SOCIAL WEBS AND FAMILY NETS

CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF FAMILY LIFE

by

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I hereby declare that the work undertaken in the research, composition and writing of this Thesis was entirely my own.

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ABSTRACT

Investigations of adolescents whose parents have divorced (and perhaps remarried) have mainly been concerned with issues typically associated with self-concept, parent-child, sibling, and peer-group relationships, educational performance, psychological disturbance, economic hardship, and socialization. Relatively little is known about the adolescent's own perceptions of and expectations towards marriage and parenting, divorce and remarriage. Little is also known about the extent to which cultural differences impinge upon the adolescent's developing perceptions in these areas. Consequently, the present study is concerned with some cultural differences and similarities in such perceptions of a sample of 382 Scottish and 499 Californian adolescents. Specifically, employing both survey methods and a number of 'in-depth' interviews, the cross-cultural study undertook to question how adolescents understand and/or relate to the divorce of their parents, to the concepts of divorce, of marriage and remarriage, and especially of their expectations concerning their own future familial relationships. The expectation - based on the greater incidence of divorce and remarriage in California - that there would be a marked difference in perceptions of marriage between the two cultures was not borne out and adolescents in both cultures were remarkably similar in their outlook. Rather, the more obvious differences in responses to the various issues of marriage investigated, were based on family composition differences, common to both cultures. Specifically, adolescents from single/blended families were less traditional and conservative in their views than were adolescents from both-parent families. The former more than the latter indicated future expectations of their own divorce and remarriage.

In an earlier study (Parry, 1979) on the Development of Social Awareness in Children ranging in age from 5 to 14 years, it was found that even very young children were able to articulate their views on social issues such as poverty, status and power, on the concepts of minority groups, sex stereotyping, and political influence. 'Older' children, specifically those in their 'teens', were also able to discuss their views on social and family interaction, parenting roles, marriage, separation and divorce. The simple aim of that study was to find out to what extent children have a concept of the different elements which make up a society, how these concepts or perceptions change with age, and whether or not the child's gender, influences the development of these perceptions in any obvious way.

The findings were clearly defined in some areas but only tentative in others. For instance, while there were some quite marked age differences, gender differences were not very significant. More specifically, it was found that children at the lower end of the age-range were mostly unaware of their individual contribution to the family or role within society. In contrast, those at the higher end of the age-range, had acquired a perception of family and societal roles and the nature of interaction, as well as the notion of cause and effect, concepts which enabled the young adolescent to discriminate between various societal norms and expectations.

A quite natural step from that study was to enquire further into adolescent social perceptions and specifically, to ask the questions: Do adolescents have clearly defined perceptions of marriage and parenting and further, to what extent are their perceptions influenced by their own family structure? These are not only interesting questions but also important ones, for, any understanding of the development of social perceptions of the young in society serves to some extent, as an understanding of the ways in which societal expectations are developed. For instance, does the adolescent's experience of his/her parents' marriage indeed determine how marriage is *perceived* or are there other, extra-familial influences? And if so, which? Do these apply equally to the matter of divorce? Further, given that in western societies the period of adolescence is traditionally known to be one during which the individual strives towards a certain independence from parents, to what extent, one may ask, does the existing parenting style within the family impinge upon the adolescent's *perception* of parenting?

These questions were central to the investigation which was undertaken and which will be reported in later pages.

We all carry the family of our youth
within ourselves...and we all project
it again into the families we form as
adults". (Bohannan, 1970)

CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTON

This study is about adolescence. More specifically, it is an investigation into adolescent perceptions on existing and future familial roles, on marriage, and on parenting. And even more specifically, this study is an attempt to shed some light on how, if it all, adolescent perceptions are shaped and influenced by the cultural mililieu within which an individual is reared. However, while the thrust of the study is toward adolescent perceptions, it is essential that such perceptions be placed within the context of our understanding of "the family" itself and not as a universal ipso facto, for to attempt any study of the sociology of adolescence - or, for that matter, of any phase of childhood - without reference to familial or 'household' influences- would be tantamount to sociological heresy. Yet, as it will be shown, both traditional and contemporary views of the family are so many and so varied that the task for the individual researcher becomes doubly difficult in finding an acceptable definition of the family and an understanding of the sociology of the family. Poster (1978) put it succinctly when he wrote, "With regard to the study of the family... the existing state of research is so sparse and so conceptually unclear that it is not possible to offer a theory of how one family structure changes into another" (p.141).

Therefore, before proceeding further, and towards the construction of a framework for the undertaking of this present

study it is necessary to consider 'some of the different perspectives on 'the family', all of which may be seen as valid, albeit optional, scenarios. In the ensuing pages, it will become clear that there is only one consensus among theoretical sociologists, namely that there is no consensus on what exactly is the family. This is not meant to be a profoundly new observation on the part of the writer but simply an emphasis that any piece of research which must incorporate the sociology of the family immediately has to address the fact that, in sociology perhaps more that any other social science, there are prolifically diverse perspectives to contemplate.

Contemporary perspectives on The Family

To begin with, few would argue that in modern times, both the structure of the family and the roles within families, have undergone great changes when compared with what constituted 'typical' families and familial roles of earlier decades. It is fair to say that today both within scholarly works and in the popular press, the family is being attacked and defended with equal vehemence. On the one hand, it is blamed for oppressing women, abusing children, spreading neurosis and preventing community. One the other hand, it is praised for upholding morality, preventing crime, maintaining order and perpetuating civilization. Marriages are being broken more than ever before and being constituted more than ever before. The family is the place from which one desperately seeks escape and a place in

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which one longingly seeks refuge. To some the family is boring, stifling and intrusive; to others it is loving, companionate and intimate.

With so many prevailing perceptions of the family, perhaps it is inevitable, that the varied historical perspectives within which the study of the family have been undertaken will be perpetuated well into the coming decades. It seems that the traditional sociological writings of the family and its salient or constituent characteristics will continue to take place within a number of (sometimes conflicting) theoretical paradigms such as political, functional, psycho-analytic, structural, socio-economic, interactionist, moralist-religious, and more recently, feminist.

What then is the family? Is there such a thing as 'the' family? There are a variety of definitions of the family available for different purposes. There are legal and administrative definitions, there are statistical and demographic models and there are ideal typical definitions of, for example, the 'nuclear family' or the 'extended family'. There are also ideal models of what the family ought to be like, evaluations of the importance and meaning of family life in the context of society as a whole.

In his introduction to *The Sociology of the Family*, Anderson (1980) observes that more recently in this century, notably within the last decade or so, there has been an emergence of

three new themes which have significantly changed the way in which the contemporary family is viewed by sociologists. The first, an empirically based family history offering historical comparative perspectives, has highlighted mistaken assumptions on which ideas about the past development of the western family had been based.

The second new perspective on the family re-appraises the contemporary family in a more radical way. Here, the psychiatric critique associated with the work of R.D.Laing and David Cooper, in common with the work of various feminist writers, argue in terms of a perceived "destructiveness" inherent in the conjugal family as we have known it.

The third perspective which has developed in recent decades according to Anderson, has been "the impact of phenomenological and symbolic interactionist modes of analysis through which the family, the identities and self-images of family members, and family behaviour are all viewed as socially constructed realities" (p.9)

Elliot (1987) reports that the approach to the problem of defining 'the family' is now generally accepted and the old concept of 'the family' has given way to a new concept, that of 'families' (p5).

Berger and Berger (1983) point out that this change in terminology recognises the empirical fact of diversity and reflects a shift in ideological positions. It reflects, they

say, the normative acceptance of diversity and a reluctance to accord any particular arrangement moral superiority as the family.

However, Elliot argues that this change in terminology does not solve the definitional problem for it raises the question: what is it that is varying but regarded as familial? Nevertheless, although this problem remains unresolved in formal terms, distinctions are made in practice and some have become common currency in sociological discourse. For instance, the term 'nuclear family' is used to refer to a unit consisting of spouses and their dependent children. This term, Skolnick (1978,p43) notes, is sometimes used to refer to an observable group of people who live together and are set off from the rest of society in tangible ways, but it is also used in an abstract way to denote simply the recognition of bonds between parents and children. Elsewhere we have 'conjugal family' (Goode. 1963) which refers to a family system in which the nuclear family is more or less independent of kin and in which the main emphasis is on the marital relationship.

Bell and Vogel (1968,p3) cite the 'extended family', a term used to denote "any grouping, related by descent, marriage or adoption, that is broader than the nuclear family" while Litwak (1960a and 1960b) makes distinctions even in 'extended families'. For example, between the 'classical extended family' and the 'modified extended family'. One is a family system based on the

geographical propinquity of related nuclear families, economic interdependence, the authority of extended family groupings over the nuclear family and stress on extra-nuclear kin relationships, the other is based on a loose set of kin relationships in which nuclear families, though geographically dispersed and autonomous, value and maintain extra-nuclear kin relationships.

Goldthorpe (1987) suggests that we distinguish family as household from family as kin and refers to 'family life' rather than 'the family'. What we are concerned with are events, processes and experiences, whether they are those of individual development, or the formation and dissolution of families (p3).

Diana Gittings (1985) reflects this point and argues that thinking in terms of 'the family' leads to a static vision of how people actually live and age together and what effects this process has on others within the household in which they live. Moreover, the environment and conditions in which any household is situated are always changing, and these changes can and often do have important repercussions on individuals as well as households.

Approaching this point from an historical perspective Allen (1985) argues that even though Laslett (1969,1974) shows that household composition has remained surprisingly constant over the last 400 years, this does not mean that the 'content' of domestic life - the relationships and activities it incorporates - is

equally unchanged. The thing we term '.the family', says Allen - and even to talk of it in this way makes it appear overly fixed and static - is modified and moulded as other elements of the social mosiac of which it is part themselves alter. Even while apparently performing the same ageless functions - such as caring for, protecting and socialising its members - the specific manner in which the family achieves these is not historically constant.

The notion then, of there being such a thing as 'the family' is highly controversial and full of ambiguities and contradictions. Indeed, Morgan (1975) argues that the difficulty of defining 'the family' or even, of talking about 'the' family at all arises from an absence of s strong theoretical tradition or agreement, for while there exist plenty of theories about particular parts of the sociology of the family - the incest taboo or fertility for example - there does not appear to be the same tradition of theoretical argument and discussion that we find say, in the sociology of religion or the study of organisations. A consequence of this absence says Morgan, has been the somewhat fragmented nature of the subject, ranging from sexual behaviour to kinship in modern urban society, from social factors affecting fertility to the changing roles of the sexes. Families in their entirety often appear to be missing in this process of fragmentation.

Yet, Morgan further notes, because 'the family' differs considerably between classes, different parts of the world,

different ethnic and religious groups, and so on, and because each individual 'family' is constantly changing over time as its members die, get married and have children, perhaps at present it would not be worthwhile to provide 'the' theory of the family: for one thing it is by no means certain that theoretical boundaries in Sociology necessarily or usefully coincide with conventional institutional boundaries such as 'the family'. 'religion', 'industry', and so on. Writes Morgan (op cit) "I am certainly not sure what a 'theory of the family' would look like even if it were to be developed" (p7).

Tamara Hareven (1982) points out that it is important when analysing families to differentiate between individual time, family time, and historical time. Thus in considering the structure and meaning of 'family' in any society it is important to understand how definitions of dependency and individual time may vary and change, how patterns of interaction between individuals and households change, and how historical developments affect all of these.

Hareven's views are consistent with those of Poster (1978) who suggests that historians and social scientists in general have gone astray by viewing the family as a unitary phenomenon which has undergone some type of linear transformation. Instead, the family should be viewed as discontinuous, involving several distinct family structures, each with its own emotional pattern. Further, that these family structures cannot be correlated, in

their development, with any single variable, such as modernization, industrialization, patriarchy, capitalism, urbanism or empathy. Childbearing, childrearing, the construction of gender, allocation of resources, mating and marriage, sexuality and aging all loosely fit into our idea of family, and yet all of them may be seen to be variable over time, between cultures and between social sectors.

Not very surprisingly then, it seems that both historically and today the bulk of the sociological writings on the family suggest to us what it is not rather than what it is. If 'the family' cannot be defined with reference to any specific variable, is it possible to define it by reference to a number of variables? And if so, can there be a general agreement on which variables or combinations thereof constitute 'the ' definitive ones? Perhaps not. Nevertheless, is there some kind of universal notion of the family?

Here again, the claim that 'the family' is universal has been especially problematic because of the failure by most to differentiate how small groups of people live and work together, and what the ideology of appropriate behaviours for men, women and children within families has been.

Imbued in western patriarchial ideology are a number of important and culturally specific beliefs about sexuality, reproduction, parenting and power relationships between age groups and between the sexes. The sum total of these beliefs

make up a strong symbol-system which is, labelled as the family. Gittings (op cit) argues that while all societies have beliefs and rules on mating, sexuality, gender and age relations, the context of rules is culturally and historically specific and variable, and in no way universal. Thus it is meaningless to claim that the family is universal.

If defining families is so difficult, how do we try to understand how and why people live, work and form relationships together in our own societies?

To do this the theorist must first confront a thorny problem: The family is defined by different societies in greatly divergent ways and it is given greatly divergent degrees of importance. The pre-industrial European view denotes either household or lineage and even then it is relatively indistinct as a social category. In the modern period the family is defined as a prominent unit of society but tends increasingly to be limited to the conjugal unit of parents and children. In "primitive" societies kinship seems to dominate family almost completely. Hence diffent societies do not have comparable definations of the family. Historians cannot, therefore, trace the history of the family by relying upon the meanings provided by the societies themselves.

If it is difficult for both the historian and the social scientist to conceptualise a 'universal' defination of the family, is it any easier to define the family within the constraints of a specific society? Most writers agree that yes,

not only is it possible to do so, it is the only way in which we can begin to comprehend ' the family'.

Nevertheless, here too, we must be cautious. Poster argues that maybe the family is so dependent on other levels of society (the state or the economy) that changes in its structure cannot be understood by reference to aspects of the family itself. It may be that the structure of the family is determined almost wholly by the economy or by politics.

However, there are important theoretical reasons for doubting this conclusion. As suggested in earlier pages, just as political forms do not emerge in step with economic forms, so family forms are not perfectly contemporaneous with other levels of society. Industrial capitalism and representative deomocracy, for example, do not emerge at the same time as modern family forms.

Therefore family forms enjoy at least a partial autonomy from the state and the economy. Since the family enjoys partial autonomy, changes in its structure will untimately need to be explained separately from explanations of the birth of industrial capitalism or democracy. But where is one to look for such explanation?

Gittings suggests that first of all, and most importantly, it is necessary to look beyond the 'traditional' (i.e. the patriarchial) view of the family construct, that we must allow a perception of the family other than the patriarchial ideology

which is embedded in our socio-economic and political institutions and thinking, and which penalise or ostracise those who transgress it by leading non-conformist lives.

Secondly, we need to acknowledge that while what we may think of as families are not universal, there are still trends and patterns specific to our culture which, by careful analysis, we can understand more fully. Additionally, we can accept that while there can be no perfect definition, it is still possible to discover certain defining characteristics which can help us to understand changing patterns of behaviour and beliefs.

Gittings goes further in suggesting how best we may understand the family in our society. She states that problematic though it may be, it is necessary to retain the notion of co-residence, because most people have lived, and do live, with others for much of their lives. Thus, she suggests that 'household' is a useful defining characteristic and one which gets us away from the ideological concept of the patriarchially-determined notion of 'family'. 'Household' should not be interpreted as a homogenous and undivided unit. Virtually all households will have their own division of labour, generally based on ideals and beliefs, as well as the structure of age and sex.

The family then, is not necessarily that which traditional patriarchial ideology implies it is but rather, a 'household' of individuals living together with diferent roles and expectations.

Yet, these have always been perceived roles and expectations and probably, there will always be perceived roles and expectations. Perhaps what has changed over time is the nature of the perceptions or roles and expectations as influenced by changes in the modern world, and especially among women.

With the strengthening of the 'feminist' perspective a gradual change has been set afoot in challenging previously sanctified patriarchial models of the family where the roles of women were prescribed and proscribed.

In her review of Feminism and The Family, Caldwell (1984) comments on the writings of Barrett and McIntosh (1982), Coward (1983), Segal (1983), and Thorne and Yalom (1982). Caldwell writes that is is still feminists who do most of the work of reopening and extending the issues of sexual identity, of different forms of domestic arrangement, of state regulation of an allegedly private arena, of questions regarding motherhood and the concepts of the child's rights.

Of course, not all of the issues which purport to be strictly specific to 'familial' roles are indeed so, for as Caldwell points out, even a cursory examination of the list of contents of the cited works of the writers referred to exposes the degree to which 'the family' or even 'family forms' is a shorthand for discussion of a multiplicity of different issues with quite different parameters and quite different problems.

Nevertheless, in focussing on issues that can be linked to

the concerns and lifestyles of feminist women, the central problems are those associated with how to live and with whom, how to approach (or not) the realities of shared parenting and/or collective childcare, how to continue to grapple with these as daily problems when the discrepancies between political aspirations and individual needs and desires become apparent.

Such an emphasis is present in Barrett and McIntosh's (op cit) views as detailed in *The Anti-social Family*. Although they argue strongly for flexibility and variety in what one may term 'intra-familial' roles, they primarily single out the institution of marriage as the institution to resist, thus arguing both implicitly and explicitly that the 'role' of wife becomes redundant.

To those steeped in the historically traditional 'male-as-head-of-household' ideology of the family, the feminist views as expoused by Barrett and McIntosh will be anathema. But it is a fact and increasingly so, that with the prevailing extent of divorce, single-parenting, and alternative lifestyles, in this western world in many instances the role of 'wife' within a family context does <u>not</u> exist, either by choice, design or circumstances.

Indeed, as it will be shown in later pages, in some societies, notably within the USA, the incidence of single-parenting is high enough to constitute the rule rather than the exception.

Ideologically, western society has given highest status to long-term relationships between men and women, and between parents and children. Ideologically, such relationships are supposed to be loving and caring, though in reality many are not. Yet, so ingrained is our concept of the 'male and female with children' type of family that even though often times relationships within such families are totally disrupted by conflict, ideologically such a concept of the family is largely still upheld as the model, and when this specific model is challenged by non-conforming and/or alternative 'household' styles of familial interaction some commentators ask if the family is falling apart (see Poster, 1978, p.139). Indeed, they go on, is it worth saving in any case for challenged by feminists, child liberationists, advocates of sexual freedom, libertarian socialists, humanistic psychologists and radical therapists, the family is losing its long-standing sanctity. Commentators such as Amitai Etzioni (1977) point to divorce, child abuse, alcoholism, single-parent families, single-person households and mental illness as indicators of family disequilibrium and conclude that the family no longer provides the context of emotional support it once did!

Compelling questions intrude upon the social scientist. How, given the absense of a definitive interpretation of the family can the validity of such criticisms and indicators be tested and evaluated? Does the family contribute to the oppression of women

and children, to sexual repression, to capitalist exploitation and to psychic ailments? Are the values of monogamous love, privacy, individualism, domesticity, maternal child care and emotional fulfillment realised in or corrupted by the family? And in all types of families at that?

Gittings clarifies these complex issues by referring to the interaction between people as the essential constituent of society. A society will always be composed of a myriad of relationships between people, from the most casual to the most intimate. Relationships are formed between people of the same sex, the opposite sex, the same age group, different age groups, the same and different social classes, and so on. Some relationships will be affectionate and loving, others will be violent or hostile. Some will be made up of brief encounters, some may extend over much of a person's life-cycle. Some will give rise to emotional distress, to alcoholism, to child abuse, and to oppression. All of these variations, can and do occur among 'people', whether within families or out of them, whether within a group of individuals sharing a common household lifestyle or persons related by kinship.

Whatever is the definition of the family, one fact of people living together, at least when they are adult and are not 'bound to remain' by social laws and regulations, is that individuals live together on the basis of <u>voluntary association</u>. True, as Hirst (1981) suggests, the family may be structured by laws,

social policies and dominant ideologies, but it is formed by the acts of choice, of two individuals coming together, perhaps in marriage, perhaps not, and having children. This concept extends itself to that aspect of choice where, in the wake of a breakdown of an existing relationship, the individuals concerned have the choice to each go their own way, to form other alliances, to establish other households and dynamics.

However, germane to the stated subject matter of the present study on adolesscent perceptions is the question of _how_ these family/household dynamics impinge upon children.

Of course, up until they reach an age when they may go their own way, children do not have any choice but to be part of the household phratry, whether or not it is a benevolent one. On reaching adolesence however, an individual may be seen to be poised nearer to the age of making choices and acting upon them in terms of family alliances.

To reiterate, the study reported here, focuses on one specific facet of the family, namely the adolescent and may be seen to be located within one of the many competing paradigms outlined in preceding pages.

This paradigm does not have a specific label but in so far as it describes a process within which one may attempt an understanding of intrafamilial dynamics, its validity is as acceptable as any specific label, e.g. Benevolent Functional Institution.

Simply then, the study reported here and discussed in the following pages, is done so within the framework of the family as an interactive, self-styled institution of individuals living collectively and sharing common experiences, albeit within different roles, expectations and perceptions.

In a sense, the 'theoretical style' of this study, if one may enter such a concept, was a phenomenological approach to understanding more about those aspects of family life which somehow, permeate the developing perceptions of the developing child within a household. Here, Backett's (1982) notion of stages and processes in family life is particularly illuminating. As detailed in Morgan's (1988) discussion of phenomological studies in *The Family, Politics and Social Theory*, Social Scientists have, for some time, used notions of 'the family life cycle', developing the idea that individuals, families and households can be understood as passing through a set of styles, elaborated with varying degrees of sophistication. Centrally, the construction of these life cycles are analytical constructions based upon the analysts' assumptions about age and about crucial turning points in family life. Backett, in contrast, seeks to construct an ideal typical construction of family processes based upon the parents' own understanding of their world. Backett specifically refers to and explores the importance of gender differences within parenthood but her approach may be extended to encompass the child's understanding as well.

One difficulty in taking a phenomenological approach is that one ends up looking at tendencies rather than absolutes, with an emphasis on 'how' rather than 'why' but it is hoped such a problem has been avoided in this study, for as subsequent discussions will indicate, perceptions elicited from the adolescents in this study, dealt with the 'whys' as much as the 'hows'.

Against the backdrop of the various discussions on 'family' outlined in preceding pages, let us now turn to a discussion on Adolesence and attempt to appropriately place it within the context of the introduction to the study undertaken.

PERSPECTIVES ON ADOLESCENCE

It is customary, in setting out to study a particular phenomenon or in discussing the issues surrounding that phenomenon, to first place it within a meaningful framework of reference. To this end - and especially in the context of scholarly undertakings - it is traditional to formulate the nature of that which is being investigated against that which is already known. However, in those instances where the phenomenon studied is directly a manifestation of a specific social group - as is the case in the present study - it is necessary, first of all, to clearly define the 'group' in question, so that any ensuing discussion of the manifest phenomenon can be more easily understood. Simply, the phenomenon here is *Adolescent Perception*- i.e. conceptual understanding- while the particular social group is the *Adolescent Group.* The words have been italicised in order to emphasize that the term adolescent - from its Latin root *adolescere* (meaning to "grow to maturity") - is one that has become so much a part of our understanding and our thinking in various societal contexts, that its validity is taken for granted.

This is not to suggest that the terms - adolescent and adolescence - are invalid but rather, that it is necessary, especially in the context of the present study, to clearly understand what the terms stand for and, perhaps more appropriately, to enquire into their aetiology, not in a semantic

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sense but in their sociological beginnings.

The way people define adolescence influences the way they view adolescents themselves (Forisha-Kovach, 1983). Some people view adolescence as primarily a time when children grow bigger physically and they compare adolescent behaviour with that of children. Others view adolescence as an era of pre-adulthood and assume that adolescent behaviour is comparable to that of adults. Still others see adolescence as a time in-between, distinct from both childhood and adulthood. However, before going any further, it is necessary here to raise an important point, indeed an issue of great significance towards a clearer understanding of Adolescence, both in an historical sense and as it is still largely viewed today. In her paper *Femininity and Adolescence*, Barbara Hudson (1984) demonstrates quite clearly that above all, "Adolescence is a 'masculine' construct" (p 35). It is true that all our images of the adolescent, the restless, searching youth, the Hamlet figure; the sower of wild oats, the tester of growing powers, and so on, are masculine images. Not surprisingly therefore, it will be shown that predominantly, if not totally, the historical references to, and *ipso facto* concept of adolescence, is of male adolescents.

Brake (1980) concedes that an examination of the literature reveals, on the one hand, a sexist perspective, but arguing against the criticisms of women such as McRobbie and Garber (1976) and Smart (1976) on the absence of girls in subcultural

studies, suggests that such an absence is not surprising because on the other hand, "subcultures, traditionally have been a place to examine centrally variations on several themes concerning masculinity. New forms of femininity for girls have come later than adolescence....and have come from more middle-class groups with a feminist perspective". (p 2)

However, almost all people, when talking about adolescence, are referring to young people between the ages of twelve and nineteen. Social scientists, however often do not agree on the ages covered by adolescence, much less on further definitions and, although as indicated above, the Latin term *adolescere* means to "grow to maturity," social scientists consistantly disagree on what growing into maturity means.

The difficulty stems, in part, from a lack of scientific studies on the adolescent experience. Social scientists have done extensive research on *child* development, but until recently, *adolescent* development has not been a subject of intense study. In contrast to the lack of available scientific information, the general public and social scientists have always had many strong opinions on adolescence, opinions coloured by the vantage point from which they observe people in general and adolescents in particular. Thus, the combination of little information and strong opinion has led to the development of many perceptions of adolescence, each with its own specific definition of the developmental period.

In recent times, the traditional perspectives from which adolescence is viewed may be categorised simply as biological, psychological, and social. Those with a *biological* orientation generally define adolescence as "the span of a young person's life between the onset of puberty and the completion of bone growth" (Konopka, 1973). Adolescence is seen as a reflection of the preprogrammed sequences that occur in the course of physical maturation (Muuss, 1975).

Social scientists with a *psychological* orientation are more concerned with the changes that occur in the ways that adolescents think and feel about themselves and their world. Adolescence is viewed as a psychological process influenced but not determined by external events, as a time of psychological change and psychological crisis (Erikson, 1950, 1968; Elkind, 1971).

Others, usually social psychologists and sociologists, view adolescence from a *social* perspective and define adolescence in terms of the part adolescents play in the larger society. This period spans the years from age twelve to the early twenties and ends when the individual acquires the vocational, educational, sexual, social and ideological commitments that identify an adult according to the society and culture in which the individual belongs (Muuss, 1975). For these social scientists, adolescent behaviour is often explained as a response to a marginal status in society.

Most definitions of adolescence, however, incorporate a recognition of *change* in all three spheres - biological, psychological, and social.

Further, when adolescence is recognized in a culture, it is generally described in terms of rapid, multidimentional *change*. Consequently, before going on to review the literature covering adolescent perceptions and how trends in marriage and divorce, styles of parenting, and the related issues impinge upon them, it is first necessary to look at adolescence within an historical framework.

However, an important note must be added here. In spite of an abundant literature on adolescence, and a quite notable bibliography associated with the 'history' of adolescence in both Britain and America, the majority of scholarly work in this area has been undertaken by American researchers and writers. To a large extent (as will be discussed), this is perhaps due to the 'functional' association between the term 'adolescence' and its American conceptual aetiology.

Nevertheless, the historical allusions to adolescence in the following pages are not all specific to American culture and may be seen to represent historical perceptions of youth on a general and universal level within the context of Western civilization.

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ADOLESCENCE - AN HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK

The history of adolescence as a growth stage and as a psychological concept can be traced directly to the publication of G. Stanley Hall's two volume work, *Adolescence*, published in 1904. Some (Lee Manning, 1983), suggest that the concept as we know it today may have originated with Rousseau's *Emile*. In his attempt to clarify and prolong childhood, Rousseau (Foxley translation, 1911) characterised the period of adolescence as being a second birth, or beyond the earlier period of childhood.

> "...we are born, so to speak twice over;
> born into existence, and born into life:
> born a human being and born a man...." (p.172)

Attempting to further define the concept, Rousseau continued:

> "...I still speak of childhood for want of a
> better word, for our scholar is approaching
> adolescence, though he has not reached the
> age of puberty...." (p.128)

However, contrary to certain beliefs, adolescence, both as a concept and as a term, is relatively new. According to Demos and Demos (1969), the concept did not exist prior to the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Although the term incorporated older attitudes and modes of thinking, adolescence was an American invention. According to Demos and Demos, the term was barely recognised before the last century. Similarly, Philip Aries in *Centuries of Childhood* (1962) suggested that even the concept of childhood was hardly acknowledged.

Bakan (1971) provides further evidence that adolescence is a modern invention. He writes:

"...the idea of adolescence as an intermediary, In starting at puberty and extending to some period in the life-cycle unmarked by any conspicuous physical change but socially defined as 'manhood' or 'womanhood' is a product of modern times...." (p.979)

According to Aries, 'youth' signified the prime of life. Therefore, room did not exist for adolescence. Furthermore, the meaning of adolescence was ill-defined in other languages. Both French and Latin either confuse the two or did not allow for discrimination. Aries wrote;

"...in its attempts to talk about little children, the French language of the 17th Century was hampered by the lack of words to distinguish them from bigger ones. The same was true of English where the word 'baby' was also applied to big children...."

In general, the American term 'adolescence,' was not understood by other cultures, and the idea took a long time to be defined. In the past, different ages were defined in varying terms as Aries further states;

"...youth is the privileged age of the seventeenth Century, childhood of the nineteenth, adolescence of the twentieth...."

Bakan (1971) suggests that social changes such as compulsory education, child labour laws, and juvenile deliquency associated with America's development in the latter half of the nineteenth

century and the earlier twentieth century resulted in the term 'adolescence.'

Basically, American society considered a person a child as long as he or she did not have the authority to terminate schooling, to work as an adult and to be convicted as a criminal. In essence, adolescence was an American invention to make provision for the time between childhood and adulthood, the time a person was not a child yet did not have the authority to act and the right to be treated as an adult.

As such, adolescence was a cultural creation rather than a physical developmental period. The concept of adolescence as a stage of human development is a recent phenomenon. According to Proefrock (1983), its existence seems to depend upon the presence of an urban, industrialized society. It is nonexistent in parts of the world today. In America the necessary conditions for the emergence of a period of adolescence did not exist until the middle of the nineteenth century.

To reiterate, adolescence exists only within a cultural context. Proefrock argues that it is not a physical stage of development in the same sense as infancy, childhood, and adulthood and although there does exist a relatively brief period of time when the body is actually undergoing the process of puberty, that process is usually complete by approximately age 14, at which time the youth has what is essentially, an adult body. A period of adolescence which extends roughly from age 12

to 20 however is purely a cultural creation, and "the adolescent is in a transitional period between childhood and adulthood that is cultural rather than physical." (p.343) In that position, the adolescent is subject to ever-changing societal as well as personal demands.

Adolescence as a process - an historical framework continues

Adolescence as a cultural phenomenon, is subject to redefinition at any time. Hall (1904) saw the period of adolescence as one of new birth. The process was thought of as being characterised by a disruption of the personality which resulted in what Hall referred to as the period of *storm and stress.*

Indeed, historically the disruptive process and negative perception of the behaviours associated with "youth" - what is now referred to as adolescence - has been variously documented. Lee Manning (1983) quotes Hesiod of the eighth century as describing youth in the following terms:

> "...I see no hope for the future of your
> people if they are dependent on the
> frivolous youth of today, for certainly
> all youth are reckless beyond words...
> When I was a boy we were taught to be
> discreet and respectful of elders, but
> the present youth are exceedingly wise
> and impatient of restraint...." (p.524)

His opinion of eighth century youth indicates an historical concern for the behaviour of younger generations.

Antisocial and unacceptable behaviour also was recorded in

the 1700s.   Solomon Stoddard (1717) complained and warned of the
pride of youth which created disobedience, rebellion against
family government,   anger,   self-conceit,   boasting, Sabbath
breaking, extravagant attire and other misconduct.   Also he
cautioned of the sexes being together in the evenings "...in
company together toying and dallying and stirring up corruption
with one another...."

Hiner (1975) adds, that the problem was so severe that
Stoddard decried the tendency of youth to gather together in "the
evenings, on wet days and on public days, to engage in a great
deal of vain worldly proud discourse, and corrupt communication."
Hiner notes other examples of unacceptable behaviour.   In 1718,
Israel Loring was more specific when he wrote:

> "...when children and young people are
> suffered to haunt the taverns, get into
> vile company, rabble up and down in the
> evening, when they should be at home to
> attend family worship, in the dark and
> silent night, when they should be in their
> beds, when they are let alone to take other
> sinful courses without check or restraint,
> they are then on the high road to ruin...." (p.18)

The concern over the degradation of youth was so wide-spread
during the period 1800-1875 that a large number of books and
pamphlets were directed toward the "moral problems" of youth
(Demos and Demos, 1960). Specifically, in 1863 the literature on
child rearing repeatedly used such words as "disorder,"
"disobedience," "licentiousness," and "indulgence."   A typical
example from Burton (1863) is as follows:

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"...it must be confessed that an irreverent,
unruly spirit has come to be a prevalant, an
outrageous evil among the young people of our
land...some of the good old people make facetious
complaint on this...'There is as much family
government now as there used to be in our
young days' they say, 'only it has changed
hands'...." (p.3139)

Regarding this same group of young people, Mary Carpenter
expressed similar concern in her 1875 address to the American
Social Science Association stating that the whole society would
suffer if parents neglect their duty to their young (Abbott,
1938).

This concept of the 'disruptive adolescent' is not simply
one to be found in an historical context but continues with us to
the present era. For example, in Britain, the 'Teddy Boys' of
the late 1950's, the 'Mods' and 'Rockers' of the 60's, and more
recently, the 'Punks' of the 80's all fall within the general
category of 'Hooligans' first coined in the late 19th.Century
(Pearson, 1983). Indeed, in his detailed report of Mods and
Rockers Cohen (1973) argues that society will continue to
generate problems for some of its more vulnerable members such as
working class adolescents, and will continue to condem whatever
solutions these groups may find for their problems. Cohen refers
collectively to these different 'disruptive' adolescent groups as
"Folk Devils" and postulates that other, as yet nameless, folk
devils will be created, resulting in other moral panics in
society.

However, in spite of the many historical references and the

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even current day wide-spread beliefs about adolescence being a period characterised by disruptive behaviour, not everyone subscribes to this point of view. Indeed as it will be discussed shortly, there are some (Lee Manning, 1983) who even challenge the premise that adolescence is a time of rebellion marked by antisocial behaviours, and contend that such beliefs are simply developed myths which are even today being perpetuated by the mass media and popular literature.

Thornburg (1982) feels that although adolescents engage in rebellious activities, they are not rebellious by nature. Often because of peer pressure, "The immediacy of behaviour often overrides the individual's personal values or sense of right or wrong."

A study by Frankel and Dulleart (1977) also provided similar evidence that rebelliousness was the extreme rather than the norm, and suggests that too often the behaviour of a small percentage of adolescents becomes the norm for judging the entire adolescent population. Lipsitz (1979) provides a succinct and excellent example with regard to pregnant adolescents. Although the pregnancy problem is serious and deserves attention in the form of social, educational, and health programmes, the problem affects only a small percentage of adolescents.

Lipsitz's illustration is of a society which becomes flabbergasted when a million teenagers become pregnant each year - 30,000 under fifteen years of age - yet placing these

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statistics in perspective, "one tenth of one percent of girls 10 to 14 are having babies; 98 percent of unmarried girls [to age 17] are *not* becoming pregnant."

In an examination of the relevant literature from the 17th Century to the present Lee Manning (1983) concluded that there are three myths surrounding prevailing perceptions on adolescence: *Myth 1* is that contemporary adolescence is a time of rebellious, antisocial and unacceptable behaviour; *Myth 2* is that the concept of *adolescence* has been present throughout history; and *Myth 3* that there is a generation gap between adolescents and their parents.

(This latter point will be discussed in some detail later.) In summarizing the findings, Lee Manning writes:

> "...the concept of adolescence, a relatively
> new invention, is plagued with misconceptions,
> assumptions, and outright myths. As a
> defined stage of growth, adolescence is yet
> to receive deserved recognition. Debunking
> the myths, assumptions and falsehoods will
> require a more critical examination of the
> prevailing beliefs about adolescence...." (p.828-9)

Adolescence as a growth stage: developmental, socio-cultural, and economic

To reiterate, Hall (1904) saw adolescence as a period of *storm and stress*. It reflected his view of adolescence as a somewhat psycho-pathological stage of development, and this became his most enduring contribution to the study of adolescence.

This view was challenged, but no real change in perception

took place until Erik Erikson's *Childhood and Society* in 1950. Erikson emphasised that storm and stress was not a necessary condition of adolescence, but only one of a number of ways of dealing with the issues associated with the adolescent stage of growth. In Erikson's developmental theory of life stage crises, the adolescent faces the challenge of identity versus role confusion. In order to successfully deal with this challenge, the adolescent must reestablish the continuity and sameness of childhood in post-pubescent life. The entire process was characterised by Erikson as a time of "uprootedness" as opposed to storm and stress.

This and other supporting theories of adolescent development (Gessell and Ilg, 1943; Bandura and Walters, 1963) see adolescence as a normal developmental period and have done much to remove the psycho-pathological aspect. However Proefrock (1983) agrees they have also further obscured the fact that adolescence is a cultural rather than physical phenomenon.

David Bakan (1971) speaks of "the promise" in considering the place of the adolescent in present day America. The promise is if young persons do all the things they are "supposed to do" during adolescence, they will then realise success, status, income, power, and so forth in adulthood. This is, in essence, deferred social gratification and it takes the form of longer periods of formal education and training. Society's acceptance of this agreement carries the implicit acceptance of what has

been called the "youth culture."

The youth culture is believed to occur when adolescents, cut off from the adult world and no longer a part of the child world, create a world of their own. This world includes their own music, clothes, literature, and even language (Plumb, 1972). To this list one should also add *perception* for, as it will be argued in later pages, adolescent perceptions play an important and interactive part in the creation of their own world.

It is argued that in an affluent society with a growing economy, "the promise" usually holds for those who are in the socio-economically advantaged classes. However, when society can no longer ensure its part of the bargain, for example, when there is rising unemployment and inflation, the period of education and training can no longer reliably guarantee a secure future. Indeed, this appears to be what began to occur in America during the 1960s and in a sense, is continuing to the present time.

While this has always been the case for lower socio-economic groups, it began during the late 1960s to be true also for large numbers of middle class-adolescents (Bakan, 1971). Middle-class deliquency became an important reality and the youth of the 60s became what Margaret Mead (1970) and others described as a *generation in revolt.*

Although the immediately preceeding discussion is clearly based upon changes in American culture, observations of the so-called 'generation in revolt' can quite readily be generalized to

other cultures during the corresponding time period.

For example, implicit in the introduction to his book *Adolescent Boys of East London*, Wilmott (1972) refers to what had then become a quite predictable and much publicised aspect of adolescents in revolt - the so called 'teenage riots' at Bank Holiday seaside resorts, football rowdyism, damaged telephones and slashed train seats. In general, violence and delinquency were thought to be on the increase but especially among the young. There was great concern too about what was seen as generally declining moral standards, especially among a generation of young people seen to be readily equipped with contraceptives who were growing up in an increasingly 'permissive' atmosphere.

Guided by current theories of adolescent development, society - especially American society - responded in various ways to these initial signs of breakdown (Bakan, 1971). For example, the age of majority was lowered to eighteen.

Merely reducing the length of the sanctioned period of adolescence, however is hardly sufficient to save the validity of "the promise."

Society has continued to make changes. The jurisdiction of juvenile courts has been reduced and there seems to be an increasing trend to try adolescents charged with serious crimes in adult courts (*Op cit*). Most indications are pointing toward an even more abbreviated period of adolescence in the future.

In large part, it has been the psychological view of adolescence as a normal developmental period which has guided the direction of these changes. The relationship between the social fact of adolescence and the psychological concept of adolescence then, seems to be one of interacting cyclical movement. As we have seen, the social fact of adolescence came into existence and was undergoing change from roughly the middle of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century, by which time the psychological concept was well-defined, but at considerable variance with the social fact. The *social definition* of adolescence then began undergoing changes that are still in process.

