactions that include an ownership episode children demonstrate proportionately fewer affiliative behaviors than they do in nonownership interactions;
3. in interactions that involve an ownership episode children are proportionately more aggressive than they are in nonownership interactions;
4. in interactions that involve an ownership episode children behave more competitively than they do in nonownership interactions.

In addition to the theoretical constructs discussed earlier, there are some empirical studies that support these hypotheses. Several studies involving college students found that, when a high state of self-concern is induced, the subjects' willingness and abilities to help another person drop significantly (Berkowitz, 1970). Helen Dawe's study

(1934) of young children's quarrels disclosed that over half of the observed quarrels involved possessions. This finding supports the prediction that ownership oriented social interactions are more likely to involve aggression than those that are not ownership oriented.

These hypotheses reflect the central theses that ownership is a major factor in young children's social interactions and that its presence as an individual trait and as a situational factor has an alienating effect on social behavior. If we assume that a classroom of young children provides a valid microcosm of the larger social environment, then this study should offer some insights into the development and associated social patterns of ownership involvement in this society.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Subjects of the Study

The subjects of the study were 20 children who attended the University Day School, a campus day care center and laboratory school at the University of Massachusetts. There were 10 boys and 10 girls; both groups had a mean age of 3.5 years. The children were divided into younger and older groups of boys and girls. The characteristics of the sample are summarized in Table 2.1.

All of the children were in the same classroom at the University Day School. The 20 subjects were selected from a class of 27 on the basis of age and sex distribution.

Setting

There are some unique features about this classroom which should be mentioned. The classroom is staffed by 10 student teachers who work in groups of five. On any given day, five teachers work with the children, while the other five observe, confer with their faculty supervisor and plan for the following day. There is no permanent head teacher in the classroom. This role is assumed by each of the 10

Table 2.1: Characteristics of the Sample
N = 20

Characteristic		Value
Range of Age		2.9 - 4.5 years
Mean Age		3.5 years
Mean Age of Younger Boys		3.1 years
Mean Age of Younger Girls		3.1 years
Mean Age of Older Boys		3.8 years
Mean Age of Older Girls		3.8 years
Number of All Day Children	13	
Number of Half Day Children	7	
Mothers' Occupations	8	Students
	3	Homemakers
	1	Manual worker
	3	Clerical workers
	5	Professionals
Fathers' Occupations	9	Students
	3	Manual workers
	1	Clerical worker
	4	Professionals
	3	Unknown
Family Structure	16	Lived with both parents
	3	Lived with mother
	1	Split time between mother and father
Sibling Order	14	Only children
	3	Oldest children
	0	Middle children
	3	Youngest children
Mean Number of Children in Families of Subjects	1.2	

students on a week-by-week basis. The students are closely supervised by a member of the faculty and a graduate teaching assistant. The classroom is characterized by a high ratio of adults to children and by a shifting group of student teachers.

Thirteen of the subjects are at the school all day. All the data, however, were collected during the morning sessions.

Observational Data

Each subject was observed in 12 spontaneously occurring peer social interactions over a period of four weeks. "Social interaction" was operationally defined as "an episode in which two or more children were verbally or physically involved with each other." Specifically, interactions included conversations, physical contact and simultaneous use of equipment or space with some verbal or physical exchange. The interaction was begun at the point at which one child indicated awareness of the other one by eye contact, verbal exchange, response to the other's actions or physical contact. It was considered terminated when either party physically left or stopped responding to the other child. The observations continued for the duration of the social interaction so defined or until a period of five minutes elapsed.

Observers. The observers were 12 undergraduate students in early childhood education. These students were experienced in observational methods. Each had previously completed a course in Child Study Observation. Earlier in the semester they each had observed and assessed three children in the classroom. Nine of the 12 students were the student teachers in the classroom; three worked as assistant supervisors.

Observational Procedure. Each observer performed one observation of each subject in one social interaction. In order to reduce the tendency to selectively seek the specified behaviors, the observers were instructed to blindly select three children's cards from their deck of 20 names. They then observed the first social interaction that they saw that involved any of the three specified subjects. The reason for selecting three names instead of one was to prevent an observer from spending an extended period of time watching a child who was engrossed in a solitary or teacher-directed activity.

The observers recorded the actions of the subjects during the social interaction in running record form. Immediately following the observations, the observers filled in any missing details on the running records and then coded the subjects' behaviors on the coding sheet which can be found in Appendix I. As suggested by Gellert (1955), this combination of running records and coding was

used in order to have access to the actual events, yet, at the same time, generate quantifiable data.

<u>Training of Observers</u>. The observers had been trained in the running record form of observation in their prior course work. For this study, they were trained to use the coding sheet through the following procedures:

1. As a group, the observers and the investigator discussed the coding sheet in detail. Each of the behaviors was discussed and enacted with members of the group. Distinctions among the various behaviors were clarified through questions and discussions.
2. The whole group then watched video tapes of two social interactions. They recorded and coded the behaviors in the manner described above. Results were compared and discussed; distinctions among the various behaviors were further clarified.
3. Three more video tapes were shown. With each tape, the observers recorded and coded the behaviors with no discussion. After each coding, questions were raised. After the final tape, 80% agreement was achieved by the whole group. The percentage of agreement was computed by dividing the total number of agreements by the total number of agreements and disagreements.
4. The observers then observed in the classroom in groups of four or five. The investigator was included in these groups. They practiced the recording and coding

in a live classroom situation. It was difficult to achieve an acceptable level of reliability in this situation. In order not to crowd the children, the observers had to be placed in a variety of positions in relationship to the subjects. As a result, each observer heard and saw different amounts and segments of the interaction. In addition, the observers felt that, despite their efforts to be unobtrusive, the presence of four or five attentive adults affected the children's behavior. Although acceptable reliability was not achieved on these occasions, the practice sessions did serve to further clarify behavioral distinctions and observational guidelines.

5. The observers then observed in successive pairs. One pair observed and coded until a minimum of 80% reliability was achieved. Then each member of that pair would observe with another person and so on until each person achieved 80% reliability with at least two other people. The training was concluded at that point.

Continuing Check of Reliability. During the four weeks of data collection, each observer performed five simultaneous observations with other observers.* Reliability for each observation was determined by dividing the number of

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*Because of absences due to illness, one observer was only able to do three simultaneous observations and two others were only able to do four.

agreements by the total of agreements and disagreements. The percentage of agreements ranged from 80% to 100% except for one at 66%. The mean level of agreement was 90.6%. Disagreements were articulated and discussed with the observers and the investigator. Through an inquiry process, discrepancies in perceptions and interpretations were discussed by the observers involved. Once the issues were clarified, they were discussed by the whole group.

In addition, the investigator read and checked the observations and the codings on a daily basis and watched for indications of coder drift or misunderstanding. Since the group of observers met on a daily basis as part of their student teaching program, any issues and disagreements about the coding were raised and discussed with the whole group.

Coding System. The coding system was designed for this study. The categories were derived from previous studies, developmental knowledge and field testing. Section I, "Ownership Episodes," was drawn from preliminary observations of behaviors that involved excluding others from use of resources--the definition of ownership used in this study. The categories were field tested and modified several times. The first four items were measures of ownership involvement. "Initiates dispute" referred to instances when a child, by asking, demanding or attempting to take an object or space, made a claim that was verbally or physically challenged by the current possessor. "Claims

with no dispute" was noted when a child requested, demanded or took an object and the current possessor complied, left or offered no resistance. "Excludes others from group or space" referred to instances when a child barred another one from entering an interaction or a space. "Defends property" was indicated when a child, verbally or physically, protected a space or an object already in his or her possession from a real or perceived claim of another child. In all cases these involvements could be verbal, physical or both. They were so designated on the coding sheet (Appendix I). If a child was an inactive target of any of these behaviors, it was so indicated on the scoring sheet but not counted as part of a child's "active involvements in ownership episodes" score.

Items 5 through 11 were the possible outcomes of ownership episodes. Two possible events were "winning," when the subject gained or retained control over the disputed object and the other child left or conceded, and "yielding," when the subject lost the object by leaving or letting the other child have it. Both of these outcomes involved the exclusion of one (or more) persons from the objects of dispute. Another outcome was "exchanges," which was indicated when the parties involved in a dispute resolved it by trading objects or bargaining for use of an object. "Leaves situation as a result of dispute or loss" was marked if the subject's departure was clearly

precipitated by loss or conflict involving ownership. Other possible outcomes included the intervention of a teacher, either spontaneously or at the request of one of the children in the dispute. Item 12, "inquiries about ownership," referred to instances when a child asked who owned an object but in no way indicated a wish or intention to gain control of it. The objects of the claims or disputes were categorized by "inanimate object," "person" or "space" and named. Also, the observers were instructed to record any utterances that indicated some concept of ownership rules.

Section II, "Prosocial Behavior," was similarly based on observation and field testing. The general categories of "comforting," "helping" and "sharing" were taken from Yarrow and Waxler's study (1976). These three categories were further refined into seven items in order to provide more specific behavioral categories and thereby increase the accuracy of the coding. Items in Murphy's study of sympathetic behavior in young children (1937) were used in this refinement. There were four helping measures. "Helps other" included any actions or statements that aided another's efforts to gain a desired goal, object or social response. "Encourages other" indicated verbal reassurance and support. "Seeks help for other" referred to instances when the subject, unable to effectively help, sought help by getting a teacher or another child to lend a hand.

Finally, "contributes to social problem solving" indicated a child's efforts to resolve a conflict between two or more children. The sharing item referred to a child's willingness to either temporarily or permanently let someone else take an object or space that the child initially had. This behavior was distinct from "yielding in an ownership dispute" since the object was rendered willingly, and the transaction was not seen as a loss. The comforting measure was comprised of "expressing concern," which were statements and actions that indicated an awareness and sympathetic response to another child's need or distress, and "comforting," which referred to efforts to make the child feel better with affection or diversion.

Section III, "Affiliative Behavior," was similarly developed from observation, field testing and modification. Some of the categories were drawn from those used by the Whitings (1975) in their cross-cultural studies of children. "Initiates interactions" referred to a child's efforts to engage another child by asking a question, making a statement or touching. "Responds to overture from another" was noted when the subject acknowledged and accepted an invitation, greeting or approach from another child. The variable of including consisted of "greets other," which designated welcoming words and gestures and recognition of another's arrival, and "invites other(s) to join," which included attempts to draw another child into the group, activity or

area. The cooperative variable included both "suggesting and participating in a reciprocal/cooperative arrangement." These indices noted efforts to initiate and maintain an activity in which turns, roles and materials were exchanged in a mutually beneficial manner. The friendliness variable included "shows affection," which referred to hugging, kissing, patting and other gestures indicating warmth, and "promises friendship," which was the verbal counterpart. "Imitates or follows" was noted when a child replicated another's actions in an effort to make contact or be included.

Section IV, "Non-Interactive Play," was based solely on the investigator's observations and field testing. The items in this section were not used in the data analysis. This section was included to account for some behaviors not specified in the other parts of the instrument. I reasoned that such a provision would reduce the temptation to force observed actions into the other categories.

Section V, "Aggressive Behavior," was drawn, in part, from categories used by the Whitings (1975), Goodenough (1931) and Dawe (1934), and from the preliminary observations. Serious aggression included all efforts to intimidate or injure another child with actions such as hitting, kicking, pushing, threatening with a gesture and destroying another's possession or project. It also included verbal statements that were threatening, taunting or humiliating

in some way. Playful aggression, which was not used in the data analysis, included roughhousing and teasing. Laughter, smiles and other signs of enjoyment were used as indices to distinguish playful aggression from serious aggression.

The items in Section VI, "Competitive Behavior," were drawn from previous studies of competition (Crockenberg et al., 1976; Thomas, 1975) and my own observations. The behaviors included belittling another's size, accomplishment, ability and possessions or trying to outdo the other with the intention of gaining recognition at the other's expense.

The Coding Process. The coding process included noting the names of the subject and the observer, the date of the observation, the times of the beginning and ending of the interaction (each observer had a stop watch or a watch with a second hand), the activity the children were involved in, the location in the classroom, the types and amounts of materials that were in use and, finally, the number of other children and the presence or absence of a teacher. In all cases the observers were asked to be as specific as possible. In the later coding, the activities, location and materials were organized by more generic categories. The observers then indicated which behaviors had occurred. If a child had performed with a physical action, a "P" was noted by that specific behavior. If the behavior was verbal, then a "V" was indicated. If it included both verbal and physical

involvement, then a "VP" was marked by the specific behavior. In cases where a child was the target of a particular gesture or overture from another child, it was indicated with an "R." The "R" codes were not considered as part of that subject's behavioral summary. This procedure was slightly different in the final two sections, "Aggressive Behavior" and "Competitive Behavior." These behaviors were already broken down between physical and verbal interactions and instead, the observers were asked to distinguish between "ownership" and "nonownership" related behaviors. The notation of "R" was still used in these sections. The notational system was designed to capture as much detail as possible without being too complicated and burdensome for the observers.

Teacher Ratings

To provide another perspective on the behavior of the subjects and to have some measure of the validity of the observed behavior, the teachers of the children were asked to rate them.

Rating Dimensions and Procedures. The children's teachers were asked to rate them on the following dimensions: ownership orientation, aggressiveness, competitiveness, affiliativeness, helpfulness, sharing and concern for others. The 12 teachers (who were also the observers) were asked to designate the three "highest" and the three "lowest"

children for each category. Scores for the children were derived from the number of high or low ratings each one received in the different categories.

The fact that the same people provided both the observational data and the ratings is a source of contamination in the data. It should be noted, therefore, that the ratings were viewed as impressionistic and not heavily relied upon in the overall statistical analysis.

