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KEZAR, EDWARD FRAZE

CRISIS THEORY RELATED TO DIVORCE AND REMARRIAGE

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro

PH.D.

1980

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CRISIS THEORY
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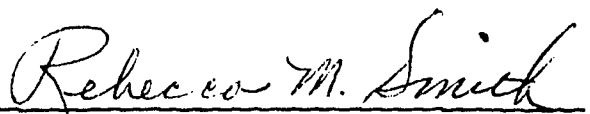
by

Edward Frazee Kezar

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Approved by


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APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of the Graduate School at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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KEZAR, EDWARD FRAZE. Crisis Theory Related to Divorce and Remarriage. (1980) Directed by: Dr. Rebecca M. Smith. Pp. 167.

This research challenges the belief that a specific event is a crisis. The major purpose was to determine whether unusually high levels of stress precede the decision to divorce or to remarry. The divorced were tested for the 12 months prior to the decision to divorce; the remarried were tested for the 12 months prior to the decision to remarry; and the currently married to their first spouse were tested for the 12 months prior to participation in the study. A second major purpose was to test two major assumptions in crisis theory: (a) What is a crisis for one person will not be a crisis for another, and (b) after a crisis, an individual may approach, but not exceed, the level of organization at which one was functioning before the crisis occurred.

The purposive sample consisted of 90 subjects. Sixty had experienced divorce and 30 were still married to their first spouse. Twenty of the 60 divorced subjects were remarried and tested as such.

The Life Events Inventory (L.E.I.) by Cochrane and Robertson (1973) was the instrument used to determine amounts of accumulated stress during designated 12-month periods. The instrument has a reliability factor of 0.89.

Analysis of variance techniques were used to determine significant differences in the L.E.I. scores for the main

effects of marital status and gender and the interaction effects. In addition to providing a total accumulated stress score the L.E.I. also determines which events are pleasant or unpleasant and controlled or uncontrolled. A chi square was used to compare the differences between groups ranking crisis events, the recovery level profile, and the need for meeting crisis-precipitating events with a mate.

The difference in scores between the divorced group (479) and the control group (162) were significant at or beyond the .0001 level of confidence suggesting that, prior to their decision to end the marriage, the divorced were functioning under far more stress. There was no significant relationship between stress and gender.

The pleasant or unpleasant and controlled or uncontrolled scores were converted to weighted proportions for greater accuracy. The divorced experienced significantly more unpleasant and controllable events than the control group, but they also experienced higher pleasant and uncontrollable events as well. Similar results were noted for the remarrieds.

The traditional assumption in crisis theory is that "what is a crisis for one person will not be a crisis for another." The "what" in this assumption refers to a specific event as the crisis (such as death or divorce). The writer challenges only the "what" portion of the definition. The "what" should not refer to a specific event but to an

accumulated stress level which has become intolerable. No event can become a crisis in and of itself but the event can move a previously high stress level to crisis proportions. The divorced subjects did not feel that working through the process of divorce had made them weaker than they were before the event occurred.

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This research would not have been completed without the contributions of the subjects who provided the valuable data. Not only did they give freely of their time, but they also showed a genuine interest in the hope that these findings would provide help for others who might later face divorce and remarriage.

My deepest gratitude and sympathy are extended to my family for tolerating my frustrations and stressful

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Divorce, remarriage, and crisis are interrelated elements in the phenomenon of broken relationships or family disorganization (Waller & Hill, 1951, 1966). Divorce is commonly seen as the crisis event and remarriage as the consequence of, and response to, the relationship broken by divorce or death. However, the writer suggested that divorce is the result of accumulated stress from unresolved strife that eventually reached crisis proportions.

A general overview of the literature on divorce and remarriage was diverse. Divorce seemed to receive the most attention with material polarizing into two camps: one concerned with saving the marriage and the other concerned about the individual. Much of the material dealing with remarriage emphasized how to get and keep a mate. However, remarriage or its possibility was important in the divorce literature because one could never be sure if a third person might be waiting for the marriage to dissolve.

The literature produced a composite picture of divorced persons: They were probably married when they were young or immature; the marital problems usually began sometime during the first year of marriage; the wives, in most cases, sued for the divorce due to pressure from the husbands; they were most apt to be black, a member of the lower class, poorly educated, low income; probably Protestant, expressed no religious faith, or were from a mixed religious marriage; and they were likely to live in the western United States (Bell, 1971; Burchinal, 1960; Duvall, 1967; Fullerton, 1977; Glick & Norton, 1971; Kenkel, 1977; Kessler, 1975; McCary, 1975; Ogg, 1975; Pineo, 1961; Rodman, 1967; Winch, 1971).

Explanations of causes of divorce vary. Some of the more prevalent explanations were: Individuals or couples have not learned how to carry out the expected role obligations (Goode, 1966); over a period of time the family has been losing functions which create less stability (Winch, 1971); the strains put upon today's marriages are too great (Fullerton, 1977; Schulz, 1976; Skolnick, 1973); the demands for greater emotional fulfillment in the marriage are too great (Vincent, 1966); and the developmental crisis during adolescence causes one to seek one's identity not in one's self but through others (Erikson, 1968). Bohannon (1970) clarified the most recent viewpoint by stating that it is not known what causes divorce. The only factor that can be counted on is that divorce rates are going higher (Bell, 1971;

Bernard, 1956, 1961, 1970; Bohannon, 1970; Goode, 1966; Hunt, 1966; Waller & Hill, 1951, 1966).

There are a number of major concerns shrouded in the divorce controversy. In the United States advocates of familism have argued that to strengthen the family, individuals should not be allowed to break their marriage commitment. However, the advocates of individualism have called for a pragmatic approach emphasizing concern for the people involved (Scanzoni & Scanzoni, 1976). Some early family life experts and clergymen were fearful that the higher divorce rates indicated either a dissatisfaction with marriage or were symptoms of a decadent family system in which easy divorces would create a wholesale abandonment of marriage (Fullerton, 1977; Kenkel, 1977).

Family crisis represents one of the newest variables in research in family disorganization. The modern family is seen as the bottleneck through which all troubles pass and therefore serves as a valuable mirror reflecting the strains and stresses of life (Hill, 1949; Waller & Hill, 1951, 1966). Evidence for referring to divorce as a crisis include: identifiable stages in the divorce process, the amount of violence in the family, and the number of people who refuse to even talk about their divorces. A few voices have called for a more intense study of the divorce process by stressing the need for more investigation in the following areas:

(a) looking at divorce as an end product of marital discord--

with special emphasis upon discord (Koos, 1951), (b) viewing divorce as a process which does not just happen but develops over a long period of time with each stressful experience having a cumulative effect (Bell, 1971; Goode, 1956; Wiseman, 1975), and (c) recognizing that "chaos lies not so much in divorce, but in marital breakdown" (Kessler, 1975, p. 129). A large number of family experts tend to view crisis in a negative light; therefore, its presence in marital dissolution or family disorganization has never been seriously questioned. Traditionally divorce and remarriage have been defined as crises (Hill, 1949; Waller & Hill, 1951, 1966). However, divorce and remarriage might also be used (consciously or unconsciously) as problem-solving techniques to reduce high levels of internally accumulated stress. One major question in this research is this: Are divorce and remarriage crisis events, or could they be, in some cases, reactions to earlier unresolved stress which has resurfaced due to recent life events?

Statement of the Problem

The major purpose of this study is to determine whether stress reaches crisis proportions during the 12 months preceding the decision to divorce or to remarry. A second purpose is to examine two of Hill's (1949; Waller & Hill, 1951, 1966) basic assumptions in crisis theory: (a) what is a crisis for one person will not be a crisis for another;

and (b) following a major crisis one's recovery level seldom returns to the point at which one was functioning before the crisis occurred.

Hill (1949; Waller & Hill, 1951, 1966) recognized that stress had an impact upon the family but it is possible that he did not recognize that the major crisis was not the event but a level of stress reaching crisis proportions. This study is based upon the assumption that when internal stress becomes too great it can propel a person toward divorce or remarriage. Stress is cumulative and can be caused by either positive or negative events. Two crucial factors appear to be the amount of stress which has accumulated and the individual's stress tolerance. Holmes and Rahe (1967) measured the amount of stress it would take to make individuals severely ill, thus recognizing the presence of individual stress levels. When stress begins to build to intolerable levels it appears that one is propelled toward a number of actions or reactions with one goal which is to reduce the stress level. There is no guarantee that one will act in one's own best interest at such a time. With the problems that can be created by trying to reduce the internal stress level it is understandable how these trigger events have been interpreted as the actual crisis.

When internal stress has built to a certain level and a trigger event has sufficient power or impact, something will happen. What the trigger event does is create a situation

which the writer refers to as the "critical period." This juncture is critical because the behavior which follows will determine if the stress level is merely lowered to a more comfortable (or tolerable) level or a serious attempt is made to deal with the causes of the previously accumulated stress. The reader is reminded that divorce and remarriage have been traditionally viewed as crises and that the emphasis has been on studying what happens following the "crisis" event. In this study divorce and remarriage will be viewed as possible reactions to accumulated internal stress-- previously unresolved experiences prior to divorce or remarriage.

The writer expanded upon a generally accepted paradigm regarding crisis. It involved the idea that there can be a number of events involved in a crisis. However, in the past, crisis was generally defined as one specific event. This writer proposed that the crisis is not one specific event but an accumulation of unresolved internal stress built to an intolerable level.

Definitions

The definitions used in this study are listed under two categories: (a) specific terms used in Reuben Hill's study of crisis and (b) operational terms.

Reuben Hill's Study of Crisis

Crisis:

It is the event which strains the resources which families possess, cannot be solved by the repertory of ready-made answers provided by the mores or built up out of the family's previous experience with trouble, and requires the family to find new (and usually expedient) ways of carrying on family operations. Viewed from the perspective of habit, a crisis is that which interrupts the run of habit. Whether the crisis is produced by extrafamily or intrafamily events, once family habits are threatened successfully, the influence of the event travels through the family like a bowling ball through a set of tenpins--as one set of habits is disrupted, other sets are affected and there arises the objective possibility of complete family paralysis. In fact, crises have been defined, in terms of their effects upon families, as those situations which create a sense of sharpened insecurity or which block the usual patterns of action and call for new ones. (pp. 456-457)

Crisis-precipitating event (CPE):

Almost any event, if of sufficient intensity or if occurring in a family which is not structured to meet it, may precipitate a crisis. The important thing is not what the event is but rather what happens as a result of the event. (p. 459)

No crisis-precipitating event is the same for any given family; its impact ranges according to the several hardships which may accompany it. (p. 460)

Operational Terms

Crisis. In this study crisis is defined, not as a specific event, but as a heightened level of accumulated stress reaching intolerable proportions. The individual is then forced to act--perhaps in his own best interest, perhaps not. The writer suggests the following developmental sequence of a crisis: (a) the accumulation of stress (resulting from unresolved problems or life events which could be psychological, social, physical and/or developmental in nature);

(b) the trigger event (a specific life event either traumatic, such as a death, or benign, such as the breaking of a dish, which pushes the stress level to its peak); (c) the crisis (the level or point at which the accumulated stress becomes intolerable); (d) the critical period (a time of immobilization or temporary suspension explained by the approach-avoidance principles); and (e) the action to reduce the stress (ranging from desperate random reactions to carefully thought-out processes). Traditionally, whatever event caused the reaction or produced a change in behavior (such as a divorce or remarriage) was labeled "the crisis." The researchers then studied the disorganization which followed. It was a simple and an almost obvious conclusion (based upon an ex post facto approach) that anything causing so much trouble had to be a crisis. However, in this study the emphasis will be placed, not on what has happened after the divorce or remarriage, but on what happened during the 12 months before the decision to divorce or remarry.

Stress. In this study stress is defined as the internal pressure or tension created by unresolved problems or life events which could be psychological, social, physical, and/or developmental in nature. Stress, a condition in life, can be productive (Selye, 1967) or counter-productive.

Accumulated stress. Stress is cumulative in nature and is seldom adequately reduced without direct cognitive effort and specific skills. It can be temporarily reduced by

emotionally explosive behavior or a traumatic situation. It can be present with or without the individual's awareness, but it will usually resurface when one feels threatened or experiences a similar traumatic event. Holmes and Rahe (1967) recognized that accumulated stress could produce physical illness. Four methods commonly used to reduce accumulated stress are personal insight, direct cognitive effort coupled with the development of specific skills, a highly explosive emotional discharge or a traumatic experience, and serendipity.

Stress level. In this study stress level is the amount of stress which has accumulated over a 12 month period measured by the Life Events Inventory (Cochrane & Robertson, 1975).

Abbreviations. The abbreviation FMD shall refer to formerly married divorced; RMD₁ shall refer to the remarried divorced who were tested with the divorce sample for the 12 months prior to the decision to end the marriage; RMD₂ shall refer to the remarried divorced who were the remarried sample, tested for the 12 months prior to the decision to remarry; and the CMFS shall refer to the control group, tested for the 12 months preceding their participation in the research project.

Research Questions

The review of literature provided the basis for the following research questions:

1. To what degree is accumulated stress present in the 12 months preceding the decision to divorce or remarry?
2. Is there a relationship between stress level and gender?
3. Do relationships exist between marital status and (a) pleasant and unpleasant life events and (b) controlled and uncontrolled life events?
4. Are there life events which people in general see as highly stressful?
5. Can one experience a divorce and come out of the experience stronger than before the event occurred?
6. Do differences exist between the remarried's and formerly married's desire to share crises events with a mate?

Statement of Hypotheses

The following directional hypotheses were developed:

1. During the 12 months prior to the final decision to legally terminate the marriage the L.E.I. scores for the divorced will be significantly higher than the L.E.I. scores for the control group.

2. During the 12 months prior to the decision to remarry the L.E.I. scores for the remarried will be significantly higher than the L.E.I. scores for the control group.
3. There will be a significant difference between the L.E.I. scores for males and females.
4. During the 12 months prior to the final decision to legally terminate the marriage the divorced will experience a higher incidence of unpleasant to pleasant life events by weighted L.E.I. scores than the control group.
5. During the 12 months prior to the decision to remarry the remarrieds will have experienced higher incidence of unpleasant to pleasant life events by weighted L.E.I. scores than the control group.
6. During the 12 months prior to the final decision to legally terminate the marriage the divorced will experience a higher incidence of controlled to uncontrolled life events by weighted L.E.I. scores than the control group.
7. During the 12 months prior to the decision to remarry the remarrieds will have experienced a higher incidence of controlled to uncontrolled life events by weighted L.E.I. scores than the control group.

8. There will be no significant difference in the order in which the remarried and divorced rank the 10 given crises.
9. The recovery level scores for the remarried divorced and divorced will be equal to or exceed the precrisis level score.
10. The remarried will be significantly more interested in facing the ten given crises with a mate than will the formerly married.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Marriage is described as a complicated business. With its elaborate round of activity touching a number of different people in society, it becomes a significant rite of passage from adolescence to the adult world. However, the end result is not always marital bliss where they "live happily ever after."

They progress, in most cases, to varying stages of marital ennui, depending on the ability of the couple to adjust to reality; most common are (1) a lack-luster standoff, (2) a bitter business carried on for the children, church, or neighbors, or (3) separation and divorce, followed by another search to find the right person. (Cadwallader, p. 171)

The ending of a marital relationship may be far more difficult and painful than starting one.

The review of literature is divided into three sections: (a) divorce, (b) remarriage, and (c) crisis theory.

Divorce

Fullerton (1977) stated that

finding the reason why a marriage comes apart is like finding the cause of a war. Strained relations and growing expectations of hostility build a situation in which both sides are in a perpetually defensive mood, and any small incident can trigger open aggression. (p. 413)

Bernard (1970) suggested the following regarding divorce:

(a) one must learn to make the best of divorce because it is

going to be with us a long time; (b) divorce's emotional and social costs should be minimized and its benefits maximized; and (c) there is a pressing need to study more remarriages to gain additional information. To better understand divorce this section of the review of literature will deal with: an historical overview of divorce, definitions of divorce, variables studied in relation to divorce, causes of divorce, and family crisis.

Historical Overview of Divorce

Fullerton (1977) suggested that historically two major institutions have shaped Western attitudes toward divorce--the state and the church. In Western societies Roman women were the first to gain divorce. Seneca, according to Fullerton (1977), made the bitter comment that Roman women "counted the years by husbands." However, Roman women married more for personal reasons than for family alliances. Within the early Christian Church there was a reaction to the loose Romans of that day causing the early Christians to elevate celibacy, rather than marriage, as the supreme human state. However, the question of primary versus secondary motives may have been overlooked.

Fairchild and Wynn (1961) found that sexual asceticism and celibacy were mentioned in the early church but "on the whole, much of the New Testament showed a clear suspicion of celibacy" (p. 77). Paul was the major spokesman for celibacy,

not Jesus. Walker (1959) supported the statements of Fairchild and Wynn (1961) by indicating that voluntary celibacy and poverty were, therefore, deemed impossible, but they would confer special merit on those who practiced them. It was also inferred that celibacy was never really more than an idealized goal within the early church. The questions surrounding the marriage, divorce and remarriage of bishops and popes in the early years of the church plus the political intrigue behind the power structure of the papacy raised questions regarding the church's elevation of celibacy.

According to Kirkpatrick (1963)

for many centuries Christianity had waged war against the relatively free divorce practices of Romans and Germans. Yet divorce occurred regularly. It was allowed for adultery and for other grounds, with remarriage possible after the divorce. (p. 113)

Fullerton (1977) stated that prior to the middle of the sixteenth century divorce and marriage were considered private family matters, not social problems. "The concept of marriage as a sacrament and an indissoluble union was not developed until the middle of the sixteenth century" (p. 392). After the Council of Trent (1545-1563) marriage could not be dissolved but legal separation could be granted for cause.

Legal separations were permitted on grounds of adultery, spiritual adultery (heresy), and cruelty. Another provision made it possible to dissolve marriage by papal dispensation if a Christian spouse were abandoned by an infidel spouse. And marriage could be nullified because of the existence of some impediment, such as the fact that one of the spouses was under age when the marriage was contracted, or because of incest, bigamy, or a variety of other factors existing prior to the

marriage. If an impediment to the marriage were found by an ecclesiastical court, then a valid marriage had never existed and both parties were declared free to marry someone else. (p. 394)

Thus annulments provided a way around indissoluble marriages and "some impediment could usually be discovered if sufficient pressure were exerted on the ecclesiastical court" (p. 394). The Protestant Reformation played a crucial role in the history of divorce. It created a "value crisis in which divorce was one of the points of contention" (p. 394). However, the issue of divorce was more important in England (due to Henry VIII's need for an heir) than in other nations.

Kirkpatrick (1963) found that Luther seemed to believe that only adultery and desertion were adequate grounds for divorce but other Protestant leaders eventually added, in addition to adultery and desertion, cruelty and "refusal of conjugal duty" to the list of exceptions. Protestants apparently favored full divorce to separation as relief from marriage. The English clergyman and poet John Milton pressed the merits of divorce in England between 1643-1645. Except for a brief time under Cromwell it was not until 1857 that judicial divorce (divorce granted by a court of law rather than an act of Parliament) became available in England.

Paradoxically the Puritans were convinced that the state, rather than the church, should regulate moral behavior. Thus another facet of divorce began to develop in the colonies of New England. Fullerton (1977) indicated that

Mrs. Polly White was an early example of the government's involvement in divorce. She charged that her husband "went to bed with his boots on to annoy me and put dead chickens in my tea pot" (p. 395). Thus the seeds of "mental cruelty" as grounds for divorce were planted. Over the years divorce continued to be a controversial topic.

By the end of the nineteenth century there was a broad outline of divorce laws in the United States. Divorce had become a matter of the state, not federal, law. The Protestant position was accepted in every state except South Carolina (which abolished all laws pertaining to divorce in 1878 and did not grant it again until 1949). Scanzoni and Scanzoni (1976) suggested that the major arguments over divorce in the United States pitted individualism against familism. Proponents for familism argued that the yoke of marriage--when one cannot get out of the marriage--actually produces good mates. However, the proponents of individualism stressed the pragmatic or practical concern for the individual and eventually became the dominant position. Gordis (1967) reported that Judaism recognized that a union had lost its sanctity and its sanction once it became clear that the marriage had failed irremediably--the husband and the wife were no longer joined together by God in any meaningful sense. Society can do nothing to cover up this truth. Today divorce is regarded as a private matter in all 50 states. The state sees itself as an interested third party,

because an abandoned spouse and/or minor children often become public responsibility. Fullerton (1977) stated that today "the great crisis in the lives of a man and a woman is a routine matter for the courts" (p. 397).

Definitions of Divorce

Waller and Hill (1951) indicated that marriage is not a contract but a status. However, this social phenomenon is also entangled in legal theory which creates a situation where, in the eyes of the law, divorce is a redress granted to the injured party for some breach of the marriage mores. This means that certain offenses against the marriage mores are recognized as grounds for divorce. Waller and Hill (1951) and Winch (1971) distinguished between types of divorce: "a vinculo matrimonii," complete divorce; and "a mensa et thoro," separation from bed and board, which allows neither to remarry. When divorce occurs "the state through legal process, has declared that the marriage did exist but has been dissolved" (Koos, 1953, p. 329). Bohannan (1970) suggested that divorce "is a complex social phenomenon as well as a complex personal experience" (p. 29). Krantzler (1974) defined it as "an emotional crisis triggered by a sudden and unexpected loss" (p. 30). Kenkel (1977) reported that it was a social invention which could be a personal tragedy, devised to deal with marriage failure. "It recognizes that the marriage relationship is no longer binding and it

redefines the status, the relationships, and role obligations established at marriage" (p. 319). Fullerton (1977) defined divorce as "the dissolution of a valid marriage for a cause that occurred after the marriage was contracted" (p. 402). Three aspects of divorce are noted: legal, social, and personal.