This leads to the question concerning the acquisition of identity and values during adolescence. In particular, given that the social fact of adolescence and the psychological concept of adolescence interact cyclically on an on-going dynamic basis, one may ask to what extent are adolescent values themselves *derived* from current social values? Or, are adolescent values simply a mirror to a dynamically changing society?

Further, do adolescents in fact have a *perception* of their socio-cultural roles? Are they aware of the ever-changing social order as they create their own world with its concomitant music, fashion, language, and sub-cultural expectations?

It may be that there are no simple answers and that these questions are not mutually exclusive. In all likelihood, the

various perspectives within which we may understand the adolescent growth stage - i.e. the biological (developmental/psychological), the socio-cultural (sociological), and the economic perspectives, may all be seen to portray adolescence as a period of growth influencing and influenced by societal change. To understand this more clearly, it is necessary to understand the adolescent's acquisition of identity and values.

Adolescence - Identity and Values

The acquisition of values is a multi-dimensional task. First, information or content is somehow disseminated. This must then be incorporated into the cognitive structure and processed. Finally, behaviours which reflect the values must be evidenced. Juhasz (1982) suggests that on the individual level what is valued becomes something to which one becomes faithful, something that directs one's life - a part of one's identity, and it is during adolescence that identity consolidation is the major task. During adolescence one is developing competencies which will be incorporated into the value system.

Maturation and identity formation are integrally tied to the changing individual who is simultaneously interacting with and reacting to the changing society, or more succinctly "the human being is a changing being in a changing world." (Riegel, 1976, p.696)

In his *Youth, Identity, and Crisis* (1968), Erikson argues

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for the importance of the 'historical perspective' in the adolescent's identity formation, i.e. the developmental processes at adolescence and the way in which the individual and society react and interact have implications for the transmission and nurturing of values by the collective society.

Erikson defines historical perspective as:

"...a sense of the universality of significant events and an often urgent need to understand fully and quickly what kind of happenings in reality and in thought determine others and why." [Basic to the concept of historical perspective is the idea of historical identity] "For the group, the society to realise its composite historical identity, a core must be retained and will be retained whatever the individual does...." (p.247)

Juhasz (1982) supports this view and argues that the development of an historical perspective is a unique aspect of adolescence. It is important in identity formation and also serves an important function in society and in history. For youth, the historical core intersects with the individual life history. The life history includes those genetic and environmental factors which have had an impact from birth until the present. This impact is irreversible and cannot be wiped out.

The adolescent, in the process of intersecting with the historical past identifies both with significant persons and with ideological forces.

In developing her argument further, and drawing heavily on the Eriksonian model, Juhasz goes on to suggest that adolescents

developmental characteristics, adolescents are influential change
agents in this process.

Adolescence - Identity and values: the social milieu and values

In more recent times, notably within the second half of this
century, has emerged the social psychological and analytical
perceptions of adolescence. An important development at the onset
of adolescence, as seen by psychoanalytic theory, is the moving
away from the love objects of early childhood. Freud (1953)
suggested that a certain amount of affection become liberated as
a result of the dissociation from early love objects and goes in
search of new love objects outside the family. With it occurs a
weakening of the parental authority which formed the backbone for
"superego" development. This weakening of the superego is
further reflected in feelings of loneliness, inner turmoil and
depressed moods. Consequently, Adolescence has been described as
a phase in which mourning and being in love dominate the
affective life of the young person.

Implicit in the more recent Laingian-Cooperian view however,
is that the adolescent not so much disassociates from love
objects as actively attempts at fleeing from the crushing
destructiveness of the family's influence, which is seen to
undermine the sexual and social independence of the individual
(Laing,1961,1971; Cooper, 1971).

Adolescent identity, including the value components, emerges
in the context of the current social milieu. The social ethos
provides the content with which youth interact and against which

they react. In addition, aspects of the historical perspective which they encounter are determined by adults in the current social setting. Adolescents, interacting with and reacting to the social milieu, cannot escape the impact of the historical era in which they live. This determines the number of socially meaningful models from which they can select different aspects with which to identify. Within the framework of the Social Interactionist school of Sociology, Simmel's concept of "a web of circumstances" (Wolff, 1959) underlines the extent to which the adolescent is caught within the social milieu while in a 'conflict of transition.'

At this stage of social development the adolescent's conflict is underscored by a need to 'break away' and exert some independence while, at the same time, seeking a degree of group affiliation, concomitant with its own pressures.

The adolescent strives for individual uniqueness away from polarisation, either wholly toward identification with family and kin or wholly toward the peer group.

In an era of rapid technological change such as the present time, Erikson sees "the ideological needs of all but intellectual youth of the humanist tradition beginning to be taken care of by a superordination of ideology to the technological superidentity." (1968, p.259)

Individuals who are in a position to make a difference, to have a stake in what goes into the historical perspective - that

which is retained and passed along - are the parents, teachers, and other adult mentors of youth. On the collective level, church, school, state, and mass media could be effective transmitters of values. The considerations of what, how, why, and when, relative to aspects of both the collective and the individual indentity, are the same for the individual as for the social group.

Ideally, argues Juhasz (1982), there should be common underlying elements as a basic philosophy or value system to which all ascribe. This would provide structure and guidelines within which all the uniqueness that individuals strive for in identity formation is possible. The assumption here is that it *is* possible to have a single philosophical outlook or value system (presumably determined by the society in question) which is flexible enough a framework within which the adolescent may develop a unique identity. Whether or not this is possible in practice is debatable.

It is true that in some societies a single well-defined value system determined by the state is often the rule. For example, in his comparison of childrearing in the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., Bronfenbrenner (1970) noted the significant influence of a single limited doctrine at the collective and individual levels, on consistency of goals and related behaviours.

He argues that with a single philosophy established by the state, taught by the social institutions, and reinforced by the

school, home, and peers, both choice and conflict are eliminated. Also eliminated, is the opportunity to be unique, to leave one's mark on history, to be somehow 'oneself.' While this may be a somewhat simplistic interpretation of Bronfenbrenner's view, it is nonetheless sufficient a basis for his comparison with the *status quo* in democratic countries. For instance, and in contrast, not only are there many options available in the United States - as in other Western Democracies - there are also many visible, often competing values fighting for a place in history.

Varied ethnic, cultural and religious groups strive to retain some parts of a collective identity, while, to reiterate, the adolescent within the subculture strives for individual uniqueness. Yet, within the framework of western democracies, the historical perspectives differ significantly. For instance, it could be argued that for American youth, it must be more difficult than it is for their contemporaries in older nations to come to grips with the concept of the historical perspective, to go back far enough in time, to grasp the common strands which have persisted unbroken throughout a long history. American visible artifacts do not go back even five centuries. Unlike the inhabitants of Rome, or London, or Edinburgh, and other 'older' European cities, Americans cannot as they go about their work in their daily life, get a feeling of where they come from and what their distant ancestors constructed, valued, and preserved.

In the historical process of childhood, the past survives in

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fairy tales, family lore, superstition, gossip, and early verbal
training. Erikson sees "the mythmakers of religion, politics,
arts, science, drama, cinema, fiction, social sciences, and
psychiatry, the press and mass media" as contributing by
awakening and training the historical consciousness in young
people on a daily basis. (1968, p.257) Their content, and method
of presentation determine the historical logic absorbed by youth,
the ideas which they present go back generations and those who
control the production and presentation are, in essence,
responsible for what youth react to and interact with.

However, this poses something of a problem which gives rise
to certain questions. For instance, given that the historical
perspective and the current social milieu both play a part in the
values component of adolescent identity formation, how in fact
does one select from the past that which should continue to be
valued? How does an adolescent represent or present what has
been selected? How does he or she bridge the gap by making
meaningful connections with today's social milieu?

The very heterogeneity, freedom, and complexity of a social
milieu which is diversified, within which the climate is open
to change and variety, and where there are few inhibitors, gives
rise to the problem of choice, of boundaries, of structure and
direction, all of which are inherent in the social milieu of
today's adolescents.

On the one hand it is sometimes argued (e.g. Juhasz, 1983)

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that in the search for solutions to the values problem, adults, adolescents, and society are inextricably involved.

At the individual level, parents and teachers can direct, control and interpret what the mythmakers present.

However, on the other hand it may be argued that the current social milieu makes it almost impossible for any but the most mature (in the Eriksonian sense) individual to make a contribution to the value and identity formation of youth. Built-in family mythmakers, the grandparents and extended family members, are being increasingly phased out as disseminators of the historical past. Often, parents are immersed in their own ongoing individuation and for many, interpretation of today's mythmakers - mass media, science, religion, etc. is focused not on children but on self. Indeed, it could be argued that even where parents consciously impose their influence on the identity formation of their adolescent children this influence is increasingly in competition with that exerted by the mythmakers representing 'freedom', 'rebellion', 'individuality', and 'self-fulfillment'.

On the one hand, these myths are perpetuated along less clear amorphous lines such as indicated by Pollert (1981) in her book *Girls,Wives,Factory Lives*, where she analysed the responses of young working-class girls as to their preparedness for the future and concluded that there is a "collective myth of marriage as a final escape...[which]...prejudices their chances of coming

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to grips with a future of unskilled work." (p.20). Indeed Pollert, found this myth to be so strong that even among older women, many already married and with children, there is a corollory belief that the myth of 'work' is temporary, or only peripheral to their 'real' lives.

On the other hand, the myths are more clearly defined and at times, quite explicit when for instance they are depicted in the realms of Television, Popular Music, Fashion, and Advertising. For example, McRobbie (1982) analysed the predominant themes in *Jackie*, Britain's best selling teenage magazine for girls, and found that problems of romance, a pre-occupation with beauty and pop mark the limits of the subject matter offered - all other possibilities are ignored or dismissed. McRobbie argues that two things are happening here (1) Teenage girls are invited to 'join' a close, intimate sorority where secrets can be exchanged and advice given; and (2) they are also presented with an ideological bloc of mammoth proportions, one which "imprisons" them in what McRobbie calls " a claustrophobic world of jealousy and competitiveness" (p265).

Also, with increasing numbers of single-headed households and re-constituted families, children of divorce have more complicated and less stable family histories and value structures (issues which are shortly to be discussed in greater detail). It is not inconceivable that for many adolescents, the resulting confusion and difficulty in establishing a common, ongoing,

value-related dimension of self is perhaps equal to that of minority group adolescents who must come to grips with cultural and language variations.

Simply, it may be suggested that the acquisition of values during adolescence is mediated by the adolescent's *perception* of his or her social world, and that no matter how these values are presented, whether intra-familial, and/or socio-cultural, whether by word of mouth or on a one-to-one interaction, or through the mass media, whether in a didactic 'mentor-pupil' relationship or in a more democratic and discussive context, it is how the adolescent *comprehends* these values which serves as the only meaningful criterion. It is therefore appropriate, at this point to inquire into the nature of adolescent perceptions and in particular, to understand something about how cognitive development and the socialization process impinge upon these perceptions. Subsequently it should be that much easier to understand adolescent perceptions of marriage and divorce, of the family and parenting.

How adolescents understand and conceptualise

The whole process of 'understanding' is referred to as *cognition*. This in turn, refers to the processes involved in: (1) *perception* - the detection, organisation, and interpretation of information, (2) *memory* - the storage and retrieval of the perceived information, (3) *reasoning* - the use of knowledge to make inferences and draw conclusions, (4) *reflection* - the

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evaluation of the quality of ideas and solutions, and (5) *insight* - the recognition of new relationships between two or more segments of knowledge. (Mussen et al., 1979)

According to Piagetian theory (Piaget, 1954), by adolescence, the cognitive developmental stage of *formal operations* is reached. At this point, the adolescent can assume hypothetical conditions and generate their implications. Therefore, adolescents are no longer just preoccupied with the ramifications of what is real; they are capable of dealing with what is possible. As Elkind (1968) puts it:

> "...to be able not only to grasp the immediate state of things but also the possible state they might or could assume" (p.152).

There are four important characteristics of the stage of formal operations. Examined briefly they are: (1) the inclination and ability to reason about hypothetical situations - the adolescent is able and willing to deal with the logical possible, even though it may violate his or her view of the real world, (2) systematic search for hypothesis - adolescents are capable of considering the possible ways a particular problem might be solved, (3) ways of using abstract rules to effect higher-order operations - the adolescent does not simply attempt to solve a problem by the 'trial and error' method (associated with pre-adolescent thinking), and (4) detection of inconsistencies in beliefs - adolescents reflect on the rules

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they possess, are aware of their own thoughts, are aware of what they know and examine their beliefs and search for inconsistencies among them. In being capable of this, adolescents begin to question the validity of many attitudes and values held earlier and begin to search for new sets of values and premises upon which to base a philosophy.

For example, the concern among adolescents with 'the phoniness' of their ideals and those of adults (perhaps acute in present times) is rarely seen in pre-adolescent children.

The pre-adolescent child (Piaget's *concrete operational stage*) tends to deal largely with the 'here and now;' the adolescent becomes concerned with the hypothetical, the future, and the remote:

> "I find myself thinking about my future and then I begin to think about why I am thinking about my future, and then I begin to think about why I am thinking about why I am thinking about my future." (adolescent quoted in Mussen et al., 1979, p.290)

According to Piaget this preoccupation with thoughts is the principle component of the stage of formal operations.

While there has been some criticism of Piagetian theory (e.g. Donaldson (1978), there is little dispute concerning the fact that by adolescence the individual is perceptually and intellectually capable of making abstract inferences about cause and effect, about past, present, and future of both the physical world and the social world. Thus, adolescent cognitive development is not simply a passive unfolding of innate

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characteristics but a dynamic process which enables the individual to construct his or her social reality. For, in acquiring the ability to 'internalise' rules and values, the individual's cognitive development at adolescence permits the adolescent to also incorporate meaningful *social cognitions*. Consequently, these 'cognitions' or 'understandings' of the immediate world they inhabit serve as a pre-requsite for the adolescent's 'conceptualisation of society'. Let us look at this within the context of the socialisation process.

Adolescence - social cognition and socialisation

Social cognition can be defined as "how people think about other people and about themselves" (Muuss, 1982), or how people come to know their social world. Social cogntion is concerned with the processes by which children and adolescents conceptualise and learn to understand others; their thoughts, their intentions, their emotions, their social behaviours, and their general point of view. Social cognition involves role taking, perspective taking, empathy, moral reasoning, interpersonal problem solving, and self-knowledge.

Implied in the concept of social cognition, is an ability to make inferences about other people's capabilities, attributes, expectations, feelings, and potential reactions. These

inferential processes of social cognition are referred to as role taking and social perspective taking.

It was discussed earlier, that in reaching the formal operations stage of conceptual development, the adolescent is able to make inferences and abstractions of a 'higher order.' Thus, the adolescent's new-found talent for discovering the previously idealised parents' feet of clay - for questioning their values, for comparing them with other 'more understanding' or less 'square' parents, and for accusing them of 'hypocritical' inconsistencies between professed values and behavior - all appear at least partly dependent on the adolescent's changes in cognitive ability.

As Elkind (1968) puts it, "The awareness of the discrepancy between the actual and the possible also helps to make the adolescent a rebel. He (or she) is always comparing the possible with the actual and discovering that the actual is frequently wanting".

Elkind views the relentless criticism by many adolescents of existing social, political, and religious systems and their preoccupation with the construction of [often elaborate or highly theoretical] alternative systems, as similarly dependent on their emerging capacity for formal operational thinking - for formulating hypotheses, thinking more abstractly, and considering what might happen rather than what merely is. A good deal of the adolescent's apparently passionate concern with the

deficiencies of parents and the social order, and with the creation of 'viable alternatives' often turns out to be primarily verbal, more a matter of word than deed. This, according to Elkind, is perhaps a reflection of the fact that this stage of cognitive development is still relatively new and not yet fully integrated into the adolescent's total adaptation to life.

At the same time, it is important to recognise the positive aspects of the adolescent's newly acquired ability to conceptualise and reason abstractly about hypothetical possibilities and instant convictions. Osterrieth (1969) writes:

> "To reason is for young persons a need and a pleasure; the 'constructs of the mind' are a delight. [Adolescents] reason every which way, about subjects that are most unreal and farthest from their experience...The arrival at abstraction permits the individual to delve into the system of collective representation that are offered to them by the culture in which they are growing up, and they will gradually be carried away by ideas, ideals, and values" (p.15).

This, according to Selman's theory of role-taking (1976), raises the level of role-taking in adolescence from one of didactic relationships between people to the level of a general social system and in so doing, it serves as a major step in the adolescent's on-going socialisation.

Ordinarily, children adopt only (or mostly) those characteristics and responses considered appropriate, or at least acceptable, by their own social, ethnic, and religious group. The basic problem in studying the process of socialisation is to

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determine how these behaviours, beliefs,. and motivations develop.

According to Mussen *et al* *(op cit)*, most behavioural scientists regard the process called *identification* as one of three basic processes in the socialisation of the child. The other two processes are training by reward and punishment, and observation of others.

The concept of identification refers to the process that leads a child to believe that he or she is similar to another person (a model) - that is, the child shares some of the model's attributes - and to act as though he or she were the *model* and possessing the model's thoughts, feelings, and characteristics.

Identification with parents is considered to be a very important aspect in the socialisation of the young but the three processes - identification, training by reward and punishment, and observation of others - are not independent; they interact and supplement each other. However, identification with parents - and specifically same-sexed parents - serves as the basis for the acquisition of perceptions and behaviours inherent in role-modeling.

Sex-typing is the term used to refer to the acquisition of those responses, characteristics, and abilities considered appropriate to the individual's own sex in his or her society. (Sex-typing must be differentiated from sexual, or sex-role, identity which refers to the degree to which the child regards himself or herself as masculine or feminine.) There is strong

evidence (e.g. Carlsmith, 1964; Lynn, 1974) that identification with the same-sexed parent contributes to the process of sex-typing. However, according to cognitively oriented developmental psychologists such as Kohlberg (1966), the primary factor in the socialisation process of sex-typing is the child's knowledge of the conceptual category, boy or girl, to which he or she belongs. Sex-typing is not viewed as a product of identification but, on the contrary, identification is seen as a *consequence* of sex-typing.

Nonetheless, whether as cause or effect, there is no disagreement that in the process of socialisation identification with parents has a marked influence on the young.

The nature of the influence, however, may be directly associated with the nature of the parenting style itself. For instance, while socialisation in the family typically refers to 'the parents' as though all children are raised by both mothers and fathers, as noted in earlier pages, there are a great number of children who are raised in single-parent homes. This, even on an intuitive *a priori* basis must not only affect the child's socialisation, but also his or her perceptions of parenting.

This effect is perhaps most profound when children reach adolescence, for, as outlined in previous pages, now they are equipped with the conceptual tools for evaluating not only their roles within the family but also towards formulating expectations about marriage, parenting, divorce, and remarriage. We may now

turn to each of these.

Adolescence and family influence - A sociocultural framework

Stolz (1967) suggests that by the age of adolescence it may be accepted that perceptions of the family, its dynamics and its interactive styles, are well consolidated and that future expectations of marriage and styles of parenting stem directly from 'within family' perceptions and practices.

However, there needs to be some clarification of what constitutes 'within family' perceptions. For instance, it has been pointed out (e.g. by Hess and Waring, 1978) that in spite of the erosion of the extended family network today, some adolescents may still be influenced by many relatives outside of the nuclear family, relatives such as aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents. Further, given that in the decade since the second World War, our concepts of the family have changed to include many more alternate forms such as single-parent, blended and reconstituted families, one may ask to what extent 'within family' perceptions of adolescents are influenced by family composition. Answers to this question will be dealt with in later pages but first a general note concerning socialisation and the family.

Throughout adolescence, as in childhood, the family remains the main socializing agent of young people. Despite the increasing importance of extra-familial influences (school, peer-group) in the adolescent years, the family is still the primary

training ground for adulthood. The family transmits cultural values, including the importance of work and responsibility, to its children (Parsons, 1959).

Within the family young people are said to develop patterns of interpersonal behaviour that last a lifetime (Sullivan, 1953). In emphasising the importance of the family, Kanopka (1976) writes:

> "The people at home - especially the parents -
> still spell the difference between a life of
> strength and hope or a withering period of hate
> and despair" (p.63)

In their study on family structure and function as influencing adolescent values, Winch and Gordon (1974) reported that 90 percent of their sample of adolescents acknowledged their families as the prime source of influence of major values. Values relating to interpersonal skills were influenced by the mother, and values in relation to work and responsibility were shaped by the father. Yet, as Forisha-Kovach (1983) emphasises, it is not just from parents that adolescents learn, but from the interaction within the family, from the patterns that evolve between both parents, between each child and each parent, and among the children themselves.

The family, as the primary setting for learning values, is critical in shaping both the orientation and interpretive framework of the growing individual.

For example, one recent study (Forisha, 1981) found that adolescents' self-esteem and success in school were more strongly

related to perceptions of their family,than to their own self-descriptions.

However, if in the socialization process the *patterns* of interaction are considered important in shaping the adolescent's perception of family and self, and the patterns themselves - i.e. the processes - are a function of both *form* and *structure*, then it seems quite logical to ask, to what extent is the adolescent's socialization determined by family form and family structure. Before we proceed to deal with this question we must briefly define these terms, structure and form.

Although the terms are sometimes used interchangeably generally in the literature, family structure refers to aspects such as birth order, sibling spacing, and family size. Family form - also referred to as family composition - is defined as the 'type' of family; for example, intact, single-parent, re-constituted, and so on.

For the present, it is necessary to consider both for if there is to be any meaningful understanding of those areas of the socialization and aculturation process dealing with the self-concepts, aspirations, and expectations of adolescents, we cannot justifiably separate *how* these occur from *where* they occur. The functional interaction between process and context must be viewed as a whole. For example, how can we separate an adolescent's values and expectations of marriage, or of the family and parenting style from the type of family within which the

expectations and values develop?

Even at the purely intuitive level, one would expect that to a greater or lesser extent, adolescents reared in single-parent homes would have somewhat different views than those raised in a re-constituted household, where both parents have been previously divorced and two sets of children come together to form step-siblings.

One other important, and perhaps even fundamental point of discussion is necessary here: It is that which deals with the present cultural framework within which the process and composition of the family's influence on the adolescent may be understood. Consequently, let us begin with an overview of the demographic data concerning trends in marriage and divorce and their resulting impact on changing family composition.

Marriage, re-marriage, and divorce - selected cultural differences in Britain and the U.S.A.

The ways in which marriage and remarriage are changing are a vast and complex subject about which one *must* be selective. This is especially so in the context of this study which is not about marriage and divorce *per se*, nor even so much about the 'effects' of separation, divorce, and remarriage, but mainly concerned with the adolescent's *perceptions* and *expectations* in these areas. Nevertheless, as indicated above, the socio-cultural context *is* important to understand and with that in mind the following selected overview is undertaken. First the U.S.A.

American are still said to be a 'marrying people' and

according to Campbell (1987) a larger proportion of the American population marries than in most Western societies.

In terms of Americans' affinity for marriage, there appears to be lttle change from the past. Yet in recent decades Americans have also become a 'divorcing people'. While national census statistics indicate that of people over 40 years of age, 95% have been married at least once, the tally also shows that 15% have been married twice, and two-three percent have been married three or more times (U.S.Census, 1980). The divorce rate in America has always been higher than in many other countries but since the early to mid-60s it has increased dramatically. Changing divorce rates reported by Campbell (1987) document the fact that among individuals born about 1900, approximately five percent were divorced by age 35; of those born in the 1930s 12% were divorced by age 35; of those born in the late 1940s and early 1950s, 33% were divorced by their early 30s.

A result of the increasing divorce rate in America and the slightly later age of first marriages - in 1984 the median age for a first marriage was 22.8 years for women and 24.6 for men, one year older than in 1980 and almost three years older than in the 1960s (U.S.Census,1980 and 1988) - is that more individuals are living alone (or with children only) now than in the past. The number of single households (adults alone without children) including those resulting from divorce increased by almost 70% from 1960 to 1984.

More young people in America are also living together without being married. It is estimated that between 1960 and 1977, the number of unmarried couples living together more than doubled (Yankelovitch, 1981).

Neither the popularity of marriage nor the changing trends in marriage and divorce are unique to America. For instance, in discussing the changing patterns in marriage and re-marriage in Britain, Rimmer (1982) remarked, "Marriage is still a very popular institution. Nearly nine out of ten people will marry at some stage in their lives and this is a higher level than at earlier periods" (p.101). However, Haskey (1982) indicated that just as in American divorce trends, the British too are becoming a 'divorcing people' and one couple in three may now be expected to divorce in England and Wales by their thirteenth wedding aniversary. Dominian (1982) also refering to divorce trends in England and Wales suggests that "A significant cultural phenomenon has emerged which is also present in other European countries and the U.S.A." (p.266).

This 'cultural phenomenon' may be extended to Scotland as well, for as the Registrar General's Annual Report (1985) confirms, the increasing trends in divorce clearly reflect those in England and Wales in particular, and of Western countries in general.

Whatever the reason for the increase in divorce rates, the fact remains that in the Western world, perhaps more children

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today than ever before experience the divorce and often the remarriage of their parents.

Haskey (op cit) argues that the increase in divorce is not in itself an indicator of an increase in the number of children who experience divorce, for many divorces occur early (peaking approximately three years after marriage) and generally too soon for many couples to have started a family.

For example, Haskey cites that in England and Wales, the proportion of divorces involving children under 16 has remained at about 60% since 1970. The proportion in Scotland was about 76% until a sudden drop in 1977 and again in 1978, but since then the proportion has remained steady at about 60%, removing the earlier disparity with England and Wales.

However, one may challenge Haskey's postulation for while many children do not 'experience' divorce in their own familes, they may be said to do so in a less direct 'perceptual' way. For instance, due to the general increase of divorce in Britain and the U.S.A. - and perhaps because many of the parents of their peer group have divorced - those children still in intact families *do* experience, second-hand as it were, the effects of divorce in its wider, extra-familial and socio-cultural sense.

It may be argued that this challenge to Haskey's view is based on an *a priori* assumption, that somehow, whether by first hand experience or by acquiring specific societal values, children do in fact, formulate *their* outlook on marriage and

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divorce by witnessing the current sociocultural trends in these areas.

While the *a priori* assumption may be conceded to a large extent, some data do exist to support this premise, and it is to this small but important body of work we may now turn. However, once again, it must be noted that the major bulk of the literature is American in source as well as in reference.

Perceptions of family structure and composition

Family structure and family composition may be said to affect not only conceptions and perceptions, but also intrafamilial relationships, specifically between siblings and between parents and children. We may begin with the effects of structure. Bell and Avery (1985) posed the question concerning family structure and parent-adolescent relationships: Does family structure really make a difference? Using a sample of 2313 'older adolescents' (eighteen and nineteen years of age) the investigators concluded that there was little evidence that family structure - i.e. family size, birth order, sibling gender, and sibling spacing - has a significant impact upon adolescents' views of their relationships with their parents. However, using a sample of younger adolescents (twelve to thirteen years old), Richardson *et al* (1986) found that parent-child relationships *are* affected by family structure, and specifically, that mother-child relationships are influenced by a child's gender while adolescents' relationships with their fathers are a function of

sibling spacing. The adolescent's age, then, seems to have some effect.

Rigby and Rump's (1981) study of adolescents' attitudes towards parents supports this notion. They found evidence for negative attitudes towards parental authority during early adolescence (thirteen to fifteen year olds) but fairly strong pro-authority attitudes among older adolescents (sixteen to seventeen year olds).

However, certain cultural differences are also to be found. For example, Coleman's (1974) study of English adolescents found a strong tendency towards unfavourable evaluations of parents by males, eleven to seventeen years, to increase with age. Similar unfavourable attitudes were found among adolescent girls of eleven to fifteen years but with some reversal among later adolescents. Coleman's study though, did not evaluate the effect of family structure.

Bryan *et al* (1986) undertook to measure adolescent perceptions of family structure as a cue to stereotyping. Here, the study was not concerned with the adolescent's own family structure but rather, on stereotypical perceptions that adolescents have on family structure in general. Using a sample of 696 college students (aged between 18 to 22 years) the investigators compared perceptions of step-parents and step-children to perceptions of adults and children in other family structures (i.e. families with married, widowed, divorced, or

never married parents) to see whether family structure is a salient social category by which people organize their perceptions of others.

The findings support the contention of earlier investigators (Kompara, 1980; Visher and Visher, 1979) that a societal bias against step families exists and are consistant with findings by Ganong and Coleman (1983) and Byrom *et al* (1985) in that step-family members were viewed significantly less positively than members of intact families. In fact, in this study, step-parents were seen more negatively than both married and widowed parents.

Step-parents generally were evaluated similarly to divorced and never-married parents, two groups traditionally stigmatized in Western societies.

Further findings indicate that children in step families are viewed more negatively than children in other family structures and may be among the most negatively stereotyped children in society. Although both step-parents and step-children had consistently low evaluations, step-children were perceived relatively more harshly than step-parents. The investigators explain:

> "It might be expected that step-children, who are usually seen as "victims" in divorce and re-marriage, would have been perceived more benignly than step-parents. Though the term *wicked* is readily associated with step-mother and *abusive* has recently been linked with step-father, it may be that the frequent use of *step-child* to mean poor, neglected, and ignored has had an

insidious impact on attitudes over time."
(Bryan *et al*, 1986, page 173)

So what then, is the adolescent's concept and evaluation of the family when he or she is a step-child? Is this evaluation any different from the evaluations of adolescents from intact homes or from other families differently composed?

There are a number of questions which arise and for which there are few answers to be found. For instance, it has already been established that a great number of young people are, and will be, living in single-parent homes as a consequence of parental divorce. How do such children evaluate *their* 'families'? What are *their* perceptions of marriage?

How does having only a single-parent affect *their* views on parenting? Are *they* likely to divorce when they grow up or will they strive all the harder to keep *their* marriages and families together? The simple answer to all of these questions is that very little information is available.

It is true that we are well informed by the literature about how many people marry, how many divorces result, and how many children are involved. But surprisingly little research has been undertaken into how all of these sociocultural changes in marriage and divorce affect the child's point of view. Where there is some information, with the rare exception or two (detailed below), most of the work is undertaken in the USA.

In their extensive review of the literature, Richards and Dyson (1982) highlighted the general paucity of research:

"No detailed studies of the immediate
impact of marital separation on children
have been carried out in Britain . . .
and regrettably, most evidence about the
effects of divorce on children comes
from the USA." (page 16)

However, as indicated, there are some notable exceptions in
the study of children's points of view to which we may now refer
and which may serve as a brief introduction to adolescent views
on the family, on marriage, on parenting, and on divorce.

Family structure and family processes as determinants of
adolescent perceptions

In a recent Australian study, Amato (1987) attempted an
investigation into the child's point of view on family processes
in one-parent, step-parent, and intact families. Using a sample
of primary school children, and a second sample of adolescents -
with 172 and 170 subjects, respectively - Amato reported as
follows: Compared with children in intact families, children in
one-parent families reported less father support, less father
control, less father punishment, more household responsibility,
more conflict with siblings, and less family cohesion. Step-
fathers were said to provide less support, less control, and less
punishment than biological fathers in intact families, although
step-father involvement was positively associated with the number
of years step families had been together. Children reported
similar levels of support and punishment from mothers, regardless
of family type.

In an American study Parish *et al* (1981) looked at

adolescent evaluation of themselves and their parents as a function of 'intactness of the family' and 'family happiness.' The findings indicate that children from intact families evaluated their parents significantly more favourably than did children from divorced families, and children from 'happy' families evaluated both themselves and their parents, significantly more favourably than did children from 'unhappy' families.

Earlier work in this area (e.g. Landis, 1960, 1962; Nye, 1957) had suggested that children in divorced families are better adjusted than children from unhappy, intact families. However, these studies failed to look at all possible combinations of divorced versus intact, and happy versus unhappy conditions, something that Parish and his colleagues corrected. Nevertheless, their conclusions confirmed the earlier findings, for in unhappy family environments - regardless of the intactness of the home - children negatively evaluated themselves and their parents.

The findings are particularly interesting for they add an additional dimension to our understanding of adolescent perceptions - namely that of the 'interactive' nature between the composition of the family and the extent to which it provides a happy environment or, as the authors explain:

> "...the findings...point clearly to two conclusions: first, that regardless of the intactness of the family, happiness within the family

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is very important, and second, that
regardless of the happiness within
the family, the intactness of the
family is very important." (Page 209)

Finally, we may conclude this overview with a discussion on
marriage and divorce, how adolescents perceive the former and are
affected by the latter.

Adolescence - Perceptions of marriage and effect of divorce

For many decades now, leading scholars in the field of
family sociology, e.g.Cottrell (1930, Burgess and Locke (1953),
Waller (1951), Hill (1951), have suggested that the expectations
of the child's family serve as . , preparation of future marriage
roles. Further, that from the very outset of one's own marriage,
the roles which one plays tend to approximate those previously
played by the parental models. Marriage adjustment is said to be
a process in which marriage partners attempt to re-enact certain
relational systems or situations they acquired in their family of
orientation.

More recently, studies such as that by Patterson (1981)
confirm that when asked their views on marriage, the majority of
adolescents *do* indicate that they expect to marry and that they
would like their marriage to be like that of their parents.

Of course, as it has been suggested at various times in the
preceding pages, the composition of the family, i.e. intact or
other, may have a marked influence on the adolescent's
perceptions. Snow (1973) looked at the differential marriage

perceptions and attitudes of adolescents living in intact families and adolescents living in child-care institutions. Snow concluded that the outcome of the process of socialisation for marriage is notably different for adolescents who live in an intact family with respect to marriage role expectations and marriage attitudes. Simply, these are more positive than are the expectations of adolescents who live in child-care institutions.

Some gender differences were also found. Within intact families, girls expressed more equalitarian marriage role expectations than did the boys although the precise nature of the differences were not reported by Snow. There were no obvious gender differences in expectations between the males and females living in the child-care institutions.

Sarsby (1972) on the other hand, found very clear gender differences in her survey of 'Love and Marriage' expectations of 310 English adolescents aged between 14.5 and 15.5 years. For example, while the vast majority of her sample subjects indicated they *would* get married, Sarsby reports that boys were less precise as to when ("...somewhere between the ages of 20 and 29"), whereas the majority of the girls said they expected to marry between 20 and 24 years of age.

Sarsby's study was essentially an investigation of differences in expressed attitudes to marriage between adolescents representing three different school systems, i.e. Secondary-Modern, Grammar, and Private. Consequently, the gender

differences which emerged were partly attributed to implied 'social class' differences. Nonetheless, Sarsby reports that even with the diversity of conceptions about marriage there were sufficient differential gender responses within all three 'schools', to support the male-female difference in attitude to marriage among adolescents. Girls generally stressed the need for "...a dominant, if reliable and honest, male" to whom the major responsibility [of marriage] could be delegated. In addition, girls stressed sexual faithfulness and spending time together in the evenings.

Boys asserted independence, less faithfulness, and the chance to go out with the boys when they wanted to. For the male group, the main emphasis on marriage was for regular "sex-lives" with their wives, who would be highly attractive, very sexy, and who would be competent housewives. Females opted for their husbands to be good-looking, sexually-experienced, faithful, kind, understanding, and to provide a regular income. Both groups however, stressed how important it was not to marry too hastily or early, and to be sure "...you had a lot in common". One Grammar school boy put it thus: "Men like to have the upper hand, women like to be loved", while a Grammar school girl said, "You have to understand each other completely. Honestly. Complete compatibility". (All quotes from p.617).

Sarsby also indicated, but did not enlarge upon this, that a reason for marriage, which was stated often from children of

broken homes, was the need for a very close relationship. Exactly how many children there were in this category was not specified.

As far as divorce is concerned, there is a dearth of information in the literature on adolescent perceptions and expectations. It is true that a great deal has been written about the *effects* of divorce upon children but generally, there it has stopped. Traditionally, those who research divorce and its effect on offspring generally ask children of divorced parents to express how they feel about it and how they cope with the situation. As a rule, investigators have not surveyed the general adolescent population for their *views* on divorce.

There is also little literature concerning the attitudes of children toward stepparents, and the communication pattern between children and stepparents.

Notwithstanding such limitations, it is still possible to draw certain inferences from the literature. For example, Wallerstein and Kelly (1979) report that divorce becomes real for most children when one parent moves out of the home. Initially, almost all children experience their parents' divorce as painful and as disruptive of their lives, and their suffering is compounded by both realistic and unrealistic fears. These fears are related to the following factors: a heightened sense of vulnerability, sadness at the loss of the protective structure of the family and of the parent who does not retain custody, guilt over fantasised or actual misdeeds that may have contributed to

parents' quarrels (although such fantasies are not found in all children), worry over distressed parents, anger at the parent or parents who have disrupted the child's world, shame regarding parents' behaviour, a sense of being alone, and a concern about being different from peers.

For many adolescents, the overall initial response to divorce can be considered a reactive depression. There is no evidence that these initial reactions are muted or are experienced as less painful because of the high incidence of divorce taking place in the surrounding community (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1974; 1975; 1976). Indeed, the sense of loss experienced by adolescents is heightened by their anxieties about their parents' loneliness, and not infrequent regression.

One interesting rider to the above findings is the work undertaken by Glen and Kramer (1987). They investigated the subsequent marriages and divorces of 'the children of divorce'. The stated purpose of this study was to assemble evidence on the divorce-proneness of the children of divorce, in order to assess the strength and importance of the relationship between the divorces of parents and those of their offspring. The findings of the study indicate that there is a tendency for divorce to run in families and that the association between the divorce-proneness of parents should be seriously considered. In drawing their conclusions, Glenn and Kramer had undertaken their investigation of divorce-proneness within the following

explanatory frameworks:

1. *The absence-of-modelling-of-spouse-roles explanation*: Growing up without both parents present leaves the person without an opportunity for day-to-day observation of the performance of the roles of husband and wife.

2. *The inadequate-social-control explanation*: This explanation is that a lack of adequate adult control over peer contacts and mate selection, and lack of adequate parental support after marriage, tend to lead to trouble in the marriages of persons who spend their late childhood and adolescence in a one-parent or no-parent home.

3. *The inappropriate-modeling-of-spouse-roles explanation*: This is something of a corollory of (1) above and suggests that much of the modeling of spouse roles by parents who divorce is likely to be inappropriate, and thus the offspring will tend to have problems in their marriage if they emulate their parents.

4. *The greater-willingness-to-resort-to-divorce explanation*: This explanation is essentially that divorce tends to be less unthinkable to the children of divorce than to other persons, and so the former will more readily resort to divorce when problems arise in their marriages.

5. *The earlier-age-at-marriage explanation*: Simply, that an earlier marriage age at marriage has contributed to the divorces of these persons (i.e. children of divorce). It is quite well known that persons who marry at a very young age are unusually

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likely to divorce (Bumpass and Sweet, 1972; Glenn and Supancic, 1984), and at least two studies have found that the children of divorce tend to marry at a younger age than do persons from intact families of orientation (Carlson, 1979; Mueller and Pope, 1977).

6. *The lower-educational-attainment explanation*: There is evidence that growing up in a single-parent family tends to depress educational attainment (Krein, 1986; McLanahan, 1985) and educational level is related to percentage ever-divorced or legally separated (Glenn and Suparcic, 1984). Therefore it seems that parental divorce might affect divorce-proneness through 'amount of education'.

7. *The lower-commitment-to-marriage explanation*: Even though the children of divorce are not unusually reluctant to marry, they find it unusually hard to make a strong commitment to marriage. While there is no explicit, coherent statement of this explanation in the literature, there are a number of allusions to it.

A recurring theme of reports of in-depth studies of pre-adult children of divorce is their apprehensiveness about their own ability to love and to establish secure and enduring heterosexual relationships. For instance, Wallerstein (1983) reports that among the adolescent children of divorce she and Kelly studied, many were frightened at the possible repetition of marital or sexual failure in their own lives. Some adolescents

insisted that they would never marry because they were convinced that their marriage would fail. Still others were caught in a web of promiscuity and low self-esteem and spoke cynically and hopelessly of ever achieving "a loving relationship or other goals" (p.240).

To some extent, it may be argued that children's perceptions of their parents' divorce are based upon what they *understand* about the circumstances surrounding the breakdown of the marriage. This understanding comes partly from observation of the interaction between the parents and partly from explanations given by the parents to the child. Communication, talking about separation and divorce is important. As Mitchell (1985) points out, "...Parental separation is not a single event but a continuing one. Children need to have some information about why they are being separated from one parent, so that they can make some sense of their changed circumstances and of their parents' behaviour". (p.56).