Administration. The rating scales were administered over a two week period in order to diminish potential confounding as a result of a "halo effect." Initially, the dimensions of "ownership orientation," "affiliativeness" and "helpfulness" were administered. Four days later the dimensions of "aggressiveness" and "sharing" were measured. Finally, after another four days, "competitiveness" and "concern for others" were assessed. When the teachers were given the rating forms, I operationally defined the terms as follows. For the dimension of "ownership orientation," the teachers were asked to think of the children who were most frequently (or least frequently) engaged in excluding others or defending, claiming or disputing objects, people or space in the classroom. "Affiliativeness" was defined as the children's tendency to seek out other children, respond to their overtures, include others in their play, establish cooperative interactions, or follow others with the intention of joining them. The

teachers were also asked to consider social ease and enjoyment in their ratings for this dimension. "Helpfulness" was described as the willingness to aid others either by request or spontaneously. The items for this dimension on the observational coding sheet were defined as they were earlier in this chapter. "Aggressiveness" was defined as the tendency to hurt or intimidate others either physically or verbally. The items on the coding sheet under this category were described. For the dimension of "sharing" the teachers were asked to think of children who were more (or less) likely to willingly offer an object that they had to someone else even though it involved some sacrifice. "Competitiveness" was defined as the concern with outdoing others, belittling them or trying to achieve recognition at their expense. Finally, "concern for others" was described as the level of awareness and responsiveness to others' needs as demonstrated through verbal and physical attempts to comfort and show sympathy. The teachers then completed the rating forms with no discussion. At each rating session, the teachers were given lists of all the subjects in an effort to increase the possibility of each subject being equally considered and to, thereby, mitigate the disproportionate impact of recent events.

Prosocial Assessment Procedure

Rationale. Prosocial behavior is defined as a response to another's need(s). It is stimulated, to a large degree, by the needs and expectations of others. A child might have the willingness and intention to respond prosocially, but, if no opportunity arises, then this potential would not emerge (Murphy, 1937).

There are some aspects of pre-schools in general, and the University Day School in particular, that might limit the number of opportunities for prosocial responses. The fact that the children are all the same age means that their social, motor and cognitive skills are at approximately the same level. Therefore, the amount of peer helping is somewhat limited. Also, the less experienced student teachers at the University Day School tend to respond very readily and nurturingly to the needs of the children. They are less likely to ask for help or to encourage children to help each other. In addition, the high ratio of adults to children probably increases the likelihood that children will seek help, comfort and materials from adults rather than peers. Moreover, in terms of individual patterns, it is likely that, if a child is not initially prosocially oriented, then the expectations of the other children would be low as far as seeking comfort, help or sharing from him or her.

Given these possible sources of bias and limits, it was decided to provide standard opportunities for each

subject to respond prosocially. Each child was exposed to the Prosocial Assessment Procedure, a series of staged events designed to elicit the prosocial behaviors of helping, comforting and sharing. The procedures were similar to those used in Yarrow and Waxler's study (1976). However, based on their reported results, some modifications were made. The following situations were presented to each of the subjects on two different days, ten days apart. In all cases Procedure A was administered first and Procedure B was administered later. They were executed in the classroom during the regular school day and were designed to appear incidental. The sequence of events was varied between the two procedures.

Procedures.

Procedure A.--For Procedure A, I invited a subject to play a new game in a quiet corner of the classroom. As I was getting the game out of a cabinet, a can of balls "accidentally fell." I expressed dismay, but made no direct request for help, nor did I pick them up, but appeared engrossed in locating a "missing part of the game." The child and I then sat down to play the game in which we each had a sorting box with six different sections and objects to place in each section. The child had a few extra pieces and I had too few. I expressed disappointment at not being able to complete the game two separate times at a minute's interval (approximately), but made no direct

request for any pieces. We played the game two or three times, depending on the child's interest. Then, as the game was being put away, I "pinched my finger" while closing the cabinet door. I exclaimed for ten seconds and put my finger in my mouth.

Procedure B.--The second series of events was similar. While turning to get the game from a shelf I "bumped my head" and exclaimed for ten seconds and rubbed it. I then described the game to the child, and, as I reached into the shelves, I "accidentally knocked over" a can of pencils. Again, I expressed dismay, but made no direct request for help. I did not pick them up, but continued "counting the pieces" of the game, which was out of sight of the child. After 30 seconds I presented the game to the child. It was a magnetic fishing game. As we started to play I commented that my pole seemed to be missing. I looked around the area in a puzzled, frustrated way and then returned to the child and expressed disappointment about not being able to play because I could not find my pole. I made two such statements about a minute apart, but made no direct request to use the child's pole.

Observation of Reactions. As each child reacted to the situation designed to elicit comforting, helping and sharing, an observer recorded the reactions on a scale from one to six (see Appendix II). The possible responses ranged from "active indifference" to "aid with special involvement."

"Active indifference" was defined as an indication that the child noticed the mishap, but did not intend to aid. It included such statements as "You can't use mine.", "Ha ha, look at what you did! You're silly!" and "You have to clean those up! I'm not gonna!" "No apparent notice" was indicated if the child showed no physical or verbal reaction, even that of surprise, to the event. "Recognition only" was marked when a subject looked and appeared to notice what had occurred, but made no physical or verbal effort to aid the adult. "Concern/partial attempt to intervene" was indicated when a child made an attempt or offer to aid but did not follow through. The last two categories "aid" and "aid with special involvement" were used when a child both offered and followed through fairly completely with the action. The latter category was used when a child responded very immediately and energetically to the implied needs. The observer also recorded any noteworthy comments or actions that the child made about the events. (These were not used in the data analysis.)

Training of Observers. The observers were three undergraduate students in early childhood education. The various degrees of involvement were discussed and exemplified with the three observers. They then watched in pairs during the field testing of the instrument, which was done with several children who were not subjects. Their ratings were compared and discussed following each administration. By the end of

the training and field testing period, they checked the same response items on two out of three dimensions in each procedure and either agreed or were within one point on the third part. One initial difficulty was whether to rate initial or delayed reactions of the children or both. For example, some children ignored the fallen balls initially, but later, while the game was being put away, cleaned up the balls. It was decided that only the initial reaction would count as part of the child's score, but both reactions would be recorded.

Continuing Reliability. At intervals during the 40 administrations, 8 of the observations were done in pairs. Reliability was determined by dividing the smallest sum by the largest sum. Also, the ratings were compared to see if they agreed or were within one point on all three dimensions. The level of reliability averaged 93%. The overall coefficient of reliability was .97 (Spearman *r*).

Summary

The primary source of data for this study was the observation of naturally occurring social interactions. In the initial, exploratory stages of social research, naturalistic observation is one of the most productive methods for generating theory (Graves, 1974). Since the specific issue of ownership has not been studied in this manner before, a primary goal of this study was to gain a

broad and authentic picture of the dimensions and correlates of ownership behavior. This technique allows patterns to emerge inductively and thereby stimulates the construction, expansion and refinement of theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Graves, 1974) Moreover, naturalistic methods are appropriate to the study of young children whose ideas and personalities cannot be measured through verbal assessments (Gellert, 1955). The naturalistic observations were, in turn, augmented by two other procedures. The teacher ratings were included to provide a verification of the naturalistic results. The Prosocial Assessment Procedure was administered to provide a comparison among all children in the same situation.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Introduction

The findings of this study are reported in several ways. First, the general frequencies and distribution of the observed ownership related behaviors are described. In the second section environmental influences that appear to have some impact on whether or not an ownership episode occurs are reported. The third section describes the behavioral patterns correlated with the level of ownership involvement in individual children. There the data reported include the teachers' ratings and the results of the Prosocial Assessment Procedure, as well as the observational data. The differential effects of age and sex and demographic variables are also considered in this section. In the fourth section the behavioral differences between ownership interactions and nonownership interactions are described. Finally, in the fifth section, the relative effects of individual children as opposed to the absence or presence of an ownership episode on the immediate social behaviors are reported.

Overall Frequencies of Ownership Related Behaviors

Ownership Episodes. Since all 20 subjects were observed once by 12 observers, there was a total of 240 recorded peer social interactions. Of these 240 interactions, 138 or 57.5% had at least one instance of ownership behavior as defined in the previous chapter. In other words, in over half of the interactions there was an ownership dispute or an undisputed claim, a defensive action or an exclusionary action. These interactions are hereafter referred to as "ownership episodes." The distribution of types of ownership episodes was as follows: 49 instances of "initiates dispute," 35 undisputed claims, 30 exclusionary acts, and 64 defensive actions. The total number of recorded ownership acts is 178. This higher number is due to the fact that several of the interactions included more than one ownership action. Of the 138 interactions that were ownership episodes, 103 or 75% involved disputes.

Outcomes of Ownership Episodes. Seven of the 138 ownership episodes were resolved with some form of compromise (5%). Ninety-four (68%) were resolved with one party winning and the other yielding. Thirty-one (17%) were resolved with teacher intervention. Of the ownership episodes, 60 (43%) resulted in termination of the social interaction.*

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*The number of "outcomes" exceeds the number of ownership episodes because some of the interactions that were terminated by ownership episodes also included "winning/losing," "teacher intervention" or compromise.

Twenty-five percent of all of the social interactions observed ended as a result of an ownership loss or dispute.

Objects of Ownership Claims or Disputes. The most frequent objects of ownership disputes and claims, as reported in the observational data, were inanimate objects. There were 100 disputes over objects which account for 67% of all the disputes. Of these, the most frequently (31%) disputed objects were "manipulatives" which included puzzles, beads, legos, etc. The next most frequently (13%) disputed or claimed objects were art materials, with housekeeping materials such as plates, dishes, utensils, following close behind (11%).

People were not often objects of ownership claims or disputes. Only five of the recorded disputes involved a person. In four cases the object was a male child and one time it was a female teacher. While it is not surprising that young children who are establishing their initial peer relationships are not possessive of their friends, it was expected that the children would try to control the adults' attention. Contrary to this prediction, however, only one interaction involved a dispute over a teacher.

Disputes or claims involving space accounted for 41 (30%) of the ownership episodes. Sixteen of these were focused on places at a table, sand table or water table. Fourteen involved closed areas, such as a single entranced loft or house.

Distribution of Ownership Involvement. The number of active ownership involvements per subject was distributed in a roughly normal curve with a slightly negative skew of -.104. The mean and median were 6.1 and the mode was 6.00. The distribution is graphically presented in Figure 3.1.

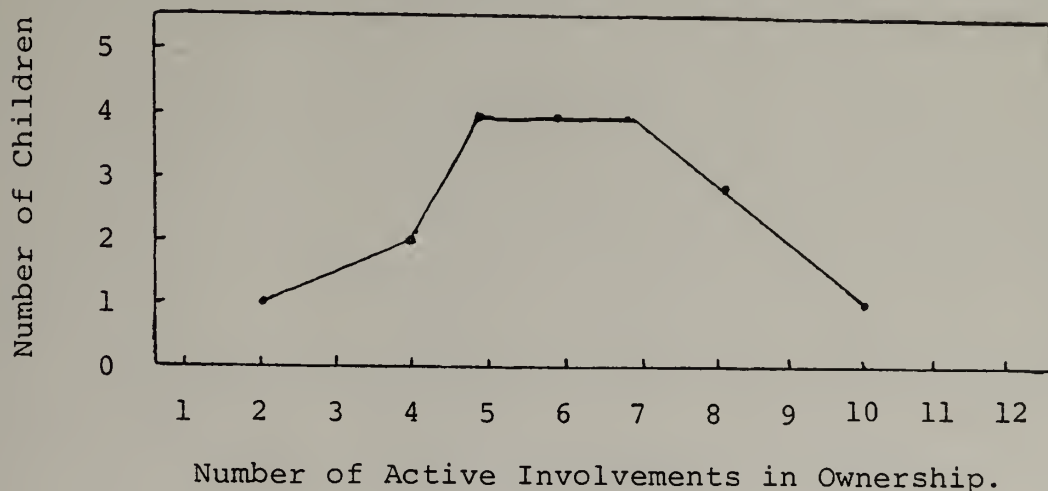

Figure 3.1 Distribution of Number of Ownership Involvements by Individual Children

Environmental Influences

Cross tabulations of several environmental factors and the occurrence of ownership episodes yielded some indications about the influence of particular variables. The environmental factors that were considered were: outdoors/indoors, noise level, location in the classroom, the type of space, whether it was open or closed, the type of activity, the quantity of materials available, the number of children present and the proximity of a teacher.

Of these variables, location, whether it was open or closed, type of activity and quantity of materials appeared to be most strikingly related to the presence or absence of ownership episodes. The effects of these variables are discussed in the following section.

Location in the Classroom. In terms of location, the areas that had the highest proportion of ownership episodes were the blocks, role play corner and the reading area. The gym area had the lowest proportion of ownership episodes. The areas where the difference between ownership and nonownership events was negligible were the math and science area, art area, bathroom, kitchen and cubbies. The following findings are described in percentages. The raw scores can be found in Appendix III.

In the block area 78% of the interactions involved ownership. Playing in this area requires a fair amount of negotiation of both space and materials and it is not surprising that issues of property arise frequently. In an earlier study Houseman (1972) noted that the block area was the most frequent scene for possession conflicts. This phenomenon was attributed to the lack of pre-determined boundaries, the tendency to build walls and the constantly changing use of the blocks.

The role play area, in which 64% of the interactions were ownership episodes, contains a house that is small and has a single entrance. Frequently children were seen

blocking the doorway with furniture or pillows in order to exclude other children. Moreover, this area has the house-keeping materials which emerged as frequently disputed items.

The reading corner, where 75% of the interactions involved ownership, suggests more quiet and individual activities and, therefore, a less likely location for property disputes. However, at the University Day School this area contains a loft with a single entrance which was frequently used in an exclusionary manner. As in the role play house, the entrance was easily blocked to provide an exclusive space.

