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## An Investigation of the Adolescent Sibling Bereavement Process and Adaptation

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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ADOLESCENT SIBLING  
BEREAVEMENT PROCESS AND ADAPTATION

by

Nancy Schildberg Hogan

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate  
School of Loyola University of Chicago in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

September

1986

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DEDICATION

To my husband

Frank Hogan

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My deepest appreciation and gratitude goes to my principal advisor, Dr. Anne Juhasz, for her unwavering faith in my ability to venture into the uncharted realms of this investigation. She maintained uncompromising standards for the quality of this project and kept a constant vigil over my development as a scientist. Her commitment to me and this project and her pride in my growth as a researcher have been important beyond measure. Indeed, Dr. Juhasz led me to believe that I had a professional obligation to undertake this project.

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Steven Miller provided me with the methodological strategies needed to venture into new areas of research. He taught me to believe in triangulation theory which became the basis of the literature review for this

project. He taught me to go beyond "understanding" and to try to grasp the deeper "verstehen," in the search for new knowledge. Dr. Miller provided me with the tools to develop grounded theory.

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Rosemary Koerner typed the many manuscripts that were preliminary to this work. She was my typist, my editor, and my confidante. Her ability to hear what wasn't said and to know when to help and when to wait made her a rare friend.

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His death and my family's responses to his death were not incidental to my lifelong interest in the study of bereavement.

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My husband Frank J. Hogan III's support through the last twelve years of school and the writing of a thesis and dissertation is inestimable. His steadfast love and encouragement have made the three degrees, a thesis, and a dissertation possible. He has been a fortress of strength to me for many years. He has taught me to be resilient, to weather the storm, and to rejoice in the victories.

## VITA

Nancy Schildberg Hogan was born in Three Rivers, Michigan, on February 21, 1938. She grew up in Rangeley, Maine. Her father was a physician and her mother taught second grade. Two siblings, Lee and Karen, completed the family. She has three children - Thomas Soldau, David Soldau, and Eric Soldau - and three stepchildren - Frank Hogan, IV, Thomas Hogan, and Beth Hogan. Her husband is Frank J. Hogan III.

In 1959 Mrs. Hogan received her diploma in nursing from the James Ward Thorne School of Nursing. Her interest in the bereavement process began when she became a radiological nurse/technician responsible for treating a large population of children and adults who had cancer and related diseases. Her interest in working with bereaved families continued when she worked in critical care areas at Scripps Clinic and Scripps Hospital in La Jolla, California, and Rush-St. Luke's Presbyterian Medical Center in Chicago, Illinois. Coincidental to her involvement with the grieving family in the clinical setting, Mrs. Hogan began to work with mutual support organizations for bereaved families.

Her work with The Compassionate Friends at both the national and local level included creating an audiotape, writing articles for the newsletter, and making speeches to local chapters and at national conferences on the subject of family and sibling bereavement processes.

For many years she has worked with bereaved siblings as a facilitator to sibling groups. She is an advocate for bringing the special needs of bereaved children to the academic community. Through this work with bereaved parents and children, Mrs. Hogan made her decision to undertake a formal investigation of the adolescent sibling bereavement process. This commitment began with the development of an instrument specifically designed to study adolescent sibling bereavement.

She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing at Rush University and a Master of Science degree in Nursing at DePaul University. Mrs. Hogan has taught in the Department of Nursing at DePaul University, at Aurora University, and at the School of Nursing of the University of Miami. In addition to courses in the nursing major, she has also taught psychology, educational psychology, and social psychology.

She has received two research grants to assist in her investigation of adolescent bereavement: one from the Public Health Service, National Institute

of Health, Division of Nursing, and the other from the Fox Valley Funeral Directors Association, Geneva, Illinois.

Mrs. Hogan's publications comprise the following articles and professional audiotape.

Detection of incest. Journal of Home Health Nursing, July/August, 1984.

Commitment to survival. (Part 1), The Compassionate Friends Newsletter, Summer 1983.

Commitment to survival. (Part 2), The Compassionate Friends Newsletter, Fall, 1983.

"Impact of death on marriage," tape prepared and distributed through The Compassionate Friends, Summer, 1980.

Why teach death education in school? Independent Schools of the Central States Bulletin, Fall, 1979.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a time of change, a time of upheaval and a time of attempting to define and redefine a theory about oneself. The work required to accomplish these tasks of psychosocial development takes place in the social environment of parents, siblings, friends, and peers (Erikson, 1959, 1963, 1968). During this period the adolescent asks the critical questions, "Who am I? and "Who will I become?" "The search for a personal identity emerges as the vital ground where brothers and sisters become significant to one another." (Bank & Kahn, 1982, p. 49). Identification and later identity formation take place in the psychosocial environment of these intimate relationships. Bank and Kahn (1982) state, "Siblings, early in life, can acquire meanings for one another and become locked into a complementarity in which a vital part of one's sibling's core identity becomes fitted to deep parts of the other's core identity" (p. 30). Sibling relationships evolve to become a "fitting together of two people's identity" (p. 15). The role and function

sibling relationships play in identity formation is becoming recognized as a potent force in terms of personality development.

#### Statement of the Problem

What happens when a sibling dies? If siblings help to determine each other's identity, what happens when a part of an adolescent's "core identity" is changed because of a sibling's death? "It has been said that death ends only a life: it does not end a relationship" (Bank & Kahn, 1982, p. 271). So what happens to the surviving siblings when this potent relationship is altered by death?

The answer is unclear because the study of adolescents' reactions to the death of a sibling has been a relatively neglected area of research in human development (Balk, 1983; Bank & Kahn, 1982). The clinical and theoretical work that has been done has focused on the death of a parent rather than on the death of a sibling (Barnes, 1965; Becker & Margolin, 1967; Bowlby, 1960; Caplan, 1969; Elizur & Kaffman, 1982, 1983; Furman, 1964, 1968, 1974; Kliman, 1968; Raphael 1983; Ragen & McGlasham, 1986). A review of research on childhood and adolescent bereavement (Osterweis, Solomon, & Green, 1984) revealed this scarcity of research on sibling bereavement. Of the

13 major studies reviewed by the Institute of Medicine, eleven focused on parent death, one on multiple family death and one on sibling death. Methodology focused on the parental perception of childhood bereavement, reviews of case records, or adult perception of parental loss in childhood. Only one study asked bereaved adolescent siblings what it was like to have a sibling die (Balk, 1983). Studies of dying children, in addition, often failed to describe any details of the sibling's reaction to a dying brother/sister (Green, 1964; Martin, 1968; Morrisey, 1964). Pollock (1972) and others (Hilgard, 1969) suggest that loss or death of a sibling during childhood affects the timing and appearance of overt depression in adulthood. The accumulated losses that a sibling sustains have been poignantly described by Cain, Fast, and Erickson (1964) as "the senseless arithmetic of adding newly warped lives to the one already tragically ended" (p. 751).

The effect of sibling death is just beginning to be formally studied, and yet even this sparse research identifies multiple kinds of disruption that impact upon surviving siblings. The work of identity formation, for adolescence, takes place in the presence of siblings who share a life history and are expected always to "be there." Nonetheless, at this most crucial time



for developing a meaningful identity, bereaved siblings find themselves suddenly with a new identity, that of a bereft sibling. Parents, overwhelmed by their own grief, are frequently unable to help their surviving children with the complex work of grieving the loss of one identity, while at the same time creating and integrating a new identity that includes the reality of having a deceased sibling.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions of adolescents in response to the death of a sibling in order to gain a better understanding of the specific adolescent bereavement reactions as well as of the effect bereavement has upon adolescent psychosocial development. It is anticipated that the outcome of this study will lead to the development of bereavement interventions to be used by health care workers, counselors and others involved with bereaved adolescents. In an effort to learn more about the phenomenon of the adolescent sibling bereavement process, this study will seek to examine the perceptions of adolescents regarding their own responses and those of other persons to the death of a sibling.

### Statistical Hypotheses

Based on a review of relevant theoretical, clinical, and research literature, and on personal experience from working with bereaved siblings, seven statistical hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the age of respondent.
2. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the difference in age of respondent and deceased at time of death.
3. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the gender of respondent.
4. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the gender of deceased.
5. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the cause of death.
6. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the length of time respondent knew sibling would die.

7. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the amount of time elapsed since death.

Justification for Development and Construction of Sibling Inventory of Bereavement (SIB)

The lack of instruments to study bereavement in general has been a major deterrent to the development of a theoretical understanding of the phenomena associated with bereavement (Zisook, Devaul, and Click, 1982).

A major report by the Institute of Medicine Bereavement: Reactions, Consequences, and Care, states,

More empirical data on the response to loss are needed. Theoretical formulations should be translated into operational definitions, and hypothetical constructs must be broken down into particular variables that can be systematically studied. (Osterweis et al., 1984, p. 66)

In addition to addressing general bereavement, the study identifies the need for methods to study childhood bereavement systematically. "Different methods have been used to study outcomes of childhood bereavement and, partly because of the variation in approach, studies have yielded different results" (p. 104).

The report concludes with this statement:

Studies on childhood loss tend to rely exclusively on interview data or material in case files; standardized instruments that permit greater generalizations across studies have rarely been used in the assessment of children (p. 104).

Thus, the first step in this study will be the development and construction of an instrument which can be used to investigate the perceptions of adolescents regarding their bereavement responses to the death of a sibling: The Sibling Inventory of Bereavement, hereafter referred to as SIB.

### Procedure and Method of Analysis

The second part of the study, the empirical investigation, will use as respondents a non-probability sample of bereaved adolescents ages 13 to 18 who have experienced the death of a sibling within the last three years. The respondents will be located with the help of various chapters of The Compassionate Friends and other bereavement organizations. The SIB questionnaire will be administered by this researcher.

The data from the SIB will be treated by calculating the following: (1) means and standard deviations for each question; (2) correlation coefficients for age of respondent, difference in age of respondent and deceased at time of death and amount of time elapsed since death; (3) T-test for gender of respondent and gender of deceased; (4) a general linear model procedure for cause of death and length of time respondent knew sibling would die.

### Summary

This study is designed to investigate the specific bereavement process that characterizes adolescents who have experienced the death of a sibling. The role and function siblings have in each others' lives and the subsequent powerful effect of losing a brother or sister are relatively uncharted areas in general bereavement theory as well as in growth and development theory. The need to identify empirically the specific independent variables associated with these phenomena will require the development and construction of an instrument. The differential outcomes of this research can lead to the beginning of the development of sibling bereavement theory, and eventually to interventions which are appropriate for bereaved adolescent siblings.

Chapter II will provide a review of literature related to sibling relationships, general bereavement theory and research, childhood and adolescent sibling bereavement theory and research. The theory and research on which this inventory is based will be presented in Chapter III, together with details of development and design. Research methodology will be described in Chapter IV to include the following: research problems, sample, and administration of the SIB. The focus of Chapter V will be on analysis and results

of the data. Chapter VI will interpret and discuss the results of the study. Chapter VII will include a summary of the research project, limitations of the study, and implications of the findings for further research.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ON SIBLING RELATIONSHIP, GENERAL BEREAVEMENT, AND CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENT BEREAVEMENT

The review of literature presented in this chapter provides the background of this proposed research and is organized under three headings which include theoretical perspectives and relevant studies related to (1) Sibling Theory and Research (2) General Bereavement Theory and Research (3) Childhood and Adolescent Sibling Bereavement Theory and Research.

#### Sibling Relationship Theory and Research

The literature review that is pertinent to sibling relationship includes the research and theories related to interpersonal forces that operate during infancy and childhood, as well as the particular skills that siblings learn through significant social interactions with each other. Research and theories of child development in the past have focused almost exclusively on the mother-child relationship. For example, according to Colonna and Newman, the word "'sibling' is not even mentioned in the index of the Standard Edition

(although Siberia is), nor is 'birth of sibling'" (1983, p. 285). Furthermore, psychoanalytic clinical research has focused on sibling rivalry, deprivation, conflict, and distortion associated with sibling relationships rather than on the development of those aspects that promote growth (Solnit, 1983). In the 70's the studies of the father-child relationship were initiated (Biller, 1971; Clarke-Stewart, 1978; Lamb, 1976; Lynn, 1974). Only in the 80's, however, have child development specialists begun to investigate in a systematic manner relationships and interactions between siblings (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Berman, 1978; Dunn & Kendrick, 1982; Hamlin, 1979; Lamb & Sutton-Smith, 1982; Schreiber, 1984; Sutton-Smith & Rosenberg, 1970; Timberlake, 1982).

Sibling relations, sibling functions, and the meaning siblings have for each other are among the least studied aspects of nuclear family life (Balk, 1981; Bonchek, 1983; Pollock, 1978).

Contemporary psychotherapists--analysts; neo-Freudians; ego psychologists; gestalters; group, marital, or family therapists--are, for the most part, taught nothing about sibling relationships (Bank & Kahn, 1982, p. 299).

In addition, the most highly regarded psychodynamically based therapists--Sigmund Freud, Harry Stack Sullivan, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann and others--did not investigate



concepts related to sibling relationships (Lesser, 1978). Freud's writings taught that the primary interaction that influences a child's development is the relationship that has been established between the mother and child.

The complex interpersonal forces that operate in sibling relationships are just beginning to be investigated. Siblings spend a great deal of time together; their relationships are intimate and intense, yet the studies of sibling relationships have focused primarily on such factors as gender, status, sibling power, birth order, academic competence, and primogeniture. Particular factors that intensify or diminish the effect siblings have on one another's personality are for the most part unidentified and unstudied.

Pioneering work in sibling research has begun to identify some of the ambiguous and paradoxical rules siblings learn from parents and society (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Dunn & Kendrick, 1982; Pollock, 1978; Sutton-Smith & Rosenberg, 1970; Tsukada, 1979). Some of the rules parents project onto siblings include the following:

Be close, but distant enough to be separate and distinct individuals.

Be loving, but don't become intensely or sexually involved.

Be cooperative, but don't become dependent on each other.  
Be loyal, but not in preference to caring about your parents.  
Be admiring, but don't let your sibling take advantage of you.  
Be competitive, but don't dominate.  
Be aggressive, but not ruthless.  
Be tolerant, but defend your own point of view (Bank, 1982, p. 11).

Dunn and Kendrick (1982) studied 40 families to investigate the nature of the sibling relationships between firstborn children and newborn siblings. This longitudinal study recorded unstructured observations of mothers and children during four time periods: prior to the birth of the second child; during the secondborn's first month, eighth month and fourteenth month. Developmental issues were studied, including the effect of emotional experiences and the developmental changes that occurred as the sibling relationship developed. Dunn and Kendrick (1982) noted that the emotional quality of the sibling relationship includes "a relationship in which pleasure, affection, hostility, aggression, jealousy, rivalry, and frustration are freely and frequently expressed" (p. 211). They also documented the following:

The salience for each child of the interaction between the parent and sibling; the sensitivity with which the child assesses and reacts to the interaction of others in his family, and the frequency and intensity of the interaction between the siblings themselves--imitation, play, combat, aid, frustration, attention, and amusement (p. 211).

Sutton-Smith (1970) provide extensive documentation on the development of certain individual characteristics such as sex status effects, sibling power effects, academic primogeniture, developmental transformations of dependency and achievement, consistencies and transformations in sibling status, hierarchical affiliation and egalitarian interactions. Nadelman (In Lamb & Sutton-Smith, 1982, p. 15) described how sibling relationships provide an environment for acquiring life skills such as, "learning cooperation, practicing negotiating skills, competing and establishing territoriality, and learning that others have different rights and needs at different times." Hamlin (1979) reported that roles within a family are highly differentiated. For example, siblings assume for each other roles of protector, antagonist, competitor, nurture-giver and nurture-receiver. Yourglich (1964) identified four areas of activity that are shared by siblings: communication, affection, power (concerning who makes decisions and who follows), and shared time in recreation, household tasks, and schoolwork. Solnit (1983) described the effects of developmental closeness of siblings. These include levels of excitation, frustration, and conflict as well as capacities for regulation, anticipation, planning and adaptation. He stated,

the developmental closeness of siblings enables them to play, fight, love, and compete in a manner that usually is protected because their physical, emotional and intellectual strengths and weaknesses are more proportionally matched than those of their parents (p. 284).

It was further argued that (Provence & Solnit, 1983) that sibling attachments provide each member with "someone more like oneself in size, function, tolerances, and interests with whom to explore one's world, to practice one's intimate personal engagements, and against whom one can define oneself" (p. 349).

In 1976 Miller suggested that the complex interpersonal skills of significant social interactions a child will face as he or she matures are learned with siblings. Bank and Kahn (1982) who studied 250 sibling situations through audiotape and videotape sessions, field investigation, psychodynamically oriented therapy, family-systems research, histories and investigative research, presented the first major account of the powerful emotional connection between brothers and sisters throughout the lifespan. Abramovitch, Pepler and Corter (In Lamb & Sutton-Smith, 1982) made this statement:

Sibling relationships have something in common with each other that is different from other relationships, perhaps closer, deeper, more automatic and spontaneous. The other sibling is there forever and is always there and is thus a part of one's life, in a way that an unrelated peer is not (p. 84-85).

The term "sibling bond" was first used in 1982 by Bank and Kahn to describe "a connection between the selves, at both the intimate and the public levels, of two siblings; it is a 'fitting' together of two people's identities" (p. 15). They added that this "bond" is sometimes warm and positive, but that it may be negative. Regardless of the valence of the bond, however, siblings can be considered "bound" if their identities have an influence on each other. Bank and Kahn theorized that through sibling relationships one learns "the sense both of being a distinct individual and of constancy through knowing a sibling as a predictable person" (p. 15). They further described the identification process to be the "glue" that results in the sibling bonds between children: "the life-long quest for a secure personal identity is inextricably woven into that of one's sibling" (p. 111). Finally,

Siblings, early in life, can acquire meaning for one another and become locked into a complementarity in which a vital part of one sibling's core identity becomes fitted to deep parts of the other's core identity (p. 337).

Provence and Solnit (1983) asserted that

The sibling experience, an opportunity for enrichment and practice of social exchange, can promote or be supportive of a progressive development and touches on universal developmental tasks and accomplishments (p. 337).

"No comprehensive body of information--no support for investigating the sibling bond--has been given up to now" (Bank & Kahn, 1982, p. 299). As early as 1970, Sutton-Smith and Rosenberg stated:

Sibling status is a silent variable, one that goes unannounced to both parties in a relationship, and yet it is like psychological maleness and femaleness in being the focus for systematic patterns of behavior. Sibling status has only recently become such a silent variable (p. 1).

#### General Bereavement Theory and Research

Bereavement theory and research has had a slow and sporadic historical development. The theoretical perspectives include the psychoanalytic theory, crisis theory, cognitive and behavioral theories, and interpersonal and attachment theories. While the treatment modality is different for each orientation, the theoretical descriptions of the process of bereavement currently overlap considerably.

The psychoanalytic model of bereavement was first developed formally by Freud. In 1917, Freud commented in Mourning and Melancholia on the extreme psychological pain that follows the death of a love-object. Later Lindemann's (1944) discussion of the bereavement process, in his classic study "Symptomatology and Management of Acute Grief," was to become the seminal work in bereavement theory. Lindemann described the

symptoms of unanticipated bereavement: denial, shock, somatic distress, hostility, guilt, preoccupation with images of the deceased and loss of purposive behavior. His study of bereavement postulated that there are both adaptive and maladaptive ways of meeting a range of emotional hazards during the life cycle, and that each one of these events has significant consequences for emotional well-being and ability to cope with subsequent life events. The next major significant period in bereavement work occurred during the 60's and 70's, with researchers focusing their attention on selected groups of bereaved persons. For example, Bowlby (1963, 1980) described bereavement in infancy and early childhood, Parkes and Brown (1972) described the bereavement of widows. Each of these populations seems to have some factors in common relating to bereavement and yet others that are distinctly related to a particular type of loss.

Schoenberg, Carr, Peretz and Kutscher (1970) classified various types of bereavement. The process of uncomplicated loss is characterized by changing emotional states, somatic systems, thoughts and motivational stages. This group of researchers established these types of bereavement

- 1) "normal" grief;
- 2) anticipatory grief
- 3) inhibited, delayed and absent grief
- 4) chronic grief (perpetual mourning)
- 5) depression
- 6) hypochondriasis and exacerbation of pre-existing somatic conditions
- 7) development of medical symptoms and illness
- 8) psychophysiological reactions
- 9) acting out psychopathic behavior, use of drugs, promiscuity
- 10) specific neurotic and psychotic states (p. 21).

Osterweis et al. (1984) presented an overview of several theoretical positions related to the concept bereavement. A summary of this overview includes the psychodynamic perspectives which identify the following factors as important variables to investigate during therapy with the bereft persons: the role of the preexisting personality, the activation of latent negative self-images, the ambivalence in the relationship, and the dependency in the relationship.

Cognitive and behavioral theories provide a model for understanding a variety of depressive and anxiety disorders. Beck, Rush, Shaw, and Emery (1979) emphasized the relationship between distorted thinking and psychopathology. His focus on disturbed thinking and dysphoric thinking is similar to the framework used by some current dynamic theorists. According to Beck's model, a person's affect and behavior are based on how he or she structures the world. Persons



who perceive their past, present and future as negatively valenced construct a reality to fit that perception. The loss of a significant person is interpreted as a deliberate rejection based on their inherent defectiveness. Ramsey (1979) described severe or persistent grief as a function of inadequate or misplaced social reinforcement. Gauthier and Marshall (1977) found that excessive social reinforcement for grieving behavior either prolongs or exacerbates the process. They cautioned people in the bereft's social environment against primarily reinforcing the survivors for grieving behavior, at the expense of reinforcing more adaptive nongrieving behavior.

Crisis Theory describes death of a significant other as disturbing the survivor's "homostasis or equilibrium." Death is seen as a stressful life event that presents an acute situation that may result in increased disorientation. The disorientation may provide an opportunity to work on preexisting personality problems and to emerge from the crisis with a more integrated personality. The work of bereavement according to this theoretical position may result in change and growth for survivors (Caplan, 1963).

Interpersonal and attachment theory focuses primarily on interpersonal relationships, the nature

of attachment bonds, and the psychosocial consequences of breaking them. According to Bowlby (1980), it is instinctual for humans to make strong affectional bonds. The loss of a person breaks those affectional bonds, causing emotional distress and personality disturbance. He described the goal of bereavement as the ability of the bereft person to successfully form new attachment bonds. He included in his model, however, the concept that a significant loss, instead of freeing up the psychic energy for new attachments, may result in chronic bereavement, with emotional and physical illness. According to this perspective, the bereaved must redefine themselves in light of the death and learn a new definition of self. Other authors concur that one measurement of a favorable outcome in bereavement is a survivor's ability to make this transition and redefine his or her role (Osterweis, et al., 1984; Pollock, 1978).

Some research supports the hypothesis that there is a temporal relationship between loss and the onset of physical illness and death. In an especially well-controlled study, Rees and Lutkins (1967) surveyed records of deaths occurring over a six-year period to determine whether bereavement produced increased mortality among bereaved close relatives (spouse,

child and parent). A control group of 37 relatives (matched for age, gender and marital status) was followed. Bereaved relatives were found to have a much higher mortality rate during the first year of bereavement. For example, 12.2 percent of the widowed people died compared to 1.2 percent in the control group. The phasic nature of bereavement has been described by Hardt (1978-1979). He studied 700 subjects and found that there is a temporal sequence to stages of grief. These include shock and denial (from awareness of death to one month after); false acceptance (first month after); false normality (second month after); reorganization and acceptance (eighth month and beyond). A number of studies suggest that survivors of sudden death have more difficulty than do people with advance warning (Parkes, 1975; Parkes & Brown, 1972). Two additional factors that are hypothesized to be major determinants of both intensity and duration of bereavement are the closeness of relationship and the mourner's perception of preventability of the death (Hogan, 1983c).

Symptomatology that has been identified and associated with sibling death includes sadness, anger, rage, shame, fear, guilt, restlessness, dazed states, nightmares, insomnia, anorexia, headaches, enuresis,

hypochondriasis, difficulties with concentration and learning, anxiety, withdrawal, depression, regression dependency, aggression, delinquent acting out, and phobias (Bender, 1954; Binger, Ablin, Feuerstein, Kishner, Zoger & Mikklesen, 1969; Cain et al., 1964; LaGrand, 1981). The sudden realization that death can happen at any time to any one shakes the adolescent's sense of invulnerability. The belief that the world is a safe, predictable place may be destroyed, resulting in disruption of a child's capacity for basic trust (Arthur & Kemme, 1964). The potential long-term consequences of losing the capacity for basic trust have been well summarized and documented by Bowlby (1980). Osterweis and colleagues made this statement:

Although the bereavement process involves the completion of certain tasks and the resumption of others, all the feelings and symptoms triggered by bereavement do not simply disappear or return to exactly the same state as before. People do adapt and stabilize, yet clinical observations of the bereaved have found that some of the pain of loss may remain for a lifetime (1984, p. 53).

#### Childhood and Adolescent Sibling Bereavement

##### Theory and Research

Conceptions of death, attitudes toward it, and reactions to it have been of concern to theorists and researchers. Most of what is known is known in relationship to parent death rather than to sibling

death (Becker & Margolin, 1967; Bowlby, 1960; Furman, 1964, 1968, 1974; Kliman, 1968).

A review of the literature of childhood and adolescent bereavement suggests that children gradually develop a concept of death directly related to cognitive maturation and age (Anthony, 1940; Gartley & Bernasconi, 1967; Kastenbaum, 1977; Koocher, 1973; Melear, 1973; Minig-Peterson & McCabe, 1977-1978; Nagy, 1948; Safier, 1964; Schilder & Wechsler, 1934; Tallmer, Formanek & Tallmer, 1974). There is substantial evidence to indicate that children develop attitudes about death gradually in certain defined stages (Anthony, 1940; Dunton, 1970; Piaget, 1954). Bowlby (1980) described infants who have been separated from their mothers as having reactions that are similar to adult mourning. Their responses occur in three phases beginning with some form of protest, which may include anxiety, anger and denial, followed by a period of despair, sadness and depression, and finally acceptance during which the infant becomes willing to form new attachments. These infant responses appear as early as the seventh month. The child under three relates death with loss of the human love object upon whom he depended. The four-to-five-year old child becomes interested in concepts like burial, the characterizations of dead

animals and flowers, and about accidental features of death. Children between five and nine years of age believe that death happens only to others. The cognitive processes used to conceptualize death include fantasy reasoning, magical thinking, and the sort of special cases which are directly linked to the child's idiopathic thought processes (Koocher, 1973). Prior to adolescence, children believe death is a temporary departure and that sleep and death are often synonymous. To die means the same as to live but under changed circumstances.

Children under 10-12 are intellectually and cognitively too immature to be able to understand such death concepts as finality, causality, irreversibility, and sense of time. They are also unable to conceptualize the words and deep feelings that are expressed in the family by older members who are cognitively able to project into the future and grieve for what will never be. As children enter pre-adolescence, they start developing the ability to tap the experiences of others to a significant degree and to share the experiences of others; because of these cognitive changes, a philosophy of life and death develops. At this time the child begins to have the cognitive maturity to realize the totality

of his/her experiences. Emotional tolerance, intellectual development, and sense of time (in retrospect and with projection into the future) enable the child to conceptualize the implications of inevitability in a number of ways. With these skills of reciprocity, the child now learns to know that death is irreversible. The adolescent is cognitively able to understand death with the same finality as adults do, and yet there are dimensions that are common to adolescent thinking about death, such as a defiant attitude of invincibility (Nagy, 1948).

In a bibliography compiled by Fulton (1977), Death, Grief and Bereavement: A Bibliography 1845-1975, only 15 of the 309 citations were listed as "reactions of the death of siblings." In addition to the sparsity of research in this area, studies regarding childhood bereavement frequently ignore gender, age, and relationship to the deceased as identifiable variables. These omissions, plus the lack of instruments to measure grief, complicate attempts to understand how specific factors affect childhood bereavement. In one exceptionally well-done study on parent loss, Beck and Seth in Philadelphia (1965) reported findings on 297 inpatients and outpatients regarding parental death and severity of depression. They found 27% of the very depressed

had been orphaned before age sixteen. Other studies also present support for the potential negative outcomes related to parent loss (Greer, 1964).

Little is known about childhood and adolescent sibling bereavement. And much that is known has been derived from emotionally disturbed children and adults (Cain et al., 1964). Some studies do relate to sibling loss and long-term effects: Blinder (1972) noted that the loss or death of a sibling during childhood affects the timing and appearance of overt depression. In the same year Pollock presents a psychoanalytic study that identified the relationship between pathological mourning and childhood sibling loss. Cain et al. (1964) reviewed the psychiatric records of 58 children ranging in age from 2 1/2 to 14 and reported the relationship between the children's emotional and behavioral problems following the death of a sibling. Other researchers have reported on the association of depression and mourning (Brown, 1966; Poznanski, 1979).

These findings are supported by numerous other investigators (Bendrikson & Fulton, 1975; Bowlby, 1960; Brown, 1966; Hilgard, 1969; Krell & Rabkin, 1979; Nixon & Pearn, 1977; Rosenzweig, 1943; Tietz, 1977).