As it stands, it would appear that children are rarely given any explanations, let alone adequate ones (Bohannan, 1970; Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980; Murch, 1980; Mitchell, 1981).

How the adolescent understands and/or relates to the divorce of their parents, to the concepts of divorce, of marriage and remarriage, and especially of their expectations concerning their own future familial relationships, is reported in following pages on the basis of the findings obtained in the study here

undertaken.

Reiteration of some main points

Before going on to discuss the rationale for the study undertaken here, it may be useful to summarise the main points raised and discussed in the preceding pages. For instance, it has been suggested that adolescence is a cultural creation rather than a physical, developmental period and that before the beginning of this century neither the term nor the concept of adolescence were understood. Further, that adolescence is culture-specific and that even today, the concept of adolescence is far from universally accepted - especially in rural, non-industrialised societies.

Within the framework of western civilisation and societies, the concept of adolescence has been further categorised according to the different social science perspectives so that the adolescent has come to be differently studied in psychological and sociological terms. Nevertheless, it has been argued that as far as adolescent perceptions are concerned, both psychological cognitive processes and sociological explanations of the socialisation effect must not be seen in mutually-exclusive terms but rather as an on-going, interactive, and dynamic process of change.

Societal changes, specifically trends in marriage and divorce, have been discussed in order to establish a framework within which one may view factors said to impinge upon the

perceptions of adolescents.   In this regard,   it was pointed out

(1)   that while there is an abundant literature on   adolescence,

there is precious little about the adolescent's point of view on

matters concerning marriage and divorce;   (2) most of the

literature   is American in source and reference;   (3) the .

literature   concerning *cultural* differences   in   adolescent

perceptions is almost non-existent.

CHAPTER TWO
METHODS - THE STUDY

Rationale and Natural History of the Study

Generally, it is appropriate - especially following (1) discussion of literature such as in preceding pages, (2) developing an analytical framework to study adolescents' perceptions on marriage, etc., and (3) formulating a set of hypotheses - that that which is to be investigated, should be directly related to the general issues discussed. Consequently, the impetus was to undertake a detailed study into certain areas of adolescent perceptions - specifically those dealing with marriage, divorce, parenting, and the family.

However, before detailing the hypotheses it is to be emphasised that the one factor more than any other prompting this study was the general lack of *cross-cultural comparisons* in the areas discussed.

While other cross-cultural studies of adolescents *have* been undertaken from as far back as 1898 (Hill, 1930) up to present times (Eppel and Eppel, 1966; Bull, 1969; Searle, 1971; Edwards, 1973; Simmons and Wade, 1984; 1985) most of these have compared the 'self-perceptions' and 'ideals' of British, American, and European adolescents. Hitherto there have been no comparative studies on perceptions of marriage and divorce, etc. However, there have been some 'international' studies into parent-child relationships, a topic more appropriate to the present study.

A review of the literature dealing with this area reveals similarities between the parent-child relationships of America

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and those of other cultures, particularly with Britain (Walters and Stinnett, 1972).

Therefore, given that there are perhaps as many similarities as there are differences between the British and American cultures two basic questions helped to formulate the precise nature of the proposed study. They were: (1) Do adolescents in two cultures similar yet differing in certain values, perceive marriage and divorce, parenting and the family differently? (2) Are their expectations of their own future familial roles based on these perceptions?

As indicated in the Preface to the work reported here, this Study grew out of an earlier M.A. study (1979) undertaken by the writer, who was living in Edinburgh, Scotland at the time. The project itself, was a comparitively simple one, consisting primarily of eliciting views on certain social issues from children between 5 and fourteen years. The methodology was simple; armed with an aide memoire and photographs depicting aspects of the topics to be discussed - specifically poverty, sex stereotyping., political influence and the concept of status and power - a number of interviews were carried out within the framework of a phenomenological study and incidental findings, although not very many nor very profound, did raise some interesting questions concerning the way in which children perceive 'the family', marriage, parenting and divorce. Most notable of these findings, and not very surprisingly, was that

while there were no obvious sex-group differences, there were definite age group differences where the older, more mature child was more able to understand the notion of and express reasonable views on the topics discussed.

Simply then, that study, although lacking a great deal due to the small and simplistic nature of the project, did form the basis for a potentially larger and more comprehensive study, preferably with children who had reached an age of appropriate reasoning skills, namely children at adolescence.

Not long after the completion of that study the author moved with her own family to take up what was to have been temporary residence in California but which in fact developed into a permanent move.

Here, the transition to a new culture was dramatic, especially for the three children, all female, then aged between nine and fourteen years. They found that the family composition for many of their new peers was quite different to that in Scotland. For instance, the children found that a great many of their peers in California, were children of divorce and that divorce, and remarriage of parents seemed to be accepted as a fact of life.

Stepfamilies were spoken of in quite casual terms. However, after subsequent aculturisation, it became evident that this apparent casualness was simply an attempt at coping with a difficult situation and that many children in fact, were very

distressed by the disruption in their families.

Coincidently, this was the very area in Northern California in which Wallerstein and Kelly had undertaken their series of studies into the effects of separation and divorce on children, and which were extensively reported. The same resources did not have much information to offer about how adolescents' actually perceive marriage and divorce in general terms.

It seemed an ideal opportunity to make a formal proposal to Edinburgh University to undertake a study which would attempt to investigate not only adolescent's perceptions on marriage and so on,but to do so on a cross-cultural, comparative basis for it was especially clear after a glimpse of the currently available statistics that divorce rates and remarriages were much higher in California than in Scotland. To reiterate, the question underlying the rationale for such a study was 'how do adolescents perceive marriage,family, divorce and remarriage?' Again, it was not intended that the study 'be about adolescence' or about 'adolescence as a sub-culture' but simply about their perceptions.

In the light of this a hypothesis was formed as follows:

(1) That adolescent perceptions of marriage, divorce, parenting, and the family *would* vary significantly between Scots and Californians.

(2) That the significant differences in perceptions between adolescents in these two cultures would be a direct function of

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their cultural milieu and specifically as follows: (a) Scots would profess more 'traditional' perceptions and expectations of marriage, i.e. that it is important to be married before having a family; (b) that Californians would more readily accept divorce and remarriage as a 'normal way of life'; (c) that Scots would hold more traditional views on roles within the family and would see the husband/father as the more significant head of the family; (d) that Californians would have more egalitarian views and expectations on family dynamics and especially on parenting.

(3) That the nature of the family's composition (nuclear, blended, single-parent) *would* within the specific cultural milieu, exert a significant influence on adolescent perceptions and expectations of marriage, divorce, parenting, and the family.

(4) That perceptions and expectations based on gender differences would be more markedly different in Scotland (contingent upon their more traditional views) and less so in California (again, contingent upon their greater egalitarian outlook).

(5) That differences in perceptions of marriage, divorce, parenting, and the family would be further diferentiated by age. Specifically that younger adolescents (12-14 years) - more affected by recent trends in divorce and remarriage - would perceive as more *commonplace* remarriage and variations in family compositions.

RATIONALE FOR THE METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Before going on to the detailed discussion of the design and implementation of the study, a few words of explanation are necessary concerning the particular methodological perspective and framework within which this study was undertaken. Principally, the study was a field survey carried out within the framework of a phenomenological investigation. As such, it was felt that data collection should follow well-tried field-survey methods. In so far as numerous investigations (e.g. Seely *et al*, 1956; Moore and Holtzman, 1965; Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980; Tittle, 1981;) previously undertaken in the field of adolescence obtained data using questionnaires and/or interviews, the present study too, was designed to obtain data in the same way. It was hoped that the employment of both these methods would encompass not only data collection from a large sample (responses to questionnaires) but also a greater depth of information (discussion in interviews).

It is to be recalled that in his evaluation of three new themes which have significantly changed the way in which the contemporary family is viewed by sociologists, Anderson (1980) observed that some of the most important new insights have come from developments in the area of phenomenological modes of analysis. Morgan (1975) also argued that while few of the subtle interactional cues inherent in a family's dynamics can be picked up through the use of the questionnaire or even the non-directed

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interview, in spite of these difficulties there have been several perceptive and provocative studies of the family in modern society - Seeley et al (1956) on middle-class families, Komarovsky (1962) on blue-collar families, Laing and Esterson (1970,Ed) on families of schizophrenics and so on.

However, in order that the investigation of the issues detailed in the hypothses be undertaken in the most efficient way, it was deemed necessary that first, a pilot study should be conducted to try out the procedural methodology and to take note if any, of those aspects which did not quite 'work', i.e. questions which were considered too ambiguous. Consequently, this was the approach used and we may now turn to a discussion of the way in which the initial questionnaire items (subsequently modified for the main study) were developed for the Pilot Study.

Using various questionnaire items as reported in the relevant literature on adolescence (e.g. Seely, *et al*, 1956; and others cited above), a number of informal group meetings were held with adolescents in California where they were asked to respond to a 'Sentence Completion' pro-forma (see Appendix A) which elicited responses concerning their concepts of Marriage, Divorce, Parenting, and The Family.

From the adolescents' responses to the Pro-forma, a preliminary list was drawn up of possible items for inclusion in the present study. This list, then served as a basis for a number of 'brain-storm' sessions with the investigator and some

university colleagues in California and Scotland.

Specifically, for each of the areas of Marriage, Divorce, Parenting, and The Family it was determined that this, the first questionnaire list, should be designed in such a way so as to enable an adolescent to clearly indicate how he/she felt about these areas, how relationships were perceived, how roles were evaluated, and what expectations were envisaged for the adolescent's future. An important point is to be made here. In the various discussions with the school authorities it became clear that permission to undertake the study (specifically in California) would only be granted on the clear understanding that the pupils would *not* be asked questions pertaining to those areas which may be construed to be a 'gross invasion of privacy' namely questions of race, religion, sexual preferences and activities, use of drugs and/or alcohol, whether of self, siblings, parents, other family members, and friends.

As a result of these sessions, the preliminary list consisted of 100 questionnaire items. These in turn, were further scrutinised to eliminate those which were evaluated as not suitable, and the final Pilot Study Questionnaire contained 91 questions (see Appendix B). Subsequently, for reasons that will be discussed later, this number was reduced even further (to 60) before the start of the main study.

As to the evaluation of the *validity* of the questionnaire items, (by the subjects who were asked to respond to them), we

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may now turn to the discussion of the Pilot Study.

THE PILOT STUDY

For logistic reasons which will be explained below, the Pilot Study was undertaken in two parts, i.e. the pilot questionnaire was tried out with 25 adolescents (12 male and 13 female) in Scotland while the interview protocol was tried out both in Scotland and California, where 16 adolescents (four males and four females from each country) were seen in their own homes.

Pilot Study (Questionnaire)

Limiting the pilot questionnaire only to Scotland became necessary when it became obvious that entry into schools for research purposes in California was a very complicated business which would have taken a great deal of time, and especially as the timing of the pilot study would have coincided with the commencement of the school vacation period. Indeed, the subsequent trials and tribulations in seeking and obtaining permission to conduct research with school children in Calfornia confirmed as correct the choice to undertake the pilot study of the main questionnaire only in Scotland.

The 25 children on whom the pilot questionnaire was tried out were seen in an Edinburgh High School where they were asked to respond to a preliminary list of 91 questions and statements concerning the major areas of the proposed research, i.e. Family life, Marriage, Parenting, Divorce, Gender roles and Perceptions

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of Society and Peer groups.

The 25 subjects were first informed that they were taking part in a pilot study and the cross-cultural nature of the proposed research was explained in some detail.

It was emphasized that there were no right or wrong answers and that the investigator was mainly concerned with perfecting the questionnaire to be employed in the main study which was to follow.

The subjects were then instructed to respond to the questionnaire statements as spontaneously as possible but were also permitted to take as much time as they needed to complete the protocol. They were further instructed to indicate with an 'X' any numbered statements which were unclear or ambiguous.

Finally, the subjects were asked to raise their hands when they had finished responding to all 91 items so that the time taken to complete the questionnaire could be recorded.

In this way it was possible to calculate the mean response time and evaluate any particular questionnaire statement in terms of abiguity.

Following their completion of the pilot questionnaire, a detailed discussion took place with the 25 subjects, in which they were encouraged to express any difficulties relating to the clear understanding and validity of the questionnaire statements.

It transpired that not only were 91 statements too many to be adequately dealt with in a 45 minute period (the proposed

duration to fit in with school lesson periods), but that the questionnaire statements represented a certain degree of overlap. More specifically, the mean response time was 63.8 minutes (S.D. = 6.4 minutes) and 31 of the 91 statements were invalidated due to being irrelevant, unclear and/or ambiguous.

In the light of this discussion and a subsequent reappraisal of the pilot questionnaire, the resulting 60 statements were redefined for the main study. Here, it transpired that they were categorised to represent the four study areas in the following distribution: Marriage - 13 statements; Divorce - 6 statements; Parenting - 16 statements; The Family - 25 statements. Even though there was an unequal number of statements in the four areas, in many cases the statements were worded in such a way as to elicit reponses in more than a specific area.

Pilot Study (Interview)

The pilot study of the interview protocol and procedure was undertaken in Scotland as well as in California. In both places the 'trial run' was essentially the same. Using personal contacts with access to adolescents, appointments were made to interview four males and four females, each in their own home, at a time convenient to them. Steps were taken to control for age as well as socioeconomic status so that responses could be evaluated more clearly and subsequently, construction of the Main Study Interview could be more precisely delineated. Each of the four subjects within a gender group represented a specific age-group,

i.e, one male and one female each from the following:

12-13 years; 13.1-14 years; 14.1-15 years; 15.1-16.5 years.

The slightly wider age range for the oldest group here was taken to reflect the inclusion of those adolescents over 16 years who still attended school and who would certainly be included as part of any school-based sample of adolescents.

Of the 16 subjects, four (one male and one female each from the oldest age-group) were from homes where the parents were either divorced or separated at the time of the interview. The inclusion of such adolescents was in order to evaluate responses equally from subjects who came from single-parent and/or 'blended families and others.

None of the 16 Interview subjects had been previously included in the questionnaire part of the pilot study. Each was informed that a cross-cultural study was being undertaken with a view to comparing the attitudes of adolescents to Family life, Marriage and Divorce, etc. They were informed that there were no right or wrong answers to the interviewer's questions but that the main purpose of the exercise was to help the investigator in constructing an interview protocol that was clear and relevant.

Each subject was interviewed on a one-to-one basis and with the cooperation of the adolescent, as well as the parent/guardian the procedings were tape-recorded, ensuring that no names or other obviously identifying information were included. To this end, subjects were informed that if at any time during the course

of the interview they wished the tape-recorder to be switched off it would be done so without hesitation. In fact, no subject made such a request.

A careful check was kept on the time taken for the interview as subsequent interviews in the forthcoming main study would have to be undertaken during a 45 minute school period.

The two most striking differences between the Scottish subjects and those in California were (a), the higher degree of prompting and encouragement needed to get the former to express their views and (b), the spontaneous manner in which adolescents from California discussed the various areas of Marriage and Family life etc. as compared with the Scottish adolescents who appeared to be more comfortable with a straight 'question and answer' procedure.

The interview itself was unstructured but an *aide memoire* was used to help in delineating the different areas under study. After the 'formal' part of the interview was completed, subjects were asked how they felt about the general nature of the interview and invited to make comments and suggestions towards improving the procedure.

In the light of their suggestions and the investigator's own appraisal of the pilot interview, the procedure was slightly modified for the subsequent main study. Specifically, the interview was redesigned to become more structured so that a subject's responses could be elicited more adequately within the 45 minute period.

INSTRUMENTS

(A) The Questionnaires

The rationale for the use of questionnaires has already been discussed. Therefore, let us go on to the discussion of the questionnaires themselves.

Two questionnaires were employed in the study. The first - or Primary Questionnaire - was used for collecting data pertinent to the subjects' attitudes and perceptions of the various areas under study. The second - or Supplementary Questionnaire - was used for obtaining relevant biographical and demographical data. The rationale for this was based on previous discussion with subjects who had taken part in the pilot study. They had generally found the pilot questionnaire, which encompassed bio/demographic as well as other information, too 'awesome' and suggested that had the same information been broken down into two different questionnaires it would have been less intimidating than one long questionnaire. Consequently, the main study questionnaire was designed to be administered in two parts.

The Primary Questionnaire

Based upon the information gleaned from the pilot study, and as discussed before, this questionnaire finally, was made up of 60 statements which were randomly ordered (see Appendix C).

Alongside each statement a blank space was allocated for the subject's use in recording his/her level of agreement with

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the statement, according to the Six-Point Semantic Differential Key shown at the top of each page of the questionnaire and indicated as follows:

STRONGLY DISAGREE 0 1 2 3 4 5 STRONGLY AGREE

The rationale for the use of such a scale was based on the assumption that it would be easier for subjects to record variations or degrees of agreement/disagreement in their responses to the questionnaire statements. However, so that subsequent 'for' and 'against' analyses may also simply group the responses on either side of a mid-point (i.e. polarise them), a six-point scale (allowing for three gradations on each side of the scale) was arbitarily deemed to be the most expedient.

The Supplementary Questionnaire

As stated above, the purpose of this questionnaire was to obtain information so as to understand the relationship between a subject's responses to the Primary questionnaire against his/her biographical and demographic background (see Appendix D). Therefore, this questionnaire was made up of a number of relevant questions about Age, Gender, Family Composition (i.e. Nuclear Family, Single Parent Family, etc.,), and Parental occupations (to ascertain the socio-economic status of the family). Names and other identifying information were not required in either of the questionnaires.

(B) The Interview

As indicated earlier, the basic rationale for conducting interviews was to obtain a depth and quality of information which could not be elicited from responses to questionnaire statements. It was felt that a subject would feel freer to express and explain his/her response to the areas under study.

The interview *aide memoire* shown below was used to elicit responses to the specific areas of the study cited above.

AIDE MEMOIRE USED FOR INTERVIEWING

1. Definition of a family (does subject recognise there are different types?)
2. Is Subject's own family seen as typical?
3. Would subject like family he/she creates to be like present one?
4. Are some family types seen as problem ones? If so, what makes them that way?
5. Is it necessary to have two parents? Are they seen as providing the same things?
6. What makes for 'good' and 'bad' parents?
7. Are the relationships between family members seen as changing ones as the child grows older
8. Is 'marriage' perceived as old fashioned?
9. Is marriage perceived 'for life'?
10. What is the basis for marriage, i.e. what makes it work or not?
11. What is the subject's perception of the likelihood of his/her divorce?
12. Does subject know any peers whose parents are divorced?
13. Is the availability of divorce seen as too easy/too difficult to obtain?
14. Is divorce between parents different when children are involved?
15. Are children necessary to make a family?
16. What are the subject's perceptions of being the only child? Of having other siblings (male/female)?
17. What assets if any, do children bring to a family?
18. Are particular children most important to parents?
19. What are the values aimed at in parenting?
20. How is parenting affected by the parents' jobs in terms of mother/father working part-time/being away from the home etc?
21. What differences are there in step-parenting?
22. Which parent, mother or father, is most important to the family? And why?
23. What is the household division of labour? To what extent is it a role model for the children?
24. For the wage-earner which is more important, career or the home?
25. Does subject discuss any of the above with his/her closest friends?
26. How do friends feature in subject's perceptions of any of the above?
27. What is subject's perception of society's role or sphere of influence in any of the above?
28. How important is it that divorced parents remarry?
29. Should people 'live together' before marriage or not? Discuss.
30. Does subject indicate any religious/spiritual influences in perceptions of marriage, divorce etc?

THE MAIN STUDY

SAMPLE DESIGN

Principally, the design of the study was a field survey of 841 adolescents followed by interviews with 40 adolescents (all 881 were aged between 12 years and 16.5 years). Of the 841 main subjects 362 were obtained from Edinburgh in Scotland, while the remaining 479 were obtained from a county suburb of the San Francisco Bay Area in California.

However, given the sensitive nature of the areas being investigated, it was felt especially important that interviews should be conducted independently of the questionnaires so as to allow for a much greater depth and quality of response to the issues being studied.

But there was a limiting consideration. As it would be logistically very difficult to conduct in-depth interviews with over eight hundred subjects, it was determined that interviews would be conducted with a much smaller sample (i.e. 40 subjects). This will be discussed in more detail below.

In both countries the school locations from which the samples were drawn were predominantly middle class. While it is conceded that a wider range of locations would have offered a wider cross-section of the population, it was arbitrarily decided to investigate only the perceptions and expectations of adolescents from the middle classes (as formulated by the Registrar General's Classification of Socio-Economic Status). This was based on two reasons.

(1)   It was felt that by keeping the two sample populations as
homogenous as possible, subsequently it would be easier to
compare their responses to the issues under investigation without
having to account for the influences of other, difficult to
control, socio-economic factors.

(2)   The samples were simply to be two independent samples of
adolescents, each in a different culture but not necessarily
"representative" samples of that culture.

For instance, even if it was possible to obtain a sample of
adolescents representative of adolescents in Scotland (urban and
rural areas and including those from the Highlands and Islands)
given the much greater number of ethnic population in California,
it is open to debate whether such a comparable sample - also
chosen from urban and rural areas - would indeed, be
representative of adolescents in California, let alone the U.S.A.

Therefore, even for purely logistic reasons, the acquisition
of "representative" samples was considered too difficult a task
to accomplish within the scope of a study such as this.
Consequently, the study was undertaken only with predominantly
white middle class adolescents from the Barnton and Cramond areas
of Edinburgh, Scotland and from the Mill Valley, Tiburon, Corte
Madera, and Larkspur areas of Marin County, California.

The responses of 42 subjects (13 from Scotland and 29 from
California) were omitted from the study due to grossly incomplete
and unusable data protocols.

The final main study sample was made up of 841 middle class adolescents of which 362 (43%) were from Scotland and 479 (57%) were from California.

The samples' age-ranges and mean ages were as follows:

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SCOTLAND          MALES           FEMALES          OVERALL
Age range         12y.-15y.9m.    12.1m.-15y.7m.   12y.-15y.9m.
Mean age          13y.10m.        14y.1m.          13y.10m.
-----------------------------------------------------------------

CALIFORNIA        MALES           FEMALES          OVERALL
Age range         12y.-16y.6m.    12y.2m.-16y.3m.  12y.-16y.6m.
Mean Age          14y.-3m.        14y.4m.          14y.3m.
-----------------------------------------------------------------
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Overall, justification for the sample to be represented by the particular age-range 12y.- 16y.6m. was based on the rationale that these ages encompass adolescent attitudes from their early development through to early adulthood.

The slight difference between the numbers comprising the two cultural samples was primarily a function of the existing differences in the number of children attending the selected schools. Each cultural sample of adolescents was made up of subjects obtained from two or more year groups.

The slightly wider age-range differences between the Scottish and California samples may be explained by the wider age span within any given grade (year group) in the American System. There were no significant statistical differences between the mean age of the two samples nor between males and females within the samples.

The proportion of males to females within each of the two sub-samples were as follows: 256 males - 223 females in California; 198 males - 164 females in Scotland. The total sample male/female percentage distribution was 54% - 46% (rounded).

The apparent bias towards males in both samples is a function of (a) the greater proportion of males to females within the general population of school-based adolescents and (b) the nature of the sampling process.

Simply, as many subjects as possible within the stipulated age-range were included in the sample and in so far as there were more males than females, the proportionate difference was reflected in the final sample. The table below shows the distribution by age and gender of the 841 subjects who took part in the study.

TABLE SHOWING AGE X GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF 841 SUBJECTS

AGE GROUP	SCOTLAND		CALIFORNIA		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	N
I (12y-14y)	99	75	125	107	406 (48%)
II (14y.1m- 16y.6m)	99	89	131	116	435 (52%)
TOTALS	198	164	256	223	841
%	24%	20%	30%	26%	100%

COMPILATION OF THE TWO SAMPLES

(A)EDINBURGH

The sample was compiled in the following manner: Telephone contact was made with an Assistant Headteacher of an Edinburgh High School and a meeting arranged. At the meeting, the nature of the proposed research was outlined and biographical and other items on the proposed Questionnaire were discussed.

It was emphasised that the researcher would contact parents/guardians by letter in order to obtain their permission to approach their children at school, and to explain that their child would not been singled out in any way, as all students within a particular 'school year' were to be interviewed.

It was further emphasised that letters to the parents/guardians would assure them that every safeguard would be taken to ensure confidentiality.

A sample Questionnaire, together with copies of the approval letter were left with the Assistant Headteacher who further discussed the proposed study with the school's Headteacher before the "go ahead" was given.

Subsequently, an appointment was made with the Head of Guidance at the school in order to schedule the researcher's meeting with the students in the following weeks. Meanwhile, the school arranged for the parental/guardian approval letters to be hand delivered by each child within classes and age-groups chosen for the study.

Children in the United States attend Elementary (Grade) School until around 10 years old, then they attend a Middle School/Junior High School to approximately 14 years and finally, they attend a High School. Consequently, in order to obtain a sample representing the age-range proposed for the study and comparable in form and number to the Scottish sample it became necessary to use three schools in California as opposed to the one in Scotland.

In California, obtaining permission to conduct research with students at school proved to be a much more complicated and lengthy business than in Scotland, and for the researcher, an exercise in patience, persistence and sheer determination!

Two Middle Schools and one High School were approached. While some details varied slightly, the initial contact was as in Scotland, i.e. over the telephone an explanation was given to the schools' principals as to the nature of the cross-cultural study.

While showing their interest, and sympathetic to the researcher's request, they advised that it was first necessary for approval to be granted by the District's Superintendent of Education and other officals.

To this end, and depending upon the particular schools' requirements, the researcher had various meeting with school psychologists, counsellors, and even in one instance, was required to make a verbal presentation of her proposed study to

a School Board.

Basically, it was necessary to convince school and education officials that the researcher possessed the skills for dealing with any emotional problems that might arise in the children in the course of the study.

An interesting difference came to light between the two cultures in respect to access to schools to conduct research of this nature. Whereas in both countries school authorities require undertakings of confidentiality against information gleaned in the course of research, due to the cultural difference in attitudes to litigation, schools in the U.S. are much more prone to legal action and concerned about 'being sued'. Consequently, school officials in California were very emphatic that prior parental permission be obtained, while it was pointed out that there was a great likelihood of refusal from some parents.

An official letter was written for the school records together with copies of the research instruments. Approval letters (see Appendix E) were sent out to parents/guardians who were given the option to refuse their permission if they so desired. Only four refusals to participate were received. Two of these were in California and two in Scotland.

PROCEDURE

Questionnaires

Essentially, the procedure was the same in both countries. In each of the schools visited by the researcher appointments with the students began approximately two weeks after the parental/guardian approval letters had been sent.

Prior arrangements had been made by the school for the researcher to administer the questionnaires to children in pre-selected classes/grades. In all cases, this simply meant that the researcher would meet the subjects in the room they had been occupying in the Social Studies lesson just prior to the researcher's arrival.

There were approximately between 20-35 students per session and in all instances, the duration of the procedure fitted in well with the 45 minute allocated by the school (45 minutes being the time of a lesson period).

A typical session was as follows: The researcher introduced herself to the teacher who would in turn introduce her to the class before leaving her to handle the procedure.

With each group the researcher began by seeking their cooperation and describing the research study. Basically, the group was told that the study was an important component of a Ph.D. program, that the attitudes and perceptions of adolescents to Family life, Marriage and Divorce etc., from two cultures with which the researcher was familiar, were being studied.

They were told that this was being done in order to understand more about the family and the extent to which cultural influences determined a particular course of action in the life of an individual or a group.

Following the introductory explanation, the investigator attempted to make the subjects feel comfortable with the procedure by emphasising the confidentiality of their responses. She said she hoped they would find the study interesting and enjoy taking part, for little was known about what people of their age felt about these issues being investigated and this was one opportunity for them to express their views.

Additional time was spent in reiterating the information detailed in the approval letters, namely, that the research was a University-based Ph.D. study and not in any way connected with the School. Further, that all the students from that particular school "year" were being included in the survey, that there were no 'right or wrong' answers, and that their replies were to be anonymous. The students were told that there would be time at the end of the session for them to ask questions on the material.

The Primary Questionnaire was handed out and the instructions were read through with the students. Once it had been established that the procedure was understood, subjects were asked to complete the example on the first page in order to 'get a feel' for the rating system, then to respond to the incomplete sentence before turning to the Questionnaire items and working

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evenly through, each at their own pace.

After completion of the Questionnaire, the subjects were to turn it face down and wait quietly until everyone else had finished. This generally took between 15-20 minutes. (The "smiley-face" drawing at the end of the Questionnaire proved to be a stroke of genius here! Children who completed the questions quickly busied themselves turning the smiling face into the most elaborate pieces of Artwork ranging from maidens with Inca head-dresses to bald baby figures.)

Next, the Supplementary Questionnaire was handed out. Again, some time was spent going through the individual items and in making sure everyone understood what they had to do (for instance, differences between the terms "step" and "half" relationships in families required explanations).

Students were asked to insert any additional categories they considered omitted and to ask for help if they needed it. The researcher walked around the room to assist those subjects who appeared to be having problems completing the form. Generally, this part of the procedure took no more than 15 minutes. Upon completion of the Supplementary Questionnaire it was pinned to the Primary Questionnaire.

Questions and comments were then invited from the students. If none were forthcoming, any remaining time was used to tell the students about their counterparts overseas, and about the differences between the school systems.

In California, adolescents professed a greater interest in the study and displayed an eagerness to ask questions, not only about the cultural differences encountered by the researcher in her study but also of general teenage life in Scotland.

The students were then thanked for their participation in the research and promised that after analyses, a copy summarizing the results of their responses as a group as compared with their counterparts overseas, would be sent to them. (This was subsequently done).

Interviews

Interviews were conducted approximately 8-10 months after the Questionnaire phase of the study. Subjects were essentially from the same basic socioeconomic population but drawn from a different school so that no subject would have previously responded to the questionnaire.

The two interview samples were made up of 10 males and 10 females within each country, yielding a total of 40 subjects (5% of the total sample).

The students interviewed were chosen by their own class teachers as arranged with the researcher. The researcher was obliged to conduct each interview within the time allocation for a class lesson period (i.e.45 mins) so as not to disrupt the smooth running of the school timetable.

This proved to work very well and was sufficient time in fact, in which to adequately conduct the session.

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Chosen subjects were directed to a specified room in the school building where they met the researcher who explained the nature of the study, the need for interviews, the importance of the students comments to the pool of research data and the fact that all information obtained would be treated in the strictest confidence.

It was further explained that it would be necessary for the researcher to record the subject's responses on a portable tape-recorder but that if the student had any objection, or at any point during the course of the interview would prefer his/her comments not to be recorded, then the machine would be shut off. In fact, not a single subject objected to the use of the tape-recorder.

As with the 841 subjects who were administered the questionnaire *en masse*, each of the 40 subjects interviewed was requested to complete the Supplementary Questionnaire so that background information was available against which the interview responses could be analysed.

After this was completed, the interview got under way. The researcher used the *Aide Memoire* to keep the interview flowing smoothly and within the framework of the study.

Subjects varied greatly between those who had to be prompted frequently, to those - especially in California - who had no difficulty whatsoever, in expressing their views.

Mostly, the interviews were conducted without any problems

although in a single instance, the subject's class teacher had failed to inform the researcher of the recent death of the student's grandparent and a chance question in the interview triggered a mild emotional upset.

However, while most of the information during the course of the interviews was extremely useful and pertinent, the researcher discovered that many subjects freely added more information in the few minutes *after* the interview 'proper' had been completed and the tape recorder shut off.

In a sense, this was expected and where such information given proved to be relevant to the main thrust of the study, the researcher herself recorded this immediately after the departure of that particular subject.

Confidentiality was insured by the following simple procedure: Before the commencement of each interview, the researcher recorded a number on the tape without any reference to names or other identifying information.

TREATMENT OF DATA

Tabulation of Questionnaires

The 841 sets of questionnaires (Primary and Supplementary) were grouped into 362 Scottish subjects and 479 Californian subjects. For each sample, the questionnaires were further regrouped according to age and gender as previously outlined. It should be noted here, that the demo/biographic data collected in the supplementary questionnaires were used simply to obtain

information on Family Composition, Gender, and Age and no further analysis was undertaken.

Scoring of the Primary Questionnaire

A numerical coding system was employed. The Facing Page Sentence Completion item "A family is........ was coded 1-7 according to the following criteria.

COMMENTS INDICATING...

		CODED
A family unit without children	-	1
Any reference to extended family network	-	2
'Broken homes' are still a family	-	3
People with no biological or marital ties living together (e.g. in a 'commune')	-	4
Single parent family units	-	5
Unmarried parent family units	-	6
Other, i.e.where the nature of the .relationship was specified,e.g. love & affection, support, discipline, etc.	-	7

There were no "mixed responses."

As far as the 60 questionnaire statements were concerned, the frequency of responses to each were grouped according to the 6-point rating scale (agreement/disagreement) mentioned earlier.

Omitted from the group totals and mean scores were those responses where subjects either failed to make a clear response or where no rating at all was made against the statement. By and large, this represented a very insignificant number for in no instance did this figure reach even one percent of the responses.

Treatment, Tabulation and Scoring of Interview Data

The 40 tape recorded interviews were first transcribed verbatim before being coded against the particular subject's

Supplementary Questionnaire responses establishing the background bio/demographical information.

Transcribed interview comments were grouped into areas and coded 1 - 4 according to the following criteria: Comments relating to Family Life (including gender roles) were coded 1; comments relating to Divorce were coded 2; comments relating to Marriage were coded 3; and comments relating to Parenting were coded 4. A 1 in 10 sample of the interview responses were coded by two other coders. An inter-observer reliability check yielded a pooled corellation-coefficient of r=0.88; p<.001.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Chi Square (X^2) analysis were used to determine levels of statistical significance for the distribution of 'agreement - disagreement' responses to the 60 questionnaire statements along the 6 point scale discussed earlier. However, after preliminary analysis of the data it became clear that the much greater majority of adolescents made their responses in terms of 'strong' agreement or disagreement with each of the statements.

Consequently, in an overwhelming number of cases, there were insufficient responses in the four cell-divisions between the two extremes to undertake the analysis based on a frequency distribution along the 6 point scale. Therefore, a post hoc decision was made to regroup the responses and re-analyse the data in terms of agreement and disagreement. Specifically, using the Chi square analysis, the data was treated as follows.

(1) Both sample responses for each of the 60 statements were first pooled and an overall analysis for agreement - disagreement was undertaken. (2) Responses were grouped for culture, family composition, gender, and age, and a separate analysis undertaken for each category.

The results obtained from these analyses will form the basis for the presentation and discussion of findings in the forthcoming chapters.

However, before moving on to an examination of the findings, within each of the areas - and in so far as it was previously suggested that adolescents' perceptions and expectations of marriage and divorce are influenced by their specific cultures, it is first necessary to note some family composition differences which emerged between the two samples.

Table of proportional differences in family composition between adolescents in Scotland and California

FAMILY COMPOSITION	SCOTS N=362	CALIFORNIANS N=479	x^2	SIG.LEVEL
Both-Parent	305 (84%)	261 (54%)	12	<.001
Single by Divorce	31 (9%)	138 (29%)	8	<.005
Single by Death	13 (3%)	12 (2.5%)		NS
Blended by Divorce	9 (3%)	64 (14%)	4.4	.05
Blended by Death	4 (1%)	4 (<1%)		NS

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Two things are clear from the above table; (1) that a significantly greater number of adolescents in California compared with those in Scotland, were from single parent and blended families (hereafter collectively designated as SB families), and (2) that the proportional difference between adolescents from SB families and 'both parent' families (hereafter BP families) in Scotland was considerably greater than ($x^2 = 27.2$; p <.001) than in California ($x^2 = 3.2.$, NS)

A note concerning the format used in the presentation of data and findings.

Each of the following chapters, 3: Marriage, 4: Divorce, 5:. Family, and 6: Parenting, will be presented using the same format so that the findings in each area may be discussed in as clear a manner as possible. Specifically, in each chapter, and where appropriate, questionnaire statements dealing with that particular issue will be discussed separately. However, where one statement is the corollary of another, responses to the two will be shown together and findings will be discussed around the central issue.

In each instance, the results will be shown and discussed as follows. First, quantative data will indicate the distribution of responses to the questionnaire statements in terms of overall 'agreement' and 'disagreement' differences. This will be followed by data representing the significant findings relating to Culture, Age, Gender, and Family Composition and incorporating

qualitative data in the form of selected excerpts from the interview part of the study.

Both, the quantative and qualitative data will be addressed to the appropriate literature which impinge on the issue under discussion.

Finally, each chapter will conclude with a brief summary of the main findings and a qualitative study table.

CHAPTER THREE

MARRIAGE

As indicated in Chapter 1, both in Britain (Rimmer, 1982) and in America (Campbell, 1987) the majority of people still marry. In terms of the general affinity for marriage, there appears to be little change from the past. Yet, because of a corresponding increase in divorce trends (Haskey, 1982), an increasing number of people get married more than once. At the same time, the age at which people marry appears to be higher. This, together with a more liberal social acceptance of couples co-habiting has in recent years, also resulted in an increase in the number of unmarried couples living together (Yankelovitch, 1981).

In the 1950s someone with a complex family history of divorce and remarriage would have been rare; in the 1980s it is no longer unusual. Specifically, in Scotland, in the 1960's 4% of people marrying had previously been divorced whereas by 1985 the (mean for males and females) was 18% (Annual Report of the Registrar General, Scotland, 1986). In the U.S.A. the corresponding figures were 16.5% in 1970 rising to 23.4% by 1984 (U.S. Census Bureau, 1988).

Against this present social background we may ask, how do adolescent's perceive marriage?

Cherlin (1981) suggests that perhaps now is a good time to try to answer this question; for in spite of the very rapid changes in recent years, for the moment, the pace of change in marriage, divorce, and other aspects of family life appears to

have abated.   For instance,   now in the 1980s rates in both
Britain and the U.S. appear to be slowing down again. Since the
mid-1970s, for example, the marriage and birth rates have
increased by small amounts and the divorce rate has not been
rising as fast. We may indeed, as Cherlin suggests, be in an
interval of less rapid change in marriage and family life - a
period in which we may pause to investigate the adolescent's
perception of marriage.

        Thirteen, questionnaire items, listed below, dealt with
marriage.

<div align="center">STATEMENT</div>

4   I think of marriage as something that will last a lifetime
6   1 will only get married if I want to have children
8   Marriage will be a more important aim in my life than a
    career
11 People who marry for the second time are usually more
    unhappy in that marriage
15 I would not like my marriage to be like my parents'
18 Marriage is thought of as old fashioned by people of my age
22 Children get most of their ideas about marriage and divorce
    from their own families
24 I would want to get married before I had children
38 The best basis for marriage is romantic love
44 I expect to get married one day
46 Children get most of their ideas about marriage and
    divorce from their friends
53 I think I would feel very unhappy about it if I never
    married
57 I would want to have children even if I wasn't married

        It is clear from the above list that many of the items are
corollaries of others and as such,   they will be grouped
appropriately in the presentation of results and discussion of
issues common among them.

These issues fall within four main categories as follows:

(A) Issues concerning the 'importance of marriage'
    [IEMS: 8,44,53]

(B) Issues concerning views on marriage as representing   an
    'institution'
    [ITEMS: 4,11,18,38,]

(C) Issues concerning the relationship of marriage to the
    having of children
    [ITEMS: 6,24,57]

(D) Issues concerning those influences which impinge on the
    perception of marriage
    [ITEMS: 15,22,46]

GROUP 'A' STATEMENTS - (concerning the importance of marriage)

8   Marriage will be a more important aim in my life than a
     career
44   I expect to get married one day
53   I think I would feel very unhappy about it if I never
     married

As suggested above, the basic issue here concerns the 'importance' of marriage. Simply, to what extent do young people, as represented by those who took part in the study, anticipate marriage and what form does that anticipation take? To what extent does the importance of marriage weigh against the importance of a career? Overall responses from the two samples to the three statements in this group are shown in the following summary table, with Chi Square (X^2) values and Significance levels.

STATEMENTS	RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	x^2	P
'Marriage will be a more important aim in my life than a career'	835	302 (36%)	5.6	<.025
'I expect to get married one day'	832	749 (90%)	16.0	<.001
'I think I would feel very unhappy about it if I never married'	832	593 (71%)	8.8	.005

Only slightly more than one-third of the total sample anticipated marriage in more important terms than their future careers. The majority felt this was not the case, i.e. careers would be more important than marriage. However, this does not mean that they would not marry for as the table shows, the majority of adolescents indicated 'yes', they *would* marry.