The area of the room that had proportionately fewest ownership episodes (36.8%) was the gym area which contains a slide, climber and rope swings. Children generally use the equipment for short periods of time and turns are usually easily negotiated. Because the equipment is large and heavy or fixed, the issues of "keeping it," or "taking it" was clearly irrelevant.

Open and Closed Areas. Another perspective on the influence of location is offered by looking at the differential effects of open-access and limited-access of the various areas. Of the interactions occurring in the closed areas of the room 61 of the 87 interactions (70%) were ownership episodes. By contrast, in the open areas of the room 61 of the 120 interactions (51%) involved ownership. Outside, 16 of the 33 interactions (48%) were ownership episodes.

<u>Types of Activities</u>. The type of activity was strongly related to the proportional numbers of ownership episodes. The raw data are reported in Appendix III. For activities involving manipulatives, 73% of the interactions involved ownership. In construction activities, 74% of the interactions were ownership episodes. These results reflect the previously reported findings that manipulatives were most often the objects of disputes and that more disputes occurred in the block area. Slightly less strong but clear effects were noted for activities labeled as role play (60% ownership episodes) and art (62% ownership episodes). Again, these findings reflect the earlier described associations of ownership behaviors with the role play area and art materials. Interestingly, Houseman's study (1972) indicated that, because of the clear boundaries afforded by the customary distribution of one set of materials per child in art activities, there tended to be fewer conflicts. This finding is not confirmed by the present study.

<u>Amount of Materials</u>. The amount of materials available was strongly related to the proportion of interactions that involved ownership. The raw data are reported in Appendix III. When there were no materials, only 33% of the interactions involved ownership episodes. In contrast, when there was one object to be shared, 66% of the interactions involved ownership. Similarly, when there were two or three objects to be shared, 68% of the interactions involved ownership.

When each child had his or her own material(s), 55% of the interactions had an ownership episode. When many objects were available, 52% of the interactions were ownership oriented. When no materials were available, then ownership concerns were limited to space and people, and therefore diminished. Interestingly, even when each child had his or her own materials, ownership episodes still occurred. The clarity of boundaries afforded by this distribution diminished, but did not eliminate, property disputes.

Behavioral Patterns Correlated with the Level of Ownership Involvement of Individual Children

This section examines the patterns shown by individual children in their social behaviors as related to their level of ownership involvement. Differences by age and sex of the subjects will also be discussed.

Distributions of Individuals' Behaviors. The distribution of the observed behaviors from each category varied widely over the sample. The summary scores are described here. More detailed information is provided in Appendix IV. The number of ownership related actions per individual varied between 2 and 15, with a mean of 8.9. The total number of prosocial behaviors per person ranged from 0 to 14, with a mean of 6.7. For the overall numbers of affiliative behaviors the range extended from 6 to 24, with a mean of 15 behaviors per subject. The

individual scores for aggressive behavior varied between 0 and 9 with a mean of 3.7 actions per subject. The range of individual scores for competitive behavior was 0 to 3 with a mean of .35 incidents per subject. It should be noted that the difference in the ranges and mean of the behavioral categories reflects, in part, the varying numbers of indices within the categories. These raw totals do not necessarily reflect actual proportions of the subjects' behaviors.

Correlations in the Naturalistic Data. The individual scores of the coded naturalistic data were analyzed using the Pearson *r* to correlate ownership involvements with prosocial, affiliative, aggressive and competitive behaviors. The results are reported below.

Ownership and prosocial behavior. The categories of prosocial behavior, as described in chapter two, include helping, comforting and sharing. The results of the correlational analysis are on Table 3.1. Ownership involvement was negatively correlated with both helpfulness and sharing, with a significant relationship demonstrated between ownership and helpfulness.

Ownership and affiliative behavior. The categories of affiliative behavior, which were defined in chapter two, consist of initiating social interactions, responding to others' overtures, including others, cooperating, showing affection and imitating or following others. The results

Table 3.1

Intercorrelation (Pearson r's) of Active Ownership Involvement with Prosocial Behavior

(N=20)

	Actively Claiming Ownership	Helping	Showing Concern	Sharing
Actively Claiming Ownership	1.00	-0.46*	0.11	-0.31
Helping		1.00	0.24	0.54
Showing Concern			1.00	0.39+
Sharing				1.00

Note: All tests of significance are two-tailed.

+ $p < .10$

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

of this correlational analysis are found on Table 3.2. Ownership involvement was negatively correlated with length of interactions and all of the affiliative behavioral indices. The correlations with responding, including, and showing affection were close to significant and the negative relationship with cooperation was significant. With the combined affiliation scores, there was a very significant negative correlation of -.6679, $p < .01$, two-tailed, between ownership involvement and affiliation (see Table 3.3).

Ownership and aggression. The aggression scores for each child included all acts in that section of the coding sheet with the exception of roughhousing and teasing which were defined as playful or sociable aggression. There was a significantly positive correlation between high ownership involvement and aggression (see Table 3.3). In addition, aggression was significantly negatively correlated with the affiliative scores.

Ownership and competition. As discussed previously, the competition scores for each child were computed from the number of actions included in the "competitive" section of the coding form. There were few competitive behaviors recorded so it is difficult to draw any conclusions regarding the relationship of competition and ownership. There was a slightly positive correlation between ownership and competition, but it did not approach significance (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.2: Intercorrelation (Pearson r's) of Ownership Involvement and Affiliative Behaviors (N=20)

	Ownership Involvement	Time of Interaction	Initiation of Interaction	Responsiveness to Others	Inclusion of Others	Cooperation	Friendliness and Affection	Imitation of Others
Ownership Involvement	1.00	-0.24	-0.25	-0.43+	-0.30+	-0.62**	-0.37+	-0.20
Time of Interaction		1.00	0.18	0.27	0.45*	0.38+	0.38+	0.30
Initiation of Interaction			1.00	0.14	0.16	0.45*	0.19	-0.25
Responsiveness to Others				1.00	0.16	0.17	0.47*	0.34
Inclusion of Others					1.00	0.34	0.24	0.20
Cooperation						1.00	-0.04	0.17
Friendliness and Affection							1.00	0.18
Imitation of Others								1.00

Note: All tests of significance are two-tailed.

+ $p < .10$
* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

Table 3.3: Intercorrelation (Pearson r's) of Ownership Involvement, Prosocial Behavior, Affiliation, Aggression and Competitiveness (N=20)

	Ownership Involvement	Prosocial Behavior	Affiliation	Aggression	Competi-tiveness
Ownership Involvement	1.00	-0.33	-0.67***	0.62**	0.19
Prosocial Behavior		1.00	0.57**	-0.16	0.12
Affiliation			1.00	-0.56*	-0.25
Aggression				1.00	-0.10
Competitiveness					1.00

Note: All tests of significance are two-tailed.

+ $p < .10$
* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

Summary. While there were varying degrees of significance, the naturalistic data generally supported the hypotheses that highly ownership oriented children less frequently respond prosocially and affiliatively to others and are more likely to act aggressively. The relationship between ownership and competition appears to be positive, but the small amount of data renders it inconclusive.

Behavioral Correlations in the Teacher Ratings. The teachers' ratings were correlated using the Pearson r. The findings are reported in Tables 3.4 and 3.5. To some extent, the teacher ratings reflected the correlations derived from the naturalistic data.

Ownership and prosocial ratings. There were significant negative correlations between high ownership and high sharing ratings. Conversely, the correlation between high ownership and low sharing was significantly positive. Low ownership ratings were significantly correlated with all of the prosocial measures, both high and low, in the predicted directions.

It is interesting to note that there are more significant correlations among the teachers' ratings than in the behavioral data. This consistency is particularly evident within the prosocial ratings. This fact may reflect the nature of the rating scale, that is, teachers were forced to think in terms of polarities of high and low.

Table 3.4: Intercorrelation (Pearson r's) of Teacher Ratings of Ownership Orientation and Prosocial Variables (N=20)

	High Ownership Ratings	High Helpful Ratings	High Sharing Ratings	High Concerned Ratings	Low Ownership Ratings	Low Helpful Ratings	Low Sharing Ratings	Low Ownership Ratings
High Ownership Ratings	1.00	-0.29	-0.38+	-0.29	-0.44+	0.12	0.81***	0.34
High Helpful Ratings		1.00	0.84***	0.76***	0.69***	-0.32	-0.26	-0.43*
High Sharing Ratings			1.00	0.79***	0.68***	-0.39+	-0.41*	-0.50*
High Concerned Ratings				1.00	0.56**	-0.22	-0.33	-0.42+
Low Ownership Ratings					1.00	-0.38+	-0.45*	-0.46*
Low Helpful Ratings						1.00	0.40+	0.63**
Low Sharing Ratings							1.00	0.73***
Low Concerned Ratings								1.00

Note: All tests of significance are two-tailed.

+ $p < .10$ ** $p < .01$

* $p < .05$ *** $p < .001$

Table 3.5: Intercorrelation (Pearson r's) of Teacher Ratings of Ownership, Affiliative, Aggressive and Competitive Variables (N=20)

	High Ownership Ratings	High Affiliative Ratings	High Agfressive Ratings	High Competitive Ratings	Low Ownership Ratings	Low Affiliative Ratings	Low Aggressive Ratings	Low Competitive Ratings
High Ownership Ratings	1.00	-0.01	0.82***	0.42+	-0.44*	-0.25	-0.36	-0.37
High Affiliative Ratings		1.00	0.15	0.31	0.31	-0.37	-0.17	-0.21
High Aggressive Ratings			1.00	0.31	-0.36	-0.18	-0.32	-0.32
High Competitive Ratings				1.00	-0.33	-0.44*	-0.43*	-0.45*
Low Ownership Ratings					1.00	0.24	0.67***	0.64**
Low Affiliative Ratings						1.00	0.67***	-0.44*
Low Aggressive Ratings							1.00	0.85***
Low Competitive Ratings								1.00

Note: All tests of significance are two-tailed.

+ $p < .10$ ** $p < .01$
* $p < .05$ *** $p < .001$

It may also suggest more established images of the children. In other words, the teachers' perceptions of the children's prosocial behaviors may be more consistent than the actual behavior.

Ownership and affiliative ratings. The teachers' ratings did not yield any significant correlations between ownership and affiliation (see Table 3.5). It is interesting to note that, while there was a stronger correlation between prosocial and ownership ratings than that yielded by the behavioral data, the reverse was true for the affiliation-ownership correlation. It is possible that the more neutral nature of affiliative behavior (as opposed to the "good" prosocial behavior) may render more diffused impressions of what behaviors are associated with affiliation. Moreover, this result suggests that the negative correlation between affiliation and ownership orientation, even though evident in the naturalistic data, is not part of the teachers' perceptions and conceptions about children's social behavior. Another intriguing result was the positive correlation between low affiliative and low aggressive ratings. These low ratings may simply reflect the teachers' lack of information about particular children (i.e., low ratings may reflect "have not seen"), which in turn suggests the factor of level of social activity. Children who are viewed as "not aggressive" and "not affiliative" may simply be the less active children.

Ownership, aggressive and competitive ratings. The teacher ratings substantiated the positive behavioral correlations between ownership and aggression found in the naturalistic data (see Table 3.5). They also yielded a significant relationship between ownership and competitiveness which was not discernible in the analysis of the naturalistic data.

Summary. The teacher ratings provided support for the hypotheses predicting a negative correlation between ownership and prosocial behavior and a positive one with aggression and competition. They did not reflect the hypothesized negative relationship between ownership and affiliation, which had been found in the naturalistic data.

Ownership and Prosocial Assessment Procedure. The results from the Prosocial Assessment Procedure were also correlated using the Pearson *r*. The results can be found in Table 3.6. The results of the two procedures (Procedure A and Procedure B) were compared with each other. Then, correlations among the various dimensions of helping, sharing and comforting were examined. Then, the scores for active ownership involvement derived from the naturalistic data were correlated with the results of the Prosocial Assessment Procedure.

Consistency of results of Procedures A and B. The analysis of the two procedures on the comforting and helping dimension did not yield significant correlations. The

Table 3.6: Intercorrelation (Pearson r's) of the Results of Prosocial Assessment Procedures (A and B and Ownership Involvement (N=20)

	Ownership Involvement	Helping Procedure A	Helping Procedure B	Sharing Procedure A	Sharing Procedure B	Comforting Procedure A	Comforting Procedure B
Ownership Involvement	1.00	-0.04	0.56*	0.35	0.04	0.02	0.38+
Helping Procedure A		1.00	0.36	0.11	0.13	0.06	-0.11
Helping Procedure B			1.00	0.48*	0.12	0.05	0.47*
Sharing Procedure A				1.00	0.46*	0.40+	0.27
Sharing Procedure B					1.00	0.13	-0.11
Comforting Procedure A						1.00	0.07
Comforting Procedure B							1.00

Note: All tests of significance are two-tailed.

+ $p < .10$
* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
*** $p < .001$

results for the sharing dimension, however, were consistent. The overall scores showed that more children (11) received a score of five or six in the helping section than with sharing (7) and comforting (3). This finding supports the results of Yarrow and Waxler's study (1976).

Correlations among the behavioral dimensions. There were two significant correlations among the dimensions assessed. The scores from the helping part of Procedure B were positively related to those for the sharing part of Procedure A and the comforting one in Procedure B. There were no other significant correlations among the prosocial dimensions.

Relationship between ownership and the responses to the Prosocial Assessment Procedure. In contrast to the results of the naturalistic observations and teacher ratings, the correlations between high ownership orientation (as determined from the naturalistic data) and the results from the Prosocial Assessment Procedure were generally positive and, in fact, reached a level of significance with the helping part of Procedure B, the score that was also significantly related to comforting and sharing scores.