Following the death of a child with leukemia, Binger et al. (1969) studied 20 families retrospectively. They reported that approximately half (11/20) of the families had at least one member who required psychiatric help and, in addition, that previously well-behaved siblings exhibited significant behavior problems. Other investigators, however, reported no obvious increase in problems among siblings following a sibling's death. Futterman, Hoffman, and Sabshin (1972) studied the children in 21 families and found that most had coped well. Similarly, Stehbens and Lascari (1974) found transient problems in only 12 out of 64 siblings; one year following the death, all of the siblings were considered "back to normal." Discrepancies in these sets of findings may be due to (a) definitions of sibling adaptation and pathology (b) nature of the samples (c) reliance on parent report rather than on sibling perception of their grief.

Bank and Kahn (1982) described how loss of one sibling can be crucial for the personality development of another sibling. They also stressed the difficulty of accomplishing the task of identity formation for a surviving sibling whose identity is and has been developed in the presence of the now deceased sibling. A chapter in their book Sibling Bond entitled "Siblings

as Survivors: Bonds Beyond the Grave" poignantly captured the legacy of the surviving sibling: "The dead sibling's legacy can be a force for sickness and stagnation or under beneficent circumstances, can serve as an inspiration for maturity and creativity" (p. 271).

Experiencing the death of a sibling results in a permanently altered childhood. The family experiences an increased number of conflicts, role confusion, and either isolation or overdependency on one another. This family effect changes the environment for each member of the altered family. There is "a heightened sense of meaninglessness and intensified grieving for a life unfulfilled" (Hare-Muslin, 1979, p. 51). Some families are unable ever to complete the grief-work necessary to return to a "normal" family life.

Although resolution of the death of a child is probably never complete (Balster, 1984; and Goodrich, 1984), in time some families can develop new family patterns and rhythms that can allow them a relatively "normal" life (Bowlby-West, 1983; Hogan, 1980; Hare-Muslin, 1979). Gelcher (1983) held that nonresolution of mourning permits a ghost to become an integral part of a family system. Bank and Kahn (1982) described

the development of the sibling bond and how, with the death of a sibling, that bond is shattered: "Whatever bonds, whatever conflicts the surviving children may have experienced while their sibling was alive, must be sealed off" (p. 275), thus preventing any opportunities for forgiving and forgetting old insults and injury. The emotional residue can be changed with heightened feelings of guilt and anger as the surviving sibling is left alone with old business related to the relationship and no usual ways to resolve it.

The individuals within a family and the family collectively no longer are available in the same way as they were before the death. The children are essentially abandoned "twice," first by their deceased sibling and then by their parents, as everyone struggles with his/her own loss. Adolescents who are already experiencing the upheavals of attempting to develop a sense of identity, now find they must accomplish this developmental task in the absence of primary significant others. To escape from intense feelings that accompany grief and the isolation or overprotection that they feel from parents, adolescents often escape to sex, drugs and other dangerous activities (Melin, 1984).

Parents at this time frequently feel helpless,

knowing how to help their children when they are so absorbed in their own grief and grieving. It is not uncommon for parents to report that they don't remember much about the first year or about what was happening to their surviving children (Goodrich, 1984). Some parents develop pathological behaviors in order to alleviate their guilt, guilt that they should have prevented the death in some way. Or guilt for the unresolved conflicts that can never be resolved. These parental processes can entrap the survivors in their parents' bereavement. According to Krell and Rabkin (1979):

The death of a child leaves a legacy that influences all future transactions among the surviving family members. It compounds the experience of bereavement with the status of survivorship, the latter fraught with its own special psychological stresses (p. 471).

Bank and Kahn (1982) made this statement:

Little is now being done in the United States to help surviving children face the death of a brother or sister. . . . We believe that this lack of attention and care must be corrected because during and after a sibling's death, the surviving child is very much at risk for both psychosomatic and emotional disturbance (p. 295).

### Summary

The complex nature of sibling relationships is just beginning to be studied in a systematic manner. It seems clear, however, that there are powerful and enduring behaviors that operate and affect a child's

psychosocial development and that these interpersonal and intrapersonal dynamics play a vital role in personality development first through the processes of identification and later, during adolescence, through identity formation. Many disciplines and theoretical perspectives have contributed to the development of general bereavement theory; however, the impact on adolescent siblings has been a relatively neglected area of investigation. There is a recognized need for standardization of design and methodology which would allow researchers to organize descriptions of the adolescent sibling bereavement process. Theorists would then have a common conceptualization within which to define an elegant theory of adolescent sibling bereavement. Finally, an empirically based theory could lead to predicting specific interventions for adolescents at risk for the negative outcomes of sibling bereavement.

## CHAPTER III

### RATIONALE, DEVELOPMENT, AND CONSTRUCTION OF THE SIBLING INVENTORY OF BEREAVEMENT

Chapter III will describe the rationale, development, and construction of the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement (SIB). The first section will describe the rationale for the development and construction of the instrument. The second section will describe the methodology used in developing and constructing the SIB. The third section will present the item selection and placement in content categories. The inventory in its final form appears in Appendix A. The final section will present the literature which constitutes the basis for the questions.

This investigator reviewed literature related to sibling relationships, general bereavement theory and research, and childhood and adolescent sibling bereavement theory and research in the preparation of the study. This review revealed the lack of both a theoretical and a conceptual framework within which to understand the process of adolescent sibling bereavement. The need to develop instruments for empirical study of sibling bereavement was identified by many authors.

It became apparent that to begin to understand the concepts embedded in this phenomenon, which can lead to the development of a comprehensive theory of sibling bereavement, the investigator would first need to develop an empirical instrument.

For eight years this investigator has conducted seminars and workshops for bereaved siblings and has become increasingly concerned about the lack of support systems available for bereaved adolescent siblings; often they must try to cope with their bereavement alone. Bereaved adolescents have an ability to describe clearly and poignantly the way in which the death of a sibling changed life for them, their mothers, their fathers, and their surviving siblings. They are also acutely aware of impact on the other aspects of roles and functions in the life of the family. However, a common theme expressed by this population is, "No one knows what I am going through." The accumulated stresses that result from the superimposing of the sibling bereavement process upon adolescence which, by definition, is a time of heightened vulnerability, make this population of adolescents at risk for negative emotional and physical outcomes.

The Behavioral Science Research Branch Programs of The National Institute of Mental Health have identified

priority research areas pertaining to the development of knowledge regarding psychological processes and psychosocial correlates of behavior relevant to mental health. Basic and applied research projects, focusing on the ways stressful life transitions and events impact on mental health, have been identified as important areas of study. A recent comprehensive report on bereavement conducted by the National Academy of Science draws the following conclusions:

Different methods have been used to study outcomes of childhood bereavement and, partly because of the variation in approach, studies have yielded different results. . . . Studies on childhood loss tend to rely exclusively on interview data or material in case files; standardized instruments that permit greater generalizations across studies have rarely been used in the assessment of children (Osterweis et al., 1984, p. 104).

This investigator, although concerned about the adverse physical and emotional health consequences, was also interested in the normative process of adolescent sibling bereavement. Of particular interest was the possible growth-producing aspects related to coping with the stress of sibling death and the subsequent bereavement process. Adolescent sibling bereavement falls somewhere along a bereavement process continuum that has some factors in common with general bereavement. It also has many variables that are specific to this age group. The research relevant to this study, with



one exception (Balk, 1983), has relied for information upon parent perception or therapist interpretation. Most of these studies involved "patients" who were admitted to psychiatric facilities. Researchers who used this kind of subject selection identified primarily the long-term pathological outcomes of sibling bereavement. Studying populations of subjects with identified existing psychiatric dysfunction automatically introduced confounding variability. This kind of variability increased the difficulty of differentiating the symptomatology associated with sibling bereavement from that resulted from mediating factors.

In an effort to study the normative process as well as the growth producing outcomes of sibling adolescent bereavement, the literature review on which the rationale was based focused on those bereaved adolescents who seemed to cope adequately with the stresses of adolescence and bereavement. Bereaved siblings who were identified as having emotional problems that warranted long-term psychological or psychiatric intervention have not been included in this study for two reasons: First, this population of adolescents has been studied more than any other. Second, bereaved adolescent siblings' response to the content in this instrument was unknown, and there was the possibility

that reading the items could arouse powerful emotions. In consideration of this possibility, respondents already at risk for emotional dysfunction were excluded from the population. By controlling for respondents without known emotional and behavioral difficulties, this investigator hoped to reduce the possible confounding effects.

A comprehensive literature review revealed one study that focused exclusively on adolescent siblings' perception of their bereavement (Balk, 1982). The methodology used included Offer's "Self Image Questionnaire for Adolescents" as well as a semi-structured interview. Balk concluded that bereaved adolescents are both able and willing to disclose intimate information regarding their feelings and thoughts related to their siblings' death. Balk, who was contacted (1984) during the planning phase of this study, encouraged this investigator in its development. He also served as a member of the panel of experts who evaluated the questionnaire items for content validity.

This investigator found only a few isolated studies and these were fraught with problems of methodology and design. In some cases, the studies did not differentiate bereavement of children who had experienced the death of a sibling from bereavement

of children who had experienced the death of a parent. In other cases, the age and gender of the subjects were not identified. There was no clearly defined or researched conceptual framework from which to understand the bereavement of adolescent siblings. It was, therefore, central to the purpose of this study to develop a questionnaire that would allow researchers to investigate adolescent sibling bereavement in an empirical, systematic manner, and thus begin the development of adolescent sibling bereavement theory.

#### Development and Construction of the SIB

This section will describe the development and construction of an instrument specifically designed for use with the bereaved adolescent siblings who were the respondents of this study. The 109 questions on this instrument were derived from the review of literature, from communications with researchers and other persons involved in working with bereaved adolescent siblings, and from personal experiences through working with bereavement organizations, bereaved parents, and siblings. Various tests of validity were performed on the instrument during several revisions.

### Item Selection and Questionnaire Construction

A panel of experts, consisting of graduate students and an educational psychologist familiar with theory development, participated in the original construction of the questionnaire. Based on the review of the literature, experts' communications, and personal experience, the investigator selected content related to sibling bereavement and reviewed the forms of the questions with these evaluators. This process resulted in the development of 109 items for the questionnaire.

Each item was evaluated for both content and cognitive level in order to assure that the item was appropriate for the intended population of adolescents. Adolescents included in this study ranged in age from 13 to 18.

A five-point Likert scale was chosen as the mechanism for responding. This allowed respondents a range of answers; moreover, it was similar to test formats currently used in schools. A stem sentence, "since my sibling died I feel-," was devised to notify and remind the respondents that each of the questions in the questionnaire referred to their perception of feelings, actions, and thoughts since the death of their brother/sister.

Many of the 109 questions seemed to fall into logical categories. Some of the categories used for this study were identified by Balk (1981) in his research with bereaved adolescent siblings. He investigated perceptions of bereavement related to self, to peers, to parents, to family members, to religion, and to school.

This investigator, in order to differentiate between the bereavement responses of individual members in the family, developed three more categories: relationship to mother, relationship to father, and relationship to surviving siblings. Where an item seemed ambiguous, the "best fit" rule for placement was implemented.

The order of these categories has been rearranged in the following section to permit the investigator to introduce items that have the most personal meaning and then to sequence the sections of items toward those which are less personal, i.e., beginning with items related to self and moving toward items related to school.

#### Literature Review and Question Design

This section will present the specific literature review and research from which the items were derived. The previously identified categories--adolescent bereavement

process as it relates to self, as it relates to mother, father, parents, surviving siblings, family, friends, religion, and school--are used as general organizers for the research review and item design.

### Adolescent Sibling Bereavement Process

#### As it Relates to Self

The literature that relates to the way the bereaved adolescents perceive their thoughts, actions, and feelings after experiencing the death of a sibling includes fearfulness, physical reactions, headaches, enuresis, appetite loss, dazed states and nightmares, anti-social and acting out behaviors, patterns of overactivity with aggressive and destructive outcome, and perception of the parents' occupation with the dying child as a rejection of themselves (Balk, 1983; Bowlby-West, 1983; Cain et al., 1964; Krupnick, 1981; Nixon & Pearn, 1977). In 1982 Bank and Kahn stated that some bereaved siblings become dedicated to proving that they can escape a sibling's untimely death by "spitting at danger which becomes its own fascination; they encounter their own fears and the family's protectionism and take unnecessary risks" (p. 277). Anniversary reactions with reactivation of the grieving process occur on holidays, the birthday of the deceased person, day of death and other special times (Bowlby-West, 1983;

Brown & Stoudemire, 1983; Freeze, 1977; Hilgard, 1969; pollock, 1970). Anger is associated with separation and loss in many ways (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Osterweis et al., 1984). There may be anger because of belief of deliberate abandonment by sibling (Arthur & Kemme, 1964); anger related to the feeling that somehow if someone in the family had acted differently, the deceased child would still be alive (Krell & Rabkin, 1979); anger expressed through doing dangerous things to forget about the death (Brenner, 1984; Melin, 1984). Adolescents may also continue to compare themselves with the deceased to see if they measure up to the idealized deceased sibling (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Krell & Rabkin, 1979). Confusion and forgetfulness seem to be acute problems in the initial phases of the bereavement process (Balk, 1983; Freeze, 1977). Denial as a defense mechanism is used to help avoid thinking about the death or the facts of the death (Balk, 1983; Bonchek, 1983; Freeze, 1977; Osterweis et al., 1984).

Depression and its association with grieving has been extensively studied (Balk, 1983; Beck et al., 1963; Blinder, 1977; Brown & Stoudemire, 1983; Freud, 1957; Fulton, 1977; Greer, 1964; Lindemann, 1944; Poznanski, 1979). Specifically, depression is used as a means of numbing the survivor from feeling guilty and angry

(Bank & Kahn, 1982). Some bereaved siblings struggle between wanting to achieve in academics and sports, yet feeling that such achievement will dishonor the deceased siblings by possibly surpassing their successes (Bank & Kahn, 1982). The bereaved often reexperience the bereavement process with higher levels of maturation. Having new experiences, like learning to drive a car or graduating from school, reminds the surviving siblings that their deceased sibling is gone, a painful reminder of a life that can no longer be shared (Goodrich, 1984; Johnson & Rosenblatt, 1981; Vasiliadis, 1984).

Other feelings and thoughts are associated with sibling death: general fearfulness (Balk, 1983; Bank & Kahn, 1982; Krupnick & Horowitz, 1981); fear reactions of dying in the same way the sibling did (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Osterweis et al., 1984); fear of dying when the surviving sibling reaches the age at which the deceased sibling died (Bank & Kahn, 1982); fear of losing control in public places (Brown & Stoudemire, 1983); fear of losing control to such a degree that suicide or other pathological outcomes could become possible (Brown & Stoudemire, 1983); fear of getting close to others and risking more abandonment (Hogan, 1983); fear of the dark (Vasiliadis, 1984); fear of going crazy (Freeze, 1977; Hogan, 1983); fear that other people whom the



surviving sibling loves will die (Furman, 1974; Kliman, 1968; Krell & Rabkin, 1979).

Suffering with guilt over real or imagined events related to the sibling life and/or the circumstances surrounding the death can pervade the emotional life of the survivor (Balk, 1983; Bank & Kahn, 1982; Berman, 1978; Lindemann, 1944; Nixon & Pearn, 1977; Vasiliadis, 1984). Some of these forms of guilt include the following: guilt that death wishes made during the sibling's life somehow played a role in the sibling's death (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Osterweis et al., 1984; Schwalter, 1983); guilt for living while the sibling died (Hagan & Corwin, 1974; Schwalter, Patterson, Tallman, Kuscher, Gullo, & Peretz, 1983; Vasiliadis, 1984); guilt for feeling happy and having fun in spite of the death (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Goodrich, 1984); guilt related to some highly polarized relationships between siblings that can now never be rectified (Bank & Kahn, 1982). The term survivor guilt encompasses many forms of guilt that occur when a bereaved sibling asks such questions as, "By what right do I live while my sibling died?" (Lifton, 1967).

The belief that when grief has limited other ways of being experienced it will be converted to physical symptoms is well documented (Lindemann, 1944; Kliman,

1968). The symptomatology of grief as it relates to physical illness includes nightmares (Bowlby-West, 1983; Brown & Stoudemire, 1983; Cain et al., 1964; Freeze, 1977), and sleep disturbance (Balk, 1983a; Nixon & Pearn, 1977). Bank and Kahn identify some symptoms associated with psychosomatic illness such as severe headaches, skin rashes, back problems, undiagnosable gastrointestinal difficulties, and exhaustion. According to the authors, these symptoms are used to reduce the assumed and suppressed guilt about the sibling's death (1982).

Siblings who change ordinal position feel dislocated in the family (Vasiliadis, 1984). This process is especially complicated when a child who loses a sibling becomes an only child. Some siblings state that they deserve to be punished for some omission related to the sibling's death (Bowlby-West, 1983; Hogan, 1983). Bereaved siblings sometimes have suicide fantasies (Balk, 1983a; Bowlby-West, 1983; Brown & Stoudemire, 1983). The number of bereaved adolescent siblings who actually attempt or complete suicides seems to be undocumented, but officers of major bereavement organizations believe the number to be small (Balster, 1984; Goodrich, 1984). Bereaved siblings report that they try to avoid thinking about their deceased sibling

because of the feelings these thoughts arouse in them (Bonchek, 1983; Hogan, 1983).

Binger and his colleagues (1969) described coping behaviors used by siblings to include crying, direct verbal expressions of grief, and nonverbal expressions exhibited through play. Moreover, bereaved adolescent siblings report that few people in the community or school know how to listen to their expressions of grief. In addition, they report that society's expectation that a few weeks, or at the most a few months, is an adequate amount of time to grieve the loss of a sibling hampers seriously their need to reach out to others for help. Researchers and authors have shown how the all pervasive feelings of sadness affect the lives of survivors (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Johnson & Rosenblatt, 1981; Osterweis et al., 1984; Wessel, 1983). Surviving siblings have described, for this investigator, a profound sadness that seems to "wash over" them when they least expect it and leaves them feeling bathed in complex emotions that are difficult to explain or understand.

Bereavement and the range, intensity, and duration of feelings, thoughts, and actions related to loss of a loved one have been well documented for adults. The kinds of reactions range from "normal" grief to specific neurotic and psychotic states (Brown & Stoudemire,

1983; Eisenstadt, 1978; Lindemann, 1944; Nadelman (In Bank & Kahn, 1982); Schoenberg et al., 1970). The positive outcomes of grief have been less well identified. Some recent outcomes of a study with bereaved parents included grief as a possible catalyst for growth, with bereaved parents stating that they feel more positive about life and are more compassionate, more caring for others, more appreciative, more serious, and generally better persons (Miles & Crandall, 1983). Other possible positive outcomes include increased sense of mastery (Eisenstadt, 1978) and increased creativity (Pollock, 1978). Some authors and researchers believe that traumatic stress has, through the process of learning to cope with it, the possibility of increasing maturity (Baldwin, 1978; Bank & Kahn, 1982; Offer, 1969; Vasiliadis, 1984). Bereaved siblings learn through the process of their grief-work that all people die (Balk, 1983).

The literature referring to the way in which the bereaved adolescent siblings perceive their deceased sibling and the ways in which survivors maintain their relationship to their deceased sibling is especially well described by Bank and Kahn in The Sibling Bond. The authors begin a chapter on sibling death with the following sentence:

It has been said that death ends only a life; it does not end a relationship. This statement is especially true when a sibling dies in childhood, adolescence, or early adulthood--an untimely death whose unhealthy consequences can endure long after the farewell at the graveside (Bank & Kahn, 1982, p. 271).

Bereaved siblings may regard themselves as hostile and destructive. The strong emotions related to rivalry and competitiveness often felt between siblings can result, with the death of one of the children, in the survivors' thinking that in some way they may have influenced the events resulting in their sibling's death. The intensity of negative thoughts and feelings the survivors must experience is believed to be related to the kinds of resolution possibilities available to them. These possibilities include the potential of becoming stuck in the bereavement process and may increase the risk factors that can lead to pathological outcomes (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Osterweis, et al. 1984; Raphael, 1983). The common reason given for this risk potential is that the valence of the relationship determines the intensity, duration, and degree of significant survivor's guilt, with no chance for restitution (Unruh, 1983): "Whatever bonds, whatever conflicts the surviving children may have experienced while the sibling was alive, must be sealed off" (Bank & Kahn, 1982, p. 275). These are the ways adolescents

are known to respond to sibling bereavement: expressing anger at the deceased sibling for dying; missing the deceased sibling at special times of year, on holidays or when special events in the family occur (Balk, 1983; Hogan, 1983b); wanting to be like the deceased sibling (Goodrich, 1984); mission sharing with the deceased sibling; wanting to live up to the expectation of the deceased sibling (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Krell & Rabkin, 1979).

The bereaved adult is known to maintain ties to the deceased through identification, through memorialization, and through selection and preservation of certain identities of the deceased (Unruh, 1983). Authors have described the process parents of dying children go through that results in forming a fixed image of the child by which he/she will be remembered (Unruh, 1983). Identification with the deceased is described as the surviving child's attempts to replace the deceased child and to help the parent cope better with the loss (Birthchnell, 1972). Some adolescents express a wish to die to rejoin their deceased sibling (Bowlby, 1980; Schwalter et al., 1983).

The loss of a sibling during adolescence, a time when identity crisis is believed to occur through the transition of the processes, first by identification

with significant others, and later by way of identity formation (Elkind, 1983; Erikson, 1963). Adolescence is believed to be an especially difficult time in the life span in which to experience the death of a sibling. In 1982 Bank and Kahn described the difficulty of continuing the identity process and self definition in the absence of the deceased sibling.

The following questions were constructed from the above literature review. In some cases the questions came from adult bereavement literature. When possible, questions were derived from research and review of the literature related to bereaved adolescent siblings. However, because this study investigated a relatively unknown concept, the items constructed from the SIB were, in some cases, developed from this investigator's hunches that came during many years of working directly with this specific population.

#### Questions Related to Self

1. I am a better person.
3. I am closer to my dead brother/sister.
6. I will lose control when I start thinking about my dead brother/sister.
7. I miss sharing with my dead brother/sister.
11. I am uncomfortable about having fun.

15. I have never accepted the fact that my brother/sister is dead.
16. I am confused about the actual facts concerning my brother's/sister's death.
20. I am guilty that I lived and my brother/sister died.
21. I have difficulty sleeping at night.
25. I mostly remember good things about my dead brother/sister.
30. I am uncomfortable because I don't miss my dead brother/sister.
31. I have been helped by keeping something special that belonged to my dead brother/sister.
33. I have little control over my grief.
38. I am going crazy.
44. I want to die to be with my dead brother/sister.
45. I'm uncomfortable when I am happy.
46. I am stronger because of the grief I have had to cope with.
48. I should have died and my dead brother/sister should have lived.
53. My dead brother/sister and I were not getting along when he/she died.
54. It would help me to talk to an adult outside my house.



57. I have learned to cope better with problems.
58. I am depressed when I think about him/her.
59. I must live two lives, my own and my dead brother's/sister's.
62. I may lose control and kill myself.
63. I am angry at my dead brother/sister for dying.
65. I never should have told my brother/sister "I wish you were dead."
67. I am still close to my dead brother/sister.
71. My brother/sister who died was my favorite.
73. My dead brother/sister and I were like each other.
74. I have learned that all people die sometime.
75. I do more dangerous things.
80. I am afraid to get close to people.
83. I am uncomfortable about getting older and doing things my dead brother/sister can never do.
85. I will die the same way my brother/sister died.
87. I have no control over my life.
88. I am sick more often.
89. I am responsible for his/her death.
92. I will be punished because I didn't do enough for my brother/sister.
93. People don't seem to know what I am going through.

95. I take risks to help me forget that my brother/sister died.
97. I compare myself to my dead brother/sister.
100. I am afraid that more people that I love will die.
101. I want to be like my dead brother/sister.
108. I have had nightmares about my brother's/sister's death.

#### Adolescent Process Related to Maternal and Paternal Bereavement

There is limited literature that relates to how the death of a child affects relationship between parents and surviving children (Krell & Rabkin, 1979). In addition, the literature that does exist, with few exceptions (Cook, 1983; Miles & Crandall, 1983), has reported on parental bereavement as a whole and has not focused on the father's and mother's bereavement behaviors as individual events. Cook (1983), in an exceptionally interesting study, examined the bereavement responses of 55 fathers and 90 mothers whose child had died of some form of cancer. She concluded that mothers and fathers report significantly different bereavement responses in the year following their child's death. Although both fathers and mothers describe the feeling of loss to be overwhelming, fathers

identify these feelings as a general sense of "void" in their lives, a feeling that "something is missing." Fathers, in addition, report that they did their grief-work (including crying) privately, without seeking out their spouses or others for comfort. Fathers, in general, did not feel that their peers and other potentially supportive people had invited them to express their feelings of grief.

Mothers, by contrast, report three themes that dominated their grieving and distinguished it from paternal grief. The primary effect relates to the constancy of missing the child because of the disruption in the tasks of family living. The mother's routine, including the number of places to set for dinner, the amount of laundry to be done, and the shopping for food, confronted her often with the reality of the death. Another factor of maternal grief concerns the unpredictability of finding personal reminders of the child. For instance, during cleaning or rummaging through drawers, it was common for a mother to come upon a note, school paper or other artifact of the child's life. The mothers report that these occurrences thrust them into acute episodes of grief. A final feature of the maternal grief is mothers' descriptions of their ability to have visual or auditory experiences

in which the deceased was present in the environment. These parental differences are supported by bereavement counselors who work with bereaved parents (Balster, 1984; Goodrich, 1984; Hogan, 1981).

The outcome of Cook's (1983) study of maternal and paternal bereavement includes three findings significant to this study: (1) mothers are more likely to feel distance in the relationship with their spouses in the post-death period ( $p = .05$ ); (2) mothers are less likely to report that they and their spouses are able to comfort each other ( $p = .01$ ); and (3) there are significant differences ( $p = .001$ ) according to gender in the number of categories of support sources reported by respondents. Fathers report little or no social support in contrast to mothers, who identify their parents, their surviving children, and their siblings as important sources of help during the first year of bereavement.

Some literature relates to maladaptive parenting that may occur after the death of a child. Because parenting and relationship to parents has been the more commonly studied variable in childhood bereavement literature, the concept of parent is included, in addition to the separate variables, mother and father.

Bereaved parents are faced with multiple kinds of grief-work, including the grief related to becoming a bereft parent and losing a part of identity as parent to the now-deceased child. They must work through this deep personal grief and at the same time try to remain emotionally available to remaining children and spouse. And there is the grief of feeling that friends and relatives do not understand or care to understand what parents go through with the death of a child. Moreover, society believes grieving the death of a child should be done privately and at home (Brenner, 1984; Goodrich, 1984; Hogan, 1983c). These findings support other research which affirms that mothers and fathers often feel that some family friends treat them differently after the death of their child (Hare-Mustin, 1979).

The common belief is that the parents are so preoccupied with their own grief during much of the first year that little consideration is given to the needs of the surviving children during that period of time (Balster, 1984; Bowlby-West, 1983; Cain et al., 1964; Goodrich, 1984; Osterweis, et al., 1984; Woolsey, Thorton & Friedman, 1978; Vasiliadis, 1984). The relationship between the surviving children and their parents can become very complicated if the parents

develop maneuvers that compare surviving siblings to the deceased sibling (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Hagin & Corwin, 1974). In some cases parents unconsciously pressure a remaining child to take on the personality and behavior of the deceased sibling through maneuvers of substitution and replacement. This maneuvering results in the child's having two identities, his/her own and that of the deceased sibling (Brenner, 1984; Krell & Rabkin, 1979). Surviving siblings often feel excessively responsible for the parents and try to make the parents "happy," thus hoping to bring relief to the grieving parents (Hogan, 1983c). Siblings sometimes avoid talking to their parents about their grief because they are afraid of arousing powerful feelings in parents which then spill over onto the children and make them feel out of control (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Bonchek, 1983; Brenner, 1984).

Adolescents sometimes think that parents question whether the surviving children grieve "enough" or "at all." Bereaved adolescents who are questioned about this issue often feel hurt and offended by such questioning that implies to them that however much grief they experience, it is not appropriate or enough (Hogan, 1983b). Parents may become overprotective of the surviving children, fearing that these children

may also die. The outcome for children with overprotective parents may take two forms. Some surviving children may respond to this parental fear by becoming fearful themselves or counterphobic (Blinder et al., 1972; Bowlby-West, 1983; Krell & Rabkin, 1979; Woolsey, 1978). Other bereaved siblings become overly dependent on their parents (Hare-Mustin, 1979).

The surviving siblings often have the feeling that the deceased was the most cherished child in the family (Osterweis et al., 1984; Vasiliadis, 1984). This is the only plausible explanation they have for the depth and the extent of their parents' suffering. The long-term changes in the parenting behaviors and abilities may make the surviving siblings feel that they are not loved and are rejected by the parents (Bowlby-West, 1983; Kaplan, Crobslein, & Smith 1976; Wessel, 1983).

In spite of an abundance of literature related to maladaptive parenting after bereavement, Balk (1983), in a study of bereaved adolescent siblings, reported that most siblings are satisfied with the relationship that they have with their parents. Additional positive outcomes include feeling that the grief made surviving siblings closer to parents (Brenner, 1984; Vasiliadis, 1984).