Variables Studied in Relation to Divorce

Kessler (1975) stated there was no "typical" divorced person, because divorced individuals are people first and divorce's second. However, there are variables which have received considerable attention. The following variables have been researched at great length: age, gender, occupation, education, income, race, socioeconomic status, religion, children, remarriage, widowhood, second marriages, cross-national comparisons, trends, statistical information, divorce proneness, causes of divorce, and family crisis.

Causes of Divorce

Waller and Hill (1951, 1966) indicated that the historical conditions which could have once spelled the doom of divorce have, for the most part, passed. From theoretical positions it was noted that the moralistic theory condemned divorce as an unpardonable sin against marriage; the psychoanalytic theory relied upon "factors deeply ingrained in the personalities of the participants, deposited there from early experiences in their own parental families" (p. 509) as the cause.

Recently some educational sociologists have begun to view the causes of divorce as related to social change. Winch (1971) stated that when the functional aspects of the family break down or cease to be important there will be an increase in divorce. Skolnick (1973) suggested that divorce is increasing because society has been placing greater strains upon marriage than the institution can stand and that the higher rates may indicate a new pattern of marriage where people are demanding more happiness from marriage. Kenkel (1977) hypothesized that the causes of divorce are related to a costs-reward factor--when the costs of staying married outweigh the rewards, or when the rewards of divorce outweigh the costs, the couple begin moving toward divorce.

Fullerton (1977) and Vincent (1966) pointed to the emotional overloading of marriage as the cause of divorce with people demanding more emotional satisfaction from the marriage relationship today. When they do not find the satisfaction they divorce and begin looking for it again. Most researchers noted that whatever the causes of divorce may be, one cannot blame liberal divorce laws. Schulz (1976) indicated that divorce merely established the demise of the marital relationship in the eyes of the law. Bronfenbrenner (1974) was concerned about the heavy toll which the quality of the family relationship has had upon the children and pointed to the alienated youth in our society. In response to Bronfenbrenner's position Schulz (1976) stated that "yet even these

data suggested that it is the quality of the relationships, not their structure, that should be the focus of our concern" (p. 224). Holmes and Rahe (1967) and Cochrane and Robertson (1973) devised methods to measure stress and both ranked divorce as the second highest producer of stress.

Bernard (1970) reviewed earlier divorce research and concluded that two general approaches have competed with each other for acceptance regarding the causes of divorce. First, the psychologists have the most extreme form which is represented by Bergler who insisted that divorce was caused by people who were incapable of sustaining a marital relationship because it and remarriage

meant only the replaying of the old record on a different instrument. The only cure was psychoanalysis to remove the basic flaw which, in effect, required divorce. The alleged defect might range from a relatively manageable neurosis to a full-blown psychosis. (pp. 10-11)

Within this same framework a less extreme view, with the same effect, was represented by Terman et al. (1968). Their concept of marital aptitude indicated that "some people were quite normal, even above normal, in most respects, but they lacked the interests required for domesticity" (p. 11). "Both the Bergler and Terman approaches looked to the individual for causes--and found them" (p. 11).

The second approach has come from sociology and has been represented by Burgess and Cottrell who looked for the "causes in the relationship itself, in which might be called

the 'team factor'" (Terman, 1938, p. 11). Both schools of thought were concerned with the personalities of the subjects, and were looking for factors which made some people divorce-prone; they just looked for different causes. However, Bernard (1970) indicated that the data presented by both disciplines were defective because the research was based on people who were at the time in the status of divorce and only the failures of the remarried, not the successes, were reported. Recognizing that stress was present during divorce, she concluded that "no amount of research can wholly eliminate the emotional price exacted by divorce. All it can do is help lighten the load" (p. 12).

Bohannon (1970) stated that divorce was a complex personal and social phenomenon causing pain and bewilderment because society was not yet equipped to handle it well or because some parts of society would not even acknowledge it. He listed six stages or stations of divorce:

- (1) the emotional divorce, which centers around the problem of the deteriorating marriage;
- (2) the legal divorce, based on grounds;
- (3) the economic divorce, which deals with money and property;
- (4) the coparental divorce, which deals with custody, single-parent homes, and visitation;
- (5) the community divorce, surrounding the changes of friends and community that every divorcee experiences;
- and (6) the psychic divorce, with the problem of regaining individual autonomy. (pp. 29-30)

He concluded that the fundamental cause of divorce was that people

find themselves in situations in which they cannot become autonomous individuals and are unwilling to settle for a folie a deux. Divorcees are people who

have not achieved a good marriage--they are also people who would not settle for a bad one. (p. 54)

However, a shield of ignorance has been created by experts and laymen who have produced statements which merely masquerade as explanations but in reality block explanations that might otherwise help divorced people achieve a fuller life. In suggesting that the causes of divorce are not known, Bohannan (1970) asked three interesting questions: (a) Is it caused by maladjusted personalities as many schools of psychology would suggest? (b) Is it caused by social problems where one or both partners cannot settle down to a team approach called marriage as suggested by many sociologists? or (c) Is divorce caused by people who have not yet learned how to become autonomous individuals before they leap into matrimony or have used matrimony to avoid learning who they are as individuals?

Sprey (1972) presented a conflict framework for studying the family which challenged the older equilibrium theory. In the equilibrium theory conflict was seen as the villain, while in the conflict theory unresolved strife was the villain. Conflict theorists saw conflict as a normal part of the family while a stable equilibrium and harmony were not.

The family process is thus perceived as an ongoing peace-making effort which may result in a negotiated order, a state of affairs which remains, however, open to continuous re-negotiation. (p. 188)

Generally speaking, it appears that this society tends to teach young couples to avoid conflict in relationships rather

than how to manage it. Family behavior is explained in terms of cooperation, rather than adjustment, accommodation, or consensus.

Family crisis. Hill (1949) indicated that the modern family has experienced great tension because "the family is the bottleneck through which all troubles pass, no other association so reflects the strains and stresses of life" (p. viii). The postdivorce process is traumatic, with a considerable breakdown of one's values and standards, and adjustment is achieved at great cost to the personality. Similar findings were reported by Popenoe (1938) and Goode (1949, 1950). Problems are created by either internal or external factors. Goode (1956) believed that divorce created considerable personal disorganization. Bell (1971) interpreted Goode's (1956) findings to mean that a divorce did not just happen, but was the termination of a process that had developed over a long period of time. "Each new crisis of unpleasantness in the marriage may more negatively define the marital relationship" (p. 515). Wiseman (1975) depicted divorce as a process with potential for growth or grief but it is stress which has not been accommodated that throws the relationship out of balance and then "almost any stress can provoke a major marital crisis if the system is not flexible enough to accommodate to it" (p. 206). Scanzoni (1968) indicated that nearly half of the 110 people he interviewed refused to even talk about their divorce experiences because it was too painful.

Blood (1960), Cochrane and Robertson (1973), Holmes and Rahe (1967), Holmes and Masuda (1972), and Renne (1970, 1971) all raised interesting questions concerning the connection between unresolved stress and physical illness. Carter and Glick (1970) showed that the chances of suicide for divorced males was 4.2 times greater than for married males while it was 3.5 times greater for divorced females than married females. Death caused by cirrhosis of the liver--linked with alcoholism--also appeared to be a factor. Divorced white women had a 2.8 higher death rate from cirrhosis than married white women while divorced white males had a death rate 7.1 times higher than that for married white men.

Schulz (1976) indicated that each stage in the family's development "can be seen as presenting particularly critical tasks that must be satisfactorily completed or the family will suffer additional strains" (p. 202). Erikson (1968) pointed to the crisis of identity vs. role confusion as the major crisis faced in the adolescent years (ages 12-18). During this critical period the young person must find out who he is--in his own eyes and in the eyes of others. Having achieved a good identity allows him to move on to the next stage of development, which is young adulthood (ages 18-25), where he will want to find another person to share his life. But identity precedes intimacy and young adults who try to solve their identity crisis by getting married may frustrate

their search for identity and their need for intimacy.

Duvall (1967) suggested that children who have not been able to break, in a mature way, with their parents may also fail in their marriage.

Violence in the family has been a concern for a number of family-life researchers (Carter & Glick, 1970; Schulz, 1972, 1976; Wolfgang, 1956). Schultz (1972) indicated that police are often called to settle domestic troubles in the family because violence is an endorsed method for dealing with conflict in our society. One is more apt to be killed by a member of one's own family or close friend than by a stranger.

Heatherington, Cox, and Cox (1976) investigated the processes of disruption, coping, and adjustment by fathers to the crisis of divorce and found that during the first year following divorce that not one family was able to avoid distress or disruptive behavior following the divorce (at least one family member was affected). "Immediately following divorce the family system was in a state of disequilibrium" (p. 427). Stress was reflected in four areas: changes in parent-child relations, changes in personal life style, emotional distress, and attitudes toward one's self. "Disorganization and disrupted functioning seemed to peak at one year and be re-stabilizing by two years following divorce" (p. 427). Nye, Carlson, and Garret (1972) found that family size was a factor influencing family stress.

The model-size families of three or four which are also the size reported as the preferred by the largest proportion of Americans, emerged from the analysis in a consistently unfavorable position. (p. 205)

Barringer (1973) reported that divorced single parents felt their greatest problems were: dealing with the stigma of divorce, finding a new purpose in life, and managing emotional depression. Krantzler (1974) stated that "divorce is an emotional crisis triggered by a sudden and unexpected loss" (p. 30). Next to the death of a loved one, divorce is the most traumatic experience or crisis in a person's life.

Raschke (1974) showed that religious beliefs, higher occupational or educational status, or involvement in the formerly married subculture did not lower stress levels among the divorced, but it did help to keep busy socially.

Remarriage

Remarriage is divided into two sections: an historical overview and research on remarriage.

Historical Overview of Remarriage

Bernard (1956) found different cultural controls for remarriage ranging

. . . from the strict prohibition of remarriage, for either religious or romantic reasons, to mandatory remarriage, including, in some cultures, specific prescriptions as to whom the widowed shall marry. (p. 27)

However, "the barriers against the regulations concerning remarriage of the divorced among some people are less severe than those restricting remarriage of the widowed" (p. 29).

In many early societies remarriage of divorced people was probably allowed because women were too valuable as potential breeders to force them to remain unexposed to conception during their prime years. People subject to kin control in their first marriage were freer the second time to choose their own partner, but the kin group still had input (Bell, 1971). Kenkel (1977) reported that the ancient Hebrew society had restrictions on the right of a divorced person to remarry. Upon receiving a bill of divorce a woman could become the wife of another man but she could never remarry her first husband nor could she marry a priest. These are considered minor limitations but reveal that the status of a divorcee was lower than that of a married woman.

In colonial America, divorce was not the major reason for broken homes but the New England Puritans did have a fairly liberal attitude toward divorce, even though there were not many cases. The liberal attitude may have been due to the fact that a large number of men had to leave their wives in England to make a new start in the colonies. Nevertheless, the Middle Colonies and the South did not have the same liberal divorce laws found in New England (Bell, 1971).

Historically, much of the information regarding remarriage was tied to widowhood. In general, the regulations regarding divorced people and remarriage were punitive or repressive to discourage divorce--if it were hard to remarry then people would not quickly turn to divorce (Baber, 1953;

Bernard, 1956; Scanzoni & Scanzoni, 1976). Bernard (1956) indicated that in American culture religious, legal, and conventional controls were exercised over remarriage of the divorced. The religious restrictions were the most severe. Some religious groups would not allow their clergy to remarry divorced people. Remarriage for divorced Roman Catholics has been nearly impossible. The legal restrictions were less severe, but they were designed to discourage divorce. In the past, legal terminology was concerned with identifying guilty parties and making them wait longer to remarry than innocent parties. The conventional restrictions have also been severe, but it appears that society's attitude toward remarriage is more accepting today than it has ever been. Divorcees were not expected to make formal announcements of a coming marriage although this was permissible for widows. The double standard was at work in that a divorced man could be the guilty one, but if the woman he were marrying were single she could still send out the invitations.

Research on Remarriage

Traditionally, the remarried element of our population has been separated into remarried widowed and remarried divorced for research purposes (Bernard, 1956; Fullerton, 1977; Goode, 1956; Hunt, 1966; Kenkel, 1977; McCary, 1975; Scanzoni & Scanzoni, 1976; Schulz & Rodgers, 1975; Waller & Hill, 1951, 1966). Waller and Hill (1951, 1966) reported

the following for remarried divorced: (a) their remarriage rate has continued to climb; (b) both men and women have a tendency to remarry a previously married person; (c) divorced people seem to prefer remarriage with another divorced person; (d) the presence of children reduces a woman's chances for remarriage more than one-eighth; (e) divorced people are more apt to marry someone closer to their own age than widowed people; (f) there is not enough data to judge the success of second marriage; (g) divorced people are a poorer marital risk than widowed or single people; and (h) a woman's age can be a great obstacle to remarriage--the older she is the harder it is for her to find a mate.

A general overview of the following research variables will be included in this section: (a) pressures to remarry, (b) predicting success in remarriage, (c) length of time from first marriage to second, (d) age at time of remarriage, (e) gender and remarriage, and (f) causes of marital dissolution in second marriages.

Pressure to remarry. Goode (1956) found that there were social, legal, and ambiguous pressures upon the divorced to remarry (usually related to the marriage and divorce rates in different states). Fullerton (1977) reported that pressures to remarry were primarily based upon gender.

Predicting success in remarriage. As a general rule "one in four marriages end in divorce; two out of three divorced people remarry; more than nine out of ten of the

remarried stay married" (Wattenberg & Scammon, 1965, p. 192). The stability of second marriages has been openly debated by family life experts with noted researchers taking every conceivable position. Kenkel (1977) concluded that a successful remarriage was based upon personal (a sense of failure, feelings of inadequacy, fear of being incapable of a successful second marriage, accepting that they had made poor choices before, feelings of inferiority, and continuing to love the previous spouse) and situational factors (lack of support from friends, community, and/or relatives, financial problems, upset in family routines due to visiting privileges, and conflicts between two sets of children).

Krantzler (1974) noted that because three out of every four divorced people remarry it was assumed that they were looking for intimacy. However, "true intimacy is possible only when both partners are secure enough in their own autonomy that they know they can survive emotionally on their own" (p. 240). Any relationship must be able to deal with the normal abrasions of life--rejection, anger, resentment, and hostility. Glenn and Weaver (1977) suggested that there was a basic difference between marital stability and marital success in that "many stable marriages are not successful" (p. 331).

Length of time from first marriage to second. Glick (1957) indicated that divorced people do not wait as long to remarry as single or widowed individuals. Hunt (1966) found

that the person who wanted the divorce usually remarried first; younger people were more likely to remarry; wealthy people had little trouble finding another spouse; and women realized they were outnumbered in the market place. Kezar (1973) found that remarried men were older than women even though men spent much less time among the ranks of the single, divorced, or widowed people.

Age at time of remarriage. Kenkel (1977) reported that the median age for divorced men at the time of remarriage was about 35, and about 31 for women. Divorced women without children had only a slightly better chance of remarriage than divorced women with children when age was controlled (Glick, 1957). Cavan (1969) stated that most women marry at about age 20.3 and will remarry at age 31.9. Men married at about age 22.8 and remarried at age 36.

Gender and remarriage. Divorced men are more likely to remarry than divorced females and remarried men are more likely to try divorce again (Kenkel, 1977; LeMasters, 1973). One divorced woman in four remarries within four or five months of her divorce. Kenkel (1977) found that half the divorced women remarried within one year, and three out of four remarried within three years of the divorce. Waltenberg and Scammon (1965) reported that 97% of all divorced men and 96% of the women had been divorced only once suggesting that divorce and remarriage worked for those who had made a mistake and did not want to repeat it.

Causes of marital dissolution in second marriages.

Bernard (1956) pointed to marital status where one partner was widowed and the other divorced produced several areas of potential difficulty. Romance is desirable, but not as important the second time around (Steiner, 1969). Bell (1971) indicated that the following personality types tended to not remarry: the bitter, the frightened, the overdemanding, and the rejected.

Crisis Theory

The crisis material is divided into four sections: (a) an historical overview, (b) conceptualizations of crisis, (c) an overview of research, and (d) the crisis theory of Reuben Hill.

Historical Overview of Crisis

The historical overview of crisis involves three interacting yet independent avenues of development. Major concepts have evolved from different theoretical frameworks. The theoretical frameworks included in this review of literature are psychoanalytic, developmental, psycho-social, and stimulus-organism interaction. Two therapies for dealing with crises are also presented: Gestalt and behavior modification.

Psychoanalytic. The psychoanalytic framework is normally divided into two major schools of thought--classical psychoanalytic and neo-Freudian. Cameron (1963) noted that

much confusion and misinformation have resulted because researchers have not kept pace with Freud's theoretical growth and changes. Freud moved from a mechanistic view of the organism to an almost religious view. Eros and Thanatos (the only instincts Freud eventually recognized), known also as the sexual and aggressive drives, were formulated by him in such a manner

as to approach the age-old preoccupation with birth, death and resurrection, the ageless cycle of life in spring and summer, of decline and death in autumn and winter, and the miracle of rebirth with each return of spring. (p. 139)

The presence of such intensely opposite strivings in the human organism was capable of causing a number of conflicts and/or crises.

Getz, Wiesen, Sue, and Ayers (1974) indicated that classical psychoanalysis was based upon the concepts of intrapsychic conflicts, psychic determinism, and psychosexual stages. Intrapsychic conflicts are the result of the id, ego, and superego (constructs) being in conflict with one another. To deal with these conflicts defense mechanisms are called into action. The goal is to have a situation where none of the constructs (id, ego, or super-ego) has an excess or deficiency of power. Psychic determinism is the assumption that every act of human behavior has a cause or source in the life and experience of that person. Causality operates whether the individual is aware of it or not.

To understand adult behavior one looks to the events in one's infancy or childhood. The most significant determinants of present behavior are the "residues" of past experiences (learned responses), particularly those developed during the earliest years to reduce biological tensions (p. 2). Ford and Urban (1963) emphasized that Freud believed there was a reservoir of energy for everyone was responsible for initiating all behavior. "Events function as guiding influences, but they do not initiate behavior; they only serve to help mold it in certain directions" (p. 178).

Psychosexual development also plays a role in conflict or disorder. Although early sexual expression is not genital, it is expressed orally and anally. Fixations at these particular stages can reduce the amount of energy available to the ego and affect the individual's ability to cope with reality. According to Getz et al. (1974)

the more energy diverted to conflicts, the less available for the development of the genital stage (preceded by phallic and less significant latency periods), and the less complete the individual's psychosexual development. (p. 5)

Adult problems are symptomatic (or at least influenced) of the particular stage at which the individual was fixated. A number of terms have been used to describe Freud's theory, but the most popular are homeostatus or balance.

The impact of Freud's theory upon psychology cannot be ignored but his theory has experienced severe criticism. Getz et al. (1974) reminded the reader that many

psychoanalysts, including Adler, Jung, and Sullivan, disagreed with Freud regarding a basic biological drive. Over the years variations of Freud's work developed within the psychoanalytic framework and gave rise to a group called neo-Freudians. Morgan (1977) defined neo-Freudians as "followers of Freud who departed in various ways from Freud's theories, although maintaining some of his primary doctrines" (p. 10). Hall and Lindzey (1970) pointed to the later years of the nineteenth century when sociology and anthropology began to emerge as independent disciplines. "Gradually, these burgeoning social and cultural doctrines began to seep into psychology and psychoanalysis and to erode the nativistic and physicalistic foundations of the sciences" (p. 118). A number of Freud's followers began to disagree with him-- Adler, Horney, Fromm, Erikson, and Sullivan. This group began a movement sometimes called the social psychological theory of personality where the role of society and culture are emphasized in addition to childhood experiences as important aspects of one's personality.

Fromm (1956) pointed to obvious conflicts most people experience as actual attempts to avoid the real conflicts.