This finding very clearly supports that of Patterson, 1981 (discussed in Chapter 1) who also found that most of the adolescents in his study indicated they expected to get married. Indeed, in the present study not only did the majority indicate their expectations were to marry one day but this was further confirmed in their responses to the third statement, i.e. they would feel very unhappy about it if they never married.

However, in spite of the very clear positive responses - even though the priority of most was career over marriage - other findings based upon family composition, gender, and age showed some interesting differences. There were no cultural differences.

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% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 8
'Marriage will be a more important aim in my life then a career'

BOTH-PARENTS' GROUP			SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots	Calif		Scots	Calif
N=302	N=259		N=57	N=217
40%	38%		25%	35%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 8
'Marriage will be a more important aim in my life then a career'

MALE GROUP			FEMALE GROUP	
Scots	Calif		Scots	Calif
N=97	N=255		N=162	N=221
36%	40%		41%	28%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON AGE
FOR ITEM 8
'Marriage will be a more important aim in my life then a career'

AGE GROUP I			AGE GROUP II	
Scots	Calif		Scots	Calif
N=203	N=251		N=156	N=225
42%	42%		32%	28%

The above tables show that while there were no overall cultural differences there were differences in response based on family composition, gender, and age. Specifically, in both cultures, adolescents from 'single-blended' (SB) families disagreed much more than did adolescents from 'both-parents' (BP) families ($X^2=4.4$; p=.05). Could this be interpreted as a greater reluctance towards marriage based upon their own family

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experience or is the reason to be found elsewhere? For instance, while the overall responses based upon gender difference was not significant, Californian females were less in agreement with the statement than were females from Scotland ($X^2=5.2$; p=.025). (The corresponding cultural difference for the males was not significant).

However, an interesting finding here is that the slightly *greater* proportion of females than males indicated that marriage would not be more important an aim in life than a career. While disagreement with the statement does not necessarily mean that a career would be the first aim (after all, they could be seen as being *equally* important) it was expected on a purely *a priori* basis that females would more readily reflect the stereotypical response of 'marriage above all else'.

Traditionally, according to Barron and Norris (1976) *women's* attitudes [to marriage] are often bound up with expectations about their husbands' work (i.e. many do not want to be more skilled or educated than their marriage partners, and would encounter difficulties from their husbands if they were).

While there *were* a number of such responses in the interview part of the study, mostly comments from the adolescent females confirmed the general response pattern to the questionnaire statement and qualified them in the following terms:

"..I think a career is more important today because you can always get married, and if you do you don't have to be dependent on your husband to hand out things to you. I mean, say if your marriage didn't work out? If you didn't have your own career then what? "
[16 year old Scots female]

"..[I would put my] career first, definitely. I've seen what it's done to my mom not having a career. Now, after all these years, she's going back to school to get a career. She wishes she had put her career first before she got married. I want to be an anthropologist and travel to different countries and study the people. That's probably what I'd do if I wasn't married. I'd like to get married anyway, but with a family it's a little harder."
[15 year old Californian female]

"..I want to get married and have kids but first I want to go to University before I do that, University is important to me too. It's taken a long time for women to realise that they can do anything they want and it would be a pity just to leave school and get married to the first man who came along."
[15 year old Scots female]

Nevertheless, a number of females *did* agree with the statement and it is important too, to read some of their comments.

"...it's not that a career is not important, I just feel that marriage is more important, especially if I am to become a successful homemaker. I know that many of my friends want to do fantastic things with their life, I too, but I would be quite happy really, if I was married to a successful guy and we had a nice home and kids, and he went out to work while I did what I was supposed to do."
[15 year old Californian female]

"...I think if I am realistic then I
expect that I will be married and have
children much more likely than having a
great career or anything. I would like to
have one but I don't know what I want to
do and it all seems much easier just to
get married and let your husband have to
do all the worrying about jobs and
things. It's fair I think because women
have to worry about bringing up the kids
and the family an all."
[14 year old Scots female]

"...I read in a magazine that quite a lot
of women who have careers wish they had
got married instead. I guess it is
possible to do both but after reading
that magazine I started to think about
things and then, I saw a T.V. show about
these career women in New York who were
so busy becoming successful that they
didn't have time to get married and how
much they regretted that they had put
their careers first. I remember one
women, she was a president or something
of her company, was almost crying when
she remembered the man who wanted to
marry her but she wanted her career
instead and he married someone else, and
now she wishes she had started a family
and said if she had her chance again she
would be happy just doing that. Scarey
isn't it? Anyway, that's how I feel."
[13 year old Californian female]

Of course the females were not the only subjects who

expressed views concerning this issue. Adolescent males too, had

something to say both in favour of the statement and in

disagreement with it. First, an example of those who indicated

'careers ahead of marriage':

"...I think careers are more important,
especially for a man. Women have a choice
either to get married and stay home, men don't
have that choice, so a career has to be more
important. You have to be a good wage earner to
have a wife and children."
[15 year old Californian male]

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Next, an example of those (males) who indicated 'marriage ahead of careers':

> "...I think that having a family, getting
> married and all is really important. One
> can always make a career but if you wait
> too long then it's hard later on to have
> kids, you get too used to living on your
> own and then you miss out. Also, no
> matter how good you are at your job or
> how successful you become in your career,
> if you do not place your marriage first
> then it will probably not work out well
> for you later on."
> [16 year old Scots male]

As far as age differences are concerned the above tables show that in both cultures older adolescents indicated a greater disagreement with the sentiment inherent in the statement than did their younger peers ($X^2=4.6$; $p=.05$).

In the absence of corroboration in the literature on adolescents' expectations differentiating marriage and career, one can speculate that older adolescents (14-16 years) - closer to leaving school and nearer than younger adolescents to the immediacy of further education and/or employment - are more likely to think of a career first.

> "I know I will get married someday but
> first I've got to decide on what I want
> to do with my life"
> [16 year old Scots male]

> "..this time next year I'm finished with
> school but it's scary...I have to find a
> job in the evenings so I can go to State
> (San Francisco State University)..can't
> even *think* of marriage for a long time"
> [16 year old Californian female]

Let us now examine responses to the next statements.

44 - *I expect to get married one day*

53 - *I think I would feel very unhappy about it if I never married*

As it was noted earlier, the overwhelming majority (mean of 80.5%) of adolescents responded in the affirmative to both statements thus supporting Patterson's (1981) finding. However, there were no significant differences in responses based upon culture, family composition, gender, and age.

Nevertheless, how should these findings be interpreted? The fact that the majority of adolescents *do* expect to marry is not particularly surprising.

It has already been pointed out that both in Britain and in America, the tendency for people to marry is still very much the norm; therefore one would expect the majority of adolescents to acquire this expectation as part of their socialisation process. However, in spite of the expectancy being confirmed by the findings, it will be interesting to examine some of the reasons given by adolescents for *not* anticipating marriage. For example, in the following extract taken from an interview with a Scots' adolescent living in a SB family the main reason for not expecting to marry seemed to be her fear that it would turn out like her parents' marriage.

"..I think it is unlikely for me to marry
because the whole idea scares me too
much..it's so easy for marriages to break
up these days that I don't really think 1
want to get involved in all that. I've
seen what it's done to my parents...they
both say how much getting married changed
their lives for the worse and that I was
the only good thing that happened from
it...today you don't need to get married
to have children so why bother? I'll
maybe live with someone, even have a
child but I don't think I'll get
married".
[16 year old Scots female]

An interview with another Scots adolescent, also living in a

SB family (here, with both parents who had previously been

divorced) elicited the following reason for his not expecting to

marry.

"...when I grow up I don't think I'll get
married... because I don't think it is
possible to have the same kind of feeling
for the person you marry all your
life..then you have to divorce..like my
mother did and my step-father and then it
becomes very hard on the children. In our
family we had three before my mum married
and he [step-father] had three and..I
don't know, it's not that I don't like
them or anything but it's not the same
and I keep thinking that if that's what's
going to happen to me then I don't want
to get married".
[16 year old male]

While it is not possible from the data gathered in this

study to maintain that all 'anti-marriage' responses from

Scottish adolescents were based upon observations of their

parents' marriage, in the light of the above illustrations, it

makes one wonder about the extent to which such observations

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influence expectations. Certainly, it makes one wonder about the cultural differences and although the effect of culture was not statistically significant here, the negative responses of Californian adolescents to the statement "I expect to get married one day" were interestingly different. As illustrated below, there was less of an emphasis with the marriage of their parents than with more general perceptions. For example:

"..I'm sure I'm not going to get married, I mean who needs it? A lot of people I know just live together, that's the way of the 80s, you live together then if you don't like each other after a while, you split. No marriage problems, no alimony problems. I said that to my mom, that she didn't have to marry again, she could have just been independent and still continued to see [stepfather named]..I'm sure about that, that I will not marry. [16 year old Californian male]

This perception of 'living together' very much supports the finding by Yankelovitch (1981) that an increasing number of young people in America are living together without being married. Of course, we do not know, for neither Yankelovitch nor anyone else has shown, how long it is before these young people eventually *do* get married. Nonetheless, as far as the adolescent is concerned, the relevant point here is their *perception* of marriage, and their *expectancies*. This is best illustrated in the following interview extract:

"..I know that most of my friends get
married and even my parents have both
been married twice, but I don't expect to
marry, at least not for a while...I guess
I may drift into it someday but it's so
much better to live with someone and find
out what they're really like, if you can
spend the rest of your life together and
all that, and if you think yes, I can,
then maybe you should get married; but
as I see it now, it's O.K. just to live
together without getting married, a lot
of people I know, even my parents'
friends, do it".
[15 year old Californian female]

Let us now move on to the next group of statements in which

the basic issue was concerned with the adolescent's perception of

marriage as 'an institution'. The four questionnaire statements

which comprised this part of the study are shown below.

GROUP 'B' STATEMENTS - PERCEPTIONS OF MARRIAGE AS 'AN INSTITUTION

ITEM   STATEMENT

4   I think of marriage as something that will last a
       lifetime
11   People who marry for the second time are usually more
       unhappy in that marriage
18   Marriage is thought of as old-fashioned by people of my
       age
38   The best basis for marriage is romantic love

Whitehead (1976,p.183) refers to marriage as "..the major

institutionalized form of cross-gender relationship." Although

many young people today live together in a relationship outside

marriage it is argued by some (e.g. Corbin, 1978) that many

people feel that not only should a personally satisfying

relationship precede and continue into marriage, but that this

is what marriage is all about. Rather than regarding marriage as

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an institution concerned primarily with kinship, affines, and children,

"...people increasingly think of it as a legitimation of a personal relationship, a formal declaration of being a couple" (p.52). [Also that] "..Marriage is culturally portrayed as the natural consequence of love. People look after their spouses, support them and have children because they love each other" (p.53).

Bohannan (1985), suggests that marriage may be seen as both, a private matter and a public institution; on the one hand it concerns the relationship between two people and is based on sexuality; on the other hand, it is the basis for the family, which is the central unit in society.

However, while social scientists construct theories and particular frameworks or categories for viewing marriage in one or another way, the question of the adolescent's perception on what *kind* of an institution marriage is - if indeed it is viewed as one - is relatively unknown. Do adolescents perceive marriage as a formal institutionalized "cross-gender relationship"? Or do they simply see marriage in terms of specific relationships within their own experiences and noteably, the relationships of their own parents? And further, given that in many parts of the western world today the strong 'moral' pressures have eased to some extent, and that divorce, remarriage, and the blending of families are for many adolescents a not unusual experience in their families, how do these changes affect the perception of marriage?

The overall distribution of responses and the Chi Square (X^2) and levels of significance are shown in the following table.

STATEMENT	TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	X^2	P
I think of marriage as something that will last a lifetime	840	82.7%	20.5	<.0001
People who marry for a second time are usually more unhappy in that marriage	832	28.7%	33.7	<.0001
Marriage is thought of as old-fashioned by people of my age	819	29.8%	9.6	.05
The best basis for marriage is romantic love	833	67.6%	10.1	.05

The overall suggestion is that most young people think of marriage as something that will last a lifetime, and that second marriages are not necessarily unhappy. Additionally, the majority of adolescents did not think of marriage as old-fashioned and concurred that the best basis for marrying someone is romantic love.

The differential responses for culture, family composition, gender, and age follow.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 4
'I think of marriage of something that will last a lifetime'

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
N=304	N=261	N=57	N=218
90%	86%	77%	71%

There was no overall cultural difference, between Scots and Californians and most perceived of marriage as lasting a lifetime. Differences in responses based on family composition however, show that regardless of culture adolescents from SB families agreed substantially less with the statement than did adolescents from BP families ($X^2=5.6$; p=.025). This finding is patently clear. It shows that adolescents from SB families are obviously influenced by their own family experience, and consequently have a much greater likelihood of negative expectations concerning the duration of marriage.

DOES MARRIAGE LAST A LIFETIME?

"..Marriage does not last a lifetime, I know that because my parents divorced and each one married someone else. I think a lot of people are like me, their parents do not remain married forever to the same person and I think that will continue to be the case. I cannot see things changing to what they were like before when people had to stay together even though they were always fighting with each other."
(16 year-old Californian female from blended family)

"...My grandparents' generation were like Archie Bunker, they stayed together for life, forever. My parents' generation split up more easily and I guess that's the way of the future, people will marry more than once."
(16year-old Californian female with single parent)

However, does it necessarily follow that if marriages are to break up and result in people marrying again, that second marriage are unhappy? This was the question put to adolescents in the form of the statement shown below.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 11

'People who marry for the second time are usually more unhappy in
that marriage'

	SCOTS N=360	CALIFORNIANS N=472
% 'Agreement'	36%	23%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES FOR FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 11

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots N=303	Calif N=257	Scots N=57	Calif N=215
37%	27%	33%	18%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES FOR GENDER
FOR ITEM 11

MALE GROUP		FEMALE GROUP	
Scots N=198	Calif N=252	Scots N=162	Calif N=220
48%	28%	22%	18%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON AGE FOR ITEM 11

AGE GROUP I		AGE GROUP II	
Scots N=204	Calif N=249	Scots N=156	Calif N=223
41%	26%	30%	20%

It was previously noted that the great majority of the total

sample disagreed. However, the cultural difference was

pronounced; here adolescents from the California sample (which it

may be recalled, represented a much greater proportion of those from SB families than did the Scots sample), indicated a much greater disagreement ($X^2=11.2$; p=<.001). This, presumably, was because of the Californian's greater 'experience' as members of a society in which remarriage is more common and which was alluded to in earlier pages. Additionally, this finding may be seen to lend support to one of the hypotheses, namely, that "The significant differences in perceptions between adolescents in the two cultures would be a direct function of their cultural milieu."

There were no cultural differences in responses based on family composition but overall, adolescents from SB families disagreed more than those from BP families ($X^2=4.6$; p=.05). This suggests that while the former are more aware of the potential 'discontinuity' of first marriages (as indicated in their response to the previous statement), they nevertheless think that second marriages are not necessarily unhappy.

Gender differences show that whereas the majority of both males and females disagree, the latter do so much more emphatically in *both* cultures.

The age-related differences in responses were significant ($X^2=4.2$; p=.05) and show that younger adolescents in California disagreed much more than their peers in Scotland whereas the difference between the older adolescents in the two cultures was less marked.

The following extracts from the interviews were the only two direct references to this statement.

Are second marriages unhappy?

"...I think you are unhappy that you left your wife and children and married someone else...and if you get to visit your children then they are also unhappy because they can't love the new mother or father as much as their own."
(12 year-old Scots male with both parents)

"..People who divorce and then get married again to another person think they are better off but I don't think so, because they have to try and live with remembering all the good times they had before, so I think they become very sad and miss their real husband or wife."
(13 year-old Scots female with both parents)

We turn now to the two questions of whether or not adolescents think that people of their age perceive marriage as old-fashioned and is romantic love the best basis for marriage?

Again, as noted earlier the majority (71% - 29%) did not think that marriage is old-fashioned and did feel that romantic love is the best basis for marriage. These findings were reflected in both cultures. There were no significant differences in responses between the two cultures nor for those based on family composition, gender, and age. Qualitatively though, the following interview excerpts may be seen to illustrate some interesting and different points of view.

Here, many adolescents chose to discuss the issue around their perceptions of marriage relationships.

"..being married is different nowadays,
it's not the same because men and women
both go to work and often they lead
different lives, they have their own jobs
and their own friends sometimes."
(14 year-old Scots male)

"..I don't think you have to marry if you
don't want to because these days you can
live together with the person you love
and not need to get married. My brother
lives with his girlfriend and they even
pay their taxes together and they don't
need to marry because everyone treats
them as though they were married."
(14 yr.old Calif. male)

"..You can't always be romantic as you
were when you first met the man you
married, you can still love him but in a
different way. I think people who try to
cling on to that romance kind of thing
probably become quite disappointed and
that probably leads to divorce or
separation."
(16 year-old Californian female)

"..I guess it's possible for a couple to
continue to be in a romance during their
marriage but that's got to be quite rare
I think. The best basis for marriage is
for both people to have their own money
and not to have to fight over it, to be
independent, not to have to do things or
have friends the same as the other person
but to live in harmony and love of
course.
(15 year-old Scots female)

While these views may express a certain realism and perhaps

maturity of perception, it is worth including one or two other

excerpts from interviews which, although expressing opposing

views, were nonetheless as sincere.

"...There is no doubt that a married
couple should love one another and that
this love should try to capture what they
had when they first got married. My
parents do and that's the way I think it
should be, anything else is false and is
sure to make both feel frustrated and
bitter."
(16 year-old Californian female)

"..I couldn't think of marrying a girl
unless I was in love with her..and if I
stopped being in love with her after we
were married then I would have to
honestly consider a divorce."
(15 year old Californian male)

"..It's great to be in love with your
husband or wife. I know many people stop
showing affection to each other after
being married a few years but I think
that's wrong and I would want my husband
to feel I was the only woman in his
life."
(15 year old Scots female)

It is of course, inevitable that discussions on marriage
inevitably raise various questions about children, i.e. about
having them and about bringing them up. To more fully understand
adolescents' perceptions on children, specifically the extent to
which marriage is seen as an essential, or even necessary, pre-
requisite, let us now turn to the next group of questionnaire
statements (Group 'C') and discussion of the findings.

GROUP 'C' STATEMENTS
Marriage as a pre-requisite to having children

ITEM   STATEMENT

6   I think I will only get married if I want to have children
24   I want to get married before I have children
57   I would want to have children even if I wasn't married

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Is marriage necessary before having children? How have changing social values - which today see many couples living together and deliberately having children out of marriage - affected the perception of the next generation of parents?

It should be emphasized that these questions are primarily aimed at the adolescent's *perception* and not at the adolescent's *behaviour*, i.e what young people *say* about having children rather than whether or not they *have* them (during adolescence). It is important to clarify this for it is now well established that the number of premarital teenage pregnancies and resulting live births in the western world is on the increase (Thornes and Collard, 1979).

However, once again, as in other areas of adolescent perception, the literature on perceptions towards having children *per se* is very sparse. Yet, of the few recent studies undertaken in this area, noteably by Juhasz (1980) and Chelini (1983), what seems to emerge is that while adolescents feel the decision to bear children is the responsibility of the couple alone, a majority of adolescents feel that legalized marriage and the two-parent family is the most important setting for having and rearing children. Chelini concluded, that adolescents "..still have strong traditional values and that they ...want their children within the context of stable marriages" (p.45).

A relevant note here concerns an interesting finding in an earlier study (Juhasz, 1976). Here it was found that (95%) of a

sample of 350 first-year college students said they themselves would be more likely to have children if they were married than if they were single. However, asked to evaluate their peers, 25% of the sample felt that as many as a quarter of their fellow students would *not* require marriage as a pre-requisite to childbearing. Simply, their perceptions of their age-group was different to their individual expectations.

In the present study, the distribution of responses of 837 subjects to the three questionnaire statements are shown in the following table.

STATEMENT	TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	x^2	P
I will marry only if I want to have children	837	14%	21.6	<.001
I would want to marry before having children	834	90.2%	22.8	<.001
I would want to have kids even if I wasn't married	830	32.3%	18.3	.003

The overall - and very clear - indication from the above table is that the majority of adolescents would marry irrespective of wanting children. Also, that they would wait for marriage before having children, i.e. marriage was seen as an important pre-requisite. Yet, the overall response to the third statement indicates that almost one-third of adolescents (i.e. 32%) would want to have children even if they were *not* married, suggesting perhaps that having children (*per se*) is most important.

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Therefore, what appears contradictory is perhaps not so. Indeed, the importance of having children emerged in a number of interviews. We shall refer to these shortly but first, let us turn to the distribution of responses and the proportional differences in terms of agreement and disagreement on the basis of culture, family composition, gender, and age.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 6

'I think I will only get married if I want to have children"

| MALE GROUP | | | FEMALE GROUP | |
| Scots | Calif | | Scots | Calif |
N=198	N=254		N=163	N=222
25%	25%		7%	8%

To reiterate, by more than 6:1 adolescents disagree. While there were no significant differences in responses based on culture, family composition, and age, differences did emerge based on gender. As the table above shows, females (in both California and Scotland) disagreed more than males ($X^2=6$; p=.025).

Other than the overall trends reported earlier for the statements, 'I would want to marry before having children' (where 90% indicated they would) and 'I would want to have kids even if I wasn't married' (where 68% indicated they would not), there were no significant differences in terms of culture, gender, family composition, or age for these two statements.

However, in order to more clearly differentiate the views expressed, it will, perhaps be more useful here for the following

extracts to be divided into those adolescents who represented the majority view (marriage before children) and those who represented the minority view - i.e. that marriage was not particularly necessary in order to have children.

Majority View

> "..Well, I don't think it would be a
> family to have a child when you're not
> married..marriage is pretty much for
> committment, like if you or she wants to
> break it off there's more committment if
> you're married to somebody and have
> children with them."
> (13 year-old Californian female)

> "..The only reason I'd get married is to
> have kids. Why get married if you don't
> have kids, it doesn't make sense. 1 can't
> imagine having kids and not being married
> though, it's more safe."
> (15 year-old Californian female)

Minority View

> "..some people think that it's terrible
> to have children and not being married
> but I don't think so, I don't think it's
> so important as before. Many people have
> children and do fine without marrying."
> (15 year-old Scots female)

> "..I don't think it's necessary to be
> married.to have kids. The way marriage is
> set up in the USA, it's really
> scarey...it's a lot of legal
> documentation and what's really important
> is the spiritual life between two
> people...and some people want to have
> kids but they don't want to be married, I
> think that's OK."
> (14 year-old Californian male)

Of course, the question as to what exactly influences an adolescent's perception regarding marriage is not only one that

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has been part of various developmental and sociological studies over the years, but also an integral part of the present study. Given that the majority of those who responded to the statements within this group did so in traditional terms, can we conclude that in spite of the apparent changes in the nature of human relationships, traditional values are still strong enough not to be drastically influenced by these changes? If so, the question as to how these values are acquired begs itself. This in fact, forms the basis of the final group of statements in this chapter and to which we will now turn.

GROUP 'D' STATEMENTS (Concerned with influences which impinge on one's perception of marriage)

ITEM	STATEMENT
15	I would not like my marriage to be like my parents'
22	Children get most of their ideas about marriage and divorce from their own families
46	Children get most of their ideas about marriage and divorce from their friends

While there is a huge literature dealing with parental versus peer influences on issues such as educational achievement, job aspirations, moral values and general social learning (e.g. Sewell and Shaw, 1968a,1968b; Leuptow,1980; Baumrind, 1970,1971,1975; studies dealing with influences on 'marriage perception' are relatively few.

In Chelini's (1983) study previously cited, 68% of the 451 high school students who took part said their views on marriage were influenced mainly by their parents. If it is true that

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adolescents obtain most of their ideas (including their views on marriage) from their parents, we may ask to what extent these influences impinge upon the adolescent's desire to have a marriage similar to his/her parents' marriage.

STATEMENT	TOTAL OF RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	x^2	P
I would not like my marriage to be like my parents'	831	49.2%	5.9	NS
Children get most of their ideas about marriage and divorce from their families	837	73.1%	18.5	<.001
Children get most of their ideas about marriage and divorce from their friends	833	27.4%	18.1	<.001

Two things are immediately clear. The first is that responses to the corollory statements appear to be mutually exclusive (r=0.97), i.e. the majority of subjects concur that most of their ideas about marriage and divorce are obtained from the family and not from friends. This finding bears out those obtained in other studies in this area and cited above.

The second point of interest here is that although almost 75% of adolescents do indeed profess to obtaining their views about marriage and divorce from their families (presumably from their parents), yet, almost 50% of the total sample indicated they would not want their marriages to be like that of their parents'. Why should this be so? Again, let us turn to the distribution of responses based on culture, family composition, gender, and age.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 15

'I would not like my marriage to be like my parents''

	SCOTS (N=359)	CALIFORNIANS (N=472)
% Agreement	40%	57%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 15

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
N=302	N=258	N=57	N=214
35%	44%	61%	72%

While there was no overall difference between agreement and disagreement for the total sample, the significant cultural difference ($X^2=6.8$; p=.01) clearly shows that the majority of Scots adolescents disagreed whereas the majority of Californians agreed with the statement. Or more simply, Scots mostly indicated that they *would* like to emulate their parents' marriage while Californians indicated they would *not*. This finding, in conjunction with cultural differences in the 'expected duration of marriage' reported in earlier pages, suggests that the much higher incidence of SB families in California (as represented by the California sample) does *markedly* influence the adolescent's perception there and this is reflected in the findings for both, culture and family composition.

Again, the influence of differences in family composition is clear, especially in the light of the finding that adolescents from SB families agreed much more with the statement, i.e. they would not like their marriage to be like their parents' marriage. There were no gender or age differences.

The following extracts may offer some insight into this finding.

> "..My parents had the worst kind of marriage, I would never want my marriage to be the same...they fought all the time, my father basically hates women. When they split up he took my younger brother to live with him and said I should stay with my mother because it was easier for him...I really don't know why he bothered getting married."
> (16 year-old Californian female)

> "...If my marriage was like my parents' I would die, really. They seem to be living on different planets. Until they divorced two years ago I would hate to go home after school, I used to try and spend as much time as I could with my friends...but a lot of them also had the same problem. People say we should learn from our grownups, from our parents but I don't think so, not my parents anyway."
> (15 year-old Californian female)

There were of course, similar feelings expressed from some of the Scottish female subjects. For example:

> "..my folks just never got on, they always seem to be bickering about something or other. Then they would take it out on us. I couldn't do that with my kids...I wouldn't want to live like them. Now I live with my mum and I see my dad from time to time and we get along much better than before."
> (14 year-old Scots female)

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Additionally, there were some males too, who in the course
of the interviews, explained why they would not want their own
marriages to be like their parents'.

From California

> "..I love both my parents and I get on OK
> with both of them but they seem to
> dislike each other. They've been married
> for nearly twenty years and I think as
> long as I can remember, they haven't
> seemed to like each other...it's hard to
> explain but it seems like they are both
> different people when the other isn't
> around, know what I mean? Like when they
> have to talk to each other it's always
> like, formal you know, not like people
> who love each other. It's weird, I'd hate
> my life to be like that."
> (16 year-old Californian male)

From Scotland

> "My parents say very little to each
> other. My dad gets home late and after
> his tea he sits and watches the telly or
> reads the newspaper and my mother, she
> works half day, she just gets on with
> doing the things around the house. They
> don't seem unhappy with each other or
> anything like that but they are different
> to my pals' fathers and mothers...I
> dunno, it's difficult to know why but I
> would find it hard living like that."
> (14 year-old Scots male)

Before concluding this chapter, and especially because 50%
of the sample indicated a preference to having similar marriages
to their parents', interview extracts showing a view other than
those cited in preceding pages are also included here.

"...I think my parents have a good
marriage, they do a lot of things
together and they always seem to be happy
with each other. They set a good example
to us I think."
(15 year-old Californian male)

"...I think of marriage as for life, I
guess my parents have always stuck
together and my grandparents and my aunts
and uncles, and that's made me think of
it that way. With my parents it's almost
like they're the same person, they like
the same things. It's like when I look at
my friends I guess we like the same sort
of things. I guess it's kinda like that."
(15 year-old male from California)

"My parents seem very happy
together..sometimes they give each other
a row but my dad jokes a lot and my mum
jokes him back; They laugh a lot and I
like that, I would like it to be like
that when I get married to someone.
(13 year old male Scots)

Finally, given that the statement simply referred to
"family" it was open enough for adolescents to include other
familial role model influences (on the perception of marriage),
the following interview extract illustrates this.

"...I think my grandparents really liked
as well as loved each other and that's
what made their marriage work. With my
own parents they loved each other but
they didn't like each other and they
split up. It's made me think about it and
try to use my grandparents as an example
of how it should be."
(13 year-old Californian female)

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

OVERALL

The Majority of adolescents ...

- Get most of their ideas on marriage from their parents/family

- Think that romantic love is the best basis for marriage

- Do not think of marriage as old-fashioned

- Expect to marry someday

- Would be unhappy if they did not marry

- Would like their marriages to be like that of their parents'

- Think of marriage as lasting a lifetime

- Would want to get married regardless of their need for having children

- Would wait to marry before having children but would want to have children even if they did not marry

- Would not put their marriages before their careers

- Do not think that second marriages are necessarily unhappy

QUALITATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF *SIGNIFICANT* FINDINGS
ON ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF MARRIAGE

STATEMENT	CULTURAL DIFF.	FAMILY COMP. DIFF.	GENDER DIFF.	AGE DIFF.
8 - Marriage will be a more important aim in my life than a career	None	SB disagreed more than BP	Calif. females disagreed more than Scots females (overall females disagreed more than males	None
4 - I think of marriage as something that will last a lifetime	None	SB disagree BP agree	None	None
11 - People who marry for the second time are usually more unhappy in that marriage	Calif. disagree more than Scots	SB disagreed more than BP	Females disagreed more than males	Younger disagreed more in Calif. than Scotland
6 - I will only get married if I want to have children	None	None	Females disagreed more than males	None
15 - I would not like my marriage to be like my parents'	Calif. agreed Scots disagreed	SB agreed more than BP	None	None

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CHAPTER FOUR

DIVORCE

This chapter deals with the subjects' responses to those questionnaire and interview statements concerned with attitudes to divorce. Before evaluating the statistical analyses and discussion of the findings, we should be reminded that in terms of sample differences based on the subjects' family composition 40 of the 362 (or 11.1%) of the Scots were from families which had been touched by divorce in some way, (i.e. either the subject was from a 'single by divorce' family or from a 'blended by divorce' family).

In comparison, the ratio for the California sample was 42.2% (202/479). This difference (t=15.9;p<.0001) was reflected in Chapter 2 [Methods] where it was pointed out that of the total 841 subjects who made up the main study sample, 28% were from homes affected by divorce. Proportionally, the figures for subjects from such familes were 1:9 in Scotland and 1:2.4 in California.

While there were only six statements in the questionnaire part of the study specifically concerned with divorce, subjects frequently expressed their views and alluded to divorce in response to other questions (e.g. about marriage, parenting etc.,) during the interview part of the study. Consequently, where appropriate, the ensuing discussion will incorporate such material.

In Chapter 1, it was suggested that a basic tenet of social-cognitive developmental theory is that children themselves are

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active constructors of the world they experience.

As children develop, their reasoning about the social and physical world changes. Their concepts become increasingly complex, integrated, and abstract, and decreasingly ego-centered and concrete (Kohlberg,1969; Selman,1971; Selman and Byrne, 1974).

Accounting for the changes in childrens' thinking is important to the study of childrens' reactions to divorce for several reasons. First of all, it is difficult to evaluate the child's responses to divorce without knowing what he or she perceives and understands about the situation. Also, knowledge of children's level of reasoning has important practical implications. By adolescence, reactions of children to divorce become increasingly more conscious and expressive of their feelings.

The items of the questionnaire which directly related to divorce were as follows:

ITEM   STATEMENT

3   Divorce should be made easier to obtain

33   When there are problems between parents, they should
         stay together for the sake of the children

41   Divorce is the best possible solution if there are
         problems between a couple without children

42   If I marry I expect I will be divorced one day

60   There are more divorces today than twenty years ago

51   People who marry young are more likely to divorce

As before, we will begin by looking at the overall responses to the six statements as shown in the distribution below.

ITEM	TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	x^2	P
42 - 'If I marry I expect to be divorced one day'	833	163 (20%)	24.0	<.001
33 - 'When there are problems between parents they should stay together for the sake of the children'	839	371 (44%)	4.8	.05
41 - 'Divorce is the best solution when there are problems between a couple without children'	835	492 (59%)	7.2	.01
3 - 'Divorce should be easy to obtain'	834	442 (53%)	2.4	NS
60 - 'There are more divorces today than twenty years ago'	827	797 (96%)	36.8	<.001
51 - 'People who marry young are more likely to divorce'	833	571 (69%)	15.2	<.001

From this table it is clear that a large majority of adolescents do not expect their marriages to end in divorce. However, although one-third indicated otherwise, the majority of adolescents think that people who marry young are more likely to divorce. There is also little doubt - and this will be further confirmed in the cultural differences shortly to be discussed - that adolescents *are* aware of changing trends in divorce (*a la* Campbell, 1981; Yankelovitch, 1981; and Haskey, 1982; U.S.Census, 1980) for the vast majority agree that there are more divorces today than 20 years ago. In terms of it being easier to obtain a divorce, the overall response was about 50-50, with only

a marginal majority of adolescents agreeing with the statement.

To some extent, this may have something to do with perceptions about children, for the significant disagreement with the statements, indicates that overall, adolescents were of the view that parents who have problems in their marriage should *not* stay together for the sake of the children. Certainly, where there were no children, the majority of adolescents felt that problem marriages are best solved by divorce, but here too, this view was opposed by a substantial minority. One is left with a general impression that as far as these 841 subjects were concerned there was a not insignificant reluctance or even antipathy towards the idea of divorce.

This is an interesting finding, especially after the fact that such a vast majority of those surveyed, indicated an awareness of present divorce trends.

However, before reading too much into the overall findings shown in the table we should first consider the differences in responses to the six statements and especially within the parameters of culture, family composition, gender, and age.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 3
'Divorce should be made easier to obtain'

	SCOTS (N=360)	CALIFORNIANS (N=474)
% Agreement	59%	48%

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% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 3
'Divorce should be made easier to obtain'

MALE GROUP			FEMALE GROUP	
Scots	Calif		Scots	Calif
N=198	N=255		N=162	N=219
56%	42%		64%	55%

These tables show an interesting cultural difference. For instance, Scottish adolescents were significantly more in agreement $(X^1=4.4;$ p=<.05) to divorce 'being made easier to obtain' even though the proportion of adolescents from 'divorced' homes was significantly lower than in California. It may be argued that it is precisely because Californians are so much more 'experienced' as to the familial outcomes of divorce, that it is viewed less favourably there.

There were no significant differences based on family composition or age. However, as the tables show an adolescent's gender did exert an influence. Females agreed with the statement significantly more than did males in both cultures $(X^2=4.2;$ p=.05) and especially in California, i.e. their responses indicated they *did* feel that divorces should be made easier. However, within the female groups, adolescents from Scotland were slightly more emphatic about this. Let us begin by looking at some of the reasons given in the interviews.

"I think it should be easier [to divorce]
because it's no good keep living with a
man, married to him if you just don't get
on...it's no good having to wait years
before the courts say 'yes, that's long
enough now, you've proved you didn't get
on. now you can have a divorce. That's
crazy, you should get a divorce when you
want to".
(Scots female)

"No one tries to stop you from getting
married so why shouldn't divorce be as
easy? ..even if there are kids you
shouldn't stay together just for that if
you want a divorce".
(Scots female)

This view, that divorce should be as easy as marriage, was

also expressed by a Californian female.

"Divorce is not too hard to get, but it
should be even easier I think, like
marriage, as easy as getting married.
Like in Reno."
(Californian female)

The responses of Scottish males too, indicated that they

agreed more with the statement than did the Californian males

(x^2=5.6. p=.025).

"Divorce is too much a legal matter - I
know because my father is a solicitor..it
should be up to the individual to
decide if they want to divorce or not,
it's not anyone else's business,
especially if there are no children'.
(Scots male)

We have seen from the analysis of the overall results that

there was greater agreement than disagreement with the statement

that divorce should be easier if no children are involved.

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Analysed for culture (see table below) we find that adolescents from Scotland agreed much more ($X^2=8.4$; p=<.005).

% DISTRIBUTION FOR 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 41
'Divorce is the best solution if there are problems between a couple without children'

	SCOTS (N=360)	CALIFORNIANS (N=475)
% Agreement	71%	50%

In a study on the effects of family structure on marital attitudes of adolescents Ganong *et al*, (1981) reported that while female adolescents held more favourable attitudes towards marriage and were more egalitarian in their marriage role expectations than males, there were no gender differences in attitudes toward divorce. The overall gender finding in the present study supports the literature in this regard.

Additionally, there were no significant differences based on family composition and age.

FOR THE STATEMENT

> "...So long as there are no children, I
> don't think that a couple should stay
> together if they are really having
> problems...this is the 80's and a woman
> can go out and get a job......she doesn't
> have to depend on her husband to support
> her..."
> (Scottish female)

"...I think that before you get a divorce
you should first try and sort out the
problem, go to a marriage counsellor or
something. Then, if you still don't love
each other it's O.K. to get a divorce
because there are no kids to have to
worry about who would get upset.."
(Californian female)

"...they [*people who get divorced*] think,
'What about the children, we can't get
divorced...and when it's just a couple
there's no one to care about it but just
them. For just a couple I think it's a
lot easier to make the decision."
(Californian female)

"...I think if you're alone, no kids,
then it's not really affecting anyone
else but if they [*people who divorce*]
really think they don't belong together
then that's what they should do, get
divorced...but if there are kids involved
then it gets tough on the kids, it should
be avoided if possible."
(Californian male)

It has already been mentioned that one possible explanation

for a comparable male/female response to this statement was

indirectly associated with the female's perception of a possible

career. Quite a number of subjects referred to this and to

'economics' in both direct and oblique terms. The examples on

the following page will illustrate such a perception.

"...Some people get married for money, I
don't mean going after rich husbands or
anything like that...I mean they get
married because they think they will be
able to share bills and taxes and all
that. Then, when they start falling out
with each other, the money thing becomes
a real problem. Now I think that if they
have no children, then they should
divorce because a woman can do really
well for herself if she's single and

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doesn't have to think about paying part
of her husband's bills...he's probably
got more to lose than her."
(Scottish female)

"...When my parents got divorced my
mother had a really difficult time until
I was old enough and she could get a
better paid full-time job. I know she
loves me and all but she says that if it
hadn't been for us kids then she would
have left him long before she did and
gone back to making a proper career and
life for herself and I think she's right,
I think that sometimes women wait too
long to get divorced from their husbands
and by this time they've got children and
it's too late."
(Californian female)

"...What's in it for anyone to stay with
somebody they don't like any more? I
think they should give it up, get
divorced and don't just keep talking
about it, threatening to do it but really
too worried about what people will say.
They should do it right away and start
fresh...you know, find someone else or
maybe just stay single for a while and
make a lot of money first."
(Scottish male)

Against the statement

343 (41%) subjects in one way or other opposed divorce as

the best possible solution if no children are involved in the

marriage. As to their stated reasons, here, we may examine a

further selection of interview responses.

"...It really doesn't matter whether
there are children or not. People who
make promises to each other should stick
with them even if they are having
problems."
(Scottish male)

"...If you have really loved someone and
then you both decided to get
married...you should not get divorced if
sometimes you get angry with each other.
It's your relationship, nothing to do
with whether you have kids...I'm against
divorce at all, I think people should try
more to understand what's gone wrong and
then to try to make it work."
(Californian male)

"...If you start to think yes, I can get
a divorce more easily because I don't
have any children then you can say, I
should get a divorce because my husband
doesn't have a job or because I don't own
a house or a car...like property or
something. Getting a divorce is like
admitting you've failed and shouldn't
depend on whether you have children or
property...it's not right...it's not
right to give up on a marriage and use
the excuse that there are
no children therefore it's all right."
(Scottish female)

Here, the manner in which these subjects expressed their
views against divorce *per se*, is not too dissimilar to what Winch
(1971) describes as the *'institutional'* perspective. Winch made
the point that not only do observers of divorce statistics tend
to comment upon the trends in terms of the implications that such
increases in marriage breakdown may have for society, but also
that from this, two opposing streams of interpretation are
evident, which appear to represent different value systems and
wide diversities of public opinion, and which Winch sees as being
broadly divided into groups he has named *'institutionalists'* and
'individualists'.