Questions Related to Mother, Father, and Parent

The construction of this instrument included items that were selected to help identify differential behaviors of bereaved mothers and fathers as they are perceived by their surviving children. One question is included to ask how bereaved siblings evaluate their parents' level of closeness or distance since the loss of their sibling.

2. My brother/sister who died was my mother's favorite child.
5. My father overprotects me.
10. I can talk to my mother about my grief.
14. It upsets my mother when I talk about my dead brother/sister.
17. My father has no one to help him with his grief.
22. I am closer to my mother.
26. My father compares me to my dead brother/sister.
27. I try to be happy when I am around my mother.
32. My mother is too involved with her grief to help me with mine.
35. I am closer to my father.
39. I try to be happy when I am around my father.
40. My mother compares me to my dead brother/sister.
42. My mother is afraid I will die also.



47. I would like to talk to my mother about my grief but I'm afraid of hurting her more.
51. My parents are closer.
52. My mother has no one to help her with her grief.
55. I try to make my father happy.
56. I must compete with my dead brother/sister for my mother's attention.
60. My dead brother/sister was my father's favorite child.
64. My mother doesn't pay much attention to what I do.
66. My mother overprotects me.
72. I am rejected by my father.
76. My father doesn't pay much attention to what I do.
81. My father is afraid I will die also.
84. I can talk to my father about my grief.
90. I would talk to my father about my grief but I am afraid of hurting him more.
94. I try to make my mother happy.
96. It upsets my father when I talk about my dead brother/sister.
99. I compare myself to my dead brother/sister.
102. My father has been too involved with his grief to help me with mine.

105. I must compete with my dead brother/sister for my father's attention.

### Adolescent Sibling Bereavement Process

#### Related to Surviving Siblings

The literature pertaining to the relationship between bereaved adolescents and their surviving siblings is very limited. Brenner (1984) stated that sibling death may draw the remaining siblings closer together as they work to reconstruct their roles in relation to one another. This investigator was interested in studying the adolescent siblings' perception of their surviving siblings' ability to cope with the death and also in seeing how respondents compare their sense of their own bereavement process to that of their surviving siblings. A question was included to see whether the phenomenon of the parents' parental overprotectiveness that is well documented in the literature (Krell & Rabkin, 1979) is also a dynamic between siblings.

#### Questions Related to Surviving Siblings

The items selected to examine the relationship between bereaved adolescents and their surviving siblings are included in this section.

9. I grieve more than my living brother(s)/sister(s).  
13. I am closer to my living brother(s)/sister(s).

28. My living brother(s)/sister(s) cope better with their grief than I do.
43. My surviving brother(s)/sister(s) overprotect me.
77. I get along with my surviving brother(s)/sister(s) better.

### Adolescent Sibling Bereavement Process

#### Related to Family

The literature related to the dynamics of the bereaved family tends to focus primarily on the behaviors the family adopts to reduce intrafamilial blaming and guilt. Some families impose a rule of silence upon the surviving children. Bereavement must remain a private matter; one must stifle or choke back sadness, anger, or happy remembrances.

Entombed within this conspiracy of silence, the family tries to regain its balance, and life seems to go on normally, in the pretense that the death has never occurred. The central motive of these silent, haunted families is the avoidance of blame (Bank & Kahn, 1982, p. 275). The family members consciously or unconsciously collude to eliminate the thoughts that lead to arousal of feelings of grief by never referring to the deceased, never mentioning the deceased sibling's name. Other authors have observed the same

phenomenon (Cain et al., 1964; Krell & Rabkin, 1969). Some families collectively decide to maintain secrecy related to events surrounding the death (Krell & Rabkin, 1979). This decision may lead children to believe that there must be something shameful about their sibling's death (Bowlby-West, 1983; Krupnick & Horowitz, 1981).

The death of a child is a family catastrophe, and several kinds of bereavement effects have been identified by Hare-Mustin (1979), including the family's role confusion, sense of meaninglessness, number of conflicts, and intensified grief for a life unfulfilled (Hare-Mustin, 1979). The identity of the family changes, with the death of a child. Each distinct role played by each member is changed, and disorganization takes place within the family system. The family struggles during bereavement to develop a new family identity in order to stabilize the remaining individual family members' roles and functions and thereby recognize the unit as their family again. Siblings report two kinds of changes related to how they fit into their family subsequent to the death of their sibling. One change relates to a sense that their family is now incomplete (Bank & Kahn, 1982; Blinder, 1972; Krell & Rabkin, 1979). The second effect relates

to feeling dislocation in the family. This second change seems to be especially true when the ordinal position is altered, such as the middle child becoming the oldest or youngest. Some young children who experience the death of their only sibling ask the basic question, "Am I still a brother/sister?" The preadolescent and adolescent children report that they remain brothers/sisters to their deceased sibling (Hogan, 1983b).

Knowledge is limited as to possible positive effects the family may have on the outcomes of grief and their ability to be, or to become, a support system for each other. Most families, it is believed, develop new family rhythms and patterns and return to a normal life (Bowlby-West, 1983; Hare-Mustin, 1979), acknowledging that their lives, and their families' lives can never be the same as they were before the death of the child/sibling (Hogan, 1980, 1983a).

#### Questions Related to Family

The following items were selected to investigate the bereaved adolescent sibling's perception of the effect on the family as a collective primary support system.

4. My family helps each other with their grief.
8. My family is ashamed about my brother's/sister's death.

18. My family is closer.
34. My family has fewer problems.
49. My family is back to normal now.
61. I am out of place in my family.
78. My family keeps a lot of secrets about my dead brother's/sister's death.
82. My family is incomplete now.
86. Our family holidays, like Christmas are sad times for us.
91. My family grieves in silence.
98. My family's friends treat us differently.
103. My pet has helped me with my grief.
106. The time around my dead brother's/sister's birthday is a hard time for my family.

#### Adolescent Sibling Bereavement Process

##### Related to Friends

The literature on the relationship between bereaved adolescent siblings and their friends indicates that social problems appear in some children (Balk, 1983a; Payne, Goff, & Paulson, 1980). Balk concluded in his study with 33 bereaved adolescent siblings, that 21 respondents reported improved peer relationships, 10 reported some deterioration in their peer relationships, and 4 reported mixed feelings about their relationships with peers after the death of their sibling. Some

siblings have reported to this author that sometimes the friends of their deceased brother/sister seem to miss their sibling very much and over a long period of time. These friends of the deceased often refer to common events they shared with the dead brother/sister, telling stories in such a way as to keep the deceased sibling actively remembered.

The surviving siblings, however, ascribe motives to each person who alludes to their deceased sibling. These motives determine whether they interpret these interactions as genuine support or a kind of disguised harassment. Some peers are perceived to react inappropriately by saying and doing thoughtless things related to the death. Bereaved siblings report thinking that peers are watching them to see how they will act, whether they will cry or seem strange in class. This heightened awareness seems to appear more frequently in early bereavement. It is also hard to distinguish these feelings of having an audience from Elkind's (1983) assumed audience concept. Often bereaved siblings "find" a peer at school who experienced a significant loss. They state that these friends "know what I am going through and others do not" (Hogan, 1983b).

### Questions Related to Friends

The items selected for this section were included to investigate the role peers play in adolescent sibling bereavement.

- 24. I can talk to my friends about my grief.
- 37. I am more grown up than my friends.
- 50. I have to pretend to be happy when I am with my friends.
- 69. My friends are all looking at me to see how I will act.
- 79. My friends will think I am weird if I talk about my dead brother/sister.
- 109. My friends miss my brother more than I do.

### Adolescent Sibling Bereavement Process

#### Related to Religion

The literature review pertaining to religion and its relationship to adolescent bereavement revealed one study. Balk (1983a) reported that religion took on increased importance for adolescents as a function of the death of the sibling. The significance of religion seemed to increase with time. Literature referring to religion and adult bereavement suggests that some survivors are angry at God for not preventing the death (Bowlby-West, 1983; Brown & Stoudemire, 1983; Freeze, 1977; Lindemann, 1944).



### Questions Related to Religion

The questions included were intended to discover how bereaved adolescent siblings regard religion in general, and whether their notion of God, in particular, is a help or hindrance to their grieving.

29. I believe I will see my dead brother/sister again in heaven.
36. I can no longer trust God.
41. I blame God for my brother's/sister's death.
68. Religion has become more important to me.
104. Religion has helped me with my grief.

### Adolescent Sibling Bereavement Process

#### Related to School

The literature review related to sibling bereavement and academic issues includes the teacher's role as a possible social support person for bereaved adolescents (Hogan, 1979). The literature specifically related to school work and grades reveals that bereaved siblings frequently have difficulties at school with concentration and other learning skills problems (Kaplan, 1976; Payne, 1980; Townes & Wold, 1977). Balk (1983) described how grief and academic work are related to length of time since death. He found that grades worsen early in grief and recover over time to about what they were prior to death. Binger (1969) found that

school phobia is associated with siblings whose brothers/sisters are dying of leukemia. Siblings frequently cite cognitive interference that makes concentration and learning difficult. One form of this phenomenon seems to occur without warning and without known stimuli related to the sibling or the death.

Bereaved siblings feel that being in school can both help and hinder their grief. On the one hand, they are relieved to be out of the home where other family members are absorbed in their grief. School helps by distracting them from constantly thinking about their dead sibling. On the other hand, school work relies on focus and concentration on the subject matter, and bereavement disrupts this process. Other difficulties related to school include specific academic assignments that refer to their past and may require either an explanation or omission of the death.

The other major problem associated with academic work is the cognitive interference caused by the obsessive reviewing of the circumstances surrounding the death, the effects of the death on survivors' relationships with others, and the critical evaluation of the survivors' and other persons' personal culpitation related to the death. This placing of blame seems to be related

to and suggests a need to answer the basic question, "Why did this happen and how could it have been prevented and who is at fault?" It seems plausible that for the adolescent the hypothetical thinking required to construct a theory about the effects of the death on his/her existence, precludes other kinds of cognitive functioning associated with, and necessary for, achievement in school.

#### Questions Related to School

The items selected to investigate the relationship of adolescent sibling bereavement and academic work are listed below.

12. Some of my teachers have helped me with my grief.
19. I have trouble concentrating with my schoolwork.
23. I have lost interest in my schoolwork.
107. My grades have improved.

#### Summary

The basis on which the 109 items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement (SIB) were selected and developed included review of the literature and research related to sibling relationships, general bereavement theory, childhood and adolescent sibling bereavement theory, as well as consultation with experts and personal experience. The Likert scale was used for scoring the instrument in order that a range of responses

would be possible regarding the content of the items. The rationale and methodology used to construct the items and their placement in eight categories (self, mother, father, surviving siblings, family, friends, religion, school) were identified. These categories provided a framework within which to organize the research review and item design.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter IV describes the research problems, the respondent selection and the demographic data, the procedures used, the selection and nature of the instrument, and the statistical methods employed in data analysis.

#### Statistical Hypotheses

Based on a review of relevant theoretical, clinical, and research literature, and on personal experience in working with bereaved siblings, the investigator formulated seven statistical hypotheses:

1. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the age of respondent.
2. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the difference in age of respondent and deceased at time of death.
3. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the gender of respondent.
4. There is no relationship between items

on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the gender of deceased.

5. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the cause of death.
6. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the length of time respondent knew sibling would die.
7. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the amount of time elapsed since death.

#### Respondents

Forty bereaved siblings were interviewed. Criteria for the selection of respondents included the following:

1. The adolescent will be between the ages 13-18.
2. The bereaved adolescent will have survived the death of a sibling within the last three years.
3. All children within a family who satisfy conditions 1 and 2 will be potential respondents.

Most of the respondents were identified by the investigator's making contact with mutual support groups

for bereaved parents, such groups as The Compassionate Friends, Parents of Murdered Children, Survivors of Suicide, and Candlelighters. The Executive Director of Compassionate Friends, Therese Goodrich, agreed to help with respondent acquisition by sending letters of support for the project to selected chapters in two midwestern states (Appendix A). The investigator wrote and/or called each of these chapters to arrange a time in order to present personally the nature of the study, its sponsorship, and its purpose.

The assurances of confidentiality and the significance of the parent and respondent consent forms were discussed. Persons who were interested and who fit the criteria made arrangements with the investigator to meet at a specific time and place for data collection. In some cases, several siblings were given the questionnaire at a prearranged place. Most survivor siblings, however, preferred to complete the instrument privately in their own homes. In addition, several parents who did not belong to parent bereavement organizations but who had read a newspaper article discussing this study requested that their surviving siblings be included in the study. Participation was strictly voluntary in this nonprobability sample of respondents.

The respondents consisted of 15 boys and 25 girls, ages 13-18 years, who were drawn from 36 families of deceased children. The mean age of the children was 15.15 years. The demographic data included religion, ethnicity, number of parents living in the home, number of surviving siblings, and membership in bereavement organizations. The tables for these variables are identified in the following description of the respondents.

Data regarding age of participants are presented in Table 1. The respondents fell into two groups. Younger adolescents (ages 13 and 14) represented 45% and older adolescents (ages 16, 17, 18) represented 55% of the participants. Difference in age between the respondent and the deceased sibling at time of death is shown in Table 2.

The sudden unexpected death of a sibling was more frequent than anticipated death of a sibling, as represented in Table 3. Twenty-five percent of the children in the study became only children with the death of their sibling. Table 4 shows the number of surviving siblings. Nearly half (42%) had one remaining sibling. The number of months during which the respondents knew their sibling would die varied. The majority of the respondents reported no advance warning Table 5. The number of months elapsed since the sibling's death



ranged from 3 to 36 with Table 6 representing this data in six-month intervals. The data in Table 6 also show that about half of the deaths occurred in the time period of under 1 1/2 years and the other half in the 1 1/2 to 3-year period from the death. Eighty-two and one-half percent of the respondents lived with both parents (see Table 7). The ethnicity of the respondents is represented on Table 8 and shows the predominant ethnic group to be Anglo, with 80% fitting into this category. The data for the families' religion are described in Table 9, with the Catholic religion representing 60% of the respondent and only 5% of the respondents declaring no religion. Table 10 shows that the majority of the respondents or their families belonged to a bereavement organization. The majority (82.5%) of these respondents belonged to The Compassionate Friends.

#### Data Collection

The Sibling Inventory of Bereavement (SIB) was administered to 40 respondents in all (Appendix B). The design and description of the SIB were presented in Chapter 3. Administrative procedures and considerations relating to the respondents' response to the instrument will be identified.

Table 1

Age of Respondents: Frequency and Percentage of Respondents

Age	N	%
13	14	35
14	4	10
15	0	0
16	10	25
17	5	12.5
18	<u>7</u>	<u>17.5</u>
Total	40	100

Table 2

Differences in Age of Respondent and Deceased at Time  
of Death

Difference in Age in Years	N	%
Between 1-2	9	22.5
Between 2-3	12	30.0
Between 3-4	1	2.5
Between 4-5	4	10.0
Between 5-6	2	5.0
Between 6-7	4	10.0
Between 7-8	2	5.0
Between 8-9	0	0.0
Between 9-10	2	5.0
Between 10-11	2	5.0
Between 11-12	1	2.5
Between 12-13	<u>1</u>	<u>2.5</u>
	40	100

Table 3

Cause of Death: Frequency and Percentage of Respondents

Cause of Sibling Death	N	%
Disease	16	40.0
Accident	12	30.0
Murder	3	7.5
Suicide	8	20.0
Other	<u>1</u>	<u>2.5</u>
Total	40	100

Table 4

Number of Surviving Children in the Family: Frequency  
and Percentage of Respondents

Number of Children	N	%
0	10	25
1	17	42
2	6	16
3	4	10
4	2	5
5	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	33	100

Table 5

Length of Time Respondent Knew Sibling Would Die:  
Frequency and Percentage of Respondents

Time	N	%
Few days	4	10
Few weeks	1	2.5
Few months	3	7.5
A year or more	2	5
No advance warning	<u>30</u>	<u>75</u>
Total	40	100

Table 6

Amount of Time Elapsed Since Death in 6-Month Intervals:  
Frequency and Percentage of Respondents

Months since death	N	%
6	5	12.5
6-12	7	17.5
13-18	10	25
19-24	5	12.5
25-30	5	12.5
31-36	<u>8</u>	<u>20</u>
Total	40	100

Table 7

Parents Living in the Home: Percentage and Frequency

Parents at home	N	%
Both parents	33	82.5
Mother only	<u>7</u>	<u>17.5</u>
Total	40	100

Table 8

Ethnicity: Frequency and Percentage of Respondents

Ethnic Group	N	%
Anglo	32	82.0
Black	0	0
Hispanic	5	12.5
Other	<u>3</u>	<u>7.5</u>
Total	40	100



Table 9

Religiosity: Frequency and Percentage of Respondents

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Religious Denomination	N	%
Protestant	8	20
Catholic	24	60
Jewish	0	0
Other	6	15
None	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>
Total	40	100

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Table 10

Bereavement Organization Membership: Frequency and Percentage of Respondents

Organization	N	%
Compassionate Friends	25	62
Survivors of Suicide	1	2.5
Parents of Murdered Children	2	5
Other	5	12.5
None	<u>7</u>	<u>17.5</u>
Total	40	100

Administration of the Sibling Inventory  
of Bereavement (SIB)

After possible respondents had been identified, the investigator called to assess their willingness to have their children participate in this study. Four respondents were acquired by the chapter leaders of Compassionate Friends rather than by this investigator. However, this investigator contacted each respondent personally to make arrangements for a meeting at a specific time and place, such as the chapter meeting place of Compassionate Friends or the respondents' homes. Eighty-two percent of the contacts were made in the respondents' residences.

In all cases but one, the parents absented themselves from the respondent and administrator immediately after the consent forms had been explained and signed. The parents explained their leaving by suggesting that their child might be uncomfortable with their presence. The mother who remained talked to the investigator about the deceased sibling and asked general questions about this study. Although Balk (1981) found that the semi-structured interview format was an emotionally charged experience for some of the respondents in his study of bereaved adolescent siblings, the respondents in this investigation did not exhibit or express undue

distress during or after the administration of the instrument.

One respondent, in this study, said she wanted to talk about her bereavement but was afraid that if she started to talk about her brother's death, she would cry; she did not want her father to see her "that way." This sibling death had been a violent one by homicide, and the time since the death was less than a year. Many respondents said the experience of talking about the SIB allowed them to find out how other bereaved siblings perceived their bereavement. An interesting observation is that, although the non-bereaved adolescents who participated in evaluating the cognitive appropriateness of the items, laughed, joked and expressed uneasy feelings as they read some of the items, none of the 40 bereaved siblings responded to the items with any attitude other than quiet seriousness.

After completing the questionnaire, many of the respondents initiated conversation that led to talking about their siblings' death, how they felt about the changes in their relationship to others, and how they had changed personally because of the death. In addition, many of the respondents who had completed the questionnaire in their homes offered to show the investigator scrapbooks of pictures of their deceased sibling and other objects

that had belonged to the deceased sibling. One category of information related to their sibling's awards, accomplishments, trophies, and other memorabilia that they had acquired during their lifetime. Another kind of information referred to events that had occurred after the sibling's death, such as newspaper clippings of the obituary, wake and funeral programs, and other ceremonies of public recognition, including named scholarships.

All of these things, as well as pictures in the scrapbooks, seemed to represent the ways the family chose to maintain the memory of the child/sibling.

Respondents described family and individual visits to the gravesite to commemorate the life that had been shared. Sometimes these visits occurred around holidays and items were taken to the gravesite such as pumpkins at Halloween. The siblings stated that these visits made them feel better. Siblings who did not volunteer such information provided it with the slightest prompting such as the investigator's pointing to a picture and asking, "Is that your family's picture?" The respondents seemed comfortable talking about the death and the subsequent bereavement process after administration of the instrument. The investigator engaged in active listening rather than any form of probing or leading

questioning at this time. The investigator was known to four of the 40 respondents prior to data collection.

An interesting point is that these sharing sessions were not anticipated prior to this study. The act of completing the instrument seemed to give the respondents permission to talk about the death and their bereavement process. Balk (1984) also observed that catharsis seemed to occur after his semi-structured interviews with bereaved siblings.

It was common for the sibling or parent to offer something to eat and drink during the administration of the instrument. After the respondents had finished with the questions, statements, and sharing with the investigator, they were thanked for their participation. Data collection was then considered completed for that respondent.

### Data Analysis

This section provides information on the means used to analyze the data gathered through the administration of the SIB.

#### SIB Statistical Analysis

Statistical treatments were employed to investigate seven statistical hypotheses identified in Chapter I and are presented again at the beginning of this chapter.

The nature of the present study is essentially

descriptive. The analysis of the relationships between those factors which are reported by adolescents as related to scores on the SIB were investigated by means of a combination of t-tests, Pearson product moment correlation coefficients, and general linear model procedures.

Mean scores and standard deviations were obtained for each item on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement. The relationship between the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement item scores and the independent variables, the gender of respondent and the gender of deceased were analyzed using t scores. The relationship between the SIB item scores and the independent variables, the differences in age of respondent and deceased at time of death, respondent's age now and years since death were variables analyzed by computing a Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient. The relationship between the SIB item scores and the independent variables, the cause of death and the amount of time known the sibling would die were analyzed with a general linear model's procedure.

All items with mean scores from 0 to 2.99 were identified and described. Item scores on the SIB which were statistically related to the independent variables at  $p .05$  were identified and analyzed.

Each item with significant findings was placed in the category to which it had been previously assigned in Chapter III: self, mother, father, parent, surviving siblings, family, friends, religion, school. These items were examined to determine possible clustering of content. Placement of each item was done with attention to its conceptual fit as it related to previous literature or to this investigator's best hunch. Such conceptual categories included for example, anger, relationship to deceased, and perception of personal growth.

#### Summary

This chapter dealt with the research problem, respondent selection, demographic data, procedures used, selection and nature of the instrument, and statistical methods used in the data analysis.

The research problems identified in this study investigated seven statistical hypotheses, the relationship between seven independent variables and the items on the SIB.

A nonprobability sample of forty 13-to-18 year olds who had lost a sibling within the last three years through death by various causes was obtained through bereavement organizations and given the following instrument: the SIB, (described in Chapter III) that was specifically constructed to study adolescent sibling



bereavement. The test administration process consisted of the investigator's going to the homes of 82.5% of the respondents, meeting at least one parent, acquiring the written consent of the respondent and his/her parent, and remaining with the bereaved adolescent through both the scoring of the instrument which took between 20 and 30 minutes, and the post-scoring period. The respondents seemed serious and dedicated to the scoring process of the SIB. Following the completion of the questionnaire, the respondents frequently initiated conversation which led to the sharing of thoughts and feelings about their deceased siblings' lives as well as about the general and specific impact of the death upon the family members. Demographic data were collected and included membership in bereavement organizations, age, gender, cause of death, number of surviving children in the family, time known that the sibling would die, number of months since the sibling's death, parents living in the home, and ethnicity. Subjects included 15 males and 25 females from 36 families. The younger adolescents (ages 13 to 14) represented 45% of the sample and the older group (ages 16, 17, and 18) represented 55%. There were no 15-year olds in the study.

The design of the study is descriptive with statistical procedures consisting of the following tests of significance: t scores, Pearson product moment correlation coefficient, and general linear model procedure.

Chapter V will consist of the presentation of the analysis and results of the data.

## CHAPTER V

### ANALYSIS AND RESULTS OF THE DATA

#### Introduction

This study was designed to investigate the effects of adolescent sibling bereavement. The statistical hypotheses stated in the null form postulated no significant relationship between the items on the SIB and the following independent variables: age of respondent, difference in age of respondent and deceased at time of death, gender of respondent, gender of deceased, cause of death, length of time respondent knew sibling would die, and amount of time elapsed since death. This chapter will be concerned with the presentation and analysis of the statistical results of the data. It will be divided into the following sections: identification of the content headings used as a framework for discussion, statistical analysis and significant findings of the items on the SIB (Table 11), statistically significant items on the SIB grouped by content categories (Table 12), and statistically significant items on the SIB grouped by degree of association of independent

variables (Table 13). Discussion of the statistical hypotheses accompanies each of the tables.

Items on the SIB: Statistical Analysis and Significant Findings

In order to ascertain if a relationship exists between the items on the SIB and the independent variables, the following statistical procedures were performed: (1) means and standard deviations for each question; (2) correlation coefficients for age of respondent, difference in age of respondent and deceased at time of death, and amount of time elapsed since death; (3) T-test for gender of respondent and gender of deceased; (4) a general linear model procedure for cause of death and length of time respondent knew sibling would die.

The nature of this investigation is the exploration of the process, including the concepts and constructs, related to the symptomatology of adolescent sibling bereavement. This study was also done in order to acquire knowledge with which to begin to understand this phenomenon as it is related to, yet separate and distinct from, other dimensions of bereavement. The first section will present data determined in the following manner: Each item on the SIB with a mean score of 0.00-2.99 was examined. These items were then placed in the category to which they were assigned in Chapter III

(self, mother, father, surviving siblings, family, friends, religion and school). Each item was then evaluated for its conceptual content. Thirty-seven categories of content emerged from the data and were used to construct a conceptual framework within which to classify the empirical finding in this study. It was found that in some cases content headings contained only one item, and other significant items seemed to cluster under a general heading. The content headings are listed below alphabetically.

Anger

Anniversary reaction

Belief in reuniting with sibling in heaven

Blaming God

Comparing personal grief to that of surviving siblings

Comparing personal growth to that of friends

Compassion for father

Compassion for mother

Concentration

Confusion surrounding facts about death

Escape behavior

Family as support system

Family closeness

Family friends as support system

Family's sense of completeness

Father as support system  
Favoritism  
Fear of getting close to people  
Friends as support system  
Identification  
Memorialization  
Mother as support system  
New understanding about death  
Other things that helped  
Overprotection by mother  
Overprotection by surviving siblings  
Parent closeness  
Perception of personal growth  
Pet as support system  
Relationship to deceased sibling  
Religion as support system  
Reunion with deceased  
Self-consciousness with peers  
Sense of closeness to deceased sibling  
Sense of closeness to parents  
Sense of closeness to surviving siblings  
Sense of family returning to "normal"  
Sense of isolation  
Sleep disturbance  
Survivor guilt

In order to create a comprehensive picture of the findings in this study, this investigator will identify significant items ( $p .05$ ) with any and all statistical tests that are related to the item. Thus for the sake of clarity and unity, Table 11 contains all of the statistical data presented in this study. This model allows the data to be arranged so that they can be analyzed in several ways.