They are disagreements on minor or superficial matters which by their very nature do not lend themselves to clarification or solution. Real conflicts between two people, those which do not serve to cover up or to project, but which are experienced on the deep level of inner reality to which they belong, are not destructive. They lead to clarification, they produce a catharsis from which both persons emerge with more knowledge and more strength. (p. 104)

Erikson (1963) presented eight stages, each with specific psychosocial crises to be resolved. During these eight stages of man the culture, the school, the nation, and history shape and socialize the individual. He shifted the emphasis in personality from sexuality to identity indicating that it was more important because it dealt with the creative balance between what one feels one is and what others take him to be. "A person who has achieved ego identity can stand on his own feet without emotional crutches and without repudiating his past" (p. 417) according to Morgan (1977). The psychosocial stages are as follows: the first is birth through the first year and involves the learning of trust or mistrust by the infant; the second carries through the second year and helps to determine whether shame and doubt or autonomy will develop; the third takes place during the years three to five when the child must deal with industry or inferiority; the fifth is adolescence during which the young person must identify and repudiate certain behaviors or experience identity diffusion; the sixth is early adulthood in which intimacy and solidarity or isolation will be encountered; the seventh is young and middle adulthood during which the psychosocial crises are generativity or self-absorption; the eighth is later adulthood when one encounters integrity or despair. Erikson's theory is important because "it offers an explanation of the individual's social development as a result of his encounter with

his social environment" (p. 14). According to Rapoport (1970), Erikson focused on the epigenesis of the ego and on the theory of reality relationships. "Epigenetic development is characterized by an orderly sequence of development at particular stages, each depending upon the other for successful completion" (p. 14). Erikson (1963) believed adolescence was a particularly crisis-laden time of life. In his theoretical work he

integrated the biological, cultural, and self-deterministic points of view in the eight stages of man's development and broadened the scope of traditional psychotherapy with his theoretical formulations concerning identity and identity crises. (p. 4)

His work is basic for dealing with maturational crises and he has prompted serious consideration regarding man's adaptation to his current environmental dilemma. Datan and Ginsberg (1975) suggested that Erikson was one of the first modern theorists to emphasize the codetermination of crises by inner-biological and cultural-sociological forces that initiate distinct periods in adult life.

Riegel (1975) reported that the conflict between Western and Eastern conceptions of crisis goes deeper than positive or negative interpretations. It was suggested that Erikson's idea of bringing sociological and biological forces together as codeterminates of crisis would be the way of the future because it eliminated the pathological and fatalistic aspects by defining crises in a constructive sense as the "knots" which tie structured changes together

on four basic levels: the biological, psychological, cultural, and physical. Each level provides opportunities for change and offers meaning to change.

Developmental. When referring to developmental theory one must differentiate between the fields of psychology and sociology. Developmental psychology has been defined as

the concern with the processes by which early potentialities of the individual interact with later experience to form the pattern of mature behavior; it includes child psychology, adolescent psychology, and geriatrics. (Morgan, 1977)

Sociology added the concept of development in social organization. Hill (1968) indicated that the family developmental approach not only emphasized the time dimension neglected by other conceptual frameworks dealing with the family, but also focused on the family as a small group in a common household. The family was described in stages of the family life cycle with movement from one stage to another becoming a possible crisis. Datan and Ginsberg (1975) called the expected change from one developmental stage to another "normative crises," thus implying that development itself is a crisis but it is to be expected and therefore is not defeating.

The developmental approach has been noted for being eclectic in that it has borrowed from: rural sociology--the concept of stages in the family life cycle; child psychology and human development--concepts of developmental needs and tasks; sociology involved with professions--the concepts of career; the structure-function and interactional schools--the

concepts of position, role, and norms as related to age, sex roles and changing family size.

Psycho-social. A number of other psycho-social researchers have also contributed to crisis theory. Their work is presented for two reasons: (a) so the reader can get a more accurate chronological view of the development of crisis theory; and (b) because of their emphasis upon the "stages" in a crisis and their emphasis upon "equilibrium."

Lindemann, Vaughn, and McGinnis (1955) were concerned with the maintenance of good mental health and the prevention of emotional disorganization at the individual and community level. Lindemann (1944) developed the stages of grief. He postulated that for each situation involving emotional strain, stress would be experienced, and a series of adaptive mechanisms would occur that could lead either to mastery of the new situation or to failure with more or less lasting impairment to function.

Although such situations create stress for all people who are exposed to them, they become crises for those individuals who by personality, previous experience, or other factors in the present situation are especially vulnerable to this stress and whose emotional resources are taxed beyond their usual resources.
(p. 5)

His theoretical frame of reference led to the development of crisis intervention techniques, and in 1946, he and Caplan established a community-wide project of mental health in the Harvard area called the Wellesley Project.

Caplan (1961) based mental health on the state of the ego, how mature it was, and the quality of its structure. Assessment of the ego's state depended upon the following:

(1) the capacity of the person to withstand stress and anxiety and to maintain ego equilibrium, (2) the degree of reality recognized and faced in solving problems, and (3) the repertoire of effective coping mechanisms employable by the person in maintaining a balance in his psychobiosocial field. (p. 5)

Caplan said crisis upsets the individual's emotional equilibrium and the goal was to return to or maintain a state of equilibrium. Hence, the term "balance theory" is often used to express this process. The individual must either solve the problem or adapt to nonsolution. "In either case a new state of equilibrium will develop, sometimes better and sometimes worse insofar as positive mental health is concerned" (p. 5). During the period of emotional upset there is a rise in inner tension, signs of anxiety, and disorganization of function. Caplan called this a crisis, stating that "the outcome is governed by the kind of interaction which takes place during that period between the individual and the key figures in his emotional milieu" (p. 5).

Caplan (1964a) described crisis as having four distinct phases. The first phase involved the individual's perceiving that a crisis is taking place but the normal coping mechanisms are not working, thus the tension begins to build and may be associated with feelings of discomfort or strain. The second phase involves the rising tension and decreasing

organization. As one becomes more upset he/she may experience feelings of anxiety, guilt, shame, or fear depending upon the situation. During this phase one is in a state of flux and is more suggestible and thus more susceptible to radical change than during any other phase. This is a time when one is dependent and in need of support, reassurance, and guidance. During the third phase the rising tension passes a threshold announcing an emergency situation. All internal and external resources are mobilized for action and a number of novel solutions may be attempted. This may result in solving the problem or a maladaptive method to temporarily bring some stability. The fourth phase involves major disorganization.

Caplan developed the concept of crisis periods. Brandon (1970) suggested that this concept may have come from novelists and dramatists who dwelt upon the idea of crisis as a turning point in life development--in the face of adversity the hero rises to the occasion with unexpected strengths and talents. Many novels and movies have shown the hero during wartime coming face to face with a long-time fear and then moving on to growth and new strength of personality, increased self-reliance, and greater leadership.

Both Hill (1951) and Caplan (1961) suggested that a crisis situation for one individual may not be a crisis for another and a crisis can be either a positive or negative experience. Caplan (1964b) also noted that people were more open to help when they were having a crisis.

Brandon (1970) described Caplan's work as a synthesis (with his colleagues at Harvard) derived from observations in the field of sociology, social psychology, case work and ego psychology which incorporated general psychiatric and preventive medical principles. He also credited Caplan as the first to develop a crisis theory. Parad (1970), who was Caplan's co-worker, suggested that Caplan was able to weave together the following strands of theory regarding the state of crisis: psychoanalytic ego psychology, social system and role concepts, and social work practice propositions. Caplan's work implied that therapeutic interruption was beneficial during a crisis; individuals should understand their reactions when in a crisis; and individuals need support from others during a time of crisis. Rapoport (1970), a student of Caplan's and later a co-worker, reported that the nature of stress involved an upset in a steady state and a stressful event created a problem.

Parad (1970) suggested that there was a difference between a situational or accidental crisis (a stressful external event) and a normal-phase-of-development or maturational crisis. These normal-developmental-crises are generally viewed as periods of marked physical, psychological, and social change "characterized by common disturbances in thought and feeling" (p. 73).

Fundamental to understanding these maturational crises are Freud's theory of psychosexual development and Erikson's formulation of the eight stages in the human life cycle, from infancy to senescence. (p. 73)

Examples of maturational crises include marriage, pregnancy, parenthood, the birth of a premature baby, the child's entry into school, the impact of hospitalization on a child, puberty, adjustment to college, young adulthood, the climacteric, retirement, bereavement, and senescence. Parad's ideas are very similar to Caplan's because of their close association over the years.

Using the concept of equilibrium, Parkes (1971) stated that "major changes in life space which are lasting in their effects, which take place over a relatively short period of time and which affect large areas of the assumptive world" (p. 103) are called psycho-social transitions. Hospitals, prisons, service camps, and certain types of emergency accommodations are institutions used to facilitate the process of psycho-social transitions.

Most changes in life space tend to affect one area of the assumptive world to a greater extent than others. We consider events producing change in personal relationships, familiar environment, possessions, physical and mental capacities, roles and status. Changes in personal relationships are, perhaps, the area of greatest interest. They change at each stage of the life cycle, on going to school, leaving school, marrying, having children, on the marriage of children and, in over half of those who marry, on the loss by death, separation or divorce of the spouse. (p. 106)

An example of marital breakdown is given. Two factors work against marriage. First there is a discrepancy between the assumptive worlds (the only worlds one knows) of the husband and wife; the second is a determined effort by one partner to persuade the other to change, which is interpreted by the

other as a threat to his or her identity. In too many cases it is easier to "scrap" the marriage than for both partners to change their assumptive worlds in a way that allows both to tolerate the relationship. "Either way the transition involves giving up one set of assumptions about the world and establishing another; grief is the inevitable consequence" (p. 107).

Stimulus-organism. Stimulus-organism interaction is not a basic theory but refers to the interaction between the organism and the stimulus as they relate to stress. For example, Appley and Trumbull (1967) reported that the concept of stress was first introduced into the life sciences by Selye, an endocrinologist, in 1936. "The use of the term in psychological research had an accelerated growth curve following Selye's invited address to the American Psychological Association in 1955" (p. 1). This interest in the physiological reaction of the body to stress developed because of the importance of physiological variables as independent measurable indicators of a stressed organism. The concept of stress has been widened and even used in areas where no physiological or endocrine factors were subject to study. Appley and Trumbull (1967) listed three apparent reasons for the popularity of the term as defined by Selye: (a) a bandwagon effect; (b) the genuine interest which has surfaced regarding stress phenomena related to military and space work; and (c) the possibility of

establishing links between clinical, psychosomatic, and various types of traditional experimental research.

Selye (1956, 1967) used the term "systemic stress" to indicate that even though there were differences between disease syndromes and stress-caused syndromes there were also a great many features which they shared.

Among other things . . . stress is not necessarily the result of damage but can be caused by physiological function and . . . it is not merely the result of a nonspecific action but also comprises the defenses against it. (p. 626)

Systemic stress was "manifested by a General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS)" (p. 3). The first stage of this syndrome, or the alarm reaction, included an initial shock phase

(in which resistance is lowered) and a counter-shock phase (in which defensive mechanisms become active). A second stage of resistance follows, during which maximum adaptation occurs. Should the stressor persist, however--or the defensive reaction prove ineffective--a stage of exhaustion is reached in which adaptive mechanisms collapse. (p. 33)

Stimulus was a term used to describe situations characterized as new, intense, rapidly changing, sudden or unexpected, including (but not requiring) approach to the upper levels of tolerability. A stimulus deficit could also produce stress, indicating the body's need for some stimulation. Response indicated the presence of emotional activity which had been used *ex post facto* to note the existence of stress. This included anxiety, tension, upsets, tremors, stuttering, exaggerated speech characteristics, and loss of sphincter control.

In addition to observable symptoms of emotionality there was also the existence of a stress state within the organism which could be noted by changes in blood and other physiological reactions. Appley and Trumbull (1967) cited the following regarding Selye's crisis work: "With the exception of extreme and sudden life-threatening situations, it is reasonable to say that no stimulus is a stressor to all individuals exposed to it" (p. 7).

Selye stated in a private interview with Cherry (1978) that not only was a certain amount of stress essential to well being, but there were certain kinds of stress--that he called "eustress"--which are good for people.

One striking thing we've discovered is that there are two main types of human beings: "racehorses," who thrive on stress, and are happy with a vigorous, fast-paced lifestyle; and "turtles," who in order to be happy require peace, quiet, and a generally tranquil environment--something that would frustrate and bore most racehorse types. (p. 60)

Three suggestions were made for dealing more adequately with stress: (a) each person should seek his own stress level, to decide whether he is a racehorse or a turtle and to live his life accordingly; (b) each person should select goals and make sure they are his own--not something imposed upon him by a domineering adult; and (c) each person should have a healthy balance of altruistic egoism (looking out for oneself by being necessary to others and by earning the good will of others) and working at a task one feels is useful.

Following in the same physiological pattern as Selye, Lazarus (1966) indicated that stress appeared to have a tremendous influence on behavior, but to date there was

little coherence in the theory and research that annually emanates from technical books and journals dealing with stress. There is no agreement regarding terminology, definitions, or overall theory. (p. 2)

He called for the identification of internal and external conditions of stress reactions, and for an investigation of the "intervening structures and processes which determine when and in what form the stress reactions will occur"

(p. 13).

Gestalt. Perls, Hefferline, and Goodman (1965) defined Gestalt therapy as the process of getting in touch with one's self rather than concentrating on the outcome. Like Freudian theory, Gestalt theory according to Getz et al. (1974) assumes that man often experiences unresolved conflicts which cause tension and reduce one's energy which is needed for self-growth. When an individual blocks conflicts and tensions, leaving unfinished business, the result is repetitious behaviors, game playing, and rigidity, but the unfinished business refuses to be left undone. Individuals are encouraged to listen to what their bodies are telling them and how they feel about what is going on rather than looking for answers in their childhood experiences. There is no emphasis upon "why" one behaves the way he does. The therapist is not detached and objective but actively involved with the client.

Behavior modification. Wolpe (1969) and Bandura (1969) suggested that behavior modification was based upon the assumption that maladaptive behaviors are learned and maintained in accordance with the principles of conditioning. Methods used to change behavior include extinction, counter-conditioning, rewards, aversive conditioning, desensitization, and modeling. Lewinsohn (1973) found that little has been written about behavior modification approaches with crisis clients.

Conceptualizations of Crisis

When surveying crisis literature Schulberg and Sheldon (1968) stated that

one cannot help but be struck by the arbitrary, varying and even elusive qualities currently associated with the term. . . . It . . . remains for the most part diffident in definition, popular in usage and ambiguous in value. (p. 553)

This problem is compounded by the fact that the terms crisis, stress, and psychiatric emergency are often used interchangeably.

Crisis. The word crisis is derived from the Greek meaning "a turning point" but every turning point in one's life is not a crisis. Getz, Weisen, Sue, and Ayers (1974) emphasized that breadth is a problem in defining crisis. If it is interpreted strictly, too few people will be served; if it is interpreted too liberally, crisis counseling would be used in a number of unwarranted cases.

Datan and Ginsberg (1975) indicated that "crises are necessary steps in the advancement of knowledge" (p. 123). The Western idea of crisis tends to be negative while in Eastern thought it is positive.

Although the authors did not elaborate on theory or definition they concluded that in the constructive sense crises are "the knots that tie together structured changes on the biological, psychological, cultural, and physical levels; they are the opportunities for change, and provide meaning to change" (p. 125). Several definitions of crisis are presented here.

Hill (1951) defined crisis as any event which places the family under pressure but demands new problem-solving techniques because previously learned methods will not work. The disruptive effect of the event helps determine whether or not it is a crisis.

Parad and Caplan (1970) suggested that a definition of crisis should have a three-dimensional aspect: looking at the intrapersonal, interpersonal, and suprapersonal (or transactional) processes. Later, Caplan (1961) referred to crisis as a state "provoked when a person faces an obstacle to important life goals that is, for a time, insurmountable through the utilization of customary methods of problem solving" (p. 17). A crisis develops when a person faces a problem which he cannot solve. There is a rise in inner tension, signs of anxiety, and inability to function in extended periods of emotional upset.

To Rapoport (1962) the terms crisis and stress were synonymous and she tried to bring some order out of the confusion. Crisis was defined as an upset in a steady state but with growth-promoting potential. What was a hazard for one person would not always be a crisis to another.

Miller (1963) recognized that there were too many definitions for crisis and decided to pull together the following common denominators:

1. The time factor

There is agreement that it is acute rather than chronic and ranges from very brief periods of time to longer periods which are not yet clearly defined. A special case is the treatment by Caplan in which the crisis situation exists from a minimum of about a week to a maximum of six to eight weeks.

2. Marked changes in behavior

The individual or group is obviously less effective than usual. Activity is related to an attempt to discharge inner tensions, there are successive trial and error abortive attempts to solve the problems without apparent success, constructive behavior decreases and frustration mounts. It is probable that a great amount of scapegoating and excuse-giving occurs in this situation.

3. Subjective aspects

The person experiences feelings of helplessness and ineffectiveness in the face of what appears to be insoluble problems. There is a perception of threat or danger to important life goals of the individual and this is accompanied frequently by anxiety, fear, guilt or defensive reactions.

4. Relativistic aspects

Although there are common crisis situations, the individual's perception of threat and of a crisis is unique to him and there is some recognition that what constitutes a crisis for one individual or group does not constitute it for another group.

5. Organismic tension

The person in crisis will experience generalized physical tension which may be expressed in a variety of symptoms including those commonly associated with anxiety. These reactions may be immediate and temporary or they may constitute a long term adjustment to the crisis situation itself. (pp. 195-201)

Bloom (1970) called attention to the fact that work in the area of crisis was still exploratory and because of the many new concepts emerging it would be wise to keep the definition general.

Jackson (1974) added another dimension to the definition of crisis by applying Erikson's eight developmental stages. He referred to four types of crisis: (a) the physiology of crisis involves one's behavior in crisis; (b) the psychology of crisis involves the normal range of crises and is related to the individual's ability to cope adequately with stress; (c) the sociology of crisis is seen as the external aspects caused by people who live and work nearby and/or influence other's lives; and (d) the anthropology of crisis is deeper than social--when interracial and interreligious marriages stir up emotional responses out of all proportion to the situation, one is seeing the impact of primitive and cultural anthropology emerging.

Lazarus (1966) suggested that Miller (1963) seemed to emphasize the response side of crisis without giving much attention to the antecedents. He said that a

crisis is evidently either a very severe period of threat beyond the capacities of the person to readily master, or a combination of threats and frustrating confrontations that pile up, so to speak, and make this period in the individual's life (or group's) especially critical. (p. 408)

Crisis suggests the idea of a critical epoch, life episode, or period. Rather than use the term crisis, Lazarus suggested the term "threat" because it was more manageable, simpler, permitted one to easily identify crucial antecedents and consequent conditions and the intervening processes. The problem with the term crisis is that it contains different types of threats simultaneously. Both the coping processes and the analyses of each threat must be studied for their respective influence.

Stress. Appley and Trumbull (1967) indicated that the concept of stress was first introduced into the life sciences by endocrinologist Selye in 1936 and was elaborated upon in successive papers, leading to a full theoretical statement in book form in 1950. The concept of stress was based upon work by Hippocrates, Bernard, Herrick, and Cannon which led Selye to report on systemic stress. Stress referred to the direct physical assaults by noxious stimuli on tissue systems. Equilibration or restoration was a part of regulation as the body attempted to adjust to the environment. Appley and Trumbull (1967) indicated that psychological stress involved stimulus/response aspects while the existence of a stress state "within" the organism can be observed by

physical reactions. They also cited research by Selye and Lazarus which provided information necessary for identifying "patterns of stimulus-organism interaction to understand why stress occurs in exposed organisms and not in others" (p. 7).

Lazarus (1966) suggested that the word "stress" probably originated in the field of engineering, but in laymen's circles stress usually referred to a special force. A companion word was "strain." Stress referred to an external agent while strain was the result of the effect. This partially explained the common usage in psychology and in physiology. Lazarus also referred to Grinker and Spiegel's Men Under Stress (1945) in which stress was referred to as some unusual condition or demand of life dealing with the rigors of combat or dangers in life. Continuing to search for an understanding of the term, Lazarus cited Janis (1958) who classified the psychological threat of surgery as "stress."

Appley and Trumbull (1967) defined stress as the state of an organism in which he perceived that his well-being (or integrity) was endangered so he diverted all his energies to its protection. With the exception of extreme and sudden life-threatening situations, it seemed reasonable to say that no one stimulus was a stressor to all individuals.

Yusin (1974) defined the following terms: (a) equilibrium occurs when the individual adapts to his environment; and (b) stress is any situation which disrupts the equilibrium. There are two types of stresses--external and internal.

External stresses are real situations existing in the environment that disrupt the equilibrium or balance; while "internal stresses are based on distorted perceptions of the environment that disrupt homeostatis" (p. 410).

Overview of Crisis Research

The research presented in this section does not fall into systematic categories--possibly due to the relative newness of the field and the varied interests of the researchers.

Ruff and Korchin (1967) suggested that part of the problem regarding crisis research involved a suitable experimental setting where field research and laboratory research have equal value. The laboratory findings must also be applicable to the psychiatric patient. In a study involving Mercury astronauts, the most striking finding was that individuals with repeated success in accomplishing hazardous duties had minimal evidence of disruptive stress behavior because of the highly organized training and efficient patterns of behavior.

Pepitone (1967) investigated the stress found in large corporate organizations. He reported that those who experienced the most stress were not those at the top of the structure, but in junior positions.

