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The Incestuous Family: Development of an Enmeshed Family Inventory

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THE INCESTUOUS FAMILY:
DEVELOPMENT OF AN ENMESHED FAMILY INVENTORY

by

Loretta M. Petrie

Bachelor of Arts, Moorhead State University, 1985

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of the

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for the degree of

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This thesis submitted by Loretta M. Petrie in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts from the University of North Dakota has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done, and is hereby approved.

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This thesis meets the standards for appearance and conforms to the style and format requirements of the Graduate School of the University of North Dakota, and is hereby approved.

Alan R. [Signature] 14 XII 88

Dean of the Graduate School

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Title THE INCESTUOUS FAMILY: DEVELOPMENT OF AN ENMESHED
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Department Psychology

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ABSTRACT

A systems model has been proposed as useful theoretical framework for the study of incestuous families (Alexander, 1985) and is frequently used in the therapeutic treatment of the victim of sexual abuse and his or her perpetrator (Larson and Maddock, 1986). The purpose of this study was the construction and standardization of an instrument for assessing a multi-axial model of enmeshed and disengaged family systems which is based on the prior work of Minuchin et al. (1978) and Kog et al. (1987).

Minuchin et al. (1978) suggest that enmeshment, conflict-avoidance, over-protectiveness and rigidity are four characteristics that are key to an understanding of the behavioral transactions that occur in an enmeshed family system. Kog et al. (1987) suggest that these family traits are better conceptualized as dimensions and contrasted enmeshment with disengagement, rigidity with adaptability, conflict-avoidance with problem solving, and over-protectiveness with intrafamilial tension.

In the proposed model, dimensions similar to Kog's were formulated. However, the sub-dimension of enmeshment was contrasted with detachment, conflict-avoidance with confrontation, protection with punishment, and rigidity with adaptability.

In the present study, a test instrument consisting of 40 paired statements was developed. To answer each item, subjects were asked to choose the statement that best fit his or her family and rate it on a 5 point likert-scale format, ranging from "fits slightly" to "fits exactly"

The test instrument was administered to 626 male and female subjects. The results were factor analyzed using a principal components, varimax rotation. The initial analysis resulted in 12 factors on which all items had loadings of .40 or higher. The most meaningful and parsimonious solution resulted in six factors consisting of 23 items that could account for 49.3% of the test variance.

These factors were renamed as scales. Scale 1 was named Family Enmeshment/ Detachment, Scale 2 was named Information Repression/ Confrontation, Scale 3 was named Structural Homeostasis/ Entropy, Scale 4 was named Boundary Permeability/ Restriction, Scale 5 was named Parental Coalition/ Triangulation and Scale 6 was named Resistance/ Obediance to Authority.

A revised model was developed in order to incorporate the dimensions that resulted from the current study. As the overall distribution of scores in this study found a marked bias towards one or another statement within many items, it is suggested that the forced-choice format be abandoned in future uses of the inventory.

CHAPTER I

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Statement of the Problem

Interest in the relationship between early childhood sexual abuse and somatization has a long history, one that finds its genesis in Freud's (1896) early theory of the etiology of hysterical conversion. Contemporary investigators also note that women who report a history of childhood sexual molestation are likely to have a variety of somatic complaints including chronic muscle tension (Briere, 1984), headaches, difficulty with breathing, and body weakness (Runtz, 1985). Moreover, they are likely to report problems in sexual functioning, including a fear of sex, inhibited sexual desire and arousal, nonorgasmia, vaginismus, and dyspareunia (Tsai & Wagner, 1978; Becker, Skinner, Abel, Axelrod, & Cichon, 1984).

Further, incestuous and psychosomatic families have both been described as enmeshed family systems (e.g. Alexander, 1985; Minuchin, Rosman, and Baker, 1978). The relationship between the factors of family structure, somatization and incest may be more than coincidental. Yet it is unclear how these factors may be ordered in a formulation of causality. At present the construct of family enmeshment has not been sufficiently operationalized to permit a comparison of family structures between sexually

abused or psychosomatic adults. In order to facilitate such comparisons of family systems, the focus of the present study was to operationalize the construct of family enmeshment.

Before reviewing the literature on incest, it may be useful to distinguish the terms "incest victim" and "incest survivor" more carefully. Although they conjure up subtly different images, these terms are often used interchangeably by various authors. The term "victim" will be used here to refer to an individual who reports one or more incest-related problems which apparently persist in her current level of functioning, and for which she may or may not seek treatment. The term "survivor" will be used to refer to an individual who reports having no current incest-related problems, or who has apparently overcome all identifiable consequences of incest. The neutral term of "subject" will be used to refer to those reporting a history of incest when it is uncertain whether a given problem is incest-related.

Review of the Literature

This review of the literature will focus on five related topics. Studies related to the developmental and psychophysiological effects of incest on adult female functioning will be reviewed in the initial section. The second section will review studies concerning the characteristics and interactive style of incestuous families. The third section will review a currently

available method of assessing the Minuchin (1978) model of family enmeshment. The fourth section will describe a model of a child's internalization of an enmeshed or disengaged family structure upon which the Enmeshed Family Inventory is based. A fifth and final section will provide a brief statement of the experimental hypotheses.

The Effects of Incest on Adult Female Functioning.

Research on incest has tended to concentrate less on the psychophysiological components of sexual abuse than might be expected (Becker et al., 1984). Instead, the social context of the abuse, its meaning for the participants, and its influences on personality development are much more frequently discussed in the literature. Such varying interests reflect, perhaps, differences in the way that the causes and effects of sexual abuse have been conceptualized. Becker et al. (1984) observe that several influential authors (e.g., Brownmiller, 1975; Herman & Hirschman, 1977; Meiselman, 1978) view sexual abuse as a crime of power, aggression, and degradation that reflects the pathology of the larger social system. However, Becker et al. (1984) argue that the sexual component of sexual abuse is suggested by its specific effects on the sexuality of many victims. This distinction is an important one because whether the abuse is conceptualized as being a systemic or an individual problem can make a big difference in how a case is formulated for both therapy and research.

It is apparent by the growing numbers of those seeking therapy for a variety of incest-related problems that the current social climate encourages adults to disclose any history of abuse. The abuse is metaphorically described as a problem belonging to the children that they once were and which can be teased out and dealt with objectively by the adults that they are now. Yet it may be that the abuse is an integral part of all victims' development and is thus a profound part of their self identity. If this is true, knowledge of the abuse may serve as a paralyzing realization for those attempting to work in therapy. It is likely that a great deal of pressure exists to deny the breadth and depth of the effects of incest. Personality disorders may be predicted if there are diffuse effects on the development of self-concept and interpersonal relationships. However, if incest is a more discrete causal factor, then its effects may also be more specific and logically related to the abuse. Sexual dysfunction and chemical abuse would then occur with greater frequency than personality disorders.

The systemic formulation focuses attention upon the entire family system that fostered this form of child abuse. What is interesting about emphasizing the family structure is that it may go far in an understanding of the perpetuation of sexual abuse through many generations of abused family members. It may also explain differences in the ways that individuals cope with the abuse; why some

subjects appear to be continually victimized by their past experience, while others appear to survive it. The victims and survivors may have differences in their personal coping styles that they modeled from their family systems. Those that survive abuse may more easily be able to detach their self concept from their concept of their dysfunctional family and make use of values and resources that are available in the larger community.

Through a review of previous research concerning the characteristic traits of women reporting a history of incest, the answers to several fundamental questions may be discussed. Does incest lead to any similar developmental effects across all those who have experienced it, or is incest related to specific problems that are logically related to the nature of the abuse? What characteristics distinguish clinical and non-clinical samples of women who have experienced incest? Do clinical samples differ between incest and non-incest groups?

Using the Exner scoring system, Owens (1984) explored the Rorschach protocols gathered from 34 women receiving out-patient psychotherapy. The experimental group reporting a history of incest were matched for age, educational level, and length of therapy with a non-incest control group. The incest group's protocols were significantly different than those of the non-incest group in several ways. They gave fewer texture responses which were interpreted as a denial

of a need for affection. The incest group also gave fewer popular and reflection responses, which indicate a rejection of conventionality and reduced interaction with the social world, as well as egocentricity. Finally, the incest group gave significantly more blood content responses, which Owens reports are indicative of having difficulty with intimacy, poor self-esteem and feelings of anger.

Owen's study does not provide a clear test of the three ideas concerning whether the effects of incest are diffusely related to development, systemic, or logically specific. Depending upon how one construes his results, they could be viewed as supporting any of the three hypotheses.

Lending greater support for the developmental hypothesis is a study conducted by Wheeler and Walton (1987). They administered the Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory (MCMI) to 60 women seeking psychotherapy from a variety of outpatient treatment centers. The composite scores of 28 subjects reporting a history of incest were compared to 32 women who reported no history of incest. Significant differences were found between the incest and non-incest groups and which led the investigators to conclude that incest victims were significantly more disturbed than other clinical populations.

The basic personality pattern or coping style of the incest group in this study was avoidant, passive-aggressive, and schizoid. There was a high prevalence of borderline

personality, with a likelihood of schizotypal and paranoid personality disorders. Anxiety, depression, somatic complaints, alcohol abuse, and psychotic thinking were found to be acute symptoms.

However, Wheeler and Walton's study made no comparisons with non-clinical incest survivors. It could be argued that a personality disorder which was not caused by the abuse was further accentuated by the stress induced by talking about it in therapy. Although this is not compelling criticism of Wheeler and Walton's study, the results of it would be further illuminated by one in which non-clinical incest victims were used as an additional control for comparison.

A variety of control of this type was given in a study by Tsai et al. (1979), who compared a sample of incest victims who had sought professional help for incest-related problems to an incest group which had not sought such help, and to a third non-clinical, non-incest control group. Thirty women comprised each group and they were administered the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and a self-report inventory of current psychosexual functioning.

Concerning the MMPI in general, standardized scores falling between 50 and 70 are not considered to be clinically significant. The results from the MMPI in the Tsai et al. study demonstrated that the overall scores of both non-clinical samples did not differ in the clinical or statistical sense from one another. However, statistical

differences were found between the clinical incest group and the combined non-clinical samples on five subscales: Hypochondriasis (Scale 1); Depression (Scale 2); Paranoia (Scale 6); Psychasthenia (Scale 7); and Social Introversion (Scale 0). Statistically significant differences were found as well on two subscales: Psychopathic Deviate (Scale 4) and Schizophrenia (Scale 8). Further, on Scales 4 and 8 a standardized score in excess of 70 was recorded by half of the clinical incest group, demonstrating clinically significant pathology for these individuals.

According to Greene's (1980) manual for the MMPI, a marked elevation of Scale 4 is interpreted as demonstrating the presence of a conflict with authority, rebelliousness, irresponsibility and egocentricity. A marked elevation of Scale 8 is thought to demonstrate a feeling of alienation from one's environment which may reflect situational or personal distress, having difficulties in logic and concentration and showing poor judgement. The descriptions of characteristics related to both scale elevations are intuitively generalizable to incest victims.

Having a history of incest was also found to have a significantly greater negative impact on the psychosexual functioning of the clinical incest group than on the non-clinical incest group as measured by the self-report questions Tsai et al. developed for their study. Four

factors differentiated the two groups. The clinical group was older when the molestation occurred (12.37 years as opposed to 9.23); they had stronger negative feelings concerning it; and the relationship endured longer with more frequent incidents of abuse. The non-clinical group also reported that supportive friends and family members helped them to allay guilty feelings about their experience, and that sympathetic lovers helped them to overcome problems in their relationships with men.

Tsai et al. (1979) acknowledge that there are several limitations in their study. For example, because subjects were not randomly assigned to groups it is difficult to make inferences about the larger population of incest victims, and memory distortions may confound self-report data concerning the sexual abuse relationship. Women who volunteer to discuss a history of incest without seeking therapy may be different from women who do not volunteer to do so. Of particular interest in this study is in the indication of the important role that a support structure may have on whether an individual survives long term effects of incest.

The design of another study was similar to the one discussed earlier by Wheeler and Walton. Meiselman (1980) compared the MMPIs of two clinical groups, one consisting of women who reported a history of sexual abuse and another whose members did not. The two samples of incest and non-

incest patients differed significantly in the way they answered MMPI items related to sexuality. She also found the 4-8 MMPI profile among both clinical groups. However, because Meiselman found this profile in both clinical samples, she warns against terming the 4-8 scale combination as the "incest profile". Indeed, the 4-8 code is reportedly the second most common MMPI profile found amongst clinical populations in general (Gynther, Altman, & Sletten, 1973). Meiselman concludes that her research supports the hypothesis that incest is specifically related to sexual disturbance, and does not support assertions that it is necessarily related to specific clinical or personality disorders.

However, the results of a study specifically designed to examine the effect of incest on sexual functioning found that not all subjects of sexual abuse report having problems in this area. Becker et al. (1984) conducted a three-hour long, structured clinical interview with each of 371 non-psychotic adult women who reported a history of sexual abuse. Groups were compared according to the type of sexual abuse experienced by subjects; ranging from rape in adulthood (n = 222) to incest (n = 53) and mixed assaults of both incest and adulthood rape (n = 89). Another group reporting childhood sexual molestation by a non-relative was dropped from the analyses because of its small sample size (n = 7). Sexual problems were categorized under the major

subgroups of response inhibition, nonorgasmia, and intromission. The later category consisted of dyspareunia and vaginismus. Sexual dysfunction was reported by only 219 women (59%) in the total sample and this dysfunction was attributed to sexual assault by only 149 victims of this subset (40% of the total sample). The most common assault-related sexual problem concerned response inhibition (88.2%).