Table 11

Items Associated to Independent Variables by Category and Content  
Headings: and Total Population Mean Scores

*Item no.	Total population <u>M</u> and <u>SD</u>	Category/Content headings	
3.	<u>M</u> 3.1	Self: Closeness to sibling	
	<u>SD</u> 1.5	Variable	Significance
		Deceased gender	( $t(36) = 2.59, p < .01$ )
4.	<u>M</u> 2.3	Family: Support system	
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable	Significance
7.	<u>M</u> 2.1	Self: Identification	
	<u>SD</u> 1.5	Variable	Significance
		Time since death	( $r = .32, p < .04$ )

\*Item description for numbers appear in Appendix A

(table continued)

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*Item no.	Total population <u>M</u> and <u>SD</u>	Category/Content headings
9.	<u>M</u> 3.5 <u>SD</u> 1.6	Surviving siblings: Comparing bereavement process Variable Time known Significance ( $F(5, 29) = 2.60, p < .04$ )
10.	<u>M</u> 2.4 <u>SD</u> 1.5	Mother: Support system Variable Time since death Significance ( $r = -.31, p < .05$ )
13.	<u>M</u> 2.9 <u>SD</u> 1.7	Surviving sibling: Surviving sibling closeness Variable Significance
16.	<u>M</u> 3.8 <u>SD</u> 1.4	Self: Confusion about fact Variable Deceased gender Significance ( $t(38) = -2.41, p < .02$ )
18.	<u>M</u> 2.5 <u>SD</u> 1.4	Family: Family Closeness Variable Significance
19.	<u>M</u> 3.5 <u>SD</u> 1.5	School: Concentration Variable Time since death Significance ( $r = .42, p < .007$ )
20.	<u>M</u> 4.1 <u>SD</u> 1.2	Self: Survivor guilt Variable Cause of death Significance ( $F(4, 35) = 3.19, p < .02$ ) (table continues)



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*Item no.	Total population <u>M</u> and <u>SD</u>	Category/Content headings
21.	<u>M</u> 4.1	Self: Sleep disturbance
	<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable
		Significance
		Respondent gender ( <u>t</u> (32) = -3.01, $p < .004$ )
		Respondent age ( <u>r</u> = -.47, $p < .001$ )
22.	<u>M</u> 2.6	Mother: Support system
	<u>SD</u> 1.6	Variable
		Significance
24.	<u>M</u> 3.0	Friends: Support systems
	<u>SD</u> 1.5	Variable
		Significance
		Respondent age ( <u>r</u> = -.31, $p < .04$ )
25.	<u>M</u> 1.8	Self: Memorialization
	<u>SD</u> 1.1	Variable
		Significance
		Cause of death ( <u>F</u> (4, 35) = 3.76, $p < .01$ )
27.	<u>M</u> 2.8	Mother: Compassion
	<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable
		Significance
		Time known ( <u>F</u> (5, 33) = 2.46, $p < .05$ )
		Cause ( <u>F</u> (4, 35) = 2.51, $p < .05$ )
		Time since death ( <u>r</u> = .35, $p < .02$ )
28.	<u>M</u> 3.6	Sibling siblings: Comparing bereavement process
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable
		Significance
		(table continues)

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*Item no.	Total population <u>M</u> and <u>SD</u>	Category/Content headings
		Deceased gender ( <u>t</u> (33) = -2.14, <u>p</u> <.03)
		Time since death ( <u>r</u> = .36, <u>p</u> <.03)
29.	<u>M</u> 1.4	Religion: Reunion with the deceased
	<u>SD</u> 0.9	Variable Significance
		Deceased gender ( <u>t</u> (25) = -2.18, <u>p</u> <.03)
31.	<u>M</u> 2.5	Self: Things that helped
	<u>SD</u> 1.6	Variable Significance
32.	<u>M</u> 4.1	Mother: Support system
	<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable Significance
		Respondent age ( <u>r</u> = -.42, <u>p</u> <.007)
35.	<u>M</u> 3.3	Father: Support system
	<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable Significance
		Respondent gender ( <u>t</u> (37) = -3.00, <u>p</u> <.004)
37.	<u>M</u> 2.8	Friends: Perception of maturity
	<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable Significance
39.		Father: Compassion
		Variable Significance
		Time known ( <u>F</u> (5, 33) = 2.66, <u>p</u> <.03)
		Time since death ( <u>r</u> = .35, <u>p</u> <.02)
		(table continues)

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*Item no.	Total population <u>M</u> and <u>SD</u>	Category/Content headings
41.	<u>M</u> 4.5	Religion: Blaming God
	<u>SD</u> 0.8	Variable
		Significance
		Difference in age ( $r = .32, p < .03$ )
		Time since death ( $r = .30, p < .05$ )
43.	<u>M</u> 4.3	Surviving Siblings: Overprotection
	<u>SD</u> 1.1	Variable
		Significance
		Respondent age ( $r = .35$ )
		Deceased gender ( $t(19) = -2.00, p < .05$ )
		Time known ( $F(5, 28) = 3.62, p < .01$ )
45.	<u>M</u> 4.5	Self: Survivor Guilt
	<u>SD</u> 0.8	Variable
		Significance
		Time since death ( $r = .53, p < .0004$ )
46.	<u>M</u> 2.6	Self: Perception of personal growth
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable
		Significance
47.	<u>M</u> 4.1	Mother: Compassion
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable
		Significance
		Time known ( $F(5, 33) = 3.50, p < .01$ )
		Time since death ( $r = .45, p < .003$ )
		(table continues)

*Item no.	Total population <u>M</u> and <u>SD</u>	Category/Content headings
48.	<u>M</u> 3.9 <u>SD</u> 1.3	Self: Survivor Guilt Variable Significance Respondents age ( <u>r</u> = .37, $p < .02$ ) Respondents gender ( <u>t</u> (37) = 1.94, $p < .05$ ) Decreased gender ( <u>t</u> (37) = -2.35, $p < .02$ )
49.	<u>M</u> 3.8 <u>SD</u> 1.3	Family: Sense of completeness Variable Significance Time since death ( <u>r</u> = -.33, $p < .03$ )
51.	<u>M</u> 2.8 <u>SD</u> 1.3	Family: Parent closeness Variable Significance Deceased gender ( <u>t</u> (37) = -2.36, $p < .02$ )
55.	<u>M</u> 2.8 <u>SD</u> 1.4	Father: Compassion Variable Significance Time since death ( <u>r</u> = .33, $p < .04$ )
56.	<u>M</u> 4.5 <u>SD</u> 0.9	Mother: Support system Variable Significance Time known ( <u>F</u> (5, 33) = 2.59, $p < .04$ )
57.	<u>M</u> 2.4 <u>SD</u> 0.9	Self: Perception of personal growth Variable Significance

(table continues)

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*Item no.	Total population <u>M</u> and <u>SD</u>	Category/Content headings
59.	<u>M</u> 4.6	Self: Survivor growth
	<u>SD</u> 0.9	Variable
		Time known
		Significance
		( $F(5, 33) = 6.53, p < .0003$ )
60.	<u>M</u> 4.0	Father: Favoritism
	<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable
		Deceased gender
		Significance
		( $t(38) = -2.24, p < .03$ )
63.	<u>M</u> 4.3	Self: Anger
	<u>SD</u> 1.0	Variable
		Cause of death
		Significance
		( $F(4, 35) = 5.79, p < .001$ )
64.	<u>M</u> 4.6	Mother: Overprotection
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable
		Time known
		Significance
		( $F(5, 32) = 4.67, p < .002$ )
66.	<u>M</u> 3.0	Mother: Mother as support system
	<u>SD</u> 1.6	Cause of death
		Significance
		( $F(4, 35) = 3.19, p < .02$ )
67.	<u>M</u> 2.3	Self: Relationship to deceased
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable
		Deceased gender
		Significance
		( $t(33) = -3.28, p < .002$ )
69.	<u>M</u> 3.7	Friends: Self-consciousness with peers
	<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable
		Time since death
		Significance
		( $r = .34, p < .003$ )
		(table continues)

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*Item no.	Total population <u>M</u> and <u>SD</u>	Category/Content headings
71.	<u>M</u> 2.5	Self: Memorialization
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                      Significance
73.	<u>M</u> 2.9	Self: Identification
	<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable                      Significance
74.	<u>M</u> 1.6	Self: New understanding about death
	<u>SD</u> 0.9	Variable                      Significance
76.	<u>M</u> 4.7	Father: Father as support system
	<u>SD</u> 0.7	Time since death              ( <u>r</u> = .44, <u>p</u> < .003)
82.	<u>M</u> 3.0	Family: Family incompleteness
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                      Significance
		Respondents gender              ( <u>t</u> (32) = -3.20, <u>p</u> < .002)
		Time since death              ( <u>r</u> = .33, <u>p</u> < .002)
83.	<u>M</u> 3.6	Self: Survivor guilt
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                      Significance
		Time since death              ( <u>r</u> = .44, <u>p</u> < .003)
85.	<u>M</u> 4.8	Self: New understanding about death
	<u>SD</u> 0.4	Variable                      Significance
		Respondents gender              ( <u>r</u> = -.33, <u>p</u> < .03)
		(table continues)

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*Item no.	Total population M and SD	Category/Content headings	
86.	<u>M</u> 2.8	Family: Anniversary reactions	
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable	Significance
		Deceased gender	( <u>t</u> (37) = -2.11, <u>p</u> <.04)
		Difference in age	( <u>r</u> = .38, <u>p</u> <.01)
		Time since death	( <u>r</u> = .34, <u>p</u> <.02)
89.	<u>M</u> 4.6	Self: Fear of getting close to people	
	<u>SD</u> 0.7	Variable	Significance
		Time since death	( <u>r</u> = .37, <u>p</u> <.01)
90.	<u>M</u> 4.4	Father: Compassion	
	<u>SD</u> 0.9	Variable	Significance
		Deceased gender	( <u>t</u> (36) = -2.01, <u>p</u> <.05)
93.	<u>M</u> 2.9	Self: Sense of isolation	
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable	Significance
94.	<u>M</u> 2.4	Mother: Compassion for mother	
	<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable	Significance
		Cause of death	( <u>F</u> (4, 35) = 4.21, <u>p</u> <.006)
95.	<u>M</u> 4.4	Self: Escape behavior	
	<u>SD</u> 1.0	Variable	Significance
		Respondents age	( <u>r</u> = -.30, <u>p</u> <.05)

(table continues)

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*Item no.	Total population <u>M</u> and <u>SD</u>	Category/Content headings
96.	<u>M</u> 4.6	Father: Father as a support system
	<u>SD</u> 0.7	Variable
		Significance
		Time since death ( $r = -.32, p < .05$ )
98.	<u>M</u> 3.8	Family: Family friends as support systems
	<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable
		Significance
		Deceased gender ( $t(38) = -2.00, p < .05$ )
		Respondents gender ( $t(38) = 1.98, p < .05$ )
		Time since death ( $r = .34, p < .03$ )
99.	<u>M</u> 4.6	Mother: Mother as support
	<u>SD</u> 0.8	Variable
		Significance
		Time known ( $F(5, 33) = 2.87, p < .02$ )
100.	<u>M</u> 2.9	Mother: Mother as a support system
	<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable
		Significance
101.	<u>M</u> 3.6	Self: Identification
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable
		Significance
		Difference in age ( $r = -.38, p < .01$ )
102.	<u>M</u> 4.7	Father: Father as a support system
	<u>SD</u> 0.6	Variable
		Significance
		Time known ( $F(5, 32) = 2.53, p < .04$ )

(table continues)



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*Item no.	Total population <u>M</u> and <u>SD</u>	Category/Content headings
103.	<u>M</u> 3.4	Family: Pet as a support system
	<u>SD</u> 1.7	Variable
		Significance
		Time known ( $F(5, 30) = 3.54, p < .01$ )
104.	<u>M</u> 3.6	Religion: Religion as a support system
	<u>SD</u> 1.5	Variable
		Significance
		Time since death ( $r = .30, p < .05$ )
106.	<u>M</u> 2.2	Family: Anniversary reactions
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable
		Significance
		Respondents age ( $r = .37, p < .02$ )
108.	<u>M</u> 3.6	Self: Sleep disturbance
	<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable
		Significance
		Time since death ( $r = .42, p < .005$ )

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#### Items Grouped by Content Categories

The second table of data is arranged in the following manner: the content categories are listed with one or more significant items. This format is used to provide a comprehensive way in which to analyze how certain significant items cluster under particular content headings. Content categories that emerged from analyzing the significant items and the relationship between content and items are presented in Tables 12 and 13.

Table 12

\*SIB Item Numbers and Content Headings


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Content headings	Item numbers
Anger	63
Anniversary reaction	86, 106
Blaming God	41
Comparing personal grief to that of surviving siblings	9,28
Comparing personal growth to that of friends	37
Compassion for father	39,55
Compassion for mother	27, 94
Concentration	19
Confusion surrounding facts about death	16
Escape behavior	95
Family as support system	4
Family closeness	18
Family friends as support system	98
Family's sense of completeness	49,82
Father as support system	35,76,90,96,102
Favoritism	60
Fear of getting close to people	89

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\*Items by number appear in Appendix B

(table continues)

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Content headings	Item numbers
Friends as support system	24,69
Identification	7,73,101
Memorialization	25,71
Mother as support system	10,22,32,47,56,64,99
New understanding about death	74,85,100
Other things that helped	31
Overprotection by mother	66
Overprotection by surviving siblings	43
Parent closeness	51
Perception of personal growth	46,57
Pet as support system	103
Relationship to deceased sibling	3,67
Religion as support system	104
Reunion with deceased	29
Sense of closeness to parents	51
Sense of closeness to surviving siblings	13
Sense of family returning to "normal"	18
Sense of isolation	93
Sleep disturbance	21,108
Survivor guilt	20,45,48,59,83

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Items on the SIB: Statistical Analysis and Significant Findings Arranged by Content Headings

The following section will present the significant findings as they relate to these categories: self, mother, father, surviving siblings, family, friend, religion, and school; and as they associate with the content headings identified in Table 12. The content headings for each section are arranged in alphabetical order.

Analysis of significant findings related to SIB items in category: Self

Content : Anger

Item : 63. I am angry at my dead brother/sister for dying.

( $F(4, 35) = 5.79, p < .001$ ) cause of death)

The analysis indicates a relationship between cause of death and item 63. Further research is necessary to explain the significance or spuriousness of this finding.

Content : Confusion surrounding facts about death.

Item : 16. I am confused about the actual facts concerning my brother's/sister's death.

( $t(38) = -2.41, p < .02$ ) > effect if deceased  
gender female

There is a significant difference in the means for gender effects, ( $t(38) = -2.41, p < .02$ ) with the respondents who experienced the death of a female sibling scoring higher on this item than respondents who experienced the death of a male sibling.

Content : Escape behavior

Item : 95. I take risks to help me forget that my brother/sister died.

( $r = -.30, p < .05$ ) < effect as age <

There is a significant negative correlation.

( $r = -.30, p < .05$ ) between this item and the age for the younger adolescent.

Content : Fear of getting close to people

Item : 89. I am afraid to get close to people.

( $r = .37, p < .01$ ) > effect as time since death <

There is a positive correlation ( $r = .37, p < .01$ ) between this item and the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Content : Identification

Item : 73. My dead brother/sister and I were like each

other.

(M 2.9, SD 1.3)

Item 73 with a mean score of 2.9 indicates that many respondents felt they were like their sibling.

Item : 101. I want to be like my dead brother/sister.

(r = -.38, p < .01) > effect as difference in age of respondent and deceased

There is a negative correlation (r = -.38, p < .01) between wanting to be like the dead sibling and closeness in age between the respondent and the deceased sibling.

Item : 7. I miss sharing with my dead brother/sister.

(r = .32, p < .04) > effect as time since death <

This item is positively correlated (r = .32, p < .04) with the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Content : Memorialization

Item : 25. I mostly remember good things about my dead brother/sister.

(M 1.8, SD 1.1)

(F(4, 35) = 3.76, p < .01) cause of death)

The mean (1.8) indicates that this item is "pretty often true" for these respondents. The significant F indicates that there is a relationship between cause and item 25. In order to interpret the relevance of

this finding, a study with a larger population will be necessary.

Item : 71. My brother/sister who died was my favorite.

(M 2.5, SD 1.4)

The mean is 2.5 which relates to the belief that this item is almost always true for respondents.

Content : New understanding about death

Item : 74. I have learned that all people die sometime.

(M 1.6, SD 0.9)

The mean (1.6) shows that this effect is common to many of the respondents.

Item : 85. I will die the same way my brother/sister died.

(r = -.33, p < .03) < effect as age <

There is a negative correlation (r = -.33, p < .03) between this item and the young adolescent.

Item : 100. I am afraid that more people that I love will die.

(M 2.9, SD 1.3)

The mean score (2.9, SD 1.3) indicates that this effect is operating a little more than half the time for these subjects.

Content : Perception of personal growth

Item : 46. I am stronger because of the grief I have had

to cope with.

(M 2.6, SD 1.4)

The mean (2.6) for this item shows that the effects of this item were often operating for these respondents.

Item : 57. I have learned to cope better with problems.

(M 2.4, SD 0.9)

The mean (2.4) shows that this item is often true for these respondents.

Content : Relationship to deceased sibling

Item : 3. I am closer to my dead brother/sister.

(M 3.1, SD 1.5)

(t(36) = -2.59, p < .01) > effect if deceased gender is female

This item is significantly (t(36) = -2.59, p < .01) different for respondents who survived the death of a male sibling and for those who survived the death of a female sibling.

Item : 67. I am still close to my dead brother/sister.

(M 2.3, SD 1.4)

(t(33) = -3.28, p < .002) > effect if deceased sex is female)

Examination of the mean (2.3) shows that continuing to feel close to the dead sibling is often true for the respondents. There is a significant (t(33) = -3.28,



$p < .002$ ) decreased gender effect; the higher mean is from respondents who experienced the death of a female sibling.

Content : Sense of isolation

Item : 93. People don't seem to know what I am going through.

(M 2.9, SD 1.4)

Respondents' mean score (2.9, SD 1.4) indicates that there is a sense of isolation about half of the time.

Content : Sleep disturbance

Item : 21. I have difficulty sleeping at night.

(t(32) = -3.01,  $p < .004$ ) > effect if respondent's gender was female

(r = -.47,  $p < .001$ ) effect for older respondents.

The item is significantly (t(32) = -3.01,  $p < .004$ ) related to the respondent's gender, with female respondents reporting significantly more sleep disturbance than males. The older respondent reported (r = -.47,  $p < .001$ ) more difficulty with sleep than the younger respondent.

Item : 108. I have nightmares about my brother/sister's death

( $\underline{r} = .42, p < .005$ ) < effect as time since death <

There is a positive correlation ( $\underline{r} = .42, p < .005$ ) between this item and the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Content : Survivor guilt

Item : 20. I am guilty that I lived and my brother/sister died.

( $\underline{F}(4, 35) = 3.19, p < .02$ ) cause of death

The analysis indicates a relationship between the cause of death and item 20. In order to interpret the specific nature of the relationship, a study with a larger population will be necessary.

Item : 45. I'm uncomfortable when I am happy.

( $\underline{r} = .53, p < .0004$ ) > effect as time since death <

A highly significant positive correlation ( $\underline{r} = .53, p < .0004$ ) exists for the score of this item and the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Item : 48. I should have died and my brother/sister should have lived.

( $\underline{r} = .37, p < .02$ ) > effect < age

( $t(37) = -2.35, p < .02$ ) > effect if deceased  
gender female

( $t(37) = 1.94, p < .05$ ) > effect if respondent  
male

The independent variable related to this item has some interesting findings. The effect of this item is significantly positively correlated ( $r = .37, p < .02$ ) with the younger age of the adolescent. There is a gender finding resulting in male respondents scoring significantly higher ( $t(37) = 1.94, p < .05$ ) on this item than females. The means of respondents who experienced the death of a female sibling are significantly higher ( $t(37) = 2.35, p < .02$ ) than those who had a male sibling die.

Item : 59. I must live two lives, my own and my dead brother's/sister's.

( $F(5, 33) = 6.53, p < .0003$ ) > amount of  
time known death would occur

The analysis indicates that there is a relationship between the length of time the respondent knew the sibling would die and item 59. Future research with a larger population should address the meaning of this relationship.

Item : 83. I am uncomfortable about getting older and doing things my dead brother/sister can

never do.

( $r = .44$ ,  $p < .003$ ) > effect as time since  
death <

There is a high positive correlation ( $r = .44$ ,  
 $p < .003$ ) between this item and the initial phases of  
bereavement.

Content : Things that helped

Item : 31. I have been helped by keeping something special  
that belonged to my dead brother/sister.

(M 2.5, SD 1.6)

The mean (2.5) indicates that many respondents  
felt that keeping something special that had belonged  
to the sibling helped them with their grief.

Summary of Significant Findings Related to

SIB Items in Category: Self

Adolescents shared many common perceptions of  
their own responses to their sibling's death. These  
are summarized and organized under the content headings  
that emerged from the significant items in the category  
"Self": (1) Anger toward the deceased for dying differed  
depending on the cause of death. (2) Confusion about  
facts concerning siblings' death was more likely if  
the deceased was female. (3) Escape behavior in the  
form of risk-taking behavior was more likely for the

older respondent. (4) Fear of getting close to people occurred in the initial period of bereavement. (5) Identification in the form of feeling they were like the deceased occurred for many respondents; desiring to be like the deceased occurred for respondents who were not close in age to their deceased; and missing sharing with the deceased was more likely in the initial period of bereavement. (6) New understanding about death in the forms of learning that all people die sometime, and fearing that more people the respondents love would die was common for the respondents; a sense of dying in the same way the deceased sibling died was more likely for older adolescents. (7) Memorialization in the forms of identifying that the respondent's favorite sibling had died and having a sense of remembering mostly good things about the deceased sibling was common to most of the respondents. The effect of remembering mostly good things may have had different effects depending on the cause of death. (8) Perception of personal growth was reflected in a sense of being stronger because of the grief and a belief that respondents had learned to cope better with problems. (9) Relationship to deceased sibling was indicated by respondents who said they remained close to their deceased female sibling; to a second

item respondents reported that they felt closer to the deceased female sibling than to the deceased male sibling. (10) Sense of isolation was expressed by respondents' perception that people did not seem to know what they were going through. (11) Sleep disturbance was identified with two conditions; difficulty sleeping at night was more likely for older respondents, and nightmares were more likely for those respondents in the initial phases of the bereavement process.

(12) Survivor guilt was expressed in several forms. Feeling the respondent should have died and the deceased should have lived was more likely for the younger respondents. This effect was also more likely for the male than for the female respondents. This item was more significant for respondents who had experienced the death of a female sibling. A sense of having to live two lives, the respondent's and the deceased sibling's, seemed to be different depending on the length of time the respondent knew the sibling would die. (13) Guilt that the brother/sister died and the respondent lived had different effects depending on the cause of death. (14) Feeling uncomfortable when happy was more likely for respondents who were in the initial phases of the bereavement process. (15) Being uncomfortable about getting older and doing things

the deceased brother/sister would never do was more likely for respondents who were in the initial phases of the bereavement process. (16) Things that helped included the respondent's keeping something special that had belonged to the deceased brother/sister.

Analysis of Significant Findings Related to

SIB Items in Category: Mother

Content : Compassion for mother

Item : 27. I try to be happy when I am around my mother.

(M 2.8, SD 1.3)

(F(4, 35) = 2.51, p < .05) cause of death

(F(5, 33) = 2.46, p < .05) amount of

time known death would occur

(r = .35, p < .02) > effect as time since  
death <

The mean (2.8) shows that this sense of trying was pretty often true for many of the subjects. The analysis indicates a relationship between item 27 and the two variables cause of death ( $F(4, 35) = 2.51, p < .05$ ) and the amount of time known the death would occur ( $F(5, 33) = 2.46, p < .05$ ). The specific nature of that variability will require a larger population to analyze and interpret further. This item is positively correlated ( $r = .35, p < .02$ ) to the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Item : 94. I try to make my mother happy.

(M 2.4, SD 1.2)

(F(4, 35) = 4.21, p < .006) cause of  
death

The mean of 2.4 shows that this effect was common for many subjects.

The analysis indicates a relationship (F(4, 35) = 4.21, p < .006) between this item and cause of death. A larger population is required to understand the specific significance of this finding.

Content : Mother as support system

Item : 10. I can talk to my mother about my grief.

(M 2.4, SD 1.5)

(r = -.31, p < .05) < effect as years since  
death >

The mean (2.4) shows that this item was true for many subjects. There is a negative correlation (r = -.31, p < .05) between this item and the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Item : 22. I am closer to my mother.

(M 2.6, SD 1.6)

The mean score indicates that this item is true for many subjects.



Item : 32. My mother is too involved in her grief to help me with mine.

( $\underline{r} = -42, p < .007$ )  $<$  effect as age  $<$

There is a negative correlation ( $r = -.42, p < .007$ ) between this item and the younger adolescent.

Item : 47. I would like to talk to my mother about my grief but I'm afraid of hurting her more.

( $\underline{F}(5, 33) = 3.50, p < .01$ ) amount of time known death would occur

( $\underline{r} = 45, p < .003$ )  $>$  effect as time since death  $<$

The analysis indicates a relationship ( $\underline{F}(5, 33) = 3.50, p < .01$ ) between item 47 and the amount of time that the respondent knew the sibling would die. There is a highly significant ( $\underline{r} = 45, p < .003$ ) correlation between this item and the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Item : 56. I must compete with my dead brother/sister for my mother's attention.

( $\underline{F}(5, 33) = 2.59, p < .04$ ) amount of time known death would occur

The analysis indicates a relationship

( $F(5, 33) = 2.59, p < .04$ ) between item 56 and the amount of time the respondent knew the sibling would die.

Item : 64. My mother doesn't pay much attention to what I do.

( $F(5, 32) = 4.67, p < .002$ ) amount of time known death would occur

The analysis indicates a relationship ( $F(5, 32) = 4.67, p < .002$ ) between item 64 and the amount of time known the death would occur.

Item : 99. I am rejected by my mother.

( $F(5, 33) = 2.87, p < .02$ ) amount of time known death would occur

There appears to be a relationship ( $F(5, 33) = 2.87, p < .02$ ) between item 99 and the amount of time known the death would occur.

Content : Overprotection by mother.

Item : 66. My mother overprotects me.

( $F(4, 35) = 3.19, p < .02$ ) cause of death

The significant F-test ( $F(4, 35) = 3.19, p < .02$ ) indicates a relationship between item 66 and the cause of death.

Summary of Significant Findings Related  
to SIB Items in Category: Mother

These are findings related to adolescents' perception of the items in the category "mother":

- (1) A sense of consciously trying to be happy when around their mother for many of the respondents.
- (2) Trying to be happy when around their mother had different effects for respondents depending on the cause of death.
- (3) Trying to appear happy when around their mother had different effects depending upon the amount of time the respondents knew the sibling would die.
- (4) This sense of trying to be happy when around their mother was more likely in the initial phase of the bereavement process.
- (5) Sense of trying to make the mother happy was a common response for the respondents.
- (6) Trying to make the mother happy had different effects for respondents depending on the cause of death.
- (7) Feeling able to talk to their mother about their grief was common to the respondents.
- (8) Sense of being able to talk to their mother about their grief was more likely in the initial phase of the bereavement process.
- (9) Feeling closer to the mother was a common response.
- (10) Sensing the mother was too involved in her grief to help the respondents with theirs was less likely for the younger respondent.
- (11) Wanting

to talk to their mother but being afraid of hurting her more was more likely for those respondents who were not able to anticipate that their sibling would die. (12) Wanting to talk to their mother but being afraid of hurting her more was more likely in the initial phase of the bereavement process. (13) Feeling a need to compete with the dead brother/sister for their mother's attention was more likely for the respondents who were not able to anticipate that their sibling would die. (14) Sense that their mother didn't pay much attention to what they were doing was more likely for those who were not able to anticipate that their sibling would die. (15) Feeling rejected by their mother was more likely for the respondents who were not able to anticipate that their sibling would die. (16) Overprotection by the mother had different effects depending on the cause of the sibling's death.

### Analysis of Significant Findings Related

#### to SIB Items in Category: Father

Content : Compassion for father.

Item : 39. I try to be happy when I am around my father.  
 ( $F(5, 33) = 2.66, p < .03$ ) amount of  
 time known death would occur

( $\underline{r} = .35, p < .02$ ) > effect as time since death <

The analysis indicates a relationship ( $\underline{F}(5, 33) = 2.66, p < .03$ ) between item 39 and the amount of time the respondent knew the sibling would die. This item was positively ( $\underline{r} = .35, p < .02$ ) related to the initial period of bereavement.

Item : 55. I try to make my father happy.

( $\underline{M} 2.8, \underline{SD} 1.4$ )

( $\underline{r} = .33, p < .04$ ) > effect as time since death <

The mean (2.8) shows that this is an effect that is pretty often true. This item is positively correlated ( $\underline{r} = .33, p < .04$ ) with the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Content : Favoritism.

Item : 60. My dead brother/sister was my father's favorite child.

( $\underline{t}(38) = -2.24, p < .03$ ) > effect if deceased gender female

The female respondents had a significantly ( $\underline{t}(38) = -2.24, p < .04$ ) higher score on this item than male respondents.

Content : Father as a support system.

Item : 35. I am closer to my father.

( $\underline{t}(37) = -3.00, p < .004$ )  $>$  effect if respondent was female

This item is highly significant ( $\underline{t}(37) = -3.00, p < .004$ ) if the respondent is female.

Item : 76. My father doesn't pay much attention to what I do.

( $\underline{r} = -.32, p < .04$ )  $<$  effect as years since death  $>$

There is a negative correlation ( $\underline{r} = -.32, p < .04$ ) between this item and the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Item : 90. I would like to talk to my father about my grief but I am afraid of hurting him more.

( $\underline{t}(36) = -2.01, p < .05$ )  $>$  effect if deceased gender was female

This item is significantly more likely ( $\underline{t}(36) = -2.01, p < .05$ ) if the deceased gender is female.

Item : 96. It upsets my father when I talk about my dead brother/sister.

( $\underline{r} = -.32, p < .05$ )  $>$  effect as years since death  $>$

The mean (4.6) shows that this effect is only occasionally operating for these respondents. There is, however, a negative correlation ( $r = -.32, p < .05$ ) between this item and the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Item : 102. My father has been too involved with his grief to help me with mine.

( $F(5, 32) = 2.53, p < .04$ ) amount of time known death would occur

The analysis indicates a relationship ( $F(5, 32) = 2.53, p < .04$ ) between this item and the amount of time known the death would occur.

Summary of Significant Findings Related to SIB Items in Category: Father

The findings related to adolescents' perception of items from the father category are: (1) Sensing that they tried to be happy when they were around their father had different effects depending on the amount of time the respondents knew the sibling would die. (2) Trying to make the father happy was a common behavior for the respondents. (3) Trying to make their father happy was also more likely in the initial phases of the bereavement process. (4) Sensing that the deceased brother/sister was the father's favorite child was more likely if the respondent's gender was female.

(5) Sensing that feeling closer to the father was more likely if the respondent was female. (6) Believing that the father did not pay much attention to what the respondents were doing was more likely as time since the death increased. (7) Wanting to talk to their father about their grief but fearing to hurt him more was more likely if the deceased sibling was female. (8) Believing it upset their father when they talked about their dead brother/sister was more likely as time since death increased. (9) Sensing that their father was too involved in his grief to help respondents with theirs seemed to have different effects depending on the amount of time the respondent knew the sibling would die.

Analysis of Significant Findings Related to

SIB Items in Category: Surviving Siblings

Content : Comparing personal grief to that of surviving siblings.

Item : 9. I grieve more than my living brothers/sisters.  
 ( $F(5, 29) = 2.60, p < .04$ ) amount of time  
 known death would occur

The analysis indicates a relationship  
 ( $F(5, 29) = 2.60, p < .04$ ) between item 9 and the amount  
 of time known death would occur.