Lazarus and Averill (1972) reported that the degree of stress experienced by the individual varied significantly according to the length of time involved. Under laboratory

conditions subjects were threatened with a painful electric shock with six anticipation intervals: 5 seconds, 30 seconds, 1 minute, 3 minutes, and 20 minutes. They found that with only 5 seconds there was very little chance for the subjects to comprehend fully what was about to happen, so the level of stress was small. With the thirty-second to one-minute time span there was enough time for the subjects to grasp the significance of the threat, but not enough time to generate effective coping strategies. "Ego-failure and panic-like reactions were the result" (p. 272). During the three- to five-minute appraisal time the subjects were better able to develop self-assuring coping responses, and therefore displayed less stress. Then why did the stress level rise again with the twenty-minute period? It may have had something to do with having to wait for the shock,

there was perhaps increasing discomfort in being seated and confined with nothing to do for so long; alternatively, the long time to wait may have served as an ominous cue that something important, perhaps quite painful was to happen. (p. 272)

in which case reassuring cognitions may have had time to be rejected. This information does help one see a paradigm for the study of anxiety and related emotions in relationship to the variable of anticipation.

Brady (1958) found that it was not the actual electric shock which produced ulcers in monkeys but that the ulcers developed during the six-hour rest period as a reaction to stress. Carruth's study of stress revealed that today's

college students, women in particular, have experienced developmental frustrations and increasingly severe crises at the college and postcollege levels.

Lieberman (1975) studied the crisis of aging by examining the personality traits of the elderly who survived the crisis of entering a nursing home. He reported that the survivors were "aggressive, irritating, narcissistic, and demanding" (p. 155); they could introspect and had high levels of hope. The idea of growing old gracefully may be more comforting to the young than to the old. Older people characterized as "good guys" were not likely to survive the crisis of environmental change. The elderly who were able to support consistent and coherent self-images remained "intact in the face of radical environmental change despite major changes in the social system sources of evidence normally supportive of their self-images" (p. 156).

Schlegel (1975) indicated that Hopi females encountered stress in adolescence as they underwent socialization for their role in that culture. The result of this study was the discovery that "normal or situational stress is built into the life-cycle plan, times of stress being determined by culturally determined patterns and the exigencies of social life" (p. 215). Albrecht and Gift (1975) suggested that adults are often ill-prepared for change. Prior experiences do not prepare one to deal with adult life crises, but the adult socialization process does. Much of current

socialization is based upon the anticipation of fear or failure which blocks one from achieving his goals.

Pelletier (1977) found that stress-induced disorders have replaced infectious disease as the most common problem of people in the postindustrial nations.

During recent years, four disorders--heart disease, cancer, arthritis, and respiratory diseases such as bronchitis--have become so prominent in the clinics of the United States, Western Europe, and Japan that they are known as "the afflictions of civilization". (p. 35)

Poor diet, pollution, and most importantly, increased stress in modern society seem to be the cause. The effect of the relentless demands of the clock can be devastating. "Our bodies start in late adolescence to accumulate the effects of stress that will surface as disorders when we are in our 40s and 50s" (p. 35). Not all stress is bad, but pathological stress appears to be the enemy. When the source of one's stress is ambiguous, prolonged, or coming from a number of different sources at the same time, the person's body does not recover as rapidly. Pathological stress occurs when the person's body reacts as though it were threatened long after the actual threat has ended. Although the precise link between stress and physical symptoms is not known it is known that stress can alter brainwave activity, endocrine and immunological balance, blood supply and pressure, respiration rate and pattern, and digestive processes. It is also known that

different types of people are predisposed to develop different medical problems when they are under stress. For example, people prone to be impatient, aggressive, extremely goal-oriented, ambitious, and who are unable to relax--what researchers call "Type-A behavior"--are high risks to become victims of heart disease. Researchers have also found unique personality profiles connected with such diseases as migraine and tension headaches, asthma, colitis, and some types of backache. (p. 35)

Any decision that leads to the development of disease due to stress has been made at an unconscious level. It appears that psychosomatic symptoms often arise when a person must choose between two equally unacceptable alternatives, and cannot openly express the dilemma; therefore, a medical symptom may be a useful signal for a needed change in other parts of the individual's life. Recognizing that for the most part physicians treat the body, psychologists and psychiatrists deal with the mind, and the clergy attend to the soul, Pellestier (1977) called for a holistic approach which sees a person physically, psychologically, and spiritually in order to gain as full an understanding of his life as possible. The current medical model explains disease as infection, but when

we get sick, it is the outcome of the complex interaction of social factors, physical and psychological stress, and our inability to adapt to these pressures. . . . All illness signals excessive strain of some sort. (p. 40)

In holistic medicine prevention of needless stress is the keystone. Biofeedback and meditative techniques can help people become more sensitive to stress, but there are times

when one can be under stress and not really be aware of it. "Meditation brings about a general relaxation of the brain and body; biofeedback gives the person control of specific parts, such as blood pressure, heart rate, or brain-waves" (p. 82). Staying healthy involves a lot more than going to a doctor when one becomes ill.

How we live--including what we eat, our family life, our working day, and many other large and small details of our routine--are critically important in keeping us healthy or making us ill. (p. 83)

Mehrabian (1976) noted that the body's safety switch is physical tiredness, but when other defense mechanisms kick in and ultimately override it--serious physical damage can occur. The body can literally sabotage itself to get out of an environment that is causing intolerably high and frequent levels of arousal. Holmes and Rahe (1967) were convinced that there was a relationship between stress/crisis and physical illness.

Holmes and Masuda (1972) reported that the Social-Readjustment Rating (SRE) Scale has been used in the following areas of research: tuberculosis, psychosomatic illnesses, athletic injuries, and with medical students and United States servicemen. The point of this research was not to discover different causes for different diseases. "The fact found by these studies is that, although the reported illnesses do have their own special causes, 'something else' helps cause them" (p. 106). Whatever that "something else"

was, it was not a germ. It was something that happened in conjunction with major life crises. The hypothesis was that there was no specific life event which appeared to be linked to a particular disease, but it was the total impact of the life events which was significant. "The important point was the sum--the total impact of life events, the coping behavior that was required" (p. 106). The result of the investigation was that human beings do get sick when they have to cope with many of the events of normal living. When people struggle with overwhelming life crises, they tend to get more serious diseases. "The explanation, we suspect, is that the activity of coping can lower resistance to disease, particularly when one's coping techniques are faulty, when they lack relevance to the type of problems to be solved" (p. 106). "When life is too hectic, and when coping attempts fail, illness is the unhappy result" (p. 106).

Kezar (1973) found that remarried subjects were significantly more interested in facing crises with a mate than were the formerly married. Remarried and formerly married subjects ranked the ten precipitating crises similarly which inferred that the subjects did not agree with the early statement by other theorists (Caplan, 1960, 1961; Hill, 1949; McGee, 1974; Parad, 1970; Parks, 1971; Selye, 1967; Waller & Hill, 1951, 1966) that what is a crisis for one person will not be a crisis for another. When looking at different age levels in the 35-39 age group "the formerly married

experienced over twice as many crises as the remarried" (p. 65); the formerly married divorced checked the largest number of crises, followed by the remarried widowed, remarried divorced, and formerly married widowed.

Hill's Theory of Crisis

Hill presented one of the early theories on crisis in 1949. The family was viewed from two perspectives: (a) family disorganization which included all situations in which there was a break in the configuration of the family due to the loss of one or more members; and (b) the family as an interacting unity.

The American family had not escaped the tensions, frustrations and stresses which beset individuals in our society. How does the family deal with these problems? Hill (1951) defined crisis as any event which places the family under pressure but demands new problem-solving techniques because previously learned methods will not work. The disruptive effect of the event helps determine whether or not it is a crisis.

Over the years researchers have generally placed family crises into three classifications: (a) by the source (does it come from outside the family or from within), (b) by effects upon the family configuration (whether it be the loss of a member, an addition of an unprepared-for member, the loss of family morale and unity, or all three), and (c) by the type of event the family is experiencing.

In dealing with different types of disrupting events, Hill turned to studies by Burgess (1947) for classifications of family crises that threatened to disrupt the family. Burgess (1947) used the following categories for disrupting events: (a) sudden changes of status, (b) conflict among family members in the conception of their roles, and (c) loss of family members by departure, desertion, divorce, or death. He was quick to point out that a crisis can be created by a positive event as well as a negative one. Hill also built upon the work of Koos (1946) who indicated that in the middle-class family the relationships between adolescents and parents can be a point of crisis.

From life experiences Hill noticed that some families would become paralyzed in a certain situation while other families seemed never to break stride in facing the same situation. The basic question was "why?" Hill (1949) attempted to answer the question with the mathematical formula:

A (the event) interacting with B (the family's crisis-meeting resources) interacting with C (the definition the family makes of the event) produces X (the crisis). (p. 460)

A + B + C determines if there is an X. Broken into more simplistic terms this mathematical formula for determining what was or was not a crisis depended upon the following: Factor A referred to the hardship or situation. Hardship was defined as "those aspects of a crisis-precipitating event

which demand adjustments in terms of resources which the event itself has temporarily paralyzed or made unavailable" (p. 460). Factor B dealt with the crisis-meeting resources of the family. At this point Hill relied upon the work of Angell (1936) who used two concepts to explain the term "crisis-meeting resources." Those families which were integrated and could adapt were most capable of avoiding a crisis. By "family integration" he meant all the things which hold a family together. By "adaptability" he referred to the family's ability to adjust and change course, their "drive" for self-preservation, and their determination not to buckle under the pressure of the situation. Factor C in the mathematical equation dealt with the definition the family gives the event. However, "no crisis-precipitating event is the same for any given family; . . ." (p. 460). Pressure was brought upon the family to define the situation from three perspectives: the outside observer, the community, and the family. Thus one could see three possible definitions for a situation.

Why then did some families seem to be crisis prone? There were three factors to consider: (a) the stressor or hardship; (b) the family's crisis-meeting resources; and (c) the definitions the family gave to what happened or was happening. At this point the term "family inadequacy" was important. It was presented by Koos and Fulcomer (1949) to identify the following factors:

(1) conflicting interpersonal relationships, (2) conflicting family roles, (3) cultural divergencies between husband and wife, (4) conflict in aspirations, (5) class-membership pressure and (6) economic pressures. (p. 462)

They depicted these interacting forces in a polygon which is reproduced as Figure 1. Koos and Fulcomer (1949) explained the polygon in the following manner:

There is sometimes an initial cause which tends to create tensions in other areas of family life, which in turn become conflicts themselves. . . . For example, cultural disparity may cause a lack of sexual satisfaction because of the differing ideas and standards of sex behavior, which in turn may lead to suspicion of the mate and lack of cooperation as breadwinner or homemaker, which in turn may create conflicting roles in the family and draw individual members into new positions of responsibility in the family at the expense of other members, all of which so weaken the affectional relationships and integration of the family as to render it unable to meet even the simple departure from its ordinary life patterns; the result, when an out-of-the ordinary event occurs, it is a crisis. (p. 463)

Adjusting to a crisis could involve all the members of the family. The first dimension of adjustment had three parts. It involved the individual, the situation, and the person's adjustment to the situation.

The second dimension involves more properly dyadic interaction (it may be an engaged pair, a married pair, a business partnership, or merely roommates), a crisis situation involving the pair, and the adjustment to that situation as a pair. (p. 463)

It is important to note that this dimension was more complex than the first which involved only one person; now there had to be agreement between two people. The third dimension

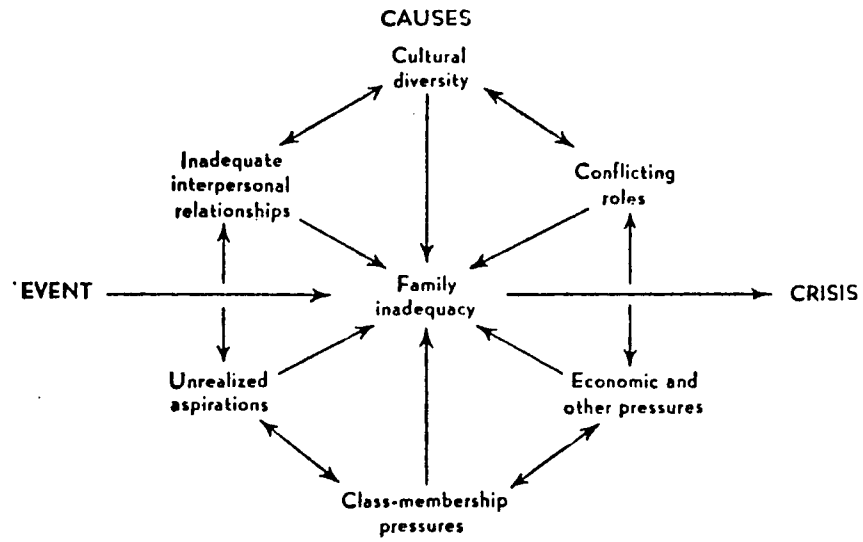


Figure 1. Hill's polygon indicating causes of family inadequacies.

expanded the number of interpersonal relationships to the number of people in the family.

Hill (1949) suggested that when one talks about adjustment it is important to remember that

the lay person may inquire about the family members' physical, mental, and emotional health, but the family expert inquires about the health of the intrafamily relationships. To keep these relationships healthy there must be frank discussion of issues, accommodation, consensus, sometimes avoidance, and a minimum subordination of the self for the family good seen in respect for rights of and recognition of the needs of other members. (p. 464)

How a family adjusts to a crisis is determined in part by each family member's ability to perform his role, how the family works as a team, and the family members' determination to master whatever they have to to survive. The family will find itself slowed by the extra energy needed to face their problem, adjusting to the shifts, and finding new patterns. But they will again experience affectional and emotion-satisfying performance when the new patterns are worked out and the avenues for expressing their love for each other are reopened.

In explaining the course of adjustment Hill (1951) created a roller-coaster profile of adjustments to crisis. The following diagram shows the components of crisis, disorganization, recovery, and reorganization (see Figure 2). Some families withdraw from crisis, some appear to be invulnerable to crisis, others are defeated by crisis. In adjustment to crisis one can see both long-term and short-term

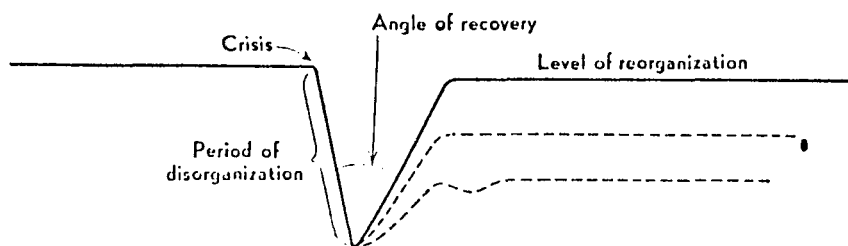


Figure 2. Hill's Profile of Adjustment.

effects. In considering the long-term effect of crisis, in regard to adjustment, Hill (1951) built upon the work of Koos (1950) regarding low-income families defeated by a crisis. "Once having been defeated by a crisis, the family appears not to be able to marshal its forces sufficiently to face the next event; there is, in other words, a permanent defeat each time" (p. 466).

The following are believed to be conducive to good adjustment to crisis:

family adaptability, family integration, affectional relations among family members, good marital adjustment of husband and wife, companionable parent-child relationships, family-council type of control in decision-making, participation of wife in activities outside the home, and previous successful experience with crisis. (p. 467)

Hill (1968) later reworked part of his own theory.

The theory was not changed but there were some additions which made the entire approach more understandable. When speaking of the "crisis-precipitating event" it was defined as that "for which the family has had little or no prior preparation and must therefore be viewed as problematic. No crisis-precipitating event will be the same for any two people" (p. 442). The impact of the event depends upon the hardships that it causes. What makes an event stressful is the definition the family gives it. Stressors can come from outside the family or from within. A classification of family crisis was made and can be seen in Figure 3. The types of impact stressor events have on the family is

A Classification of Family Crises of Dismemberment--
Accession and Demoralization

Dismemberment Only

Death of child, spouse, or parent
Hospitalization of spouse
War separation

Accession Only

Unwanted pregnancy
Deserter returns
Stepfather, stepmother additions
Some war reunions
Some adoptions, aged grandparents, orphaned kin

Demoralization Only

Nonsupport
Infidelity
Alcoholism
Drug addiction
Delinquency and events bringing disgrace

Demoralization Plus Dismemberment or Accession

Illegitimacy
Runaways
Desertion
Divorce
Imprisonment
Suicide or homicide
Institutionalization for mental illness

Figure 3. Hill's classification of family crises.

important. Using Burgess' (1937) findings, Hill (1951) added two categories for further classifying family crisis: "(1) sudden change in family status, and (2) conflict among family members and the conception of their roles" (p. 444).

It was reported that families who meet crisis with success are strengthened for their next bout, but those families defeated by the crisis experience damage in their structure and morale.

Many situations are called a "crisis" but Hill (1951) indicated that three factors must be present for a situation to be labeled as such: (a) the event, (b) the inner strengths or weaknesses of the family, and (c) the interpretation the family gives the event.

Stages in Crisis Theory Development

To date the historical information regarding crisis theory has not been tied together. The writer would suggest three stages in the development of crisis work: the independent years (1930-1950), the year of fermentation (1950-1965), and the emerging years (1965 +).

The independent years. The period between 1930-1950 was a time when different disciplines began independently studying crisis. During the late 1930's information began surfacing from sociology, physiology, and medicine regarding crisis. Sociologists were concerned with the effects of the depression upon families in relation to crisis. Names associated

with this research included Burgess, Koos, Fulcomer, Angell, Hill, Cavan, Eliot, Komarovsky, Ranck, and others. Physiologists were concerned with the effects of stress upon the organism. Selye began his work in the 1930's and no other single name really emerged in that discipline until the 1960's when Lazarus began publishing his research. The medical-psychiatric investigation began during the early 1940's when Lindemann published his findings regarding the stages in grief and bereavement in 1944. Caplan, Parad, Parks, and Rapaport continued the development of stages.

The years of fermentation. The years between 1950-1965 were years of fermentation. The work of the early researchers was being supplemented by their own students. Scientific methodology and statistical methods were being refined. This sophistication created the opportunity for new advancements in the field. With the emergence of more precise instruments a rebirth of research was about to begin.

The emerging years. Since the late 1960's a vast amount of crisis research has begun to appear. The impact this has had upon crisis theory and crisis work is to call into question the theoretical models which were created earlier. The replication of earlier studies has produced contradictory findings. This should not be viewed negatively but as a positive experience which may allow the crisis field to (a) pull itself together; (b) find a crisis model which can incorporate the loose interdisciplinary work from the past;

- (c) continue to produce reputable scientific inquiry; and
- (d) provide practical information for the workers in the field.

Research Questions from the Review

The following questions from the review of literature have implications for research.

1. Is accumulated stress present before divorce or remarriage?
2. Do men or women experience more stress?
3. Do pleasant and unpleasant life events, controlled and uncontrolled life events, have any relationship to marital status?
4. Are there events which people agree upon as crises?
5. Can crisis make one stronger?
6. How do remarrieds and formerly marrieds feel about sharing crises?

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

Traditionally crisis theory has assumed that a particular crisis-precipitating event, such as divorce or remarriage, can become a crisis. The writer suggested that crisis be defined as a heightened level of stress reaching crisis proportions. Therefore, the major purpose was to determine whether unusually high levels of stress preceded the decision to divorce or to remarry. This research was designed to test the stress level of persons for the 12 months prior to their decision to divorce. For the ones who remarried, the stress level for the 12 months prior to their decision to remarry was tested. If they experienced high levels of accumulated stress which was not resolved during those periods of their lives, then divorce might be the result of a crisis more than the crisis event.

A second purpose was to test two major assumptions of crisis theory: (a) What is a crisis for one person will not be a crisis for another--"no crisis-precipitating event is the same for any given family; . . ." (Waller & Hill, 1951, p. 460), and (b) after a crisis an individual could approach but not exceed the level of organization at which he was functioning before the crisis occurred (Hansen & Hill, 1964; Hill, 1949, 1968; Waller & Hill, 1951, 1966).

Research Design

This research was based on an ex post facto experimental design with alternative hypotheses (Kerlinger, 1973). Three groups of men and women were compared on levels of stress at particular times in their lives. The following text table shows the groups.

| <u>Group</u> | <u>Number</u> | | <u>Time Period for Measurement of Stress</u> |
|---|---------------|----------|--|
| | <u>M</u> | <u>F</u> | |
| 1. Divorced sample (FMD and RMD ₁) | 20 | 20 | During the 12 months prior to the decision to divorce |
| 2. Remarried sample (RMD ₂) | 10 | 10 | During the 12 months prior to the decision to remarry |
| 3. Currently married to first spouse (CMFS) | 15 | 15 | During the 12 months prior to the present time |

The divorced group was composed of two sections, the formerly married divorced (FMD) and the remarried divorced (RMD₁). These two sections were combined to form the divorced group so that disenchantment with marriage itself would not be a confounding variable.

The major part of this research utilized a 2 x 3 factorial design with two genders and three levels of marital status. Stress level during the 12-month period prior to

divorce, remarriage, or the time at which the currently married responded to the instrument was the dependent variable.

The writer attempted to strengthen the design by: (a) establishing a control group composed of subjects who were married only once, and (b) selecting two groups of remarried divorced subjects so the same group was not measured twice.