Discussion. The inconsistency between the results of the two procedures and among the prosocial variables may, in part, be a function of this type of procedure. The administration depended on the adult's dramatization of various emotions: dismay, disappointment and pain. While

every effort was made to consistently display these feelings, there was, undoubtedly, some variability. The observers noted some variation in the intensity and sense of authenticity of the dramatized emotions. Regardless of its source, the low level of consistency requires that any conclusions based on those findings must be viewed with caution.

The rather surprising results of the correlational analysis between the prosocial dimension and the level of ownership involvement raises the possibility that the Prosocial Assessment Procedure may, in fact, measure different personality variables than the observed prosocial measures. In the first place the procedure was administered by an adult, whereas the observational data was focused on peer interactions. Therefore, some of the reactions during the procedure may reflect the wish to please and obey the adult authority. Secondly, the procedure focused on the introduction of a "special new game." It is possible that the children who are relatively highly ownership oriented might be motivated to react particularly helpfully in order to gain possession of the game or to hasten its arrival. In both procedures, the helping part preceded the introduction of the game. This possibility may account for the significantly positive correlation between one of the helping scores and the ownership involvement.

<u>Summary</u>. The inconsistency of the results of the Prosocial Assessment Procedure makes any conclusion based

on it somewhat tentative. The positive correlations between ownership involvement and the prosocial scores raise the question of personality variables that the Assessment Procedure might be eliciting other than the intended ones. These findings also suggest that there are certain manipulative techniques that ownership oriented children might employ in order to gain access to the desired object.

Differences by Age. For the analysis of behavioral differences by age, the sample was divided into a younger group with a mean age of 3.1 and an older group with a mean age of 3.8. An analysis of variance was performed with the ownership and prosocial behavioral dimensions from the naturalistic data, the teachers' ratings and the results of the Prosocial Assessment Procedure.

Differences by age in prosocial behavior. There were no significant age effects demonstrated in the naturalistic data or teacher ratings in terms of prosocial behavior. However, one significant age effect emerged with the Prosocial Assessment Procedure. In this case older children exhibited significantly more helping behavior than younger children (F (1) = 6.72, $p < .05$). This finding is contrary to the prediction that there would be no age effect in the prosocial behaviors. However, as it was discussed previously, there are indications that the Prosocial Assessment Procedure measured variables other than the predicted ones. Thus, it is not surprising that there are deviations in the

findings in regards to age differences. The fact that older children were more responsive to the adult's need for help may have stemmed from some of the sources of aberration described earlier. Moreover, the older children had been at the University Day School for a longer time than the younger group and were more familiar with me and thereby may have felt more interest and concern about lending assistance.

Difference by Sex. For the analysis of behavioral differences by sex, an analysis of variance was performed using the independent variable of gender and the behavioral variables drawn from the naturalistic data, the teachers' ratings and the Prosocial Assessment Procedure.

Differences by sex in the prosocial behaviors. Contrary to the prediction that the female group would be more prosocial, this group showed only one significantly positive relationship with prosocial behavior. The girls' scores were higher (F (1) = 4.35, $p < .05$) on a comforting measure in the Prosocial Assessment Procedure. Moreover, the male group showed a significantly positive (F (1) = 7.02, $p < .05$) relationship with one of the helping procedures in the Prosocial Assessment Procedure. In the teacher rating scale, the male group was rated as significantly lower (F (1) = 8.00, $p < .05$) in concern.

The results of these analyses are quite inconclusive, and there is little support for the prediction that the

girls are more prosocially oriented.

Differences by sex in ownership behaviors. As it was predicted, the boys were significantly more actively involved (F (1) = 3.47, $p < .10$) in ownership episodes. They also significantly more often (F (1) = 6.63, $p < .05$) won the disputes in which they engaged. The findings offer some support for the notion that boys, as a function of social expectations and future roles, develop more confidence and ability in asserting their wills.

Influences of Demographic Variables. The relationship between the demographic data and the behavioral variables was examined by arraying the data from the naturalistic observations, the teachers' ratings and the Prosocial Assessment Procedure on scattergrams. Visual inspection of these scattergrams made it apparent that further statistical analysis would not yield any strong trends. With a sample size of 20, the demographic subsamples were so small that the related findings could not be used for statistical inference.

The Behavioral Differences Between Ownership and Nonownership Interactions

In order to examine the effect of ownership episodes on social behaviors, all 240 interactions of the naturalistic data were analysed by whether or not they included an ownership episode. Cross tabulations compared all the subjects' other social behaviors in ownership and

nonownership episodes. The findings are reported in terms of percentages. More detailed tabulations can be found in Appendices V and VI.

Ownership Episodes and Prosocial Behaviors. For two dimensions, helping and comforting, there were striking differences between their concurrences with ownership and nonownership interactions. Even though there were more ownership episodes (138) than nonownership interactions (102), 65% of the helping incidents and 71% of the comforting ones were found in nonownership interactions. The number of sharing events was equal in the two conditions. It is possible that interactions that included sharing may have evolved into ownership episodes if the sharing process broke down. Therefore, ownership and sharing might more frequently occur within the same interaction. For the overall distribution of prosocial behavior, 58% of the incidents appeared in nonownership interactions; 42% in ownership interactions. Another way of looking at this finding is that 56% of the nonownership interactions contained one or more occurrence of prosocial behavior, whereas only 30% of the ownership interactions had any of these behaviors.

Ownership Episodes and Affiliative Behaviors. The cross tabulations of affiliative behaviors by ownership episodes yielded strong differences for several of the dimensions. For the dimension of

"responding," 62% of the incidents were found in nonownership interactions, whereas 38% of them were in ownership episodes. The differences between situations for the "including" dimension were similar: 63% occurred in nonownership interactions and 37% in ownership ones. For "cooperation," 73% of the incidents were recorded in nonownership interactions and 27% in ownership episodes. There were no striking differences for the dimensions of initiating an interaction, friendliness and imitating and following. For the overall variable of affiliation, the occurrences of affiliative behavior in ownership and nonownership interactions were nearly equal, but due to the difference in the numbers of ownership and nonownership episodes, the proportionate concurrence varied. Of the nonownership interactions, 93% had affiliative actions as opposed to 69% of the ownership episodes.

Ownership Episodes and Aggressive Behavior. The differences between the concurrence of aggressive behaviors with ownership and nonownership interactions was striking. Eighty percent of the interactions that included some form of aggression were also ownership episodes. This finding is not surprising in view of the fact that out of 85 recorded aggressive actions, 69 were designated as "ownership related."

Ownership Episodes and Competitive Behaviors. There were very few incidents of recorded competitive behaviors, so any conclusions regarding the relationship of competition and ownership episodes must be tentative. There were seven incidents of competition and, of these, five occurred in ownership episodes and two in nonownership interactions. Despite this small sample, there does appear to be some support for the notion that ownership and competition are linked.

Summary. These findings strongly support the prediction that ownership episodes would have fewer prosocial and affiliative behaviors and more aggressive and competitive ones than the nonownership interactions. One note of caution should be inserted here. The lack of concurrence of ownership episodes and other behaviors (in this case, prosocial and affiliative) may be, in part, a function of a tendency on the part of the observers to stop watching an interaction after one part of the interaction is completed. In other words, an observer may stop watching after an ownership event, though the interaction is continuing; and thereby submit data that erroneously suggest that ownership and certain other social behaviors are mutually exclusive. However, the observers were carefully instructed not to bias the data in such a way. Moreover, it appeared from reading the running records and reviewing the coded sheets that, if anything, the observers tended to be overly inclusive in their observations and coding rather than too abbreviated.

Relative Effects of Individual Subjects and the Presence of Ownership Episodes on Social Behavior

In order to assess the relative effects of individual subjects versus ownership episodes on the concurrent social behaviors, a multiple regression analysis, step-wise procedure was used. (A more detailed account of the procedure can be found in Appendix VII.) The interactions recorded in the observational data were analyzed to determine whether the subject of the observation or the occurrence of an ownership episode was the better predictor of the other social behaviors.

Prediction of Prosocial Behavior. Both the ownership variable and the subjects emerged as important predictors of prosocial behavior. Ownership was a negative predictor. When the response of prosocial was regressed on ownership alone, it yielded $R^{2*} = .07$, $p < .001$. Adding the subject variables raised the R^2 to .224, $p < .001$. When the steps were reversed, the results were similar. When the response variable prosocial was regressed on subjects alone, it yielded an $R^2 = .174$, $p < .01$. Adding the ownership variable to the regression equation raised the R^2 to .224, $p < .001$. The analysis of variance tables for these

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*R^2 is the square of the multiple correlation coefficient, and is equal to the percent (when multiplied by 100) of the total sum of scores (variation) accounted for by the regression.

equations are in Appendix VIII. In sum, both "subject of the observation" and "presence of ownership" were significant predictors.

A closer look at the analysis revealed that five subject variables had significantly negative correlations (simple r) with the response of prosocial behavior. The raw data revealed that three of these children had low scores in most of the behavioral indices. The other two subjects in this group had no recorded prosocial behaviors at all, and relatively high scores in ownership involvement. These two subjects alone accounted for some of the negative correlation between ownership and prosocial behavior. However, since ownership still emerged as a significant predictor, even when the subjects were controlled for, it appears to function as a strong predictor for the overall sample as well.

Prediction of Affiliative Behavior Ownership emerged as an important negative predictor of affiliative behavior, whereas the subject variables did not emerge as strong predictors. When affiliation was regressed on ownership alone, it yielded $R^2 = .084$, $p < .001$. Adding the 20 subject variables to the regression equation raised the R^2 to .164 $p < .01$; the increase was not significant. When affiliative behavior was regressed on subjects alone, it yielded an $R^2 = .100$ (not significant). Adding the ownership variables to the regression equation raised the R^2 to .164,

$p < .01$. The analysis of variance tables for these equations are in Appendix VIII. Thus, ownership was a significant negative predictor of affiliative behavior; the subject variables were not significant.

Prediction of Aggressive Behavior. Both ownership and the subject variable emerged as strong predictors of aggressive behavior. Ownership was a significant positive predictor. When aggression was regressed on ownership alone, it yielded $R^2 = .086$, $p < .001$. Adding the subject variables to the regression equation raised the R^2 to .218, $p < .001$. When the steps were reversed, both variables were still significant predictors. When aggression was regressed on the subjects alone, it yielded $R^2 = .158$, $p < .01$. Adding the ownership variable to the equation raised the R^2 to .218, $p < .001$. Thus, both the presence of ownership behavior and particular subjects are significant predictors of aggressive behavior.

A closer look at the analysis revealed that three subject variables showed significantly negative correlations (simple r) to aggressive behavior. These three subjects, all girls, tended to have slightly higher scores in affiliative behavior and lower scores in ownership involvement.

Prediction of Competitive Behavior. Neither ownership, nor the overall subject variable emerged as important predictors of competitive behavior. None of the regressions revealed

any significant relationships between the independent variables and the response of competition. For analysis of variance tables, see Appendix VIII. However, one individual subject variable showed a significantly positive correlation (simple r) with competition. As previously reported, there were very few recorded instances of competion and it appears from this analysis that one child was responsible for most of them.

The Related Effects of Ownership and Other Behavioral Variables. To further examine the strength of ownership as a predictor of other social behaviors, another series of regression analyses were done using the same procedure as before (see Appendix VII), with the addition of the other behavioral variables entered on the same step as the ownership variable. The results were similar to those previously described. All the behavioral variables except competition were significant predictors. In three cases, ownership was selected to enter the equation first, which indicates that it is the strongest of the behavioral variables. As in the previous series of regressions, the subject variable was a significant predictor for prosocial and aggressive behaviors, but not for affiliative behaviors. When competition was regressed on the behavioral variables, affiliation, not ownership, was selected as the first variable to enter the equation, indicating that it had the strongest correlation with competition. Closer

inspection of the data revealed that the child who showed the positive relationship with competitive behaviors also had relatively high affiliative scores. Given the small number of competitive events, it is possible that this particular child's behavior may have created this link between competition and affiliation.

Summary. The regression analyses looking at the relative predictive strengths of ownership episodes as opposed to individual subjects showed that ownership was a significant negative predictor for prosocial and affiliative behaviors and a significantly positive one for aggression. For both prosocial and aggressive behaviors, however, the subjects were also significant predictors. Thus, ownership emerges as a strong predictor of other social behaviors, but not as the only one. Individual subjects are also strong predictors, particularly for prosocial and aggressive behaviors.

CHAPTER IV

PATTERNS OF OWNERSHIP BEHAVIOR

Introduction

This chapter will draw on the accounts of children's social interactions in the running record part of the naturalistic data to illustrate some of the preceding theoretical and statistical constructs. Specific examples of ownership behavior and its relationship to other social behaviors will be included to provide a fuller and more vivid picture of the prevalence, dimensions and effects of ownership episodes. The first section will focus on the intensity, dimensions and outcomes of ownership episodes. Also, children's articulated rules regarding ownership will be discussed. In the second part of this chapter I will illustrate and discuss the interactions between ownership and the specific social behaviors studied in this investigation (i.e., prosocial, affiliative, aggressive and competitive behaviors).

Dimensions of Ownership

One of the striking aspects of ownership in young children is its disruptive effect on their interactions with the social and physical world. Children may be very

engrossed in their play, whether it is social or solitary, but when an ownership issue arises, their attention is usually diverted. Often, when an object is disputed, the need to protect it obliterates any enjoyment or learning that it may potentially provide. The following example illustrates this point.

> The children were rolling small cars down a ramp. Daryl had two cars that he was rolling. Keith approached and said, "I want that car." pointing to one of Daryl's cars. Daryl shook his head and held both cars in his hands. Keith repeated his request. Daryl, holding the cars close to him, left the area.