Content: Sense of closeness to surviving sibling

Item : 13. I am closer to my living brother(s)/sister(s).

(M 2.9, SD 1.7)

The mean (2.9) shows that this effect is within the range of means related to the descriptor's "pretty often true."

Item : 28. My living brothers/sisters cope better with their grief than I do.

(t(33) = -2.14, p < .03) > effect if deceased gender female

(r = .36, p < .03) > effect as years since death <

There is a significant (t(33) = -2.14, p < .03) gender difference with the respondents who had female siblings having higher scores than respondents who had males siblings die. There is a positive correlation between this item and the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Content : Overprotection by surviving siblings.

Item : 43. My surviving brothers/sisters overprotect me.

(t(19) = -2.00, p < .05) > effect if deceased gender female

(F(5, 28) = 3.62, p < .01) amount of time

known death would occur

( $r = .35, p < .03$ ) > effect as respondent  
age <

Interesting variability is associated with this question. There is a significant ( $t(19) = -2.00, p < .05$ ) gender effect: female respondent who had a female sibling die had higher scores than respondents who had male siblings die. There is a significant ( $F(5, 28) = 3.62, p < .01$ ) relationship between this item and the amount of time known the death would occur. There is a positive correlation ( $r = .35, p < .03$ ) between this item and the younger adolescent.

Summary of Significant Findings Related to  
SIB Items in Category: Surviving Sibling

The findings related to adolescents' perception of items in the surviving sibling category were: (1) Sensing that they grieved more than the living brothers/sisters seemed to have different effects depending on the amount of time the respondents knew the sibling would die. (2) Feeling closer to the living brothers/sisters was a common response for the respondents. (3) Believing that the living brothers/sisters coped better with their grief than the respondent did was more likely if the respondent was female. (4) Sensing that the living brothers/sisters coped better with

their grief than the respondent was more likely in the initial phases of the bereavement process.

(5) Feeling that the surviving brothers/sisters overprotected the respondent was more common if the respondent was female. (6) Sensing that the surviving brothers/sisters overprotected the respondent seemed to have different effects depending on the amount of time the respondent knew the death would occur. (7) Feeling the surviving brothers/sisters overprotected the respondent was more likely for the younger adolescent.

Analysis of Significant Findings Related  
to SIB Items in Category: Family

Content : Anniversary reactions.

Item : 86. Our family holidays, like Christmas, are a hard time for my family.

(M 2.8, SD 1.4)

(t(37) = -2.11, p < .04) >effect if deceased was female

(r = .34, p < .02) > effect as years since death <

(r = .38, p < .01) > effect as difference in respondent and deceased age <

The mean score shows that this effect is operating for most of the respondents. The t-score ((37) = -2.11, p < .04) that this effect is more likely if the respondent

is female. Additional findings related to this item are associated with temporal variability. This item is positively correlated ( $r = .34, p < .02$ ) with the initial phases of the bereavement process. Finally, there is a positive correlation ( $r = .38, p < .01$ ) between the effects of this item and closeness in age between the siblings.

Item : 106. The time around my brother's/sister's birthday is a hard time for my family.

(M 2.2, SD 1.4)

( $r = .37, p < .02$ ) > effect as age of resp. <

The mean score (2.2) shows that this item is true for many respondents. There is a positive correlation ( $r = .37, p < .02$ ) between the effects of this item and the younger adolescent.

Content : Family as a support system.

Item : 4. My family helps each other with their grief.

(M 2.3, SD 1.4)

The mean score (2.3) supports this effect for family members being supportive of each other.

Content : Family Closeness.

Item : 18. My family is closer.

(M 2.5, SD 1.4)

The mean of 2.5 is associated with the descriptor "pretty often true."

Content : Family friend as support system.

Item : 98. My family's friends treat us differently.

( $t(38) = -2.00, p < .05$ ) > effect if deceased female

( $t(38) = 1.98, p < .05$ ) > effect if respondent gender male

( $r = .34, p < .03$ ) > effect as years since death <

This item is more likely to be significant at the .05 level if the respondent was male ( $t(38) = 1.98, p < .05$ ) and the deceased was female ( $t(38) = -2.00, p < .05$ ). There is additional variability that positively correlates ( $r = .34, p < .03$ ) this item with the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Content : Family sense of completeness.

Item : 49. My family is back to normal now.

( $r = -.33, p < .03$ ) > effect as time since death >

The item is negatively correlated ( $r = -.33, p < .03$ ) with the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Item : 82. My family is incomplete now.

( $t(37) = -3.20, p < .002$ ) > effect if  
respondent is female

( $r = .33, p < .03$ ) > effect with years  
since death <

This item is significantly more likely to be an effect if the respondent was female. This item is positively correlated ( $r = .33, p < .03$ ) with respondents who were in the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Content : Pet as a support system during bereavement.

Item : 103. My pet has helped me with my grief.

( $F(5, 30) = 3.50, p < .01$ ) amount of time  
know death would occur

The analysis indicates a relationship ( $F(5, 30) = 3.50, p < .01$ ) between item 103 and the amount of time known the death would occur.

Content : Sense of closeness of parents.

Item : 51. My parents are closer.

( $M 2.8, SD 1.3$ )

( $t(37) = -2.36, p < .02$ ) > effect if deceased  
female

The mean of 2.8 refers to the descriptor "pretty often true." The item is more likely to be significant ( $t(37) = -2.36, p < .02$ ) if the deceased sibling was female.

Summary of Significant Findings Related to  
SIB Items in the Category: Family

These are findings related to the adolescents' perception of the items in the category family:

(1) Sensing the family holidays, like Christmas, were a hard time for the family was more likely if the respondent was female. (2) Feeling the family holidays, like Christmas, were a hard time for the family was more likely in the initial phases of the bereavement process. (3) A sense that the family holidays, like Christmas, were a hard time for the family was also more likely for respondents and deceased who were close in age. (4) Sensing that the time around the deceased brother's/sister's birthday was a hard time for the family was a common response for these respondents. (5) Feeling that the time around the deceased brother's/sister's birthday was a hard time for the family was more likely if the respondent and deceased were close in age. (6) Believing the family helps each other with their grief was a common response for the respondents. (7) Sensing that the family was closer

since the death was a common response for the respondents.

(8) Believing family friends treated the bereaved family differently since the death was more likely if the respondent was male and the deceased was female.

(9) Having a sense that the bereaved family was treated differently by family friends was more likely for respondents who were in the initial phases of the bereavement process. (10) Feeling the family was back to normal was more likely as the time since death increased. (11) Believing the family was incomplete was more likely if the respondent was female.

(12) Sensing the family was incomplete now was more likely for the younger adolescent. (13) Believing a pet helped the respondent with his/her grief differed in effect depending on the amount of time known the sibling would die. (14) Feeling the parents were closer since the death was a common response for these respondents. (15) Sensing that the parents were closer was more likely if the deceased sibling was female.

#### Analysis of Significant Findings Related

#### to SIB Items in the Category: Friend

Content : Comparing personal growth to that of friends.

Item : 37. I am more grown up than my friends.

(M 2.8, SD 1.2)



This item falls within a range of scores associated with the descriptor's "pretty often true."

Content : Friends as support system.

Item : 24. I can talk to my friends about my grief.  
 ( $\underline{r} = -.31, p < .04$ ) < effect as age of  
 respondent <

There is a negative correlation ( $\underline{r} = -.31, p < .04$ ) between this item and the younger adolescent.

Item : 69. My friends are all looking at me to see  
 how I will act.  
 ( $\underline{r} = .34, p < .03$ ) > effect as years since  
 death <

There is a positive correlation ( $\underline{r} = .34, p < .03$ ) between this item and the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Summary of Significant Findings Related to  
SIB Items in Category: Friend

These are the findings related to adolescents' perception of items in the category friend: (1) A sense of more maturity since the death when they compared themselves to their friends. (2) Feeling able to talk to friends about their grief was more likely for the older adolescent. (3) Sensing that friends were looking at the respondents to see how they would act was more

likely if the respondent was in the 13-14 year old group. (4) Feeling that friends were watching the respondents to see how they would act was more likely to occur in the initial phases of the bereavement process.

Analysis of Significant Findings Related to  
SIB Items in Category: Religion

Content : Blaming God for the death.

Item : 41. I blame God for my brother's/sisters death.  
( $r = .32, p < .03$ ) > effect as difference  
in respondent and deceased age <

There is a positive correlation ( $r = .32, p < .03$ )  
between this item and closeness in age between the  
deceased and respondent at the time of death.

Content : Religion as a support system.

Item : 104. Religion has helped me deal with my grief.  
( $r = .30, p < .05$ ) > effect as time from  
death <

There is a positive correlation ( $r = .30, p < .05$ )  
between this item and the initial phases of the bereavement  
process.

Content : Reunion with the deceased.

Item : 29. I believe I will see my dead brother/sister  
again in heaven.

(M 1.4, SD 0.9)

(t(25) = -2.18, p < .03) if deceased gender  
female

The mean score (1.4) is the highest of all of the mean scores in the inventory. This item has a gender effect, with the statistically higher (t(25) = -2.18, p < .03) scores if the deceased's gender was female rather than male.

Summary of Significant Findings Related to

SIB Items in Category: Religion

These are findings related to adolescents' perception of items in the religion category: (1) Blaming God for the sibling's death was more likely for the respondent who was close in age to the deceased. (2) Sensing that religion had helped the respondents deal with their grief was more likely for respondents in the initial phases of the bereavement process. (3) Believing the respondents would see their deceased sibling in heaven was common. (4) Sensing that the respondents would see their sibling in heaven was more likely if the deceased was female.

Analysis of Significant Findings Related

to SIB Items in Category: School

Content : Concentration.

Item : 19. I have trouble concentrating with school

work.

( $r = .42, p < .007$ ) > effect as time since  
death <

There is a highly positive correlation between  
this item and the initial phases of bereavement.

Summary of Significant Findings Related to

SIB Items in Category: School

The one finding related to adolescents' perceptions  
of the item in the school category was a sense of trouble  
concentrating on schoolwork, which was more likely  
for those respondents who were in the initial phases  
of the bereavement process.

Statistically Significant Items on the SIB Grouped by  
Degree of Association with Independent Variables

The third form of data presents the significant items and the degree of association with independent variables in Table 13.

Table 13

Independent Variables and Association to Significant Items on the SIB

<u>Independent variable</u>	<u>Finding</u>
Age of respondent	Younger adolescents showed more effect
43. <u>M</u> 4.5	Surviving siblings: Overprotection
<u>SD</u> 0.8	Variable                      Significance
	Respondent age            ( <u>r</u> = .35, $p < .03$ )
48. <u>M</u> 3.9	Self: Survivor guilt
<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable                      Significance
	Respondent age            ( <u>r</u> = .37, $p < .02$ )
106. <u>M</u> 2.2	Family: Anniversary reactions
<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                      Significance
	Respondent age            ( <u>r</u> = .37, $p < .02$ )
Age of respondent	Younger adolescents showed less effect
21. <u>M</u> 4.1	Self: Sleep disturbance
<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable                      Significance
	Respondent age            ( <u>r</u> = -.47 $p < .001$ )
	(table continues)

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<u>Independent variable</u>		<u>Finding</u>
24.	<u>M</u> 3.0	Friends: Support systems
	<u>SD</u> 1.5	Variable                      Significance
		Respondent age              ( <u>r</u> = -.31 <u>p</u> < .04)
32.	<u>M</u> 4.1	Mother: Support system
	<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable                      Significance
		Respondent age              ( <u>r</u> = -.42, <u>p</u> < .007)
85.	<u>M</u> 4.8	Self: New understandings about death
	<u>SD</u> 0.4	Variable                      Significance
		Respondent age              ( <u>r</u> = -.33, <u>p</u> < .03)
95.	<u>M</u> 2.4	Self: Escape behavior
	<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable                      Significance
		Respondent age              ( <u>r</u> = -.30, <u>p</u> < .05)
Difference in age of respondent and deceased at time of death		As difference in age decreases, the effect increases
41.	<u>M</u> 4.5	Religion: Blame God
	<u>SD</u> 0.8	Variable                      Significance
		Difference in age              ( <u>r</u> = .32, <u>p</u> < .03)
		(table continues)

<u>Independent variable</u>	<u>Finding</u>
86. <u>M</u> 2.8	Family: Anniversary reaction
<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                      Significance
	Difference in age   ( <u>r</u> = .38, $p < .01$ )
Gender of respondent	There is more effect if respondent is female
21. <u>M</u> 4.1	Self: Sleep disturbance
<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable                      Significance
	Respondent gender   ( <u>t</u> (32) = -3.01, $p < .004$ )
35. <u>M</u> 3.0	Father: Support system
<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable                      Significance
	Respondent gender   ( <u>t</u> (37) = 1.94, $p < .05$ )
48. <u>M</u> 3.9	Self: Survivor guilt
<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable                      Significance
	Respondent gender   ( <u>t</u> (37) = -3.20, $p < .05$ )
82. <u>M</u> 3.0	Family: Family incompleteness
<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                      Significance
	Respondent gender   ( <u>t</u> (37) = -3.20, $p < .002$ )
Gender of deceased	There is more effect if respondent is male
	There is more effect if the deceased was female
3. <u>M</u> 3.1	Self: Closeness to sibling
<u>SD</u> 1.5	Variable                      Significance
	Deceased gender     ( <u>t</u> (36) = -2.59, $p < .01$ )
	(table continues)

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<u>Independent variable</u>	<u>Finding</u>
16. <u>M</u> 3.5	Self: Confusion about fact
<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                    Significance
	Deceased gender        ( <u>t</u> (38) = -2.41, <u>p</u> <.02)
28. <u>M</u> 3.6	Surviving siblings: Comparing bereavement process
<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                    Significance
	Deceased gender        ( <u>t</u> (33) = -2.14, <u>p</u> <.03)
29. <u>M</u> 1.4	Religion: Belief in seeing sibling in heaven
<u>SD</u> 0.9	Variable                    Significance
	Deceased gender        ( <u>t</u> (25) = -2.18, <u>p</u> <.03)
43. <u>M</u> 4.5	Surviving sibling: Over protection
<u>SD</u> 0.8	Variable                    Significance
	Deceased gender        ( <u>t</u> (19) = -2.00, <u>p</u> <.05)
48. <u>M</u> 3.9	Self: Survivor guilt
<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable                    Significance
	Deceased gender        ( <u>t</u> (37) = -2.35, <u>p</u> <.02)
51. <u>M</u> 2.8	Family: Parent closeness
<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable                    Significance
	Deceased gender        ( <u>t</u> (37) = -2.36, <u>p</u> <.02)
	(table continues)



<u>Independent variable</u>	<u>Finding</u>
60. <u>M</u> 4.0	Father: Favoritism
<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable                      Significance
	Deceased gender            ( <u>t</u> (38) = -2.24, $p < .03$ )
67. <u>M</u> 2.3	Self: Relationship to deceased
<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                      Significance
	Deceased gender            ( <u>t</u> (33) = -2.38, $p < .002$ )
86. <u>M</u> 2.8	Family: Family holidays
<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                      Significance
	Deceased gender            ( <u>t</u> (37) = -2.11, $p < .04$ )
98. <u>M</u> 3.8	Family: Family friends as support system
<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable                      Significance
	Deceased gender            ( <u>t</u> (38) = -2.00, $p < .05$ )
	There are no significant items related to loss of a male sibling
Cause of death	Cause of death may have different effects on the following items
20. <u>M</u> 4.1	Self: Survivor guilt
<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable                      Significance
	Cause of death              ( <u>F</u> (4, 35) = 3.19, $p < .02$ )
	(table continues)

<u>Independent variable</u>	<u>Finding</u>
25. <u>M</u> 1.8	Self: Memorialization
<u>SD</u> 1.1	Variable                          Significance
	Cause of death                 ( <u>F</u> (4, 35) = 3.76, $p < .01$ )
27. <u>M</u> 2.8	Mother: Compassion
<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable                          Significance
	Cause of death                 ( <u>F</u> (4, 35) = 2.51, $p < .05$ )
63. <u>M</u> 4.3	Self: Anger
<u>SD</u> 1.0	Variable                          Significance
	Cause of death                 ( <u>F</u> (4, 35) = 5.79, $p < .001$ )
66. <u>M</u> 3.0	Mother: Mother as support system
<u>SD</u> 1.6	Variable                          Significance
	Cause of death                 ( <u>F</u> (4, 35) = 3.19, $p < .02$ )
94. <u>M</u> 2.4	Mother: Compassion for mother
<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable                          Significance
	Cause of death                 ( <u>F</u> (4, 35) = 4.21, $p < .006$ )
Length of time respondent knew would die	The length of time known the sibling would die may have a different effect on the following items
9. <u>M</u> 3.5	Surviving siblings: Comparing bereavement process
<u>SD</u> 1.6	Variable                          Significance
	Time known                     ( <u>F</u> (5, 29) = 2.60, $p < .04$ ) (table continues)

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<u>Independent variable</u>	<u>Finding</u>
27. <u>M</u> 2.8	Mother: Compassion
<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable                         Significance
	Time known                         ( $F(5, 33) = 2.46, p < .05$ )
39. <u>M</u> 3.3	Father: Compassion
<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable                         Significance
	Time known                         ( $F(5, 33) = 2.66, p < .03$ )
43. <u>M</u> 4.5	Surviving siblings: Overprotection
<u>SD</u> 0.8	Variable                         Significance
	Time known                         ( $F(5, 28) = 3.62, p < .01$ )
47. <u>M</u> 4.1	Mother: Support system
<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                         Significance
	Time known                         ( $F(5, 33) = 3.50, p < .01$ )
56. <u>M</u> 4.5	Mother: Support system
<u>SD</u> 0.9	Variable                         Significance
	Time known                         ( $F(5, 33) = 2.59, p < .04$ )
59. <u>M</u> 4.6	Self: Survivor grief
<u>SD</u> 0.9	Variable                         Significance
	Time known                         ( $F(5, 33) = 6.53, p < .0003$ )
64. <u>M</u> 4.6	Mother: Mother as support system
<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                         Significance
	Time known                         ( $F(5, 32) = 4.67, p < .002$ )

(table continues)

<u>Independent variable</u>	<u>Finding</u>
99. <u>M</u> 4.6	Mother: Mother as support system
<u>SD</u> 0.8	Variable                           Significance
	Time known                       ( <u>F</u> (5, 33) = 2.87, <u>p</u> <.02)
102. <u>M</u> 4.7	Father: Father as support system
<u>SD</u> 0.6	Variable                           Significance
	Time known                       ( <u>F</u> (5, 32) = 2.53, <u>p</u> <.04)
103. <u>M</u> 3.4	Family: Pet as a support system
<u>SD</u> 1.7	Variable                           Significance
	Time known                       ( <u>F</u> (5, 30) = 3.54, <u>p</u> <.01)
Amount of time elapsed since death	There is more effect closer to the time of death
7. <u>M</u> 2.1	Self: Identification
<u>SD</u> 1.5	Variable                           Significance
	Time since death               ( <u>r</u> = .32, <u>p</u> <.04)
19. <u>M</u> 3.5	School: Concentration
<u>SD</u> 1.5	Variable                           Significance
	Time since death               ( <u>r</u> = .42, <u>p</u> <.007)
27. <u>M</u> 2.8	Mother: Compassion
<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable                           Significance
	Time since death               ( <u>r</u> = .35, <u>p</u> <.02)
	(table continues)

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<u>Independent variable</u>	<u>Finding</u>
28. <u>M</u> 3.6	Surviving siblings: Comparing bereavement process
<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                            Significance
	Time since death     ( <u>r</u> = .36, <u>p</u> < .03)
39. <u>M</u> 3.3	Father: Compassion
<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable                            Significance
	Time since death     ( <u>r</u> = .35, <u>p</u> < .02)
41. <u>M</u> 4.5	Religion: Blaming God
<u>SD</u> 0.8	Variable                            Significance
	Time since death     ( <u>r</u> = -.30, <u>p</u> < .05)
45. <u>M</u> 4.5	Self: Survivor guilt
<u>SD</u> 0.8	Variable                            Significance
	Time since death     ( <u>r</u> = .53, <u>p</u> < .0004)
47. <u>M</u> 4.1	Mother: Support system
<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                            Significance
	Time since death     ( <u>r</u> = .45, <u>p</u> < .003)
55. <u>M</u> 2.8	Father: Compassion
<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                            Significance
	Time since death     ( <u>r</u> = .33, <u>p</u> < .04)
	(table continues)

<u>Independent variable</u>		<u>Finding</u>
69.	<u>M</u> 3.7	Friends: Self consciousness with peers
	<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable                      Significance
		Time since death      ( $\underline{r} = .34, p < .03$ )
82.	<u>M</u> 3.0	Family: Family incompleteness
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                      Significance
		Time since death      ( $\underline{r} = .33, p < .03$ )
83.	<u>M</u> 3.6	Self: Survivor guilt
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                      Significance
		Time since death      ( $\underline{r} = .44, p < .003$ )
86.	<u>M</u> 2.8	Family: Anniversary reactions
	<u>SD</u> 1.4	Variable                      Significance
		Time since death      ( $\underline{r} = .34, p < .02$ )
89.	<u>M</u> 4.6	Self: Fear of getting close to people
	<u>SD</u> 0.6	Variable                      Significance
		Time since death      ( $\underline{r} = .37, p < .01$ )
98.	<u>M</u> 3.8	Family: Family friends as support systems
	<u>SD</u> 1.2	Variable                      Significance
		Time since death      ( $\underline{r} = .34, p < .03$ )
104.	<u>M</u> 3.6	Religion: Religion as a support system
	<u>SD</u> 1.5	Variable                      Significance
		Time since death      ( $\underline{r} = .30, p < .05$ )
		(table continues)

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<u>Independent variable</u>	<u>Finding</u>
108. <u>M</u> 3.6	Self: Sleep disturbance
<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable                      Significance
	Time since death    ( <u>r</u> = .42, <u>p</u> < .005)
	There is more effect as time since death increases
10. <u>M</u> 2.4	Mother: Support system
<u>SD</u> 1.5	Variable                      Significance
	Time since death    ( <u>r</u> = -.31, <u>p</u> < .05)
41. <u>M</u> 4.5	Religion: Blame God
<u>SD</u> 0.8	Variable                      Significance
	Time since death    ( <u>r</u> = .30, <u>p</u> < .05)
49. <u>M</u> 3.8	Family: Sense of completeness
<u>SD</u> 1.3	Variable                      Significance
	Time since death    ( <u>r</u> = -.33, <u>p</u> < .03)
76. <u>M</u> 4.7	Father: Father as support system
<u>SD</u> 0.7	Variable                      Significance
	Time since death    ( <u>r</u> = -.32, <u>p</u> < .04)
96. <u>M</u> 4.6	Father: Father as a support system
<u>SD</u> 0.7	Variable                      Significance
	Time since death    ( <u>r</u> = -.32, <u>p</u> < .05)

### Summary

Chapter V was concerned with the presentation and analysis of the statistically significant results of the data. Contained in this chapter are three tables constructed to provide a framework within which to analyze each item. This statistically identified the following items: Table 11: Independent variables by category and content headings, as well as total population mean scores and statistical deviations of these items; Table 12: Clusters and single item relationships to content headings; Table 13: Degree of association with independent variables. These tables presented a comprehensive overview of the analysis of the statistically significant items on the SIB.



CHAPTER VI  
INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION  
OF THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter will interpret and discuss the results of the study. The discussion will center on the relationship between the items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the following independent variables: age of respondent, difference in age of respondent and deceased at time of death, sex of respondent, sex of deceased, cause of death, length of time respondent knew sibling would die, and amount of time elapsed since death.

This section will also interpret and discuss items on the SIB that were found to be statistically related to the identified independent variables as they associate with certain relationship categories and content headings. The second section will present items on the SIB grouped by degree of association with the independent variables. A tabular description of findings in this chapter is presented in Chapter V, Table 11.

The interpretation of findings will be discussed in the following manner: Each item on the SIB with

a mean score of 0.00-2.99 and all items with significant relationship to independent variables and their mean scores will be interpreted and the salient points discussed.

The categories and content headings presented in Chapter V will serve as a framework. Each category -- self, mother, father, surviving siblings, family, friends, religion, and school -- will serve as an organizing theme for discussion of significant findings. A summary of the interpreted findings will be presented at the end of each category.

Thirteen content areas emerged from the significant items in the category "Self": Anger, Confusion surrounding facts concerning sibling's death, Escape behavior, Fear of getting close to people, Identification, New understanding about death, Memorialization, Perception of personal growth, Relationship to deceased sibling, Sense of isolation, Sleep disturbance, Survivor guilt, and Things that helped. In some cases there is a single item in a content area; usually, however, there is a cluster of items.

#### Discussion of Significant Items on the SIB

##### Related to Category: Self

##### 1. Anger

The responses to Item 63, "I am angry at my

dead brother/sister for dying," may differ depending on the cause of death. The analysis indicates a difference ( $F(4, 35) = 5.79, p < .001$ ) but until this variability can be investigated with a larger population, the particular cause of death factor (natural, accident, suicide, homicide) that associates with this item, or the spuriousness of this finding, cannot be inferred.

Further research is needed to establish the particular similarities and differences believed to be inherent in the bereavement process for siblings who survive a brother's/sister's death by different causes.

It is vital to develop research designs which incorporate methodology in order to study systematically the effects of different kinds of death to determine if, as the literature suggests, the nature of the death and the cause of death are important indicators of the impact the death will have on the bereavement process.

## 2. Confusion surrounding facts concerning sibling's death

The relationship of confusion and grief has been identified by researchers as a part of the symptomatology of grief (Freeze, 1977; Greenberg, 1975; Worden, 1982). The nature of the confusion

has not, however, been explored. Item 16, "I am confused about the actual facts concerning my brother's/sister's death," was stated in such a way that one of the possible causes of the confusion could be explored.

The idea of cognitive overload and difficulty with concentration is another form of confusion that needs to be studied. The survivor must revive, review, and rework the facts in an attempt to finally accept the reality of the death. This reworking of past and of present and of future history is a process which often precludes concentrating on other forms of thinking. The finding was significant ( $t(38) = -2.41$ ,  $p < .02$ ) for females, but not for males. This gender finding is in agreement with Balk's research (1981).

It is not clear why females respond differently to this question than males do. Does this finding relate to a sense of reluctance, by females, to accept the death? The significant gender effect indicates that a sense of confusion is differentially more likely for respondents who have a female rather than a male sibling die.

The persistent presence of female gender findings for both the deceased and respondent gender effects and the noticeable lack of male deceased and respondent gender effects are the most baffling outcomes of this

study. If the gender of the deceased sibling does have an effect on bereavement process, as this research indicates, future sibling bereavement research must consider the inclusion of this variable for the purpose of confirming or disconfirming the relevance of the deceased gender finding for other populations of bereaved siblings.

Findings from a well-controlled, systematic study with a large population would help provide information necessary to develop differential intervention protocols for bereaved siblings.

### 3. Escape behavior

Item 95, "I take risks to help me forget that my brother/sister died," was included to investigate whether risk-taking behavior, which has been identified in bereaved individuals (Brenner, 1984; Hogan, 1983; Melin, 1984), could be elicited from bereaved adolescent siblings. It appears that in this study the older respondent either has or claims to have more risk-taking behavior ( $r = -.30, p < .05$ ).

Although bereavement is a social phenomenon, the bitter reality remains that much grief-work must be done alone. The reforging of identity requires the bereft to give up that part of themselves that was merged with the deceased and to commit themselves

to that healing process. The detaching from the physical expectation of being with the sibling and the separating out of the hopes, wishes and dreams related to expecting to share the present and future life with the deceased sibling must be annihilated after the death.

The intense feelings that are aroused with the thoughts of living life without the now-deceased brother/sister often haunt siblings who seek experiences by which to escape. The constant and often profound sense of sadness and helplessness and myriad of other feelings are experienced by surviving siblings as they reconstruct their sense of self to include a search for a new meaning about life despite their grief.

This investigation is the first step in determining the kind and extent of risks bereaved siblings take to find relief from the anxiety of remembering. It is essential that future research include the investigation of risk-taking behavior in order to define precisely the kinds of risks and the extent to which these behaviors are used.

This investigator has become sensitive to a particular kind of risk taking by bereaved siblings and close friends of adolescents who die. The number of serious accidents and deaths occurring in the first

two years after the sibling's/friend's death seems to be far more frequent than is probable compared to usual mortality and morbidity statistics for this age group. The relevance of this observation could be evaluated with longitudinal studies of large populations of siblings.

#### 4. Fear of getting close

The findings from Item 89, "I am afraid to get close to people," were significantly correlated ( $r = .37$ ,  $p < .01$ ) to respondents in the early phases of bereavement, and this effect decreases over time.

The sense of bereaved siblings feeling generally more fearful has been documented (Balk, 1983; Bank and Kahn, 1982; Krupnick, 1981). The specific nature of these fears needs to be investigated. This study has included several questions to help differentiate the distinctive features of the sense of fearfulness. Item 89 was included in order to investigate how bereaved siblings perceive their ability to proceed with becoming emotionally invested in new relationships while coincidentally having to detach emotionally from their deceased sibling. The process of freeing up the energy previously invested in the deceased loved one, stabilizing, and finally being able to reinvest energy and accept the risks of loving again are identified phases of

getting through grief-work. Although social withdrawal has been observed as a function of the adult bereavement process, this effect also appears to operate for adolescents in the immediate period following the death of a sibling.