Selection and Description of Subjects

The three groups were a purposive sample to insure representativeness (Helmstader, 1970; Kerlinger, 1973). All potential subjects were given the letter of introduction (see Appendix A) denoting that the research was legitimate. A total of 121 individuals were contacted to participate in the research project. Five individuals did not want to participate. Sixteen questionnaires were thrown out due to errors in filling them out, subjects not being legally divorced for one year, subjects being legally divorced for more than 10 years, or omissions regarding important data. A sample of 40 subjects was gathered for the control group (CMFS). However, Dr. Ray Whitmore, statistical consultant at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, suggested that the control group did not have to be that large. Therefore, the sample was decreased in number by the following procedure: to keep gender equal and to maintain a degree of randomness a number was assigned to each subject. The

20 numbers for the males were placed in one hat and the 20 numbers for the females placed in another hat. Then randomly 15 numbers (15 males and 15 females) were drawn from each hat to be included in the study.

There were three major groups in the total sample of 90 subjects with equal male and female representation. A total of 60 subjects experienced marital dissolution (divorce) while the other 30 subjects never experienced marital dissolution at any time and were not considering it at the current time. Kerlinger (1973) suggested that groups of 20 presented less chance for statistical bias in research.

The following limitations were placed upon the sample by the researcher: (a) subjects had to be between 18 and 60 years of age; (b) subjects who had been divorced or remarried more than 10 years were not included in the sample; (c) divorced subjects had to be legally divorced at least 12 months; (d) first marrieds had to be married at least five years and not have contemplated separation or divorce during the last 12 months.

Subjects were obtained from local and county groups organized for the divorced, referrals, a local community college, and churches in the Eden-Reidsville area. Once a group cell had 20 individual subjects of the same marital status with 10 males and 10 females that section was closed.

Research Instruments

Life Events Inventory (L.E.I.)

The basic instrument in this research was the L.E.I. which measured the relative severity of psycho-social stressors (Cochrane & Robertson, 1973). To adequately understand the L.E.I. its predecessor, the Schedule of Recent Experiences (S.R.E.) developed by Holmes and Rahe (1967), is described here. The S.R.E. was created to determine whether a correlation existed between a cluster of social events (that required one to change or make life adjustments) and the onset of severe illness. Many life changes, clustering at once, are associated with illness and has been taught in medical schools for years (Leif, 1948). The S.R.E. was a checklist consisting of 43 life events which subjects have experienced over the previous 12 months.

To establish validity for the stress value each event was weighted for stress value with each event carrying a weighted score supposedly reflecting the degree of disruption it caused. Ratio-scaling methodology was used to arrive at a mean life change score for each life change event. These life change units were then used to rank order the life events on a scale from 1-100. This interval scale gives a higher validity to the total score than would a mere frequency counting of life changes experienced. However, Rahe (1978) commented that "for a clean estimate of environmental stress, it's hard to improve on a simple counting of recent life experiences" (p. 97).

Concurrent validity was established by showing the percentage of life events that were associated with health changes. When a large number of servicemen were tested, it was found that about 80% of them (with scores in excess of 300) experienced heart attacks, pathological depression, or some other serious illness.

Sarason, de Monchaux, and Hunt (1975) noted that "the history of stress research has been bedeviled by the problem of establishing objective criteria to define both stressful stimuli (stressors) and stress responses" (p. 499). Two of the most common pitfalls in stress research have been material which relied solely upon subjective criteria in defining stressors and the problem of circularity (using the response to stress to identify the stressor). The work leading to the creation of the S.R.E. by Holmes and Rahe (1967) has been "significant and valuable for its attempt to avoid these two pitfalls" (p. 499). This work has been significant and has moved the question of a relationship between stress and physical illness from a purely speculative to a theoretically based empirical operation. The major problem with the S.R.E. is "the need to increase the test-retest reliability" (p. 508) of the instrument.

Cochrane and Robertson (1973) were concerned with what they referred to as deficiencies in the S.R.E. which reduced its usefulness as a research instrument. They identified the following problems:

- (1) Many of the items on the S.R.E. were not appropriate to a general measure of recent life stresses. Some were trivial; others were only relevant to a small number of people; and still others were ambiguous. With items of this latter type, it appeared more reasonable to distinguish between a deterioration and an improvement in the life event.
- (2) The S.R.E. was not comprehensive. It was felt this list could be supplemented by other items obtained from a systematic inquiry into the kind of stressful events that befall people.
- (3) No published weights derived from clinical groups on which the instrument had often been used were published. Although agreement was obtained between the weights assigned by various samples of convenience composed of normal subjects, weights were not available from patients or from other groups most likely to have extensive experience concerning the amount of stress which seems to be associated with the event.

Three steps were followed in arriving at the weighted scores (which they felt were causing the test-retest problem with the S.R.E.). First questionnaires were mailed or given to university students, a group of psychiatrists and psychologists, and a group of psychiatric patients. Subjects were asked to

please rate the amount of "turmoil, upheaval and social readjustment" that would follow each of the events listed below. Rate each item on a 1-100 scale with 100 standing for the maximum disruption. The item marriage is assigned an arbitrary score of 50, so please rate the others on a comparative base with this. Thank you.
(p. 136)

Then, the questionnaires were evaluated to determine which could be used. The weighted scores were determined from uneven numbers (not all questionnaires could be used). The third step was to edit and revise once more the events and their weights which led to deleting some events and using word changes in others to make them more explicit. The result was the creation of the Life Events Inventory (L.E.I.)-- "which, it is hoped, is a comprehensive measure of recent life stresses equally suitable for use with all sections of the population" (p. 136). Weights for items added at this last stage were obtained from a second sample of students (N = 60). This procedure was assumed to be valid due to the high inter-group agreement on weightings. Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficients were calculated between the rank order of the mean weightings assigned by the three groups.

The coefficients were: patients and psychiatrists 0.82; patients and students 0.74; and psychiatrists and students 0.94. The coefficient of concordance of all three groups is 0.89. All four coefficients are significant beyond the $P < 0.001$ level. (p. 136)

It should be noted that the instrument (L.E.I.) is designed to quantify the amount of "turmoil, disturbance and upheaval" that people are subjected to, rather than just unpleasant experiences. It is not a measure of sickness.

What had begun as an attempt to refine the S.R.E. resulted in the creation of a new instrument with a reliability score of 0.89.

The Life Events Inventory can be used both as a supplement to the clinical interview and a standardized measure of the amount of stress that has been present in a person's immediate environment in the preceding year. (p. 136)

The L.E.I. appears to be excellent for working with family and marital situations because a number of items refer to problems not relevant to unmarried people. It can also measure two additional factors which the S.R.E. could not.

(a) The L.E.I. was designed to quantify the amount of turmoil, disturbance and upheaval which people face, rather than simply measuring unpleasant experiences. (b) The L.E.I. can also indicate which events might have been caused by the subject and those events which are outside his control.

Thus the L.E.I. "is a comprehensive measure of recent life stresses equally suitable for use with all sections of the population" (p. 136). An application of the instrument to parasuicides (1975) using a three-way analysis of variance (age x class x group) revealed "neither age nor any of the interactions produced significant effects" (p. 164).

Social class, as a variable, accounted for less than 2% of the variance. "An expected interaction between age, stress and suicide attempts did not emerge" (p. 164).

The L.E.I. consists of 55 events (see Appendix B). These 55 events can be subdivided into "pleasant" and

"unpleasant" and into "under one's control" and "outside one's control" (see Appendix B).

The writer corresponded with Dr. Ray Cochrane (the University of Birmingham, Birmingham, England) and received permission to use the L.E.I. for this research.

One adaptation was made on the instrument. Traditionally the L.E.I. has been used with the following directions. One's marital status determines which sections (1, 2 or 3) are completed on the test. Single individuals do not complete section two while marrieds do not complete section three. But where do the formerly married divorced fit? The writer wondered if it were not possible for people who were married to answer questions in section two that might be related to them. Therefore, subjects were asked to respond to all 55 questions. In any situation where there were duplicated answers the scorer tabulated only the appropriate responses for that subject's marital status.

Reliability. The major problem reported with the S.R.E. was "the need to increase the test-retest reliability" (Sarason, De Monchaux, & Hunt, 1975, p. 508). Citing statistics they indicated that at one time the S.R.E. reliability rating would be in the .80's and the next time only .18. This very problem caused Cochrane and Robertson (1973) to revise the S.R.E. thereby creating the L.E.I. Therefore, in many ways the L.E.I. is an extension of the S.R.E., only it has been refined to produce a stronger instrument with a consistent reliability figure of 0.89.

Congruent validity. Sarason et al. (1975) reported that the work of Holmes and Rahe (1967) had congruent validity in that it measured both objective and subjective components of stress. The L.E.I., a revision of the S.R.E., carries even stronger relationship between what it claims to measure and what it does measure and has greater congruent validity.

Internal validity. Cochrane and Robertson (1973) did not originally set out to create a new instrument (the L.E.I.), but attempted to strengthen the S.R.E. in three ways: (a) to remove trivial, ambiguous, and limited items; (b) to produce a more comprehensive measure of recent life stresses, and (c) to create more accurate weighting figures. They edited and revised the S.R.E. and then administered it to 125 psychiatric patients in Edinburgh. In this sample 85 of the patients had been admitted because they had attempted suicide. The other 60 subjects had been admitted to a general mental hospital. All the patients were asked what life experiences they had encountered in the previous 12 months. A total of 59 new events were collected from this approach, but because some of the events were not relevant they were incorporated into other existing events. Finally the new instrument listed 55 life events. The next step was to improve the accuracy of the weights for each life event. This was accomplished by selecting four groups (psychiatrists, psychologists, patients, and students), with an N of 60

per group, who were asked to weight each item on the instrument from 1-100 by rating the amount of turmoil, upheaval and social readjustment which would be created by each of the 55 listed events. Then the entire instrument was tested a second time and revised. There was inter-group agreement on weightings significant beyond the .001 level. The L.E.I. was pretested by the present researcher on 76 college students and 12 adults not in college and was found to be understandable.

Scoring. Two scoring measures are available: the number of stressful events reported and a total stress score. Cochrane and Robertson (1973) reported that

following the procedure of Holmes and Rahe (1967) events with both positive and negative connotations are included in the list, the crucial variable being the amount of life change or upheaval each event would cause. (p. 164)

To allow for prediction Holmes and Rahe (1967) designed a scoring scale based upon the total stress score. When a subject had experienced enough stressful events to have a stress score of 300 or more points, they predicted that there was better than an 80% chance that that person would experience pathological depression, a heart attack, or develop some other serious ailment within the next 12 months. Scores between the range of 150-300 would produce the same effects in 53% of the subjects and scores below 150 produced the same effect in 33% of the subjects.

To this researcher's knowledge neither the S.R.E. nor the L.E.I. has been used to determine the amount of stress experienced by individuals going through divorce or remarriage. Since the present research was ex post facto, there was no need for a predictive score, but there needed to be a method, with built-in controls, to determine how severe the stress level was in the lives of the subjects experiencing marital dissolution during the 12 months before the actual divorce or remarriage. Holmes and Rahe's rating scale was used for this purpose. Since this study was a probe into the possible effects of stress, rather than viewing stress as an outgrowth of divorce and remarriage, it seemed that stress level scores in excess of 200 would indicate the presence of stress that was of crisis proportions, capable of producing actions or reactions which were not always in the subject's own best interest. The event of divorce (75 points) was not included as part of any score for the divorced sample.

The Recovery Level Test (RLT). Hill (1949) and Waller and Hill (1951, 1966) proposed that the course of adjustment following a crisis would produce a roller-coaster pattern of crisis--- disorganization--- recovery--- reorganization. This design visually illustrated that one might approach but never exceed a level of recovery or reorganization equal to the level at which one was functioning before the crisis occurred (Hansen & Hill, 1964; Hill, 1949, 1968; Waller & Hill, 1951, 1966). As a part of the present research, a

measure of the level of recovery (RLT) was designed and pre-tested with 12 adult subjects who were divorced, separated, or widowed to test for clarity and understandability. No changes or corrections were suggested by the subjects. However, an additional question was added to check the validity of the subject's answers (see Appendix B).

The Ranking of Crises Measure. Hill (1949) and Waller and Hill (1951, 1966) proposed that what was a crisis for one person was not a crisis for another. As a part of the present research, the instrument for ranking 10 crisis events, designed and tested by Kezar (1973), was used (see Appendix B).

Data Collection

The following procedures were adhered to:

- (a) Only the researcher collected the data.
- (b) The researcher presented the letter of introduction (see Appendix A) to all potential subjects.
- (c) Those who qualified and wished to be part of the sample were registered on the master list of subjects and given a questionnaire with a corresponding code number. The subjects were told that this was to protect their privacy and also to allow the writer to contact them later to share the results of the study. The number of people who did not wish to participate was also recorded.

- (d) The researcher checked to make sure all questions had been answered so that needed data was not omitted. The subjects were asked to supply data that were left out.
- (e) The questionnaire was scored by a person trained by the researcher.

Analysis of Data

Items related to demographic data and the 10 hypotheses were coded according to a predetermined plan, recorded on code sheets, punched on IBM cards, and verified against original data. Data were computer analyzed with the statistical packages, SAS--The Statistical Analysis System (Barr, Goodnight, Sail & Helwig, 1976) and SPSS--Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Nie, Hull, Jenkins, Steinbrenner & Brent, 1975).

Differences in level of stress were compared between divorced, remarried divorced, and first married men and women by using an analysis of variance. These same groups were compared for differences in the proportion of pleasant to unpleasant life events and in the proportion of controlled and uncontrolled life events by using an analysis of variance.

The method of comparing the differences between the groups on the ranking of crises, the recovery level after divorce, and need level for meeting crises with a mate was the chi square.

The weighted proportions of pleasant to unpleasant and of controlled to uncontrolled life events were obtained through 200 individual T-tests. Judging significance for $p < .05$ would result in 10 expected indications of significance in the 200 tests even if there were no significant differences. Thus, $p < .025$ was used as the significance criterion so that only five indications of significance are expected when there are actually no significant differences.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Traditionally, crisis theory has assumed that a particular crisis-precipitating event, such as divorce or remarriage, could become a crisis. This research challenges that belief. The writer suggested that crisis be defined as a heightened level of accumulated stress reaching crisis proportions. This field experiment was designed to measure accumulated stress levels over three different 12-month time periods for the divorced, remarried, and control groups. The major purpose of this study was to determine whether unusually high levels of stress preceded the decision to divorce or to remarry. Of secondary importance, but still related to this question, was the role of pleasant and unpleasant experiences as well as the experiences within and outside one's control. A second purpose was to test two major assumptions of crisis theory: (a) what is a crisis for one person will not be a crisis for another--"no crisis-precipitating event is the same for any given family; . . ." (Waller & Hill, 1951, p. 460), and (b) after a crisis an individual could approach but not exceed the level of organization at which he was

functioning before the crisis occurred (Hansen & Hill, 1964; Hill, 1949, 1968; Waller & Hill, 1951, 1966). An additional question concerning whether marital status influences one's desire to face stressful situations with or without a mate was also asked.

The results of the evaluation will be presented in the following sequence: (a) description of the sample, (b) analysis of the data, (c) stress level, (d) pleasant and unpleasant life events, (e) controlled and uncontrolled life events, (f) ranking of crises, (g) recovery level scores, (h) facing crises with or without a mate, and (i) discussion of the results.

Description of the Sample

Subjects who participated in this study were obtained from groups organized for the divorced, from referrals, from a local community college, and from churches in the Eden-Reidsville area.

Age

The information regarding age is found in Appendix C. In the total divorced sample, regardless of sex, the mean for age at first marriage was 21.4 years, first marriage lasted 9.1 years, and the divorced subjects waited an average of 2.6 years to remarry. Mean age at first marriage was 21.5 for the control group and for the remarried group. Males in the control group (CMFS) married at a younger age

than any of the divorced males while the females (CMFS) were older than any of the divorced females.

Rating of Parents' Marriage and Own Marriage

The rating of the parents' marriage and the rating of the subjects' first and second marriages was converted to percentages and is found in Appendix D. The data indicate that 55% of the divorced subjects had, for a time, lived in a one-parent family either due to divorce or widowhood. However, only 10% of the control group came from one-parent families.

While 56% of the divorced subjects rated their parents' marriage as good to excellent, 73% of the control group rated their parents' marriage as good to excellent.

Only 18% of the divorced subjects rated their first marriage as good to excellent while 100% of the control group rated their first and only marriage as excellent to good. However, 94% of the remarrieds rated their second marriage as good to excellent. A Spearman Rank Order Correlation was used to test for significant differences between the subject's rating of their parents' marriage and their own first and second marriages, but there was no correlation.

Education, Income, and Religion

Percentages regarding education, income, and religion are found in Appendix E. The educational level of the

control group was the lowest (40% had high school or lower) while the RMD₂ had the highest level (35% had attended graduate school). A chi square was computed comparing education and marital status but the difference was not significant.

The largest variance in income was noted among the FMD; however, this group also had a higher than expected income. The RMD₂ group (which also had the highest educational level) also had the highest income level for the sample.

The religious preferences indicated that 93% were Protestant, 4.5% Roman Catholic, 1.25% Mormon, and 1.25% "other" (see Appendix E). When the marital groups were studied in relation to whether they were active or inactive church members, a chi square was computed and a score of 35.549 with three degrees of freedom was found to be significant at the .0001 level of confidence indicating that active church membership and attendance were significantly more important for the control group than for the divorced groups (FMD and RMD₁). The basic reason for differentiating between (a) members who attend regularly and (b) those who are not members or do not attend regularly is that many people, particularly Protestants, may associate themselves with a church in their area but do not actually join or attend regularly (meaning that they are essentially unchurched), but when asked what their religious affiliation is will often respond "Protestant" while in reality they have only a preference for that interpretation

of the Christian faith. Ignoring this factor can actually skew the final interpretation of data labeled religious information.

Analysis of the Data

The analysis of the data showed that stress reaching crisis levels occurred in the 12 months prior to divorce or prior to remarriage but not in the first-married group. This stress was more likely to come from unpleasant and controlled events than from pleasant and uncontrolled events. However, the experimental groups (FMD, RMD₁, RMD₂) experienced more of all types of events, pleasant and unpleasant, controlled and uncontrolled, than the control group (CMFS). It was found that both divorced and remarried subjects experienced more unpleasant than pleasant events and more controlled than uncontrolled events than the control group.

There was not a significant difference between the stress levels of males and females. However, it should be noted that women consistently had higher scores than men in all marital status groups.

When the groups according to marital status were asked to rank the 10 given crisis events there was no significant difference in their ranking of the events. It was found that divorced men and women believe that they are stronger individuals following a divorce than before the experience took place. The formerly married divorced (FMD) and remarried divorced (RMD₁ and RMD₂) would rather face crisis events with a mate than without a mate.

Stress Level

A two-factor (2 x 3) analysis of variance was computed using the stress scores from the Life Events Inventory (L.E.I.) to test hypotheses 1, 2, and 3. The two factors were gender and marital status (divorced, remarried, and still married to first spouse). All the mean scores on the L.E.I. (see Table 1) exceeded the crisis level of stress set at 200 except for the control group. The results showed that there was significantly more stress prior to a divorce and a remarriage than in a current marriage. There were no differences in stress between males and females.

L.E.I. Scores for the Divorced and the Control Group

There were 40 subjects in the divorced group (FMD and RMD₁) and 30 subjects in the control group (CMFS). The mean L.E.I. scores according to marital status are found in Table 1. The divorced group had a mean of 479 and the control group had a mean of 162.

To test for significant differences in the Life Events Inventory scores between the divorced (FMD and RMD₁--for the 12 months prior to the decision to terminate the marriage) and those currently married to their first spouse (CMFS), analysis of variance for computing the F value was employed (see Table 2).

An F value of 37.20 was obtained. There was a significant statistical difference between the divorced and the

Table 1
Mean L.E.I. Scores of Marital Status and Gender

| Source | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. Scores |
|------------------------------------|----|-------------------------|
| Total | 90 | 346.20 |
| <u>Marital Status:</u> | | |
| Divorced (FMD & RMD ₁) | 40 | 479.20 |
| FMD | 20 | 502.70 |
| RMD ₁ | 20 | 455.70 |
| Remarried (RMD ₂) | 20 | 264.55 |
| Control (CMFS) | 30 | 161.85 |
| <u>Gender:</u> | | |
| Males | 45 | 298.60 |
| Females | 45 | 352.82 |

Marital Status/Gender Interaction:

| Males | | | Females | | |
|------------------|----|------------------|------------------|----|------------------|
| Marital Status | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. | Marital Status | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. |
| FMD | 10 | 438.10 | FMD | 10 | 567.30 |
| RMD ₁ | 10 | 419.60 | RMD ₁ | 10 | 491.80 |
| RMD ₂ | 10 | 256.40 | RMD ₂ | 10 | 272.70 |
| CMFS | 15 | 153.07 | CMFS | 15 | 170.60 |

Table 2

Analysis of Variance of Mean L.E.I. Scores as Related
to Marital Status, Gender, and Interaction

| Source | df | SS | F | P value | |
|---|----|------------|-------|---------------------|----|
| <u>Marital Status</u> | 3 | 1844934.97 | 13.25 | 0.0001 | |
| FMD & RMD ₁ vs. CMFS | 1 | 1726656.02 | 37.20 | 0.0001 ¹ | |
| FMD vs. CMFS | 1 | 1394281.01 | 30.04 | 0.0001 ² | |
| RMD ₁ vs. CMFS | 1 | 1036291.41 | 22.33 | 0.0001 ³ | |
| RMD ₂ vs. CMFS | 1 | 126608.56 | 2.73 | 0.1024 | NS |
| <u>Gender:</u> | 1 | 75456.44 | 1.63 | 0.2059 | NS |
| <u>Marital Status & Gender Interaction:</u> | 3 | 47010.37 | 0.34 | 0.8004 | NS |
| Model | 7 | 1958096.46 | 6.03 | 0.0001 | |
| Error | 82 | 3805780.03 | | | |
| Corrected Total | 89 | 5763876.49 | | | |

¹Divorced vs. control group significant at or beyond .0001 level of confidence

²FMD vs. control group significant at or beyond .0001 level of confidence

³RMD₁ vs. control group significant at or beyond .0001 level of confidence

control group at or beyond the .0001 level of confidence. Therefore, Hypothesis 1, which predicted that the scores for the divorced would be significantly higher than the scores for the control group, was supported.