Here Daryl's concern about protecting his cars not only created a conflict between him and Keith, but also overcame his interest in the game. The exclusive nature of ownership is also exemplified here. If Daryl has the cars, then Keith cannot have any access to them. This belief is often verbally articulated by statements such as, "I got it, not you!" and "This is mine, you can't have it!"

Another example shows how an ownership episode disrupts an otherwise amicable social interaction.

> David and Chris were sitting next to each other at lunch. They were comparing their lunches and giving each other tastes of food. David reached over and picked up a feather that was on the table, Chris screeched, "That's mine, I had it before!" Then he pulled the feather away and turned away from David looking angry and upset.

At the point at which concern over a possession occurred, the reciprocal and enjoyable interaction became an angry, hostile one, and it was, at least temporarily, terminated.

In terms of social rules, Chris's statement of "It's mine, I had it before!" reflects the notion that the person who presently has an object has the right to control it from that time on. This belief, which reflects the axiom that "possession is 9/10s of the law," is a basic tenet of our property oriented society. In a more collective society, "having something before," instead of being the basis for total claim, might, in fact, be a reason for someone else to have it.

The compelling effect of ownership concerns is well illustrated by the following account of a child excluding another child from an object he does not really want.

> Ronnie had been told by a teacher that he had to sit in a chair by himself because he had been hitting the other children. He was calling out to teachers and children, "I didn't do anything bad! I don't want to sit in this chair!!" He repeated these statements several times. Joanna approached and Ronnie got up to talk to her. Meanwhile, Matthew came over and sat down in Ronnie's chair. At that point Ronnie rushed back to the chair, pushed Matthew out of it and yelled, "Get out of my chair!"

Here, the chair had a negative value for Ronnie. He did not want to be there. Yet, as soon as his possession of the chair was threatened, he fought to retain control. The fact that he did not want to be there in the first place seemed to be forgotten in the intensity of the ownership conflict. This tendency to fight for control over objects simply because other children want them was often observed.

> Lewis was walking across a board that was serving as a bridge between two ladder supports. "Hey, I'm

> walking on the board!" he called out with glee. (Lewis was usually hesitant to try physical activities.) Pandora came over and lay across the board in front of Lewis. "I'm not gonna let you!" she said. Lewis yelled, "Pandora, let me go across!" Pandora: "No!" They argued back and forth a couple of times. Lewis then turned around and walked back to the ladder and started to climb down. Pandora then moved to the ladder and blocked Lewis from descending. He yelled, "Let me come down!" Pandora pushed his foot away. A teacher intervened at this point.

It appeared that Pandora's desire to exclude Lewis from the climbing apparatus was primarily stimulated by Lewis's obvious enjoyment of it as she had not been previously involved with it. The social power and dominance attained by controlling resources that another person wants was evident in both her motivation and Lewis's response.

Another dimension of the strong influence of ownership is the high degree of persistence that children demonstrate when they want to gain or maintain control over a desired object or space. The following observation offers an example of this.

> It was snack time. As soon as the plate with the pizzas was put on the table David grabbed it. Then Barry grabbed it and they both pulled the plate back and forth and screamed. The teacher intervened; David took a pizza. Then the juice pitcher was placed on the table. David took it and filled his cup; he held tightly onto the pitcher as he drank all the juice from his cup. He poured more juice into his cup, held the pitcher, drank and finally emptied the pitcher into his cup. During this time, the other children were yelling at him to pass the juice. Then he took two more pizzas and hid one under the table. The teacher told him he had to put one back on the plate. He did, but kept his hand on it. He crammed the first one into his mouth

> and, as soon as it was partially devoured, took the second one off of the serving plate.

This episode illustrates several points. The "dogged determination" is evident in David's steadfastness in taking as much of the food as he could despite complaints, warnings and threats from the children and a teacher. Clearly he was much more concerned with controlling and consuming as much of the snack as possible than with maintaining positive social contact. When he was thwarted he was still tenacious in his efforts to reach his goal. For example, when told he had to replace the piece of pizza, he complied, but left his hand on the piece. David's imperviousness to the needs of the other children was striking. It supports the notion mentioned in the previous chapter that an "ownership frame of mind" appears to inhibit the ability and willingness to respond in a socially positive manner. Another previously described attribute of ownership is illustrated here: property as a source of power. While David was holding the snack away from the others, they had to plead with him for it. It illustrates Suttie, Ginsberg and Marshall's (1935) argument that the source of power in the property system is control over not only what <u>you</u> need, but what <u>others</u> need as well.

The insatiable quality of David's consumption was striking. Obviously, there may be many reasons for this intensity. Hunger and/or preference for this particular snack probably contributed to his urgency. However, the

gulping down of the food, not enjoying it, but merely trying to consume it so he can take more, had a quality of desperation and insatiability. David's wish to gain total control over the snack was curbed only by the constraints posed by a single cup and the "one piece at a time" rule. Ironically, David had to forego enjoying the pizza in order to consume quickly so that he could get more, yet he never actually accumulated more than the other children. This scene in some ways encapsulates Sahlins' (1971) descriptions of the feeling of deprivation, the insatiable needs and the frustrations created by a market economy. Concern about "getting enough" and keeping others away from claimed property was frequently evident.

Intensity often characterized the children's efforts to protect their "property." The readiness with which the children assumed this stance suggested some feelings of insecurity. They appeared to view their world as an unpredictable place where their access to materials was constantly threatened. This feeling may be a response to the precarious nature of the larger economic environment.

> In the block area the track pieces were in a pile on the floor. Jason was building a track. Nico approached and Jason sat on top of the pile of track pieces. Every time Nico came near, Jason screamed and pointed a track piece at him. "Pow! Pow! Pow! Go away!" Nico finally managed to get a piece. Jason grabbed it back and held Nico at bay with his "gun." Andrea approached, Jason then lay on the pile so it was more covered. Andrea cried, "That isn't fair!" She left, followed by Nico. Jason went back to building his track.

In this observation the stress of protecting one's property is striking. In order to insure exclusive control over the track pieces Jason had to interrupt his project and focus his efforts on scaring off the other children. In this case it is particularly intriguing because there were lots of track pieces. As mentioned previously, the concern about excluding others from resources keeps people in a protective frame of mind, even when they have enough supplies to fill their needs.

Another feature of the observed ownership episodes was the idea that ownership often extended beyond an actual object and included any action related to it. Statements such as, "Hide it so no one can see it," or "Don't touch that; it's mine!" or, "You can't look at this" suggest that even someone seeing or touching an object constitutes a threat to ownership. This concept was well illustrated by one child who angrily yelled when another child came over to look at her book, "He's looking at my book! He's doing something of mine!" She apparently felt that, not only the book itself, but looking at it, also belonged to her. Susan Isaacs (1972), in her accounts of the Malting House School, described children's sense of property about nursery rhymes and songs that they had learned at home. In her observations, this idea of possession included the belief that ideas were "theirs" if they thought or said them first. This notion is reflected in our adult world where discoveries,

ideas and inventions are well protected and often concealed. This denial of access to intangible items such as songs, underscores the exclusive nature of ownership. It is also likely that these statements reflect previous exposure to materials and places that the children were not allowed to touch and explore.

It is important to consider the children's concerns with ownership in terms of their environment. Ownership is contagious; if one person claims possession then everyone else must follow suit. Otherwise, the nonowners lose all access to resources. Children are often forced into claiming ownership in order to gain any access.

> Elsie walked over to the sandbox and picked up a car. Jacob hit her, took the car and said, "That's mine." Elsie then picked up a roller. Joshua screamed and pulled it away. Elsie then dug with her hands until she found a shovel that was buried.

The observation ends at this point, however, if another child had approached Elsie at that time and asked for the shovel, she very likely might have responded in a protective way.

In sum, ownership concerns have a strong impact on children's interactions with the physical and social world. Often, these concerns interrupt or terminate the children's previous involvement. The intensity of these concerns frequently overwhelms the children's awareness of their own goals and self-interest, as well as others' needs and reactions. In other cases, however, children use the control

of resources as a means to gain social power. The intensity around property issues suggests that children have already incorporated the distrust and anxiety of their competitive and insecure economic environment. Children's articulated rules regarding ownership reflect both the exclusive nature and permanence of ownership as it exists in the larger social context.

Ownership and Other Social Behaviors

Ownership and Prosocial Behavior. In the previous chapter the quantifiable findings of this study indicated that ownership and prosocial behavior were less likely to occur in the same social interaction. There were, however, some interactions where the two types of behavior did coexist.

One pattern that emerged was that of children helping each other by protecting each other's property. One example of this type of interaction follows.

> Winifred and Gary were playing with a mask. Gary left briefly and June came over and asked to see the mask. Winifred replied, "No! It's Gary's." She placed it in front of Gary and then said, "Can I have it?" He agreed and she played with it.

In this episode Winifred appeared to be using a prosocial behavior in order to maintain her control of the mask. By "protecting" Gary's mask from June and then, having done Gary a favor, asking him if she could have it, Winifred was able to keep the mask without having to directly confront June. This example demonstrates a more "socially acceptable"

way of maintaining ownership than the more overt behaviors that have been described previously.

The concern over another's property was also used in attempts to be included in the group.

> Gabriel and Keith were talking angrily about Josh being in "their" kitchen while they were sitting at the playdough table. A few minutes later Trevor came up and said, "You know Josh is in your kitchen again!" and waited (as though looking for instructions from them). His attempt to join the other two failed, however, because as he talked, he leaned on Keith's chair and Keith said angrily, "This is _my_ chair!" and Keith got up and left.

Here it appeared that Trevor was attempting to join with Keith and Gabriel by using a common target (Joshua). He appealed to their wish to protect "their" kitchen. Another noteworthy incident in the preceding observation was that Trevor's "helpful" overture was deflected because of an ownership concern. Keith responded to the perceived threat to his chair, not to Trevor's attempt to be helpful. The ownership concern superseded the prosocial effort and, in fact, essentially terminated the interaction.

There were other instances where attempts to help stimulated a protective response. A couple examples of this pattern follow.

> Diane and Jeffrey were working on puzzles. Jeffrey was having a hard time fitting a piece in. Diane said, "I'll help you." and picked up another piece and started to put it in. Jeffrey grabbed it and said, "No! That's mine!"

> Andrea spilled some juice at snack. The teacher handed her a sponge. Joey, who was sitting next to Andrea, said, "I'll help you clean it up." and reached for the sponge. Andrea quickly said, "No, it's mine! Let me do it."

In both of these incidents the efforts of one person to help were seen as potential threats to property. It is striking how readily the children felt threatened and ignored the offer of help. These examples suggest that the negative relationship between helping and ownership behaviors may be attributed to the distorting effects of ownership concerns on children's capacities to *receive* help, as well as to *offer* it.

In the statistical results, sharing and ownership frequently appeared in the same interaction. Often the children started sharing an object or space, but then one child would assert more control or take more than was offered and an ownership struggle would ensue. The following example illustrates this point.

> Hannah and Lisa were sitting next to each other at lunch. Lisa was sharing her raisins with Hannah. Hannah reached over and took a handful of raisins. Lisa cried out, "Hey! She's eating all of mine!" and quickly pulled her bag away.

Here Lisa's willingness to share quickly ended when Hannah took more than was offered. Her intrusion stimulated Lisa's need to protect her raisins and the reciprocal interaction ended. Again, as with helping, the dominance of ownership concerns may inhibit the children's abilities to receive prosocial gestures, as well as to offer them. This episode also illustrates the contagion of ownership. If one child takes more than is offered, the other one responds with anger and distrust and so the cycle of possession is started.

Sometimes offers and admonishments to share were made in a manipulative effort to gain possession of an object. Statements such as, "Let me have it, I'll share it!" were often spoken in the heat of an ownership conflict. In general, the offer was not genuine, as the following example shows.

> Karen and James were playing with the peg boards. Karen was holding a peg and James grabbed it; Karen held on and they pulled it back and forth, both yelling "I found it first!" Then James said, "I'm going to share it!" and pinched her cheek. Karen let go and picked up another peg; James then reached for the second peg saying, "Let me see it! I'll share it!" When Karen held on, he picked up a chair and knocked her over with it.

While James was familiar with the word and meaning of "sharing," he was obviously using it as a ploy to persuade Karen to give him the peg. The intensity of this dispute is intriguing since there was a whole box of pegs (that was overturned in the scuffle) right next to the children.

The children also admonished each other about sharing as a means of gaining access to an object.

> Will had a small box of candy that he was holding tightly. Four children were around him trying to convince him to give them some candy. Each one said at least once, "You're selfish. You have to share."

Here, the children were obviously familiar with the social convention of sharing, but were viewing it only as potential recipients. As a means of pressuring the current possessor, "share" functioned as a demand rather than a prosocial gesture in this instance.

In sum, as seen from the quantifiable data, prosocial behavior was rarely observed in ownership episodes. Moreover, when this combination did occur, the ownership concerns usually disrupted and ended the prosocial part of the interaction. Another interesting twist that reflected some social knowledge was the children's use of prosocial words and forms to gain or maintain propriety over the objects or to exclude others from access.

Ownership and Affiliative Behavior. The relationship between affiliation and ownership is complex. In the observational data all but two of the measures of affiliation occurred less frequently in ownership interactions. Despite this low incidence, there were some interesting ownership/affiliation combinations in the naturalistic data.

Ownership episodes frequently discouraged affiliative attempts of some children. Some of the shyer children, in particular, often withdrew in the face of ownership disputes.

> Josh was building a train track. Barry was playing with two pieces of the train. He approached Josh and sat down next to him and started putting his train on the track. Josh screamed and grabbed part of the train from Barry. Barry looked and then put the other part of the train on the track. Josh then grabbed that from Barry who then left the area.