The subject's age at the time of first assault was predictive of assault-related sexual dysfunction for the overall sample. The average age of victims was 13.22 years, while survivors averaged 17.02 years. However, age predicted survival within assault groups for only the rape sample; those who were victimized were on the average 18.39 years, while those who survived were 20.90 years. As incest victims may be, by definition, younger when they are victimized, making much of a significant difference found among a pooled sample of rape and incest victims may be misleading. Similar to the results found by Tsai et al. (1979), age of victimization did not distinguish between assault-related dysfunction among those who had experienced incest. Sexual dysfunction was also more common among women whose history included incest than among women who had been raped by a non-relative.

An interesting finding from this study was that women who felt themselves to be at least partially responsible for

their abuse were more likely to report assault related problems in their current sexual functioning. No characteristics of the assault itself, such as the type of sexual act performed or the use of a weapon by the assailant were found to be significantly related to sexual dysfunction. Summarizing their findings, Becker et al. suggest that sexual assault may have a less dramatic effect on the physiological sexual response of incest victims than it has on the cognitive aspects of their sexual functioning:

More so than in other relationships, sexual relationships are based on mutual trust. Whereas all females who are assaulted may experience a loss of trust in people in general and, specifically, in males, the degree of loss is probably greatest among incest survivors for they could not trust a father, a brother, an uncle, or other significant male figure. Loss of a basic trust, as happens in incest, most probably has a particularly enduring impact on future relationships (p.18).

Several studies have found a relationship between substance abuse and a history of sexual abuse. In a study by Miller, Downs, Gondoli and Keil (1987), a group of 45 alcoholic women were compared to 40 randomly selected women who were not problem drinkers. They found significant differences between the two groups regarding drinking behavior and sexual abuse. Although women in both samples

had experienced sexual abuse, this history was reported by 67% of the alcoholic sample as compared to 28% of the non-problem drinkers. In addition, the incidents of abuse were more frequent and took place over a longer period of time for women in the alcoholic sample. S.A. Russell, Wilsnack, Klassen, and Deitz (1988) compared the rates of reporting a history of sexual abuse from groups of women identified as problem drinkers (N=147) and non-problem drinkers (N=154) in a stratified random sample of the U.S. adult female population. A significant difference was found. Thirty seven percent of the problem drinkers as compared to 24 percent of the non-problem drinkers reported having a history of sexual abuse. The rate of reporting sexual abuse for the combined groups was 30 percent, a finding which is comparable to other studies of representative samples (e.g., D.E. Russell, 1983).

Yet again, not all the subjects in either study who reported a history of incest were problem drinkers. To date, little empirical research has been conducted in order to understand how or why some incest subjects have specific or diffuse problems while others do not. Examining the family structure of incest subjects may prove a rich source of information concerning both the cause, effects, and healing process of women who have had this painful and confusing experience.

In summary, the results of the studies reviewed here lend support to two hypotheses: that incest is related to problems that are intuitively related to the nature of the abuse; and the hypothesis that incest has diffuse effects on personality development. Wheeler and Walton (1987) and Becker et al. (1984) have suggested that further research should be directed toward determining whether victimization or the family pattern which gives rise to it is the causative factor in personality disturbance.

Characteristics of the Incestuous Family System.

Liles and Childs (1986) estimate that between three and four million children may be living with families that are both alcoholic and incestuous. Liles (1984) found that in a study of 170 father-figure perpetrators, 38 percent were classified by their individual therapists as "alcoholic." Forty-five percent of the sample consumed alcohol just prior to acts of molestation, and blackouts and/or disinhibition was frequently used as a rationalization for the behavior.

In their review of the literature, Liles and Childs note that alcoholics and incest perpetrators are found to be similar in several ways. Both behaviors are forms of compulsions that encourage, if not require, secrecy, denial, minimization, and rationalization. If known, both behaviors are likely to have serious public consequences which may indicate intense self-hate. Members of both alcoholic and incestuous families appear in the role of "enabler," as the

secret must be kept by the child directly, or through other members' denial of the problem. The children in alcoholic and incestuous families must often assume responsibility for several aspects of the family's daily well-being, for example in the areas of meal preparation and housekeeping. The family's overall pattern of communication is indirect and vague. The families are also typically isolated from external support systems. Liles and Childs conclude that a family systems model may be applied equally well to either alcoholic or incest families as both types of families may be using a variety of maladaptive behaviors in an attempt to maintain homeostasis and simply stay together.

Cohen (1983) has also summarized a number of frequently cited observations concerning characteristics of incestuous families. Incestuous families may be experiencing great stress from any of a variety of sources: an illness of a family member, parental unemployment, or parental absence due to employment or desertion. She asserts, "The occurrence of incest is a pathological manifestation of a basic need for warmth and nurturance. Its secret continuation as a structural pattern of the family is a family defense against potential disintegration." It should be noted, however, that more than half of the references she cites are from single case and poorly controlled studies published prior to the burgeoning of research in the late 1970's. The lack of adequately controlled experimental

studies is a major weakness in the body of literature on incest. However, the number of thoughtful case studies that have been published provide researchers with a wealth of ideas that could be tested in the future.

Alexander (1985) presents a clear rationale for identifying and treating the maladaptive coping styles of incestuous families based on two case studies of incestuous families which were referred to her for therapy from the courts. Her model focuses on the interactive style of a family with its environment. First, she noted that the identification of incest often arises from an agency outside the family, for example the child's teacher or social worker, rather than the child directly. Second, Alexander asserts that the incestuous behavior may arise from the family's desire to isolate itself from the larger community. In order to avoid the child's forming outside relationships and leaving home, the family fosters antagonistic relationships with neighbors, school personnel, and other sources of community authority. As a result, family members are left to rely solely on each other for most aspects of social interaction. Further, the family appears to be so threatened with the prospect of change initiated through outside intervention, that the parents may exclude the daughter from subsequent involvement with the family rather than work towards changing their family system.

Alexander identifies three characteristics which serve to differentiate the theoretically open (healthy) family system from the theoretically closed (incestuous) one. These are information exchange with the environment, "negentropy" and dynamic homeostasis. An unfortunate weakness in Alexander's study is the lack of explicit criteria for any of the three broadly defined constructs she uses. While her case summaries are convincing, the lack of a priori definitions for these constructs make it difficult to conclude that these terms provide the best fit to her data, or to other available data.

Other constructs may be more readily understood by those who find themselves working with such families. For example, Alexander implies that "enmeshment" and having "too much interconnectedness" is the essence of what is meant by dynamic homeostasis in her model. She defines "negentropy" as "the law of evolution in biology in which there is a transition in the direction of increased complexity or negative entropy." She asserts that open family systems will become more differentiated and specialized with new input from the environment, while closed family systems will respond to new information with disorganization.

An alternative to the higher order construct of negentropy might simply be "differentiation" as this may be more closely tied to role-behaviors. Behaviors that signal a lack of input from the environment may be derived from an

examination of family rules. For example, the family's rituals at bedtime and mealtime may indicate the family's structure, and a family that does not allow the children's friends to visit informally may protect the family from outside influences.

Minuchin (1978) provides a systems theory of psychosomatic families that may be applicable to incestuous families as well. An understanding of incestuous families and the development of sexual dysfunction in children raised in such families may be useful because it takes into account how sexual abuse serves to maintain family homeostasis.

Minuchin and his colleagues observed that children who needed to be repeatedly hospitalized for anorexia nervosa, asthma and diabetes, had families who were enmeshed, rigid, conflict-avoiding and over-protective. Family members were unusually dependent upon one another for many of their social needs but had poor and indirect communication skills. The children of these psychosomatic families were inappropriately involved in parental conflicts and the child's symptoms were used to detour or scapegoat marital problems. The child also often played an active role in family conflicts through the building of transient coalitions with family members and through triangulation of the parents.

The four constructs suggested by the Minuchin model parallel Alexander's dimensions closely. Minuchin et al.

provide general behavioral referents for these constructs and illustrate their application in the case studies which they present in transcript form throughout their book, Psychosomatic Families. Brief summaries of each of the constructs are given in the following excerpts from the text (pp. 31-33). Such definitions provided the foundation for item development of the Enmeshed Family Inventory (EFI) which is the focus of the present study. A more detailed description of this instrument will be provided in the methods section.

Enmeshment:

..refers to an extreme form of proximity and intensity in family interactions.. [with] implications at all levels: family, subsystem, and individual... Changes within one family member or in the relationship between two members reverberate throughout the system... Subsystem boundaries.. are poorly differentiated, weak, and easily crossed... Excessive togetherness and sharing bring about a lack of privacy.

Over-protectiveness:

.. shows in the high degree of concern of family members for each others' welfare. This concern is not limited to the identified patient or to the area of illness. Nurturing and protective responses are constantly elicited and supplied. Family members are hypersensitive to signs of distress, cueing the

approach of dangerous levels of tension or conflict. In such families, the parents' over-protectiveness retards the children's development of autonomy, competence, and interests or activities outside the safety of the family... The children in turn, particularly the psychosomatically ill child, feel great responsibility for protecting the family. For the sick child, the experience of being able to protect the family by using the symptoms may be a major reinforcement for the illness.

Rigidity:

Rigid families are heavily committed to maintaining the status quo. In periods when change and growth are necessary, they experience great difficulty... Issues that threaten change, such as negotiations over individual autonomy, are not allowed to surface to the point where they can be explored.. Such families are highly vulnerable... Almost any outside event may overload their dysfunctional coping mechanisms, precipitating illness.

Conflict Avoidance:

..such families' threshold for conflict [is] very low. Usually a strong religious or ethical code is used as a rationale for avoiding conflict. As a result, problems are left unresolved... idiosyncratic structure and functioning dictate its ways of avoiding conflict.

Often one spouse is an avoider. When the non-avoider brings up areas of difficulty, the avoider manages to detour confrontation that would lead to the acknowledgement of conflict and, perhaps, its negotiation... Many psychosomatic families deny the existence of any problems whatsoever,.. and are highly invested in consensus and harmony. Other psychosomatic families disagree openly, but constant interruptions and subject changes obfuscate any conflictual issue before it is brought to salience.

Minuchin has identified three patterns of conflict avoidance which he states are central to the maintenance of the child's symptoms. These are triangulation, parent-child coalition, and detouring.

Patterns of conflict avoidance:

In the first two patterns, triangulation and parent-child coalition, the spouse dyad is frankly split in opposition or in conflict, and the child is openly pressed to ally with one parent against the other. In triangulation, the child is put in such a position that she cannot express herself without siding with one parent against the other... In the third type of pattern, detouring, the spouse dyad is ostensibly united. The parents submerge their conflicts in a posture of protecting or blaming their sick child, who is defined as the only family problem.

Kog et al.'s (1987) Measure of the Minuchin Model.

Recent criticism of the Minuchin model has been made on methodological as well as on conceptual grounds (Kog, Vertommen & Vandereycken, 1987). Of major concern to researchers is the problem of differentiating between the constructs that Minuchin poses. For example, there is a great deal of overlap between the connotations of enmeshment, conflict-avoidance, over-protectiveness and rigidity. In particular, Kog et al. (1987) found it difficult to differentiate protectiveness from the other three constructs.

Kog et al. (1987) redefined the four categorical constructs of enmeshment, rigidity, over-protectiveness and conflict-avoidance as dimensions which could encompass any family's style of interaction. Each pathological extreme which had been emphasized by Minuchin was given an opposite pole on a continuum. Therefore, enmeshment was contrasted with disengagement, rigidity was contrasted with adaptability, conflict-avoidance was contrasted with problem-solving and over-protectiveness was contrasted with intrafamilial tension. Their original instrument consisted of 106 items and from the results of a Gulliksen item analysis, these were reduced to a 44 item, four factor solution. The final scales comprising the instrument were renamed boundary, adaptability, avoidance/recognition of intrafamilial tension, and conflict.

Kog et al. then used the instrument in a study of 55 families in which one member was a female diagnosed with an eating disorder. They found support for Minuchin's (1978) contention that it is necessary to observe the family's actual interactions in order to understand its structural pattern. They also found that the two behavioral assessment methods they used provided better convergent and discriminant validity for the model than did their self-report instrument. They concluded that the construct of over-protectiveness was not key to an understanding of family systems.

By contrast, it may be expected that a person who is rigid may be habituated to interpersonal conflict and may be careless, rather than protective, of others' feelings. On the other hand, a person who must contend with a rigid and powerful person may avoid conflict by protecting the rigid person's feelings and protect others from conflict with him through indirect interventions (i.e. triangulation and detouring). The problem of teasing protection away from the other two constructs may lie with clearly identifying that someone else, other than the subject in the subject's family system, is rigid. The implicit objective of an assessment instrument designed to measure Minuchin's model of family interaction is to relate the subject's internalization of the enmeshed family's habitual transactional behaviors.

Thus protectiveness is no less relevant to such an instrument than conflict-avoidance or rigidity.

Minuchin argues that any self-report measure will not uncover the behavioral and transactional pattern of family structure because to do so one must observe the family in context. Kog et al. (1987) have discussed this idea in their review of research using behavioral data to study family systems. The issue has been termed the difference between the "insider" and "outsider" perspectives. Kog et al. (p. 247) define the insider's perspective as simply "what family members tell about themselves". They defined the outsider's perspective as "what a therapist or another observer tells about the family". The difference between the two methods of gaining information has an implication for the style of therapy that Minuchin advocates. The systems or family therapist, as defined by Minuchin (1978, p.86):

.. sees himself as very much a member of the therapeutic system. He will change the system by participating in the interpersonal transactions that compose it... He is active and intrusive. He must participate in the family system to modify it.

Although the distinction between the insider and outsider perspective appears to make sense, it can be argued that by virtue of being a family therapist one is no more an accurate "meter" of the family system than would be provided

through a paper and pencil test administered to an individual family member. How can one be certain that the system that is observed by the therapist is not uniquely dependent upon the therapist's participation? In order to do justice to this issue it may be necessary to discuss the differences between the linear and systems philosophy of science as Minuchin et al. (1978) do. They make a very compelling argument for the systems perspective. However, such a discussion is beyond the scope of this review of the literature. The following argument begs the question posed by Minuchin's assertion of the need to assess behavioral transactions, but makes room for attempts to find reliable self-report measures. Indeed, the family member's self-report of an internalization of the family structure may be a key to an understanding of it as an independent observer's evaluation of the member's interactions with the family in context.