L.E.I. Scores for the Remarried and the Control Group

There were 20 subjects in the remarried group (RMD₂) and 30 subjects in the control group (CMFS). The mean L.E.I. scores according to marital status are found in Table 1. The 265 mean for the remarried group was higher than the 162 mean for the control group.

To test for the significant differences in the Life Events Inventory scores between the remarried divorced (for the 12 months prior to their decision to remarry) and those currently married to their first spouse (CMFS), analysis of variance for computing the F value was employed (see Table 2).

An F value of 2.73 was obtained. There was not a statistically significant difference between the L.E.I. scores for the remarried and the control group. Hypothesis 2 predicted that the L.E.I. scores for the remarried (RMD₂) would be significantly higher than the L.E.I. scores for the control group; therefore, Hypothesis 2 was not supported.

L.E.I. Scores for Males and Females

There were 45 male subjects and 45 female subjects. The mean L.E.I. scores according to gender are found in

Table 1. The 299 mean score for males was lower than the 353 mean for females. It can also be seen from Table 1 that when the mean scores are broken down according to marital status, the males had lower mean scores than the females in each marital status.

To test the significance of the difference between the male and female groups the estimates of variance were compared by computing F (see Table 2). An F value of 1.63 was obtained. There was not a statistically significant difference between the L.E.I. scores according to gender. Hypothesis 3 predicted that the L.E.I. scores would vary significantly according to gender; therefore, Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Interaction Between Marital Status and Gender

To test interaction between marital status and gender the estimates of variance were compared by computing F (see Table 2). An F value of 0.34 was obtained. There was not a statistically significant difference between the L.E.I. scores regarding interaction between marital status and gender. A sign test for difference in means of male and female scores was also done because four out of four independent samples resulted in a higher mean for females. It was found that the P -value was 0.0625 for the one-sided alternative, and the P -value for the two-sided alternative was 0.1250.

Pleasant and Unpleasant Life Events

The 12-month period prior to either the decision to divorce or the decision to remarry was predicted in Hypotheses 4 and 5 to have a significantly higher proportion of unpleasant to pleasant life events (see Appendix B) than for the most recent 12-month period of a currently married group. A two-factor (2 x 3) analysis of variance was used to test the significance of difference between gender, marital status, and the interaction. Both hypotheses were supported. Weighted L.E.I. scores for the total number of pleasant and for the total number of unpleasant events were used instead of a mere count of how many events were checked.

Pleasant and Unpleasant Weighted L.E.I. Scores for the Divorced and Control Groups

There were 40 subjects in the divorced group (FMD and RMD₁) and 30 subjects in the control group (CMFS). The mean L.E.I. (weighted proportions) scores of pleasant and unpleasant life events are found in Table 3. The 118.35 mean for the divorced group regarding pleasant life events was higher than the 66.27 mean for the control group. It can be seen from Table 3 that the 314.13 mean for the divorced group regarding the unpleasant events was higher than the 81.60 mean for the control group.

To test for significant differences in the weighted proportions (see Note 1, p. 131) of pleasant and unpleasant L.E.I. scores between the divorced (FMD and RMD₁) and those

Table 3

Mean L.E.I. Scores of Marital Status, Gender, and Interaction Between Marital Status and Gender for Pleasant and Unpleasant Life Events

| Pleasant Events | | | | Unpleasant Events | | | | | | | |
|--|----|---------------------|------------------|--|------------------|---------------------|----|------------------|------------------|----|------------------|
| Source | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. | | Source | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. | | | | | |
| <u>Total</u> | 90 | 95.53 | | <u>Total</u> | 90 | 217.03 | | | | | |
| <u>Marital Status:</u> | | | | <u>Marital Status:</u> | | | | | | | |
| Divorced (FMD & RMD ₁) | 40 | 118.35 | | Divorced (FMD & RMD ₁) | 40 | 314.13 | | | | | |
| FMD | 20 | 139.25 | | FMD | 20 | 316.70 | | | | | |
| RMD ₁ | 20 | 97.45 | | RMD ₁ | 20 | 311.55 | | | | | |
| Remarried (RMD ₂) | 20 | 79.15 | | Remarried (RMD ₂) | 20 | 158.25 | | | | | |
| Control (CMFS) | 30 | 66.27 | | Control (CMFS) | 30 | 81.60 | | | | | |
| <u>Gender:</u> | | | | <u>Gender:</u> | | | | | | | |
| Males | 45 | 96.73 | | Males | 45 | 223.27 | | | | | |
| Females | 45 | 87.82 | | Females | 45 | 180.69 | | | | | |
| <u>Marital Status-Gender, Interaction:</u> | | | | <u>Marital Status-Gender, Interaction:</u> | | | | | | | |
| <u>Males</u> | | <u>Females</u> | | <u>Males</u> | | <u>Females</u> | | | | | |
| Source | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. | Source | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. | Source | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. | Source | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. |
| FMD | 10 | 126.10 | FMD | 10 | 152.40 | FMD | 10 | 263.80 | FMD | 10 | 369.60 |
| RMD ₁ | 10 | 101.50 | RMD ₁ | 10 | 93.40 | RMD ₁ | 10 | 291.20 | RMD ₁ | 10 | 331.90 |
| RMD ₂ | 10 | 72.20 | RMD ₂ | 10 | 86.10 | RMD ₂ | 10 | 156.70 | RMD ₂ | 10 | 159.80 |
| CMFS | 15 | 63.60 | CMFS | 15 | 68.93 | CMFS | 15 | 67.60 | CMFS | 15 | 95.60 |

currently married to their first spouse (CMFS), analysis of variance for computing the F value was employed (see Table 4).

An F value of 5.66 was obtained for the pleasant life events scores between the divorced and the control group. There was a significant difference between the weighted relative proportion of pleasant events for the divorced and the control group at the .02 level of confidence.

An F value of 40.01 was obtained for the weighted relative proportion of unpleasant life events between the divorced and the control group. There was a significant difference between the weighted relative proportion of unpleasant events for the divorced and the control group at or beyond the .0001 level of confidence. Therefore, Hypothesis 4, which predicted that there would be a significant difference between the divorced and the control group for weighted relative proportion of pleasant and unpleasant life events scores, was supported.

Pleasant and Unpleasant Weighted L.E.I. Scores for Remarried (RMD₂) and Control Group

There were 20 subjects in the remarried group (RMD₂) and 30 subjects in the control group (CMFS). The mean L.E.I. (weighted proportions) scores of pleasant and unpleasant events are found in Table 3. The 79.15 mean for the remarried group, regarding pleasant events, was higher than the 66.27 mean for the control group. It can be seen from

Table 4

Analysis of Variance of Weighted Proportions of
Pleasant and Unpleasant L.E.I. Scores

| Pleasant | | | | | Unpleasant | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----|------------|------|--------------------|-----------------------------|----|------------|-------|---------------------|
| Source | df | SS | F | P Value | Source | df | SS | F | P Value |
| <u>Marital Status:</u> | 3 | 0.35327634 | 3.26 | 0.03 | <u>Marital Status:</u> | 3 | 0.65911927 | 13.75 | .0001 |
| <u>Divorced:</u> | | | | | <u>Divorced:</u> | | | | |
| FMD & RMD ₁ | | | | | FMD & RMD ₁ | | | | |
| vs. CMFS | 1 | 0.20450972 | 5.66 | 0.02 ¹ | vs. CMFS | 1 | 0.63932564 | 40.01 | 0.0001 ³ |
| FMD vs. CMFS | 1 | 0.32486941 | 8.99 | 0.004 ² | FMD vs. CMFS | 1 | 0.44903031 | 28.10 | 0.0001 ⁴ |
| RMD ₁ vs. CMFS | 1 | 0.03487489 | 0.96 | 0.33 | RMD ₁ vs. CMFS | 1 | 0.44602810 | 27.91 | 0.0001 ⁵ |
| Remarried (RMD ₂ | | | | | Remarried (RMD ₂ | | | | |
| vs. CMFS) | 1 | 0.00540900 | 0.15 | 0.70 | vs. CMFS) | 1 | 0.06693366 | 4.19 | 0.04 ⁶ |
| <u>Gender</u> | 1 | 0.04289418 | 1.19 | 0.28 | <u>Gender</u> | 1 | 0.02686326 | 1.68 | 0.20 |
| <u>Marital Status,</u> | | | | | <u>Marital Status,</u> | | | | |
| <u>Gender & Inter-</u> | | | | | <u>Gender & Inter-</u> | | | | |
| <u>action</u> | 3 | 0.03089703 | 0.28 | 0.84 | <u>action</u> | 3 | 0.01999805 | 0.42 | 0.75 |
| Model | 7 | 0.42201527 | 1.67 | 0.13 | Model | 7 | 0.70248424 | 6.28 | .0001 |
| Error | 82 | 2.96420957 | | | Error | 82 | 1.31035691 | | |
| Corrected Total | 89 | 3.38622483 | | | Corrected Total | 89 | 2.01284115 | | |

¹Pleasant L.E.I.-Divorced vs. Control group--significant at .02 level of confidence

²Pleasant L.E.I.-FMD vs. Control group--significant at .004 level of confidence

³Unpleasant L.E.I.-Divorced vs. Control group--significant at or beyond .0001 level of confidence

⁴Unpleasant L.E.I.-FMD vs. Control group--significant at or beyond .0001 level of confidence

⁵Unpleasant L.E.I.-RMD₁ vs. Control group--significant at or beyond .0001 level of confidence

⁶Unpleasant L.E.I.-Remarried vs. Control group--significant at the .04 level of confidence

Table 3 that the 158.25 mean for the remarried group, regarding the unpleasant events, was higher than the 81.60 mean for the control group.

To test for significant differences in the weighted proportions of pleasant and unpleasant L.E.I. scores between the remarried (RMD₂--tested for 12 months prior to remarriage) and those currently married to their first spouse (CMFS), analysis of variance for computing the F value was employed (see Table 4). The statistical approach used to determine the weighted and the weighted relative proportions was identical to the procedure used for the pleasant and unpleasant weighted L.E.I. scores for the divorced and the control groups (see Note 1, p. 131).

An F value of 0.15 was obtained for the pleasant life events scores between the remarried and the control groups. There was not a significant difference between the weighted relative proportion of pleasant events for the remarried and the control groups.

An F value of 4.19 was obtained for the weighted relative proportion of unpleasant life events between the remarried and the control groups. There was a significant difference between the weighted relative proportion of unpleasant events for the remarried and the control groups at the .04 level of confidence. Therefore, Hypothesis 5, which predicted that there would be a significant difference between pleasant and unpleasant life events scores for the remarried and the control groups, was supported.

Possibly Controlled and Uncontrolled Life Events

Hypotheses 6 and 7 predicted that there would be a significantly higher proportion of controlled events in the 12 months prior to the decision to divorce or to remarry than in the most recent 12 months for a first-married group. Both hypotheses were supported.

Controlled and Uncontrolled Weighted L.E.I. Scores for Divorced and Control Groups

There were 40 subjects in the divorced group (FMD and RMD₁) and 30 subjects in the control group (CMFS). The mean L.E.I. (weighted proportions) scores of possibly controlled and uncontrolled events are found in Table 5. It can be seen from Table 5 that the 384.93 mean for the divorced group, regarding controlled events, was higher than the 117.53 mean for the control group. It can also be seen from Table 5 that the 86.03 mean for the divorced group regarding uncontrolled events was higher than the 48.73 mean for the control group. It should be noted that a difference in mean scores does exist between the divorced and the control groups for both possibly controlled and uncontrolled life events.

To test for significant differences in the weighted proportions of controlled and uncontrolled L.E.I. scores between the divorced (FMD and RMD₁) and those currently married to their first spouse (CMFS), analysis of variance for computing the F value was employed (see Table 6). The statistical approach used to determine the weighted and the weighted

Table 5

Mean L.E.I. Scores of Marital Status, Gender, and Interaction Between Marital Status and Gender for Possibly Controlled and Uncontrolled Life Events

| Possibly Controlled | | | | Uncontrolled | | | | | | | |
|--|----|---------------------|------------------|--|------------------|---------------------|----|------------------|------------------|----|------------------|
| Source | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. | | Source | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. | | | | | |
| <u>Total</u> | 90 | 275.78 | | <u>Total</u> | 90 | 67.06 | | | | | |
| <u>Marital Status:</u> | | | | <u>Marital Status:</u> | | | | | | | |
| Divorced (FMD & RMD ₁) | 40 | 384.93 | | Divorced (FMD & RMD ₁) | 40 | 86.03 | | | | | |
| FMD | 20 | 417.95 | | FMD | 20 | 85.55 | | | | | |
| RMD ₁ | 20 | 351.90 | | RMD ₁ | 20 | 86.50 | | | | | |
| Remarried (RMD ₂) | 20 | 215.75 | | Remarried (RMD ₂) | 20 | 47.45 | | | | | |
| Control (CMFS) | 30 | 117.53 | | Control (CMFS) | 30 | 48.73 | | | | | |
| <u>Gender:</u> | | | | <u>Gender:</u> | | | | | | | |
| Males | 45 | 244.13 | | Males | 45 | 58.16 | | | | | |
| Females | 45 | 272.27 | | Females | 45 | 71.89 | | | | | |
| <u>Marital Status-Gender, Interaction:</u> | | | | <u>Marital Status-Gender, Interaction:</u> | | | | | | | |
| <u>Males</u> | | <u>Females</u> | | <u>Males</u> | | <u>Females</u> | | | | | |
| Source | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. | Source | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. | Source | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. | Source | N | \bar{X} L.E.I. |
| FMD | 10 | 360.60 | FMD | 10 | 475.30 | FMD | 10 | 74.50 | FMD | 10 | 96.60 |
| RMD ₁ | 10 | 354.40 | RMD ₁ | 10 | 349.40 | RMD ₁ | 10 | 80.20 | RMD ₁ | 10 | 92.80 |
| RMD ₂ | 10 | 205.20 | RMD ₂ | 10 | 226.30 | RMD ₂ | 10 | 50.80 | RMD ₂ | 10 | 44.10 |
| CMFS | 15 | 118.93 | CMFS | 15 | 116.13 | CMFS | 15 | 37.47 | CMFS | 15 | 60.00 |

Table 6

Analysis of Variance of Weighted Proportions of Possibly Controlled
and Uncontrolled L.E.I. Scores

| Possibly Controlled | | | | | Uncontrolled | | | | |
|-----------------------------|----|------------|-------|--------------------|-------------------------------|----|------------|------|------------------|
| Source | df | SS | F | P Value | Source | df | SS | F | P Value |
| <u>Marital Status</u> | 3 | 0.65499400 | 12.38 | .0001 | <u>Marital Status</u> | 3 | 0.17057839 | 3.39 | .02 |
| Divorced: | | | | | Divorced: | | | | |
| FMD & RMD ₁ | | | | | FMD & RMD ₁ | | | | |
| vs. CMFS | 1 | 0.61332022 | 34.77 | .0001 ¹ | vs. CMFS | 1 | 0.09825334 | 5.86 | .02 ³ |
| FMD vs. CMFS | 1 | 0.56327458 | 31.93 | .0001 | FMD vs. CMFS | 1 | 0.07678767 | 4.58 | .04 |
| RMD ₁ vs. CMFS | 1 | 0.31353328 | 17.77 | .0001 | RMD ₁ vs. CMFS | 1 | 0.06120815 | 3.65 | .06 |
| Remarried (RMD ₂ | | | | | Remarried (RMD ₂) | | | | |
| vs. CMFS) | 1 | 0.07873978 | 4.46 | .04 ² | vs. CMFS) | 1 | 0.00724940 | 0.43 | .51 |
| <u>Gender</u> | 1 | 0.01151502 | 0.65 | .42 | <u>Gender</u> | 1 | 0.01278869 | 0.76 | .39 |
| <u>Marital Status,</u> | | | | | <u>Marital Status,</u> | | | | |
| <u>Gender & Inter-</u> | | | | | <u>Gender & Inter-</u> | | | | |
| <u>action</u> | 3 | 0.04049127 | 0.77 | .52 | <u>action</u> | 3 | 0.00480943 | 0.10 | .96 |
| Model | 7 | 0.70306982 | 5.69 | .0001 | Model | 7 | 0.19087673 | 1.63 | .14 |
| Error | 82 | 1.44648809 | | | Error | 82 | 1.37465389 | | |
| Corrected Total | 89 | 2.14955791 | | | Corrected Total | 89 | 1.56553063 | | |

¹Controlled events-Divorced vs. Control group--significant at or beyond .0001 level of confidence

²Controlled events-Remarried vs. Control group--significant at .04 level of confidence

³Uncontrolled events-Divorced vs. Control group--significant at .02 level of confidence

relative proportions was identical to the procedure used for the pleasant and unpleasant weighted L.E.I. scores for the divorced and the control groups (see Note 1, p. 131).

An F value of 34.77 was obtained for the possibly controlled life events scores between the divorced and the control groups. There was a significant difference between the weighted relative proportion of possibly controlled life events for the divorced and the control groups at or beyond the .0001 level of confidence.

An F value of 5.86 was obtained for the uncontrolled life event scores between the divorced and the control groups. There was a significant difference between the weighted relative proportion of uncontrolled life events for the divorced and the control groups at the .02 level of confidence. Therefore, Hypothesis 6, which predicted that there would be a significant difference between the possibly controlled and uncontrolled life events scores for the divorced and the control groups, was supported.

Controlled and Uncontrolled Weighted L.E.I. Scores for Remarried and Control Groups

There were 20 subjects in the remarried group (RMD₂) and 30 subjects in the control group (CMFS). The mean L.E.I. (weighted proportions) scores of possibly controlled and uncontrolled events are found in Table 5. It can be seen from Table 5 that the 215.75 mean for the remarried group regarding possibly controlled events is higher than the

117.53 mean for the control group. It can also be seen from Table 5 that the 47.45 mean for the remarried group regarding uncontrolled events is lower than the 48.73 mean for the control group. There was no significant difference in the \bar{X} scores for uncontrolled events between the two groups.

To test for significant differences in the weighted proportions of controlled and uncontrolled L.E.I. scores between the remarried divorced (RMD_2) and those currently married to their first spouse (CMFS), analysis of variance for computing the F value was employed (see Table 6). The statistical approach used to determine the weighted and the weighted relative proportions was identical to the procedure used for the pleasant and unpleasant weighted L.E.I. scores for the divorced and the control groups (see Note 1, p.).

An F value of 4.46 was obtained for the possibly controlled life events scores between the remarried and the control groups. There was a significant difference between the weighted relative proportion of possibly controlled life events for the remarried group and the control group at the .04 level of confidence.

An F value of 0.43 was obtained for the uncontrolled life events scores between the divorced and the control groups. There was not a significant difference between the weighted relative proportion of controlled life events for the remarried and the control groups. Therefore, Hypothesis 7, which predicted that there would be significant difference between

the weighted relative proportion of possibly controlled and uncontrolled life events scores for the remarried and the control groups, was supported.

Ranking of Crises

Hypothesis 8 predicted that there would not be a significant difference in the order in which the remarried and divorced subjects would rank 10 given crisis events. The hypothesis was supported.

To test for significance in ranking the 10 given crisis events according to marital status a chi square test was utilized.

There were 30 independent chi square tests utilized for each of the 10 crisis events which were contrasted with marital status (10 events and three comparisons--controls vs. FMD, controls vs. RMD₁, and controls vs. RMD₂) to test for significant differences between the groups. When the chi square was computed it was found that a score of 6.045 with one degree of freedom was significant at the .02 level of confidence. Therefore, Hypothesis 8, which stated that there would be no significant difference in the ranking of the 10 given crisis events, was supported.

Recovery Level Scores

Hypothesis 9 predicted that the recovery level scores for all the divorced subjects would be equal to or exceed the predivorce level. The hypothesis was supported.

To test for significance regarding the divorced subjects' recovery level following the divorce (a crisis event) a chi square test was utilized.

There were 60 divorced subjects in the total sample with 20 in each cell group (FMD, RMD₁, and RMD₂). When the chi square was computed it was found that a score of 1098.3 with one degree of freedom was significant at or beyond the .0001 level of confidence. Therefore, Hypothesis 9, which stated that the recovery level of the divorced subjects would be equal to or exceed the precrisis level (where the subject was before he knew the divorce would occur), was supported.

Facing Crises With or Without a Mate

Hypothesis 10 predicted that the remarried subjects would be more interested in facing the 10 given crisis events with a mate than the formerly married divorced. The hypothesis was not supported.