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The former are associated with an earlier familial form in which the happiness of its members is secondary to the stability and continuity of the overall structure of the family. In contrast, the *'individualists'* - in this case those subjects who supported the statement - tend to regard the personal development and happiness of the individual as of paramount importance and are less concerned with the well-being of the 'family structure'.

Public comment by both the *'institutionalists'* and the *'individualists'* about the trends in divorce statistics is implicitly concerned with the *consequences* of divorce. Those who deplore the increase in divorce appear convinced of its overall negative impact on society, while those who view divorce with more equanimity point to the positive benefits it may bring to the individual and hence to society.

> "...1 know more people are getting divorced today than before and I see it in a lot of my friends' families...but that doesn't mean that because a lot of people are doing it, it becomes a right thing to do...what would happen if everyone began divorcing...everyone would be in a mess I think."
> (Californian female)

> "...No...I don't think it is the best solution...many people would give up on their marriage too easily...fewer children would be born and there'd be no more families, it would make families redundant...the end of society."
> (Scottish male)

But what if children *are* involved? Should parents with marital problems still seek to divorce or should they stay together for the sake of the children? This was the underlying question in the statement 'when there are problems between parents, they should stay together for the sake of the children'.

As noted earlier, a slightly greater majority of the total sample disagreed. A significant cultural difference ($X^z=10.4$; p<.005) shows that Scots mostly agreed whereas Californians mostly *disagreed*.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 33

'When there are problems between parents, they should stay together for the sake of the children'

	SCOTS (N=361)	CALIFORNIANS (N=478)
% Agreement	59%	33%

% DISTRIBUTION FOR 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 33

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots N=304	Calif N=260	Scots N=57	Calif N=213
62%	38%	44%	27%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 33

MALES		FEMALES	
Scots N=197	Calif N=255	Scots N=164	Calif N=223
72%	45%	44%	19%

Additionally, differences in responses based on family composition show that in Scotland subjects from BP families agreed more while in California those from SB families disagreed more ($X^2=5.8$; p=.025). Further, that when gender is taken into account, Scots males agree much more than anyone else while Californian females disagree to an even greater extent. This then, suggests that those who were most in favour of parents with marital problems staying together for the sake of the children were likely to be Scottish males from both-parent families while conversely, those who were least likely to agree with the stated view were Californian females from single-blended families. Age was not a significant factor in determining differences in response.

Here, to more clearly differentiate excerpts taken from the interviews they will be illustrated under specific sub-headings in terms of those who did not support the statement and those who did.

AGAINST THE STATEMENT

> "...I've always been taught that in
> marriage you give and take, but if that
> gets too hard then I think it's not worth
> fighting all the time...I'd go crazy.."
> (Scottish male)

> "...I don't think a child would want
> their parents [who are having problems]
> to be together just because of having a
> child...I think the child would be aware
> of how the parents feel that they have to
> stay together because it's so hard on the
> kids, and this is a pretty selfish
> attitude really because if they can't
> live together, you know properly, then
> it's worse for the kids and they should
> part."
> (Californian male)

While there can be little doubt that the effects of divorce upon the children in a family can be quite devastating at any age (McCord *et al*, 1962; Santrock, 1972) it is perhaps worth noting that for some children, the degree of upheaval in terms of social/cognitive behavior is even greater when parents 'in conflict' do *not* divorce. The following response further illustrates this perception.

> "...It [staying together] is not going to
> solve the problem if they are just not
> compatible..the way I feel is easiest to
> solve their problems is to just get a
> divorce."
> (Scottish female)

Some of the supporting arguments for why parents should seek divorce if they are unable to resolve their problems referred to the detremental consequences on the children of parents in conflict 'staying together'. For example:

> "...I think divorce is better than living
> with someone unhappily for so long, it
> just makes everything worse. It was a
> relief when they split up even though it
> was strange because it was empty
> space..."
> Californian female)

"...It should be easier to get a divorce
when there are kids because the kids have
to live with these parents' bickering..."
(Californian female)

Indeed, in the psychological literature there are various
references to this issue. For instance, in a review of previous
research, Rutter (1971) concluded that *separation* from a parent
did not have consistently negative effects on children's
adjustment, but *conflict* did. A poor marital relationship
characterized by conflict and a lack of warmth was associated
with a high incidence of children's antisocial disorder, no
matter what a family's social class status.

Zill's (1978) survey of over two thousand children reported
that the need for psychiatric help was greatest among children
from family types where marital conflict would most likely have
been witnessed. Children whose parents were separated did not
have as great a need for help.

Earlier, Nye (1957) reported a study in which a group of
randomly selected high school students were questioned about
their parents' marital status, the amount of parental quarreling
and arguing in their homes, and their parents' marital happiness.
A significant and interesting finding was that parental conflict
alone is sufficient to produce both psychosomatic and delinquent
reactions in children, while living with a single parent does not
count as an automatic strike against the child.

According to Nye's study not only did children from single-

parent homes indicate a lower incidence of psychosomatic illness when compared with children from unhappy two-parent homes but children from single-parent homes also indicated a superior parent-child adjustment.

All of these studies would appear to endorse the findings here, that some children perceive living with two parents whose relationship is conflict-ridden as much more damaging to their adjustment than simply living with a single parent. This applies particularly to children who have experienced divorce for, as previously mentioned, adolescents from divorced or reconstituted familes, were less likely to support the statement.

However, in spite of these illustrations supporting the view that parents with marital problems *should* divorce, it is necessary to reiterate an earlier point; namely, that a general impression from the overall responses was that adolescents were basically against the concept of divorce and indeed, the slightly greater majority view lent support to this premise. Therefore, bearing this in mind, let us now turn to some of the views of those who felt that parents with marital problems should *stay together*.

FOR THE STATEMENT

As we have seen, the majority of subjects (633 or 75.3%) supported the statement.

> "...People should be willing to remain together through better or worse...that's a solemn vow...if I get married I shall live with the woman for the rest of my life, no matter what". (Scottish male)

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"...if parents only knew how their kids
really feel they would never be so
selfish as to go ahead with it [*the
divorce*]...kids, and therefore the
society suffer most for if divorce is too
easy then people can give up easy...and
if people give up easy then how can they
expect their kids to also not give up
easily in whatever they are doing, at
school, wherever..".
(Californian male)

An interesting finding here was that there was no

significant differences in the frequency or quality of such

responses between those subjects who themselves had divorced

parents and those who were from intact families.

"...They [*parents*] are always having
terrible arguments and really,
sometimes...I dunno...it seems like they
have never done anything else...but I
think parents *should* stay together if
they have children. It has to be thought
out a lot more seriously than you would
an ordinary divorce where there are no
children. For me, I got used to having
them row all the time but I certainly
wouldn't want them to split up or
anything."
(Scottish male)

"...When parents have problems they
should stay together even more if they've
got kids, even one kid...I mean, problems
don't mean the end of the world do they?
...And even if they [*the problems*] get
really bad, parents don't have to think
about themselves only, they've got to
think about how bad it is for a kid to
grow up when parents get divorced...you
have to stay together...only get divorced
if your life is in danger or something
like that."
(Californian male)

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Statistically, the effect of age was not significant. Yet, a number of investigators have suggested the importance of a child's developmental level by comparing the effects of divorce on children at different ages (Landis, 1960; Rosenberg, 1965; Hetherington, 1972; Selman, 1971, Selman and Byrne, 1974).

Data on children's reaction to divorce using the social-cognitive developmental framework developed by Selman and his associates and concerned with levels of interpersonal reasoning, are particularly interesting here because they have been derived from extensive interviews with children of all ages on their views on parent-child relationships (Bruss, 1976). They showed that with increasing age, adolescents from 13 and upwards become more conscious and expressive of their feelings. While their reaction to divorce - either actual or impending - may be expressed in anger, sadness, a sense of loss and betrayal, and feelings of shame and embarrassment, the most distinguishing reaction reported by the investigators was the extent of adolescent's' reflections about their parents as persons, their parents' marriage (and marital relationships in general), and about their own relationships with their parents.

While the findings of the present study confirm the generally realistic view of parents held by most adolescents - i.e. parents are recognized as individuals with individual needs and interests - they also suggest a certain degree of ambivalence where these 'older' children still view the relationship as a

family relationship in terms of a triad or more.

Further, that no matter what allowances are made for their parents' relationship independent of the parent-child relationship, ultimately it is a matter of how the dynamics of the family affects them, the children. The following examples will serve to illustrate this perception.

> "...I know that parents are people too and that they have to live together and they have to be given space to sort out their problems as two individuals who happen to be married to each other and who happen to have children...but...the whole point is that when there are children, then the parents can't...they should not just conduct their life as though only their happiness was at stake...fine if there are no children involved but if there are children, then I would expect my parents to consider their relationship with me as *part* of their relationship with each other...they can't be separated."
> (Californian female)

> "...I think parents should always stay together, I hope mine do. They get on well but sometimes when they argue a lot I think boy, this is it. I become depressed at the idea that they may get divorced or separated...if that happened I don't know how I would react...they'd probably think I was old enough to understand that they were two mature people who couldn't live together anymore. I do think about this whole business a lot...many of my friends' parents are divorced and I see what it does to them and I wouldn't want that for myself and I guess I would say to my parents that if they thought I was old enough to understand then I do but I do not agree with them getting divorced."
> (Scots female)

"...When my parents first started to have
arguments and had fights all the time I
used to think 'I wish they'd get a
divorce then there will be some peace and
quiet here". Then, when they began
talking about divorce I felt
differently...I told them both that I
loved them and that I thought they loved
me and that even though I knew it was
difficult for them, I thought they should
stay together, especially because my
little sister was only six. Then...after
a while they got divorced anyway and I
felt really let down...cheated like, I
felt 'How could you do this to us, how
could you think only about yourselves and
not your children?'. I still feel very
bitter about that...I know part of me
says 'Look, they're probably better off
divorced, you know, they would argue so
much and everything and they have a right
to live their own lives'. But another
part of me, the stronger part says, 'Hey,
they shouldn't have had children if they
were not willing to make a go of their
marriage...to fight hard for it.."
(Californian female)

Kelly and Wallerstein (1976) argue that this is indicative
of the developing awareness of feeling states and this finding
makes sense from a social-cognitive developmental perspective,
which suggests that children at the 'subjective level' of social
reasoning (Selman's Level 1) cannot cope too well with the
conflict arising out of two opposing feelings (love and anger).

"...1 love my parents, both of them, but
I am very angry for doing this to us
children."
(Californian male)

"...I wont go so far as to say I hate
them [for divorcing] but I sometimes feel
very negative about their irresponsible
action to my sister and myself...two
people who love them both more than
anyone else will ever love them."
(Californian male)

One final example will serve to illustrate a rather
interesting response which may perhaps, shed some further light
on the so-called social-cognitive developmental perspective and
specifically, upon the apparent ambivalence of the 'older'
adolescent's perceptions. It is where the child, being the elder
child in a family, feels a very real degree of protectiveness
towards other, younger siblings and which, based on the
individual's level of maturity, may very well determine the
extent to which any action leading to divorce or separation on
the part of the parents, may be seen to be irresponsible and even
selfish.

"...My parents have been having problems
for quite a few months now and they seem
to have no idea about how much it is
affecting my younger brother and sister.
I'm fifteen and I guess I'm quite mature
for my age so I can understand that
grown-ups do argue and fight a lot and I
try to be adult about it when my parents
dump on each other but frankly...I get
mad as hell at them because the younger
kids can't understand this and I know for
a fact that they [brother and sister] are
having a really bad time...I tried to
talk to my Mom about it and she's a bit
better but not my dad. He just doesn't
seem to get it and part of me thinks
O.K., you two do what you want, I'll look
after the kids somehow and then I think,
hey, that's not really where it's at,
it's their job as parents to make sure
the family stays together." (Calif. male)

We may now move on to the next statement.

Earlier in this chapter it was pointed out that a large majority of subjects did *not* expect their marriages to end in divorce (see X^2 Square Table). Here, let us look at the significant findings based on Culture and Family Composition.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTUREe
FOR ITEM 42
'1f 1 marry I expect I will be divorced one day'

	SCOTS (N=360)	CALIFORNIANS (N=473)
% Agreement	16%	22%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 42

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots N=304	Calif N=255	Scots N=56	Calif N=218
13%	17%	27%	29%

These tables show that in both cultures, the greater proportion of responses concurred with this view. However, while the distributions for responses based on family composition did not yield any cultural differences, there were some overall sample differences based on family composition. Specifically, adolescents from BP families were much less emphatic than their peers from SB families in expecting their marriages to end in divorce ($X^2=5.2$; $p<.025$). There were no significant effects for gender and age.

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One may perhaps, associate this finding with the earlier comments on 'perceptions of economics', career opportunities, and a desire not to be 'tied down to children' for, according to Dominion (1968), modern marriage is committed to the goals of independence, freedom and the attainment of the highest standards of personal fulfilment.

As with previous reponses, it will be expedient to discuss the responses elicited to this statement in terms of [the 20%] 'For' and [the 80%] 'Against'.

FOR THE STATEMENT

> "...I come from a divorced home...my parents got divorced two years ago and I think that someday I too will get divorced."
> (Californian female)

> "...Yes, I think there's a possibility I will be divorced. I don't really think about it but it seems to be happening a lot today."
> (Scottish female)

> "...As women have become more political, divorces have increased I think. I wish to marry but I may not wish to give up my freedom so I expect I will have a lot of rows with my husband and get divorced someday."
> (Scottish female)

> "...I don't know, I guess if I think about it really it seems that a lot of people re-marry...maybe it takes two or three times to find the right person to live with...I'm quite a difficult person to live with so I guess I will be divorced a couple of times at least."
> (Californian male)

A number of subjects made specific reference to what may be described as a 'cultural' influence on their outlook about marriage and divorce. For example:

> "...Sure I'll be divorced, it's the *in* thing in California these days."
> (Californian male)

This comment may sound somewhat facetious but was, in fact, made in a very subdued manner. The sentiment it contained is reflected in other, similar comments.

> "...I have relatives in England and even Australia, cousins, and none of their parents are divorced...but many of my relatives here in California are divorced. I expect I will also get divorced if I marry and continue to live here."
> (Californian male)

> "...No, I don't expect to be divorced someday but if I were to travel, or maybe live in another country like Sweden or America like, then I guess so, I would probably divorce...they all do it there these days, look at Elizabeth Taylor and folks like that."
> (Scottish male)

It is perhaps necessary at this point to stand back slightly from the immediacy of the foregoing comments about divorce and briefly attempt to place them within a larger framework of the aspirations young people have for marriage.

The extent to which marriage is presently regarded as a life-long contract is uncertain, although in a British survey (McCann-Erikson, 1977), 60% of young single people thought that divorce was something that might happen to them. Notwithstanding

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this, marriage would seem to be an important goal in life, for the same survey showed that 91% of both single men and women expected to marry (*ibid.*), while an Institute for Social Research Survey in the U.S.A. (1974), demonstrated that being married is one of the most important determinants of being satisfied with life.

It is not then that fewer people wish to get married but that, as McCann-Erikson reported, 60% of people feel their marriage will end in divorce.

Given that the dramatic increase in the divorce rate is a relatively recent phenomenon, it is valid to argue - based on findings here - that the wider availability and comparative ease of obtaining a divorce today is more widely known among today's youth than was the case even one generation ago.

However, in the light of the same findings, it is important to mention that the expectations of the majority of adolescents appear *not* to reflect recent trends in divorce. Divorce then, certainly as far as the majority of subjects in this study was concerned, was not necessarily considered inevitable. Yet, partly for the reasons given and illustrated in the above examples, and partly because a number of adolescents from SB families believed that their own marriages would be likely to end in divorce because their parents' marriage had broken, let us look at some examples of interview responses to this effect.

"...My mother has brought me up as a
single parent...sure I would like to get
married and for it to work out but
somehow I don't think so...I think that
when one's parents divorce then you
probably also divorce, it's a learning
thing I guess."
(Scottish female)

"...My grandfather was married twice,
both my parents were [each] married
twice...I'll probably marry twice."
(Californian male)

"...In our family I have two sisters who
are divorced, my parents divorced when I
was ten...my mom's sister was divorced
two times...I don't think it's very
hopeful for me."
(Californian female)

"...I don't think there's any doubt that
there'll be a lot of divorces in my
generation, I mean, who is it that
doesn't divorce these days?"
(Californian male)

This is an interesting point. The question of who divorces

is extremely complex. According to Hart (1976) an important

factor in marital breakdown is the reduction in the level of

commitment or 'value' attached to marriage. It may be argued that

those adolescents who, in the development of their social-

cognitive perceptions experience the 'devaluation' of marriage

within their own families, are much more likely to expect divorce

in their own marriages. And further, the transmission of what

Mueller and Pope (1977) call 'marital instability' can, according

to them, be partly accounted for by what they describe as 'mate

selection rationale', in which it appears that the circumstances

of parental marital instability lead to high risk mate selection

outcomes for the children. This in turn, results in their greater
risk of divorce.

AGAINST THE STATEMENT

To reiterate, only 20% of the total sample *did* expect to be
divorced. This finding, although about *expectancy*, compliments
the findings of those studies (e.g. Ganong, *et al*, 1981) on the
attitudes of adolescents towards marriage and divorce. Employing
several instruments which were combined to form a single
questionnaire, Ganong and co-workers attempted to assess the
effect of family structure on the marital attitudes of 127 male
and 174 female adolescents: 48 from single-parent families, 48
from reconstituted families, and 225 from intact families.

Following a procedure similar to that used in the present
study, subjects' attitudinal responses towards Marriage, Divorce,
and Marriage Role Expectations were elicited during a school
class period.

The findings suggested that female adolescents held more
favourable attitudes towards marriage and were more egalitarian
in their marital role expectations than males. There were no sex
differences in attitude to divorce. Adolescents from blended
families were more positive in attitude to divorce than were
adolescents from broken or intact families.

In the present study there were no clear gender or age
differences although, and as discussed earlier, the influence of
family composition was more pronounced, i.e. there was a

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significant difference between subjects from BP families and those from SB families who responded 'If I marry, I expect I will be divorced one day'. In both countries, those from single/blended families expressed stronger agreement for the statement.

The following are a selection of responses from such adolescents living in single-blended families.

> "...I hope it doesn't happen, I will try
> very hard to make my marriage work and I
> think I wont get divorced but you never
> know."
> (Californian male)

> "...I'll probably not get a
> divorce...unless something happens like
> if I married a rotten person...but no, I
> don't think so."
> (Scots female)

> "...My parents got divorced and I'm going
> to do my best to stay married to the one
> person I love and who loves me but it's
> very hard to say, I would prefer not to
> divorce."
> (Californian female)

However, the following interview excerpts will help to illustrate the *majority* view expressed in the study, i.e. those who did *not* expect to be divorced.

> "...I wouldn't even think about it
> [*getting divorced*], I wouldn't even want
> to leave that option open. Some reasons I
> hear for divorce are so stupid."
> (Californian male)

> "...Well, I've thought of the likelihood
> of divorce but for me it's not possible
> because my parents have been married so
> many years. For myself I know I couldn't
> [*get divorced*]...I'd want my children to
> have a steady father. I've seen my
> friends without mothers or fathers, they

have problems. I'm not saying I don't
have problems but for them it's a good
excuse to get in trouble. They say 'My
parents are divorced, I'm going to go out
and...'".
(Californian female)

"...I'm not going to rush into marriage
and when I do [*get married*] I'm not going
to get divorced."
(Scots male)

"...When I marry someone I love...I'm not
going to think that it's not going to
last."
(Scots female)

"...People get married because they love
somebody, for me that's all there
is...love somebody no matter what...no
divorce for me."
(Scots female)

"..You've got to think positive...you've
got to think no matter what happens I'm
not going to break up my marriage, I'm
not going to get divorced."
(Californian male)

We may now turn to responses to the next statement, *There
are more divorces today than 20 years ago.* As previously
indicated, very nearly the entire sample of adolescents in both
cultures (95% and 97%) perceived this to be the case. There were
no significant differences in responses based on culture, family
composition, gender, or age. We may therefore, simply consider
the various comments 'for' and a [very small minority] 'against'
the statement.

For the statement

"..Well so many marriages are breaking up
people aren't so tolerant these
days...before divorce was looked on as
something bad, nowadays it's becoming so
popular."
(Scots female)

"...Marriage seems less definite or
strong than many years ago...before it
was more of a lifetime thing but now
people seem to have more choice of what
they want to do."
(Californian male)

"...Divorce these days isn't that big a
deal."
(Californian male)

Against the statement

"...I don't think there's any
difference...we hear about it more but I
don't think there's been an increase."
(Scots female)

"...It seems like there's more but I also
think there are more people getting
married so it cancels out."
(Californian female)

"...I don't know for sure...I think
not...maybe it seems like that because
the population is so much more."
(Scots male)

"...I think there were more people
divorced after World War Two and Korea
than today, at least that's what my dad
told me."
(Californian male)

Finally, let us examine the findings on whether or not
adolescents perceive that marriage at an early age is more likely
to end in divorce. As reported in Chapter 1, a number of studies
(e.g. Bumpass and Sweet, 1972; Glenn and Supancic, 1984) have

indicated that persons who marry at an early age are more than likely to divorce. From the following table it may be seen that while the majority of subjects in both cultures agreed with this view, a significant cultural effect ($X^2=5.2$; p=.025) shows that Scots were much more of the belief that marriage very early in one's life frequently results in divorce. There were no significant differences based on family composition, gender and age.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 51
'People who marry young are more likely to divorce'

	SCOTS (N=361)	CALIFORNIANS (N=472)
% Agreement	76%	63%

The following interview comments illustrate points of view for and against the statement.

FOR THE STATEMENT

"..Marrying young is a mistake, it will never last"
(Scots male)

"I have a cousin in Newcastle who ran off and got married when she was only sixteen, and then she got pregnant but lost the baby for some reason and he left her after less than two years and then they got divorced".
(Scots female)

"..It's crazy to marry young, you lose out on so many things in life and you have to grow up too quickly..it will never last, however much you love the guy it can't last because you're both still too immature'.
(Californian female)

"..I know someone at school who got
married at seventeen, and we said to her
'ohmygod, it's romantic and all but do
you think it's going to last?' And she
said she was sure. Anyway, they separated
after living together for only four
months, it was very sad, she was so upset
but he said he'd made a mistake and it
was all a mess..they got back together
for a year then divorced after all. She
said she wanted to have a child and he
said he wasn't ready yet and that they
should enjoy lfe first, but I think he
just got scared or something"
(Californian female)

AGAINST THE STATEMENT

"..I don't think it's always true that
when you get married [young] you will
divorce. My mom and dad met at high
school and got married after graduation.
That was sixteen years ago and they are
still together".
(Californian male)

"If you live in the country, on a farm
like, then I think if you marry young it
doesn't matter, you won't get divorced
because you mostly have each other".
(Scots male)

"It all depends on how much you really
love somebody..[people] who really love
each other stay together no matter what
age they marry".
(Scots female)

"It's better to marry young, then your
marriage can grow strong with you and you
can deal with any problems together
instead of waiting to marry when you're
older and have become independent and
having your own way, I think *that* will
end in divorce".
(Californian female).

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

OVERALL

The majority of adolescents ...

- Do not expect their marriage to end in divorce

- Think that people who marry young are more likely to divorce

- Agree that there are more divorces today than there were 20 years ago

- Are equally divided on the notion that divorce should be easier to obtain

- Think that parents who have problems with their marriage should *not* stay together for the sake of the children

- Think that problem marriages, when there are no children, are also best solved by divorce

QUALITATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF *SIGNIFICANT* FINDINGS
ON ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF DIVORCE

STATEMENT	CULTURAL DIFF.	FAMILY COMP. DIFF.	GENDER DIFF.	AGE DIFF.
3 - Divorce should be easier to obtain	Scots agree more	None	Females agree much more than males	None
41 - Divorce is the best possible solution if there are problems between a couple without children	Scots agree more	None	None	None
33 - When there are problems between the parents they should stay together for the sake of the children	Scots agreed more Calif. disagreed more	Scots BP fam. agreed more Calif. SB fam. disagreed more	Scots males agree more than anyone else Calif. females disagree more than anyone else	None
42 - If I marry I expect I will be divorced one day	None	BP disagreed more	None	None
51 - People who marry young are more likely to divorce	Scots agree more	None	None	None

CHAPTER FIVE

FAMILY

By adolescence, the individual's perceptions of the family, its dynamics and its interactive styles are well consolidated (Stolz, 1967). Throughout adolescence, as in childhood, the family remains the main socialising agent of young people, and in transmitting cultural values, including those of work and responsibility (Parsons, 1959), the family is considered to be the primary training ground for adulthood: To rephrase an earlier quote (see Chapter 1), ,"..the people at home..still spell the difference between a life of strength and hope or..of hate and despair" (Konopka, 1976).

Adolescents are said to learn patterns of interpersonal and social skills from their 'within-family' interactions, i.e. between parents and children and between the children themselves (Forisha-Kovach, 1983), and the extent to which a family is a 'happy' one is said to determine the well-being and adjustment of children (Landis, 1960; 1962; Nye, 1957; Parish et al, 1981). In reporting their findings, many of the studies cited above explicitly refer to the family's importance. As Bohannan (1970) suggests, the family of one's youth is carried within each person and projected again into the families one forms as an adult.

However, before that time is reached in one's life when it is possible to project what has been acquired, one is still formulating perceptions (as in the case of the adolescent). At this stage one is still evaluating, whether passively or actively, those aspects of family life which are considered

worthy of emulation and those which are not.

Therefore, it is important to understand those perceptions of adolescents which may be considered essential to a developing concept of the family. In earlier pages (Chapter 1) some of the bases for this developing concept were discussed. Here, we may examine the adolescent's perceptions and their expectations in their responses to the 25 questionnaire statements.

The issues inherent in the statements related to aspects of family life in terms of the family unit, in terms of the relationship between parents and children, the relationship between siblings, the relative importance of the family compared with friends, and of gender roles within the family.

Once again, the statements will be grouped around a central issue and the findings discussed accordingly. However, before this let us examine the adolescent's general perception of 'the family'.

It will be recalled that all 841 subjects who took part in the survey were asked to complete the supplementary questionnaire's open-ended sentence which began, "A family is..." Responses were coded independently by three coders on the basis of two concepts, (1) the traditional nuclear family (i.e. two parents with children) and (2) any departure from this concept (pooled inter-observer reliability co-efficient was r=0.87;p=<.001).

788 (94%) of the subjects' responses were coded (1) - i.e.

the traditional nuclear family concept ($X^2=35.2$; p=<.001). The remaining 53 subjects, coded (2), were divided into three concept groups as follows:

'Couples living together, even
where there are no children.......17

'Extended family' 16

'Single/blended family' 20

Of course, a response indicating that a family consists of two parents and children does not necessarily imply that the two parents are *biological* parents. Therefore, we may interpret the above findings to simply suggest that in spite of the fact one-third of the adolescents in the study were themselves from single/blended families, the predominant concept of 'the family' still remains a traditional one, and as yet, apparently not affected by changes in family composition.

This is further supported in the light of the responses from the 40 interview subjects (including one-third from SB families) who were asked the question, 'What is a family'? Here, 19 of the 20 subjects from Scotland and 17 of the 20 from California (i.e. 90% of the whole sample) defined 'family' specifically in terms of *two* parents. Indeed, when the question was put to one 14 year old adolescent from a SB family in California she responded: "..a wife, a little baby, and the father, all in suits, and living in a 50's style house with a white picket fence". (Here, one wonders about the influence of television for in the U.S. many 're-runs'

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of programmes from the 1950's/60's depict just such an image of the family).

However, as we shall see in the following pages, while in their response to the sentence completion the majority of subjects indicated the traditional (perhaps idyllic?) view, when given a choice of statements (as in the questionnaire) to which they could respond, their views concerning the determinants of a family were more varied.

Let us now turn to these statements, and once again as in previous chapters discuss responses and findings around issues central to each group of questionnaire statements.

The groups are as follows:

GROUP A - perceptions of what constitutes a family

36 A couple without children is still a family
19 When there is only one parent with children it is not a family

GROUP B - perceptions of family interaction

23 Happy families never argue
26 Families are people you can depend on for help in a crisis
27 A member of the family is not the best person with whom to discuss a personal problem

GROUP C - happiness: the family (siblings) and friends

55 Out of school I spend most of my time with my family
1   The happiest times I spend are with my family
56 Life is happier for children with sisters or brothers
52 The happiest times I spend are with my friends
30 Out of school I spend most of my time with my friends

GROUP D - expectations: children and parents

12 Children should always put their parents' wishes first
32 Parents should sacrifice everything for their children
16 Children of my age should not be expected to help around the house

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GROUP E - problems and parental understanding

21 Children from single-parent families have extra problems
39 Our parents' generation is very good at understanding
    people of my age

GROUP F - perceptions of 'societal interference'

29 Society has a right to interfere when there is violence
    towards the wife
54 Society has a right to interfere when there is violence
    towards the children

GROUP G - perceptions of gender roles in the family

14 Men should be the only ones who go out to work
17 When there are two parents in a family the husband should be
    boss
28 When there are two parents in a family neither should be boss
49 When there are two parents in a family the wife should be
    boss
58 When there are two parents in a family the money should be
    managed jointly
31 Men are the best people to manage the household money
37 Women are the best people to manage the household money
20 Housework should be done by women only

    Let us now turn to the subjects' responses to the items in

the first group.

GROUP A STATEMENTS - perceptions of what constitutes a family

36 A couple without children is still a family
19 When there is only one parent with children it is not a
    family

    Today, as the numbers for divorce and remarriage have

increased, there are also many more single-parent families than

before. Additionally, and as previously discussed, the idea of

co-habitation has become more socially acceptable. Consequently,

family compositions vary over a wide range. Therefore, one may

ask whether the presence of children (*per se*) is necessarily

part of the adolescent's concept of the 'family'.

This information is particularly lacking in the vast body of literature on the family. References to 'social perceptions' on what constitutes a family, invariably apply to adult and professional views rather than to those of children.

The lack of information in this area of adolescent's perceptions is perhaps, not so much due to a conscious decision on anyone's part to exclude 'feedback' on this issue from society's younger members but perhaps, simply a traditional oversight where such questions are more apt to be discussed among the adult population.

It was hoped therefore, that the statements within this group would shed some additional light on adolescent perceptions about *the family.*

X^2 SQUARE TABLE FOR GROUP 'A' STATEMENTS

	TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	X^2	P
Item 36 - A couple without children is still a family	838	548 (65%)	12.0	<.001
Item 19 - When there is only one parent with children it is not a family	833	172 (21%)	23.2	<.001

As the table shows, by a majority of almost 2:1 adolescents thought that even in the absence of any children, a couple together still constitutes a family. Therefore, not surprisingly, in disagreeing with the statement, the majority view about single-parents with children was that such a composition also constitutes a family. However, the proportional

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distribution of responses for culture, as shown in the following table shows that there was a much greater agreement in California than in Scotland, where the difference between those who felt that childless couples were still a family and those who did not, was proportionally less.

% DISTRIBUTION FOR 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 36
'A couple without children is still a family'

	SCOTS (N=360)	CALIFORNIANS (N=478)
% Agreement	53%	75%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 36

MALES		FEMALES	
Scots N=197	Calif N=256	Scots N=163	Calif N=222
48%	71%	60%	78%

Differences based on family composition and age were not significant. Differences based on gender show that while the overall male/female responses failed to reach significance, in Scotland, females agreed much more than did males that a couple without children is still a family ($X^2=4.8$; p=<.05). In California the difference was not as pronounced. The findings suggests that in this regard Scots males held the most traditional views of the total sample. Would these views extend to single-parents with children as well?

As noted above, the majority response (almost 4/5 of the

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sample) was that single-parents with children *do* constitute a family.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 19
'When there is one parent with children it is not a family'

	SCOTS (N=358)	CALIFORNIANS (N=475)
% Agreement	30%	14%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 19

MALES		FEMALES	
Scots N=197	Calif N=252	Scots N=161	Calif N=223
34%	19%	15%	7%

But here again, the significant difference in responses based on culture ($X^2=6.4$; p=<.025) shows that while subjects in both Scotland and California mostly disagreed, the Scots did so to a lesser extent, i.e. in Scotland there were more subjects who were of the opinion that even with children, only one parent does not constitute a family.

The influence of culture is evident too, in the above tables, for while overall response show that males and females both disagreed with the statement, and females did so more emphatically ($X^2=4.2$; p=<.05), in both gender groups Californians disagreed more than did the Scots. Therefore, the findings strongly indicate the influence of culture *per se* for there were no significant differences in responses based on family

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composition and age.

The following interview excerpts all illustrate further, the adolescent's perception of the 'family'.

> "...Most people think a happy family are
> two parents who are happily married, and
> they've got children and have a good
> basic family life. Well, I live alone
> with my Dad and I have a good happy
> family..."
> (15-year old Californian female)

> "...My parents were divorced when I was
> 12 years old. My mother married this guy
> who already had two kids, I had a younger
> brother and we've all gotten along real
> well. It doesn't matter that we#bll came
> from two different families before, now
> we are jusw#one family and I think of
> them as my dad and sisters..."
> (15-zfar old Californian male)

> "...I never think that my mother is not
> my real mother, she loves me and treats
> me just like her own son, who is now my
> brother and my dad is like his own dad,
> it's just, you know...like any family..."
> (12-year old Californian male)

> "...I live alone with my mum and I don't
> think of us as a family, not a proper
> family, you know what I mean? Some of my
> pals talk about doing this and that with
> their fathers, you know, all going
> visiting together or something, and I
> think of that as a proper family. I love
> my mum but...well, there's something
> missing I think, as a family..."
> (14-year old Scottish male)

"...We came to Scotland from England,
from near Birmingham when my mum married
again. My step-dad was divorced from his
wife like my mum had been divorced and we
moved up. I have two step brothers and a
step-sister and it's o.k. but, I don't
know..I feel that we're different, that
my mum and I are not really part of the
family. She tells me I shouldn't think
like that but I can't help feeling
like...second best..."
(15-year old Scottish female)

"...It's not your natural family, your
own brothers and sisters. It can never be
the same like your own. I have a wee
sister, my real sister and I feel more
for her, closer than I do for my sister
who came with her dad when he married my
mother. My father died after my sister
was born and now I have another father.
People think we're the same family, they
even say I look like my [step] dad
because they don't know. But I do and I
feel strange, like cheating or something.
It's not the same..."
(15-year old Scottish male)

It should be noted here that the above excerpts were drawn
from interviews which all happened to be with adolescents from
single and blended familes, both in Scotland and California. The
fact that a number of them professed 'positive' views further
supports the point made earlier, that differences in responses to
the *questionnaire* statement ('When there is only one parent with
children it is not a family') were basically cultural, and it is
interesting that this cultural difference was further reflected
in the interviews.

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GROUP B STATEMENTS - perceptions of family interaction

23 Happy families never argue
26 Families are people you can depend on for help in a crisis
27 A member of the family is not the best person with whom to
    discuss a personal problem

One way to understand conventional family life is to look at the *perceptions* of the members who make up the family. Specifically, and more appropriately within the context of this study, the perceptions of adolescents concerning the family's dynamic structure and its support network in the event of a crisis, raises some interesting questions. For instance, what is the adolescent's perception of a 'happy family'? Are happy families ones where no argument occurs or, as Yarrow *et al* (1955) suggest, has the reputation of the family, its social front as a 'congenial, happy group' become invalid? Further, to what extent does the family in its varied membership, provide the basis for the discussion of personal problems? These questions were instrumental in formulating the statements contained within this group and as included within the questionnaire.

CHI SQUARE TABLE FOR GROUP B STATEMENTS

	TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	X^2	P
Item 23 - Happy families never argue	838	104 (12%)	30.4	<.001
Item 26 - Families are people you can depend on for help in a crisis	833	750 (90%)	32.0	<.001
Item 27 - A member of the family is not the best person with whom to discuss a personal problem	840	380 (42%)	6.4	<.025

There are three clear findings from the data and results of analyses shown in the above table. They are (1) that the great majority of subjects disagreed with the notion that happy families are those which never argue; (2) an even greater majority agreed that families *can* be depended upon in times of crises; and (3) a moderate majority disagreed with the third statement, thereby indicating that a member of the family *is* the best person with whom to discuss a personal problem.

The only other significant result (shown in the tables below) were asssociated with this last statement. Specifically, that in Scotland, subjects from SB families agreed more while those from BP families disagreed more ($X^2=4.4$; p=<.05). Simply, where there was a need to discuss a personal problem, adolescents from SB families were more of the opinion that family members were *not* the best people to approach. In California differences in responses between the BP and SB groups were not significant.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 27
'A member of the family is not the best person with whom to discuss a personal problem'

BOTH-PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
N=304	N=261	N=57	N=218
42%	48%	53%	45%

However, the following excerpts illustrate some apparent cultural differences which emerged in the course of discussion with the interview sample.

"...Even though she's not my real mother,
I know that I can depend on her if I have
a crisis or a big problem. After all,
she's my family now and that's what a
family's about, helping you when you need
it..."
(15-year old Californian female)

"...I only have a father, there's just
the two of us and I can depend on him if
I'm in trouble or something like that, I
know for sure that I can depend on
him..."
(14-year old Californian male)

"...I had this problem one time, like a
few of my friends and I got into trouble
with the cops for taking a car and like
all the parents came to the station and
some of my friends felt really bad
because their parents yelled at them in
front of the cops and all, but my dad was
really cool, he was really understanding
and he knew I was having this crisis and
he was just great, especially as he's not
even my real dad..I mean, that's
family.."
(16-year old Californian male)

"...I think maybe it would be different
if my family was my own, know what I
mean? Instead of a step-father, if he
were my own dad then maybe I would depend
on him if there was some crisis but I
think now as it is, I would have to sort
it out myself, I couldn't really depend
on the family..."
(15-year old Scottish male)

"...I wouldn't ask for help from my mum
if I was having a great problem. I may
discuss something with her but she's not
very good at giving too much help on
account of there's just the two of us and
she says she has a lot of problems of her
own, so I couldn't really say that in my
family I could depend on her except for
things like food and clothes and all
that..."
(14-year old Scottish male)

Willmott and Willmott (1982) have indicated that children, more than anyone else, live in the world of the family, and changes in its patterns have a major impact on them. The above findings, both the quantitative (survey) data and the interview responses, do not seem to support this for it is quite evident from the overall responses that adolescents reflect views both for and against *regardless* of the kind of family to which they belong.

Rather, they raise the question, given the marked difference in family composition between the two samples, why were responses based on culture and family composition so similar for the three statements?

An answer to this question may lie somewhere in Young and Willmott's (1973) concept of the "Marching Column". They argued that at any point in history people and families span a range of lifestyles - some traditional, some contemporary and some already anticipating the future.

Therefore, in terms of this model, it can be argued that for these particular questionnaire statements, even though there may have been some responses which were influenced by family composition, such influences were obviously not strong enough to supercede the more powerful influences determined by the existing 'range of lifestyles' (*a la* Young and Wilmott).

GROUP C STATEMENTS - 'happiness': The family (siblings) and friends

55   Out of school, I spend most of my time with my family
1   The happiest times I spend are with my family
56   Life is happier for children with sisters or brothers
30   Out of school, I spend most of my time with my friends
52   The happiest times I spend are with my friends

In a Paper titled 'Some unexplored aspects of the sibling experience' (Pollak and Hundermark, 1984) it was correctly suggested that an area that had not been adequately explored in the sociological literature, was the set of roles that siblings take on in relation to one another and the sub-groups they form within the family.

The literature of family sociology has been preoccupied with marriage and the parent/child relationship and it is interesting to note that some family texts that have gone through several editions do not contain the word 'sibling' in the index (e.g. Adams, 1980; Eshleman, 1981; Leslie, 1979; Schulz, 1981).

Questionnaire statements such as the above, therefore, were considered a necessary inclusion in order to gain at least some insight into the adolescent's perception of siblings. How, indeed, may life be happier for children with sisters or brothers? Does it matter that sisters and brothers are not 'real' kin but step-sisters and step-brothers? What is the function of siblings, one to another?