Here some timid efforts at initiating interactions were thwarted by the other child's need to exclude him from the train materials. As previously mentioned in reference to prosocial behavior, ownership concerns seem to distort

children's perceptions so that an affiliative gesture was often seen as a threat to one's property.

Interestingly, ownership concerns sometimes stimulated social interactions. Some of the more reticent children became more outspoken when they wanted something or when they were faced with loss. While these interactions were not really friendly, these shy children were more engaged than they usually were.

> Leila, who rarely interacted with the other children, went over to the sandbox and sat down. Jacob picked up a cow. Leila said, "No, let me have that. You can have these (spoons)." They exchanged objects. Later, Leila directed Jacob not to fill in her hole. "It has my cow in it." Jacob agreed.

In this instance, Leila's desire to have the cow and her sense of propriety over it led her to do more negotiating and interacting with another child than she generally did. Another child who was very shy became the center of a great deal of attention when he came to school with a box of candy. He experienced, briefly, the power of possession as he refused the other children's requests. In the end he went off with one of the most sought after children. Here, at a three-year-old level, is an example of social power accorded to those who have what other people want or need.

One aspect of affiliation that was discussed earlier is the dimension of inclusion and exclusion. In the following observation, two children are playing together; one is reacting in an exclusionary fashion to the other children, while the other is being more inclusive in his responses.

> Glen and Will were playing on a carpeted platform. Keith came over to them. Will said, "We don't like you; we don't want you." Keith left and Glen called out, "You can stay!" Then Josh approached and said, "I like you. Don't make so much noise." Will hit him with a nerf ball. Glen said, "Okay, I'll stop." Then Josh and Will hit each other until Will started to cry.

Another juxtaposition of affiliative and ownership behaviors is found in the cooperative-exclusive interactions. In these episodes usually two children cooperated and united to keep a third child out of the group or area. A few examples of this phenomenon follow.

> Trevor and Allison were playing in the house. Trevor was "going to the store and getting dinner" for Allison. Karine walked in; Trevor said, "Get out of here!" in a loud voice. Then he turned back to Allison and said, "Do you want some cake?" She said, "Yes." Trevor passed her a plate. When Allison said, "That's good!" Trevor replied, "I made it for you. You can have it all!" Karine came back in again and Trevor shouted, "Get out of here, dummy! You can't be in our house!" Allison watched, but did not intervene. Trevor then said, "I'll fix dinner . . . I'll make the pie." Allison agreed. Then Trevor noticed Karine lying outside of the house on a pillow. "You are the dog!" he said angrily.

The shifts in Trevor's moods were striking; he varied between eagerly trying to please Allison to angrily excluding Karine. It appears that Trevor was really trying to exclude others from his interaction with Allison, rather than the space or any objects. He was adamant in keeping Karine (usually Allison's constant companion) away from the scene and, meanwhile, was almost servile with Allison.

This concern with owning friends and forming exclusive partnerships emerged as a theme with some of the older

children. One child in particular (the oldest boy) almost continuously asked people if they were his friend. In some cases the effort to keep the relationship exclusive appeared.

> Jeff and Martha were sitting on the tire swing (large enough for four to five children). Lewis came over and asked if he could get on. Jeff said, "No;" Martha said, "Yes." Jeff said again, "No, you're not our friend." Martha then said, "He's my friend." Jeff agreed to let Lewis on after Lewis agreed that he was Jeff's friend. Lewis asked that they not go fast. Jeff immediately made the swing go fast. Lewis shouted, "Stop!" They stopped and he got off.

Here Jeff tried several ways and was eventually successful in keeping the third person from entering his social interaction. Again, we see the exclusive nature of ownership; Martha cannot be Jeff's and Lewis's friend at the same time. As with the previous example, Jeff appeared to be more concerned about keeping his relationship with Martha exclusive than protecting the space on the swing. Interestingly, even when no third party was threatening his interactions, Jeff tried to establish some control over a potential "friend."

> Jeff and Matthew were drawing at a table. Jeff asked Matthew, "Do you like what I'm making?" No response from Matthew. Jeff: "Are you my friend?" Matthew did not respond. Jeff then said, "Will you play with me once in awhile?" Still Matthew did not reply. Jeff then said, "You have to." The two boys continued to draw. Jeff let Matthew use his paper. Then Jeff said, "You know what? I'm glad you're here with me." Then Matthew walked away. Jeff watched him.

This rather poignant scene reflects not only the need to establish claims over other people, but also the insecurity felt as a result of many exclusionary interactions in the

classroom. Jeff had been kept out of several of the diads and, consequently, appeared to be trying to establish some relationships through the same exclusive means.

Another facet of the affiliative-ownership relationship is the exchange value of friendship, which was sometimes a means instead of an end. The following dialogue exemplifies this pattern.

Diane: "Can I have one of your people (small doll)?"
Karen: "No."
Diane: "Please! I'll be your friend."
Karen: "No, James is my friend."

Diane is trying to procure a doll by offering her friendship in exchange. While in this incident, the doll was the goal and the friendship the means, at other times the situation was reversed. Statements such as, "if I give you this truck will you be my friend?" were examples of bargaining in order to obtain friendship. Interestingly, Karen refuses because she is someone else's friend; she perceives herself as the exclusive property of James.

There are many nuances in the interaction between affiliative and ownership behavior. Ownership concerns both terminate and stimulate social behavior. In addition, friendships often become ownership relationships, or are used to gain control over resources. The exclusiveness of the children's interactions reflected the previously described contrast between the European and Polynesian children. In some cases, the subjects of this study appeared more concerned with protecting a relationship then enjoying it.

Ownership and Aggression. Many of the previous quotations have included examples of the relationship between ownership and aggression. Clearly, from all the statistical results, there is a strong relationship between these two behaviors. It is obvious that the struggle over ownership often involves aggressive acts or statements that are attempts to intimidate or eliminate the opposition. The following examples illustrate this point.

> Carl was riding a tricycle when Jason came and asked him if he could use the bike. Carl did not answer and Jason sat down on the front wheel. Carl kicked Jason and tried to pedal the bike. He then tried to push him from the bike. Jason remained.

> James walked over to the rocker boat where Daryl was sitting. James said, "He's in my boat! Get out!!" He then got into the rocker, sat on Daryl and then jumped on his foot. Daryl cried and left.

> Matthew was playing with the telephone. Brian asked if he could have it. As he reached for it, Matthew bit his arm (mostly his sleeve). Brian did not react. Then Matthew hit him on the head with the telephone and Brian cried.

In the preceding examples, children were using aggression to either gain possession over an object or to exclude others from it.

On occasion, ownership was used as a means of retaliating an aggressive action.

> Deidre and Audrey were at the sandbox. For no obvious reason (at least none that the observer could detect) Deidre pushed Audrey and said, "I don't like you." Audrey then snatched Deidre's spoon and cup with which she had been working. Deidre cried out, "That's mine!"

In this case, taking the other child's possession was an aggressive action. Here, Audrey correctly predicted that losing a possession would be an effective revenge.

Finally, playful aggression and ownership were sometimes combined as children teased each other by threatening to take away a possession or intrude on a claimed territory.

> Billy and Matthew were in the house, it was barricaded. Amy and Darlene ran to the windows and said, "We're coming in!" The boys replied, "Pow, pow" and pointed some blocks (guns) at the girls. They ran off in gales of laughter. Then they returned to the window. This sequence was repeated several times. It was generally playful, although there were some points where it appeared to be serious.

Here, the two girls were playing on the boys' desire to maintain exclusive control over the house. All four children shared an understanding of ownership and its exclusive nature and were teasing each other with it.

The relationship between ownership and aggression emerged frequently. Most commonly, aggression occurred when a child was frustrated in his or her efforts to possess an object or wanted to maintain exclusive jurisdiction over a particular resource. On occasion, children used ownership disputes or claims as a form of aggression.

<u>Ownership and Competitive Behavior</u>. There were very few recorded competitive behaviors. Therefore, it is impossible to delineate any patterns between these two behaviors. Clearly all ownership disputes have an element of competition. If two children want to get the same tricycle, they

will race each other to get there first. However, the motivation is not outdoing each other or achieving recognition at the other's expense, it is gaining possession of that tricycle. As children increase their skills and mastery, and as they notice others' performances more, then competition is more likely to emerge. While Rutherford and Mussen (1968) were able to induce competition in pre-schoolers under laboratory conditions (i.e., "racing" the child through a maze), it rarely appeared in the naturalistic data in this study.

Summary

The observations have demonstrated the powerful effect of ownership on young children's involvements with both the social and physical world. In general, it inhibits or disrupts prosocial and affiliative behaviors and is likely to stimulate aggression. However, each episode contains many facets that are more complex than the general results and trends found in the quantifiable data. The accounts of the specific social events add to the richness of our understanding of the relationships reported in the previous chapter.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This concluding chapter includes a discussion of the findings of the study in terms of the questions and hypotheses presented in the initial chapter. Then, educational implications drawn from the results are considered. Finally, ideas for future research on the issue of ownership and social interactions are offered.

Findings of the Study

The central purpose of this study was the examination of ownership in young children's social interactions. The first task was to determine the frequency and types of ownership behaviors. The major study then focused on the correlations between ownership involvement and other social behaviors. The major hypothesis was that ownership is negatively correlated with unifying social behaviors and positively correlated with antagonistic or alienating social behaviors.

The Frequency of Ownership Behaviors. The frequency of ownership was determined by looking at the percentage of interactions that had one or more of the four ownership

behaviors: initiating a dispute, claiming with no dispute, defending property or excluding from a group or space. Over half of the interactions (57.5%) included an ownership episode. This finding indicates that, for this group of children, ownership is a major theme in the social interactions. While the children in this sample have not yet been exposed to the school system, they have, like most pre-schoolers in this country, experienced many of the other elements of "economization" that were previously described. They have had the tantalizing and frustrating experiences of shopping, watching commercials and being excluded from toys and places belonging to others. Moreover, most families in this country experience some degree of economic stress; the families of the subjects in this study are no exception. In many cases the families at the University Day School have precarious and meager incomes. Many of the parents are students who are surviving on part-time jobs, assistantships, loans and welfare. Most of them are "temporarily" poor, in that they are getting training that they hope will provide them with better jobs. However, at this point in their lives, financial concerns are a major theme for many of these families. Many of the children may have incorporated these feelings of insecurity and, at the same time, may have been denied desired toys and equipment because of the lack of money. I am not in any way implying that ownership concerns are limited to children and families

who have or are experiencing scarcity. In fact, some studies have indicated that the children of the rich tend to depend upon and derive much of their sense of identity from their possessions (Coles, 1977). While the relationship of economic class to young children's ownership behavior is beyond the scope of this study, it is important to consider what specific kinds of economic stress a particular group of children may be experiencing.

The children's experience at the University Day School, even though in some cases it had been only a few months of time, probably has also contributed to their sense of ownership. Possessiveness is contagious. If one person begins to exclude others from resources, the latter are forced to follow suit or lose all access to the available materials. Thus, even if some children had been raised in less ownership oriented households than others, they quickly learned the importance of claiming and protecting property once they were in school.

In the descriptive accounts of ownership behavior in chapter 4, the readiness with which the children became involved in ownership disputes at the expense of other kinds of social involvement was striking. Usually, any potential threat to their ownership claim immediately captivated their attention and became the focus of the interaction. In view of this frequent pattern, it is not surprising that over half of the interactions had some ownership behaviors present.

The outcomes of ownership episodes usually (68%) involved someone losing and someone winning. These findings illustrate the exclusive nature of ownership. Owners and nonowners are mutually exclusive groups. If one owns something, then the other person cannot. Thus, winning or losing are practically inevitable.

The next most frequent outcome was the termination of the interaction. This finding lends support to the notion that property and ownership are alienating influences as they create social separation. As it was seen in the descriptive accounts, ownership episodes often involved exclusion, aggression, loss and denial of access. It is understandable, therefore, that children would frequently leave an interaction that was ownership oriented.

Objects of Disputes and Environmental Factors. The objects of the ownership episodes were most often inanimate objects; secondly, space and thirdly, people. The first were usually disputes between two individuals, whereas the space disputes often involved two children excluding a third.

The objects that were most likely to be disputed were "manipulatives" which include beads, legos, puzzles and unifix cubes; art materials such as scissors, crayons, paints, paper and collage materials; and housekeeping materials such as plates and dishes. With few exceptions these materials are ones which only one child can play with at a time. They do not provide obvious or even possible

ways for children to share or cooperate in their work with them. (The primary exception is the housekeeping materials which are often used in cooperative role play activities.) In contrast, the fewest ownership episodes were in the gym area where the equipment is large and usually can accommodate more than one child at a time. Thus, the type of materials appears to have some relationship to the amount of ownership episodes. Equipment which requires cooperation or, at least, can accommodate more than one child may reduce the frequency of ownership episodes.

The spaces that were involved in ownership episodes were divided between "places" (at a table, sand table or water table) and closed areas such as a single entranced loft or the house with a single doorway. The issues involving "places" sometimes involved crowding around a limited area such as the water or sand table. Other "place" disputes occurred when a child left and then returned to find someone else in his or her spot. There was also an affiliation-ownership type of "place" conflict when children would claim an area in order to save a seat for a friend. The incidents of conflict over the single entranced areas are easily understood. These places were easily barracaded and turned into exclusive territories. Ironically, these areas were designed to provide children with privacy and quiet. Instead they were often the scene of noisy territorial conflicts. While this outcome may, in part, be the

result of less firm limits set by the inexperienced and somewhat inconsistent staff at the University Day School, they do raise the question of how to provide enclosed and private areas for children without stimulating territorial disputes. A study of the differential effects of single versus multiple entrances might yield some interesting results. This tendency for children to claim space as their own may reflect the child rearing emphasis on providing children with their "own" room. It also may stem from early experiences of being excluded from others' spaces.