To test for significance of difference between the formerly married divorced and the remarried divorced on their interest in facing crisis events with or without a mate, a chi square test was utilized.

There were 20 subjects in the formerly married divorced group (FMD) and 40 subjects in the remarried group (RMD₁ and RMD₂). When the chi square was computed it was found that a score of 3.33 with one degree of freedom was not statistically significant. A chi square of 3.84 was needed to be significant at the .05 level. Therefore, Hypothesis 10, which

stated that divorced subjects would be more interested in facing crises without a mate, was not supported.

Discussion of the Results

The results have been divided into four general categories: (a) demographic data, (b) general stress scores, (c) stress scores related to positive and negative, controllable and uncontrollable events, and (d) the testing of two basic assumptions in crisis theory.

Demographic Data

Data found regarding age at first marriage raises interesting questions. It was found that the males in the control group were one year younger than the divorced males (see Appendix C). Females in the control group were one year older than the divorced females. This raises an older question regarding age at time of first marriage. It is possible that marriage at an earlier age makes males more dependent or that there has not been enough time for independence to become firmly entrenched. It is also possible that the female's age at time of marriage is more significant than once thought. An extra year of independence may be beneficial for her in that the extra year gives her time to live on her own after leaving home and gives her time to determine what it is she is looking for before establishing her own family. This finding would suggest that women right out of high school do not have to rush into marriage and it also raises the old question of how long is long enough to wait to marry before one becomes set in one's ways.

Bronfenbrenner (1974) was concerned with the quality of the family relationship and its effect upon children. In this study 55% of the divorced group and 10% of the control group lived, for a time, in a one-parent family (see Appendix D). Either the one-parent family or the quality of the relationship could be the real problem. It also could be the inability to pass on to one's children adequate problem-solving techniques. One parent has difficulty finding the time necessary to tend to the financial, emotional, and daily maintenance needs of children and then have any life of one's own. When the subjects were asked to rate their parents' marriage, 73% of the control group and 56% of the divorced rated their parent's marriage as good to excellent. When they rated their own marriage 18% of the divorced and 100% of the control group rated their own marriage good to excellent. When parents' marriages and children's marriages were compared no significant difference was found; therefore, identification or learned behavior seems an appropriate explanation. Children from one-parent families or unhappy families may have less chance of learning the skills they need to help make marriage work.

The major portion (90%) of the sample preferred Protestantism (see Appendix E). It was found that an active church membership was far more important (at the .0001 level of confidence) to the control group than the divorced group. In the control group 97% were active church members while

only 25% of the divorced were active church members. Three explanations are offered: (a) The divorced subjects may have felt that their divorce alienated them from the church.

(b) The local church may have withdrawn its support from the person because of the divorce. (c) The divorced persons may not consider religion to be very important.

General Stress Scores

This study was a probe to determine whether stress played a role in divorce and remarriage. Cochrane and Robertson (1975) reported scores in excess of 417 on the L.E.I. to be capable of propelling one to do bodily harm to oneself, with the score for the control group being 159.3. Therefore, the writer predetermined that scores in excess of 200 would indicate the presence of stress capable of moving one toward actions or reactions which might not always be in the subject's best interest. Three hypotheses were designed to test for such accumulated stress. Hypotheses 1 and 2 attempted to determine if the stress levels were high in relation to divorce or remarriage. Hypothesis 3 was made to determine whether gender influenced stress levels.

The mean L.E.I. score for the control group in the study of parasuicides by Cochrane and Robertson (1975) was 159.3; the mean score for the control group in this research was 161.8 (see Table 1). The mean score for their parasuicide sample was 416.9; the mean score for the present divorced sample was 479.2 and 264.6 for the remarried sample. Scores

for both the divorced and remarried samples exceeded the predetermined 200 level established by the writer. The scores for the divorced were so much higher than those for the control group that the finding was significant at or beyond the .0001 level of confidence. Gender did not affect the outcome.

What implications do these findings have for family life and crisis theory? Historically, the role of stress in divorce, remarriage, and crisis theory has been evaluated only from an ex post facto position under the assumption that the events of divorce and remarriage were the major stressors. These data indicate that stress is accumulating long before the decision to divorce or to remarry has been made, thus indicating a need to study what happens prior to decisions regarding traditionally labelled crisis-precipitating events. Also, dangerously high levels of stress can cause one to act or react in ways that are not always in one's own best interest. This later statement is based upon the finding that L.E.I. stress score of 417 was high enough to cause people to inflict bodily harm upon themselves (Cochrane & Robertson, 1975). How, then, does one cope with a mean crisis score of 479.2--the mean total for the divorced group (see Table 1)? Might a divorce or a remarriage be, in at least some cases, an attempt to reduce an intolerable stress level?

Stress Scores Regarding Pleasant and Unpleasant Events, Controlled and Uncontrolled Events

Analysis of pleasant and unpleasant L.E.I. scores revealed that the divorced experienced significantly higher-weighted unpleasant events than the control group at or beyond the .0001 level of confidence (see Table 4). There were 11 pleasant, 39 unpleasant, and 5 ambiguous events on the instrument (see Appendix B). Weighted scores were used for the final analysis to control for the uneven numbers. The divorced group also experienced significantly higher-weighted pleasant events than the control group at the .02 level of confidence (see Table 4). It is important to recognize that the divorced sample had higher stress scores for both unpleasant and pleasant events indicating that they were experiencing far more stress than the control group. The divorced subjects were functioning (during the 12 months prior to the decision to terminate the marriage) under far more stress, both unpleasant and pleasant, than the control group.

The remarrieds experienced significantly higher-weighted unpleasant events scores than the control group at the .04 level of confidence (see Table 4). The weighted pleasant life events scores for the remarried was not significantly different from that of the control group. The fact that the remarried group was functioning under significantly higher stress from unpleasant life events during the 12 months before they decided to remarry has implications for people

studying remarriage. It is assumed that people marry for love; but it may be that people marry to share stress or to help lower its level in one's life.

There were 40 events on the L.E.I. within one's control and 15 events outside one's control (see Appendix B). Again weighted scores were used for the final analysis to control for uneven numbers. When the divorced group was contrasted with the control group, it was found that the divorced group received significantly higher scores for controlled events at or beyond the .0001 level of confidence (see Table 6). The divorced group was then contrasted with the control group for weighted uncontrolled L.E.I. scores and again the divorced received higher scores at the .02 level of confidence (see Table 6). Not only were the divorced experiencing more unpleasant and pleasant stress-producing events, but they were also experiencing more controlled as well as uncontrolled events than the control group. If a significant number of events experienced by the divorced are within their control, the assumption is that the events can be worked out. How rapidly these events accumulate may have a bearing but lack of resources, energy and skills to solve the problems may also be factors. The implications for marriage counseling are important. How can people learn to recognize that they have control of their own actions? After identifying stressful events which may be causing problems, the counselor may then be able to help individuals develop the

skills necessary for dealing with those problems. These data indicate that much of the stress experienced by the divorced was within their control.

The remarried group was contrasted with the control group for weighted controlled and uncontrolled events and the remarrieds received significantly higher scores for the controlled events at the .04 level of confidence (see Table 6). The weighted uncontrolled L.E.I. scores for the remarried was not significantly different from the control group. The implications of these data for the remarried are the same as those for the divorced. However, the appearance of controlled events in this group, but with a lower level of significance, suggests that something has happened between the period before the divorce and the remarriage to lessen the stress level. But the number of possibly controlled events is still significant.

Testing Basic Assumptions in Crisis Theory

There are two basic assumptions from Hill's crisis theory which have gained wide acceptance. The first is that what is a crisis for one person will not necessarily be a crisis for another. The second is that following a major crisis one's recovery level seldom returns to the point at which one was functioning before the crisis event occurred. Each assumption will be dealt with separately.

The first assumption in Hill's crisis theory is based upon his definition of crisis. "A crisis is an event which strains the resources which families possess, . . . " (p. 456). He then follows with the assumption that what is a crisis for one person will not always be a crisis for another. The "what" in his assumption refers to a specific event as a crisis (such as death or divorce). The writer challenges only the "what" portion of the definition. The "what" should not be a specific event but an accumulated level of stress which becomes intolerable when the next life event happens. The writer suggests two reasons for rejecting the definition of crisis as an event. The first is based upon the weighting scales produced by Cochrane and Robertson (1973) and Holmes and Rahe (1967). By producing weighted scores for each life event they have intimated that no single event, on either instrument, has sufficient weight in and of itself to be a crisis. The second reason for rejecting a specific event as a crisis is based upon research by Holmes and Rahe (1967) which determined that there was a correlation between accumulated stress scores of crisis proportions and serious health problems: scores between 150-199 were labeled as mild life crises with 37% of the subjects experiencing health changes; scores between 200-299 were labeled as moderate life crises with 51% of the subjects experiencing health changes; and the scores above 300 were labeled as major life crises with 80% of the subjects experiencing health changes. This

quantified figure for stress, produced by specific life events, allows one to define crisis in terms of accumulated stress rather than as a specific life event. Since no single event on the S.R.E. carries a weight in excess of 100 and no single event on the L.E.I. carries a weight in excess of 86 how can any single event in and of itself be defined as a crisis? To qualify as even a mild crisis a score between 150-199 is required. Although Cochrane and Robertson (1973) and Holmes and Rahe (1967) never defined crisis, the very nature of their research defines it as accumulated stress.

The second implication in Hill's definition that what is a crisis for one person will not necessarily be a crisis for another is that different people would not rank crisis-precipitating events in the same way. The assumption sounds so logical it seems absurd to question it. However, there appears to be an assumption within this assumption. If the assumption is true, it means that, theoretically one should be able to take a given number of subjects and ask them to rank order 10 crisis-precipitating events from most difficult to face (1) to least difficult to face (10) and find little or no agreement. However, Kezar (1973) found that 40 subjects given the same task did not produce a shotgun response but agreed at the .01 level of confidence using a Spearman Rank Order Correlation. Was this finding due to a one-in-20 chance for error? It seemed important to test the assumption again. In the present study a chi square test was employed to

determine if the traditional assumption would show that there was no agreement in the manner in which the 90 subjects ranked the 10 given crisis-precipitating events. When the assumption was tested it was found that there was no significant difference regardless of marital status in the order in which the 10 given events were ranked. Significance was found at the .02 level of confidence indicating that people do agree on which events are most difficult and which are less difficult.

Then it occurred to the writer that if subjects did not see crisis-precipitating events in a similar way, Cochrane and Robertson (1973) and Holmes and Rahe (1967) would not have been able to establish weighted scores for the various life events included in their instruments. The writer is not arguing with Hill's assumption that there must be room for individual differences. In fact, Holmes and Rahe (1967), like Hill, leave room for individual differences, but they are also more specific in that stress scores above 300 are generally viewed as cause for concern for at least 80% of the subjects. This would indicate that there is not as much variation in what individuals can tolerate as one might assume. When accumulated stress reaches an intolerable level, the individual must decide whether he or she is going to deal with the situation realistically or simply find a way to drain off the excess stress until it is reduced to a more tolerable level.

The second major assumption in Hill's crisis theory is that one's recovery level seldom returns to the point at which one was functioning before the crisis-precipitating event occurred. While the writer measured accumulated stress levels only as they related to divorce and remarriage, it is important to note that the response of the divorced subjects indicated that they felt as strong or stronger than before the divorce occurred. This does not mean that the subjects felt more healthy psychologically; it simply means that after having gone through the divorce most felt that they had reached a recovery level equal to or exceeding the level at which they were functioning prior to the divorce.

Summary

It is the writer's contention, therefore, that no crisis-precipitating event can become a crisis in and of itself. But it appears that what has happened is that the terms "crisis" and "crisis-precipitating events" have been used interchangeably. The writer also suggests that, at least in the case of divorce, subjects feel they do recover from the experience.

Critique of the Research

The research critique has been divided into five general categories: (a) the instrument, (b) retrospective data, (c) within-sample variance, (d) statistical analysis and research design, and (e) findings. These categories will be

discussed by keeping in mind that two types of error are possible in any research project: (a) the results appear to be true when they are not, and (b) the results appear to be false when they are not.

Instrument

The L.E.I. was not designed to explain why subjects act as they do under stress or what the specific amount of stress means for any given person. Instead it was developed to quantify the number of life events that a person had encountered within a given time period. Therefore, the assumption that it would measure accumulated stress can still be challenged. In addition, the instrument had never been used to compare two groups of nonclinical subjects with respect to their marital status, and therefore may not be suitable for the samples in this research.

Cochrane and Robertson (1973) indicated that they were attempting to strengthen the Schedule of Recent Experiences (S.R.E.) to be sure it adequately measured the types of life events and stress weights derived from the groups on which it was most often used. They were interested in testing a general population. To insure this they tested the instrument for validity upon college students, psychiatrists, psychologists, and a group of psychiatric patients. They noted that their instrument (the L.E.I.) was excellent for working with family and marital situations because a number of items on

the test referred to problems not relevant to unmarried people. This may be true; however, can one be sure that this instrument does not have a "psychiatric patient factor" built into it? To deal adequately with this question the writer suggests following the same methods used earlier by Cochrane and Robertson (1973) and substituting an appropriate group for the psychiatric patients to validate the types of life events and weighted scores. This would involve three identical tests comparing college students, family counselors, family life experts, the divorced, the remarried, and those currently married to their first spouse to determine whether the life events on the test were weighted similarly. This procedure would help to insure an instrument with weights derived from the group on which the instrument was to be used.

The L.E.I. can also determine which events are pleasant or unpleasant and controlled or uncontrolled by the subject. Since the instrument deals with both pleasant and unpleasant events, is it possible that when one experiences some of each that a canceling effect might be created? Additionally, are some experiences pleasant for some but unpleasant for others? The instrument might be strengthened and easier to work with statistically if the number of pleasant and uncontrolled life events were increased. The problem is not so much with the events themselves but with the large uneven numbers and the process for determining proportions.

The L.E.I. should have helped to correct the problem of test-retest reliability, but that has not yet been adequately demonstrated. The mean scores for the control group in England and for the control group in this study differed by only three points, but as with other instruments, the L.E.I. needs to be used again and again to determine reliability.

Although the concept of accumulated stress appears to be fertile ground for research, there is no way of determining which problems the subjects have worked through and which problems have been left unresolved. Therefore, there is also the question of residue. Could the event continue to be influential even after the problem had been solved? Some of the life events on the L.E.I. are claimed to be under the subjects' control and some not in the subjects' control. It would seem wise to use other instruments with the L.E.I. such as Rotter's (1954) Locus of Control instrument to help determine internality or externality and its influence on one's problem solving skills.

One additional factor should be considered regarding weighting the life events. Although there has been high inter-group reliability in weighting the life events for their respective amounts of stress, there is still some possibility that individuals do respond to life events so differently that the life events weighted score for one person might be very different for another. Garrity, Marx, and Somes (1977) suggest that life events instruments should be

accompanied by an additional instrument which measures the individually perceived stress value in each life event experienced.

Retrospective Data

All the data collected for this study were from recall, some as far back as 10 years. Retrospective data are suspect for several reasons. People tend to be selective in what they choose to remember and what they choose to forget; they may view some events differently at different times; or they may actually forget what has happened to them. Any of these reasons could have influenced the final score on the L.E.I.

Recall beyond six months is suspect according to Jenkins, Hurst, and Rose (1979) and Caplan (1975), who found that the less clearly defined and delimited life events tended to have poorer reliability in recall over time. While the most serious and personally meaningful events were the least likely to be forgotten, even they are not always remembered beyond 12 months. Events that are embarrassing or threatening are even less likely to be remembered beyond a six-month period. Rahe (1973) pointed out that lack of recall reliability is associated with longer time of recall, educational levels, ambiguity of wording, and lesser salience of the event.

Within-Sample Variance

The demographic variables (other than marital status) were very different within each group and across groups. Such

differences may have affected the total score as much as the marital status. There was a wide range of age, number of years married, and number of years divorced.

Statistical Analysis and Research Design

Using analysis of variance for comparing differences between groups may not be the crucial statistic for learning how life events influence one's decision to divorce or to remarry. A multiple regression technique or a path analysis might be more appropriate for measuring the amount of variance explained by each life event as well as the cumulative effect and the effect of which event happened first.

The research design did not control for forgetting by using either (a) the direct comparison of life events actually experienced and which were selectively reported or (b) the measurement of recall at two different times. Therefore, there is no way of knowing the degree of accuracy of the data.

Findings

The L.E.I. was designed to quantify the amount of "turmoil, disturbance and upheaval" that people are subjected to over a specific period of time. Cochrane and Robertson (1975) emphasized that high stress scores indicate high stress levels and nothing more. Scores in excess of 300 are to be considered cause for concern but are not synonymous with psychosis. There are a number of ways in which individuals might respond

to high levels of stress including divorce, remarriage, obesity, having a child, changes in drinking or smoking patterns, changing jobs, taking one's own life, taking another's life, and physical or mental illness. The divorced subjects had a higher mean stress score than those of the parasuicides in the Cochrane and Robertson study (1975). Do the higher scores suggest a greater tolerance for stress among the divorced than among parasuicides? Is divorce a form of social suicide? Do the divorced have even less congruence between self and life than the parasuicides as shown by their higher stress scores? At the current time the L.E.I. cannot answer these questions or make such assumptions. It can only measure the amount of stress which was working during a specific period of time in the lives of the subjects tested.

The high mean L.E.I. score for divorced subjects may mean that they merely experienced more life events and that the pleasant events cancelled the unpleasant events. This would invalidate the size of the score as an indication of accumulated stress.

An additional finding which raises speculation about the instrument centers on the mean L.E.I. score (469) for the divorced subjects and the mean score (265) for the remarried sample. What accounts for the lower score for the remarried divorced? Were individuals able to lower their own scores? Would the divorced group have had scores as low as the remarried group had they been asked to report their life events after the divorce?

Few answers will be found until a longitudinal study tests subjects over four different periods: (a) for the 12 months prior to the decision to divorce, (b) for a time period after divorce without remarriage as a possibility, (c) for the 12 months prior to the decision to remarry, and (d) for a 12-month period in the second marriage (say three to five years later, when they are not considering a second divorce or separation) to determine whether there is any change in their stress levels.

The finding that people do rank a list of events in the same order of most severe to least was used to challenge Hill's theory that "what is a crisis for one may not be a crisis for another." It may very well be that their ranking is based on what they think is true in this culture and may not show true individual differences.

A fourth finding needing further study is how the divorced subjects could have such high stress scores and then feel that their recovery level had returned to or exceeded the level at which they were functioning before the divorce occurred. Was this self-report accurate? Why did nearly all the divorced subjects feel so strongly about this issue? Might the remarriage or the new spouse be responsible for lowering the stress level thus allowing the subject to recover or gain insight? Is it possible to learn from one's stress-producing events? Did the divorce actually solve some of the person's real problems? Did the divorce force the individual

to learn better problem-solving techniques? Do high stress scores denote pathology or accumulated stress and nothing more? There is a need for a longitudinal study with a pre-test and posttest design. Additional instruments should be used to verify the self-report.

Reference Note

1. Whitmore, a statistical consultant at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro, indicated that for each group, Cochrane and Robertson (1975) considered the relative proportions of checks for each item. For each group, this relative proportion for any individual item was the number of people in that group who checked the item divided by the total number of checks made by the people in that group. The motivation for considering this statistic was the fact that the total number of checks for the parasuicide group was considerably more than for the control group. It thus appeared that individual items made relatively less contribution to the total stress for parasuicides than for the controls. The previous authors then tested for significant differences based on these relative proportions, in addition to testing the raw proportions. Since the usual test for equality of two proportions is based on a binomial proportion out of a fixed number of independent trials, this test would not be applicable for these relative proportions. Thus, the current author has decided to form analogous relative proportion scores for individual items for each person and test their significance.

An additional justification for this approach is that the approach used in the article by Cochrane and Robertson (1975) would not be reasonable if the large total number of checks for the parasuicide group resulted almost entirely

from a few individuals who checked virtually everything. Thus, it was implicitly assumed that each parasuicide checked a relatively large number of items. Hence, the current approach of forming a relative proportion score for each person may have more merit. For each person surveyed, the total number of items checked by that person was first determined. Then each item was given a relative proportion score for that item. The score was the reciprocal of the number of items checked for each item checked. The hypothesis tested was then that the mean relative importance of the item did not depend on group for the individuals who checked the item.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This research challenges the belief that a specific event, such as divorce, is a crisis. Any particular event may be a precipitator of crisis, but it is accumulated stress (at a very high level) which is the crisis. When stress reaches a level which forces one to act--perhaps in one's own best interest, perhaps not--a crisis has developed.

The major purpose of this study was to determine whether unusually high levels of stress preceded the decision to divorce or to remarry. The research was designed to measure the amount of accumulated stress over specific periods of time for the divorced, the remarried, and the first married. The accumulated stress levels for three different marital status groups were tested. The divorced subjects were tested for the 12 months prior to their decision to divorce; the remarried subjects were tested for the 12 months prior to their decision to remarry; and those currently married to their first spouse (the control group) were tested for the 12 months prior to responding to the Life Events Inventory in the research questionnaire.

Significant differences in accumulated stress levels were found according to marital status. The mean L.E.I.

score was 162 for the control group and 479 for the divorced group (see Table 1). Significant differences existed between the divorced and control groups at or beyond the .0001 level of confidence (see Table 2).