Despite the success that behavioral measures have had for assessing family interaction styles, the advantages of paper-and-pencil instruments warrant that efforts continue to be made towards their development. In the case of adults reporting a history of incest, it is rarely possible to make a behavioral assessment of the family of origin.

In summary, a systems model has been proposed as a useful theoretical framework to study the incestuous family (Alexander, 1985), and is used frequently in the therapeutic

treatment of both the victim and the perpetrator of abuse (Larson and Maddock, 1986). Further, incestuous families are generally described in terms that are consistent with descriptions of psychosomatic families (Alexander, 1985; Minuchin et al., 1978). Psychosomatic families have been found to be highly enmeshed, over-protective, rigid, and conflict avoiding (Minuchin et al., 1978). However, beyond case studies of entire families in treatment, there has been no study to date of large representative samples of either psychosomatic or incestuous family systems. One of the obstacles facing researchers in this area is the lack of a paper and pencil measure that can provide adequate operationalization of family enmeshment. Discriminant validity gathered from subjects in research settings may contribute to both the successful identification of psychosomatic and abusing family systems.

A Model of the Development of Children Within Enmeshed and Disengaged Family Structures.

Minuchin describes his conceptualization of family interactions as circular; no one element is independent of one another, but all are inter-related-categories of behavior. Kog et al. (1987; p. 236) revised the Minuchin model so that the constructs became dimensions "on which every type of family interaction can be situated." Combined, both of these ideas suggest a multi-axial framework on which family interactions may revolve. The model to be

described here may be regarded as a third-generation of the Minuchin model.

If the construct of enmeshment is contrasted with detachment along one axis, rigidity and adaptability along a second, protection and punishment along a third, and conflict-avoidance and confrontation along a fourth, a cyclical and dynamic pattern of behaving is formed. An eight sided model of these interactions has been illustrated in Figure 1.

The direction of the interaction that an enmeshed family member may take is illustrated by the left-handed, clock-wise spin of the cycle, in which both ties to the community and aspects of an individual identity are resisted, while family characteristics are internalized or amassed. The cycle may be described in greater detail by imagining the inter-personal, social development of a hypothetical child who is a member of an enmeshed family.

It may not matter at which point in the cycle of interactions that one begins an analysis of behavior. So long as one moves in a clock-wise fashion the development of the pattern becomes sequential. If the child's needs are met through family interactions, she will likely choose to adapt to her family structure rather than assert her individuality. As she does so, she will internalize something of the existing family pattern by learning the family rules for avoiding conflict. These rules are

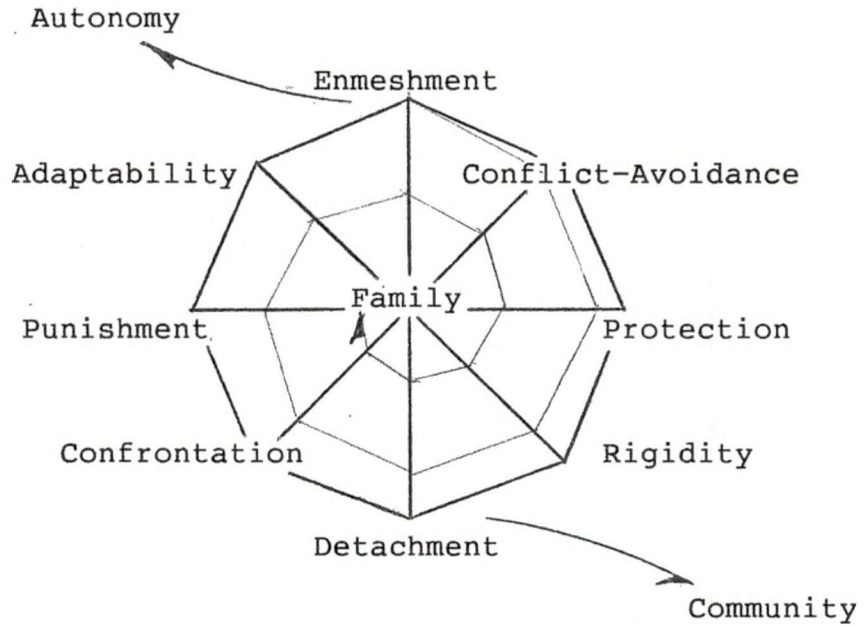


Figure 1.

Multiaxial Model of Enmeshed/ Disengaged Family Structures.

initially foreign to her. She must learn to eat, sleep, play and fight by family rules over which she has little influence while she is very young.

She may soon discover that other more powerful and influential family members can assist her in avoiding conflict. In return for her involvement in the triangulation of one parent through an alliance with the other, or through her participation in sibling coalitions, she can reciprocate in offering other family members some protection from conflict. She may feel she is an integral part of the family system to the extent to which interpersonal conflict is avoided between herself and other coalitions. The family nucleus may consist of only other important family members, like herself, that follow the family's rules. In this way, the child is acquiring some of the family's structural rigidity.

This sense of belonging to one's own family, however, comes at the cost of not being a part of other larger systems. The child may feel detached from the outsiders, some of whom she may like to become attached (e.g., a nice neighbor, a school teacher). She may explore these attachments by challenging the ways in which her own family members are different from others whom she admires. If the family is adaptable, it may incorporate aspects of other admirable systems into their own, thereby becoming less rigid. If the family is very rigid, however, she may be

punished for making suggestions that imply a need for the family to change.

If the child has little autonomy to begin with, or a poorly formed sense of herself, she will adjust to this consequence by backing down and re-evaluating both the merits of the system that she had admired and her own family system. In order to adapt to her circumstances, she may sacrifice her personal tastes in order to mesh with other family members. Thus, with each full cycling of the interactions, the child may internalize some characteristics of the family, becoming more enmeshed with it, and lose an opportunity to develop a more autonomous self image. With each successive cycle the pattern of interaction becomes even more enmeshed with the overall family.

The right-handed, counter-clock cycle results in the disengaged family member gradually accruing an autonomous self and amassing or internalizing characteristics of the community. At the same time, the power of the family is reduced and the disengaged family member finds it progressively easier to slough off yet more characteristics of the family that have been externalized.

It is necessary to assume that disengaged family members are unable to meet the needs of the child. Because the child must have basic needs met in some way or perish, she perceives the family as punishing and unfair. The stories that she hears at bedtime, at school, on television

and at the movies, hold out a hope for a more equitable world; a world in which families get along, provide for each other and are demonstratively affectionate. The child may confront the family with her fantasy of family living. If the family is adaptable, it may make changes to accommodate her needs. If the family remains detached, however, she may find that people outside the family are more willing or able to help her. She may also find that family-outsiders are no more able to meet her needs than family members are. Either way, she detaches a little more from the family and becomes more rigidly independent from family members and more sophisticated about the world. Upon each successive cycle, she becomes even more detached from an already detached family system and more vulnerable to becoming attached to other family systems that are enmeshed simply because they initially appear more inviting.

Healthy families may not cycle in one direction more than the other. As part of the self is developed, a dependency on the family structure may be reduced. But the healthy structure can adapt and include more of the child's individuality as well as part of the community that had contributed to the child's development. Healthy systems may be seen as oscillating back and forth along the cycle. Symmetrical movement in both directions insures that the child will become an autonomous adult but one who can carry on the formation of other healthy family systems.

Maladaptive families of either of the other extremes may trade members back and forth to create symmetry. One can easily imagine that a member of a disengaged family would be very attracted to a member from an enmeshed family. Similarly, a member from an enmeshed family may find a disengaged family a welcome relief. However, it is likely that if a man from an enmeshed family marries a woman from a disengaged family he may find she has a more difficult time with the level of intimacy that he expects. She may have experienced more numerous relationships of less duration than he, and also have difficulty fulfilling a commitment to a long-term relationship. Therefore, the trend predicted from this model is that of all single individuals, those who have enmeshed families of origin will likely feel oppressed by them, but ultimately value them quite highly. Those who come from disengaged families will likely feel they would like to become attached but have difficulty doing so and value the manner in which needs may be met by the community even more.

It is difficult to predict which type of family would foster incest. An argument could be made that all incestuous families are enmeshed, as Alexander asserts. However, some of the individual characteristics of incest victims suggests that they do not fully resemble the anorexic, diabetic, and asthmatic children that were raised in the enmeshed families that Minuchin describes. They

appear angrier, more rebellious, and less conflict-avoiding as adults (Owens, 1984). Perhaps the differences are due to age effects between samples used in either research setting. The studies of incest victims reviewed here focused on adult subjects while Minuchin studied children. Although it will not be a hypothesis tested in the present study, it is predicted that incest stems from a family in which the perpetrator was raised in an enmeshed family system and the other parent was raised in a disengaged family. This would explain how incest victims may be more likely to survive if they are able to detach themselves from the family system, how they model their detachment after the disengaged parent, and why victims may manifest a conflicted mix of traits along each of the four dimensions.

This model is similar to other family systems models. However, there are some notable differences between it and others that can be stated directly. First, it posits a causal chaining of events in a way that Minuchin resists doing. Second, it stretches the four primary constructs into dimensions similar to Kog et al.'s, but orders their resulting poles in relation to one another. It is not offered in opposition to Minuchin's or other systems models, but attempts to clarify aspects that have been suggested by others less directly.

If such a system has relevance for actual family systems, then independence should not be expected to exist

between the constructs of enmeshment, conflict-avoidance, rigidity and protectiveness. Instead, the salience or "pull" that a given pole of each of the four dimensions has for a given subject may indicate the direction (clock-wise for enmeshed; counter-clock-wise for disengaged) that the individual's interpersonal, social development may have taken. In other words, if the individual expects that the family (in contrast to the community) can better meet his or her individual needs, then it is more likely that statements of the family's value will be endorsed. If, however, the individual expects that the community can better meet individual needs, statements to that effect will be endorsed. This model, a child of Minuchin's model of family interaction, is in its infancy. To take a first step towards testing it requires that an instrument to measure its fundamental constructs be developed. The present study attempts to meet this need.

Experimental Hypotheses.

The present study is intended to test a small set of hypotheses that are concerned with the operationalization of the proposed model. The results of factor analyses will find that items on the Enmeshed Family Inventory will reflect their intuitive and rational placement within subscales along the specific dimensions of enmeshment/detachment, conflict-avoidance/confrontation, rigidity/adaptibility, and protection/punishment.

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

The development of the Enmeshed Family Inventory consisted of two phases, an item generation phase and an initial questionnaire phase. In the first phase, items were created through a review of the literature on incestuous and enmeshed family systems and refined by a team of graduate students interested in research concerning women's issues. In the second phase, the test instrument entitled the Enmeshed Family Instrument was administered to subjects and the resulting data were analyzed.

Item Generation Phase

There were three steps involved in the item generation phase. The first step attempted to further define each of the four primary subscale constructs of enmeshment, rigidity, conflict-avoidance and over-protectiveness into approximately ten secondary dimensions. For example, enmeshment was conceptualized as consisting of the secondary dimensions of dependency and privacy. These secondary terms were derived primarily from a review of the ways in which Minuchin, Rosman, and Baker (1978) defined the constructs of enmeshment, conflict-avoidance, over-protectiveness, and rigidity. Of secondary consideration were aspects of family structure or interaction that were suggested by Alexander's

(1985) family systems model, and by the suggestions of graduate students who had encountered incestuous, enmeshed or disengaged families through their practice of family therapy. The second step involved the process of writing the symmetrical disengagement-dimension terms for each of the 40 enmeshment-dimension secondary terms. A consideration was that the each of the paired statements should be roughly equivalent in terms of their relative social desirability. With few exceptions, paired statements were written to represent equally undesirable extremes, or theoretically maladaptive levels of the qualities under consideration. The third step involved writing the actual statements that would be used as forced-choice pairs for items in the test inventory.

The resulting forty pairs of statements were further refined in a third step that involved a research team of approximately eight graduate and undergraduate students who, under the leadership of a faculty advisor, were meeting weekly over a period of months to discuss projects concerned with women's issues. This team made suggestions concerning how to define secondary constructs and how to equate paired statements in terms of their social desirability. The final version of the test instrument which lists items in numerical order and indicates their subscale membership, is given in Appendix A. The final version of the four primary subscales, which includes each of the primary constructs'

secondary terms in the form of item subheadings, is given in Appendix B. Disengaged and enmeshed statements were randomly assigned the position of either "a" or "b" within items, and the items written for the four subscales were also randomly ordered for the test version of the instrument. In both Appendix A and B, the statements that were conceptualized as overall enmeshment items are indicated by a right-handed parenthetical mark.

Initial Questionnaire Phase

Subjects.

A total of 626 subjects volunteering to participate in a study of family interaction styles were recruited from undergraduate psychology classes at the University of North Dakota. With the permission of their instructor, most subjects received an extra credit point in their class in return for their participation. Four hundred and thirteen of the subjects were females and two hundred and thirteen subjects were males. Sixty protocols were unusable because subjects had either provided ratings for both of the statements, rather than providing a ranking from only one statement, or they had failed to give an answer for more than one of the Enmeshed Family Inventory items. Of the remaining 566 subjects returning usable protocols, 372 were female and 194 were male. Because nearly all students who took psychology courses during the fall semester at the University of North Dakota volunteered to participate in

this study, this sample is considered to be representative of only the population of students taking such courses in a similar geographical region. The total group ranged in age from 18 to 55. The distribution of ages was positively skewed. However, both the median age and the average age was 20. Thirty four subjects did not indicate their race, but of those subjects who did, 573 listed it as either "White," "Caucasian," "English," or "Anglo," while 1 listed "Norwegian," 5 listed "Black," 3 listed "Hispanic," 6 listed "Asian," and 12 listed "Native American." In terms of religion, 31 subjects omitted this item, 13 listed "None," 9 specified a Non-Christian religion such as "Jewish," "Native American," "Sikh," or "Moslem" among others, while 215 subjects listed "Catholic," 248 listed "Lutheran," and 105 specified another form of Protestant Christian religion, including simply "Christian" and "Protestant," as well as "Methodist," "Presbyterian," "Anglican," or "Episcopalian" among others.