This investigator has heard bereaved siblings who were members of bereavement groups describe and confirm with each other the experience of needing to spare their emotional energy to "hold themselves together."

It will be important to map the distinctive characteristics of the bereavement process as it changes over time by examining the items associated with the time period close to the death as well as the items that decrease over time. In this way, bereaved persons could be helped to anticipate the physiological, emotional, cognitive, and social effects of bereavement. It appears from the results of this study that time tends to alleviate some symptoms and exacerbate others. In order to understand the nature of the symptomatology that occurs at different phases of bereavement, it will be necessary to develop diagnostic protocols that can identify individuals who are at risk for poor outcomes.



## 5. Identification

The common theme that connects the following items is the notion of a continued relationship and identification with the deceased sibling: Item 73. "My dead brother/sister and I were like each other." The mean score (2.9 SD 1.3) supports the notion that identification with the deceased is a characteristic of surviving siblings. There is insufficient sibling research to know what this finding means. Do most siblings feel like each other? Is this a form of memorialization? This item needs to be studied with a larger population to control gender and age in order to better understand it.

Bank and Kahn (1982) have listed different degrees of normative as well as dysfunctional bonding behavior involving the sibling identification process. With a multifactorial design and a larger population, the study of the effect of feeling like or unlike a sibling might help differentiate specific interventions and outcomes as they relate to siblings with basically positive regard for each other and those whose lives are entangled in negative feelings.

Item 101, "I want to be like my dead brother/sister," identifies a lasting sense of positive regard for a deceased sibling ( $r = -.38, p < .01$ )

for the respondents who were farther apart in age. Contrary to what would be expected (Bank and Kahn, 1982), this investigator is unable to explain why this variable did not demonstrate that close-in-age siblings have a more powerful bond than do siblings who are farther apart in age. It is important to build this variable into future studies that will give this form of variability a chance to express itself relative to same gender/opposite gender, and birth order effects.

Item 7, "I miss sharing with my dead brother/sister," was included because this investigator has frequently heard bereaved adolescents express how much they miss sharing with their sibling. Although it appears that this longing is more likely during the period immediately following the death ( $r = .32$ ,  $p < .04$ ) the mean score (2.1, SD 1.5) reflects the persistence of this feeling. Item 7 was written in the language siblings use when asked the question "What do you miss most about your sibling?" Future studies could incorporate open-ended questions in order to define the meaning of the phrase "miss sharing." The vicarious learning that occurs with the shared experiences of siblings is well expressed by Provence and Solnit (1983):

The sibling experience, when it is mainly positive and facilitating of the unique development of each child, becomes a powerful secondary stage on which children, directly or vicariously, have opportunities to rehearse as well as to act out the sense of their inner lives (p. 351).

Bank and Kahn (1983) refer to the development of sibling bonds as a process involving a sense of a shared history of life events that are buried forever with a sibling's death.

#### 6. Memorialization

Item 25, "I mostly remember good things about my dead brother/sister," has a mean score of 1.8 SD 1.1, indicating that this item is pretty often true for bereaved siblings.

The analysis indicates a relationship ( $F(4, 35) = 3.76, p < .01$ ) between cause of death and this item. The relevance of this finding will require a study with a larger population.

Item 71, "My brother/sister who died was my favorite," has a mean score of 2.5 SD 1.4, indicating that this item was almost always true for respondents. This finding needs to be studied with a larger population to know whether it is a significant effect related to memorialization or a spurious finding because of the frequency of two child families in this study. Twenty-five percent of the respondents became only

children with the death of their sibling. Bereaved siblings who become only children are a special case that should to be studied as a group with special needs. The basic question raised by non-bereaved persons is, "Are they still siblings?" The younger bereaved siblings have expressed anguish to this investigator because of the insinuation by others that they are no longer sisters and brothers subsequent to the death of their only sibling. When asked if they are still siblings in spite of the death, they consistently report that they are. Other items in this study support this notion.

#### 7. New understanding about death

New understanding about death includes three items. The idea that all people die is frequently mentioned by bereaved siblings as a sudden and frightening revelation. Item 74, "I have learned that all people die sometime," has a highly significant mean score (1.6 SD 0.9) which supports the commonness of this sense of new learning. Bereaved siblings have told this investigator that their sibling's death made them aware of the fragile nature of human life. It seems to follow that when the awareness that death can happen to anyone at anytime occurs, one feels vulnerable to death for the self and for other important

people in one's life. The realizations about their own mortality may partially account for bereavement workers' descriptions of these respondents as "more serious about life than their nonbereaved peers" (Balk, 1983; Furman, 1974; Kliman, 1968; Kreel and Rabkin, 1979).

Item 85, "I will die the same way my brother/sister died," is significant ( $r = -.33$ ,  $p < .03$ ) for the older respondent. Fear of dying in the way the sibling died has been identified (Osterweis, 1984; Bank and Kahn, 1982) as an outcome of new understandings about death.

Item 100, "I am afraid that more people that I love will die," with a significant mean (2.9 SD 1.3) suggests that the aftermath of adolescent sibling bereavement includes multiple fears about the well-being of the bereaved's significant other. This finding is supported by other research (Furman, 1974; Kliman, 1968; Krell, 1979). Future research should focus on the different kinds of fears that develop subsequent to the death of a sibling. The new understanding that death comes to anyone at anytime appears to make the bereaved adolescent siblings feel vulnerability for their own well-being as well as for others in their life. Interventions need to include identification

of the particular fears related to experiencing the bereavement process of sibling death and the inherent anxiety associated with fear of personal death or the death of others.

#### 8. Perception of personal growth

Two items relate to perception of personal growth. Each has a mean score that identifies the effects as common feelings for the total population of respondents. Item 46, "I am stronger because of the grief I have had to cope with," was phrased to imply that experiencing sibling grief was the cause of feeling stronger and better able to cope. The mean score (2.6 SD 1.4) for this item represents one of the more significant mean scores. Item 57, "I have learned to cope better with problems," with a mean score of 2.4 SD 0.9, also represents the commonness of this perception of personal growth.

The perception of increased personal growth has been cited in other research with bereaved adolescents. One of the legacies of sibling bereavement according to Bank and Kahn (1982) is the possibility of increased creativity and maturity. Balk (1981) reported that bereaved adolescent siblings have a sense of greater maturity since the sibling's death. This finding is consistent with those of Baldwin (1978) and Offer

(1969), findings which attribute increased coping behavior to situational stress. Offer suggests that learning to manage significant stress, such as death of a parent or a sibling's severe injury, results in a quicker progression through the phases of adolescence.

These items were included because this investigator has heard siblings describe how they have changed the priorities of what they worry about since the death. They say such things as, "I just don't get hung up on the little things my friends do anymore." Some bereaved siblings state that it is hard to be patient with friends who "get upset over nothing."

The sense of personal growth needs to be further investigated. The growth-producing aspects of the bereavement process are known to mutual support organizations (Bolton, 1984; Goodrich, 1984) for bereaved parents and siblings, and these aspects of survivorship need to be carefully researched to provide a sense of hope for the bereaved who lose their faith that the pain of grief-work will have some outcome other than more pain.

#### 9. Relationship to deceased sibling

Two items on the inventory apply to a continuing sense of relationship to the deceased. Item 3, "I

am closer to my dead brother/sister," investigates the possibility of bereaved adolescents feeling closer to their siblings since the death. It appears that this effect was more likely ( $t(36) = 2.59, p < .01$ ) for the respondents who had experienced the death of a female sibling. Item 67, "I am still close to my dead brother/sister," has a mean score (2.3 SD 1.4) that demonstrates the frequency of the respondents' sensing that they still feel close to the deceased sibling. This item was more significant ( $t(33) = -3.28, p < .002$ ) for the respondents who had a female sibling die.

This investigator was not certain in which way to structure this notion; therefore both forms I am still close and I am closer were included. It is interesting that both items were significant for the gender effect, thus supporting the reliability of the respondents to score this kind of instrument with consistency.

Bank and Kahn (1982) assert "death ends only a life: it does not end a relationship" (271). This proposition helps to explain the mean score. The gender findings, however, remain unexplained. The deceased gender variable is noted but requires larger populations to define its significance or spuriousness.



This phenomenon of bereaved adolescents who continue to feel close and in some cases closer to the deceased sibling needs further verification with larger samples; nevertheless, the frequency of this feeling in this "normal" population of bereaved adolescents is important to note.

Therapists involved in bereavement intervention need to be aware of the long term nature of the bereavement process and cautious about classifying such behavior bizarre and/or pathological. The time parameters that have been constructed to define normal and abnormal symptomatology of bereavement need to be challenged for accuracy by a study of siblings who have become successful survivors.

It is common for some bereaved siblings to engage in mental conversations with their deceased sibling. Surviving siblings have told this investigator that these behaviors include mentally talking about "just whatever is happening, nothing special." This investigator has discussed the continuing sense of connection with adult surviving siblings whose losses occurred many years before. There seems to remain for many survivors a long-term sense of connectedness with their deceased sibling.

10. Sense of isolation

The sense of isolation is identified in Item 93, "People don't seem to know what I am going through." The mean score (2.9 SD 1.4) shows that the total population felt this item to be true for them much of the time. The item was included because it represents the most common theme of the bereaved parent and sibling regarding social support during bereavement. The reason frequently given for membership in bereavement organizations is the need to share with people who know what it is to suffer the profound loss of a child/sibling. The bereaved adolescents' answers to Item 93 support the notion that bereaved siblings do not feel that others understand what they are going through. This phenomenon that relates to feeling that others don't understand the intensity, duration, and complexity of the grief process has been identified by Balk (1981).

Another interesting point supports the ongoing process of bereavement and begs for more research. Fifty percent of the respondents were 18 to 36 months into their grieving process, and yet the mean score shows that the total population of respondents did not feel they were understood, even though for many of them almost three years had elapsed since the death.

Research into the bereavement process must include an investigation of what bereaved persons mean by the term feeling understood. The mutual support movement for the bereaved parent/spouse/child has emerged as one place where bereaved persons can go to feel understood. Further research needs to include identification of the interventions used in these social support systems so that current treatment and counseling modalities can be evaluated and modified if necessary.

#### 11. Sleep disturbance

The concept, "sleep disturbance," included two items. Item 21, "I have difficulty with sleeping at night," was significant ( $t(32) = -3.01, p < .004$ ) if the respondent was female. This item was negatively correlated with the age of the respondent ( $r = -.47$ ). The older respondent reports experiencing more difficulty sleeping at night than younger respondents. This finding supports Balk's (1981) research regarding difficulty with sleeping at night. Item 108 states "I have nightmares about my brother's/sister's death." The nightmare effect is highly correlated ( $r = .42, p < .005$ ) with the time period immediately following the death and decreases over time. This sleep variable

was reported by Balk (1981) whose research also involved bereaved adolescent siblings.

## 12. Survivor guilt

Survivor guilt has been described in the literature as a form of bereavement guilt associated with the survivor's feelings of culpability and responsibility for the death. Although the term "survivor guilt" is used in order to cluster selected items, the content represented in these items reflects a sense of uneasiness and discomfort that siblings have described to this investigator and which may be broader than the usual definition. The only item in the inventory with the word "guilt" is Item 20: "I am guilty that I lived and my brother/sister died." There seems to be a relationship ( $F(4, 35) = 3.19, p < .02$ ) between this item and the cause of death variable.

Item 45, "I'm uncomfortable when I am happy," is a highly significant ( $r = .53, p < .0004$ ) effect in the period of time immediately following the death. This investigator and others (Goodrich, 1984; Melin, 1984) have heard bereaved siblings describe such feelings. Examples of this phenomenon frequently include the following elements. The bereaved siblings are with friends; they find that they have been laughing and enjoying themselves when suddenly they become acutely

aware of having forgotten about the death. They says "It's like I forgot about it, like I don't miss \_\_\_\_\_." The sudden awareness makes them question their worth as a surviving person. They feel disloyal, guilty of not grieving properly, of publicly appearing to be over the effect of the death; they feel concerned about their capacity for selfishness in light of the family disaster.

Item 48, "I should have died and my brother/sister should have lived," has especially interesting outcomes that need to be studied with larger populations and a research design that can verify the complexity of gender and age as they relate to this form of guilt. These findings suggest a particular cohort of bereaved siblings at risk. The feeling that the respondent should have died while the deceased sibling should have lived is specific for the male respondent ( $t(37) = 1.94, p < .05$ ) and for respondents who experienced the death of a female sibling ( $t(37) = -2.35, p < .02$ ). This effect is also more significant ( $r = .37, p < .02$ ) for the younger adolescent group. This item has a male respondent finding and a female deceased finding as well as an age finding. A larger population might show important interaction effects which would be vital for counselors/therapists to understand prior

to helping bereaved adolescents with their bereavement work.

Item 83, "I am uncomfortable about getting older and doing things my dead brother/sister can never do," is correlated ( $r = -.44$ ,  $p < .003$ ) with the initial period after the death. This notion of feeling guilty about going on with life, learning new skills, and having new opportunities that the deceased can never have has been identified by bereavement workers (Balster, 1984; Goodrich, 1984; Melin, 1984).

Each of these items taps a different part of the domain of information broadly classified as survivor guilt. The universe of content that constitutes this aspect of adolescent bereavement needs to be more fully explored in future research.

Analysis indicates that there is a difference ( $F(6, 33) = 6.53$ ,  $p < .0003$ ) between Item 59, "I must live two lives, my own and my dead brother's/sister's," and the amount of time the respondent knew the sibling would die. The items developed to investigate this construct are common themes for sibling bereavement groups. These particular items were included to start narrowing the universe of variability attached to the concept of sibling bereavement guilt. Clarification of the feelings associated with survivor guilt will

be necessary in order to create potent interventions for bereaved siblings.

13. Things that helped

Item 31, "I have been helped by keeping something special that belonged to my dead brother/sister," has a total mean score of 2.5 SD 1.6, indicating that this effect is a common perception.

Bereaved siblings have described to this investigator the comfort they felt by wearing the deceased sibling's clothes and keeping the possessions of their sibling. Sometimes this comfort derived from holding an object, like a stuffed toy, that was a favorite of the deceased sibling; sometimes relief occurred by listening to music the deceased had liked or looking at family scrap books. The explanation given for this feeling is couched in terms that include a sense of closeness and being in touch in some way with the deceased sibling. Unruh (1983) reported that similar relief behavior has occurred for bereaved adults. On the other hand, this investigator has also heard bereaved adolescents describe how they purposely avoided objects associated with the deceased sibling because of the powerful emotions that these objects evoked.

Discussion of Significant Items on the SIB

Related to Category: Mother

There are three content areas in the category "Mother." These include compassion for mother, mother as support system, and overprotection by mother.

Compassion for Mother

Three items (27, 47, and 94) were placed under the concept compassion. The definition of compassion is "sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it" (Webster's 1980) . This investigator has observed a special kind of compassion toward their parents from many adolescents after the death of a sibling. Compassion is not commonly thought of as a behavior of adolescence and, therefore, this observation may represent a special kind of learning or maturity.

Item 27, "I try to be happy when I am around my mother," has a mean score of 2.8 SD 1.3, indicating that respondents perceived this effect to be operating in their lives. There is cognitive awareness that bereaved adolescents make intentional efforts to construct a happy appearance when around their mother. This item is significantly related ( $F(4, 35) = 2.51$ ,  $p < .05$ ) to cause of death and to amount of time the respondent knew the sibling would die ( $F(5, 33) = 2.46$ ,



$p < .05$ ). Further research is necessary to determine how the cause of death and the amount of time the bereaved sibling had prior to the death affect the bereaved child's need to appear happy when around the mother.

Item 94, "I try to make my mother happy," has a mean score of 2.4 SD 1.2, indicating that this item was a significant effect for the respondents. Item 94 describes the respondent's conscious decision to make the mother happy. The analysis indicates ( $F(4, 35) = 4.21$ ,  $p < .006$ ) that this item is significantly related to cause of death. The specific cause of death factor cannot be identified with the present data.

Do such findings suggest that these adolescents have become less self-conscious and more empathetic toward others? Do these personality changes contribute to other effects mentioned previously, like bereaved siblings' perception of increased personal growth? One could speculate endless possible connections that occur and contribute to positive and negative outcomes of the bereavement process; however, it must be left to future projects to map the paths of interrelated variability.

It seems ironic that this kind of compassion toward the mother and her suffering, this intention

of bereaved children to appear happy and to make the parent happy, is sometimes interpreted by parents to mean that the bereaved sibling is not grieving.

Item 47, "I would like to talk to my mother about my grief but I'm afraid of hurting her more," is correlated ( $r = .45, p < .003$ ) with the initial time period after the death and decreases over time. This item is also associated ( $F(5, 33) = 3.50, p < .01$ ) with cause of death. The specific cause-of-death factor cannot be determined at this time.

Balk (1981) reported that one reason for bereaved adolescent siblings' closing off conversations with others is that they felt the personal disclosures about the bereavement would be too upsetting for other family members to hear; he did not differentiate among the individual family members. This item is phrased in the way that many siblings have described their reasons for being reluctant to discuss their bereavement with parents. It appears from the analysis of findings that this fear to talk to mothers about grief may lessen with time.

The three items that support the notion that adolescent sibling bereavement results in some kinds of compassion toward others are especially interesting

considering that adolescence is usually considered a time of emotional detachment from parents.

#### Mother as Support System

Seven items (10, 22, 32, 47, 56, 64, 99) were placed under the concept mother as support system. "Parental attitudes have a major influence on the psychological well-being of the child" (Hauser et al., 1985). The parents' ability to create an environment where the bereavement process is accepted and understood and where a grieving child feels welcome to communicate his/her thoughts and feelings about grief has been considered an important factor in the bereaved child's ability to work through sibling grief. The particular contributions that mothers make in creating this supportive environment facilitates the grief-work of the individual child. Findings from self-disclose research indicate that children reveal personal feelings and thoughts primarily to mothers (Jourard, 1964).

Item 10, "I can talk to my mother about my grief," with a significant score (2.4, SD 1.5), which relates to the descriptor's "pretty often true," indicates that the respondents felt they could talk with their mothers and receive support. This item is correlated ( $r = -.31, p < .05$ ) with the time period closer to

the death. Balk reported that 8 of the 33 bereaved adolescent siblings in his study talked to their mother about the death and their bereavement responses.

There is also variability associated with this question which indicates that the effect of this item diminishes over time. It cannot be determined from these findings whether the respondents did not feel they could talk to their mothers as much with the passing of time or whether they felt less need to talk to their mothers about the death in the later phases of bereavement.

Balk (1981) found after the first year of bereavement that of the 33 bereaved adolescents in his study, 20 to 24 respondents said that discussions about the death were not at all difficult after one year of bereavement. Three subjects said talking about the death remained difficult.

Item 22, "I am closer to my mother" has a significant mean score of 2.6 SD 1.6. This finding is important because it signifies that bereaved adolescent siblings feel a sense of continued connectedness with their mothers and, beyond that point, they perceive an increased sense of closeness since the death.

Bereaved siblings' mothers have often told this investigator that they feel concerned about their own ability to provide adequate support for surviving

children. The mothers expressed a sense of failing the sons/daughters who live, of feeling impotent to do anything about helping their living children. An almost haunting quality of helplessness and hopelessness accompanies the questions for mothers about how to parent the surviving children. The findings from this item give evidence that bereaved mothers are providing more than adequate emotional support for their children.

Bereaved adolescents' sense of feeling closer to the mother is interesting when one considers the usual distancing behavior that is believed to be necessary during the identity crisis of adolescence in order for these children to progress toward the resolution of identity formation. The dependency, independency, and interdependency issues of adolescence and how these processes are modified because of the death of a child/sibling would be an important area of study.

Future research can investigate the ways in which bereaved children feel support from their parents and ways in which they feel lack of support. The implications from this finding will be exciting for the future researchers who are interested in understanding the dynamics of bereaved families. The final goal of the bereavement researcher will

be empirically based prescriptive interventions for bereaved family members individually and collectively.

Item 32. "My mother is too involved in her grief to help me with mine," is highly negatively correlated ( $r = -.42$ ,  $p < .007$ ) with the younger adolescent. Younger respondents are more likely to feel that their mothers are able to help them grieve their sibling's death than are the older respondents. Why do younger respondents feel more support than do older respondents? Does this reflect the older adolescents' enlarged social support system of peers with whom to work through personal stress? The actual meaning of this finding must await further research. This item was phrased in words that bereaved siblings use to express this notion. In the initial stages of developing theory related to sibling bereavement, one must remain grounded in the language used by the bereaved siblings, although the findings may raise more questions than they answer.

The following items were analyzed and found to have significant F- tests related to the amount of time the respondent knew the sibling would die. Although these items are specified, until a study is done with a larger population, the actual factors of time that may associate with these items cannot be identified.

The next three items (64, 56, and 99) show an interesting relationship to each other. All are significantly associated with the amount of time the respondent knew the brother/sister would die. It appears that the suddenness of death may be a predictor for the perceived ability of the bereaved adolescent to receive support from the mother. At this time, it is unknown if this significance relates to respondents who experienced the sudden death of a sibling or respondents whose sibling lingered with a terminal illness and then died. Opinion is conflicting as to which death has the most deleterious effect on the family members, sudden death or anticipated death. Some authors postulate that family members who have had an opportunity to care for a dying child/sibling adjust to the impending death during the illness process. They conclude that having time to accept the death results in a bereavement process that is less traumatic to the survivors. Other authors, however, contend that the well children in a family with a terminally ill child are abandoned by the caregivers for months and sometimes years at a time, thus leaving the well child/children without emotionally available parents at crucial developmental periods in their lives. It is time to bring the mythology of this debate to

an end by conducting investigations which will empirically define the symptomatology of the bereavement process as it relates to the amount of time the respondents know the sibling would die. The following items indicate that bereaved siblings perceive that their mothers' ability to be supportive to surviving children is related to the time known the sibling would die. These three items are only identified; further analysis must await a study with a larger population. The items are Item 64, "My mother doesn't pay much attention to what I do," with a finding of ( $F(5, 32) = 4.67, p < .002$ ); Item 56, "I must compete with my dead brother/sister for my mother's attention," with a significant finding of ( $F(5, 33) = 2.59, p < .04$ ); and Item 99, "I am rejected by my mother," associates with an ( $F(5, 33) = 2.87, p < .02$ ).

#### Overprotection by Mother

Item 66, "My mother overprotects me," is found to have a significant F-test ( $F(4, 35) = 3.19, p < .02$ ) for cause of death. A further study with sufficient numbers in the cell of each cause of death is needed to illuminate the meaning of this relationship. The cause of death variable and the relevance of including this variable in future studies will be examined in Chapter VII.



Discussion of Significant Items on the

SIB Related to Category: Father

Compassion for Father

Three items (39, 55, and 90) that related to the concept compassion for father. These three items are worded in the same way as items 27, 47 and 94 and are found to be significant in the category mother. Although the items are perceived to be significant for both mothers and fathers, it is interesting to see that the independent variability that results in the significance is in some cases very similar and in other cases very different for each parent.

Item 39, "I try to be happy when I am around my father," is correlated ( $r = .35, p < .02$ ) with the time period immediately following the death. Compassion was earlier identified as a possible positive outcome of the sibling bereavement process. This finding adds credibility to the proposition that developing compassion for others may be learned through the experience of surviving the death of a sibling. This item is significantly related to the amount of time the respondent knew the sibling would die ( $F(5, 33) = 2.66, p < .03$ ). Future research will elaborate on the meaning of this finding. Item 55, "I try to make my father happy," has a mean score

of 2.8 SD 1.4, indicating that respondents feel this effect in their lives. There is a positive correlation ( $r = .33$ ,  $p < .04$ ) between this item and the period of time immediately following the death.

Item 90, "I would like to talk to my father about my grief but I am afraid of hurting him more," is significantly ( $t(36) = -2.0$ ,  $p < .05$ ) different for respondents who experienced the death of a female sibling than for siblings who lost a male sibling.

Psychoanalytic theory has set forth an elaborate theory that describes father/daughter bonding effects, and the findings in this study seem to verify the hypotheses that are derived from this perspective.

There is no bereavement research known to this investigator that helps interpret these findings. Speculation about the meaning will require a study with a large population that can help confirm or disconfirm these findings.

### Displacement

Item 60, "My dead brother/sister was my father's favorite child," has a t-test ( $t(38) = -2.24$ ,  $p < .03$ ) indicating that bereaved siblings who had a sister die believed this item was truer than did respondents who had a brother die. This investigator has heard bereaved siblings justify the parent intensity of

suffering as an outcome of the family's favorite child having died. This justification seems to provide a plausible reason for the parents' inconsolable grief (Vasiliadis, 1984). Item 60 was so phrased in order to investigate the notion of favoritism as a possible bereaved sibling's perception of parental bereavement. Gender seems to play a role in the bereaved child's perception of the bereavement effects on fathers.

#### Father as a Support System

Item 35, "I am closer to my father," was found to be more significant ( $t(37) = -3.00, p < .004$ ) for female respondents than for male respondents. This item supports the previous father and gender item findings that give evidence to the father-female child relationship that has received attention in psychoanalytic literature.

Is this finding related to a stoic male response exhibiting itself as early as 13 years of age for these male bereaved siblings? Jourard's (1964) work with self-disclosure in the family unit revealed that male children have lower self-disclosing behaviors than do female children and that fathers are the least disclosed to other members in the family unit. Does this finding reflect continuing established patterns of self-disclosing behavior that operated prior to

the death? If so, do the family dynamics put male children and male parents at risk for holding grief inside without a safe outlet for expression?

Item 76, "My father doesn't pay much attention to what I do," is negatively correlated ( $r = -.32$ ,  $p < .04$ ) with the period of time later in the bereavement process. The respondents who had experienced the death for a short time period were more likely to perceive this item as true than respondents who had grieved for a longer time period. A future research project could clarify the meaning of this finding. The item is phrased to match the language used by bereaved siblings in bereavement sessions with this investigator to describe the impact of the family changes as they occurred after the death.

Item 96, "It upsets my father when I talk about my dead brother/sister," is negatively correlated to ( $r = -.32$ ,  $p < .05$ ) to the period of time close to the death. It appears that the bereaved adolescent perceives that with the passing of time the father is becoming more upset by being reminded about the death. This finding is very important. The adolescent's perception of the other family members' bereavement process describes time as helping to heal the wounds left by the death, but in the father's case the wound

seems to remain unhealing. Fathers seem to suffer silently and have fewer outlets for social support during bereavement. Society expects them to be strong for everyone else, their bereaved children, their wives, their parents and in-laws, and all others significant to the deceased child. Schiff (1977), in her classic book on parental bereavement, said that fathers are victims of the "masculine-must-be-strong" ethic in which they are denied support and opportunities to express their grief and anger. Cook (1983) studied the differential effects of mother and father bereavement and concluded that fathers have fewer social supports, primarily grieve alone, and are unlikely to name a family member as a person who provided emotional support. She added in addition that the fathers in her study seemed to have lost an aim or purpose in life. These perceptions suggest the possibility of the fathers becoming silently at risk for chronic bereavement reactions because of their particular coping behavior. Furman (1966), after working with bereaved families, stated that the severity of the narcissistic injury to the parents is never fully worked out.

The Compassionate Friends frequently have sessions called "For men only" or "Father only" that may meet on days other than the usual chapter meeting times.

These sessions are known to be a place where bereaved fathers can meet and share in private their special grief. Future research needs to focus on the father and his special isolation subsequent to the death of a child. The father may be the family member with the highest risk for physical and emotional dysfunction.

Item 102, "My father has been too involved with his grief to help me with mine," has a finding ( $F(5, 32) = 2.53, p < .04$ ) that indicates a relationship between this item and the amount of time the respondents knew the sibling would die.

A study with a larger population is necessary to define the effects of being able to anticipate the death and the effects of sudden death with no time to adjust as variables of significance in bereavement research.

Cook (1983) concluded that since American society encourages closer relationships between mothers and children, mothers who have children who die from terminal illness have more difficulty than men. It remains very interesting that the children in this study perceive their mothers to become more able to talk about the death as time passes, and yet they perceive their fathers to be less able to talk about the death as time passes. Cook asserts that "there is a lack of

in-depth, systematic, qualitative descriptive and analytic information about how mothers and fathers cope with such a loss" (p. 43).

Discussion of Significant Items on the  
SIB Related to Category: Surviving Siblings

The category "Surviving Siblings" had five items that were placed within the conceptual areas, comparing personal grief to that of surviving siblings and overprotection of the surviving siblings. The respondents who had surviving siblings numbered 30 of the 40 total respondents in this investigation. The discrepancy here represents the 10 respondents who became only children. The following interpretation is made on this subset of respondents.

Comparing Personal Grief to that of Surviving Siblings

Item 9, "I grieve more than my living brother(s)/sister(s)," has an F statistic ( $F(5, 29) = 2.60$ ,  $p < .04$ ), that relates this item to the amount of time the respondent knew that the sibling would die. The temporal variability and the defined effects it has on the bereavement process cannot be illuminated with the present data.