These, and similar questions are necessary to ask if one is to gain an insight into the family dynamics of different types of families.

While the issue of friendships *per se* will be separately discussed shortly, here, within the context of perceptions which seem to place an importance on brothers and sisters underwriting a better quality of life, it is relevant to make the point that friendship is widely regarded to be an especially important relationship during adolescence (Douvan and Adelson,1966; Millen and Roll, 1977; Kon and Losenkov, 1978). The major assumption concerning the importance of friendship during this period is that adolescence is a time of growing emancipation from past dependencies and a time of self-discovery, self-growth, and identity formation. This process of exploration, growth, and identity formation cannot take place apart from interaction with significant others.

Therefore, one may ask, do friends (who may also be classified among one's 'significant others') also provide the same, if not greater, function towards the adolescent's self-growth as do sisters and brothers?

Inherent in the five statements are two alternatives: (1) That time with the family is generally happy, is made happier with siblings around and consequently, one spends more out of school time with the family than with friends; (2) that time spent with friends is happier, consequently more out of school time is spent with them then the family.

Therefore, the data will be presented and discussed according to these alternatives.

CHI SQUARE TABLE FOR GROUP 'C' STATEMENTS

	TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	X^2	P
Item 55 - Out of school I spend most of mt time with my family	836	457 (55%)	4.0	.05
Item 1 - The happiest times I spend are with my family	837	609 (73%)	18.4	<.001
Item 56 - Life is happier children with sisters and brothers	835	648 (78%)	22.4	<.001
Item 30 - Out of school I spend most of my time with my friends	839	627 (75%)	20.0	<.001
Item 52 - The happiest times I spend are with my friends	836	609 (73%)	18.0	<.001

To begin with, a direct comparison of the responses to statements 55 and 30 shows that a much greater proportion of the sample professed to spending more out of school time with their friends than with their families. Indeed, this difference is reflected in the proportional differences *within* each of the two statements; 55% - 45% in favour of families (statement 55) and 75% - 25% in favour of friends (statement 30). On the face of it this may appear somewhat confusing, i.e. that 55% said they spent more time with families and 75% with friends - the figures do not appear to add up! Yet, if it is understood that the two statements are mutually exclusive then the findings may be understood as follows: 55% (statement 55) spent their time with families; of the remaining 45% some spent their time with friends

while others spent their time elsewhere (e.g. on their own, at part-time work, at extra-curricular activities, etc.,). In the same way, 75% (statement 30) spent their time with friends; of the remaining 25% some spent their time with family, while others spent their time elsewhere (at work, etc.,).

The only influence to reach statistical significance was a slight cultural one where Scots indicated more time with the family $(X^2=4; p=.05)$.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 55
'Out of school I spend most of my time with my family'

	Scots (N=360)	Californians (N=476)
% Agreement	59%	49%

There were no significant differences in responses based on family composition, gender, or age. But what about the quality of time? Is there is difference between family and friends?

In their study on relationships, Wright and Keple (1981) refer to 'Relationship Intensity and Interpersonal Rewards' a propos parental and friendship interactions.

They found that adolescents indicated stronger and more rewarding relationships with friends of either sex than with parents, particularly fathers. Mothers were seen as generally more rewarding than fathers (who were seen as especially lacking in 'ego supportiveness and self-affirmation value') but *female* friends among all others, were seen to provide the most rewarding

relationships. Wright and Kelpe did not enquire into the relationships of their subjects with siblings so one is left uncertain whether relationships with friends were perceived more favourably than with brothers and/or sisters.

In the present study, even though a greater majority of subjects indicated they spent more time with their friends than their families, the time thus spent was seen to be equally happy (73% agreement in both cases).

Further, some interesting findings came to light based on family composition, gender, and age.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 1
'The happiest times I spend are with my family'

| BOTH-PARENTS' GROUP | | SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP | |
| Scots | Calif | Scots | Calif |
N=304	N=260	N=56	N=216
77%	74%	57%	69%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSE BASED ON AGE
FOR ITEM 1

| AGE GROUP I | | AGE GROUP II | |
| Scots | Calif | Scots | Calif |
N=205	N=254	N=156	N=222
83%	74%	61%	70%

It may be noted that adolescents from BP families more than those from SB families indicated that the happiest times they spent were with their families ($X^2=5$; p=<.05) but again, this was much more pronounced in Scotland than in California ($X=8$; p=.005).

From the above tables again, we see that whereas overall, the younger subjects agreed with the statement significantly more than their older peers ($X^2=5.2$; p=.025), this was particularly so in Scotland ($X^2=8.8$; p=<.005).

Let us now turn to some typical responses made during the interviews.

> "...I'm a wee bit less dependent on my family than most people my age but I could never do without my family. I think that most of the really good times are spent with them and even though I do spend a lot of time with my friends, I suppose I'm happiest when I'm with my folks.."
> (13-year old Scots male)

> "...These days I mix more with folk, with my friends. You're talking more openly to them, to your friends 'cos you're not bothered that your mum and dad can hear. Sometimes I tell my mum and dad about rules my friends have so I can get them to change and let me go out more..it's not that I don't like being at home, I just prefer the company of my friends.."
> (15-year old Scots male)

> "...I guess the happiest times are with my family because right now, having a family is kinda a new thing for me. I now have a brother, he's younger, and a sister who's older since my mom married again, and we all do things together a lot, which is pretty good.."
> (14-year old Californian female)

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"...When I'm at school and even when
school is out, I spend nearly all of my
time with my friends. My family is just
my mom and me and she's at work when I
get home and she also has to work on
Saturdays so I get to spend very little
time with her. She's OK but I share very
little with her, mostly with my friends
and I enjoy that.."
(15-year old Californian male)

"...When school finishes, I have to go
straight home. I would like to be able to
stay with my friends for a while but my
mum says I have to be home, she's scared
I may get into trouble or something. I
don't mind really but sometimes it's a
bit much and I argue with her and she
says that as there's just the two of us
and because she loves me and all that,
she wants to make sure I grow up right
and not get in with the wrong crowd..I
appreciate what she's trying to do but I
need to have more time with my friends,
just chat and all, not do anything mad,
just you know, be together.."
(15-year old Scots female)

"...Being with my family's OK but mostly
kinda boring. Sometimes I like hanging
out with them, or with my brother but
it's not like being with my friends, I
prefer that. You talk to your Mom and Dad
totally different than with your friends.
You treat your parents as though they're
there to go over you, they're there sort
of like a teacher, sort of to guide and
watch on you, take care, teach the rules
and all but with friends it's different,
you're all the same and you can bitch
together about what a drag it is being at
home.."
(13-year old Californian male)

In terms of the statement concerning the importance of

siblings, by a large majority the subjects agreed that life is

happier for children with brothers or sisters. There were no

significant differences in responses based on culture, gender, or age but as the following table shows, adolescents from BP families were more in agreement with the statement than were those from SB families ($X^2=4.2$; $p=<.05$). This was particularly true in California ($X^2=6$; $p=.01$).

% DISTRIBUTION FOR 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 56
'Life is happier for children with sisters and brothers'

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
N=304	N=257	N=57	N=217
83%	81%	77%	66%

It was expected that responses would be influenced by whether or not there *were* siblings in the family. Surprisingly, analysis for this failed to show any significant difference between the responses of 'only' children and those subjects with sisters and/or brothers.

However, the following interview excerpts will provide some rationale as to why the majority of adolescents in this study perceived that 'life is happier...with sister or brothers'.

> "...I have a sister and a younger
> brother...we argue and fight a lot but I
> don't think that's unnatural...sometimes
> we get along very well. I think I get
> along better with my sister because she
> seems to understand how I feel more than
> my brother...he's always trying to do
> everything I do...They are important to
> me for I know that if it really came to
> the test they would support me against
> say, my friends or others. We share a lot
> of secrets, I discuss things with them

that I couldn't with my parents, in fact,
we sometimes discuss my parents you know,
whether we are lucky to have caring
parents or when they've been mad with us
for something, how we can manipulate them
[subject laughs]. But seriously, I think
I much prefer having a sister and a
brother than to being an only child.."
(15-year old Californian male)

"...My brothers and I share our parents,
it is important that we have a history
together. I think not having brothers or
sisters is like something missing...it's
like having cornflakes without the
milk.."
(15-year old Californian female)

"...I live with my own sister and mother
and my step-father and his daughter and
son..I love them as though they were like
my own sister but it's not the same, I
mean with her we grew up together for the
first thirteen years before my mother
remarried. My father died when my sister
was two, I was four so we don't remember
him but for nearly ten years until my
mother remarried, it was just the three
of us, so I do feel different to my
sister..but we are all one family now and
it's great having another sister and a
brother, especially him, he's my age and
he gets my dad to agree to all kinds of
things for us..also, we go out with our
friends and my brother looks out for
us.."
(14-year old California female)

"...I don't have any sisters or brothers
and yes, I wish I had, I think I would
have much more fun. At least with sisters
and brothers you don't have to be with
your parents all the time. I love my
parents but I can't get to do things like
my friends who have sisters and brothers,
they get to go out with them and I think
that if I had a brother or sister, my
parents would be less worried about me

going out..also, I only have my friends
to discuss personal things with and I
know that my friends have their sisters
and brothers to talk to.."
(15-year old Scottish male)

The following excerpt is from an interview with a 16-year
old girl who was one of twins. (In both the main survey and the
interview part of the study subjects were not specifically
required to indicate whether or not they were one of twins).

"...We've grown up together, we share the
same room, the same clothes, the same
friends together. We go out together..we
do everything together, she is more than
my sister, she is my best friend...my
whole life.."
(Californian female)

GROUP D STATEMENTS - expectations: children and parents

12 Children should always put their parents wishes first
32 Parents should sacrifice everything for their children
16 Children of my age should not be expected to help around the
     house

Students of family dynamics and socialization generally
believe that a child builds attachments to the parents as a
result of their ministrations to that child, and that favourable
attachments by the child to other children are built in terms of
pleasant and reinforcing experiences which have been shared with
them.

Observational studies of social behaviour have sketched some
detail within the general picture. Young children play together
freely and select best friends regardless of gender. As children
grow older there arises an increasing tendency to form same-
gender friendships and this, in turn, breaks down during

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adolescence to a greater interest in heterosexual relationships. At the same time of course, there is a waning of interest in the parent figures. This is said to be particularly noticeable in early adolescence, when a period of antagonism or, indeed, outright conflict with parents often occurs. At this time, perhaps more than any other in the the individual's life, the adolescent frequently, is as far removed as can be from parents.

What then, are the adolescent's views about his/her parents? To what extent is the adolescent aware of the reciprocity between most parents and their children? Are parents to sacrifice everything for their children or should children always put their parents' wishes first? And, how much should a child help out in the small, everyday details of running a home?

The statements grouped in this section were included in the questionnaire so as to obtain at least some answers to the above questions, and hopefully, to find out whether or not adolescents from different cultural backgrounds, and those from differently constructed families shared common views and beliefs.

CHI SQUARE TABLE GROUP 'D' STATEMENTS

	TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	X^2	P
Item 12 - Children should always put their parents' wishes first	836	367 (44%)	4.8	<.05
Item 32 - Parents should sacrifice everything for their children	836	273 (33%)	13.6	<.001
Item 16 - Children of my age should not be expected to help around the house	838	252 (30%)	16.0	<.001

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The general finding is that (a) by a statistically significant majority subjects disagreed with the view that children should always put their parents wishes first. Yet, considerably more than a third agreed with this; (b) by a ratio of 2:1 there was also disagreement that *parents* should sacrifice everything for their children; and (c) by a large majority, adolescents indicated that children of their age *should* be expected to help around the house.

The tables below show the significant findings based on the analyses for culture, family composition, gender, and age.

% DISTRIBUTION FOR 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 12
'Children should always put their parents' wishes first'

	SCOTS (N=359)	CALIFORNIANS (N=477)
% Agreement	58%	34%

% DISTRIBUTION FOR 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES FOR FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 12

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots N=302	Calif N=260	Scots N=57	Calif N=217
57%	41%	61%	24%

Here, we may see that regardless of family composition Scots mostly agreed while Californians - especially those from SB families mostly disagreed that children should always put parents' wishes first ($X^2=9.6$; p=<.005).

An explanation for this difference in responses may be offered in terms of the more 'traditional' pattern of socialisation in Scotland and the more modern patterns in California, where, it has previously been suggested, there have been greater changes in child-rearing than in Scotland. Won and Yamamura (1970) postulated, that how the youth [of today] relate themselves to a changing world may not necessarily be similar to the manner in which the preceding generation looks at the world.

These observations were based on their studies with American adolescents. Porteous (1981) on the other hand, investigated the personal beliefs and the experience of problems of British adolescents and came to another conclusion, one which helps to explain the findings here of the responses by the Scottish subjects.

Porteous suggests that for adolescents around the age of 14-15, "high conservatism, which generally means agreeing with parental values, controls and ideas of family centred togetherness...leads to a lower level of problem experiencing" (p.60).

Interviews with Scottish adolescents clearly reflected the 'need' to conform to parental expectations which, according to the perceptions of the subjects interviewed, amounted to 'parental superiority'.

Indeed, this aspect of the traditional socialisation that 'parents know best' and therefore their wishes should always come

first, was best reflected in the age-related responses as shown
in the table below.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON AGE
FOR ITEM
'Children should always put their parents' wishes first'

	AGE GROUP I		AGE GROUP II	
	Scots N=203	Calif N=252	Scots N=156	Calif N=225
	65%	37%	48%	30%

In Scotland it was the *younger* adolescent who agreed more
with the statement $(X^2=6.8;$ p=.01) while in California there was
no statistical differences in responses between the two age
groups. As far as gender was concerned, there were no
significant differences in response for either statement.

As for 'parents sacrificing everything for their children',
a significant gender difference (see table below) shows that
females much more than males disagreed with the statement $(X^2=5.4;$
p=.025).

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 32
'Parents should sacrifice everything for the sake of their
children'

	MALE GROUP		FEMALE GROUP	
	Scots N=197	Calif N=253	Scots N=164	Calif N=222
	38%	40%	24%	27%

These results do not necessarily indicate an assertion of

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emotional disaffection with parents but mostly, as will be seen in the interview excerpts below, an understanding that in ideal terms, a truely democratic dynamic within the family, would not always require either parents or their children to *always* put the other first.

"...your parents know best, they are there to help you and all and you should always put them first, even if you don't agree with them.."
(13-year old Scots male)

"...quite often my parents make wrong decisions so I cannot always believe that they are going to do the right thing...sometimes they should listen to us kids, especially about the things that concern us, our friends and all.."
(14-year old Californian female)

"...I get mad with my mum and dad at times because they think they know everything but they don't, but I've got to listen to what they have to say and even pretend to agree because then I'm a good lad [*laughs*] and I know I must put them first, before me."
(15-year old Scots male)

"...I live with my mum only and I listen to what she has to say about how I should behave and all that but I don't always agree. She's human too and if I always put her wishes first where would I be? I learn from her mistakes, she tells me to do that but quite often I do what *I* think is right for me.."
(15-year old Scots female)

"...My mom is my real mom and this is her
second marriage, and the guy she's now
married to, my dad, has been married
twice before. To me, they've both made
mistakes, I'm not blaming them, it's just
that they've made mistakes and so I'm not
too sure about always figuring that I
should put their views before mine. At
the same time I don't think that they
have to give up everything for their
kids, you know, we should kinda listen to
each other if things are going to work
out.."
(16-year old Californian male)

"...Parents know everything, you should
always listen to them because they care
for you and love you, and don't want you
to be hurt.."
(13-year old Scots male)

"...I hardly ever consider that my mother
is right about the things which concern
me..."
(15-year old Californian male)

"...Parents who give everything up for
their kids are nuts, they're cute [nice]
maybe, but nuts. They should never do
that I think.."
(14-year old Californian female)

"...I always used to do things cos' my
mom wanted me to, but now I say 'why
should I do that, I'm too old'. Parents
have to win the respect of their kids,
they're like coaches or teachers. When
they teach or coach well, you respect
them, there's no problem. Instead of just
slamming the discipline on you just say I
don't want to do this, I want to do my
own thing. I guess if the parents make it
easier to take then the kids would want
it, they'd want to do it with pleasure."
(15-year old Californian male)

"...It shouldn't be listen to your
parents they'll tell you what to do, the
kid should make a decision and the parent
could tell them if it's wrong or right,
they can ask them a question, do you
think that's a good thing to do (?) so he
can make his own decisions."
(13-year old Californian female)

Let us now turn to the adolescent's perceptions concerning

the children helping around the house. The rationale for the

inclusion of this kind of statement was given in the opening

paragraph to this section. Simply, there was a need to enquire

into the adolescent's perception of being a 'contributory member'

of a household and the extent to which this perception was

influenced by the structure of the particular family.

Here, apart from the majority overall response implying that

children *should* be expected to help, there were no other

significant findings. Let us therefore, turn directly to the

interview extracts both in support of and against the statement.

"...It's my parents' home and they run
everything, even what we have to eat at
mealtime, so I don't think children
should be expected to do housework."
(13 year old Scots male)

"...My wee sister helps my mum sometimes
but she never asks me to clean or
anything, I help my dad with the car and
things.."
(14-year old Scots male)

"...My dad goes to work and earns the
money, my mother looks after the house
and family, and we have to go to school,
each person has their different job to
do."
(14-year old Scots male)

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Lest it appear that *all* young, male Scots were of the above sentiments, the following are excerpts which indicate other viewpoints.

> "...I think that children should do their share, pull their own weight, at least help with some things...it depends what age you are, when you're little you might be more nuisance than help."
> (12-year old Scots male)

> "...We've a rota at the weekend for washing up, my father's not on the rota, it's the four of us. We agreed we should do some and the weekend was the time we were all around. It's really my mother's job with us children helping."
> (15-year old Scots male)

> "...All my friends used to do work in the house and I was glad my mum didn't make me cos' I could stay out a lot more and do things. I'm not very good at it now cos' I started so late. When I look back now it was pure skiving."
> (15-year old Scots female)

While no significant findings were obtained in terms of family status, it will be interesting to include a couple of interview excerpts from subjects with single/blended family structures.

> "...I think my family should make us do chores, just sort of to get used to life. It's sort of like good training, it would help you in later years."
> (14-year old Californian male)

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"...We have a chart we set up for chores and we trade off each week. Before we used to just decide on jobs then we traded off on the ones we hated. I do the garbage and there's special nights for dishes."
(14-year old Californian female)

"...I do a lot more than my brother and it's because my parents have said to me many times this year that I'm not contributing to the family, so this is my way of trying to show them that I am."
(15-year old Californian female)

"...I think kids should do it, they have some sense of reponsibility if they do it. When it comes time for them to get a house or apartment they'll have things to do, it won't be done for them."
(15-year old Californian male)

GROUP E STATEMENTS - problems and parental understanding

21 Children from single-parent families have extra problems
39 Our parents' generation is very good at understanding people of my age

The phrase 'role model' has become something of a cliche, but it is, nevertheless, said to refer to something very real: Father and mother represent to the child the strongest possible models for the performance of adult roles. Even when the child, in the process of growing up, struggles with and against these models, they are indispensable in serving as points of orientation. In those cases where either or both of the parental figures are absent, the child's personal and moral development is said to become more difficult.

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The family, with all its weaknesses and problems, continues to provide this essential service to both children and adolescents. That is why the *ideal* of 'the family' is said to continue strongly even among people who often miss its reality. Reasearch findings bear out these contentions, i.e. children growing up within family situations - as opposed to institutions and children's homes - have fewer emotional and behavioural problems, do better in school, have higher rates of achievements, and move more easily from dependence to autonomy (Levine, 1980).

However, do adolescents perceive that children from SB homes have greater problems? Further, depending on their particular family composition how do they view those members of their parents' generation in terms of the latter's understanding of young people?

CHI SQUARE TABLE FOR GROUP 'E' STATEMENTS

	TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	x^2	P
Item 21 - Children from single-parent families have extra problems	836	433 (52%)	1.6	N.S.
Item 39 - Our parents' generation is very good at understanding people of my age	831	349 (42%)	6.4	<.05

Overall, responses were equally divided for and against the first statement while by a statistically significant, but not very large majority, subjects were of the opinion that the 'older' generation was not very good at understanding young

people. Nonetheless, in turning to differences based on culture,

etc. we see some interesting findings.

To begin with, Scots more than Californians agreed that

children from SB families *do* have more problems ($X^2=8$; p=.005).

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 21
'Children from single-parent families have extra problems'

	SCOTS (N=360)	CALIFORNIANS (N=476)
% Agreement	63%	43%

This cultural difference is further highlighted in terms of

family composition for while overall there was a significantly

greater agreement from subjects living in BP families ($X^2=5.4$;

p=.025), in Scotland this was more pronounced, while in

California there was greater *disagreement* from subjects living in

SB families ($X^2=5.8$; p=<.025).

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 21

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE-BLENDED GROUP	
Scots N=303	Calif N=259	Scots N=57	Calif N=217
64%	52%	58%	33%

Yet again, in terms of differences in responses based on

gender, while overall, males agreed more with the statement ($X^2=9$;

p=<.005) as the following table shows, Californian females

disagreed much more than did Scots females ($X^2=8$; p=.005).

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 21
'Children from single-parent families have extra problems'

| MALES | | FEMALES | |
Scots N=197	Calif N=254	Scots N=163	Calif N=222
73%	54%	51%	31%

There were no significant differences in responses based on age.

An interesting point which emerged - and this, to some investigators in the area, may read as synonymous with 'problems' - was the adolescent's perception of 'responsibility'.

It was apparent from the interviews conducted, excerpts of which are shown below, that for many of those from single-parent families, merely being a member of such a family imposed certain obligations not to be easily found elsewhere. Or, as Weiss (1979) suggested in his premise of the "hierarchy" maintained within a two-parent household, [that] "...the absence of hierarchy [an echelon structure] in the one-parent household..permits the single parent who works full time to share the managerial responsibility for the household with the children." Weiss goes on to say that "...The consequences for the children may be a fostering of an early maturity" (p.97). Of course, it may be argued that to some extent, this also applies in two-parent families where both parents go out to work.

However, it was this issue to which many subjects referred in the course of the interviews.

"...I live alone with my mom and younger
brother, there's just the two of us. My
mom goes out to work every day and I am
expected to take care of my kid brother
and also run errands and all that kind of
stuff. I don't have as much time to be
with my friends but that's OK in a way
because I have to help out at home, it's
my responsibility.."
(14-year old Californian female)

"...My boyfriend has to help out at home
a lot of the time. Sometimes I think he's
expected to do too much but he says now
that his dad is no longer around [father
died] he has to take care of his mom and
sister and brother. I wouldn't say he has
more problems, just different ones to
me.."
(13-year old Californian female)

"...I think that children who come from
divorced families, you know, living with
say just their mum or dad, have a lot of
problems, like they have to keep things
to themselves because they don't want to
add to the problems of their mum or dad,
and they have to spend more time at home
and help at home and not be able to go
out with their pals.."
(13-year old Scots male)

"...There'll be a problem if the father's
left the mother with the child. The child
would feel inferior. When it's a one-
parent family there'll be problems at
school and that, like getting into
trouble with the teacher."
(14-year old Scots Male)

However, not all subjects see those from single-parent
families as disadvantaged. For example:

"...The parent is pretty lenient with
them. When we get home, we've got two but
they've got one...and if the child isn't
the favourite of the one [parent] they're
more strict. One boy I know, he buys his
own clothes, he's got a paper round and

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also his dad gives him so much money, he
buys his own food and his own clothes,
whereas I just go home to my mother."
(14-year old Scots male)

Sometimes, expressed views were a bit more ambivalent. For

instance:

"...I always think I'm so lucky I have
two parents, then sometimes I wish they
were divorced, I'd have more freedom. My
parent would be at work and nobody would
be at home. I wouldn't have to check in
with anybody. I look at some of the kids,
they have total freedom and make the
wrong choices and then I say, 'oh no,
it's not for me'."
(14 year old Californian female)

"...I think it's more stable to live with
two parents. Most of my friends live with
their mothers and they go out on dates
and come in at one a.m. My friends are
latch-key kids, come home and no one's
there. They talk to my mom, I sort of
have a community mom."
(16-year old Californian female)

This latter excerpt points to an area which is to be

discussed following this, namely that of parents, or others of

their generation, 'understanding' and helping out the adolescent

with a problem.

Here, apart from the significant overall disagreement with

the statement (previously noted), there were no other significant

differences in responses. Generally, the data which emerged from

the interviews indicated that as a rule, adolescents found it

difficult to 'communicate' with their own parents but easier to

approach others of their parents' generation, specifically, their

parents' friends. In some instances, older relatives were
accorded the confidences of the young.

> "...I think sometimes, my mom likes the
> dog better than me, she's really close to
> the dog! My father doesn't listen to my
> problems, or if I have a problem, he gets
> mad at me and then doesn't listen to why
> the problem was brought on."
> (14-year old Californian female)

> "...Well, my friend's father died and his
> mother remarried, he's finding it hard,
> feeling like running away from home.
> We're his retreat, he comes to my house
> and my dad spends a lot of time raising
> him too. My dad has a lot of influence
> over him."
> (13-year old Californian male)

> "...My boyfriend's parents have been a
> great help to me, they sit there and talk
> and they don't know what it means to me,
> things will just click in my brain."
> (15-year old Californian female)

> "...I consider some of my friends folks
> as my own when they're really nice ones."
> (13-year old Scots female)

> "...I don't think my parents are very
> understanding about my problems, I think
> they want to be but it doesn't happen,
> somehow they just don't seem to
> understand. They say things like 'I know
> what's up with you, I've been a teenager
> too" but they can't seem to understand
> that their generation was different,
> every teenage generation is different.
> But I get more understanding from my
> Aunt, she's not much younger than my mum
> but she seems more with it, seems to
> understand my problems more, and I can
> tell her all kinds of stuff that I
> couldn't discuss with my own parents."
> (15-year old Scots female)

The parent/child element in the 'socialisation function' is one which is given constant emphasis and meaning in the context of everyday family living. But 'experience' in the world outside, in the occupational world of the wider society, through schools, through peer-group attachments, and so on, shapes the adolescent's perception. One finding which emerged from the responses to the above statements more than any other, emphasised the ever-constant and ongoing 'conflict' between the generations, parent and child, not so much in absolute terms but sufficiently in terms of perceptions. Simply, many adolescents *expect* their parents to lack understanding of them, and this expectation is reinforced by their peergroup relationships, and increasingly by the media - especially in the American film version of 'the family'.

GROUP F STATEMENTS - perceptions of 'societal interference'

29 A society has the right to interfere when there is violence towards the wife
54 A society has the right to interfere when there is violence towards the children

Marital violence presently is recognized as a pervasive problem. Although the primary victims are the wives, recent evidence suggests that other family members are victimized as well. In an American study, a question posed by Wilson *et al*, (1980), asked whether 'family composition' affected the risks of child abuse and neglect. In their following investigation, the authors concluded that while the factor of *poverty* was more

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strongly associated with neglect risk...[it could not] "..account for the high risks of abuse and neglect in father-only and step-parent families" (p.333). They went on to suggest that the presence of an unrelated adult filling a parental role exacerbates the risk of physical abuse.

However, given the fact of violence towards women and towards children, do adolescents perceive that others in society have a right to interfere when this is so?

The statements grouped in this section were included in the main questionaire in order to investigate whether (based upon their own experience or not), adolescents believed that 'society' has a right to interfere, when it is perceived that a wife and/or children are at risk of violence.

Again, it will be more appropriate to look at the findings within a comparative framework, and to this end responses to the two statements will be discussed together.

CHI SQUARE TABLE FOR GROUP 'F' STATEMENTS

	TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	x^2	P
Item 29 - Society has a right to interfere when there is violence towards the wife	833	749 (90%)	32.0	<.001
Item 54 - Society has a right to interfere when there is violence towards children	834	772 (93%)	34.4	<.001

Overwhelmingly, adolescents in both cultures agreed that, yes, society has a right to interfere when there is violence

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towards a wife or towards children. In responses to both statements, there were no cultural, family composition, gender, or age differences. Therefore, we may turn directly to the interview excerpts.

> "...When there's child abuse or the husband beating the wife or vice versa, with some kids you say 'God, her dad must hit her as well', but you don't really think that's what's going on, at least you hope it isn't, but when someone says 'my dad hits my mom' you think to yourself that he must be hitting his kids as well and someone, the police or social worker or someone should be told."
> (14 year old Californian female)

> "...sometimes children are beaten when there's a lot of tension between the parents, they should talk it over and find out why and try to get some help with their problem."
> (15-year old Californian female)

Even though there was a certain amount of disagreement with both statements, the following excerpt is the only clear example to be found in the interviews.

> "...people should be allowed to get help if they want to, it's no one else's business to butt in unless I guess, things become really dangerous"
> (15 year old Californian male)

It is important to note that generally, adolescents seemed to be either unwilling or unable to discuss this issue any more than those examples cited. Given the logistics of a 45 minute interview session and the range of topics to be covered within that period, it was not always possible - or even desirable,

where there appeared to be some reluctance from the adolescent - to press for further discussion.

It was expected that in both cultures adolescents would talk more about this issue. In California there are no statistics as clearly defined as those in Scotland obtained by Dobash and Dobash (1980), whose analysis of official statistics on offences involving violence in two Scottish cities found that wife assault represented 26% of all serious assault and 76% of all family violence. Nonetheless, the following (and only) interview excerpt from the Scottish interview sample will help to illustrate the overall view discussed above.

> "...there's no point in folk being together and the wife getting battered..I think she should get her husband charged, a lot of folks just let it go. I suppose they drink, they have too much stress."
> (14-year old Scots male)

In this regard, being a women is - in Scotland at least - something of a liability according to Dobash and Dobash for they report that wife-battering is not a rare phenomenon but is widespread and has cultural support, i.e. the male's perception of his 'authority' over his wife and family, the family's right to privacy coupled with the reluctance of the police to intervene, highlghts the 'lessening' of a woman's value. Whether or not this is a general perception is unclear, but it is expedient now, to turn to the next section and specifically, to adolescents' perceptions of gender roles.

GROUP G STATEMENTS - perceptions of gender roles in the family

14   Men should be the only ones who go out to work
17   When there are two parents in the family the husband should
     be boss
28   When there are two parents in the family neither should be
     boss
49   When there are two parents in the family the wife should be
     boss
58   When there are two parents in the family household money
     should be managed jointly
31   Men are the best people to manage the household money
37   Women are the best people to manage the household money
20   Housework should be done by women only

In Chapter 1, it was discussed that in acquiring values and

identity, the adolescent's maturation and identity formation are

integrally tied to the changing individual who is simultaneously

interacting with and reacting to the changing society.   As   the

roles and expectations of males and females change in society, so

too, one would expect, would the perceptions and expectations of

adolescent girls and boys.

Attitudes are moulded within specific experiences as much as

by observations of others in society, how, as males or females,

they behave and what is expected of them.   For   example,   should

only men go out to work or, as in the concept of 'affirmative

action' (equality of the sexes) as legislated in the U.S.A. and

practiced in many countries in the Western World, should women be

equally entitled to work outside the home?

Researchers such as White and Brinkerhoff (1981), in looking

at the significance and meaning of children's work in the family

have suggested that childhood experiences in this regard will

have consequences for later roles in their own families.

This expectation is also supported by Thrall's (1978) finding that both men and women rely heavily on their childhood experiences when devising their own marital division of labour.

However, do adolescents have definite views on such issues as who should be the 'boss' in the family, or who is the best person to handle the household money? If gender roles in our society *are* centred around the division of labour in the home and socio-political-economic structures outside the home (as suggested by Zey-Ferrell, *et al* 1978) are they reflected in the adolescent's perceptions and expectations? These were the underlying questions which prompted the inclusion of the statements which made up Group G.

For purposes of discussion and presentation of data, the results and findings will be grouped accordingly: (1) Should only men go out to work? (2) Who should be the 'boss' in the family? (3) Who should manage the money? and (4) Should housework be done only by women?

In each case we will begin by looking at the sample's overall responses before going on to differences in responses based on culture, etc.

CHI SQUARE TABLE FOR GROUP 'G' STATEMENTS
FOR ITEM 14
'Men should be the only ones who go out to work'

TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	X^2	P
838	137 (16%)	27.0	<.001

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By 5:1 adolescents did not think that men should be the only ones to work. There were no significant differences based on culture, family composition, or age. However, not surprisingly, gender differences as shown in the following table show that females (in both cultures) disagreed more with the statement than did the males ($X^2=4.8$; p=<.05).

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 14
'Men should be the only ones who go out to work'

| MALES | | FEMALES | |
| Scots | Calif | Scots | Calif |
N=198	N=256	N=161	N=223
26%	18%	11%	9%

"..it's a bit discriminating thinking
that the women should cook and clean and
the father only, should earn the money; I
don't think it should be like that".
(14 year old Scots female)

"It used to be that men made more money
and maybe they still do, most of the time
anyway, but that's no reason for a women
not to work. This is the 80's, not the
Wild West".
(16 year old Californian female)

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Next, the issue of who should be the boss in the family.

	TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	x^2	P
Item 17 - When there are two parents in the family the husband should be boss	837	283 (34%)	12.8	<.001
Item 28 - When there are two parents in the family neither should be boss	840	655 (78%)	22.4	<.001
Item 49 - When there are two parents in the family the wife should be boss	835	151 (18%)	25.6	<.001

As the above table shows, the majority of subjects felt that neither parent should be boss. However, Californian adolescents were more emphatic that husbands should not be the boss ($X^2=5.6$; p=<.025).

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 17
'When there are two parents in the family the husband should be boss'

	SCOTS (N=361)	CALIFORNIANS (N=476)
% Agreement	42%	28%

There were no significant differences based on family composition but as in the case of Statement 14 concerning 'men only going out to work', here again, for both Items 17 and 28 (see following two tables) females disagreed much more about husbands being the boss ($X^2=10.8$; p=.001).

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% RESPONSES FOR 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 12

'When there are two parents in the family the husband should be boss'

	MALES		FEMALES	
	Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
	N=198	N=253	N=163	N=223
	53%	42%	29%	12%

% DISTRIBUTION FOR 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 28

'When there are two parents in the family neither should be boss'

	MALES		FEMALES	
	Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
	N=198	N=256	N=163	N=223
	73%	73%	82%	86%

Not surprisingly, and as the following table shows, there were some 'opposition' (in responses from males) to the 'wife as boss'. However, the significant gender difference ($X^2=6$; p=<.025) was only in Scotland, where males disagreed more emphatically with the statement than did females.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 49

'When there are two parents in a family the wife should be boss'

	MALES		FEMALES	
	Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
	N=198	N=254	N=164	N=222
	12%	16%	27%	19%

"I don't think anyone should really be
boss over the other but if it *had* to be
one person then I think the husband
should be".
(15 year old Scots male)

"Equal, men and women should be equal in
the family..no one in a higher position
than the other".
(15 year old Californian male)

But who should handle (manage) the money?

CHI SQUARE TABLES FOR GROUP 'G' STATEMENTS

	TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	X^2	P
Item 58 - When there are two parents in the family, household money should be managed jointly	821	744 (91%)	32.8	<.001
Item 31 - Men are the best people to manage the household money	838	384 (46%)	3.2	N.S.
Item 37 - Women are the bst people to manage the household money	835	375 (45%)	4.0	.05

Overall, subjects felt that when there are two parents in the family the money should be managed jointly. In Scotland only, subjects from BP families more than those from SB families, were of this opinion (X^2=4.4; p=<.05) (see table below).

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 58
'When there are two parents in the family, household money should be managed jointly

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots N=301	Calif N=250	Scots N=57	Calif N=212
90%	92%	79%	93%

There were no other significant differences in responses.

Finally, 'should housework only be done by women'?

CHI SQUARE TABLE FOR GROUP 'G' STATEMENTS FOR ITEM 20
'Housework should be done by women only'

TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	x^2	P
840	148 (18%)	25.6	<.001

While there was an overall (4.5:1) disagreement with the statement, Californian adolescents were in much greater disagreement than the Scots (x^2=4.4; p=<.05) (see table below).

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 20
'Housework should be done by women only'

	SCOTS (N=361)	CALIFORNIANS (N=479)
% Agreement	24%	13%

Additionally, females in both cultures disagreed more emphatically than males (x^2=10.6; p=<.005).

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 20

MALES		FEMALES	
Scots N=198	Calif N=256	Scots N=163	Calif N=223
37%	21%	7%	4%

We may now turn to some of the interview extracts relevant to this topic.

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"There's no way that women only should do
housework..if a man expected me to do
that I would tell him to get lost".
(15 year old Californian female)

"Men and women should be equal in
everything, even housework".
(14 year old Scots female)

"It's O.K. to say that men and women
should share the housework but that's not
possible many times, especially when the
husband is out to work all hours".
(15 year old Scots male)

"Everyone should do their share of
housework, that's how it should be but
usually it's my mom,not my dad and
sometimes not even me".
(13 year old Californian male)

OVERALL

The majority of adolescents believed that -

- a couple without children is still a family

- a single-parent with children is still a family

- happy families *do* argue

- families can be depended upon for help in a crisis but that a member of the family is not necessarily the best person with whom to discuss a personal problem

- even though most of their out of school time was spent with friends, the quality of time was equally happy with friends and with family

- life *is* happier for children with sisters or brothers

- children should not always put their parents first nor should parents sacrifice everything for their children

- children (of their age) *should* be expected to help around the house and women should should not be the only ones to do the housework

- their parents' generation is *not* very good at understanding young people

- society has a right to interfere when there is violence towards the wife and/or towards children

- men should not be the only ones who go out to work

- when there are two parents in the family neither should be boss and the money should be handled jointly

QUALITATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF *SIGNIFICANT* FINDINGS
ON ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE FAMILY

STATEMENT	CULTURAL DIFF.	FAMILY COMP. DIFF.	GENDER DIFF.	AGE DIFF.
36- A couple without children is still a family	Calif.agreed more than Scots	None	In Scotland only, females agreed more than males	None
19 - When there is only one parent with children it is not a family	Calif. disagreed more than Scots	None	Females disagreed more than males	None
27 - A member of the family is not the best person with whom to discuss a problem	None	In Scotland only: BP disagreed more SB agreed more	None	None
55 - Out of school I spend most of my time with my family	Scots agreed more	None	None	None
1 - The happiest times I spend are with my family	None	BP agreed more than SB but more so in Scotland	None	Younger agreed more than older but moreso in Scotland
56 - Life is happier for children with sisters or brothers	None	BP agreed more than SB but more so in California	None	None
12 - Children should always put their parents wishes first	Scots agreed more Calif. disagreed more	In California only: SB disagreed more than BP	None	Scots only: Younger agreed more than older
32 - Parents should sacrifice everything for their children	None	None	Females disagreed much more	None
21 - Children from single-parent families have extra problems	Scots agreed more	BP families agreed more, especially in Scotland. In California SB disagreed more	Males agreed more. Calif. females disagreed more than Scots females	None

[TABLE CONTINUES NEXT PAGE]

QUALITATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF *SIGNIFICANT* FINDINGS ON ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF THE FAMILY

STATEMENT	CULTURAL DIFF.	FAMILY COMP. DIFF.	GENDER DIFF.	AGE DIFF.
14 - Men should be the only ones who go out to work	None	None	Females disagreed much more	None
17 - When there are two parents in the family the husband should be the boss	Californians disagreed more than did Scots	None	Females disagreed much more	None
49 - When there are two parents in the family the wife should be the boss	None	None	In Scotland only: Males disagreed much more	None
58 - When there are two parents in the family the money should be handled jointly	None	Scots only: SP agreed more than SB	None	None
20 - Housework should be done by women only	Californians disagreed more than did Scots	None	Females disagreed much more than did males	None

CHAPTER SIX

PARENTING

According to Elkind (1968), by the age of adolescence one is able to formulate hypothetical situations and conceptions about 'what might be'. As far as we are concerned with the adolescent's perception of how he or she might be as a *parent* some day, Stolz (1967) suggests that future expectations and styles of parenting stem directly from 'within family' perceptions and practices. Implied here is the notion that in observing how their parents behave "as parents", children acquire their understanding of parenthood. Of course, this understanding changes, for as Galinsky (in Bohannan, 1985) has pointed out, parenting itself changes and in any kind of family is determined by the development of the child; that is, as the child changes, so too, does the style of parenting.