Materials.

The entire questionnaire packet included four separate sections and a total of 115 questions. One such section was a detached consent form which began with an invitation to participate in a study of family interaction styles and requested that the subjects complete four questionnaires. The consent form also provided a brief description of each of the questionnaires, and identified the experimenter by

name, address, and phone number. It was written in the consent form and verbally explained that the purpose for obtaining a name was only to facilitate the process of giving research credit in return for participation, and that the anonymity of all other information was assured. The second portion of the packet consisted of a detached post-testing information sheet which subjects were encouraged to keep. This handout also identified the experimenter by name, address, and phone number. The four questionnaires were stapled together and formed the third portion of the packet. This portion began with general instructions for filling in the optical scanning answer sheet. The first 25 questions, subtitled "Demographic Questionnaire" requested information about the subject, such as race, family's religion, sex, birthday, the size of the subject's hometown, number of siblings, and parents' ages when first married, among other information. These were followed by a checklist of 20 significant life events, entitled "Life Events Inventory," four items on this inventory were concerned with sexual molestation and rape. Others concerned a variety of events, for example the number of times the subject had been critically ill or lost a parent through death. The next 40 items were the paired statements of the Enmeshed Family Inventory, which was subtitled simply "EFI." The final portion was a symptom checklist, subtitled "PPCL," which consisted of 30 physical complaints, such as headache, upset

stomach, weight gain, or painful menstruation. The testing packet also included a general purpose, NCS Sentry Optical Mark Reading Systems answer sheet. A subject number was pre-assigned to each Opscan and subjects were instructed to give their race and religion in the place provided on the form for their name. The entire questionnaire booklet, consent form, Opscan, and post-testing information sheet are given in Appendix C. For the purposes of this study, however, only the 40 items of the Enmeshed Family Inventory will be discussed.

Procedure.

The questionnaire packets were distributed by the experimenter in undergraduate psychology classes. The experimenter verbally reviewed each section of the packet in turn, and answered any questions that subjects had concerning the nature of the study and item answering format.

The Opscan sheet consisting of 120 rows of 10 numbered circles corresponding to each of 120 possible items. The Optical Reading System used to score each Opscan, and upload the data into a mainframe file, can read only one filled-in circle, or answer, per line item. This posed a potential problem in tracking which of the paired statements had been selected and rated by subjects. The solution of this problem used in the present study involved several

steps. Great care was taken in explaining the procedure in as clear a manner as possible.

Subjects were asked to first choose a statement, "a" or "b," from each item. Then they were asked to rate the degree to which the statement "fit" their family on a five point likert scale ranging from "slightly" to "exactly". Because the Opscans contained 10 possible choices ("0" through "9") for each line item, subjects were asked to mentally divide each line into two equal parts. If the subject selected statement "a" as representative of his or her family's interactive style, the subject could rate the statement "a" by filling in one of five circles ranging from "0," the most extreme value of "fits slightly," to "4," the most extreme value of "fits exactly." If statement "b" was chosen, circles ranging from "5" (fits slightly) to "9" (fits exactly) would be used to rate the statement.

In order to code the responses for the purpose of the factor analyses, all of the paired statements that had been conceptualized as representing overall disengagement or enmeshment were recoded separately by the statistical program used in the analyses. If a subject had indicated that a generally disengaged statement fit only slightly, regardless of whether circle "0" (if the statement had been placed as "a" within an item) or circle "5" (if the statement had been placed as "b" within an item) had been filled in, the value of their selection was coded as "5."

If the subject indicated that a generally enmeshed statement fit only slightly, it was assigned the value of "6," again regardless of whether circle "0" (enmeshed statements placed as "a") or circle "5" (enmeshed statements placed as "b") had been filled in.

If, however, a subject had endorsed an enmeshment item strongly, regardless of whether this was done by filling in circle "4" (for statements placed as "a"), or by filling in circle "9" (for statements placed as "b"), the value assigned this selection was coded as "10." Similarly strong endorsement of disengaged statements were coded as "1." Therefore, the recoded high and low scores can be conceptualized as representing opposite poles of a continuum ranging from an extremely disengaged family structure (low scores) to an extremely enmeshed family structure (high scores). Middle range scores can be conceptualized as reflecting more adaptive levels of both enmeshment and disengagement. Given the large number of subjects returning unusable protocols, this method of recording subjects' responses appears to have been confusing to them.

As the questionnaires were gathered, the experimenter checked them for completeness and legibility. Protocols were removed from further use if the subject had left more than one item blank on the Enmeshed Family Inventory, or more than four items blank on the overall questionnaire

packet. As was stated above, this check found that 60 protocols were not suitable for further consideration.

Analyses.

A series of principal components, varimax rotation, factor analyses were performed in order to determine the most parsimonious and meaningful solution for the data. This was accomplished by using the Statistical Program for the Social Sciences, revised edition (SPSSx).

Statements which were found to have a factor loading of 0.40 or greater were selected for further consideration for their incorporation on factors. Items which did not load on any factor, or which loaded on more than one factor were dropped from the final version of the instrument. Analyses were also performed to yield Item-Total correlations. Coefficient theta was calculated as a measure of reliability of the factors as they were derived from the principal component model of factor analysis (Carmines & Zeller, 1979). The final instrument resulted in six factors and retained a total of 23 of the original paired statements. The following section reviews the results of all analyses in greater detail.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Treatment of the Data

The data from 566 male and female subjects who returned usable protocols were factor analyzed using a principal components, varimax rotation. This analysis resulted in twelve factors which accounted for 53.2% of the test variance. All but six items loaded independently on at least one of the twelve factors. However, six factors consisted of only two items each, and two factors each contained only one item. Carmines and Zeller (1979) recommend that coefficient theta be used as a measure of reliability. Theta for the overall initial 12 factor solution was calculated and found to be 0.82.

As a number of the factors from the initial solution contained only one or two items, the scree test was used to determine that between three and six factors could be included in the final factor rotation. The three factor solution appeared to result in an inventory devoid of any secondary constructs related to rigidity. The rotation of items loading on the first six factors of the initial solution resulted in 23 items that loaded independently on one of six factors. This is considered the most meaningful solution because it captures much of the complexity of information that might be expected from an inventory of

family structure. Further, the factors appear to describe, albeit indirectly, all of the four primary constructs (i.e. enmeshment, rigidity, conflict-avoidance, and over-protectiveness) which were used in the scale's initial development.

The final factor solution accounts for 49.3% of the total test variance. Theta for this solution was calculated and found to be 0.80. Theta for each of the six factors ranged from 0.37 for the sixth factor to 0.73 for the first factor. The factors will now be referred to as scales. The scale means, standard deviations, and coefficient theta are listed in Table 1. Ideally, items that are normally distributed will have item means of 5.5 and range between 4.0 and 7.0 as the midpoint of each dimension has been conceptualized as being the adaptive norm for each of them. The correlations between scales are listed in Table 2. Scales that have correlation coefficients approximating 0.00 are considered to be highly independent of one another. A frequency distribution of subjects' response choices for each item is provided in Table 3.

The reasoning behind how each of the six factors were renamed as scales is discussed in the following section. The scale names and the factor loadings of items are indicated in Table 4 by reference to the secondary terms which were used to generate each item's paired statements.

Table 1.

Scale means, standard deviations and reliability coefficient theta

Factor	1	2	3	4	5	6
Mean	40.8	30.0	20.3	25.3	9.4	11.5
Standard Deviation	8.66	9.71	4.71	7.01	4.86	2.83
Coefficient Theta	.73	.65	.40	.53	.48	.37

Table 2.

Intercorrelation of scale scores.
Pearson correlation coefficients.

Scale	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.
1.	.00					
2.	-.36	.00				
3.	-.14	.27	.00			
4.	.46	-.23	-.10	.00		
5.	-.19	.19	.07	-.06	.00	
6.	.08	-.01	.14	.05	-.07	.00

Table 3.

Frequency Distribution of Subjects Responses
to Items Incorporated into the Final Six Factor Solution.

value Item / %response	Overall Inventory Dimension									
	Disengagement "fits"					Enmeshment "fits"				
	exactly		slightly			slightly		exactly		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1:	1.2	2.1	7.4	6.4	11.5	7.6	10.4	23.0	21.9	8.5
5:	8.8	11.1	16.6	11.5	13.6	6.5	6.9	8.7	7.4	8.8
6:	18.4	10.2	8.7	6.0	13.4	14.0	5.3	6.0	8.1	9.9
8:	2.1	1.9	2.5	1.8	4.1	4.8	4.2	12.7	26.5	39.4
10:	25.1	11.3	10.1	6.2	11.5	9.9	4.6	7.1	8.0	6.4
11:	3.4	3.9	4.4	3.9	14.1	31.6	14.7	10.8	8.7	4.6
14:	1.8	2.5	1.8	1.8	3.9	4.2	4.2	8.8	27.4	43.6
16:	1.8	2.3	1.4	.9	13.4	29.2	13.8	16.3	13.8	7.8
19:	11.1	9.4	14.0	11.1	18.9	12.7	4.8	5.8	6.0	6.2
21:	3.5	7.1	9.9	8.1	20.1	11.0	7.1	11.3	10.4	11.5
22:a.	5.1	4.9	5.3	6.5	8.7	5.3	4.8	15.0	19.4	24.7
26:	4.1	4.4	8.0	10.4	36.7	18.0	6.2	6.0	3.7	2.5

Table 3. Continued

value Item / %response	Overall Inventory Dimension									
	Disengagement "fits"					Enmeshment "fits"				
	exactly		slightly			exactly		slightly		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
27:	4.8	5.5	7.6	3.2	5.8	22.4	12.4	13.6	11.7	13.1
28:	.9	2.1	2.8	4.2	15.9	22.1	10.4	12.2	12.9	16.4
29:	20.7	19.1	13.3	9.9	7.6	4.2	2.3	6.9	7.4	8.7
31:	12.2	13.6	15.4	11.7	13.3	5.1	4.6	6.4	9.4	8.5
32:	3.9	3.4	5.5	5.7	20.7	18.9	9.4	11.7	12.5	8.5
33:	6.0	5.3	4.9	4.2	9.2	25.1	9.0	11.5	12.7	12.0
34:	1.6	3.5	6.2	7.1	31.3	17.7	7.1	8.8	10.4	6.4
36:b	7.1	8.7	7.1	5.7	13.3	30.2	9.9	8.8	5.1	4.1
37:	7.1	8.1	6.5	7.6	10.4	23.9	12.2	10.2	6.9	7.1
39:b	9.9	10.4	7.1	7.4	11.7	5.7	5.3	11.0	13.8	17.7
40:	9.0	10.6	13.1	12.5	17.8	7.4	5.5	7.4	9.4	7.2

Note.

a = One subject did not complete this item.

b = Two subjects did not complete this item.

Table 4.

Six factor solution of the principal component analysis.

Factor	Name	% Common variance	Factor Loading
1.	Family Enmeshment / Detachment	18.5%	
	Denial vs Emphasis of Family Conflict		.66
	Rejection vs. Attachment to Family Identity		.64
	Community Isolation vs. Integration		.61
	Symbiosis vs. Detachment		.61
	Parental Nurturing vs. Neglect		.60
	Reactivity vs. Insensitivity		.49
2.	Information Repression / Confrontation	8.7%	
	Low vs. High Family Threshold For Conflict		.66
	Conflict Avoidance vs. Problem Resolution		.58
	Enabling vs. Confrontation		.58
	Indirect vs. Direct Communication		.54
	Low vs High Need for Family Privacy		.50
	Valuation of Innocence vs. Experience		.49
3.	Structural Homeostasis / Entropy	6.6%	
	Need for Security vs. Risk		.70
	Low vs. High Parental Threshold for Stress		.60
	Conformity vs. Idiosyncrasy		.44
4.	Boundary Permeability / Restriction	5.7%	
	Intuitiveness vs Indifference		.75
	Affective Expression vs. Repression		.59
	Hypersensitivity vs. Callousness		.51
	Isolation vs. Permeability to Social Influences		.48
5.	Parental Coalition / Triangulation	5.2%	
	Triangulation of Child vs Parental Dyad		.73
	Parent-Child Coalition vs Parental Dyad		.69
6.	Resistance / Obedience to Authority	4.6%	
	Resistance vs Obedience to Authority		.70
	Dogmatism vs Skepticism		-.63

Positive factor loadings can be interpreted as reflecting the loadings of statements conceptualized on the overall inventory dimension of an enmeshed family structure as these were coded as the higher values on item item's dimension. Negative factor loadings reflect the loadings of statements conceptualized on the opposite pole of disengaged family structures.

Tables 5 through 10 list the individual items that loaded on each of the six factors and indicates the item means and standard deviations. These tables have been organized so that each item is numbered as it appeared on the test instrument and indicates the name of the subscale (e.g., Enmeshment, conflict, rigidity and protectiveness) to which the item was originally associated. Item statements are also listed in the "a" and "b" order in which they appeared. The statements which were conceptualized as belonging to the enmeshment pole of the enmeshment-disengaged continuum are indicated by a right-sided parenthesis mark next to the letter "a" or "b." All items but the last item (item number 33 on the test instrument) covaried in a manner consistent with the contrasting poles of enmeshment and disengagement.

Factor/Scale Naming.