Item 13, "I am closer to my living brother(s)/sister(s)," has a mean score ( $M 2.9$ ,  $SD 1.7$ ), indicating that this item is an effect in the lives

of the respondents. Brenner (1984) asserted that sibling death may draw the remaining siblings closer together as they work to reconstruct their roles in relation to one another. There is a need for research to define the social support within the family that helps bereaved family members understand how and under what circumstances support is possible.

Item 28, "My living brother(s)/sister(s) cope better with their grief than I do," is correlated, ( $r = .36, p < .03$ ) for respondents who were in the period immediately following the death. This item has important implication. It appears that respondents in the early phases of the bereavement feel that they are particularly vulnerable and that other family members are coping better. A study that investigates the bereavement of all the children in bereaved families and compares their answers to this item will help investigators to better understand surviving sibling coping perceptions.

Item 28 has a gender finding that relates this item ( $t(33) = -2.14, p < .03$ ) to the female respondents. It appears that female respondents are more likely than male respondents to feel that their surviving siblings cope better with the sibling death. It will be important to investigate this idea with a larger



population and to include the birth order and same and opposite gender effects to begin to understand the meaning of this interesting finding.

#### Overprotection by Surviving Siblings

Item 43, "My surviving brother(s)/sister(s) overprotect me," is positively correlated ( $r = .35$ ,  $p < .03$ ) to the younger adolescent. No known research has investigated the concept of overprotection with surviving siblings. Parent overprotectiveness as a part of the bereavement process is documented (Krell & Rabkin, 1979), but the family dynamic of overprotectiveness during and after the crisis of family death has been a neglected area of study.

This item is more significant ( $t(19) = -2.00$ ,  $p < .05$ ) for the respondents who experienced the death of a female sibling than for respondents who experienced the death of a male sibling. The immediate question this finding raises is "Who is doing the overprotecting for whom?" Future research with a larger population may help define the gender/age variability that is suspected to be related to this item.

There is a significant ( $F(5, 28) = 3.62$ ,  $p < .01$ ) finding that relates this item to the amount of time known that the sibling would die.

Discussion of Significant Items on the  
SIB Related to Category: Family

The category "Family" has six items which were placed within these content areas: 1) anniversary reactions, 2) family as support system, 3) family closeness, 4) family friends as support system, 5) pets as support system during bereavement, and 6) closeness of parents. The respondents' concept of a changed family identity is demonstrated in the following category of items. The respondents sense the effects of the death of a child/sibling upon the family identity. Family cohesiveness is also elucidated.

Anniversary Reactions

Two items (86 and 106) were included under the concept anniversary reactions. This concept has been extensively studied. It is well known that adults have an exacerbation of grief reactions at certain times such as birthdays, death days, family holidays. This phenomenon was studied by Balk (1981) who also found children to have a reemerging of symptoms of grief during these times.

Item 86, "Our family holidays, like Christmas, are a hard time for my family," has a mean score (2.8, SD 1.4), indicating that this item is a common effect for many respondents. Mutual bereavement groups

provide pamphlets and other forms of information about handling the holidays. These times are well known to exacerbate the symptomatology of the bereavement process. This item correlates with the respondent and siblings who were close in age at the time of death ( $r = .38, p < .01$ ) and correlates ( $r = .34, p < .02$ ) with the time period immediately following the death. This investigator has heard bereaved siblings describe the effects of the first Christmas after the death as well as the subsequent holidays. There is a sadness that seems to come with these occasions; although the intensity of the feelings may decrease with time, family members continue to feel the loss, especially at a time of family transition and celebration.

Respondents who had experienced the death of a sister were significantly ( $t(37) = -2.11, p < .04$ ) more troubled by the holidays than respondents who had lost a brother. Why do female and male respondents have differential effects depending on the gender of the deceased sibling? What role does the female child play that makes her loss appear different for the surviving siblings?

Item 106, "The time around my brother's/sister's birthday is a hard time for my family," has a mean score (2.2, SD 1.4) which shows that respondents find

the deceased sibling's birthday to be a particularly difficult time of bereavement for the family. It appears that this effect is more likely for the younger respondent ( $\bar{x} = 37, p < .02$ ) than for the older respondent. Does this effect represent feeling a loss for the shared experience of parties and the celebration traditions that are more common for the younger adolescent? Balk (1981) found that 31 of 33 bereaved adolescent siblings felt that family anniversary dates were especially difficult times.

#### Family as a Support System

Item 4, "My family helps each other with their grief," has a mean score (2.3 SD 1.4) which provides strong evidence that family members are perceived to be a significant support system for each other. A study focusing on the ways in which bereaved siblings feel supported by their family and on the specific interventions that result in children's feeling helped during bereavement will result in the foundation on which professional bereavement workers can begin to base intervention which is supplied by empirically based research data.

#### Family Closeness

Item 18, "My family is closer," has a mean score of 2.5 SD 1.4. This finding is supported by Gelcher

(1983) who stated that reactions to death are like reactions to other crises and can be viewed as having their own mobilizing effects on the individual and the family. The family closeness finding is related to other findings that identify family members as helping each other through the grief-work.

#### Family Friends as Support Systems

Item 98, "My family's friends treat us differently," was included to investigate the effects of support systems outside of the nuclear family. The findings indicate that male respondents are more likely than female respondents to feel that family friends treat the family differently than before the death ( $t(38) = 1.9$ ,  $p < .05$ ). This finding is important because it is the only male-respondent finding in the study. Moreover, this item is significantly related ( $t(38) = -2.00$ ,  $p < .05$ ) to siblings who experienced the death of a sister rather than to respondents who lost a brother. These findings raise the question of gender effect and the importance of understanding how these different effects can have implications for differential bereavement interventions for male and female children.

Exactly what is meant by the word "different" in item 98 will need to be studied, possibly with an unstructured or semi-structured interview. It

has been this investigator's experience with bereaved families that friendship systems shift after the death of a child/sibling. The family friends who do remain close are highly valued by the bereaved family.

The sense that family friends treat the bereft family differently since the death seems most likely to be felt early in bereavement ( $\underline{r} = .34$ ,  $\underline{p} < .03$ ) and to decrease over time.

These findings are supported by others which report that mothers and fathers often feel that some family friends treat them differently after the death of their child. (Hare-Mustin, 1979).

#### Family Sense of Completeness

Item 49, "My family is back to normal now," negatively correlates ( $\underline{r} = -.33$ ,  $\underline{p} < .03$ ) with the time period close to the death, indicating that as time passed from the death, the feeling that the family was returning to a more normal state was gaining recognition. The findings of this item relate to and support the findings of item 82, "My family is incomplete now," which is positively correlated ( $\underline{r} = .33$ ,  $\underline{p} < .03$ ) with the early phases of bereavement.

This effect has been described to this investigator in terms of missing the deceased sibling at particular events that would normally bring the family together.

Examples include family transitions such as graduations, marriages, and the birth of new family members -- times normally signifying a new victory for the family or for an individual. The issue of incompleteness also seems to reflect the wrenching effect of shrinking the family to a different configuration, with a place vacated that can not be filled or forgotten.

This item was highly significant ( $t(32) = -3.20$ ,  $p < .002$ ) if the respondent was female rather than male. Why does the female bereaved sibling feel the family is dismembered and only a fragment of what it was in different ways than does the male respondent? How does the male bereaved sibling view the new family as an altered unit? In future studies these question would be investigated with methodology that includes interviewing.

#### Pet as a Support System During Bereavement

Item 103, "My pet has helped me with my grief," has a significant finding ( $F(5, 30) = 3.54$ ,  $p < .01$ ) related to the amount of time the respondent knew the sibling would die. The nature of the time variable needs further study to determine how knowing or not knowing a sibling will die affects the bereavement process.

This item needs to be investigated further in

order to determine the power of the pet as a support object for bereaved siblings. The pets identified on the data sheet included dogs, cats, birds and a snake. A larger study could validate the value of pets in general and different kinds of pets in particular as they impact upon the sibling bereavement process.

Levinson (1967) stated that the bereaved child's grief, tears, fears, terrors, and feelings of guilt are entrusted to the pet: "The pet's silent, non-demanding acceptance of the child's hidden emotions and his unfailing admiration and love for the child are comforting." (p. 199).

#### Sense of Closeness of Parents

Item 51, "My parents are closer," has a mean score of 2.8, SD 1.3, which indicates that the bereaved siblings felt their parents had become closer after the death of their sibling. This finding is supported by some authors, one of whom is a bereaved sibling (Brenner, 1984; Vasiliadis, 1984). Balk (1983), in a study of bereaved adolescent siblings, reported as a parent finding that most siblings are satisfied with the relationship they have with their parents.

It has been this investigator's experience in working with bereaved parents over many years in different chapters of mutual support bereavement



organizations that the findings reporting high divorce rates are questioned by the members who belong to these groups; in fact, the divorce statistics are not confirmed by the vast majority of members who have survived the death of a child with intact marriages.

The issue of parental bereavement and divorce urgently needs to be studied so that the high estimate of divorce can be verified. If the probability for bereaved parents to divorce is not confirmed through research, then it is time to quell the fears of newly bereaved parents who hear about the high divorce statistics, and who, in addition to grieving the death of their child, fear the death of their marriage also.

Marriages take on a different rhythm because the spouses individually become different people during the bereavement process. New communication patterns are necessary, for the parents are changed through the grief-work and must commit themselves to re-stabilize their lives and marriages.

The perception of parental closeness was more likely ( $t(37) = -2.36, p < .02$ ) for the respondents who had a female sibling die. Why does gender affect the likelihood of parents to be perceived as closer after the death of a child?

Discussion of Significant Items on the  
SIB Related to Category: Friend

Friends

Three items of the category "Friend" will be discussed under the heading comparing self to friends on the question of maturity and of friends a support systems.

Comparing Self to Friends on Maturity

Item 37, "I am more grown up than my friends," has a mean score of 2.8 SD 1.2 that gives evidence to the research of Baldwin (1978) who posited that certain crises often result in personal growth. These findings lend support to the proposition that adolescent bereavement induces growth and maturity in many surviving siblings.

Researchers (Garmerzt, 1981; Hauser, Vieyra, Jacobson & Wertlieb, 1985; Werner & Smith, 1982) who study children at risk are developing a body of knowledge on factors that contribute to vulnerability and resiliency of adolescents who must cope with exceptional stress situations. Bereaved siblings need to be studied to determine the variables that influence them to be vulnerable and resistant to the psychopathology that is often cited in the literature as an outcome of sibling bereavement.

### Friends as Support Persons

Item 24, "I can talk to my friends about my grief," is negatively correlated ( $r = -.31$ ,  $p < .04$ ) with the younger adolescent. It appears that the older adolescent feels more able or more willing to disclose sensitive personal information to friends. Feeling able to talk to friends about the bereavement seem to be a function of age. The older respondents were more likely to talk to their friends than were the younger respondents. The older adolescent has a higher developmental capacity for intimacy and confidentiality, which may help account for this finding.

The literature on the relationship between adolescent siblings and their friends refers to general statements that social problems appeared in some bereaved children (Davis, 1983; Payne, 1980).

### Self-consciousness with Peers

Item 69, "My friends are all looking at me to see how I will act," is positively correlated ( $r = .34$ ,  $p < .03$ ) with the time period close to the death. There appears to be a heightened sense of self during the early phases of bereavement. In Balk's study (1983), 10 of 33 bereaved adolescent siblings reported deteriorated relationships with peers. When this investigator asked bereaved siblings how "things are

going with your friends," they gave answers like "they are all looking at me to see how I will act and they talk to me like my mind is mush. They talk baby talk to me." This effect is reported in bereavement sessions to be one that decreases over time.

This effect seems to occur more frequently in early bereavement. This period of human development is believed (Elkind & Bowen, 1979) to include egocentrism and a sense of being judged by an assumed imaginary audience. Because of the increased stresses that accompany this complex stage of psychosocial development, the bereaved early adolescent may be especially vulnerable to feeling looked at by peers during this time.

#### Discussion of Significant Items on the SIB Related to Category: Religion

The sense of religion and its impact as an institutional support system during bereavement will be discussed in this section. The significant findings fit into three conceptual areas: 1) blaming God, 2) religion as a support system and, 3) reunion with the deceased.

#### Blame God for the Death

Item 41, "I blame God for my brother's/sister's death," is positively correlated ( $r = .32, p < .03$ )

to respondents close in age to their deceased sibling. This finding is supported by the work of Bank and Kahn (1982), which revealed that siblings close in age tend to have tighter bonds than dyads who are separated by many years. The negative correlation ( $\underline{r} = -.30, p < .05$ ) of this item indicates that as time increases from the death, the tendency to blame God for the death increases. Literature referring to religion and adult bereavement suggests that some survivors are angry at God for not preventing the death (Bowlby-West, 1983; Brown & Staudemire, 1983; Freeze, 1977; Lindemann, 1944; Worden, 1982). Cain et al, (1964) proposed that the child's death "typically stimulates an avalanche of superego accusations and overt blaming, which in turn undergo marked transformations" (p. 745). Cain further stated that blaming God for the death relieves the survivors of placing blame within the family, projects blame away from the family members, and thus keeps the family intact.

#### Religion as Support System

Item 104, "Religion has helped me deal with my grief," is positively correlated ( $\underline{r} = .30, p < .05$ ) with the early phases of bereavement. The literature review related to religion and its relationship to

adolescent bereavement revealed one study. Balk (1983) reported that religion took on increased importance for adolescents as a function of the death of the sibling. Contrary to the findings in the present study, the significance of religion seemed to increase with time for his respondents. An explanation of this discrepancy includes the difference in time since death that was studied in these two investigations. The time elapsed since death is shorter in the present study, which fact may provide a partial explanation.

#### Reunion with the Deceased

Item 29, "I believe I will see my dead brother/sister again in heaven," has the most significant mean score (1.4, SD 0.9) of all the items. The continuing theme of connectedness to the deceased and the expectation of reuniting with the sibling is not surprising given that these respondents have been culturally taught through the Judeo-Christian belief system that heaven is a place where reunion with loved ones occurs after death. The strength of this item shows the power of this sense of seeing the dead sibling again. Bank and Kahn noted that siblings may react to "the death of a brother or a sister as if they have actually lost a part of themselves, and stay

dominated by the wish to reunite or merge with their lost counterpart." (20).

The gender variable indicates that respondents who experienced the death of a sister ( $t(25) = -2.18$ ,  $p < .03$ ) are more likely to believe they will reunite with their sibling than are respondents who lost a male sibling. The gender findings in this study beg for explanation. The research that defines the actual roles and functions that sisters and brothers play in each other's lives is in its infancy and offers no help in explaining these findings. Recent research (Northman, 1985) on the socialization process during middle childhood and adolescence showed that helping behavior, identified as a generalized sense of responsibility and caring for others, was associated with female gender. Male and female respondents in Northman's study identified this prosocial behavior to be characteristic of the female child.

#### Discussion of Significant Items on the

##### SIB Related to Category: School

This category yielded only one item with a significant finding. This item was concerned with ability to concentrate on schoolwork.

##### Concentration

Item 19, "I have trouble concentrating with

school work," is positively correlated ( $r = .42, p < .007$ ) with the initial phases of bereavement. Difficulty with concentration is a well-known symptom related to the early phases of the bereavement process for adults. Learning difficulties, particularly those related to the tasks of schoolwork, have been documented for bereaved siblings (Kaplan, 1976; Payne, 1980; Townes & Wold, 1977). In one study, grades were found to worsen early in grief and to recover over time to about what they had been prior to the death (Balk, 1983).

Siblings have reported to this investigator two kinds of cognitive interference that make concentration and learning difficult. One form of concentration difficulty seems to occur without warning and without known stimuli related to the sibling or the death. Siblings describe these events as happening in the following way: The bereaved siblings may be doing ordinary things like reading or talking to a friend, when suddenly a flood of feelings flow over them. Siblings report that they fight back the feelings so that no one will know. Adult bereaved parents sometimes describe these sudden heightened feelings as being like an emotional roller coaster ride, up one minute and down the next.



The other major problem associated with academic work is the cognitive interference caused by known stimuli related to the deceased sibling. The kinds of stimuli that arouse grieving responses include hearing music the deceased sibling liked, being at or near the scene of the death, and having to decide how to answer the commonly asked questions of childhood, like "How many brothers and sisters do you have?" There are three ways of responding to this question: 1) to include the deceased sibling in the membership without explanation, 2) to include the sibling and to acknowledge the death and, 3) to answer the question omitting the deceased child in the answer.

Often siblings vary their answer depending on the assessed ability of the listener to respond to the answer in an acceptable or genuine manner. Other siblings settle on one answer and are less concerned about the response of the non-bereaved person.

#### Items on the SIB Grouped by Degree of Association with Independent Variables

The third form of discussion and interpretation of findings will use the independent variables as a framework within which to analyze significant items. This is done in order to illustrate how the significant items relate individually to the independent variables

(age of respondent, difference in age between respondent and deceased at time of death, gender of respondent, gender of deceased, cause of death, length of time respondent knew deceased would die, amount of time elapsed since death) and thus to define the independence and interdependence of items.

### Analysis of Hypotheses

The analysis of data in this section includes a statement of each hypothesis in the null form. The item number and significant findings associated with each independent variable are found in Table 13. This form of presentation helps to illustrate the multidimensional nature of the adolescent sibling bereavement process. Note that some independent variables have many more items than others.

It is important to consider the content of the particular items related to specific variables in order to acquire a richer understanding of how specific variability is interwoven into these phenomena.

#### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between the items on the SIB and the age of the respondent.

This hypothesis had five items negatively correlated and three positively correlated to age.

### Age of Respondent

Correlation Coefficients were run on the independent variable age of respondent and items on the SIB. The scores of younger respondents (13 and 14) were positively correlated with these three items: (1) Sense of feeling overprotected by other siblings; (2) Feeling that the time period around the deceased's birthday was a hard time; (3) Believing that the respondent should have died and the deceased should have lived.

The younger respondents' scores were negatively correlated with five items on the SIB related to the following feelings and perceptions: (1) Having difficulty sleeping at night; (2) Being able to talk to friends about the grief; (3) Feeling that the mother was too involved in her own grief to help the respondents with theirs; (4) Believing that the respondent would die in the same way that the deceased sibling died; (5) Taking risks to help forget that the brother/sister had died.

### Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between the items on the SIB and the difference in age between the respondent and deceased at the time of death.

Two items were positively and one item negatively

correlated to closeness in age difference between the respondent and the deceased sibling.

### Difference in Age Between the Respondent and Deceased at Time of Death

The difference in age variable measured closeness in age between the respondent and the deceased at time of death with the items on the SIB. There were two negatively correlated items and one positively correlated. Respondents who were close in age to the deceased were more likely to (1) Blame God for the death; (2) Feel that holidays, like Christmas, were sad times for the family.

Respondents who were not close in age to their deceased sibling wanted to be like the deceased sibling.

### Hypothesis 3

There is no significant relationship between the items on the SIB and gender of respondent.

The t-tests revealed female respondents scored significantly higher on three items while males scored higher on two items.

### Gender of Respondent

Female respondents reported (1) Having difficulty sleeping at night; (2) Feeling closer to the father since the death; (3) Sensing that the family was incomplete now.

The items that discriminated for male respondents included (1) Feeling that they should have died and the deceased should have lived; (2) Perceiving that family friends treated the bereaved family differently.

#### Hypothesis 4

There is no significant relationship between the items on the SIB and gender of the deceased.

The t-test was employed to association of items on the SIB and gender of deceased variability.

Eleven items were statistically significant for respondents who had experienced the death of a female sibling; no items were significantly related to death of a male sibling.

#### Gender of Deceased

The gender of the deceased variable was found to associate with eleven items on the SIB. Each of these relationships was significant if the deceased sibling was female: (1) Feeling closer to the deceased sibling; (2) Sensing still being close to the deceased sibling; (3) Believing that the surviving brother(s)/sister(s) coped better with their grief than the respondent did; (4) Believing that the respondent would see the deceased sibling again in heaven; (5) Feeling that the surviving siblings overprotected the respondent; (6) Feeling that the

respondent's parents were closer; (7) Sensing that the deceased sibling had been the father's favorite child; (8) Feeling that holidays, like Christmas, were sad times for the family; (9) Wanting to talk to the father about the respondent's grief but being afraid of hurting him more; (10) Sensing that the family's friends treated the bereft family differently since the death; (11) Feeling confused about the facts concerning the death; (12) Sensing that the respondent should have died and the deceased should have lived.

#### Hypothesis 5

There is no significant relationship between the items on the SIB and cause of death.

In order to investigate a relationship between cause of death and the items in the SIB, the investigator employed a regression procedure. The analysis indicates a relationship between cause of death and six items. The nature of the relationship must await a future study with a larger population.

#### Cause of Death

The items that may be dependent on different causes of death include: (1) Feeling guilty that the respondent lived and the deceased died; (2) Remembering mostly good things about the deceased; (3) Consciously trying to appear happy when the

respondent is around the mother; (4) Feeling anger toward the dead brother/sister for dying; (5) Sensing that the mother overprotects the respondent.

#### Hypothesis 6

There is no significant relationship between the items on the SIB and the length of time the respondent knew the sibling would die. These findings were determined by employing F-tests. The analysis indicates that 14 items on the SIB relate to the length of time the respondent knew the sibling would die.

#### Length of Time Respondent Knew Sibling Would Die

The following items may have different effects depending on the amount of time the sibling has to adjust to the knowledge that the death will occur:

- (1) A sense of the family members helping each other with their grief;
- (2) Compassion toward mother by trying to be happy when around her;
- (3) Compassion toward father by trying to be happy when around him;
- (4) Sensing that surviving brothers/sisters overprotect the respondent;
- (5) Wanting to talk to the mother about the respondent's grief but afraid of hurting her more;
- (6) Identifying a need to compete with the dead brother/sister for the mother's attention;
- (7) Believing in the need to live two lives, the deceased sibling's and the respondent's;
- (8) Feeling that the

mother does not pay much attention to what the respondent does; (9) Sensing rejection by the mother; (10) Feeling the father is too involved in his own grief to help the respondents with theirs; (11) Believing that a pet has helped with the grieving process; (12) Believing the respondent grieves more than the living brothers/sisters.

### Hypothesis 7

There is no significant relationship between the items on the SIB and the amount of time elapsed since death.

There are sixteen items on the SIB that were positively correlated with the amount of time elapsed since death, such as that time increased the effect of the item decreased. Six items are negatively correlated with time elapsed since death.

### Amount of Time Elapsed Since Death

An analysis using correlation coefficients was done in order to investigate the relationship between the items on the SIB and the independent variable, amount of time elapsed since death. Table 13 illustrates that 16 items were positively correlated with the initial phases of the bereavement process and 6 items were negatively correlated with the initial phases of bereavement. The initial phase of the bereavement



process was positively correlated with these items:

(1) A sense of missing being able to share with the deceased brother/sister; (2) Difficulty concentrating on school work; (3) Trying to be happy when around the mother; (4) Believing that the living brothers/sisters were coping better with their grief than was the respondent; (5) Trying to be happy when around the father; (6) Feeling uncomfortable when happy; (7) Wanting to talk to the mother about the grief but afraid of hurting her more; (8) Trying to make the father happy; (9) Feeling that the respondent's friends were looking at the respondent to see how he/she would act; (10) Sensing that the family was incomplete now; (11) Feeling uncomfortable about getting older and doing things the dead brother/sister could never do; (12) Sensing that the family holidays, like Christmas, were sad times for the family; (13) Feeling afraid to get close to people; (14) Believing that family friends treated the bereft family differently; (15) Sensing that religion helped the respondent deal with his/her grief; (16) Identifying that the respondent had nightmares about the brother's/sister's death.

These six items were negatively correlated with the initial phases of the bereavement process:

(1) Feeling that the respondent could talk to the

mother about his/her grief; (2) Blaming God for the brother's/sister's death; (3) Sensing the family was back to normal now; (4) Identifying the brother/sister who died as the respondent's favorite sibling; (5) Feeling that the father was not paying much attention to what the respondent did; (6) Sensing that it upset the father when the respondent talked about the dead brother/sister.

#### Summary

The adolescent bereavement process has been identified through the interpretation of the significant findings from the data derived by administering a newly devised instrument to study this phenomenon. Chapter V described the findings and the analysis for each item presented. Chapter VI has identified the findings from other research that will help explain the results of this investigation. There is a scarcity of literature on sibling bereavement that can be used as a foundation for the investigation of these findings. The ground-breaking nature of this study has made it necessary for this investigator to speculate with personal anecdotal information where evidence from other sources was not available. Chapter VII will describe the investigation and will present the implications, along with recommendations for further study.

## CHAPTER VII

### SUMMARY, MAJOR FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This chapter has been divided into three main sections. The first is a summary of the research project. Limitations of the study are presented in the second section. The focus of the third section is on the implications of the research findings for further research.

#### Summary

This study was designed to investigate the specific bereavement process that characterizes adolescents who have experienced the death of a sibling. The role and function siblings have in each others' lives and the subsequent powerful effects related to experiencing the death of a brother or sister have received little attention by theorists or researchers. The sparse research findings that are available suggest that the effects of sibling death can result in bereaved adolescent siblings having an increased potential for emotional problems in later life.

The central focus of this study with fully functioning bereaved siblings was the development of

knowledge regarding psychological processes and psychosocial correlates that seem to affect survivors' resilience to the risk of mental, emotional, or behavioral dysfunction.

A literature review revealed a need for standardization of design and methodology which would allow researchers to organize descriptions of this phenomenon. A national report by the Institute of Medicine identified the need for researchers and theorists to develop a common conceptualization within which to define a comprehensive theory of adolescent sibling bereavement. The specific factors which mediate the bereavement process and influence "normal" or pathogenic grief responses have for the most part been neglected in terms of both conceptualization and research. The patterns of "normal" adolescent bereavement coping behaviors and the adaptation process of this phenomenon have only begun to be charted.

### The Study

In order to study the adaptive and maladaptive means of coping with the sibling bereavement process, this investigator constructed an instrument specifically designed to study this phenomenon. The outcomes of the study will include an empirically based identification

of specific concepts and constructs that are associated with adolescent sibling bereavement and the interrelationships among the variables.

It is hoped that the findings of this investigation will result in information that can lead to a theoretical framework within which to describe sibling bereavement theory as a complex multivariate phenomenon, similar to, but separate and distinct from, other forms of childhood bereavement. The bereavement symptomatology related to adolescent sibling bereavement needs to be carefully studied so that interventions specific for survivors of sibling death can be developed and implemented.

The instrument used in this study was specifically designed to investigate adolescent sibling bereavement. The development and construction of the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement (SIB) included review of the literature, consultation with experts, and personal as well as professional experience. A stem sentence, "Since my brother/sister died I feel" was used as a stimulus for the items on the inventory. A five-point Likert scale was used for scoring. The rationale and methodology used to construct the 109 items as well as the categories of item content (self, mother, father, surviving siblings, family, friends, religion, and school) were identified.

Respondents were instructed to report their perception of the ways in which the death of their brother/sister had impacted upon themselves and upon the other members of their family and also to report the ways in which church and school had affected their bereavement.

The nonprobability sample consisted of 40 bereaved siblings between the ages 13 to 18 who had experienced the death of a sibling within the last three years. There were 15 males and 25 females within the sample, which was drawn from 36 families of deceased children. The respondents constituted two age groups. The younger adolescents consisted of 13 and 14-year olds and constituted 45% of the population, with the remaining 16, 17, and 18-year olds making up the older adolescent group. There were no 15-year olds in the sample. One-fourth of the respondents (10) became only children with the death of their sibling. Most of the respondents (75%) reported that they had little or no advance warning that their sibling would die. Half of the respondents had experienced the death 12 to 18 months previously. The remaining respondents had had siblings die less than a year and one-half previously. Most of the respondents (82.5%) lived with both parents. The predominant (80%) ethnic group was Anglo, with Catholicism the most frequently (60%) identified religious affiliation.

A mutual support organization for bereaved families of child/sibling death was contacted, and permission was given for this project to be undertaken with members of seven chapters in two midwestern states. The nature of the study was identified and parents were invited to consider having their children who fit the criteria included in the investigation. Respondents who were identified as possible participants were contacted and arrangements made for instrument administration. The assurances of confidentiality as well as the significance of the parent and respondent consent forms were discussed.

After confidentiality had been explained and consent forms had been signed by each respondent and one parent, this investigator administered the inventory. Most of the questionnaires were scored in the respondents' own homes. Two small-group administrations were also done. After the instruments had been completed, respondents were asked to comment on the significance of the items and were invited to suggest additions, deletions, and other modifications of the instrument. Several respondents made suggestions for additional items.

Following the scoring of the inventory, many of the respondents seemed eager to talk about their

having learned to cope with the stress resulting from the death of their brother/sister and its impact upon the family as a group or upon individual family members. During these times personal artifacts of the deceased sibling's life were frequently presented and described to this investigator. The respondents seemed to take pride in showing these items. These sharing sessions were not anticipated prior to the collection of data.