The few ownership episodes involving people as the object were primarily those initiated by the child described in chapter 4 who was very concerned about establishing friendships. He tried to maintain or gain control of various children by a combination of affiliative and exclusionary behaviors which were previously described. This effort to gain social acceptance and companionship through "owning" another person reflects social institutions such as marriage that equate exclusiveness with trust and intimacy. Again, because of the competitive nature of the society as a whole, the only way to develop a relationship of trust is to unite together against the outside world. This child, who was often the target of exclusionary behavior, was trying to gain a social foothold by the same means.

The clarity of boundaries appeared to be somewhat related to the incidence of ownership behaviors. The block area, where both materials and space must be negotiated, was the location with the highest percentage of ownership disputes. This finding was similar to that of a previous study of the effect environmental settings have on disputes (Houseman, 1972). The lack of articulated boundaries is probably a strong factor in the findings that indicated that disputes were most likely to occur when the children were using one or a few objects that had to be shared. It might, therefore, be assumed that, if each child has his or her own object, then disputes would be eliminated. However, the findings revealed that, even when children had their own materials, there was still a 55% rate of ownership disputes. This distribution did not significantly diminish the number of ownership episodes. The difficulty that children have in negotiating shared space and materials may be linked to the fact that, at home they are accustomed to having their own space and toys and, therefore, have to adjust their expectations in order to accommodate to the needs of the other children. Moreover, in the observations, teachers frequently resolved conflicts by giving each child one of the desired objects. While this intervention is frequently the most efficient way of ending the quarrel, it also supports the notion that harmony is achieved by individual ownership. The child's focus and motivation,

therefore, remains with gaining possession of an object, rather than learning how to collectively use it.

These findings suggest that certain environmental factors such as types of space and the amount and size of materials affect the incidence of ownership behaviors. In general, objects and space that are small and have limited access were seen to be the most frequently associated with ownership disputes.

Behavioral Patterns Correlated with Level of Ownership Orientation in Individual Children. The findings of the naturalistic data and the teachers' ratings supported the hypothesis that children who were more ownership oriented would be less prosocially inclined. However, the naturalistic data yielded significant results with only one of the prosocial indices, helping, whereas the teachers' ratings yielded a stronger negative relationship between ownership and prosocial behavior. This discrepancy illustrates a difference between behavioral data and teachers' perceptions. The teachers' images appeared more consistent than the actual behavior. This tendency was particularly obvious in the correlation of the prosocial dimensions. At any rate, it appears that there are some differences in the social behavior between children who are more or less ownership oriented. Children who are engaged in more ownership episodes, less frequently responded prosocially. Given the exclusive nature of ownership, it is expected

that children who are more frequently concerned about owning are less likely to demonstrate concern for other people, since more of their interactions would involve competitive struggles. Also, as the analysis of the ownership versus nonownership interactions revealed, the former tend to have fewer prosocial behaviors. Therefore, if a child is spending a higher proportion of his or her time involved in ownership interactions, then, it is reasonable to suppose that less of it is spent prosocially. Another element to consider is the expectations of others. Since prosocial behaviors are defined as responses to another's need, they are somewhat dependent on the opportunities presented. If a child tends to be primarily focused on gaining possession of objects and unavailable to help others, then, over a period of time, other people stop asking or expecting aid from that child. Thus, the expectations of others might affect the number of prosocial responses. While there was no measure of the children's views of each other, the teachers' ratings suggest that the adults in the classroom had fairly unified and set ideas about who was prosocially oriented and who was not. It has been well documented (Leacock, 1969) that teacher expectations influence children's behavior and level of achievement. Thus, there may be an interactive and accumulative effect between ownership involvement, prosocial responses and expectations of others in the behavioral differentiations of high owners and low

owners.

Contrary to the findings in the observational data and teachers' ratings, the results of the correlational analysis of ownership behaviors and the findings on the Prosocial Assessment Procedure did not support the hypothesis regarding the negative relationship between prosocial behavior and ownership. In fact, one score of helping was positively correlated with ownership involvement. As previously discussed, this discrepancy raises some questions about what factors other than prosocial behaviors these procedures may evoke. One confounding variable that may have been particularly important was the fact that the procedure was administered around the presentation of a "new" game. Eagerness to help may have been an effort to hasten the arrival of the game. One child, who tended to be highly ownership oriented, jumped up to help with surprising alacrity. Interestingly, he also ran around the room looking for the "other pole" for the fishing game so that he would not have to share his. The use of prosocial behaviors as means of gaining and keeping possession of an object was also described in an earlier chapter. This speculation touches on the issue of intentionality. Are actions that are prosocial in form, but used to manipulate others prosocial? This study did not measure the variable of intention, but it is a provocative issue in relationship to ownership. Particularly as children get older and become

more covert in their efforts to possess, the use of affiliative and prosocial behaviors to this end and may increase.

From the observed behavior and the teacher ratings, there appears to be some support for the hypothesis that more highly ownership oriented children will be less prosocially oriented. These findings concur with the central thesis of this study, that ownership concerns exert a negative influence on social relationships.

The negative relationship between affiliative behaviors and ownership involvement emerged strongly in the naturalistic findings, but only slightly in the teachers' ratings. This inconsistency may be, in part, due to the fact that affiliative behavior is viewed as more neutral (in contrast to the "good" prosocial behavior) and, therefore, makes less of an impression in the teachers' minds. In addition, there was only one general measure for affilation on the teachers' ratings, in contrast to the many behavioral indices in the behavioral data. Therefore, the behavioral affiliation scores represent the conglomeration of many specific behaviors. The teachers' ratings only represent a singular impression.

The negative correlation between affiliative and ownership behaviors supports the central theme of the study, that ownership concerns are an alienating force in social relationships. The children who spend more time involved

with possessing objects and space are less likely to respond to others in an affiliative way. The negative relationship was particularly strong between ownership and cooperation. Cooperative social interaction requires a considerable amount of trust between the people involved. If one person is highly ownership oriented, he or she may try to exclude the other(s) from the common materials or space. This behavior is often contagious, as previously described, and undoubtedly prevents or inhibits cooperative ventures. Moreover, there is probably also an interactive effect here. The children who are more often vying with others for control of resources may also be less frequently approached by other children. Thus, their opportunities for some affiliative behaviors, such as "responding to affiliative overtures" may be fewer than the less ownership oriented children.

The positive correlation between ownership involvement and aggression also supports the main thesis that ownership exerts an antagonistic and alienating influence on social interactions. Since most of the aggressive actions recorded in the naturalistic data were ownership related, it is obvious that the highly ownership oriented children would be the more aggressive. In both the teachers' ratings and in the naturalistic data this relationship emerges strongly.

Many theories and studies have established a close relationship between frustration and aggression (Berkowitz,

1962; Dollard et al., 1939). Clearly the exposure to inaccessible resources is a source of frustration. When a child sees an object, but is confronted with a defensive action of another child, it is likely to stimulate frustration and then aggression. There are differences between the protective/aggression on the part of the defender and the frustration/aggression of the seeker. One is tantalized and wants to gain access to an object or space; the other one is trying to maintain her or his sole jurisdiction over it. This dynamic appears in the larger social context at all levels: between individuals, groups and classes. At the root of it is the effort to gain the right to exclude others from resources.

Despite the obvious and strong connections between ownership and aggression, it should not be concluded that it is a linearly causative relationship. There are mutual effects between the two dimensions. For instance, children who have developed some confidence in their aggressive skills are probably bolder in their ownership demands, and thus more frequently involved in disputes. Also, as mentioned previously, ownership is sometimes used as a form of aggression, as well as aggression serving as a means to gain ownership.

In sum, there is a strong association between ownership and aggression. Aggression most frequently occurred as a means to gain or protect possession of objects or

space by injuring or intimidating another person. The elimination of property would probably not end aggression, but it is clear that, for this group of subjects, it stimulates a considerable amount of this type of behavior. In this society, children are tantalized by resources to which they cannot have access and are taught to protect those that they do control. The frustration and protectiveness that evolve as responses to these experiences inevitably stimulate the development of aggressive feelings and skills.

The relationship between competition and ownership is difficult to establish due to the small numbers of competitive behaviors recorded in the naturalistic data. The teachers' ratings did indicate that highly ownership children were highly competitive and that children low in one were low in the other. Thus, there is some substantiation for the hypothesized relationship between high ownership orientation and competitiveness. This relationship might be more productively studied with older children who are more likely to be competitive. It would be interesting to examine the interaction between ownership and competition in these cases. Some studies looking at the effect of reward systems (Crockenberg et al., 1976) have indicated that the anticipation of gaining an individual reward (which relates to one's ownership interests) increases competition. Thus, ownership might be viewed as a motivational factor in

competition. This malleability of competition, also an important point to consider, is reflected in the contrast between the findings here and those of Rutherford and Mussen's study (1968). In the earlier study the investigators were able to induce competition in pre-schoolers, whereas little emerged spontaneously with the same aged children in the present study. While this difference may reflect some variations in the sample groups, it does suggest that competition is influenced by environmental conditions.

The age and sex differences between the high and low owners were not very pronounced. However, the boys tended to be more involved in ownership than girls and more often won the disputes. This finding supports the hypothesis that boys, who are more influenced through same-sex role models and future work roles to develop more dominant characteristics, would be more likely to be involved and successful in ownership disputes. Even more striking was the qualitative difference between the boys and girls' styles of pursuing ownership that emerged in the examples described in chapter 4. In this sample the boys appeared to be more direct and more readily aggressive in their efforts to maintain or gain ownership than the girls were. The girls appeared to be equally persistent, but used more affiliative or prosocial behaviors to achieve their ends. A future study of ownership might include some indices for

level of intensity and directness and an analysis of these items by sex differences. It appears that the variations by sex may be qualitative as well as quantitative.

Behavioral Differences in Ownership and Nonownership Interactions. The analysis of the types of behaviors found in ownership and nonownership interactions showed the same trends that were apparent in the analysis of individual children's behavior. In general, ownership interactions had fewer prosocial and affiliative responses and more aggressive actions than nonownership interactions. Because of the nature of the data, inferential statistical analyses could not be used. However, the descriptive statistics demonstrated strong and consistent trends that supported the predictions. The difference between the two types of interactions suggests that ownership episodes influenced the immediate behaviors of most of the children, not just the highly ownership oriented ones. When the differential behaviors under the two conditions were cross tabulated for each child separately, the effects showed up in most of the children. In other words, there were not just a few children whose production of prosocial, affiliative or aggressive behavior changed dramatically between the two types of interactions, but it was a general trend for the whole group.

The earlier analysis of the specific interactions provided some insights into why there were definite

behavioral differences between the nonownership and ownership interactions. The disruptive and inhibiting effect of ownership episodes on affiliative and prosocial behaviors was often quite dramatic. Likewise, the stimulation effect on aggression was also very clear. The power of ownership was repeatedly evident. Not only did it obliterate other kinds of involvement, it also provided a source of social control. By excluding others from desired resources, children achieved a dominant social position. This dominance, in turn, exerted an alienating influence on the interaction. Moreover, the withholding of resources stimulated ownership behaviors and sometimes aggression from the children. Thus, one child's ownership involvement often drew in several others.

Relative Effects of Individual Subjects and the Presence of Ownership Episodes on Social Behavior. Since it was established that the predicted behavioral patterns emerged, both in the correlational analyses of individual children and in the examination of the behavioral differences between ownership and nonownership interactions, the following questions emerged: were these correlations and trends caused by the personality characteristics of more and less ownership oriented children, or were they caused by the impact of ownership episodes on all of the children? Clearly a definite causative relationship could not be established. However, the relative predictive powers of

these two variables were examined in a series of regression analyses. The results showed that for prosocial and aggressive behavior, both individual subjects and the presence of ownership were significant predictors. On the other hand, for affiliative behavior, ownership was the only significant predictor. Thus, both individual traits and the occurrence of ownership episodes influence social behavior. In order to more fully articulate the relative influence of ownership as a situational factor and ownership as a personality trait, more precise analysis is required. A coding system that captured the temporal sequence of events and all the subjects in each interaction would help in this study.

Conclusion. Ownership is a prevalent and powerful influence in children's social interactions. Children who spend proportionally more of their time involved in ownership episodes appear to spend less of it responding prosocially and affiliatively and are more likely to be involved in aggressive interaction. The reverse appears to be true for the children who are less ownership oriented. However, because of its exclusive nature, ownership stimulates antagonistic and separating behaviors and inhibits or disrupts positive and unifying responses for most children, regardless of their individual traits. In this society where a basic tenet is "I am what I have," one's property must necessarily be a primary focus even at the expense of

social comfort and trust. Ironically, this concern only stimulates more needs, and any security derived from possessing is diminished by the antagonistic social climate.

Educational Implications

Clearly, what happens at school is a minor influence in the face of the economic realities that have been described. However, it is important that educators realize the extent of social and economic pressure to own that is exerted on themselves and the children. Social goals for children, such as sharing, helping and cooperating, should be viewed with this understanding. Children are often the recipients of contradicting messages. While they are rewarded for owning, they are, at the same time, admonished to be generous and sharing. Individual children should not be simply blamed for their inability to establish positive social behaviors, but rather viewed in light of the kinds of economic and social pressures that they are experiencing. Class differences should be considered. While all children in this society experience the world in terms of owning and nonowning, this experience differs in terms of intensity, level of expectations and degree of deprivation.