Factor 1. The reliability of Factor 1 as indicated by coefficient theta is 0.73. This scale consists of four enmeshment items, one conflict item and one protectiveness

Table 5.

Factor 1. Family Enmeshment / Detachment

Item means, standard deviations and subscale membership.

Item Number	Subscale Membership Statement Choices "a" and "b"	Item Mean	Standard Deviation
14.	Conflict.	8.5	2.20
	a) My parents and I get along well almost all of the time.		
	b. There has never been a moment of peace between my parents and me.		
16.	Enmeshment.	6.8	1.93
	a) I am nothing without my family.		
	b. My family identity is a part of my that I don't like to accept.		
8.	Enmeshment.	8.3	2.23
	a) My parents' focus is primarily family oriented.		
	b. My parents' focus is primarily community oriented.		
11.	Enmeshment.	6.1	2.06
	a) I feel smothered by my parents' attentions.		
	b. I feel rejected when I seek my parents attentions.		
37.	Protectiveness.	5.7	2.51
	a. My parents are slow to respond to my needs.		
	b) My parents are overly concerned that they give me what I need.		
36.	Enmeshment	5.4	2.33
	a. My family doesn't seem to notice how each other feels.		
	b) My family is overly sensitive to each other's moods.		

Note.

The overall enmeshment-pole statements, regardless of subscale membership, are indicated by parathesis of statement choice "a" or "b".

Table 6.

Factor 2. Information Repression / Confrontation
Item means, standard deviations and subscale membership.

Item Number	Subscale Membership Statement Choices "a" and "b"	Item Mean	Standard Deviation
31.	Conflict	4.8.	2.89
	a) My family works hard to avoid disagreements.		
	b. It is acceptable for people in my family to openly disagree.		
40.	Conflict	5.1	2.72
	a) In order to avoid hurting anyone, problems in my family are left unresolved.		
	b. Problems in my family are resolved even if the resolution is hurtful.		
19.	Conflict	4.8	2.58
	a) If my father does something wrong, the family just covers it up.		
	b. If my father does something wrong, the family confronts him.		
29.	Enmeshment	4.3	3.04
	a) I often feel uncertain about what my family members are really trying to say to me.		
	b. My family members usually say what they mean.		
34.	Protectiveness	6.0	2.13
	a) My family tries to conceal itself from outsiders.		
	b. My parents are too open about my family's home life.		
5.	Protectiveness	5.1	2.78
	a) I am expected to preserve my innocence for as long as possible.		
	b. I have gained much sophistication through my parents' training.		

Note.

The overall enmeshment-pole statements, regardless of subscale membership, are indicated by parathesis of statement choice "a" or "b".

Table 7.

Factor 3. Structural Homeostasis / Entropy

Item means, standard deviations and subscale membership.

Item Number	Subscale Membership Statement Choices "a" and "b"	Item Mean	Standard Deviation
27.	Rigidity. a. My parents thrive when things are constantly changing. b) My parents strive to keep everything the way they like it.	6.4	2.57
28.	Rigidity a) My parents do not cope with pressures and stress very well. b. My parents love risk and high pressure.	6.9	2.17
1.	Rigidity a) My family expects a great deal of conformity to their standards. b. Most forms of even bizarre behavior are accepted by my family.	7.0	2.28

Note.

The overall enmeshment-pole statements, regardless of subscale membership, are indicated by parathesis of statement choice "a" or "b".

Table 8.

Factor 4. Boundary Permeability / Restriction
 Item means, standard deviations and subscale membership.

Item Number	Subscale Membership Statement Choices "a" and "b"	Item Mean	Standard Deviation
21.	Enmeshment	5.9	2.60
	a) It is discouraged for me to keep a secret from my family		
	b. My family appears indifferent to the private aspects of my life.		
39.	Enmeshment	6.0	3.14
	a) My family is very emotional towards one another.		
	b. My family rarely shows their feelings towards each other.		
22.	Protectiveness	7.1	2.85
	a) My family has an uncanny sense for when one of us is in trouble.		
	b. My family is usually the last to sense it when I am in trouble.		
32.	Protectiveness	6.2	2.34
	a) To me, my parents' home feels like a fortress against the world.		
	b. To me, strangers are too welcome in my parents' home.		

Note.

The overall enmeshment-pole statements, regardless of subscale membership, are indicated by parathesis of statement choice "a" or "b".

Table 9.

Factor 5. Parental Triangulation / Coalition
 Item means, standard deviations and subscale membership.

Item Number	Subscale Membership Statement Choices "a" and "b"	Item Mean	Standard Deviation
6.	Conflict	4.9	2.98
	a) I often feel pressured to take sides in my parents' arguments.		
	b. My parents do not allow me to get involved in their arguments.		
10.	Conflict	4.4	3.0
	a) One of my parents and I often team up to oppose my other parent.		
	b. I feel that I have no right to side with one parent over the other.		

Note.

The overall enmeshment-pole statements, regardless of subscale membership, are indicated by parathesis of statement choice "a" or "b".

Table 10.

Factor 6. Resistance / Obedience to Authority
 Item means, standard deviations and subscale membership.

Item Number	Subscale Membership Statement Choices "a" and "b"	Item Mean	Standard Deviation
26.	Rigidity	5.2	1.90
	a) My parents resist local authorities (police, school officials) telling them what to do.		
	b. My parents constantly seek the guidance of local authorities.		
33.	Rigidity	6.4	2.56
	a. My family has no specific doctrine and tends to question religion.		
	b) My family is governed by our religious doctrines.		

Note.

The overall enmeshment-pole statements, regardless of subscale membership, are indicated by parathasis of statement choice "a" or "b".

item. Although the item that loaded most strongly on the factor concerned the family's level of conflict, this item also suggests that family conflict may stem from the perception of members similarity to each other and their overall compatibility. The second item loading on the factor concerns whether the child accepts or rejects the characteristics of the family that are a part of a self concept. The third item indicates whether the parents' focus is primarily family oriented or community oriented. The fourth, fifth, and sixth items are indicative of the quality of parental attention towards family members. At the enmeshed pole for each of these items, any parental attention may be felt as oppressive, while at the detached pole the children may feel that the parents lack concern or are insensitive to their needs. This scale was named "Enmeshment and Detachment," as all six statements at the enmeshment end of the continuum are consistent with Minuchin's overall conceptualization of an enmeshed family structure. The six opposite-end statements are consistent with what may be expected of a detached family.

The distribution of scores on Factor 1 was negatively skewed, due largely to subjects' responses to Items 14 and 8. These items may be better measures of social desirability than they are measures of family structures. Indeed, nearly 66% of all subjects felt that the enmeshment statement from Item 8, "My parents' focus is primarily

family oriented," fit them very well or exactly. On Item 14, a full 71% of all subjects endorsed the conflict statement, "My parents and I get along well almost all of the time." Subject responses on the other four items were normally distributed.

Factor 2. The reliability of the second subscale is 0.65. Three conflict items, two protection items and one enmeshment item loaded on Factor 2. Families that typify the enmeshed end of this factor appear to sacrifice a fuller understanding of each other and the world in order to guard against possible conflict. Families that are characterized by the disengaged statements of this factor may achieve a greater breadth and depth of understanding about the world and other family members, but may be abrasive to each other and appear boorish and ill-refined to others. For these reasons the scale dimension at the enmeshment extreme was named "Information Repression," rather than protection from conflict as the statements may also suggest. At the opposite-end of the continuum the statements suggest conflict confrontation, however to provide symmetry it was named "Information confrontation."

The distribution of scores on Factor 2 was slightly skewed in the positive direction, due largely to subjects' even endorsement of all levels of "fitness" of the statements associated with the overall dimension of disengagement. This trend was particularly evident on Items

5, 19, 31, and 40. Subjects endorsed the two most extreme values for Item 29 which may also indicate this statements social desirability. Item 34, however, was fairly normal in its distribution of responses.

Factor 3. The reliability associated with the third factor is 0.40; the second lowest of all the factors. All three items loading on the third factor were rigidity items. However, the dimension underlying this rigidity factor may be a concern for uniformity or diversity. Families typifying the disengaged extreme of this factor may derive a great deal of enjoyment from meeting challenges or experimenting with new fads. It may also be expected that members of such families may be somewhat antisocial but secure with themselves. Families who typify the opposite, enmeshed extreme may be highly vulnerable to stress and therefore its members less secure as individuals. The enmeshed pole of the overall scale dimension was named "Homeostasis," as families typifying the associated statements may be highly invested in maintaining equilibrium within the family structure. Disengaged families may enjoy the intensity provided from a less well controlled, more chaotic family structure. For these reasons, this scale has been named "Structural Homeostasis / Entropy."

The distribution of scores on Factor 3 was slightly negatively skewed. Subjects endorsed all levels of the overall enmeshment statements in a fairly even manner, with

22% of subjects selecting the "fits slightly" category for both Items 27 and 28. Nearly 22% endorsed the "fits well" category for the statement on Item 1, "My family expects a great deal of conformity to their standards." Less than 1% of all subjects felt that the disengaged statement from Item 28, "My parents love risk and high pressure," fit them "exactly."

Factor 4. The reliability of the fourth factor is 0.53. Two of the items were from the enmeshment subscale and two were protective subscale items. Statements associated with the enmeshed end of the continuum suggest that family members are highly perceptive about each others' thoughts and feelings. The family environment may be womb-like. Such family members may also violate other members' personal boundaries. Statements associated with the disengaged end of the continuum suggest that family members may be callous, unsympathetic and disinterested in each other. Such family members may not know each other well at all, and may have their social needs met through outside relationships. They may also have difficulty opening up to one another in times of crisis. To the extent that each member has an individual support network, other members' guests may be regarded as strangers. For these reasons, this scale has been named "Boundary Permeability / Restriction."

The distribution of scores on Factor 4 was slightly skewed in the negative direction, indicating that subjects felt that the overall enmeshment pole "fit" them better than the disengaged pole of the overall dimension. Nearly 25% of all subjects endorsed the most extreme value for the statement on Item 22, "My family has an uncanny sense for when one of us is in trouble." Responses for Item 39 varied widely on both ends of the continuum.

Factor 5. Coefficient theta for the fifth factor is 0.48. Both statements associated with the enmeshment pole of the continuum concerned patterns of conflict avoidance, specifically triangulation of the parents by the child. The opposite statements were both concerned with the child's recognition and respect of the parental dyad. For these reasons, Scale 5 has been named "Parental Coalition / Triangulation."

The distribution of scores on Factor 5 was positively skewed, although subjects endorsement of the two extreme categories for both disengaged statements varied in a bimodal manner. This was especially true for Item 6, "My parents do not allow me to get involved in their arguments." A fourth of all subjects, endorsed the "fits exactly" category for the disengagement statement from Item 10, "I feel that I have no right to side with one parent over the other." Only 36% of all subjects selected and subsequently rated the enmeshment statement from Item 10, "One of my

parents and I often team up to oppose my other parent." Less than 30% of all subjects selected and rated a response to the statement on Item 6, "I often feel pressured to take sides in my parents' arguments."

Factor 6. Coefficient theta for Factor 6 is 0.37, the lowest of all the factors. The two items loading on Factor 6 were both from the rigidity subscale but did not correlate in the predicted direction. In other words, the disengaged statement choice on Item 33, "My parents constantly seek the guidance of local authorities," was correlated with the enmeshment choice from Item 26, "My family is governed by our religious convictions." Although this result was initially puzzling, on closer inspection the two statements that actually covaried are also conceptually related as both indicate a respect for external authorities. The newly combined opposite statements both demonstrate a resistance to external authority. It remains uncertain which of the two statement pairs would discriminate between an enmeshed and disengaged family system. A clue may be given by Minuchin who states, "a strong religious or ethical code is used as a rationale [by enmeshed family members] for avoiding conflict" (1978, p. 31). Therefore, the enmeshed pole of the dimension underlying Scale 6 appears to be "Obedience to Authority." The opposite disengaged pole was named "Resistance to Authority."

The distribution of scores on Factor 6 was slightly negatively skewed, due largely to subjects' responses to Item 33. Nearly 71% of subjects chose the statement "My family is governed by our religious doctrines" over the opposite statement, "My family has no specific doctrine and tends to question religion." However, Item 26 was fairly normally distributed.

Summary

A principal components, varimax rotation factor analysis resulted in the formation of six distinct scales. This factor analysis is the first step towards the development of an inventory that can validly measure the model proposed in the first chapter of this manuscript. Its validity can not be determined at this time. Problems that are apparent from the skewed distribution of scores gathered from the subjects in this study will be discussed in the chapter that follows.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

The following discussion will examine (1) the relationship of the results to the four primary constructs described by Minuchin et al. (1978) and the proposed model dimensions of enmeshment/ detachment, conflict-avoidance/ confrontation, rigidity/ adaptability, and protection/ punishment; (2) the meaning of the scale-score distributions and correlations; (3) issues about the sample used in this study; (4) the uniqueness of the final instrument; and (5) the future use of the instrument.

The Relationship of the Results to Hypothetical Constructs

The results of this study appear to justify the importance that Minuchin places on the four constructs of enmeshment, conflict-avoidance, protectiveness and rigidity. Support was also found for the conceptualization of the constructs as dimensions having an overall enmeshment pole and an overall disengagement pole. However, in the present study, the items that were designed to operationalize each of the primary constructs did not cluster with each other as predicted. Rather, it appears that a number of items that had been designed to be independent of one another were statistically correlated and others that were expected to

correlate did not. This result may be explained by two of hypotheses. First, as suggested by Kog et al. (1987), and predicted by the reformulation of a family systems model posed here, Minuchin's constructs may not be expected to be independent of one another. Second, the statements written to operationalize the constructs may not have been adequate for this purpose.

Independence of Minuchin's constructs.