The nature of the study was essentially descriptive. Nonparametric measures of mean scores and standard deviations were obtained for each item on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement prior to the parametric manipulations. The analysis of the relationship between the items and the independent variables was performed in the following manner: (1) the gender of respondent and the gender of deceased were analyzed using t scores; (2) the relationship between the SIB item scores and the independent variables, the difference in age of respondent and deceased at time of death, age of respondent, and length of time since death were variables analyzed by computing a Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient; (3) the relationship between the SIB item scores and the independent variables, the cause of death, and the amount of time elapsed



since death were analyzed with a general linear models procedure.

Seven major hypotheses were formulated and tested:

1. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the age of respondent.
2. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the difference in age of respondent and deceased at time of death.
3. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the gender of respondent.
4. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the gender of deceased.
5. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the cause of death.
6. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and the length of time respondent knew sibling would die.
7. There is no relationship between items on the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement

and the amount of time elapsed since death.

All items with mean scores from 0 to 2.99 were identified and described. Item scores on the SIB which were statistically related to the independent variables at  $p < .05$  were identified and analyzed. Each item with significant findings was placed in the category to which it had been previously assigned: self, mother, father, parent, surviving siblings, family, friends, religion, school (see Chapter III). Following an examination of the significant items, this investigator constructed a classification system in order to summarize the data and to identify clusters of data that seemed conceptually interrelated. This taxonomy was introduced in order that a conceptual scheme could be identified within which to describe the findings of this investigation in both a qualitative and quantitative manner. Thirty-eight conceptual categories which formed the taxonomy of symptomatology of the adolescent sibling bereavement process include belief in seeing sibling in heaven, compassion for mother, compassion for father; overprotectiveness of father/mother and surviving siblings, perception of personal growth, sense of isolation, and survivor guilt. (Complete list appears in Chapter IV). It was found that in some cases content headings contained only one item,

and other significant items seemed to cluster under a general heading. It was possible through analysis of the items and clusters of items to identify specific empirical relationships. These descriptive and relational concepts described in Chapter V constitute this investigator's perception of best fit at the time. Further studies will be necessary in order to confirm or disconfirm these preliminary propositions. This taxonomy was constructed in order to provide a conceptual framework within which one can begin to explain this phenomenon. A deductive scheme to determine how these findings relate to an empirical-theoretical system is a critical next step toward a comprehensive theory of adolescent sibling bereavement.

The following limitations are identified:

1. Retrospective methodology is considered weaker than many other kinds of research designs. For the data, this investigator relied on the respondents' memory and willingness to disclose sensitive information.

2. The sample consisted of subjects who volunteered to be included in the study. They came from a predominantly biased population. Most of the parents belonged to a mutual help bereavement group. The emotional support given the members of such groups could be considered a powerful influence on the outcomes

of the surviving children. The goals of these organizations included creation of a community for support, placement of the locus of control on the individual, and emphasis on interaction and growth (Klass & Shinner, 1982-1983). Members who had weathered the acute phases of the bereavement became authentic models for other bereaved members. Bereaved adolescents thus learned to grieve within a special kind of social support system that might affect the sibling bereavement process and its outcome.

3. The subjects were all from two midwestern states; therefore, the findings cannot be generalized to other populations without more research.

#### Major Findings and Recommendations for Future Research

The recommendations for future research will be divided into the following sections: (1) an overview of the conceptual nature of the study and research plans for the revision of the instrument; (2) recommendations for further research with the independent variables used in this study; (3) recommendations for future research using the categorical system of items as they were used in this study; (4) recommendations for methodological considerations; (5) recommendations for bereavement counselors and therapists.

### Revision of the SIB and Future Research

The results of this study indicate that the self-report inventory is one method that can be used to study adolescent sibling bereavement. From the findings derived from the items in the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement, a categorical system was constructed. From this taxonomy, concepts were identified with which to describe the findings. A conceptual framework was introduced to help develop a descriptive scheme with which to explain the findings. This framework was constructed with the hope that it would serve as a foundation upon which to begin a systematic theory of adolescent sibling bereavement. Subsequent to this study this investigator plans to revise the Sibling Inventory of Bereavement and to begin to establish the parametric properties of the SIB. Suggestions made by the bereaved respondents in this study will be added to the revised version. A large-scale study is planned to replicate this one with a larger population of bereaved siblings.

The central concern of future bereavement research must become the systematic study and establishment of empirically-based assessment criteria with which to plan implementation programs for bereaved persons in need of professional counseling and treatment.

Osterweis et al. (1984) asserted that a "major problem in bereavement research is the lack of agreement about what constitutes normal or abnormal outcomes and the absence of reliable criteria for assessing them" (p. 17). This issue will be addressed throughout the recommendation sections.

### Recommendations for Further Research with Independent Variables Used in This Study

The independent variables used in this study will be commented upon with regard to their relevance to future sibling bereavement research.

1. The age of the respondent as a variable related to the items in the SIB yielded a small but potentially important group of findings. The value of continuing to use this variable includes the ability to develop age appropriate counseling/treatment modalities that are specific to the cognitive and psychosocial development of bereaved adolescents.

2. The difference in age between respondent and deceased sibling as a variable related to the items on the SIB had few significant outcomes. These findings failed to confirm the findings and beliefs of researchers interested in studying the relationship between sibling relationships and personality development. A semistructured interview may be necessary to follow

up on the items that were significant and to search for the presumed factors that mediate bonding between close-in-age siblings as these dyads differ from those in which siblings are farther apart in age.

3. The gender variable resulted in findings that were totally unexpected. The specific effects related to female and male gender for both respondent and deceased sibling raised many questions that cannot be answered at this time. An argument can be made that the female respondent is more self-disclosing and therefore the findings are biased for female gender. That argument, however, does not explain the fact that male and female respondents felt that the death of a sister had a different effect from the death of a male sibling. The nature and function of same-gender/opposite-gender effects need to be included in future research.

4. Nature of death and cause of death are variables that are believed to have a significant impact upon the outcomes of the bereavement process. The relatively small number of respondents in this study precluded being able to analyze this variability more than to say that the findings do confirm the value of using this variability in bereavement research. It is important to build this into further studies

in order to begin to investigate how particular kinds of deaths affect the outcomes of sibling death.

5. The amount of time the respondent knew the sibling would die is often referred to in the literature as an important variable. The literature tends to support the notion that persons who have time to anticipate a significant death have a less traumatic bereavement process and a shorter recovery time than those persons who have a loved one die a sudden unexpected death. Many items related significantly to this variable, but the small number of respondents precluded this investigator's being able to translate the significant findings into time factors that would lend support for this proposition. Empirical research is needed that can help differentiate the particular factors associated with sudden death and with anticipated death.

6. The amount of time elapsed since death was related to many items on the SIB, and the importance of these findings as a cluster of bereavement symptomatology must not be understated. First, these findings indicate that it is possible to chart patterns of adolescent sibling bereavement symptomatology as it relates to time. It is possible also to identify which effects seem to decrease over time and which do not. Second, if these findings can be replicated



with a large population, empirically based guidelines can be developed as intervention protocols for bereaved adolescent siblings. Ultimately, these parameters of duration and intensity of symptomatology could allow counselors/therapists to determine which bereaved siblings are processing their grief-work "normally" and which bereaved siblings are at risk for post-bereavement psychopathology.

#### Recommendations for Future Research

Specific recommendations for further research were identified with the individual items in Chapter VI. Using the categorical system of items as they were evolved in this study, this section will focus on recommendations for future research. The following recommendations are related to the use of the categories for classification of items and their value in future research:

1. The category "Self" had findings which indicate that the impact of sibling death has a powerful and enduring effect on adolescents. It is important to point out, however, that this study gives supporting evidence for the proposition that there are positive outcomes of the bereavement process. For instance, the increased sense of personal growth, compassion, empathy, and maturity are issues which need to be explored

further in order to gain an understanding of these prosocial characteristics associated with bereaved siblings. Balk (1981) found that bereaved adolescent siblings scored significantly higher on the "Morals" scale of Offers Self Image Questionnaire for Adolescents than did the same-sex/same-age normative group. Future research should focus on the factors that result in survivors becoming more resilient or more vulnerable to developmental impairment after the death of a sibling.

2. The categories "Mother" and "Father" had identical items except for the words mother/father. The inclusion of identical items allowed the investigator to compare and contrast findings. There are many interesting findings related to parent effects, especially those related to the father-daughter dyad effects, and yet results did not identify a complementary mother-son effect. Respondents perceived their fathers and mothers to have different outcomes at the three-year period. Family bereavement literature has usually combined father and mother effects into a single parent effect. There is support from this study and from a small number of others that the father may be especially vulnerable subsequent to the death of a son/daughter. Future researchers need to continue to separate the

parent variability into mother and father factors in order to understand these effects more clearly.

3. The category "Surviving Siblings" had findings suggesting that the brothers/sisters who survive seem to be important social support systems for each other. The issue of feeling overprotected by surviving siblings is an interesting finding. Future research can investigate whether this is seen as a positive or negative effect.

4. The category "Friend" had findings that indicate the positive and negative effects for bereaved siblings. These different effects were related to the cognitive and psychosocial maturity of the respondents. Future investigations can identify the specific ways in which the friends of the bereaved siblings feel that an individual's bereavement was helped or hindered by the peers.

5. The category "Religion" had items indicating that religion and God are important variables. The belief that the respondent will reunite with the sibling in heaven is deeply embedded in the bereavement process. The sense that the sibling is not gone forever seems to be central. Future bereavement studies can include an understanding of how this ideology operates to mediate the effects of the bereavement process.

6. The category "School" had the smallest group of items. Only one item was significant in the group. It appears that school as an institution cannot be identified as a social support for bereaved adolescents. A study to investigate the attitudes of teachers and administrators toward students whose brother/sister dies is important. The fact that the deceased sibling, as well as the respondent, is usually known to those in this social setting makes the lack of perceived support worthy of notice and further investigation.

#### Recommendations for Methodological Considerations

1. A study which included bereaved siblings whose parents belonged to a mutual bereavement group and bereaved siblings whose parents would help define the effects of learning to be bereaved through social modeling. The increasing numbers of the mutual help bereavement organizations attests to their success as a support system for bereaved persons. The characteristics of the interventions used to help members need to be studied so that those involved in care of the bereaved parent/child will have opportunities to learn from those who are most able to know what helps and what hinders those persons who experience the death of someone they love.

2. A study which examines sibling bereavement

over the lifespan is necessary in order to begin to understand the effects that growth and development have on the bereavement process.

3. The study of sibling bereavement is confined primarily to white, middle-class populations. No information is available about the ways children in other cultures experience the death of a sibling. There is a need to study sibling bereavement from the transcultural perspective in order to understand how culture facilitates or hinders the bereavement process.

4. Future research designs need to focus on the effects that different support systems have on the bereavement process. The findings in this study indicate that bereaved adolescents sense different kinds of support from mothers, fathers, surviving siblings, peers and family friends. An investigation could be designed to identify the ways social support is viewed by bereaved siblings as both positive and negative.

5. The research on sibling bereavement has generally been done by accumulation of case study data in various forms of documents obtained from psychiatric institutions. This frequently-reported body of literature provides a baseline of symptomatology associated with sibling bereavement that may or may not be generalizable to fully-functioning bereaved siblings. There is need

to study both populations in order to differentiate the factors that result in different psychogenic outcomes.

### Recommendations for the Bereavement Counselor/Therapist

1. The bereavement worker should be aware of the individual bereaved adolescent's multifaceted bereavement process. He or she should solicit information regarding the particular ways family members and societal factors are impacting upon the adolescent's bereavement. Such data would enable the practitioner to assess the level of resiliency or vulnerability operating in the adolescent as well as provide a way to evaluate the effectiveness of bereaved persons' social support systems. The seven categories of support identified by this study can serve as a framework for investigation of the kinds and amount of support available to individual children.

2. The bereavement worker needs to plan interventions that consider the families' strengths and limitations as well as the individual client's competencies for getting through the bereavement. The individual family members constitute the principal environment within which the adolescent must learn to adapt and cope with the tragedy of experiencing the death of a brother/sister. Parental influences are known to have a significant impact on the surviving

children's potential to become well adjusted or pathogenic as an outcome of the bereavement. The parental and surviving sibling responses to the death are factors that must be considered.

3. The bereavement worker should consider the age and gender findings which suggest that psychosexual and psychosocial considerations may determine differential intervention strategies.

4. The bereavement worker needs to keep in mind that the potential for personal growth and maturity are possible outcomes of adolescent sibling bereavement. The bereaved client needs to know about these potentially positive aspects of surviving the death of a sister or brother so that hope can be a part of the client's plan for survivorship.

5. The bereavement worker needs to remain skeptical of current beliefs regarding the time it takes to get through the grief-work of a significant loss. The present standards identified in manuals designed to label behavior as falling within normal limits from that falling outside normal limits of healthy grief-work use symptomatology and time as variables by which to classify various levels of "mental health." These do not conform to the experience and reality of bereaved persons who are fully functioning bereaved

parents and siblings. The difference between the professional-belief system regarding how long it takes to get through various phases of grief-work and the beliefs of members of bereavement organizations with many years of experience need to be empirically studied in order to resolve this discrepancy.

6. The bereavement worker should be cautioned about the tendency to treat the childhood bereavement process resulting from parent and sibling death as the same phenomenon. The similarities and differences need to be carefully identified so that children can benefit from care that is specific to their needs.

7. An instrument such as the SIB might become useful as a diagnostic tool to identify individuals whose symptomatology requires professional intervention.



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### REFERENCE NOTES

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## APPENDIX A



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

National Office • P.O. Box 3696 • Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3696 • 312/323-5010

## M E M O

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Therese Goodrich

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### FOUNDERS

Reverend Simon Stephens  
—England  
Paula and Arnold Shames  
—U.S.A.

TO: TCF Chapter Leaders

FROM: Therese Goodrich, Executive Director *JH*

DATE: December 1, 1984

SUBJECT: Nancy Hogan Research

We are very pleased to announce that Nancy Hogan is completing her doctoral dissertation on "An Investigation of the Adolescent Sibling Bereavement Process and Adaptation" at Loyola University. We ask that you encourage your members who are interested to participate in this research.

Nancy is well-known and a good friend of TCF. You may have read some of her articles we have published. The most recent, "Commitment to Survival", appeared in two parts in the Summer and Fall, 1983, issues of the National Newsletter. She has been a speaker at several sibling seminars and has led workshops at the national conferences.

I have been involved in the development of the questionnaire she will be using and feel this will be a valuable experience for any of our sons and daughters.

Once again I urge your participation in this research, as the need for knowledge in this field is so great and we can help her as she in turn will help us. Nancy will be contacting you in the near future in the hope of making arrangements to acquire bereaved parents' and siblings' names and addresses.

TG/jb

A self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents



# THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS, INC.

National Office • P.O. Box 3696 • Oak Brook, Illinois 60522-3696 • 312/323-5010

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
Therese Goodrich

January 7, 1985

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Simi Valley, CA

Betty Siegelmeier  
Colorado Springs, CO

FOUNDERS

Reverend Simon Stephens  
— England  
Paula and Arnold Shamres  
— U S A

Dear Parents,

We invite you to allow your child/children to participate in research conducted by Nancy Hogan. She is completing her doctoral dissertation on "An Investigation of the Adolescent Sibling Bereavement Process and Adaptation" at Loyola University. This is an original research project that has never been approached before, and we know that teachers, counselors, doctors and even we, ourselves, as parents will benefit from the information gained by this study.

Nancy has worked with bereaved siblings many times before, especially as a workshop facilitator, and has repeatedly been invited back by several TCF chapters in the area to speak to parents and bereaved siblings.

I believe your children's experience in reading this questionnaire will be of therapeutic value. I have been involved in its development and feel good in urging you to share in this activity.

Sincerely,

Therese Goodrich  
Executive Director

TG/jb

A self-help organization offering friendship and understanding to bereaved parents

**APPENDIX B**



PARENT CONSENT FORM

I would like to invite you to permit your child (children) to participate in a research study I am conducting on sibling grief.

**DESCRIPTION OF PURPOSE AND EXPLANATION OF PROCEDURES:**

The purpose of this research is to investigate the perceptions of adolescents to the death of a sibling.

I request your permission to administer a questionnaire to your adolescents ages 13 to 18. The approximate time for taking the questionnaire is one half hour. I will personally administer the instrument at a time and place mutually agreeable to you, your child and to me.

The instrument asks questions about feelings and attitudes related to experiencing the loss of a sibling.

All information resulting from this study will be confidential and only group information will be available, thus no individuals can be identified.

**RISKS AND DISCOMFORT:**

It is not anticipated that any discomfort will occur while your child is providing information. Should any discomfort occur, I will be available to assist and counsel your child at that time.

I have worked for many years with The Compassionate Friends and other organizations in counseling and advising adolescents and their parents on issues that relate to the death of a sibling or child. Letters supporting this research are attached.

**POTENTIAL BENEFITS:**

It is anticipated that the outcomes of this study will lead to development of bereavement interventions for health care workers, counselors and others involved with bereaved adolescents. A formal report will be available to all participants at the completion of this research, in the hope that the information derived from studying sibling loss may benefit individual participants and parents as well as others interested in sibling loss.

-----  
I, the parent or guardian of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ children 13 to 18 years of age, consent to his/her participation in a program of research being conducted by Nancy Schildberg Hogan entitled, "An Investigation of the Adolescent Sibling Bereavement Process and Adaptation."

I understand that I may withdraw my child at any time.

I understand that my child at their own request may withdraw at any time.

I freely and voluntarily consent to my child's participation in this research project.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Telephone)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

SUBJECT CONSENT FORM

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study I am conducting on sibling grief.

**DESCRIPTION OF PURPOSE AND EXPLANATION OF PROCEDURES:**

The purpose of this research is to investigate the perceptions of adolescents to the death of a sibling.

I request your permission to administer a questionnaire to you. The approximate time for taking the questionnaire is one half hour. I will personally administer this instrument at a time and place mutually agreeable to you, your parent(s) and to me.

The instrument asks questions about feelings and attitudes related to experiencing the loss of a sibling.

All information resulting from this study will be confidential and only group information will be available, thus no individuals can be identified.

**RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS:**

It is not anticipated that any discomfort will occur while you are providing information. Should any discomfort occur I will be available to assist and counsel you at that time.

I have worked for many years with The Compassionate Friends and other organizations in counseling and advising adolescents and their parents on issues that relate to the death of a sibling or child. Letters supporting this research are attached.

**POTENTIAL BENEFITS:**

It is anticipated that the outcomes of this study will lead to development of bereavement interventions for health care workers, counselors and other involved with bereaved adolescents. A formal report will be available to all participants at the completion of this research, in the hope that the information derived from studying sibling loss may benefit individual participants and parents as well as others interested in sibling loss.

-----  
I, \_\_\_\_\_, consent to participate in a program of research being conducted by Nancy Schildberg Hogan entitled, "An Investigation of the Adolescent Sibling Bereavement Process and Adaptation."

I understand that I may withdraw at any time.

I understand that my parent(s) may withdraw at any time.

I freely and voluntarily consent to my participation in this research project.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Subject)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Telephone)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

## APPENDIX C

C. \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_

**SIBLING INVENTORY OF BEREAVEMENT (SIB) DATA SHEET**

Please answer the questions below. I would like to get some information which will help me and other adults understand how teenagers feel after the death of a brother/sister.

1. My sibling that died was a male \_\_\_\_\_ female \_\_\_\_\_
2. How old was your brother/sister when he/she died? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How old were you when your brother/sister died? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How long ago did your brother/sister die? (year and month) \_\_\_\_\_
5. State sex and age of all of the living siblings in your family.

	Sex	Age		Sex	Age
a.	_____	_____	d.	_____	_____
b.	_____	_____	e.	_____	_____
c.	_____	_____			

6. Put an X beside the other people who were living in your house when your brother/sister died.

\_\_\_\_\_ father  
 \_\_\_\_\_ mother  
 \_\_\_\_\_ other, state relationship to you \_\_\_\_\_

7. Put an X beside the cause of your brother's/sister's death.

\_\_\_\_\_ disease or illness                      \_\_\_\_\_ suicide  
 \_\_\_\_\_ an accident                              \_\_\_\_\_ other, please state cause  
 \_\_\_\_\_ murder    \_\_\_\_\_

8. If your brother/sister died of an illness, please put an X beside the length of time you knew your brother/sister would die.

\_\_\_\_\_ a few days  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a few weeks  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a few months  
 \_\_\_\_\_ a year or more  
 \_\_\_\_\_ no advanced warning

Page 2

9. Do you have a pet? \_\_\_\_ yes \_\_\_\_ no  
If you have a pet, what kind of pet do you have? \_\_\_\_\_  
How long have you had your pet? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Put an X beside your ethnic group.
- \_\_\_\_ Anglo
  - \_\_\_\_ Black
  - \_\_\_\_ Hispanic
  - \_\_\_\_ Other
11. Put an X beside the religion you belong to.
- \_\_\_\_ Protestant
  - \_\_\_\_ Catholic
  - \_\_\_\_ Jewish
  - \_\_\_\_ Other
  - \_\_\_\_ None
12. Put an X beside the organization you belong to.
- \_\_\_\_ Compassionate Friends
  - \_\_\_\_ Survivors of Suicide
  - \_\_\_\_ Candlelighters
  - \_\_\_\_ Other, please identify by name \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

### SIBLING INVENTORY OF BEREAVEMENT (SIB)

Here are some FEELINGS that some teenagers have had after the death of a brother or sister. All you need to do is read each sentence and fill in the brackets that describe how often the sentence is true for you.

There are no right or wrong answers — it depends completely on how you feel yourself about the answers. But don't spend a lot of time thinking about each answer.

- 1 = almost always true
- 2 = pretty often true
- 3 = true about half the time
- 4 = occasionally true
- 5 = hardly ever true

#### SINCE MY BROTHER/SISTER DIED I FEEL THAT:

- |     | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |   |
|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 1.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am a better person.   |
| 2.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My brother/sister who died was my mother's favorite child.              |
| 3.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am closer to my dead brother/sister.                                  |
| 4.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My family helps each other with their grief.                            |
| 5.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My father over protects me.   |
| 6.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I will lose control when I start thinking about my dead brother/sister. |
| 7.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I miss sharing with my dead brother/sister.                             |
| 8.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My family is ashamed about my brother's/sister's death.                 |
| 9.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I grieve more than my living brothers/sisters.                          |
| 10. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I can talk to my mother about my grief.                                 |
| 11. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am uncomfortable about having fun.                                    |
| 12. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Some of my teacher's have helped me with my grief.                      |
| 13. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am closer to my living brothers/sisters.                              |
| 14. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | It upsets my mother when I talk about my dead brother/sister.           |

## Page 2

- 1 = almost always true  
 2 = pretty often true  
 3 = true about half the time  
 4 = occasionally true  
 5 = hardly ever true

## SINCE MY BROTHER/SISTER DIED I FEEL THAT:

- |     | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |  |
|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 15. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have never accepted the fact that my brother/sister is dead.                           |
| 16. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am confused about the actual facts concerning my brother's/sister's death.             |
| 17. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My father has no one to help him with his grief.   |
| 18. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My family is closer.   |
| 19. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have trouble concentrating with school work.   |
| 20. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am guilty that I lived and my brother/sister died.                                     |
| 21. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have difficulty sleeping at night.   |
| 22. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am closer to my mother.  |
| 23. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have lost interest in my schoolwork.   |
| 24. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I can talk to my friends about my grief.   |
| 25. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I mostly remember good things about my dead brother/sister.                              |
| 26. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My father compares me to my dead brother/sister.   |
| 27. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I try to be happy when I am around my mother.  |
| 28. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My living brothers/sisters cope better with their grief than I do.                       |
| 29. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I believe I will see my dead brother/sister again in heaven.                             |
| 30. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am uncomfortable because I don't miss my dead brother/sister.                          |
| 31. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have been helped by keeping something special that belonged to my dead brother/sister. |
| 32. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My mother is too involved in her grief to help me with mine.                             |
| 33. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have little control over my sadness.   |
| 34. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My family has fewer problems.  |
| 35. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am closer to my father.  |

Page 3

- 1 = almost always true  
 2 = pretty often true  
 3 = true about half the time  
 4 = occasionally true  
 5 = hardly ever true

## SINCE MY BROTHER/SISTER DIED I FEEL THAT:

- |     | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |  |
|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 36. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I can no longer trust GOD.   |
| 37. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am more grown up than my friends.  |
| 38. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am going crazy.  |
| 39. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I try to be happy when I am around my father.  |
| 40. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My mother compares me to my dead brother/sister.                                     |
| 41. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I blame God for my brother's/sister's death.   |
| 42. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My mother is afraid I will die also.   |
| 43. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My surviving brother's/sister's over protect me.                                     |
| 44. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I want to die to be with my dead brother/sister.                                     |
| 45. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I'm uncomfortable when I am happy.   |
| 46. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am stronger because of the grief I have had to cope with.                          |
| 47. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I would like to talk to my mother about my grief but I'm afraid of hurting her more. |
| 48. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I should have died and my dead brother/sister should have lived.                     |
| 49. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My family is back to normal now.   |
| 50. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have to pretend to be happy when I am with my friends.                             |
| 51. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My parents are closer.   |
| 52. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My mother has no one to help her with her grief.                                     |
| 53. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My dead brother/sister and I were not getting along when he/she died.                |
| 54. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | It would help me to talk to an adult outside of my house.                            |
| 55. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I try to make my father happy.   |
| 56. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I must compete with my dead brother/sister for my mother's attention.                |



- 1 = almost always true  
 2 = pretty often true  
 3 = true about half the time  
 4 = occasionally true  
 5 = hardly ever true

**SINCE MY BROTHER/SISTER DIED I FEEL THAT:**

- |     | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |  |
|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 57. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have learned to cope better with problems.                             |
| 58. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am depressed when I think about him/her.                               |
| 59. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I must live two lives, my own and my dead brother's/sisters.             |
| 60. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My dead brother/sister was my father's favorite child.                   |
| 61. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am out of place in my family.  |
| 62. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I may lose control and kill myself.                                      |
| 63. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am angry at my dead brother/sister for dying.                          |
| 64. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My mother doesn't pay much attention to what I do.                       |
| 65. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I never should have told my brother/sister "I wish you were dead."       |
| 66. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My mother over protects me.  |
| 67. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am still close to my dead brother/sister.                              |
| 68. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Religion has become more important to me.                                |
| 69. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My friends are all looking at me to see how I will act.                  |
| 70. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't miss my dead brother/sister.                                     |
| 71. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My brother/sister who died was my favorite.                              |
| 72. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am rejected by my father.  |
| 73. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My dead brother/sister and I were like each other.                       |
| 74. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have learned that all people die sometime.                             |
| 75. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I do more dangerous things.  |
| 76. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My father doesn't pay much attention to what I do.                       |
| 77. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I get along with my surviving brother/sisters better.                    |
| 78. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My family keeps a lot of secrets about my dead brother's/sister's death. |

## Page 5

- 1 = almost always true  
 2 = pretty often true  
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 4 = occasionally true  
 5 = hardly ever true

## SINCE MY BROTHER/SISTER DIED I FEEL THAT:

- |     | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |  |
|-----|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| 79. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My friends will think I am weird if I talk about my dead brother/sister.                     |
| 80. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am afraid to get close to people.  |
| 81. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My father is afraid I will die also.   |
| 82. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My family is incomplete now.   |
| 83. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am uncomfortable about getting older and doing things my dead brother/sister can never do. |
| 84. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I can talk to my father about my grief.  |
| 85. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I will die the same way my brother/sister died.  |
| 86. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Our family holidays, like Christmas are sad times for us.                                    |
| 87. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have no control over my life.  |
| 88. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am sick more often.  |
| 89. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am responsible for his/her death.  |
| 90. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I would like to talk to my father about my grief but I am afraid of hurting him more.        |
| 91. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My family grieves in silence.  |
| 92. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I will be punished because I didn't do enough for my brother/sister.                         |
| 93. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | People don't seem to know what I am going through.   |
| 94. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I try to make my mother happy.   |
| 95. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I take risks to help me forget that my brother/sister died.                                  |
| 96. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | It upsets my father when I talk about my dead brother  |
| 97. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I compare myself to my dead brother/sister.  |
| 98. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My family's friends treat us differently.  |
| 99. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am rejected by my mother.  |

Page 6

- 1 = almost always true  
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 5 = hardly ever true

## SINCE MY BROTHER/SISTER DIED I FEEL THAT:

- |      | 1                        | 2                        | 3                        | 4                        | 5                        |   |
|------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 100. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I am afraid that more people that I love will die.                                |
| 101. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I want to be like my dead brother/sister.   |
| 102. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My father has been too involved with his grief to help me with mine.              |
| 103. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My pet has helped me with my grief.   |
| 104. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Religion has helped me deal with my grief.  |
| 105. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I must compete with my dead brother/sister for my father's attention.             |
| 106. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | The time around my dead brother's/sister's birthday is a hard time for my family. |
| 107. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My grades have improved.  |
| 108. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I have had nightmares about my brother's/sister's death.                          |
| 109. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | My friends miss my brother/sister more than I do.                                 |

APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Nancy Schildberg Hogan has been read and approved by the following committee:

Dr. Anne M. Juhasz, Director  
Professor, Foundations of Education, Loyola

Dr. Steven Miller  
Professor, Foundations of Education, Loyola

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

November 20, 1986

Date

  
Director's Signature