Helping children understand the exclusive nature of ownership and its impact on social interactions should be another goal of educators. Often pre-school efforts to have the children become cooperative are thwarted by the

intrusion of ownership behaviors. Rather than simply be told that they have to share, children need to understand more fully the immediate social consequences of excluding others. Obviously, for young children, their limited role-taking abilities and lack of experience pose some limits on how much they are able to grasp about social dynamics. However, by exposing children to alternative ways of interacting with others, they can gain a new perspective on the effects of exclusive ownership. By providing experiences that contradict the economic and social emphasis on ownership, schools can foster critical understanding of this issue. In this society, children generally receive less reinforcement for positive social interactions than they do for individual achievements and products. While they are congratulated for finishing a puzzle, reciting the alphabet or painting a picture, they are less likely to be praised for including another child, sharing an object or working cooperatively. In fact, working cooperatively becomes "cheating" in most school systems. It might be an interesting study to see the different amounts and kinds of reinforcement children receive for social and nonsocial efforts and accomplishments. Teachers, by more directly encouraging and recognizing children's positive social responses, may be able to increase children's appreciation and motivation to engage in positive social interactions. As a result, the debilitating and disruptive effect of

ownership episodes might be reduced. Rather than seeing only the advantages of gaining exclusive possession of a particular object, children might see some of the social disadvantages of such an outcome. With age and more peer involvement this change occurs to some extent anyway. However, many friendships are built on exclusive relationships in a climate of social distrust.

One difficulty for teachers, if they want to address the issue of ownership, is the extent to which it permeates their own reactions and views. The naturalistic data of this study included many examples of teachers inadvertantly reinforcing the ownership ethic, despite their awareness (through their participation in this study) of some of the negative effects that it has. There were many reprimands such as, "You can't have that; it's April's; she brought it from home!", "Give that back to him; he had it first," and "Everyone will have their own, so you don't need to fight." Conflicts were often resolved by removing the object, returning it to the original owner or by giving each child his or her own. Sometimes the teachers told the children to share but rarely spent the time to help them actually do it. The teachers are not solely responsible for these reactions. Often the materials themselves were very difficult to be shared or used cooperatively. Still, there were many reinforcements for gaining possession ("Billy, why don't you come up in front of the group and show us

your new Star Wars book.") and many for not sharing them. ("Now take it back to your cubbie so that the other children won't take it.") Understanding the depth and extent to which ownership shapes our physical, cognitive and social constructs of the world is a necessary first step in dealing with this issue in an educational environment.

It is unrealistic to think that educational change would have much impact on children's ideas and needs for owning in the face of the economic realities and social pressures. Still, if educators can support the development of children's capacities to appreciate, enjoy and learn from the physical and social world in a less exploitive way, these children may grow up to resist the encroachment, disruption and insecurities that emerge from the pressures of ownership.

Future Research

There are many directions for possible future research related to the issue of ownership and social relationships. In terms of refining the present study, the behavioral measures could be expanded to provide more insight into the complexities and subtleties of ownership. For instance, the differential effect of intensity, the role of intentions and the behavioral patterns of the children who are targets of ownership overtures are only a few of the dimensions that might be examined. Also, the study of the impact of

ownership concerns on a child's interactions with the physical world might yield some insights into the effect of protectiveness with learning, exploring and creativity. Other personality variables such as level of security and self-concept might also be analyzed in relationship to children's level of ownership involvement. The observational data provided the richest and clearest data for this study. The comparative results between the sources of data suggest that the observations also provided the most authentic information. It did not have the evaluative bias of the teachers' ratings nor the confounding variables of the Prosocial Assessment Procedure. Further study of this issue of ownership would benefit from expanded and refined naturalistic research.

Secondly, comparative studies in a variety of economic and cultural settings would provide more insight into the interactive effect between the development of ownership orientation and the social milieu. This type of research could discover the extent that this behavior emerges from inherent human traits and developmental phases and the extent that it is the incorporation of the economic environment. In addition, alternative styles and techniques for raising and educating children to be less ownership oriented might emerge from investigations in other social milieus.

This study has been an effort to investigate children's development as it reflects and incorporates their social and economic milieu. Too often this context is not considered and the resulting knowledge offers a limited perspective. By studying the dynamic between development and the cultural context, a more complete picture of the growth process emerges. Moreover, the most basic and compelling reason for social change is to enhance and enrich the course of human development. A fuller understanding of the interaction between growth and the social and economic environment will bring us closer to this goal.

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APPENDIX I

CODING SHEET

NAME: ________ OBS: ________ DATE: ________

TIME BEG: ________ TIME END: ________ STATE OF CLASSROOM: ________

ACTIVITY: ________ LOCATION: ________

MATERIALS: ________ AMOUNT: ________

OTHERS PRESENT (INC. TEACHER): ________

SECTION I: PRESENCE OF OWNERSHIP EPISODE(S) YES ___ NO ___

1. S initiates dispute ________
2. S claims/requests with no dispute ________
3. S excludes other(s) from group or space ________
4. S defends property ________
5. S wins struggle ________
6. S yields ________
7. S exchanges ________
8. S leaves situation as a result of dispute or loss ________
9. S seeks teacher ________
10. Teacher intervenes by request ________
11. Teacher intervenes spontaneously ________
12. S inquires about ownership

<u>Objects of Dispute or Claim</u>

1. Inanimate object ________ What? ________
2. Person(s) ________ Whom? ________
3. Space ________ Where? ________

Articulated Rules about Ownership: ________

____

SECTION II: PRESENCE OF PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR

1. S helps other ________
2. S encourages other ________
3. S comforts other ________
4. S expresses concern ________
5. S seeks help for other ________
6. S contributes to social problem solving ________
7. S shares with other ________
   Object of sharing ________

SECTION III: AFFILIATIVE BEHAVIOR

1. S initiates interaction ______________
2. S responds to overture from other ______________
3. S greets other ______________
4. S invites other(s) to join ______________
5. S suggests reciprocal/cooperative arrangement _______
6. S participates in reciprocal/cooperative arrangement ______________
7. S shows affection ______________
8. S promises friendship ______________
9. S imitates or follows other ______________

SECTION IV: NON-INTERACTIVE PLAY

1. S watches other (over 5 secs.) with no interaction ______________
2. S receives overture from other - does not respond ______________
3. S is physically close but appears oblivious _________
4. S leaves other ______________

For Sections V and VI, do not use "P" or "V." Use "O" if aggression or competition is associated with ownership and "N" if it is not.

SECTION V: AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR

PHYSICAL

1. S roughhouses (playful) ______________
2. S hits, kicks, etc. ______________
3. S pushes other away ______________
4. S threatens with a gesture ______________
5. S destroys property ______________

VERBAL

1. S threatens ______________
2. S teases (playful) ______________
3. S taunts ______________
4. S calls names ______________

SECTION VI: COMPETITIVE BEHAVIOR

1. S belittles other's size ______________
2. S belittles other's ability ______________
3. S belittles other's accomplishment ______________
4. S belittles other's possession ______________
5. S verbally intends to "beat" other (i.e., win) ______
6. S physically tries to "beat" other (i.e., win) ______

Noteworthy behaviors that do not fit above categories:

Comments:

A P P E N D I X   I I

PROSOCIAL ASSESSMENT PROCEDURE
OBSERVATION FORM

A B (circle one) DATE: ____________

CHILD'S NAME: ______________ OBSERVER: ________________

Check the appropriate response. Indicate if response was delayed.

<u>HELPING</u>

1. Active indifference _________
2. No apparent notice _________
3. Recognition only _________
4. Concern/Partical attempt to intervene _________
5. Aid _________
6. Aid with special involvement _________

<u>SHARING</u>	<u>COMFORTING</u>
1. ___________	1. ___________
2. ___________	2. ___________
3. ___________	3. ___________
4. ___________	4. ___________
5. ___________	5. ___________
6. ___________	6. ___________

COMMENTS:

APPENDIX III

CROSS TABULATIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS AND OWNERSHIP EPISODES

Location in the Classroom

LOCATION	TABULATED FOR NONOWNERSHIP INTERACTIONS	TABULATED FOR OWNERSHIP INTERACTIONS	TOTAL
Outside	17	16	33
Blocks	9	32	41
Gym	12	7	19
Role Play	9	16	25
Math & Science	14	18	32
Reading Corner	4	12	16
Art	34	36	70
Cubbies	1	0	1
Bathroom/ Kitchen	2	1	3
TOTAL	102	138	240

Type of Activities

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	TABULATED FOR NONOWNERSHIP INTERACTIONS	TABULATED FOR OWNERSHIP INTERACTIONS	TOTAL
Large Muscle	24	17	41
Fantasy/ Role Play	16	24	40
Construction	5	14	19
Art Projects	9	15	24
Listening/ Conversing	14	19	33
Eating	14	6	20
Working with Manipulatives	14	38	52
Music	0	1	1
Cooking	0	1	1
Other	6	3	9
TOTAL	102	138	240

Amount of Materials

AMOUNT OF MATERIALS	TABULATED FOR NONOWNERSHIP INTERACTIONS	TABULATED FOR OWNERSHIP INTERACTIONS	TOTAL
None	20	10	30
Each has Own	21	26	47
One Object to be Shared	19	37	56
Two or Three Objects to be Shared	19	40	59
Many Objects to be Shared	23	25	48
TOTAL	102	138	240

APPENDIX IV

DISTRIBUTIONS OF BEHAVIORAL SUMMARIES OF INDIVIDUALS

BEHAVIOR	RANGE	MEAN
Ownership Involvement	2 - 15	8.9
Initiating Disputes	0 - 5	2.45
Claiming with No Dispute	0 - 3	1.75
Excluding	0 - 4	1.45
Defending	0 - 7	3.25
Prosocial Behavior	0 - 14	6.7
Helping	0 - 8	2.8
Sharing	0 - 7	2.8
Comforting	0 - 3	1.1
Affiliative Behavior	6 - 24	15.0
Initiating Social Interaction	3 - 10	6.2
Including Others	0 - 5	1.9
Responding to Others	0 - 7	3.1
Cooperating	0 - 7	2.5
Being Friendly	0 - 6	1.2
Imitating/ Following	0 - 9	4.4
Aggressive Behavior	0 - 9	3.7
Competitive Behavior	0 - 3	.35

APPENDIX V

CROSS TABULATIONS OF BEHAVIORAL VARIABLES AND OWNERSHIP EPISODES

OTHER BEHAVIORS PRESENT*	NONOWNERSHIP INTERACTIONS N = 102	OWNERSHIP INTERACTIONS N = 138
Prosocial Behavior	58	42
Helping	33	18
Comforting	15	6
Sharing	29	28
Affiliative Behavior	95	96
Initiating Social Interactions	64	62
Responding to Others	40	25
Including	20	12
Cooperating	30	11
Being Friendly	12	15
Aggressive Behavior	15	80
Competitive Behavior	2	5

*Each interaction was considered in terms of presence or absence of these behaviors. Thus, the sum of the subdivisions does not necessarily equal the number in the major divisions.

APPENDIX VI

PERCENTAGE OF OWNERSHIP AND NONOWNERSHIP INTERACTIONS THAT CONTAIN OTHER SOCIAL BEHAVIORS

OTHER SOCIAL BEHAVIORS	NONOWNERSHIP INTERACTIONS	OWNERSHIP INTERACTIONS
Prosocial Behavior	56%	30%
Helping	32%	13%
Comforting	15%	4%
Sharing	28%	20%
Affiliative Behavior	93%	69%
Initiating Social Interactions	62%	44%
Responding to Others	39%	18%
Including Others	20%	8%
Cooperating	29%	8%
Being Friendly	11%	11%
Aggressive Behavior	15%	42%
Competitive Behavior	2%	4%

APPENDIX VII

REGRESSION ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

Each of the social behavioral categories were considered dependent variables in a succession of multiple regressions. All of the variables were dichotomized so that each interaction was analyzed according to the presence or absence of each subject, an ownership episode, prosocial behaviors, affiliative behaviors, acts of aggression and competitive behaviors.

The regression analysis used in this study was a step-wise procedure. Two different regressions were done for each dependent variable. In the first one, the ownership variable was entered on the first step and the subject variables on the second step. In this regression, ownership, by entering on step one, took out all the possible variance first. In the second regression, the subjects were entered on the first step and ownership on the second. This analysis was a more stringent test of the predictive strength of ownership because the subject variables removed as much variance as possible on the first step.

In later analyses, the other behavioral variables, i.e. prosocial, affiliative, aggressive and competitive behaviors, were included as independent variables on the ownership step. All the behavioral variables were then selected into the equation one at a time. The relative predictive strength among the behavioral variables was thus measured.

APPENDIX VIII

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE TABLES

SOURCE	SUM OF SQUARES	DEGREES OF FREEDOM	MEAN SQUARES	F
Prediction of Prosocial Behavior				
Part I				
Ownership	4.10	1	4.10	19.50**
Subjects	9.10	19	.47	2.23**
Residual	45.21	220	.21	
Part II				
Subjects	10.16	19	.53	2.52**
Ownership	2.95	1	2.95	14.05**
Residual	45.22	220	.21	
Prediction of Affiliative Behavior				
Part I				
Ownership	3.26	1	3.26	21.70**
Subjects	3.11	19	.16	1.06
Residual	32.62	220	.15	
Part II				
Subjects	3.91	19	.20	1.25
Ownership	2.46	1	2.46	15.37**
Residual	35.08	220	.16	
Prediction of Aggressive Behavior				
Part I				
Ownership	4.37	1	4.37	24.20**
Subjects	6.70	19	.35	1.90**
Residual	39.72	220	.18	
Part II				
Subjects	8.04	19	.42	2.30**
Ownership	3.03	1	3.03	16.83**
Residual	39.72	220	.18	

SOURCE	SUM OF SQUARES	DEGREES OF FREEDOM	MEAN SQUARES	*F*
		Prediction of Competitive Behavior		
Part I				
Ownership	.02	1	.02	.66
Subjects	.53	19	.03	1.00
Residual	6.23	220	.03	
Part II				
Subjects	.55	19	.02	.66
Ownership	.01	1	.01	.36
Residual	6.25	220	.03	