Kog et al. (1987) found it very difficult to create clearly independent statements for each of the four constructs of enmeshment, conflict-avoidance, over-protectiveness and rigidity. That this was also found to be a problem in the current study cannot be overstated. The most parsimonious, two factor, principal components analysis of the data gathered in the present study would have resulted in all rigidity items being discarded. They were salvaged because the two factors that were formed solely from five of the ten rigidity items appeared to contribute a unique and useful meaning to the final inventory.

It is more difficult to determine the adequacy of the six scales as measures of the proposed model. First, only four dimensions were initially proposed and that the inventory contains six subscales is problematic. This result may be due to the actual existence of six family structural dimensions, or it may be due to the uniqueness of the items contained in the test instrument.

For example, the inventory contained few redundant items. Perhaps if items within each of the four original subscales had been more similar to each other there would have been less scattering of inter-related items over the final factor rotation. In the present formulation of the scale an attempt was made to include a broad sampling of the potential aspects of each of the primary constructs. In a future study it may be advantageous to reduce the scope of each scale dimension in favor of focusing the assessment on a salient aspect of each one.

Scale 1, Family Enmeshment/ Detachment appears to contain elements of the proposed model that it would be expected to contain. Of all of the factors, it was expected that the first one should consist largely of items from the enmeshment scale. After all, the inventory is named the Enmeshed Family Inventory! Fortunately, this scale was the most statistically significant. It is also meaningful in terms of the proposed model, as it contains items that are generally indicative of how well the family may meet the subject's needs. A score from this scale may discriminate between enmeshed-cycling family members (high scores) and disengaged-family members (low scores).

Scale 2, Information Repression/ Confrontation is most similar to what had been conceived of as the Conflict-Avoidance/ Confrontation dimension in the proposed model. It contains elements of both enmeshment and protectiveness

which were also conceptualized as neighboring constructs in the proposed model. A problem with this scale may be its name. Information repression and confrontation are not symmetrical terms, nor do they appear to fully describe the underlying dimension. However, at this time another name has not appeared to be better suited to Scale 2. Perhaps it could be combined with Scale 5, another scale related to the dimension of Conflict-Avoidance/ Confrontation, and be renamed in the future.

Scale 3, Structural Homeostasis/ Entropy, appears to be most closely related to the proposed model's dimension of rigidity. High scorers on this scale may be concerned with reducing differences between family members and high scorers on Scale 6 may try to reduce differences between the family as a unit and the larger community. By contrast, low scorers on Scale 3 may expect and even welcome differences between individual family members, while low scorers on Scale 6 may resist conforming to community-based groups as well. It is possible that these two scales could be combined into one dealing with conformity and individuality.

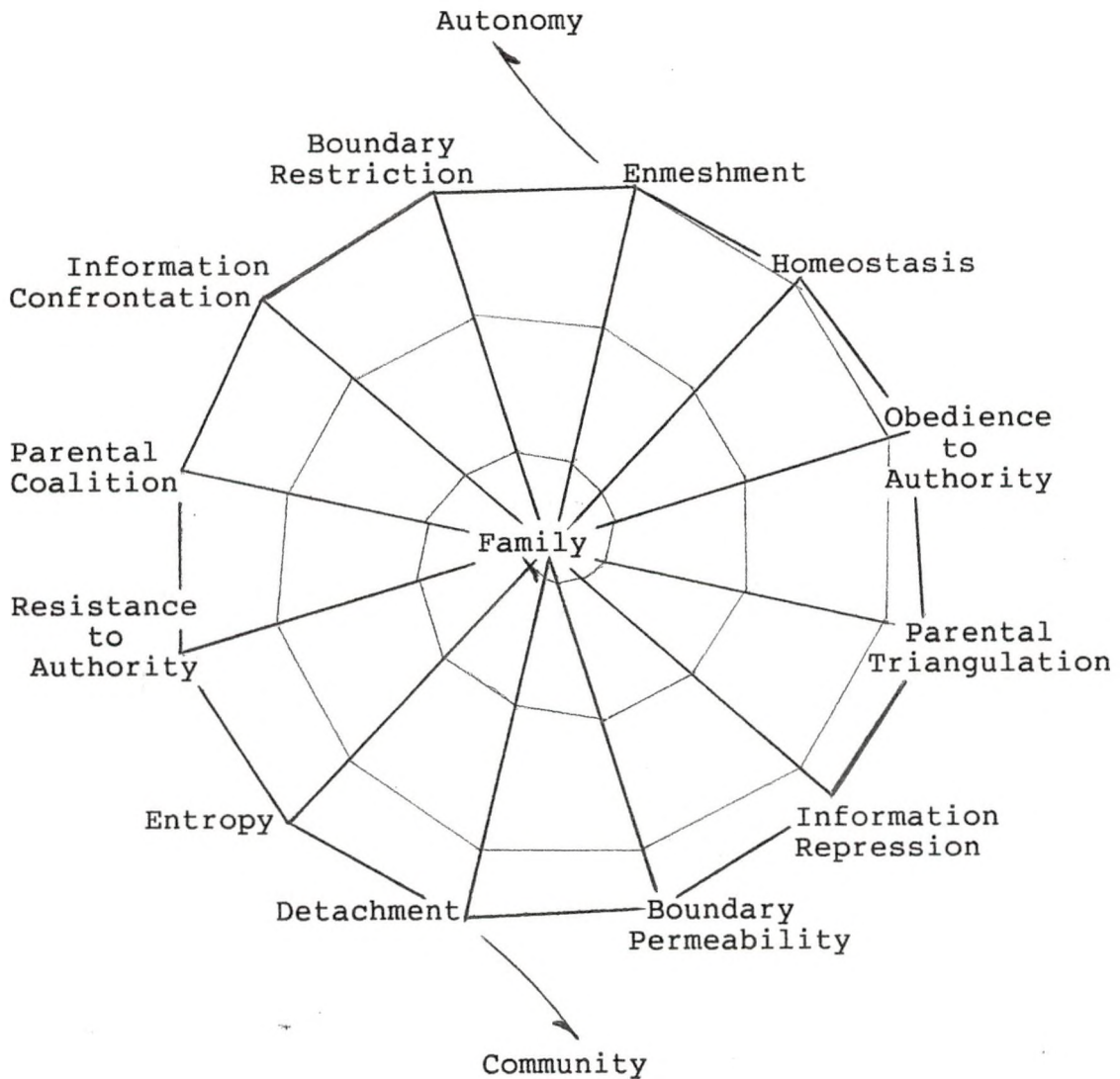
Scale 4, Boundary Permeability/ Restriction, is most similar to the proposed model's dimension of Protection/ Punishment. Yet it does not capture the pole of punishment very well unless punishment is reconstrued as rejection and the connotation of punitiveness is abandoned. The name for this scale is also unsatisfactory, but at the present time a

better name has not been suggested. This scale also has similarities to the proposed dimension of enmeshment. A cardinal feature of the enmeshed families described by Minuchin was their intuitiveness about each other's needs and feelings. Enmeshed family members feel that they can almost read each other's minds and Item 22 on Scale 4 concerns this characteristic. Therefore, it is concluded that this scale poses the greatest problem of interpretation and appears to need the most revision.

Scale 5, Parental Triangulation/ Coalition, is clearly similar to the patterns of conflict-avoidance proposed by Minuchin. It may be useful to combine Scale 5 with Scale 2 as both are similar to related aspects of the proposed model's dimension of Conflict-Avoidance/ Confrontation.

Scale 6, Obedience to Authority/ Resistance to Authority, may be indicative of how receptive a family might be to therapeutic interventions, especially those interventions that are mandated through the court. Subjects who feel their parents resist local authorities and tend to question religious values may be at greater risk for a variety of taboo and illegal behaviors, such as incest or problem drinking, than those who feel their families conform to custom. In a future study this hypothesis could be easily tested.

Figure 2 illustrates the manner in which the six subscales derived from the present study may be related to



Development of Enmeshment: Lefthanded transactions
 Development of Disengagement: Righthanded transactions

Figure 2.

Revised Multiaxial Model of Enmeshed/Disengaged Family Structures.

each other in a model that is similar to the originally proposed model. This model suggests several decision points at which a subject could be asked to choose one of two statements which would be indictative of the direction in which the subject is "cycling" on the model of family transactions. It also suggests a revised ordering of the dimensions.

The Distribution of Scale-Scores

The forced-choice format of the test instrument may have contributed to the skewed distribution of scores within each item. It appears that for this particular sample, certain items were not equal in terms of their social desirability. This is particularly evident by subjects' choice of the enmeshment statements in Items 8 and 14 on Scale 1. In a future study it may be useful to allow subjects to rate each statement separately and use the enmeshment statements from these items as a correction index for social desirability. Separating the enmeshment items from the disengagement items may also reduce the intra-scale variance by creating more redundancy within each scale. Therefore, this change has been incorporated into the present form of the Enmeshed Family Inventory and the final version of it appears in Appendix D. More information about the test version of the EFI will be provided by conducting a full analysis of the data available from the Demographic Questionnaire, Life Events Inventory and Symptoms Checklist.

A larger sample size is required to complete such analyses but will also provide assurance of the stability of the present factor solution of the EFI.

Issues Concerning the Sample

The sample used in this study appeared to have a response set to endorse traditional family values. Many North Dakotans pride themselves on the cohesiveness of their families. It is not unusual for students enrolled at North Dakota's state Universities to call home frequently and many of them visit their home-towns and families as often as they are able.

Because this rural area may indeed have such strong family ties, it presents advantages and disadvantages for studies of enmeshed and disengaged family structures. On the one hand, it is expected that students living in Grand Forks, North Dakota will be more enmeshed than others living in Los Angeles, California, for example. Yet for this reason one must be cautious not to assert that disengaged family values will not have salience for other, less family oriented regions. Therefore, a future test of the Enmeshed Family Inventory should incorporate samples from other demographic areas.

Uniqueness of the Enmeshed Family Inventory

Unlike Kog et al's inventory, the Enmeshed Family Inventory has the advantage of retaining much of Minuchin's

emphasis on protectiveness. It also retains much of the complexity of the statements that Minuchin asserted were true of enmeshed family systems and is conceptualized in such a way that interactions between family members may be studied sequentially.

The Enmeshed Family Inventory appears to be problematic in the manner in which enmeshment and disengagement statements were placed in a forced-choice format. Although this format has resulted in the formation of six scales that appear to capture unique aspects of the model of family structure for which it was proposed, it doesn't do this as well as it was hoped. For this reason, the forced-choice format was abandoned for the final version.

Future Use of the Enmeshed Family Inventory

The inventory in its present form may be adequate to use in a future test of the revised model. It represents a first step towards the creation of an inventory that may have a potentially broad use for others interested in the transactions and structures of family systems and the prediction and prevention of family-related abuse.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
TEST INSTRUMENT

Enmeshed Family Inventory

Subscale membership indicated by the letters "e, c, r, p";

e = proposed Emeshment/Detachment subscale

c = proposed Conflict-Avoidance/Confrontation subscale

p = proposed Protectiveness/Punishment subscale

r = proposed Rigidity/Adaptibility subscale

Parenthesis indicates overall Enmeshment dimension.

r 1.

- a) My family expects a great deal of conformity to their standards.
- b. Most forms of even bizarre behavior are accepted by my family.

e 2.

- a) I would feel comfortable sitting on my father's lap.
- b. I prefer to keep my father at arm's length.

c 3.

- a. I feel my parents don't care how my problems are resolved.
- b) I feel my parents use my problems to avoid resolving their own.

c 4.

- a) Personally, I really try to avoid arguments at all costs.
- b. I secretly enjoy getting in to arguments with people.

p 5.

- a) I am expected to preserve my innocence for as long as possible.
- b. I have gained much sophistication through my parents' training.

c 6.

- a) I often feel pressured to take sides in my parents' arguments.
- b. My parents do not allow me to get involved in their arguments.

c 7.

- a. I believe people should have to pay for their mistakes.
- b) I often cover for other people when they are in trouble.

- e 8.
 - a) My parents' focus is primarily family oriented.
 - b) My parents' focus is primarily community oriented.

- c 9.
 - a) My parents view conflict as an effective way to bring about change.
 - b) My parents believe that "good" families do not have conflict.

- c 10.
 - a) One of my parents and I often team up to oppose my other parent.
 - b) I feel that I have no right to side with one parent over the other.

- e 11.
 - a) I feel smothered by my parents' attentions.
 - b) I feel rejected when I seek my parents attentions.

- r 12.
 - a) My parents are far too lax in their discipline.
 - b) Punishments in my family are often more severe than are justified.

- p 13.
 - a) My parents feel the world is a very dangerous place.
 - b) My parents feel that all people are basically trustworthy.

- c 14.
 - a) My parents and I get along well almost all of the time.
 - b) There has never been a moment of peace between my parents and me.

- r 15.
 - a) My parents fear my leaving home and are unwilling to let me grow up.
 - b) My parents push me to grow up and are happy for me to leave home.

- e 16.
 - a) I am nothing without my family.
 - b) My family identity is a part of me that I don't like to accept.

- p 17.
 - a) My parents often put me on "display" for others to admire.
 - b) I feel my parents are jealous of other people's attentions towards me.

- e 18.
- a) My parents will never accept me as an equal.
 - b) I resent that I was never allowed just to be a child in the family.
- c 19.
- a) If my father does something wrong, the family just covers it up.
 - b) If my father does something wrong, the family confronts him.
- e 20.
- a) My family is not dependable so I have had to become self-reliant.
 - b) My family is dependable but my independence is discouraged.
- e 21.
- a) It is discouraged for me to keep a secret from my family.
 - b) My family appears indifferent to the private aspects of my life.
- p 22.
- a) My family has an uncanny sense for when one of us is in trouble.
 - b) My family is usually the last to sense it when I am in trouble.
- r 23.
- a) My mother has little influence on how our family is run.
 - b) My mother's opinion is more influential than my father's.
- c 24.
- a) My family is too open about the problems they have.
 - b) If you asked my family they'd claim, "We have no problems."
- r 25.
- a) Any luxury is considered somehow sinful to my parents.
 - b) My parents encourage our family to indulge in luxuries.
- r 26.
- a) My parents resist local authorities (police, school officials) telling them what to do.
 - b) My parents constantly seek the guidance of local authorities.