Support for validity of the research instrument was shown by the similarity between the mean L.E.I. scores for the control group in this study (162) and the control group (159) for Cochrane and Robertson (1975). The L.E.I. scores for the parasuicides--those who had inflicted bodily harm upon themselves--studied by Cochrane and Robertson (1975) had a mean L.E.I. score of 417. Holmes and Rahe (1967) have continued to emphasize the danger of stress scores in excess of 300. The writer assumed that if scores of 300 plus could cause serious health problems, scores in the 200 range could indicate the presence of stress in sufficient amounts to affect decisions regarding the marital relationship. Therefore, the writer predetermined that a score in excess of 200 would imply stress of serious proportions.

The divorced subjects in this study had experienced unusually high levels of accumulated stress prior to the decision to end the marriage (mean of 479). The mean L.E.I. score for the remarried divorced was 265. Although the L.E.I. scores between the remarried and the control groups were not statistically significant, it should be noted that the mean L.E.I. score for the remarrieds was 265 which was 65 points higher than the predetermined score needed to determine a high level of

stress and only 35 points below the 300 danger zone suggested by Holmes and Rahe (1967).

In addition to determining a total accumulated stress score, the L.E.I. can also determine which events are pleasant or unpleasant and which events are controlled or uncontrolled. The divorced group experienced significantly more events of all four types than the control group, but they also experienced significantly more unpleasant and controlled events.

A second major purpose of this study was to test two major assumptions of crisis theory. (a) The first assumption is that what is a crisis for one person will not be a crisis for another. Waller and Hill (1951) said that "no crisis-precipitating event is the same for any given family . . ." (p. 460). (b) The second assumption is that after a crisis, an individual might approach, but not exceed, the level of organization at which one was functioning before the crisis occurred (Hansen & Hill, 1964; Hill, 1949, 1968; Waller & Hill, 1951, 1966). Neither assumption was supported statistically.

The sample consisted of 90 subjects. Sixty subjects had experienced divorce and 30 were still married to their first spouse. Twenty of the 60 divorced subjects were tested as remarrieds. From this total sample of 90 three groups were established on the basis of marital status with equal numbers of males and females in each group. The formerly

married divorced (FMD, 20 subjects) and the remarried divorced (RMD₁, 20 subjects) who composed the divorce sample were tested for the 12 months prior to the decision to end the marriage. The remarried sample (RMD₂, 20 subjects) was tested for the 12 months prior to the decision to remarry. The control group (CMFS, 30 subjects) was composed of those currently married to their first spouse and were tested for the 12 months prior to responding to the research questionnaire. Subjects were obtained from local and county groups for the divorced, referrals, a local community college, and churches in the Eden-Reidsville area.

The researcher placed the following limitations upon the sample: subjects had to be between the ages of 18-60; in the case of the divorced or remarried the divorce or remarriage must have taken place within the previous 10 years; the divorced subjects must have been legally divorced at least 12 months; the currently married to their first spouse subjects had to have been married at least five years and had not contemplated divorce or separation during the last 12 months.

The instrument used to determine the amount of stress the subjects had experienced for the designated 12-month periods was the Life Events Inventory (Cochrane & Robertson, 1973). The remaining information was obtained by a questionnaire (see Appendix B) designed by the writer which included demographic data and (a) rank ordering 10 crisis events,

(b) the desire to face crisis events with or without a mate, and (c) the recovery level profile.

Analysis of variance techniques were used to determine significance of differences in the L.E.I. scores for main effects of marital status and gender and for the interaction effect. Before groups could be compared for differences in pleasant to unpleasant life events and controlled to uncontrolled life events the scores had to be converted to weighted proportions (see Note 1, p. 131). The weighted proportions were then tested by using an analysis of variance. A chi square was used to compare the differences between the groups for ranking crises, the recovery level profile after divorce, and the need for meeting crisis precipitating events with a mate.

Ten directional hypotheses were formulated and tested by this research. Each hypothesis and the results are listed below:

1. During the 12 months prior to the final decision to legally terminate the marriage the L.E.I. scores for the divorced will be significantly higher than the L.E.I. scores for the control group. The hypothesis was supported.
2. During the 12 months prior to the decision to remarry the L.E.I. scores for the remarried will be significantly higher than the L.E.I. scores for the control group. The hypothesis was not supported. However, the writer assumed that if scores

of 300 plus could cause serious health problems scores in the 200 range could indicate the presence of stress in sufficient amounts to affect decisions regarding the marital relationship. Therefore, the writer predetermined that a score in excess of 200 would imply stress of serious proportions. The mean L.E.I. score for the remarried divorced was 265.

3. There will be a significant difference between the L.E.I. scores for males and females. The hypothesis was not supported.
4. During the 12 months prior to the final decision to legally terminate the marriage the divorced will experience a higher incidence of unpleasant to pleasant life events by weighted L.E.I. scores than the control group. The hypothesis was supported.
5. During the 12 months prior to the decision to remarry the remarrieds will experience a significantly higher incidence of unpleasant to pleasant life events by weighted L.E.I. scores than the control group. The hypothesis was supported.
6. During the 12 months prior to the final decision to legally terminate the marriage the divorced will experience a significantly higher incidence of controlled to uncontrolled life events by weighted L.E.I. scores than the control group. The hypothesis was supported.

7. During the 12 months prior to the decision to remarry the remarrieds will experience a significantly higher incidence of controlled to uncontrolled life events by weighted L.E.I. scores than the control group. The hypothesis was supported.
8. There will be no significant difference in the order in which the remarried and divorced rank the 10 given crises. The hypothesis was supported.
9. The recovery level scores for the remarried divorced and the formerly married divorced will be equal to or exceed the pre-crisis level score. The hypothesis was supported.
10. The remarried will be significantly more interested in facing the 10 given crises with a mate than will the formerly married divorced. The hypothesis was not supported.

Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn:

1. During the 12 months prior to their decision to divorce, the divorced subjects had a mean stress level score of 479 indicating the presence of stress of crisis proportions.
2. The divorced subjects experienced more unpleasant life events than the control group.

3. The divorced subjects experienced more life events that were within their own control than the control group.
4. The traditional assumption in crisis theory is that "what is a crisis for one person will not be a crisis for another." The "what" in this assumption refers to a specific event as the crisis (such as death or divorce). The writer challenges only the "what" portion of the definition. The "what" should not refer to a specific event but to an accumulated stress level which has become intolerable. No event can become a crisis in and of itself but the event can move a previously high stress level to crisis proportions.
5. The divorced subjects did not feel that working through the process of divorce had made them weaker than they were before the event occurred.
6. The divorced subjects would rather face stressful events with a mate than alone.

Recommendations for Research

After considering the overall findings the writer offers the following recommendations for further development and study.

1. There is a need for more research to check the revised theory of crisis which takes into account

both what occurs before one reaches the limits of one's stress and what happens following the crisis-precipitating or "trigger" event.

2. Further research is needed to determine what tools would be most effective in reducing the impact of the most stress-producing events as measured by the L.E.I. instrument.
3. A longitudinal study for divorced subjects using a test-retest format should be instituted to learn if or when their stress level drops to a manageable level and then verify the findings with the recovery level profile instrument (see Appendix B).
4. The writer suggests using all three sections of the L.E.I. when working with divorced, remarried, and married subjects to achieve a more accurate score.
5. Prospective studies rather than retrospective studies may yield more accurate assessment of the actual count of life events. Prospective studies are those in which an accurate recording of life events is made regularly. After a year or more, this information is studied to see what relationship the events have to each other.
6. Items in Section 3 may apply to the divorced and married as well as the single individual. However, when scoring the test the researcher should be careful not to include duplicated items in the total score.

Recommendations for Counselors

Since this study was a probe into the possible role of accumulated stress in divorce and remarriage it would seem that counselors and family life experts would consider using the L.E.I. as a diagnostic tool for the following reasons:

1. To be aware that when a subject approaches a stress level score in excess of 300 the subject may be functioning under a great deal of stress and the counselor should therefore watch for behavior which may not be in the subject's best interest;
2. To recognize that divorced subjects with L.E.I. scores in excess of 250 may be "open to remarriage" if a willing partner were available;
3. To consider the L.E.I. as a premarital instrument to determine what amount of stress is present and to attempt to ascertain whether stress might be a factor in one's decision to marry;
4. To measure accumulated stress levels among subjects arrested for aggressive or violent behavior;
5. To measure accumulated stress suggests that a preventive program can be developed for working with married couples who have L.E.I. scores in excess of 300-400;
6. To find ways to bring effective problem-solving techniques into the counseling situation to help people reduce or control their stress level.

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Appendix A
Letter of Introduction

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT GREENSBORO



School of Home Economics

March 22, 1979

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter will serve to introduce Edward F. Kezar who is conducting research for the Doctor of Philosophy Degree at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in the Department of Child Development and Family Relations. This research has been reviewed for academic importance and ethical standards and has been approved by the proper University officials.

We hope that you will be able to participate in this research. If you have any questions concerning the legitimacy of this research, feel free to call our office between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The telephone number is 379-5315.

Sincerely,

J. Allen Watson, Ph.D.
Professor and Chairman
Department of Child Development
and Family Relations

JAW/as

GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA / 27412

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA is composed of the sixteen public senior institutions in North Carolina
an equal opportunity employer

Appendix B
Research Questionnaire

I.D. NUMBER _____

MARITAL STATUS QUESTIONNAIRE

MARITAL STATUS:

- Divorced and never remarried (FMD)
 Divorced and remarried (RMD)
 Widowed and remarried (RMW)
 Currently married to first mate (CMFM)

SEX: Male Female

AGE: _____ Years

EDUCATION: (Please circle the last year of school you completed)

Grade School: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
 High School: 9 10 11 12
 Trade/Technical School: _____ Area of training
 College: 12 14 15 16
 Graduate School: _____ degree or approximate number of hours beyond college

ANNUAL INCOME:

\$2,999 or less \$3,000-\$4,999 \$5,000-\$7,999
 \$8,000-\$11,999 \$12,000-\$19,999 \$20,000 plus

RACE: Asian, Black, Caucasian, Indian,
 Spanish/American

RELIGION:

Christian
 Not a member of a church or do not attend church regularly
 Full church member & attend church regularly
 Protestant Roman Catholic
 Eastern/Greek/Russian Orthodox
 Mormon
 Jewish
 No religious preference
 Other

FAMILY INFORMATION:

_____ Age when you were married.

_____ Age when you were divorced.

_____ Age when you were widowed.

_____ Age when you decided to remarry.

_____ Age when you remarried.

Were your parents ever divorced? _____ mother _____ father
(leave blank if no)

Was one of your parents widowed? _____ mother _____ father

How would you rate your first marriage?

_____ Excellent, _____ Good, _____ Fair, _____ Poor, _____ Terrible

How would you rate your current marriage?

_____ Excellent, _____ Good, _____ Fair, _____ Poor, _____ Terrible

How would you rate your parent's marriage?

_____ Excellent, _____ Good, _____ Fair, _____ Poor, _____ Terrible

1. Most of us face crises at one time or another. Please rank the following crisis events assigning (1) to the most difficult crisis for you to face and (10) to the least difficult crisis for you to face:

_____ Income

_____ Employment

_____ Relocation

_____ Problems with your children

_____ Loneliness

_____ Social Activities

_____ Questioning your religious faith

_____ Critical health problems

_____ Minor health problems

_____ Death

2. If I had the choice I would want to face the 10 crises (in question 1) with a mate.

_____ I strongly agree

_____ I agree

_____ I am undecided

_____ I disagree

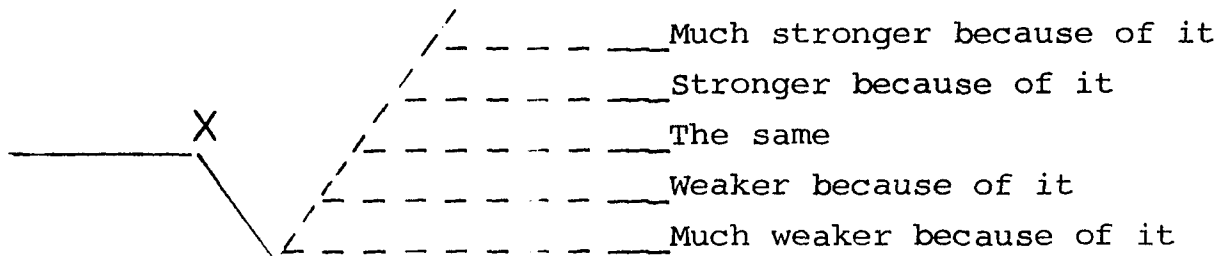
_____ I strongly disagree

3. (For remarried people only!) When I compare this marriage to my previous marriage I would say that this marriage is

Much better
 Better
 About the same
 Worse
 Much worse

4. FOR ALL DIVORCED AND WIDOWED PEOPLE

The diagram below is for you to show the path your life has taken since the loss of your mate through divorce or death. After having had this experience do you feel you are better able to cope with life or are you less able to cope? The diagram below has been designed to help you answer this question. The X represents your divorce or spouse's death. It is assumed that the event was upsetting; however, the dotted line represents your angle of recovery. Please check (✓) the appropriate line which most accurately describes your current stage of adjustment to that experience.



5. The event I faced was: divorce date of a mate
6. It has been year: and months since I experienced the event.

THE LIFE EXPERIENCE TEST

Please go over the life events twice to make sure you have not overlooked an event you have experienced. Put a check mark by each event you have experienced during the last 12 months. Thank you.

| | | | |
|-----|-----|--|---------|
| - C | 1. | Unemployment (of head of household) | ___(68) |
| - C | 2. | Trouble with superiors at work | ___(40) |
| + C | 3. | New job in same line of work | ___(31) |
| + C | 4. | New job in new line of work | ___(46) |
| @ C | 5. | Change in hours or conditions in present job | ___(31) |
| + C | 6. | Promotion or change of responsibilities at work | ___(39) |
| @ C | 7. | Retirement | ___(54) |
| @ C | 8. | Moving house (from one home to another-- not new) | ___(42) |
| + C | 9. | Purchasing own house (taking out mortgage) | ___(40) |
| @ U | 10. | New neighbors | ___(18) |
| - C | 11. | Quarrel with neighbors | ___(26) |
| + C | 12. | Income increased substantially (25%) | ___(35) |
| - C | 13. | Income decreased substantially (25%) | ___(62) |
| - C | 14. | Getting into debt beyond means of repayment | ___(66) |
| + C | 15. | Going on holiday (vacation) | ___(29) |
| - C | 16. | Conviction for minor violation (e.g., speeding or drunkenness) | ___(34) |
| - C | 17. | Jail sentence | ___(75) |
| - C | 18. | Involvement in fight | ___(38) |
| - U | 19. | Immediate family member starts drinking heavily | ___(65) |
| - U | 20. | Immediate family member attempts suicide | ___(66) |
| - U | 21. | Immediate family member sent to prison | ___(61) |
| - U | 22. | Death of immediate family member | ___(69) |
| - U | 23. | Death of close friend | ___(55) |
| - U | 24. | Immediate family member seriously ill | ___(59) |
| + C | 25. | Gain of new family member (immediate) | ___(43) |
| - C | 26. | Problems related to alcohol or drugs | ___(59) |

| | | |
|---------|--|---------|
| - C 27. | Serious restriction of social life | ___(49) |
| - C 28. | Period of homelessness | ___(51) |
| - U 29. | Serious physical illness or injury requiring hospital treatment | ___(65) |
| - U 30. | Prolonged ill health requiring treatment by own doctor | ___(48) |
| - U 31. | Sudden and serious impairment of vision or hearing | ___(59) |
| - C 32. | Unwanted pregnancy | ___(70) |
| - U 33. | Miscarriage | ___(65) |
| - C 34. | Abortion | ___(63) |
| - C 35. | Sex difficulties | ___(57) |
| + C 36. | Marriage | ___(50) |
| + C 37. | Pregnancy | ___(49) |
| - C 38. | Increase in number of arguments with spouse | ___(55) |
| - C 39. | Increase in number of arguments with other immediate family members (e.g., children) | ___(43) |
| - C 40. | Trouble with other relatives (e.g., in-laws) | ___(38) |
| - U 41. | Son or daughter left home | ___(44) |
| - C 42. | Children in care of others | ___(54) |
| - U 43. | Trouble or behavior problems in own children | ___(49) |
| - U 44. | Death of spouse | ___(86) |
| - C 45. | Divorce | ___(75) |
| - C 46. | Marital separation | ___(70) |
| + C 47. | Extra-marital sexual affair | ___(61) |
| - C 48. | Break-up of affair | ___(47) |
| - U 49. | Infidelity of spouse | ___(68) |
| + C 50. | Marital reconciliation | ___(53) |
| @ C 51. | Wife begins or stops work | ___(34) |
| - C 52. | Break-up with steady boy or girl friend | ___(51) |
| - C 53. | Problems related to sexual relationship | ___(54) |
| - C 54. | Increase in number of family arguments (e.g., with parents) | ___(43) |
| - C 55. | Break-up of family | ___(77) |

Key for Interpreting L.E.I. Events

- + Pleasant events (11)
- Unpleasant events (39)
- @ Ambiguous events (5)
- C Controllable events (40)
- U Uncontrollable events (15)

Appendix C
Mean Age for Sample

| Subject | N | Current Age | At First Marriage | At Divorce | At Remarriage |
|------------------|----|-------------|-------------------|------------|---------------|
| FMD | 20 | 32.8 | 21.4 | 28.8 | |
| Males | 20 | 32.8 | 23.7 | 29.5 | |
| Females | 10 | 32.4 | 19.1 | 28.1 | |
| RMD ₁ | 20 | 36.0 | 20.8 | 32.2 | 34 |
| Males | 10 | 36.8 | 22.0 | 33.1 | 35 |
| Females | 10 | 35.1 | 19.5 | 31.3 | 33 |
| RMD ₂ | 20 | 37.9 | 22.2 | 30.6 | 34 |
| Males | 10 | 39.7 | 24.5 | 33.3 | 36 |
| Females | 10 | 36.0 | 19.9 | 27.9 | 33 |
| CMFS | 30 | 45.0 | 21.5 | | |
| Males | 15 | 46.5 | 22.3 | | |
| Females | 15 | 43.5 | 20.7 | | |

Information deduced:

1. All married about 21-22 years of age. Divorced age at marriage = 21.5.
2. Married 8-10 years before divorce, (a) 9.1 average, (b) RMD₁ = 11.4 years married.
3. CMFS: (a) males married younger and females older than divorced.
4. RMD₁ & 2 waited 2.6 years to remarry.

Appendix D
Parents and Subjects Marriages

| Subjects | FMD | RMD ₁ | RMD ₂ | CMFS |
|---|-----|------------------|------------------|------|
| <u>Marital Status of Parents:</u> | | | | |
| Experienced marital dissolution | 50% | 55% | 70% | 10% |
| Did not experience marital dissolution | 50% | 45% | 30% | 90% |
| <u>Rating Parent's Marriage:</u> | | | | |
| Excellent | 30% | 5% | 25% | 30% |
| Good | 15% | 48% | 45% | 43% |
| Fair | 20% | | 10% | 20% |
| Poor | 25% | 26% | 10% | 7% |
| Terrible | 10% | 21% | 10% | - |
| <u>Rating Subject's Own First Marriage:</u> | | | | |
| Excellent | 5% | - | - | 63% |
| Good | 30% | 5% | 15% | 37% |
| Fair | 35% | 25% | 40% | - |
| Poor | 20% | 50% | 30% | - |
| Terrible | 10% | 20% | 15% | - |
| <u>Rating Own Second Marriage:</u> | | | | |
| Excellent | - | 55% | 60% | - |
| Good | - | 30% | 40% | - |
| Fair | - | 5% | - | - |
| Poor | - | 10% | - | - |
| Terrible | - | - | - | - |

Appendix E
Levels of Education, Income, and Religion
for the Sample

| | FMD | RMD ₁ | RMD ₂ | CMF'S |
|---------------------------------------|-----|------------------|------------------|-------|
| <u>Education:</u> | | | | |
| Grade school | | | | 7% |
| High school | 20% | 30% | 10% | 33% |
| Trade/technical | 20% | 20% | 20% | 7% |
| Two years college | 25% | 15% | 20% | 27% |
| Four years college | 20% | 25% | 15% | 13% |
| Graduate school | 15% | 10% | 35% | 13% |
| <u>Income:</u> | | | | |
| \$2,999 or less | 10% | | | |
| \$3,000-\$4,999 | | | | 3% |
| \$5,000-\$7,999 | 5% | | 5% | |
| \$8,000-\$11,999 | 15% | 25% | 20% | 10% |
| \$12,000-\$19,999 | 50% | 20% | | 33% |
| \$20,000+ | 20% | 55% | 75% | 55% |
| <u>Religious Denomination:</u> | | | | |
| Protestant | 94% | 95% | 90% | 93% |
| Roman Catholic | 6% | | 5% | 7% |
| Mormon | | 5% | | |
| Other | | | 5% | |
| <u>Church Membership:</u> | | | | |
| Member and attend regularly | 28% | 21% | 58% | 97% |
| Not member or not regular attender | 72% | 79% | 42% | 3% |