However, as suggested above, it is only at adolescence that the child is cognitively able to begin thinking about the self as a potential parent. Yet thoughts about becoming a parent (or not), or of becoming a particular kind of parent may be influenced by extra-familial learning as much as by the within family observations of one's own parents. For instance, to day with changing female expectations, more young women are seeking fulfilment in channels other than child-bearing and child-rearing. The expectations that when an adolescent female becomes an adult she will necessarily concentrate on her role as a mother, are decreasing (GLick and Norton, 1973). We have already seen in Chapter 3 on Marriage, that while a majority of

adolescents in the present study indicated that they indeed, expected to marry someday, they would not in fact, place their marriages before their careers.

What are the implications for parenthood? Indeed, what do adolescents generally think of parenting? And more specifically, what are their views on issues such as two-parent vs. one-parent differences in child rearing; which parent (if any) is considered more important for the well-being of the child; whether step-parents are as fond of their children as are natural parents; the number of children to have in their own future families and the preference for sons or daughter; should mothers go to work when they have young children?

In an attempt to obtain answers to these questions, 16 relevant statement were incorporated into the questionnaire for the survey part of the study. The statements were as follows:

ITEM   STATEMENT

2   A child is brought up as well by one as by both parents
5   Step-parents are not as fond of the child as natural
        parents
7   Women should not work when they have small children
9   If I were to have only one child I would like a daughter
10   Children need two parents to bring them up
13   A mother alone can manage a household and family as well
        as two parents
25   The best person to bring up a child is the father
34   As an adult I would like to have children of my own
35   A father alone can manage a household and family as well
        as two parents
40   If I were to have only one child I would like a son
43   Children without fathers have greater difficulties than
        children without mothers
45   If I have children I will expect them to help around the
        house

        [contd]

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47	I have no clear idea of the number of children I would like to have
48	Children without mothers have greater difficulties than children without fathers
50	I think I will bring up my children the way I am being brought up
59	The best person to bring up a child is the mother

As before, in the ensuing presentation of data and interpretation of the results, where relevant statements will be grouped around the same issues under discussion.

GROUP 'A' STATEMENTS - concerning ideals of child rearing

2	-	A child is brought up as well with one as with two parents
10	-	Children need two parents to bring them up
13	-	A mother alone can manage a household and family as well as two parents
35	-	A father alone can manage a household and family as well as two parents
25	-	The best person to bring up a child is the father
59	-	The best person to bring up a child is the mother

There are two basic issues here, (1) do adolescents perceive that both parents are essential for the succesful rearing of children and management of the family or can one parent do as well? (2) which parent is considered a 'better bet'?

It was hoped that in subsequent interview discussions with adolescents, their views on other related issues would emerge, i.e. issues on parenting such as parent-child interaction, love, affection, and the reciprocal meeting of emotional needs on the part of adult and child. It was also hoped that the adolescent's views on household management, i.e.the administrative, economic and logistic running of the family would emerge. Before looking at the interview data, let us first examine the findings in the

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survey and look at overall responses to the Group A statements.

CHI SQUARE TABLE FOR GROUP 'A' STATEMENTS

	TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	X^2	P
Item 2 - A child is brought up as well with one as with two parents	840	418 (50%)	1.6	N.S.
Item 10 - Children need two parents to bring them up	840	487 (58%)	6.4	.01
Item 13 - A mother alone can manage a household and family as well as two parents	833	506 (61%)	8.8	<.005
Item 35 - A father alone can manage a household and family as well as two parents	835	374 (45%)	4.0	.05
Item 25 - The best person to bring up a child is the father	835	229 (27%)	18.4	<.001
Item 59 - The best person to bring up a child is the mother	834	518 (62%)	9.6	<.005

Overall, adolescents are divided equally about whether a child is brought up as well with one as with two parents but they indicated that preferably, children need two parents to bring them up. However, an examination of the findings for cultural differences and those based on family composition, yield some interesting variations in Scottish and Californian findings, as shown in the table below.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 2 .
'A child is brought up as well by one as by both parents'

	SCOTS (N=361)	CALIFORNIANS (N=479)
% Agreement	41%	56%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 2

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots N=304	Calif N=261	Scots N=57	Calif N=218
36%	47%	70%	67%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 2

MALES		FEMALES	
Scots N=198	Calif N=256	Scots N=163	Calif N=223
28%	46%	57%	68%

Here, unlike the majority of Scots adolescents, a slightly
greater number of Californian subjects (many of whom themselves,
were from both-parent families) were of the opinion that one
parent could bring up a child as well as could two parents
($X^2=5.8$; p=<.025).

Overall, differences based on family composition show that
subjects from single/blended families in both cultures agreed
much more than did subjects from BP families ($X^2 = 8.8$, p < .005).
However, as already indicated the influence of culture is evident

even in the responses of those adolescents *within* the both-parent group for Californians much more than Scots agreed that a child is brought up equally well by one parent. In addition, a significant gender difference ($X^2 = 10.2$, p < .005) shows that females in both cultures were also of this opinion.

> "...I think in many ways having just one parent means that you have more attention given to you because you know, your mom or dad, whomever is bringing you up, feels that they have to try harder to be better parents and make up for their child only having one. But I think that's what society expects, you know, everyone to have two parents. I have both my parents and many times I feel that I am getting less than many of my friends who have only one parent at home...I mean I get all the material things and sure, they love me and all, but when I see how close some of my friends are to their one parent, then I think that's because they only have the one parent, they don't have to be shared with anyone, and maybe they're better off for it...but no I wouldn't like to have only one parent because I love them both, but I don't think it's *necessary* to have both."
> (16-year old Californian female)

The majority of Scottish subjects (70%) however felt that *both* parents were necessary. Californians on the other hand were equally divided on this issue. The table below shows the proportional difference in adolescent's responses between the two cultures.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 10
'Children need two parents to bring them up'

	SCOTS (N=361)	CALIFORNIANS (N=479)
% Agreement	70%	49%

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% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 10
'Children need two parents to bring them up'

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
N=304	N=261	N=57	N=218
76%	59%	39%	37%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 10

MALES		FEMALES	
Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
N=198	N=256	N=163	N=223
75%	56%	64%	41%

Analysis for family composition influences yields $X^2 =$ 11.8, p < .001. Again, the strong influence of culture here, affected the responses based on gender differences. Males much more than females concurred with the statement.

> "...1 know that it is possible for a kid to be raised by a single parent, but something's got to suffer. How could a mother also be a male role model or, if the child is living with the father, how could he possibly understand what not having a mother is like? "
> (16-year old Scots Male)

The preceding interview excerpt illustrates a feeling which emerged in many interviews and which differentiated the dominant viewpoint in the two cultures. To be sure, there were other views expressed and which reflected contradictory perceptions in both cultures. For example in California:

"You don't have to have two parents.
My best friend is being raised only by her
mom and she's the best adjusted person I
know (she) does well at school, helps out
in community projects, has had a steady
relationship with her boyfriend for a long
time...she's a super person always smiling
and happy (15 year old female).

The striking difference in the results was that in
California, with a significantly higher incidence of single-
parent families, there was a more pronounced belief that a child
was brought up as well by one as by two parents. But which
parent? The only significant results were as shown in the tables
below.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 25
'The best person to bring up a child is the father'

	MALES		FEMALES	
	Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
	N=197	N=254	N=162	N=222
	27%	38%	18%	23%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 59
'The best person to bring up a child is the mother'

	SCOTS	CALIFORNIANS
	(N=360)	(N=474)
% Agreement	73%	54%

While the overall responses indicated a 62% - 38% difference
in favour of the mother (see x^2 table above), when seen in terms
of culture, as the preceding tables show, 73% of the Scots

"You don't have to have two parents.
My best friend is being raised only by her
mom and she's the best adjusted person I
know (she) does well at school, helps out
in community projects, has had a steady
relationship with her boyfriend for a long
time...she's a super person always smiling
and happy (15 year old female).

The striking difference in the results was that in
California, with a significantly higher incidence of single-
parent families, there was a more pronounced belief that a child
was brought up as well by one as by two parents. But which
parent? The only significant results were as shown in the tables
below.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 25
'The best person to bring up a child is the father'

	MALES		FEMALES	
	Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
	N=197	N=254	N=162	N=222
	27%	38%	18%	23%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 59
'The best person to bring up a child is the mother'

	SCOTS	CALIFORNIANS
	(N=360)	(N=474)
% Agreement	73%	54%

While the overall responses indicated a 62% - 38% difference
in favour of the mother (see x^2 table above), when seen in terms
of culture, as the preceding tables show, 73% of the Scots

against only 54% of Californians felt that if one parent were to bring up a child that parent should be the mother, i.e. the Californians were much less in agreement with the traditional societal perceptions concerning the 'importance of the mother'.

> "Fathers can as easily raise kids
> today...many of them do it and it seems
> to work out. I don't hear of any kid
> being really deprived because they were
> raised by their dad. I think my dad
> would do just as well on his own as my
> mom would if they ever split up."
> (15 year old Californian male)

The majority Scottish view however, may be illustrated in the following interview excerpts.

> "...It is much more important for mothers
> to be with their child because they have
> more love for it and because they can't
> earn as much as the husband so he should go
> out to work and she should bring up the
> baby.."
> (13 year-old Scots male)

> "...The best person to bring up children is
> the mother because that is her natural
> instinct while the father's job is to bring
> in the money. If he had to go to work and
> bring up the kids that wouldn't work out as
> well."
> (15-year old Scots female)

But what about when the mother has to go out to work and run the household as well, does that not affect the children in the same way as the father doing the two things?

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 13
'A mother alone can manage a household and family as well as two parents'

	SCOTS (N=358)	CALIFORNIANS (N=475)
% Agreement	69%	55%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 13
'A mother alone can manage a household and family as well as two parents'

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
N=301	N=258	N=57	N=217
74%	61%	42%	47%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 13

MALES		FEMALES	
Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
N=196	N=255	N=162	N=220
22%	35%	42%	59%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 35
'A father alone can manage a household and family as well as two parents'

	SCOTS (N=357)	CALIFORNIANS (N=478)
% Agreement	31%	55%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 35

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
N=300	N=260	N=57	N=218
28%	50%	46%	61%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 35

MALES		FEMALES	
Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
N=194	N=255	N=163	N=223
22%	47%	42%	64%

Here again, while the overall responses indicated that adolescents perceived the mother as more capably managing the household and the family (and conversely, the father as less able to manage on his own), Scots adolescents (with 69% agreeing), were much more emphatic than the 55% of Californians who agreed. Indeed, responses specifically concerning the father show that again, 55% of Californians felt that fathers were as able as the mother to manage the household than 31% of Scots. In a sense, these findings support the cultural differences found in response to the previous issue concerning 'who best to bring up children'.

One partial explanation for this cultural difference in the perception of the 'best parent' may be offered in terms of the comparatively higher incidence of SB families in California than in Scotland, i.e. a greater likelihood of single-parent fathers and a consequently greater societal acceptance of single fathers as being equally competent in raising children as are single mothers.

However, adolescents from single-parent families who took part in this study were not asked to indicate which parent raised them and consequently, it was not possible to analyse the results in such terms. Nevertheless, examination of the above tables for statements concerning the 'best parent to manage the household' shows that whereas in Scotland adolescents from BP families (compared to those from SB families) more emphatically chose the mother, Californians from BP and SB families were much less

differentiated in their responses.

Another explanation for the cultural differences may be offered in terms of differences in family 'logistics', i.e. which parent is perceived as having more 'contact time'; for instance, when there are both parents and they both work. The following interview excerpt illustrates this point.

> "My father works from home, his office is in the house. My mother goes out to work, so my father is home much more and he is around when I get back from school and also to do all the other things for us [so] he is just as good in running the family as my mother."
> (16 year old Californian male)

Where *both* go out to work, the perceptions are like that illustrated in the following Scottish interview excerpt.

> ".. Both my father and my mother go out to work but it's my mother who also takes care of the house and things like that, she seems to accept it even though sometimes they argue about how much she has to do compared with my dad, but I agree with him that he is more important for earning more money and she is better at home...it works best that way I think".
> (15-year old Scots male)

Does this mean that the 'perception of father' differs between the two cultures? In discussing the 'father figure' and how we should approach the study of fathers, Richards (1982) has referred to the over-riding importance of our [Western] system of cultural transmission of parental care where male and female roles are reinforced to the next generation.

While mothers tend to be major caretakers of children, today

the roles of both mother and father are changing and may be seen to be less categorical. Certainly, according to Richards *(op cit)* male parents often are near equal partners with the female in terms of raising children. However, it could be argued that 'flexible' domestic arrangements could mean that children develop perceptions which see the female as having more of a definite household role but the male as having a greater choice. Consequently, one may hypothesise that in a culture where traditional values are still predominant (as in Scotland) the importance of the mother being the primary caretaker is more likely to elicit the kind of responses cited above.

Does this mean then, that children without a female parent are at a certain disadvantage? This issue is taken up in the discussion of the next set of questionnaire statements.

GROUP 'B' STATEMENTS

43 - Children without fathers have greater difficulties than children without mothers

48 - Children without mothers have greater difficulties than children without fathers

CHI SQUARE TABLE FOR GROUP 'B' STATEMENTS

	TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	x^2	P
Item 43 - Children without fathers have greater difficulties than children without mothers	808	320 (40%)	8.0	.005
Item 48 - Children without mothers have greater difficulties than children without fathers	824	424 (51%)	0.8	N.S.

Overall, the majority of adolescents (2:1) were of the feeling that children without fathers do not have difficulties as much as do children without mothers. Yet, a substantial number of adolescents opposed this view.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 43

'Children without fathers have greater difficulties than children without mothers'

	SCOTS (N=354)	CALIFORNIANS (N=454)
% Agreement	45%	35%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 43

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots N=297	Calif N=246	Scots N=57	Calif N=208
47%	37%	37%	32%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 43

MALES		FEMALES	
Scots N=192	Calif N=238	Scots N=162	Calif N=216
51%	42%	39%	27%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT RESPONSES BASED ON AGE
FOR ITEM 43

AGE GROUP I		AGE GROUP II	
Scots N=197	Calif N=231	Scots N=157	Calif N=223
48%	40%	43%	30%

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% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 48
'Children without mothers have greater difficulties than children without fathers'

	SCOTS (N=358)	CALIFORNIANS (N=466)
% Agreement	70%	48%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 48

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots N=302	Calif N=256	Scots N=56	Calif N=210
67%	49%	87%	47%

In California (35%) and Scotland (45%), those who agreed with the first statement (i.e 'Children without fathers have greater difficulties than children without mothers') were in the minority. However, there was a more pronounced cultural difference based on family composition. For instance, in Scotland more adolescents from BP families (compared to those from SB families) agreed that children have greater difficulties without a *mother*, whereas in California, regardless of their family composition, adolescents were equally divided about which parent's absence caused greater difficulties for the children.

Simply, the general cultural differences may be summarised as follows: In California, there was marked disagreement with both statements but slightly greater agreement that there are more difficulties if the missing parent happens to be the mother.

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In Scotland, this perception of the mother's importance was much more pronounced.

In response to the statement concerning greater difficulties without *fathers*, there were no significant gender-based differences in California. In Scotland, females disagreed much more than did males ($X^2=4$; p=<.05) and this was especially so for females from SB families.

On the other hand, concerning greater difficulties without the *mother*, those from SB families agreed more, and again, especially SB females in Scotland.

These findings may be summarised as follows:

Those from SB families, especially if they were female, and particularly so if they were Scots, were of the opinion that the absence of both fathers *and* mothers in a family, makes a difference. However, the interview data relevant to the issue was very clearly 'for' the mother.

> "...I live with my mother and sister and young brother. My older brother lives with my father and whenever he [brother] visits us he says what a drag it is to live with my father, they seem to have so many problems. But my brother has to live there because it's closer and easier for him to get to school [college]. Even though there are more of us here, my mother's a good organizer and she's very good in keeping the family together...I wouldn't want to live with my father, his life style is too erratic."
> (16-year old Californian male)

"...Sure I think there are some
difficulties when there's no father around
but it's much more difficult if there's no
mother. Fathers are not tuned in to kids so
much as mothers, little things like if I
have a problem my Dad will say to me 'Too
bad but get in there and fight, don't let
it get you down' you know, typical male
talk, but my mother, well she'll ask me
questions and find out how I'm feeling and
all that, and she'll be real concerned and
try to help..it's different, and 1 know I'm
lucky to have both parents, but I think for
sure that it would be more difficult if my
mother wasn't around."
(14-year old Californian male)

"..Mothers are more important in families
so if there's no mother in a family, then
they're going to have more
difficulties...she's more important because
of what women do and how they think and
all, just more important in bringing up
young folk."
(13-year old Scots male)

While in fact, there is a general change in the number of

men who head single-parent households in the U.S. and Britain

(Hipgrave, 1982), the overall societal impression of the more

important parent-child dyad is that of the mother-child.

Becoming a single-parent involves a double adjustment: it

means becoming both single and becoming the sole major parent, a

combination which for men, apparently (Hetherington,Cox and

Cox,1976), does not admit of any readily available social role or

status.

One important aspect of the adolescent's cognitive

development of parenting is the extent to which s/he perceives

what parents and their children should or should not do as

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members of a family. Should both parents go out to work or should the mother remain at home? Should children be expected to share household responsibilities? Is the manner in which one is currently being raised, a style to emulate or react against?

These questions formulated the considerations for the inclusion of the following statements in the questionnaire.

GROUP 'C' STATEMENTS - Issues concerned with perceptions of family dynamics

7 - Women should not work when they have small children
45 - If I have children I will expect them to help around the house
50 - I think I will bring up my children the way I am being brought up

CHI SQUARE TABLE FOR GROUP 'C' STATEMENTS

	TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	X^2	P
Item 7 - Women should not go out to work when they have small children	839	479 (57%)	5.6	.025
Item 45 - If I have children I will expect them to help around the house	838	737 (88%)	30.4	<.001
Item 50 - I think I will bring up my children the way I am being brought up	834	516 (62%)	9.6	<.005

First the overall responses. The findings indicate that a majority of adolescents were of the opinion that women should not go out to work when they have small children. However, as will be discussed shortly, there were very clear cultural differences

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in this perception.

By a similar majority, the general feeling expressed was that subjects themselves, expected to bring up their own children in the same way they were being raised.

By a vast majority, adolescents indicated that they would expect their own children to help around the house. Let us now examine these findings as they were influenced by culture etc.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 7
'Women should not go out to work when they have small children'

	SCOTS (N=361)	CALIFORNIANS (N=478)
% Agreement	72%	46%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 7

	MALES		FEMALES	
	Scots N=198	Calif N=256	Scots N=163	Calif N=222
	77%	56%	65%	35%

46% of the Californian sample agreed that mothers should stay at home when the children were young. In contrast, 72% of the Scots sample concurred. Therefore, the majority of Californian adolescents *dis*agreed that mothers needed to stay at home and not go out to work if they had small children.

Is this perhaps due to the greater general acceptance by adolescents in California of women in the workplace? It was

hoped that some insight into this would arise out of the interviews, excerpts of which shortly follow.

There were no significant differences in responses based on family composition or age. Gender however, did influence the result, i.e. males more than females in both cultures ($X^2=6.6$; p=.01) agreed that women should stay at home when they have small children. In Scotland, however, females were also largely of the same opinion. The following excerpts from the interviews will better illustrate this.

> "...My mother had to go out to work when I was very young, and I don't think it made any difference to how I was brought up. She still goes out to work and I think she's great for being so independent and showing you you can be a good mother and a career women at the same time...other of my friends' mothers also work and they all seem to be o.k. I don't think it's such a big deal.."
> (15-year old Californian female)

> "..Maybe mothers shouldn't go to work say when the baby is just born, new, but after a month or so I think it's o.k. if she went out and left the baby with a child care unit. My sister worked in one of those places and said that a lot of mothers did that who had to go to work...you can't take the child to work with you and why should you stop working just because you have a child?"
> (16-year old Californian male)

There were of course, some opposing view from Californian adolescents. For example:

"..Mothers should stay home and care for the young child because no one else can understand the child so well or give it love like the mother...and if she goes to work then that child will be emotionally abused I think."
(14-year old Californian female)

"..I think mothers should stay home with their young because we've all been told how important that is. In my Human Sexuality class last semester they made a big deal about how the first few years of children are real important and that they should have their mothers around a lot, I can't see how that would be possible if she went to work...it's important because they need to be loved and looked after and the mother has a special need to do that."
(15-year old Californian male)

And from Scotland:

"..No, definitely mothers should not leave young children to go to work, even if they need the money they can get help on Social but the children should have their mother with them, that's only right...a stranger cannot bring them up in the same way."
(14-year old Scots female)

"..I know that some people have to go to work, some mothers, because they're not earning enough in the family, and they get other people, or a nursery to look after the kid, but that's not the best thing to do for the kid, I mean the kid must not get real caring from other people."
(16 year old Scots male)

In response to the statement about whether adolescents would expect their own children to help around the house, the results were almost unanimously in the affirmative. 89% of Californians and 86% of Scots professed that yes, if they were to have offspring someday, then they would certainly expect their children to help around the house. There were no differences in responses based on culture, family composition, or age.

> "Can't see me letting my kids sit about..not likely..*I* have to help all the time."
> (Scots male)

> "Everyone's got to help in a family — that's the way it is."
> (Californian male)

But what about the 5% of the total sample who disagreed? A search through the interview transcripts revealed only one emphatic comment from a subject in this group.

> "..I would not expect my children to help around the house, that's not their job, they would get in the way and do things wrong. I would want them to do their homework and do well at school and if they helped to clean and cook at home then they would be too tired to do their homework."
> (12-year old Scots male)

The final questionnaire statement in this section asked subjects whether or not they would bring up their own children in the same way as they were being reared. Here there were some differences based only on family composition and age, with no overall cultural differences.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 50

'I think I will bring up my children the way I am being brought up'

BOTH PARENTS' GROUP		SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP	
Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
N=304	N=256	N=57	N=217
66%	63%	53%	57%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON AGE
FOR ITEM 50

AGE GROUP I		AGE GROUP I1	
Scots	Calif	Scots	Calif
N=204	N=249	N=157	N=224
71%	59%	55%	61%

Overall, two-thirds of both samples agreed with the statement. While there were no cultural differences between Scots and Californians, within Scotland the differences between BP and SB families show that there was more agreement with the statement from adolescents in the former ($X^2=5.2$; p<.025). Simply, Scots subjects from BP families much more than those from SB families indicated they *would* raise their children in the same way as they were being raised. In California the difference between the two family composition groups was not significant. In Scotland too (and not California), younger subjects more than older subjects reflected this response ($X^2=6.4$; p=<.025).

In contrast, those subjects who expected most to *change* the style of rearing their own children, were likely to be from

single/blended families, and within the older age-group. The following are excerpts from interviews with such subjects.

> "..I hate the way I'm being raised. My mother's been married and divorced three times and I have one sister and two half-brothers. We've moved all over the country, I've never been in a place long enough to make close friends and every time we seem to get settled in somewhere, it's time to move again. I would rather not get married than to do what my mother did and if I were to have any children then I would put them first, I would make sure that they had their emotional needs met."
> (16-year old Californian female with single parent)

> "..I will bring my child up differently because of all the hardships I went through. My mother and father never got along yet they stayed together for a long time before they divorced. I used to escape to my room so I wouldn't hear them fighting, they didnt seem to think how upset I was to see that all the time. Then when they divorced things were better for a while but afterwards, my mother became bitter and said my father wasn't giving us enough money so she had to go out to work, and I was alone at home a lot of the time. When I visit my father, he says my mother expects too much and that he's having a hard time himself and instead of concentrating on me, he mostly bitches about my mother. I can't wait to live on my own, it's no way to raise a kid."
> (15-year old Californian female with single parent)

> "..My mother's got no time for us, my sister and myself. She tries hard and all but she's too tired to be a real mother you know, she works long hours and that and my sister and I have to bring ourselves up. I will be real close to my children, ask them things, find out if

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they're alright and that, give them my
time. That's what kids need, parents who
give their time. My dad died when we were
little kids and my mum refused to marry
again, so we grew up without a dad and
that's not very nice. I think I would
marry again because my kids would need a
dad."
(15-year old Scots female with single
parent)

"..My parents place too much emphasis on
achieving, doing well at school, doing
the American thing. I hate school, and I
hate the way in which they go on at me
for not doing so well. When I have kids
I'll make sure never to bug them about it
but to try and encourage them in things
they do well.'
(15-year old Californian male with both
parents)

"..I would definitely bring my own
children up different to myself, I mean
how I was brought up...because my dad has
to travel all the time and I hardly get
to see him. Even when he's home he's on
the telephone talking business a lot of
the time and he doesn't like to be
disturbed. My mum misses him too but she
supports him and when I complain she says
he's a good father and he provides
well...but I think it needs more than
that."
(16-year old Scots male with both
parents)

However, in support of the majority of responses in this
section, Section C, the general views on rearing a family were
quite traditional, i.e. subjects believed that children should
have the presence of, and the love and care from both parents.
The somewhat contrary finding (albeit slight in this last group
of interview excerpts) that adolescent *females* were notable among
those who anticipated changing the rearing practice of their own

children, makes scrutiny of the responses to be reported in the following section a lot more relevant to the questions, is one's aspiration to raising children based on any perceived tangible differences in being male or female? Also, do adolescents have any clearly felt views about the preferred gender of children, and if so, are these views based on their own experiences as a male or female child?

First, the general questionnaire statements as shown in Group 'D' below.

GROUP 'D' STATEMENTS - preferences for having children.

34 - As an adult I would like to have children of my own
47 - I have no clear idea of the number of children I would like to have
9 - If I were to have only one child I would like a daughter
40 - If I were to have only one child I would like a son

It may be argued that parents-to-be, in the sense of a pregnant woman and her male partner, have a particular vested interest in the imminent arrival of their child. The expectant mother particularly, is interested in her future offspring, for she may said to be supported by strong biological inclinations. But to anticipate children sometime in the future when one is still in the developing years of adolescence, is at best an exercise in make-believe, in playing with hypothetical situations. Preferences, if such exist, may be based upon any number of variables, from transient whims to one's own identification as a son or a daughter.

Therefore, exactly how much importance one may attach to

findings about the adolescent's anticipation of his/her own offspring, depends upon the extent to which such findings reflect acquired learning of parent-child relationships.

To begin with, do adolescents indeed, think of having children? If so, do they have a realistic notion of how many, and of which gender? Is there a preference for males over females, or *vice versa*?

These questions were considered to be important in any attempt to understand more about adolescents' perceptions of parenting.

CHI SQUARE TABLE FOR GROUP 'D' STATEMENTS

	TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	X^2	P
Item 34 - As an adult I would like to have children of my own	835	712 (85%)	28.0	.001
Item 47 - I have no clear idea of the number of children I would like to have	835	475 (57%)	5.6	.025
Item 9 - If I were to have only one child, I would like a daughter	836	401 (48%)	1.6	N.S.
Item 40 - If I were to have only one child, I would like a son	831	555 (67%)	13.6	.001

Let us first examine the extent to which adolescents consider having children. Overall, 85% of the sample indicated they would like to have children some day. 83% of the Californian sample and 89% of the Scots responded that yes, as adults they

would like to have children of their own. With such overwhelming
majorities in both samples, there is little question of
differences in prevailing attitudes in the two cultures (non sig.
diff.) although, by a small overall majority, subjects said they
were unclear about the number of children they expect to have.

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 47
'I have no clear idea of the number of children I would like to
have'

| | MALES | | | FEMALES | |
| Scots | Calif | | Scots | Calif |
N=196	N=254		N=163	N=222
61%	59%		60%	49%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON AGE
FOR ITEM 47

| | AGE GROUP I | | | AGE GROUP II | |
| Scots | Calif | | Scots | Calif |
N=203	N=251		N=156	N=225
62%	53%		37%	55%

Nevertheless, it appears from the gender-based results above
that in California at least, females have more of an idea of how
many children they would like to have (X=4; p=<.05). In terms of
age differences, younger Scots and older (presumably female?)
Californians also indicated the same view.

But if they were to have only the one child?

Here, the overall preference for a son was slightly greater
than for a daughter. More significantly, Scots from BP families

more than SB families tended more towards a son (X^2=4.4.;   p=<.05)

and less towards having a daughter (X^2=5.2; p=.025).

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 40
'If I were to have only one child, I would like a son'

| BOTH PARENTS' GROUP | | SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP | |
| Scots | Calif | Scots | Calif |
N=302	N=255	N=57	N=217
69%	67%	58%	65%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 40

| MALES | | FEMALES | |
| Scots | Calif | Scots | Calif |
N=195	N=252	N=164	N=220
83%	86%	48%	44%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON FAMILY COMP.
FOR ITEM 9
'If I were to have only one child, I would like a daughter'

| BOTH PARENTS' GROUP | | SINGLE/BLENDED GROUP | |
| Scots | Calif | Scots | Calif |
N=303	N=259	N=57	N=217
44%	50%	47%	51%

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 9

| MALES | | FEMALES | |
| Scots | Calif | Scots | Calif |
N=197	N=256	N=163	N=220
36%	36%	55%	68%

In both cultures, overall, males too, indicated preference for a son ($X=15.4$; p=<.001) while females 'chose' a daughter ($\overset{2}{X}=9$; p=<.005).

Interview extracts follow:

ON THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN

"..I would like to have no more than two children because these days one must plan a family so that you get the best standard of living for all. I know in China they are encouraging people to have only one or two per family and they punish them if they have more. I don't think we should do that but I do think having two children is enough."
(16-year old Californian female)

"..one, maybe two at most. I don't want any more than that. I mean there's a good chance that even if I were to get married it wouldn't last very long these days, so you don't want to have too many kids to have to support. Who knows, I may not get married but I would still like to have two children."
(16-year old Californian female)

ON GENDER (DAUGHTER)

"..girls are so cute, they're adorable, I love little girls. You can do so much more with them and take them everywhere without having to worry about them bumping into things and behaving like little boys."
(15-year old Californian female)

"..I must say honestly that I would prefer to have a girl if I could only have one child. I don't dislike the idea of a son but I would prefer to have a girl..I don't know, maybe because I'm one too."
(15-year old Californian female)

"..I have two brothers and a sister and
if I was only allowed to have one child
it would have to be a girl. I'm a
feminist and I believe that having a
daughter would help the next generation
of women have a better deal."
(16-year old Californian Female)

ON GENDER (SON)

"...I have two sisters and no brother, I
guess that's why I would prefer to have a
son when I have children. Seriously, I
think that it's much easier for a man in
this world and I would hate to have a
daughter of mine have to come up against
prejudice against females...I think
things are still against women, I would
want to have a son, he would have better
chances."
(15-year old Scots female)

"..I prefer a son, I think it's much
safer having a son, you don't have to
worry about going out at night and who
you're going to meet. My dad keeps
telling me that I have to be careful and
all because I'm a girl and I say that's
not fair, I can do anything my brother
does but my dad says don't you believe it
and I guess I really know it's true, it
is easier to have a son."
(14-year old Scots female)

Finally, let us turn to a question concerning the
adolescent's perceptions of step-parenting; not whether they
themselves, expect to become step-parents one day, but
specifically, whether step-parents are perceived to be as fond of
their children as are natural parents. Given that there has been
a large increase in divorce and remarriage in both Britain and
the U.S. in recent years, the number of children who have become
step-children has increased in like measure (e.g. Burgoyne and

Clark, 1982; Visher and Visher, 1979). Simply, there are many step children around.

Findings by Visher and Visher, by Kompara (1980), Ganong and Coleman (1983), and Bryan *et al* (1985), have all indicated that there is a societal bias against the concept 'step' - 'step-parents', 'step-father', 'step-mother', and 'step-children'. As discussed in Chapter 1 (*a propos* Bryan *et al*, 1986), the terms *wicked* and *abusive* are readily associated with step-mother and step-fathers.

Is this how adolescents perceive step-parents? Relatively little, if anything, is known about this. It was hoped therefore, that a statement such as the one in the following section would elicit some pertinent information.

GROUP 'E' STATEMENT - concept of step-parents

5 - Step-parents are not as fond of the child as are natural parents

CHI SQUARE TABLE FOR GROUP 'E' STATEMENT ITEM 5
Step-parents are not as fond of the child as are natural parents

TOTAL RESPONSES	AGREEMENT	x^2	P
831	357 (43%)	5.6	.025

% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON CULTURE
FOR ITEM 5

	SCOTS (N=358)	CALIFORNIANS (N=473)
% Agreement	49%	39%

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% DISTRIBUTION OF 'AGREEMENT' RESPONSES BASED ON GENDER
FOR ITEM 5 '
Step-parents are not as fond of the child as are natural parents

| | MALES | | FEMALES | |
	Scots N=195	Calif N=253	Scots N=163	Calif N=220
	54%	44%	42%	33%

While the overall majority of adolescents disagreed with the notion of step-parents not being as fond of their children as natural parents, the above tables also show that a substantial minority *agreed*. Distribution for culture shows that Scottish adolescents were almost equally divided 'for' and 'against' the statement but in California, the majority (61% - 39%) disagreed with it ($X^2=4$; p=.05). However, Scots males agreed more while Californian males disagreed more, whereas among the females groups, while both disagreed more than agreed ($X^2=6.6$; p=<.01) Californian females disagreed much more than the Scots females ($X^2=7.6$; p=<.01). Differences based on age were not significant.

Qualitative differences however, as shown in the excerpts below, may help us to understand something of the reasons behind the perceptions of adolescents for and against the statement.

> "...I have had a step-father for almost
> two years and I'm definitely having a
> harder time with him than with my own
> dad. I see my dad about two or three
> times a year, he lives on the East Coast,
> but he's remarried and he has some step-
> children...I've never really thought
> whether he treats his step children like
> my step-father treats me, I hope not."
> (14-year old Californian)

> "...I think that step-parents can't love
> their children as much, it's not yours
> how can you feel the same for it'?
> (15-year old Scots male)

This oblique reference to 'biological' ties, came up a few times
in the course of the interviews.

> "..step-parents don't try to be mean or
> anything like that, it's just that they
> have to get to know strange kids, not
> their own blood, someone else's and that
> may take a long time or even never, but
> even then; it's hard for them to love the
> kids like they gave birth to them"
> (15-year old Californian female)

> "..Step-fathers are no good..I hate mine
> and most times I can't live in the same
> house as him, I go to my sister who's
> married. He's beaten me, he bad-mouth's
> me in front of everyone..I can't talk
> about it really.."
> (15-year old Californian male)

Finally, given that a slight overall majority were *against*
the statement, i.e. implying a view that step-parents were as
fond of their children as were natural parents, a couple of
excerpts in favour of step-parents.

> "...I think that my step-mother is like a
> real mother to me. I never think of her
> as different, she's my mom, that's it,
> she loves me and my brother like her own"
> (15-year old Californian female)

> "..My brother and I have a step-dad, and
> he's real good to us, we do a lot of
> things together. He was married before
> but had no kids and when he married my
> mum he just became our dad and he's
> great."
> (13-year old Scots male)

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SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS ON ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTING

OVERALL

- subjects were divided equally about whether a child is brought up as well with one as with two parents but felt that preferably, children need two parents to bring them up

A majority of adolescents –

- felt that if only one parent is to bring up the children then it should be the mother and *not* the father

- were of the opinion that a mother on her own can manage a household and family as well as can two parents whereas a father on his own is much less able to do this

- [by 2:1] believed that children without fathers (i.e. to help rear them) do *not* have greater difficulties whereas those without mothers *do*

- [by almost 2:1] believed that women should not go out to work when they have small children

- indicated that they would expect their own children to help around the house

- [by almost 2:1] would like to have children and mostly would expect to bring their own children up in the way in which they were being reared

- would prefer a son if they had only one child

- thought that step-parents are just as fond of their children as are natural parents

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STATEMENT	CULTURAL DIFF.	FAMILY COMP. DIFF.	GENDER DIFF.	AGE DIFF.
2 - A child is brought up as well by one as with two parents	Californians agreed much more	SB agreed	Females agreed much more	None
10 - Children need two parents to bring them up	Scots agreed more Californians disagreed more	BP agreed more	Males agreed more	None
25 - The best person to bring up a child is the father	None	None	Females disagreed more	None
59 - The best person to bring up a child is the mother	Scots agreed more	None	None	None
13 - A mother alone can manage a household and family as well as two parents	Scots agreed more	BP agreed more	Females agreed more Males disagreed more (diff. was greater in Scotland)	None
35 - A father alone can manage a household and family as well as two parents	Californians agreed more	BP disagreed more	Males disagreed more	None
43 - Children without fathers have greater difficulties	Californians disagreed more than did Scots	Scots only: SB disagreed more than BP	Males agreed more Females disagreed more	California only: Older disagreed more than younger
48 - Children without mothers have greater difficulties	Scots agreed more Californians disagreed more	SB agreed more	None	None
7 - Women should not work when they have small children	Scots mostly agreed Calif. most disagreed	None	Males agreed more	None
50 - I think I will bring up my children the way I am being brought up	None	Scots only: BP agreed more	None	Scots only: Younger agree more than older

[TABLE CONTINUES NEXT PAGE]

QUALITATIVE SUMMARY TABLE OF *SIGNIFICANT* FINDINGS ON ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF PARENTING

STATEMENT	CULTURAL DIFF.	FAMILY COMP. DIFF.	GENDER DIFF.	AGE DIFF.
47 - I have no clear idea of the number of children I would like to have	None	None	Calif. only: Males agreed more	Younger Scots and older Californians agreed more
40 - If I were to have only one child I would like a son	None	Scots only: BP agreed more than SB	Males agreed more Females disagreed more	None
9 - If I were to have only one child I would like a daughter	None	Scots only: BP disagreed more	Females agreed more	None
5 - Step-parents are not as fond of the child as are natural parents	Californians disagreed more than did Scots	None	Males agreed more. Females disagreed more, especially in California	None

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CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUDING SUMMARY

Although the world is never directly 'knowable' and cannot empirically present itself in the way that the ethnographic account seems sometimes to suggest, it must nevertheless be specifically registered somewhere, albeit in theory. But if theory pretends to any relevance at all, then theories must be judged ultimately for the adequacy they display to the understanding of the phenomenon they purport to explain - not to themselves. This study with its myriad faults inherent in studies of a phenomenological nature, nevertheless, has attempted to take the advantages still offered by a qualitative methodology, while presenting its findings in qualitative <u>and</u> quantitative terms, to respond both descriptively and numerically to a real and complex aspect of social existence.

Primarily, this study was not so much concerned with *describing adolescence* as with addressing some specific questions associated with the adolescent's *perceptions* of marriage and divorce, of the family, and of parenting. Inevitably however, in pursuing this, it was at times first necessary to understand the 'nature' of that period of transition from childhood to adulthood which we, in western societies, refer to as *adolescence*. In so doing, a number of things became clear.

For instance, while adolescence is often reported in terms synonymous with conflict, rebellion, and distress (e.g. Hall, 1904; Freud, 1966), this view is not without its challengers.

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Thornburg (1971) writes: "Where are the tensions, the crises, the muddled, befuddled, struggling, exasperating personalities, lurching spasmodically through the teen years? When we contemplate the systematic empirical literature, we find that adolescents really don't go through all that" (p.3). Indeed, in the present study, the overriding impression of the adolescents who took part was that they were quiet, sober-minded, and contemplative - not only of the issues under discussion but often, also of other contentions.

It became clear too, that if adolescence does indeed, contain stressful periods, one should ask why, i.e. under what circumstances is this so? For example, the Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry (1968) argues that if adolescence is stressful, it is not because of biological changes, which are universal, but because of particular kinds of pressures and demands on the adolescent, which vary cross-culturally.

The cross-cultural study reported in this thesis did not set out to investigate adolescent stress or the pressures which give rise to this. However, it *did* attempt, in a simple, yet systematic way, to understand something more about how adolescents perceive their world, whether or not they think to the future, to marriage and a family. The study attempted to inquire into the adolescent's perceptions of parenting, of peer-group versus family affiliations, of gender roles and of individual versus societal expectations in each of these areas.

The study was undertaken within a cross-cultural framework so that comparisons in perception could be made not only in terms of an adolescent's individual socialisation but also the extent to which this was influenced by the inherent constituents of the adolescent's cultural milieu.

Of course, some may argue that responses elicited from a sample of adolescents about their experiences and their expectations may not necessarily provide definitive answers about the nature and significance of perceptions in the general population of adolescents. While this may be so, there is nevertheless, much of value to be obtained, for such an exercise can provide a sufficiently clear picture of how certain aspects of life are experienced by individual adolescents and those who form specific cultural and sub-cultural groups.