- r 27.
- a) My parents thrive when things are constantly changing.
 - b) My parents strive to keep everything the way they like it.
- r 28.
- a) My parents do not cope with pressures and stress very well.
 - b. My parents love risk and high pressure.
- e 29.
- a) I often feel uncertain about what my family members are really trying to say to me.
 - b. My family members usually say what they mean.
- p 30.
- a) When I take risks, I can sense my parents' anxiety for my safety.
 - b. I can sense that my parents encourage me to take risks.
- c 31.
- a) My family works hard to avoid disagreements.
 - b. It is acceptable for people in my family to openly disagree.
- p 32.
- a) To me, my parents' home feels like a fortress against the world.
 - b. To me, strangers are too welcome in my parents' home.
- r 33.
- a. My family has no specific doctrine and tends to question religion.
 - b) My family is governed by our religious doctrines.
- p 34.
- a) My family tries to conceal itself from outsiders.
 - b. My parents are too open about my family's home life.
- r 35.
- a) My father's opinions are the laws of our household.
 - b. My father's opinions about most everything are too easily changed.
- e 36.
- a. My family doesn't seem to notice each other's feelings.
 - b) My family is overly sensitive to each other's moods.

p 37.

- a. My parents are slow to respond to my needs.
- b) My parents are overly concerned that they give me what I need.

p 38.

- a. My parents do not rely on me enough.
- b) I feel a great responsibility for my parents' security.

e 39.

- a) My family is very emotional towards one another.
- b. My family rarely shows their feelings towards each other.

c 40.

- a) In order to avoid hurting anyone, problems in my family are left unresolved.
- b. Problems in my family are resolved even if the resolution is hurtful.

APPENDIX B
PROPOSED SUBSCALES OF THE
TEST INSTRUMENT

Enmeshment / Detachment Subscale

2. Proximity vs. Distance.
 a) I would feel comfortable sitting on my father's lap.
 b. I prefer to keep my father at arm's length.
8. Community Isolation vs. Integration.
 a) My parents' focus is primarily family oriented.
 b. My parents' focus is primarily community oriented.
11. Symbiosis vs. Detachment.
 a) I feel smothered by my parents' attentions.
 b. I feel rejected when I seek my parents' attentions.
16. Rejection vs. Attachment to Family Identity.
 a) I am nothing without my family.
 b. My family identity is a part of my that I don't like to accept.
18. Autonomy vs Role diffusion.
 a. My parents will never accept me as an equal.
 b) I resent that I was never allowed just to be a child in the family.
20. Unmet Dependency vs. Independency Needs.
 a. My family is not dependable so I have had to become self-reliant.
 b) My family is dependable but my independence is discouraged.
21. Intuitiveness vs. Indifference.
 a) It is discouraged for me to keep a secret from my family.
 b. My family appears indifferent to the private aspects of my life.
29. Indirect vs Direct Communication.
 a) I often feel uncertain about what my family members are really trying to say to me.
 b. My family members usually say what they mean.
36. Reactivity vs. Insensitivity.
 a. My family doesn't seem to notice each other's feelings.
 b) My family is overly sensitive to each other's moods.
39. Affective Expression vs. Repression.
 a) My family is very emotional towards one another.
 b. My family rarely shows their feelings towards each other.

Conflict-Avoidance / Confrontation Subscale

3. Detouring vs. Carelessness.
 - a. I feel my parents don't care how my problems are resolved.
 - b) I feel my parents use my problems to avoid resolving their own.

4. Low vs High Personal Threshold for Conflict.
 - a) Personally, I really try to avoid arguments at all costs.
 - b. I secretly enjoy getting in to arguments with people.

6. Triangulation of Child vs Parental Dyad.
 - a) I often feel pressured to take sides in my parents' arguments.
 - b. My parents do not allow me to get involved in their arguments.

7. Enabling vs Punishing.
 - a. I believe people should have to pay for their mistakes.
 - b) I often cover for other people when they are in trouble.

9. Rationalization of Conflict.
 - a. My parents view conflict as an effective way to bring about change.
 - b) My parents believe that "good" families do not have conflict.

10. Parent-Child Coalition vs. Parental Dyad.
 - a) One of my parents and I often team up to oppose my other parent.
 - b. I feel that I have no right to side with one parent over the other.

14. Denial vs. Emphasis of Family Conflict.
 - a) My parents and I get along well almost all of the time.
 - b. There has never been a moment-of peace between my parents and me.

19. Enabling vs. Confrontation.
 - a) If my father does something wrong, the family just covers it up.
 - b. If my father does something wrong, the family confronts him.

24. Denial vs. Openness to Family Problems.
 a. My family is too open about the problems they have.
 b) If you asked my family they'd claim, "We have no problems."
31. Low vs. High Family Threshold for Conflict.
 a) My family works hard to avoid disagreements.
 b. It is acceptable for people in my family to openly disagree.
40. Conflict Avoidance vs. Problem Resolution.
 a) In order to avoid hurting anyone, problems in my family are left unresolved.
 b. Problems in my family are resolved even if the resolution is hurtful.

Protection / Punishment Subscale

5. Valuation of Innocence vs. Experience.
 a) I am expected to preserve my innocence for as long as possible.
 b. I have gained much sophistication through my parents' training.
13. Cynicism vs. Naivete.
 a) My parents feel the world is a very dangerous place.
 b. My parents feel that all people are basically trustworthy.
17. Parental Possessiveness vs. Objectification of child.
 a. My parents often put me on "display" for others to admire.
 b) I feel my parents are jealous of other people's attentions towards me.
22. Hypersensitivity vs. Callousness.
 a) My family has an uncanny sense for when one of us is in trouble.
 b. My family is usually the last to sense it when I am in trouble.
30. Low vs. High Risk Taking.
 a) When I take risks, I can sense my parents' anxiety for my safety.
 b. I can sense that my parents encourage me to take risks.
32. Isolation vs. Permeability to Social Influences.
 a) To me, my parents' home feels like a fortress against the world.
 b. To me, strangers are too welcome in my parents' home.

34. Low vs High Need for Family Privacy.
 a) My family tries to conceal itself from outsiders.
 b. My parents are too open about my family's home life.
37. Parental Nurturance vs. Neglect.
 a. My parents are slow to respond to my needs.
 b) My parents are overly concerned that they give me what I need.
38. Role Reversal vs. Role rigidity.
 a. My parents do not rely on me enough.
 b) I feel a great responsibility for my parents' security.

Rigidity / Adaptability Subscale

1. Oppression vs. License.
 a) My family expects a great deal of conformity to their standards.
 b. Most forms of even bizarre behavior are accepted by my family.
12. Abuse vs. Neglect.
 a. My parents are far too lax in their discipline.
 b) Punishments in my family are often more severe than are justified.
15. Retardation vs. Acceleration of development.
 a) My parents fear my leaving home and are unwilling to let me grow up.
 b. My parents push me to grow up and are happy for me to leave home.
23. Powerless vs Powerful Mother Role.
 a) My mother has little influence on how our family is run.
 b. My mother's opinion is more influential than my father's..
25. Austerity vs. Luxury.
 a) Any luxury is considered somehow sinful to my parents.
 b. My parents encourage our family to indulge in luxuries.
26. Resistance vs. Obedience to Authority.
 a) My parents resist local authorities (police, school officials) telling them what to do.
 b. My parents constantly seek the guidance of local authorities.

27. Need for Security vs. Risk.
- a. My parents thrive when things are constantly changing.
 - b) My parents strive to keep everything the way they like it.
28. Low vs. High Parental Threshold for Stress.
- a) My parents do not cope with pressures and stress very well.
 - b. My parents love risk and high pressure.
33. Dogmatism vs. Skepticism.
- a. My family has no specific doctrine and tends to question religion.
 - b) My family is governed by our religious doctrines.
35. Powerful vs. Powerless Father Role.
- a) My father's opinions are the laws of our household.
 - b. My father's opinions about most everything are too easily changed.

APPENDIX C
QUESTIONNAIRE PACKET

Consent Form

Name (Print): _____ Subject #: _____

T.A.'s name: _____ Psych. Class: _____

You are invited to participate in a study of family interaction styles.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to fill out four questionnaires. All of your responses to these surveys will be kept confidential. Your name will be given a coded number that will be used in all future treatments of the data you provide. It is expected that it will take you less than one hour to complete all of the questions and you will be given one credit for your participation in the study. You are free to withdraw your consent at any time during the course of completing the inventories and you will be given credit in proportion to the time you have spent at this task.

The first questionnaire asks you information about your family in very general terms. For example, among other things you will be asked to give the numbers of your brothers and sisters, and the size of your home town.

The second questionnaire is simply a list of things that might have happened to you at any point in your life. All you have to do is mark each one "0" for never, or the number of times it has happened to you.

The third survey asks you questions about your family's style of interacting with each other. For example, is your mother easy to talk to? You will be asked to choose which of two paired statements best describes your family, then you will rate the degree to which you think it is true of your family on a 5-point scale.

The last inventory asks you health-oriented questions which are comparable to the kinds of questions you are usually asked if you are seeing a physician for the first time. You need to mark an item true or false, then indicate its frequency and severity on a 9-point scale.

If you have any questions concerning this study or its results, a brief summary of it will be made available upon request after August, 1988 by contacting Loretta Petrie, through the UND, Psychology Department, Corwin-Larimore 337, Grand Forks, ND 58201 (701) 777-3212. The faculty advisor for this study is Dr. Sheila Deitz.

I have read the description of the study and what it will measure above and willingly agree to participate.

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Demographic Questionnaire

The following questions are designed to help describe the people who are participating in this study in general terms. Please indicate the answer category that best describes you in the terms of the question while being as accurate as you can. Thank you for your help in this research.

- A. Do not put your name anywhere on your answer sheet, it already has an identification number filled in. In place of your last name on the answer sheet, please print your racial ethnicity (for example "White", "Black", "Hispanic", "Asian", or "NatAmer"). Leave a space, and in place of your first name, print your family's religious affiliation, for example "Lutheran", "Moslem", or "None" if your family is not affiliated with any religious organization. Fill in the circles under each of the letters you have printed in the boxes.
- B. Fill in the box with sex printed on it. Fill in the circle "m" for male, or "f" for female.
- C. Fill in the long box that has grade printed on it with your current year in school. Circle "13" is for a freshman in college, "16" is for a college senior or graduate. However, if you are a graduate student, fill in "1" for first year, "2" for second year, "3" if you have a masters degree, "4" if you are in a PhD program, and "5" if you have earned a PhD.
- D. Fill in the box and circles for your birth date.

Now you may begin filling in the General Purposes area of the answer sheet beginning with item 1.

1. How many brothers and sisters, including half and/or step-siblings do you have?
2. What is your birth order in relation to all your brothers and sisters, including half and/or step siblings?
(only child=0, oldest=1, second=2, last or youngest=9.)
3. How many times has your father been married?
4. How many times has your mother been married?
5. How many times have you been married?

6. In which type of setting have you, for the most part, been raised in?
- a. = Family farm, single family.
 - b. = Farm complex; multiple families, population less than 100.
 - c. = Village complex; multiple families, population 50 - 300 persons.
 - d. = Small town; population 301 - 1,500.
 - e. = Small city; population 1,501 - 25,000.
 - f. = City; population 25,001 - 100,000.
 - g. = Large city; population 100,500 - 300,000.
 - h. = Inner minor metropolitan area; population 300,500 - 1,000,000.
 - i. = Suburb of major metro area; population 1,500,000 - 7,000,000.
 - j. = Inner major metro area; population over 2,000,000 and more.
7. How many times did your parents move to a new town while you lived with them?
(0= always lived in the same house, ranging through 9+ moves.)
8. What is your parents general range of net income?
- a. = I can give no reasonably correct estimate.
 - b. = Between \$5,000. and \$10,000./year.
 - c. = Between \$10,500. and \$15,000./year.
 - d. = Between \$15,500. and \$20,000./year.
 - e. = Between \$20,500. and \$25,000./year.
 - f. = Between \$25,500. and \$40,000./year.
 - g. = Between \$40,500. and \$80,000./year.
 - h. = Between \$80,500. and \$100,000./year.
 - i. = Between \$100,500. and \$500,000./year.
 - j. = \$500,000. and above.
9. What is your father's level of education?
10. What is your mother's level of education?
11. What is the level of education to which you aspire?
- a. = 8th grade or less.
 - b. = Some high school.
 - c. = High school graduate.
 - d. = Some formal vocational training.
 - e. = Formal vocational training school graduate.
 - f. = Some college.
 - g. = College graduate.
 - h. = Some graduate level training.
 - i. = Masters Degree.
 - j. = PhD.

12. What is your father's level of employment?
 13. What is your mother's level of employment?
 14. To what level of employment do you aspire for yourself at age 45?
 a.= Unemployed, spouse provides all income.
 b.= Unemployed, receiving government assistance.
 c.= Unemployed, retired with company benefits.
 d.= Unemployed, retired with capital investments.
 e.= Low-to-management (clerk, nursing aid, etc.).
 f.= Mid-to-management (teacher, nurse, sales representative, etc.).
 g.= Top-to-management (school principal, sales exec., etc.)
 h.= Self-employed, small business owner, professional tradesperson.
 i.= Self-employed, major business owner, professional Atty, DDS, Dr.
 j.= Self-employed, professional artist, writer, etc.
15. To what degree is your father a leader within his community?
 16. To what degree is your mother a leader within her community?
 17. To what degree do you aspire to be a leader within your community?
 (0= not at all a leader, ranging through 9 = one of top leaders.)
18. How old was your father when he first married?
 19. How old was your mother when she first married?
 20. How old were you/ do you expect to be when you marry/married?
 a.= 15 or fewer years. f.= 27 - 30 years.
 b.= 16 - 18 years. g.= 31 - 35 years.
 c.= 19 - 20 years. h.= 36 - 40 years.
 d.= 21 - 23 years. i.= 41 - 50 years.
 e.= 24 - 26 years. j.= 50 or more years.

Life Events Inventory

The following list of items are significant events that may occur in anyone's life. Please indicate the number of times that each of these events has happened to you by filling in the appropriate circle on your answer sheet. If the event has never happened to you, fill in "0". If the event has happened to you 9 or more times, fill in "9". If the event has happened to you less than 9 times, fill in the circle containing the appropriate number.

21. Death of a parent.

22. Death of a spouse or a marriage-like partner.
23. Death of a close family member.
24. Death of a close friend.
25. Divorce of your parents.
26. Remarriage of your parent.
27. Divorce from your spouse or "divorce" from a marriage-like partner.
28. Pregnancy (your own, or in which you were the father).
29. Diagnosed with a personally life-threatening illness.
30. Suffered a personally life-threatening injury.
31. Marriage or cohabitation with a marriage-like partner.
32. Victim of a crime in which you were confronted by the perpetrator.
33. Received medical treatment for alcohol or drug use.
34. Arrest for driving under the influence (DUI).
35. Sexual molestation (any sexual action) by a family member 5+ yrs. older than you before age 15, and that made you feel extremely uncomfortable.
36. Sexual molestation (any sexual action) by a non-relative 5+ yrs. older than you before age 15, and that made you feel extremely uncomfortable.
37. Rape or attempted forcible intercourse by a family member when you were 16 years old or older.
38. Rape or attempted forcible intercourse by a non-relative when you were 16 years old or older.
39. Personal conflict that resulted in your loss of employment.
40. Personal conflict that resulted in the ending of a close friendship.

E F I

Before answering the following items, please take a moment to think about your family, or the family in which you were raised. Recall your relationship with your mother, your father, and with each of your brothers and sisters if you have them. Think about your brothers' and sisters' relationships with your parents. Remember times in which your whole family was gathered together informally, for example watching TV together, or on a camping trip, or a trip to a shopping center. Remember your family's "house rules", how and when dinner was eaten, what bed-time was like as a child. Think also about times of stress and conflict. Think about one of your parent's arguments, an argument that you might have had with one of your parents.

Close your eyes for a minute and simply think about these things. When you are ready, begin answering the items according to these directions:

Each numbered item contains 2 paired statements and you have to choose which statement best fits your parents or family.

Then you must rate how much the statement you choose is true of your family. You may feel some statements are exactly like your parents or family, while you may feel others are only slightly true of them.

Half of the circles, from 0 to 4 are used to rate statement "a".

Half of the circles, from 5 to 9 are used to rate statement "b".

fits a						fits b				
(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
slightly			exactly			slightly			exactly	

Do you have any questions about how to answer these items? If you do, please ask them now, as this is an unusual answering format.

41.

- a. My family expects a great deal of conformity to their standards.
- b. Most forms of even bizarre behavior are accepted by my family.

- 42.
- I would feel comfortable sitting on my father's lap.
 - I prefer to keep my father at arm's length.
- 43.
- I feel my parents don't care how my problems are resolved.
 - I feel my parents use my problems to avoid resolving their own.
- 44.
- Personally, I really try to avoid arguments at all costs.
 - I secretly enjoy getting into arguments with people.
- 45.
- I am expected to preserve my innocence for as long as possible.
 - I have gained much sophistication through my parents' training.
- 46.
- I often feel pressured to take sides in my parents' arguments.
 - My parents do not allow me to get involved in their arguments.
- 47.
- I believe people should have to pay for their mistakes.
 - I often cover for other people when they are in trouble.
- 48.
- My parents' focus is primarily family oriented.
 - My parents' focus is primarily community oriented.
- 49.
- My parents view conflict as an effective way to bring about change.
 - My parents believe that "good" families do not have conflict.
- 50.
- One of my parents and I often team up to oppose my other parent.
 - I feel that I have no right to side with one parent over the other.
- 51.
- I feel smothered by my parents' attentions.
 - I feel rejected when I seek my parents' attentions.

- 52.
- a. My parents are far too lax in their discipline.
 - b. Punishments in my family are often more severe than are justified.
- 53.
- a. My parents feel the world is a very dangerous place.
 - b. My parents feel that all people are basically trustworthy.
- 54.
- a. My parents and I get along well almost all of the time.
 - b. There has never been a moment of peace between my parents and me.
- 55.
- a. My parents fear my leaving home and are unwilling to let me grow up.
 - b. My parents push me to grow up and are happy for me to leave home.
- 56.
- a. I am nothing without my family.
 - b. My family identity is a part of me that I don't like to accept.
- 57.
- a. My parents often put me on "display" for others to admire.
 - b. I feel my parents are jealous of other people's attentions toward me.
- 58.
- a. My parents will never accept me as an equal.
 - b. I resent that I was never allowed just to be a child in the family.
- 59.
- a. If my father does something wrong, the family just covers it up.
 - b. If my father does something wrong, the family confronts him.
- 60.
- a. My family is not dependable so I have had to become self-reliant.
 - b. My family is dependable, but my independence is discouraged.

61.
 - a. It is discouraged for me to keep a secret from my family.
 - b. My family appears indifferent to the private aspects of my life.
62.
 - a. My family has an uncanny sense for when one of us is in trouble.
 - b. My family is usually the last to sense it when I am in trouble.
63.
 - a. My mother has little influence on how our family is run.
 - b. My mother's opinion is more influential than my father's.
64.
 - a. My family is too open about the problems we have.
 - b. If you asked my family they'd claim, "We have no problems."
65.
 - a. Any luxury is considered somehow sinful to my parents.
 - b. My parents encourage our family to indulge in luxuries.
66.
 - a. My parents resist local authorities (police, school officials) telling them what to do.
 - b. My parents constantly seek the guidance of local authorities.
67.
 - a. My parents thrive when things are constantly changing.
 - b. My parents strive to keep everything the way they like it.
68.
 - a. My parents do not cope with pressures and stress very well.
 - b. My parents love risk and high pressure.
69.
 - a. I often feel uncertain about what my family members are really trying to say to me.
 - b. My family members usually say what they mean.
70.
 - a. When I take risks, I can sense my parents' anxiety for my safety.
 - b. I can sense that my parents encourage me to take risks.

- 71.
- a. My family works hard to avoid disagreements.
 - b. It is acceptable for people in my family to openly disagree.
- 72.
- a. To me, my parents' home feels like a fortress against the world.
 - b. To me, strangers are too welcome in my parents' home.
- 73.
- a. My family has no specific doctrine and tends to question religion.
 - b. My family is governed by our religious doctrines.
- 74.
- a. My family tries to conceal itself from outsiders.
 - b. My parents are too open about my family's home life.
- 75.
- a. My father's opinions are the laws of our household.
 - b. My father's opinions about most everything are too easily changed.
- 76.
- a. My family doesn't seem to notice how each other feels.
 - b. My family is overly sensitive to each other's moods.
- 77.
- a. My parents are slow to respond to my needs.
 - b. My parents are overly concerned that they give me what I need.
- 78.
- a. My parents do not rely on me enough.
 - b. I feel a great responsibility for my parents' security.
- 79.
- a. My family is very emotional towards one another.
 - b. My family rarely shows their feelings towards each other.
- 80.
- a. In order to avoid hurting anyone, problems in my family are left unresolved.
 - b. Problems in my family are resolved even if the resolution is hurtful.

PPCL

Below is a list of problems and complaints that people sometimes have. Mark each item between "0" and "9" to rate the degree to which the problem has bothered or distressed you during the past year. Mark only in pencil, beginning at item # 81 on the green answer sheet you are using to complete all of the questionnaires.

- 0 = Not at all
- 1 = Infrequent - mild symptoms.
- 2 = Infrequent - moderate symptoms.
- 3 = Infrequent - severe symptoms.
- 4 = Frequent - mild symptoms.
- 5 = Frequent - moderate symptoms.
- 6 = Frequent - severe symptoms.
- 7 = Nearly continual - mild symptoms.
- 8 = Nearly continual - moderate symptoms.
- 9 = Nearly continual - severe symptoms.

How much have you been bothered or distressed by:

- 81. Headaches.
- 82. Asthma.
- 83. Faintness or dizziness.
- 84. Loss of sexual interest or pleasure.
- 85. Pains in heart or chest.
- 86. Food allergies.
- 87. Pains in joints.
- 88. Feeling low in energy or fatigued.
- 89. Poor appetite or weight loss.
- 90. Feeling tearful or crying easily.
- 91. Temper outbursts that you could not control.
- 92. Lower back pain.
- 93. Painful intercourse.
- 94. Nausea or upset stomach.
- 95. Muscle soreness not caused by excessive exercise.
- 96. Trouble falling asleep.
- 97. Hot or cold spells.
- 98. Numbness or tingling in parts of your body.
- 99. Symptoms of cigarette "hangovers".
- 100. Overeating or weight gain.
- 101. Awakening in the early morning.
- 102. Trouble maintaining blood sugar level.
- 103. Trouble maintaining sexual arousal.
- 104. Feeling bloated and/or gassy.
- 105. Sleep that is restless or disturbed.
- 106. Allergies to pollen, dust, and/or other common particles.
- 107. Symptoms of alcohol "hangovers".
- 108. Feeling dissatisfied with your body's appearance.
- 109. Feeling out of touch with your true feelings.
- 110. Painful menstruation.

Post-testing Information

Thank you for your participation in this research.

The present study is designed to provide normative data for the Enmeshed Family Inventory, a questionnaire that is being developed to provide a measure of how families communicate and interact with each other. As it was stated in the consent form, all of the information that you have provided will be kept completely confidential. Your answer sheet will in no way be connected with your name.

In recent years family problems have come to the attention of the public and human service professionals. Many documentaries that touch on family issues have reached wide audiences through the news, entertainment media, and through community self-help projects.

It is my sincere hope that none of the questions that were asked here made you feel sad or uncomfortable in any way. However, if during the process of completing the questionnaires, you became aware of a painful experience or feelings that you would like to talk to someone about, you are welcome to speak with me or another professional counselor. Below are listed several resources where such help can be found in the Grand Forks and Fargo-Moorhead areas.

Loretta Petrie
(Experimenter)
Psychology Service Center
Montgomery Hall,
U of North Dakota
Grand Forks, ND 58201
(701) 777-3691

Dr. Sheila Deitz
(Clinical Supervisor)
Department of Psychology
204 Corwin-Larimore,
U of North Dakota,
Grand Forks, ND 58201
(701) 777-3792

Counseling Center
McCannel Hall,
University of North Dakota,
Grand Forks, ND 58201
(701) 777-2127

Northeast Human Service Center
1407 24th Avenue South,
Grand Forks, ND 58201
(701) 775-0525

Counseling Center
Frick Hall
Moorhead State University
Moorhead, MN 56560
(218) 236-2227

Southeast Human Service Center
15 Broadway Street North
Fargo, ND 58102
(701) 237-4513

Counseling Center
North Dakota SU
Fargo, ND 58102
(701) 237-7671

The Village Family Service Center
1201 25th Street SW
Fargo, ND 58103
(701) 235-6433

APPENDIX D
ENMESHED FAMILY INSTRUMENT
FINAL FORM

Enmeshed Family Inventory

1. I feel smothered by my parents' attentions.
2. There has never been a moment of peace between my parents and me.
3. My family identity is a part of my that I don't like to accept.
4. My parents constantly seek the guidance of local authorities.
5. My parents do not allow me to get involved in their arguments.
6. My family appears indifferent to the private aspects of my life.
7. My parents' focus is primarily community oriented.
8. My parents' focus is primarily family oriented.
9. My family is governed by our religious doctrines.
10. My family works hard to avoid disagreements.
11. I feel that I have no right to side with one parent over the other.
12. I often feel pressured to take sides in my parents' arguments.
13. To me, my parents' home feels like a fortress against the world.
14. To me, strangers are too welcome in my parents' home.
15. My parents do not cope with pressures and stress very well.
16. My family rarely shows their feelings towards each other.
17. I am expected to preserve my innocence for as long as possible.
18. In order to avoid hurting anyone, problems in my family are left unresolved.
19. My parents love risk and high pressure.

20. My family members usually say what they mean.
21. If my father does something wrong, the family just covers it up.
22. My parents are overly concerned that they give me what I need.
23. It is discouraged for me to keep a secret from my family.
24. My parents thrive when things are constantly changing.
25. My parents are too open about my family's home life.
26. My family is very emotional towards one another.
27. My family has an uncanny sense for when one of us is in trouble.
28. My parents strive to keep everything the way they like it.
29. If my father does something wrong, the family confronts him.
30. My family tries to conceal itself from outsiders.
31. My family doesn't seem to notice how each other feels.
32. My family is usually the last to sense it when I am in trouble.
33. My family expects a great deal of conformity to their standards.
34. I am nothing without my family.
35. My parents and I get along well almost all of the time.
36. My family is overly sensitive to each other's moods.
37. It is acceptable for people in my family to openly disagree.
38. Problems in my family are resolved even if the resolution is hurtful.
39. One of my parents and I often team up to oppose my other parent.

40. Most forms of even bizarre behavior are accepted by my family.
41. My parents resist local authorities (police, school officials) telling them what to do.
42. My family has no specific doctrine and tends to question religion.
43. My parents are slow to respond to my needs.
44. I have gained much sophistication through my parents' training.
45. I feel rejected when I seek my parents' attentions.
46. I often feel uncertain about what my family members are really trying to say to me.

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