It was well understood that there is an inherent problem in survey studies such as this, in that what a person *says* or *claims* is not necessarily what is actually *done*.

Yet, when large numbers of adolescents respond to a series of questions in the same way, and when many of these responses are confirmed not only by subsequent one-to-one discussion but also by what is sometimes clearly evident in the adolescent's particular society, then at very least, a certain credence must be given to that which is said or claimed.

It is a truism that societies themselves differ to a lesser or greater extent, influenced greatly by the larger cultural

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background against which one society's different structure, and its set values, may be compared with another.

A useful metaphor here is Simmel's concept of 'Social Webs'. Simply, the metaphor suggests that in the course of ontogenetic development a person's individuality is determined by a web of circumstances, beginning with "..whom the accident of birth has placed next to him ".

The metaphor of 'social webs' implies that in the course of the socialisation process, the individual is somehow inherently 'caught up' and cannot escape whatever it is that society dishes out. But given that influences are exerted from many directions, not least of all from within one's own family, it was considered appropriate in this study, to incorporate into the symbol of a web, that of 'family nets', i.e. the influence upon one's social development of close coexistence with one's family.

It cannot be disputed that the family does indeed exert a strong influence on an adolescent's perception, either by direct didatic interaction between parent and child, and/or by a more indirect and passive influence based on the structure or composition of the immediate family itself. However, in the last decade or so,earlier views which espoused the notion of the "isolated" nuclear family have been challenged.

Leach (1968) forcefully argued against the myth of the so-called isolated domestic household. Leach's views is that the family "looks inward upon itself; there is an intensification of

emotional stress between husband and wife, parents and children. The strain is greater than most of us can bear. Far from being the basis of a good society, the family with all its tawdry secrets and narrow privacy is the source of all discontents."

Lasch (1971) argued that this isolation,both from the kinship system and the world of work had been taken for granted. It assumed that such an isolation made the family impervious to outside influences. Mitchell (1970) too, points to the belief in the family's provision of an impregnable enclave (of the intimacy and serenity in an atomized and chaotic cosmos) as having assumed the absurd - that the family can be isolated from the community and that its internal relationships will not reproduce in their own terms the other external relationships which dominate the society.

Indeed, Lasch (op cit) underlines this by proclaiming "the sanctity of the home" a sham, in a world "dominated by giant corporations and by the apparatus of mass production". (p.xvii) But other factors too, operate and exert their influence. For example, once again it may be pointed out that peer-group influences are great and are alike for both males and females. As the adolescent "John" in Willis' (1977) book *Learning to Labour* says in the post-study discussion with the investigator, "When you're with your mates everybody changes..." (p 196)

The various findings in this study have shown, and will again be summarised and discussed against specific determinants

as detailed in the hypothesis that adolescents from whole or 'intact' families often have markedly different perceptions and expectations about marriage, parenting, and family, than adolescents from blended or reconstituted families.

For example, it was reported that adolescents from single-blended families agreed about 2:1 (than those from both-parent families) that they would not like their marriage to be like their parents' marriage.

Additionally, the greater proportion of adolescents who indicated that the happiest times they spent were with their families were those from both-parent families. This group was also more of the opinion that life is happier for children with sisters or brothers.

Again, marked differences between adolescents from single-blended and both-parent families were elicited in their responses to whether or not children should always put their parents' wishes first. Here, as reported in earlier pages, the most obvious differences were in California, where adolescents from single-blended families much more emphatically than those from 'intact' families, indicated that parents wishes should *not* be put first.

Certain perceptions about parenting too, were markedly differentiated in terms of responses based on family composition. For instance, adolescents from SB families were much more of the view that children were brought up as well by one parent as by

two parents. Those from both-parent families were largely of the opposite view.

The findings have further shown that in a society where the incidence of divorce and remarriage is comparatively greater - as indicated in the results obtained from the Californian sample, then the likelihood of an adolescent being part of a blended family increases proportionally. In this way it may be argued, that the generally prevailing circumstance of marriage in a given culture impinges upon the adolescent's perception of marriage as mediated by his/her family. In the following pages, these issues will be discussed in terms of the specific parameters governing family life.

Descriptions of adolescent perceptions and expectations can be examined from at least three different perspectives: (1) the *content* (concerns, issues) of adolescent experience, (2) the *structures* (ways of knowing) that adolescents bring to their experiences, and (3) the *function* of an adolescent period for society.

As a preamble to the discussion of findings in this study, we may begin with the last of these three perspectives and answer the question, what is to be gained in acquiring information of the kind obtained here? To simply reply that hitherto, very little of such information had been available would not adequately answer the question.

Instead, it is more meaningful to think in terms of the

significance of adolescence, i.e. that the existence of an adolescent period is as important to the growth of humankind as it is to the growth of the individual. Indeed, some go so far as to suggest that in cultures in which there is no adolescent period there is little change over the years, either in individuals or in the societies to which they belong (While and Speisman, 1977).

Whether or not this is so does not detract from the fact that - in western societies at least - adolescents, on the threshold of adulthood, both reflect society's values and mores and are poised to change them. Consequently, any steps taken toward an understanding of the *adolescent's* perceptions may be seen to be taken toward a greater understanding of society.

Further, in so far as the family, no matter how it is defined- whether as a 'household,'conjugal,extended or whatever, although contraversial - and is still considered to be one of the most important 'determinants' of societal change, this study of adolescent perceptions, with its specific questions on family interaction, marriage, and divorce may be seen as having contributed positively to the field of adolescence; and by so doing, added another building block to our on-going construction of appropriate frameworks within which the study of family sociology may continue.

Let us now turn to the discussion of findings in this study. For the sake of greater clarity, the findings will be discussed

specifically within each of the four areas, i.e. adolescents'
perceptions and expectations of marriage, divorce, the family,
and parenting.However,to more fully understand the conclusions
drawn it is more meaningful to compare that which was expected
with that which was found. Consequently it is necessary to re-
visit the hypothesis.

THE HYPOTHESES REVISITED

It was hypothesised that adolescent perceptions of Marriage,
Divorce, Parenting and the Family would vary significantly
between Scots and Californians and that the significant
differences in perception between the two cultural groups would
be a direct function of their cultural milieu. In some areas the
findings clearly bore this out while in other areas the results
were less conclusive. We may now turn to each of the four areas.

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Specifically, it was hypothesised that adolescents' perceptions of marriage would vary significantly between Scots and Californians, where Scots would profess more 'traditional' perceptions and expectations, i.e. that it is more important to be married before having a family. Also, that the nature of the family's composition (nuclear, single-parent, blended), *would* exert a significant influence on the adolescent's perception and expectation of marriage. That gender differences too, especially influenced by the adolescent's specific cultural milieu, would clearly differentiate between male and female perceptions. Finally, that differences in perceptions of marriage would be further differentiated by age, where younger subjects (12-14 years old) would have markedly different views compared with the 15-16 year olds.

The assumption of many experts in family studies is that value orientations attached to marriage and the motivation to marry are products of socialisation in the parental family (Hill and Aldous, 1969; Stinnet, 1969). Childhood family experiences are thought to provide the foundations for an individual's expectations, attitudes, and behaviours with respect to courtship, and marriage.

Research support for these assumptions is limited but lends credence to the idea that the parents' marital relationship does indeed, affect their children's expectations with respect to

marriage.

While this may be so, there are still more fundamental questions, which may be put as follows: If, in fact, marriage perceptions and images are presented and reinforced by parental models, what is the effect on children whose exposure to these models is discontinued due to separation, death, or divorce. Further, what is the impact on marital socialisation among children who live in reconstituted families and thus have been intimately exposed to two patterns of parental marriage?

Within the framework of the present study, these were important questions to consider. Some answers are to be found in the results of the study undertaken by Gonong *et al* (1981) on the effect of family structure on marital attitudes of adolescents.

Their general conclusions were that adolescents from intact families were more favourably disposed towards marriage than were adolescents from single/blended families. To some extent, these findings have been supported in the present study. However, it is necessary to qualify the degree of parental influence. For instance, while by a majority of about 3:1 adolescents indicated that they did indeed, get most of their ideas on marriage from their parents and family, responses were equally divided about having similar marriages to their parents.

This division of opinion was culturally influenced, i.e. Scots mostly hoped their marriages would be like their parents; Californians on the whole, hoped theirs would not. However,

given that a vast majority affirmed their expectations to marry someday - and that they would be unhappy if they did not - makes it very clear that the *notion* of marriage, at least, is still very much alive. This finding supports that of Patterson (1981) who, it may be recalled from earlier pages, found that most of the adolescents in his study also indicated that they expected to get married some day.

Of course, as previously discussed, in Britain as well as America, the tendency for people to marry , is still very much the norm today, and the overall finding in the present study that marriage is *not* considered old-fashioned may be seen to support the *status quo*.

Most adolescents also indicated that they perceived romantic love to be the best basis for marriage, and that for them marriage would last a lifetime. However, family composition appears to influence this latter view.

For instance, while adolescents from both-parent families were of this opinion, others, from single/blended familes, were not. Yet, in the event of a second-marriage, certain views expressed in the interviews were that such marriages were not necessarily unhappy simply because they were second-marriages. Culturally speaking though, Scots were less sure about this as were children from both-parent families.

As far as the idea of romantic love is concerned, in psychosocial terms, the adolescent may be seen to be more

'primed' than anyone else, to this perception. According to Piaget (1968), Erikson (1968) and other developmental and social psychologists, the *idea* of romance involves a good deal of mental playing with the possible (i.e. the projection of an ideal onto a real being), and a dramatic concern with love *per se*. Therefore, it was not surprising that a majority of adolescents in both cultures, regardless of gender, age, or family composition differences, reflected the view concerning the importance of romantic love as a basis for marriage.

Yet, while this may be so, the perception of marriage itself, if not actually placed behind, at very least, shared 'honours' with that of a career, for mostly adolescents were of the view that they would not put marriage ahead of their careers.

Again, according to psychosocial scientific thinking (e.g. Inhelder and Piaget, 1958), the climax of adolescent development comes with the young person's commitment to a vocation. Yet, the influence of one's family composition may also be considered. For instance, in both cultures, adolescents from single/blended families were more sure that marriage would not be put ahead of careers and we can simply reiterate the question put earlier, could this be interpreted as a greater *reluctance* towards marriage on the part of such adolescents – based upon their own family experience – as opposed to any particularly propitious tendency towards a career?

Nonetheless, females were especially emphatic in indicating

that marriage (compared with a career) would not be more important an aim in life, although this does not necessarily mean that a *career* would be more important. Both may be equally important. Here a small point may be worth noting. In Chapter One, reference was made to McRobbie's (1982) study on an ideology of adolescent femininity as depicted in the teenage magazine *Jackie*. McRobbie concluded that "romance problems,beauty and pop mark out the limits of the girls'concern - other possibilities are ignored or dismissed".(p.281) The findings in the current study indicate that female adolescents are open to the subjects of careers as much, if not more, than that of romance and marriage.

As to the question of children, the majority of adolescents indicated that they would have children even if they did not marry. Again, this was a widespread view and not differentially influenced by one's culture for in both, Scotland and California, the majority view was more than 2:1. In the absence of other relevant information in the literature on adolescents' perceptions, one can only assume that in indicating as they did about their views on having children, those who took part in the study, strongly indicated a continuance in the future of the *importance* of having children.

We may conclude this discussion and summary on adolescents' perceptions and expectations of marriage by referring to what was

expected at the outset of this study - a *propos* cultural differences and those based upon family composition, gender, and age.

It was expected that given such an obvious difference between the two cultures in regard to marriage and divorce statistics, and the consequent fact that many more adolescents in California than in Scotland would be members of 'blended' families, that perceptions of marriage would be markedly different. In fact, this was not so, and in more cases than not, adolescents in both cultures were remarkably similar in their outlook. Rather, the more obvious differences in responses to the various issues of marriage investigated, were based on family composition differences, common to both cultures.

Here, specifically, adolescents from single/blended families were less 'traditional' and 'conservative' in their views and more realistic in their expectations than were adolescents from both-parent families. A major consequence then - specifically when children are involved - of marriages ending in divorce, and/or of marriages resulting in the blending of families, is that the children of such family compositions develop a 'world view' that is particularly influenced by their unique *family experience* ("..the family set apart from the world", Leonard, 1980, p.19) and less so by any larger *cultural* composition.

(2). The Hypotheses Revisited : ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF DIVORCE.

Specifically, it was hypothesised that adolescents' perceptions of divorce and remarriage would vary significantly between Scots and Californians, where the latter would more readily accept divorce and remarriage as a 'normal' way of life, and be directly influenced by their specific cultural milieu. Additionally, that within both cultures the nature of one's family composition (nuclear, etc.,) would exert a significant influence on perceptions and expectations concerning divorce.

It was also hypothesised that gender would more markedly differentiate the Scots and Californians perceptions of divorce. Specifically, the Scottish perceptions would be contingent upon their more traditional views whereas Californian perceptions would be contingent upon their greater egalitarian outlook.

Finally, it was hypothesised that one's age would differentiate perceptions and expectations of divorce where younger adolescents (12-14 years old) - more affected by recent trends in divorce and remarriage - would perceive these as more *commonplace.*

In Chapter One, the recent trends in divorce and remarriage were discussed to indicate that while these trends have shown a dramatic increase in the past decade or so in Britain and the U.S.A, they have been particularly dramatic in California. Of course, there has been a longer history of divorce in California

but comparison with Scottish statistics shows that while the figures themselves are lower than those for California the rate of increase in recent years has been very similar.

One purpose of this study was to investigate the extent to which these changing cultural patterns of divorce (often resulting in remarriage and the blending of families) impinge upon the perceptions of adolescents. The study was not concerned with any attempt to gather such information in order to make predictions about the future behaviour of adolescents in regard to divorce and remarriage. This implies a longitudinal paradigm well outside the range of a study such as that undertaken here.

Nevertheless, the cross-cultural design of the study was very useful in eliciting some clear views on divorce. For instance, in spite of the fact that a not insignificant number of adolescents were children of divorced parents (especially in California) the majority of all who took part in the study indicated that they did not expect their own marriages to end in divorce. Surprisingly, the expected cultural difference was not significantly apparent. Rather, and not so surprisingly, children from single/blended families in both cultures were less sure, thus reflecting their attitudes to marriage noted above.

Mostly. cultural, family composition, gender and age differences in the perception of divorce were not differentiated so much in terms of 'for' or 'against' the specified items but rather, in the degree to which these views were expressed.

For example, while the majority view was that when there are problems, divorce is the best solution for a couple without children, Scots agreed much more. Again, while the sample's overall opinion was that people who marry young are more likely to divorce, Scots agreed much more. Indeed, Scots also agreed much more that divorce should be easier to obtain whereas, here, Californian adolescents were not so sure about this. On the other hand, females much more than males - and within the 'female only' group, those in Scotland more so than their peers in California - were of this opinion.

This gender-based finding is very interesting for it indicates that somehow, divorce rates and the changing status of women in society are impinging upon the young, female adolescent's perception. Thornes and Collard (1979) report that the upward trend in the divorce statistics has been considered by some observers in terms of the effect of women's 'emancipation', i.e. the more freedom women gain, the less willing they become to accept an unsatisfactory marriage. As their economic status improves, they have a real alternative to continuing with an unhappy marriage. But what if children are involved?

Here, the cultural difference between the two samples' responses was more marked, with Scots mostly indicating that parents (with problems) should stay together for the sake of the children and Californians indicating they should not. This cultural division in perception also extended to the findings

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based on family composition and gender. Specifically, Scots from
Both-Parent families felt that parents should stay together.
Californians from Single-Parent families felt parents should not;
males in Scotland said 'yes' stay together, females in California
said 'no'.

Therefore, we may conclude that culture has a greater
influence on adolescents' perceptions and expectations of divorce
than it did on marriage, where it was noted, the effect of one's
family composition was more pronounced. Simply, while the young
people who took part in this study indicated and expressed views
on marriage that were perhaps 'more idealistic' in nature, their
views on divorce were undoubtedly influenced to a noticeable
extent by their specific cultural milieu.

More specifically, this finding confirms in part at least,
the expectations stated in the hypothesis, namely, that the
nature of the family composition would, within the specific
cultural milieu, exert a significant influence on the
adolescent's perceptions of divorce.

Here, we may equate the significantly greater incidence of
divorce among the families of the Californian sample to their
greater familiarity with the concept of divorce. In other words,
while 'marriage' itself is equally a familiar concept in both
cultures, the idea of divorce on the other hand is much more a
common occurrence in the world of the Californian adolescent than
it is for the Scots adolescent, and, judging from the findings,
did influence their perceptions.

It was hypothesised that adolescent perceptions of the family would vary significantly between Scots and Californians and that these differences would be a direct function of culture. Specifically, it was held that Scots would profess more traditional views on roles within the family and would see the husband/father in more significant terms. Californians, on the other hand, would have more egalitarian views on family dynamics.

Additionally, it was hypothesised that the nature of family composition would influence perceptions and expectations of the family. Finally, that both gender and age variables would also differentially influence perceptions of the family.

In earlier pages it was suggested that a useful approach to an understanding of adolescents' perceptions and expectations of 'the family' was to begin with an evaluation of what constitutes a family.

To reiterate, surprisingly, in spite of a not insubstantial number of adolescents themselves being a part of single/blended families the overall perception, regardless of culture, family composition, gender or age, was that of the 'traditional' nuclear family - two parents with children.

When asked to respond to the concept of a 'happy family', the statement contained two implicit questions, one concerned with the extent to which happy families were seen as those within

which no arguments occured, and another with whether or not the happy family was one where its various members provided the basis and support for the discussion and resolution of personal problems.

A majority of adolescents from both Scotland and California did not accept that a lack of family arguments necessarily indicated a happy family. The overall perception was realistic enough in understanding that all families, the happy and the unhappy alike, have arguments at some time or another.

More important were the findings concerning the family as a support network. The subjects were asked whether families were people on whom they could depend for help in a crisis or, to whom they could go to discuss a personal problem. An overwhelming number of adolescents in both cultures said yes, indeed, families were the first they would turn to for help and as such, this finding confirmed those of earlier studies (Siann et al, 1982: Hoyt and Babchuck, 1983).

However - and in Scotland only - adolescents from families with both (natural) parents were less likely to seek help within the family than were those who lived with a single parent, or were part of a blended or reconstituted home.

A question concerning the necessity for children before the definition of 'a family' could be applied, elicited responses which showed that in both cultures, adolescents perceived that childless couples are still a family and so too, are single

parents with children. However, this was a cultural difference for while Scots (specifically females) agreed more with the 'family' status of childless couple. Californians were much more emphatic about perceiving single parents with children as 'a family'.

Relationships with siblings, whether true siblings, step-siblings, or half-siblings were also very much a part of the adolescent's perception of family life.

For most of those who took part in the study, life was considered to be happier if they had sisters and/or brothers, although this feeling was significantly greater among adolescents from Both-Parent families in Scotland than in California. Wright and Keple (1981) found that adolescents indicated stronger and more rewarding relationships with friends of either sex than with parents. But these investigators did not enquire into sibling relationships against those with friends and it may very well be that where adolescents have brothers and sisters, and especially where their relationships with their brothers and sisters are good, then these turn out to be perceived as more rewarding than relationships with friends.

This is not to suggest that adolescents only form strong and meaningful relationships with their friends if they lack the same kind of relationships at home. There is much written about this subject to strongly suggest that peer-group relationships are an important and integral part of adolescent development and in this

study too, that much was revealed.

The finding however, also showed that while more subjects reported spending a greater amount of time with their friends, the quality of time spent with friends and with family was considered equally good. However, adolescents from Both-Parent families more than those from Single/Blended families did indicate that the happiest times they spent were with their families.

The division of labour in the home forms an important part of adolescent perceptions of family life. Parents generally expect their children to assist in the necessary activities around running a home and consequently, the whole business of household chores often becomes a basis for conflict between parents and children.

In this study it was found that while there was a certain degree of disagreement as to whether or not children should be expected to help around the house, the majority of subjects from both cultures agreed that as children they should help.

The overall finding is similar to that by Hansen et al (1985), who investigated adolescent attitudes to division of labour in the home, and with responses from a total sample of 893 young people aged between 11 and 16 concluded that adolescents' attitudes were still traditional. Certainly, if one refers to some of the interview excerpts in this study it will be found that while there were some variations, what emerged was that

helping around the home was considered by many adolescents to be an essential part of family life.

Many, and especially those who were themselves part of 'intact' families, were of the view that children from single-parent families have greater problems. In contrast, adolescents from such families, especially in California did not think so, although some concurred that because their parents had their own problems, they (the children) were more likely to keep their own problems to themselves and not add to the burden. In this regard they felt that their parents' generation was not very good at understanding young people.

In their perceptions of gender roles, and specifically as these relate to the family "hierarchy", to housework and the management of finances, adolescents were mostly in agreement that when there are two parents in a family, the division of labour (both within and outwith the home) and the handling of money should be based on an egalitarian foundation.

Scots were slightly more in agreement with the 'traditional' role of the male, the husband, as the head of the family (the 'boss') and as being the best person to handle or manage the finances. Females, in both cultures, emphatically disagreed.

Indeed, we may conclude with reference to the Scots' perceptions of the family and gender roles as generally, more 'traditional' and, it appears, influenced more by the perceptions of those from 'intact', i.e. both-parent families.

Specifically, it was hypothesised that perceptions of
parenting would vary significantly between Scots and
Californians, where the former would view parenting in more
traditional terms and the latter would view parenting in more
egalitarian terms. Also that the nature of one's family
composition would influence perceptions and expectations of
parenting. Additionally, that gender and age differences would
directly influence perceptions of parenting.

A considerable amount of research has been undertaken on
adolescent-parent relations (e.g. Offer et al. 1981; Richardson
et al,1984). However, to reiterate earlier comments, almost
nothing of any significance is known about how adolescents
themselves, perceive parenting.

An understanding of the socialisation process and the
family's role in it requires at least, an understanding of how
the 'parental role' is perceived. In the socialisation process,
parents are said to serve as both, educational models and
definers (Cohen, 1987), and to exert a considerable influence
over adolescents, expecially in the occupational amd educational
areas of life (Smith, 1970). Indeed, so important is this
influence said to be, that some scholars in the field of
Adolescence have maintained that inadequate parenting results in
children running away from home (Wolk and Branden, 1977), low

empathy and lack of positive regard on the part of offspring (Spillane-Grieco, 1984), abuse of drugs (Roberts, 1981), and so on.

Elkind (1968) suggested that as part of their preoccupation with elaborate thinking and hypothesising, adolescents often belittle the way in which their parents do things. Yet, a good deal of the adolescent's apparently passionate concern with the deficiencies of the parents, often turns out to be primarily verbal, more a matter of word than deed and identification with parents is considered to be a very important aspect of the socialisation of the young.

In their responses to the various statements associated with parenting, the adolescents of this study have shown how they perceive parenting. While, as previously discussed there were some culturally influenced differences in their perceptions, and others based on family composition, gender and age variables, the most noticable finding was that regardless of such differences adolescents in the two cultures mostly agreed rather than disagreed on most of the issues on parenting. Nevertheless, the differences were sufficiently numerous to indicate that culture, and perhaps the consequent differences in family composition, do exert noticeable influences.

The overriding finding here, is that Scots were more 'traditional' in their views on parenting than were Californians, e.g. that children need two parents to bring them

up and specifically, in terms of roles, that the mother is more
important, that women should not work when they have small
children. Family composition influences were most obvious in the
extent to which adolescents from both-parent families agreed that
two parents are essential to raise children but that a mother
(and not a father) alone can raise them as well as two parents.
On the other hand, adolescents from single and blended
families disagreed with both notions.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

Of considerable interest to "systematic sociologists" (Wolff, 1959) is the differentiation between the family as a web of concrete interactions (*a la* Simmel), "..some of which can ordinarily be known only to the family members themselves", and the family as an abstract collectivity, "..often more readily perceivable by outsiders than by its own members" (*ibid*; p.228).

Essentially, webs of interactions are bonds and links through which the individual in the family - in this case the adolescent - relates to other family members.

The Simmelian concepts of the 'dyad' encompasses the notion that within the two-way interaction that takes place in any paired link in the family (e.g. father-son, mother-daughter, husband-wife, brother-sister), individual as well as group perceptions are moulded. In the ensuing family dynamic, any one dyad may be singled out as the most important in a particular context or within a specified framework.

For example, Bell (1968) postulated that "..the father-son link is structurally important in the middle-class extended family because through it flows aid to the elementary family" (p.231 in Anderson, 1980).

But, it has variously, already been discussed that 'perceptions' of the world are as much influenced by the 'outside world' as from within the family itself. If one experiences something , like the break-up of the parents' marriage for

instance, then this first-hand experience serves further to mould any existing perceptions of divorce derived from observations of one's general social milieu. As Gillis (1974) succinctly puts it, "..youth makes its own history, a history linked with and yet analytically separable from that of the family" (p.ix).

However, whether or not youth does indeed make its own history, it is important for us to allow that within that group referred to as 'youth', there are a collection of individuals, each with a point of view, although encompassing much that is in common with the views of other individuals.

Therefore, in the context of the present study, while it is possible to make certain generalised statements concerning *Californian* adolescents and *Scots* adolescents within each of the cultures represented, we cannot allude to the 'typical' adolescent, whether young or old, whether having one parent or both, whether male or female. Indeed, for example, Griffin (1985) argues that there is no such thing as a *typical* female.

The stated, and often repeated, aim of this study was a simple one: To investigate what young people thought about marriage and divorce, about the family and parenting. But often, as is the case, simple endevours such as this, in fact turn over some very complex issues. Here, specifically, it is clear that one cannot enquire into any one of these four areas without the issues of any area impinging upon all of the others.

Therefore, one has to be cautious in drawing specific

conclusions or in making definitive statements. Nevertheless, a number of cultural differences *have* been elicited and these have been discussed in preceding pages.

It has been suggested that the nature of the cultural difference - specifically in terms of family composition influences - underscores differences in perception and expectations. To state that there is still much to be discovered and ample scope for further research in the areas investigated here would be a gross understatement. There are many questions left unanswered. How, for instance, adolescents actually *formulate* their perceptions on marriage and divorce, on the family and parenting, is but one among a host of areas in which available information is negligible. Yet, as a step towards a greater awareness of adolescent perceptions the views, as expressed by the 841 main study and the 40 interview subjects may help us to understand a little more about how young people think.

It is clearly apparent that adolescents, as part of society, are set to act upon those changes which, paradoxically, are constant and always present in any dynamic society.

Final Observations

It is appropriate here to enter some final observations of the nature and methodological approaches to this study. The first and most heartfelt view is that the study was over-ambitious and far too complex an undertaking for a single person with limited resources. The sheer size of the sample alone - given the nature of the analysis performed, was more suited to say, a team of workers within a Survey Research Centre than a lone Doctoral candidate.

No one piece of research can be all-encompassing and inevitably, certain areas of investigation are omitted, which, later on, are deemed to have been important for inclusion. For example, in this study, while it was argued that for mainly logistical reasons the sample was primarily homogenous in terms of 'class', a future investigation would evaluate the importance of socio-economic differences along more homogenous lines, so that the dynamics of a household could more appropriately be interpreted within the framework of such parameters.

Another *post hoc* observation concerns the nature of the questions asked. For instance, instead of, or perhaps in addition to the open-ended statements used to elicit responses here, future studies of this kind may focus more specifically on questions pertaining to relationships within households, between individuals, across generations, and between households. For example, where a couple with children divorce and each partner

remarries and has other children, ' what is the ensuing relationship between these two newly-constituted households and the various offspring?

Also, future studies may address issues on 'perceptions of sexuality', of one's self, of one's gender group, of one's role models. As indicated in the methodology section in earlier pages, the exclusion of questions concerning 'sexual' matters and/or perceptions was determined to a large extent by the (Californian) school's policy on what could and could not be asked of pupils. Consequently, 'playing it safe' was deemed more prudent than not being given permission to play at all!

Finally, while the inclusion of quantitative data and analysis may be seen to lend weight to a developing arguement on a particular finding, given the nature of a phenomenological study (albeit with its own limitations) a future investigation of this kind would not only attempt, as it were, to paint a greater qualitative 'picture' but also to do so within a more reliable *in vivo* context of the subject's own household rather then the limited strictures of school with its concommitant problems of time-tables and regulations.

In brief then, a suggestion for future studies on adolescents' perceptions of family, parenting, marriage and divorce is that they concentrate on more detailed information - even if obtained from smaller numbers rather than a not too deep investigation of many. It is, nevertheless, hoped that the

various insights derived in this study, will have contributed
positively to the ever growing pool of sociological knowledge.

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APPENDICES

Sentence-completion blank used to generate questions
for the Pilot Study

1. BY SOCIETY I MEAN.._____

_____

2. GENERALLY YOUNG PEOPLE OF MY AGE THINK OF MARRIAGE AS_____

_____

3. WHEN I GET MARRIED I WILL EXPECT MY PARTNER TO_____

_____

4. (A) FAMILIES ARE IMPORTANT BECAUSE_____

_____

   (B) FAMILIES ARE NOT IMPORTANT BECAUSE_____

_____

5. (A) I THINK THAT MARRIAGES SHOULD LAST FOREVER BECAUSE_____

_____

   (B) I DO NOT THINK THAT MARRIAGES SHOULD LAST FOREVER BECAUSE_____

_____

6. THE BEST THING I EXPECT FROM MY PARTNER WHEN I GET MARRIED IS_____

_____

7. THE MOST IMPORTANT MEMBER OF THE FAMILY IS_____BECAUSE_____

_____

8. (A) CHILDREN SHOULD BE BROUGHT UP MAINLY BY THEIR MOTHER BECAUSE____

_____

   (B) CHILDREN SHOULD BE BROUGHT UP MAINLY BY THEIR FATHER BECAUSE____

_____

9.. IF I HAVE CHILDREN THE MOST IMPORTANT THING I WILL TELL THEM ABOUT

MARRIAGE IS_____

10. THE BEST AGE FOR ANYONE TO GET MARRIED IS:MEN_____WOMEN:_____

11. WHEN SOMEONE HAS PROBLEMS WITH THE FAMILY THE BEST PERSON TO TALK TO

ABOUT IT IS_____BECAUSE_____

12. THE WORSE THING I EXPECT FROM MY PARTNER WHEN I GET MARRIED IS_____
_____

13. THE BIGGEST WAY IN WHICH MARRIAGE HAS CHANGED IS_____
_____

14. (A) MOST PEOPLE ARE HAPPY IN THEIR MARRIAGE BECAUSE_____
_____

(B) MOST PEOPLE ARE NOT HAPPY IN THEIR MARRIAGE BECAUSE_____
_____

15. A FAMILY IS NOT A FAMILY WHEN_____

16. (A) PEOPLE WHO GET MARRIED HAVE CERTAIN RESPONSIBILITIES:THESE ARE_
_____

(B) PEOPLE WHO GET MARRIED ARE ONLY RESPONSIBLE TO THEMSELVES BECAU
_____

17. A FAMILY IS NOT PART OF SOCIETY WHEN_____
_____

18. (A) PEOPLE SHOULD GET MARRIED BECAUSE_____
_____

(B) PEOPLE SHOULD NOT GET MARRIED BECAUSE_____
_____

19. (A) PEOPLE WHO MARRY SHOULD HAVE CHILDREN BECAUSE_____
_____

(B) PEOPLE WHO MARRY SHOULD NOT HAVE CHILDREN BECAUSE_____
_____

20. FAMILIES WITHOUT FATHERS HAVE DIFFICULTIES IN_____
_____

21. FAMILIES HAVE A RIGHT TO EXPECT OLDER CHILDREN TO_____
_____

22. THE WAY IN WHICH MOST PEOPLE THINK OF MARRIAGE IS_____
_____

23. FAMILIES HAVE A RIGHT TO EXPECT YOUNGER CHILDREN TO_____
_____

24. FAMILIES WITHOUT MOTHERS HAVE DIFFICULTIES IN_____

_____

25. WHAT I WOULD LIKE MOST FROM MARRIAGE IS_____.

26. A FAMILY IS PART OF SOCIETY BECAUSE_____

_____

27. BY FAMILY I MEAN_____

28. THE BIGGEST WAY IN WHICH FAMILIES HAVE CHANGED IS_____

_____

29. THE WAY IN WHICH I THINK OF MARRIAGE IS_____.

_____

30. IF I GET MARRIED THEN I EXPECT MY MAIN WORK WILL BE_____

_____

31. THE WAY IN WHICH I THINK OF A FAMILY IS_____

_____

32. DIFFICULT MARRIAGES ARE THOSE IN WHICH_____

_____

33. IN THE FAMILY IT IS IMPORTANT FOR MOTHERS TO_____

_____

34. (A) DIFFICULT MARRIAGES SHOULD END IN DIVORCE BECAUSE_____

_____

(B) DIFFICULT MARRIAGES SHOULD NOT END IN DIVORCE BECAUSE_____

_____

35. CHILDREN'S IDEAS OF MARRIAGE COME MAINLY FROM_____

_____

36. THE WAY IN WHICH I THINK OF DIVORCE IS_____

_____

37. PEOPLE WHO SHOULD NOT GET MARRIED ARE_____

_____

38. BY THE TIME I AM READY TO GET MARRIED MOST PEOPLE WILL THINK OF

MARRIAGE AS_____

39. IN THE FAMILY IT IS IMPORTANT FOR FATHERS TO_____

_____

40. A FAMILY IS SUCCESSFUL WHEN_____

_____

41. MARRIAGE HAS CHANGED SINCE MY PARENTS' DAY BECAUSE_____

_____

42. THE WAY TO DEAL WITH AN UNHAPPY MARRIAGE IS_____

_____

43. CHILDREN'S IDEAS OF FAMILIES COME MAINLY FROM_____

_____

I AM_____YEARS OLD.

I AM : MALE/FEMALE.
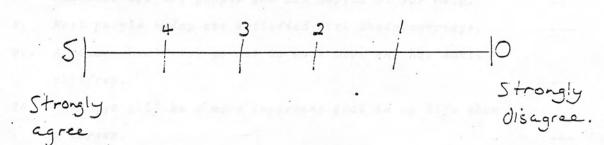
The Pilot Study Questionnaire

Please give each of the following statements a rating between 5 and 0. A mark of 5 will mean that you strongly agree with this statement and a mark of Zero will mean that you strongly disagree with it

5 ———— 4 ———— 3 ———— 2 ———— 1 ———— 0

Strongly agree

Strongly disagree.

1. As an adult I would not like to have children of my own.   -----
2. The happiest times I spend are with my family   ---
3. It is just as good to have one parent bring up children.   ---
4. Divorce should be made easier to obtain.   ---
5. Children's attitudes to marriage is generally ~~the same as~~ *different to* their
    parents.   ---
6. Step-parents are not as fond of the children as the children's
    own parents.   ---
7. Families are not people you can depend on for help.   ---
8. Most people today are satisfied with their marriage.   ---
9.. A woman should not go out to work when she has small
    children.   ---
10. Marriage will be a more important goal in my life than
    a career.   ---
11. Children are influenced in their ideas about marriage
    and divorce by the classes they are taught in school.   ---
12. If I were to have only one child, I would like a daughter.   ---
13. There are more marriages today than there were 20 years ago.   ---
14. Society should offer more advice to people about marriage
    and divorce.   ---
15. Children need two parents to bring them up.   ---
16. People who marry for the second time are usually
    more unhappy.   ---
17 Step-parents are just as fond of the children as the
    children's own parents.   ---
18. Our main responsibilities and loyalties should be to
    our family.   ---
19. A mother alone can manage a household and family just
    as well as two parents.   ---

20. Men should be the only ones who go out to work. ---
21. I would not like my own marriage to be like my parents. ---
22. Children of my age should not be expected to help regularly
    around the house. ---
23. When there are two parents in a family, the husband should
    be boss. ---
24. The institutuion of marriage is thought of as old-fashioned
    by people of my age. ---
25. When there is only one parent it is not a family. ---
26. Society has a responsibility towards families who are
    in financial difficulties. ---
27. I think it would not worry me if I never married. ---
28. If there are problems between a couple who do not have children
    divorce is not the best solution. ---
29. Housework should be done by women only.. ---
30. Children from single parent families have extra problems. ---
31.. The attitude that children have to marriage is generally
    the same as the one their parents have. ===
32. Children are most influenced by their families in
    their ideas about marriage and divorce. ---
33 All families argue at some time. ---
34. I do not expect to marry someday. ---
35. The best person to bring up a child is the mother. ---
36. Children of my age should be expected to help
    regularly around the home. ---
37. Families who are happy together- never argue. ---
38. Divorce is not the best way out of an unhappy marriage. ---
39. There are fewer marriages today than there were 20 years ago. ---
40. The best person to bring up a child is the father. ---
41. Families are people you can depend on for help. ---
42. It is easier to discuss a personal problem with a friend
    than with a family member. ---

43. When there are two parents, neither should be boss. ===
44. Society has the right to interfere when there is
    violence in the family towards the wife. X ---
45. Our main responsibility and loyalties should be to
    our friends. ---
46. Men are the best people to manage the household money. ---
47. Most people today are not satisfied with their marriages. ---
48. If there are problems between a couptes with children
    the best soluktion is not to divorce. ---
49. As an adult I would like to have children of my own. ---
50. Divorce should be made more difficult to obtain. ---
51. A father alone can manage a household and family
    just as well as two parents. ---
52. A couple without children is still a family. ---
53. Women are the best people to manage the household money ---
54. A marriage based on love rather than shared interests
    is likely to be more successful . ---
55. It is OK for a woman to work when she has small children. ---
56. When there is only one parent with children it is still
    a family. ---
57. A career would be a more important goal in my life than
    marriage. ---
58. Our parents generation is very good at understanding
    people of my age. ■--
59.. The institution of marriage is not thought of as old-
    fashioned by people of my age. ---
60. If I were to have only one child, I would like a son. ---
61. If there are ½rpblems between a couple who don't have
    children, the best solution is to divorce. ---
62. A couple without children is not a family. ---
63. I expect I will be divorced someday. ---

64. Children without fathers have greater difficulties than children without mothers. ---

65. The most unhappy times I spend are with my family. ---

66. It is easier to discuss a personal problem with a family member than with a friend. ---

67. The most unhappy times I spedd are with my own age-group/ ---

68. I do not expect I will be divorced someday. ---

69. I expect I will marry someday. ---

70. I think I will not bring up my children in the same way I am being brought up. ---

71. Divorce is the best way out of an unhappy marriage. ---

72. There are fewer divorces today than 20 years ago. ---

73. Children get most of their ideas about marriage and divorce from talking with their friends. ---

74. There are more divorces today than 20 years ago. ---

75. Children are most influenced in their ideas about marriage and divorce from book,s TV and the movies. ---

76. Children without mothers have greater difficulties than children without fathers. ---

77. A marriage based on shared interests rather than (romantic) love is likely to be more successful. ---

78. I would like my marriage to be like my parents. ---

79. People of my age are never really understood by their parents generation. ---

80. When there are two parents in a family, the wife should be boss. ---

81. I think I will bring up my children in the same way I am being brought up. ---

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82. *People who marry young are more likely to divorce.* ...

83. *People who marry for the second time are usually happier.* ---

84. *Parents should sacrifice everything for their children.* ---

85. *The happiest times I spend are with people of my own age.* ---

86. *I think I would feel very unhappy about it if I never married.* ---

87. *People who marry young are less likely to divorce.* ---

88. *If there are problems between a couple with children then the best solution is to divorce.* ---

89. *Children from single parent families do not have extra problems.* ---

90. *Society has a right to interfere when there is violence in the family towards a child.* ---

91. *Society is responsible for more people getting divorced by making divorce too easily available.* ===

What is your age?   ...... years.   ...... months

Please check (✓) those which apply to you.

1.   Male .....   Female ......

2.   I live with:-

      Both my own parents ......   My Mother ......   My Father......

3.   How often do you see the parent who does not live with you?

      Daily......   Weekly .....   Holidays only ......   Never ....

4.   Father's Occupation ....
      Mother's Occupation ....

5.   Do you have:-   Older sisters ....   ages ....
                       Older brothers ....   ages ....
                       Younger sisters ......   ages ....
                       Younger brothers .....   ages ....

Again please check those which apply to you (✓)

Parents living together ....
Parents married   ....
Mother has died   .... during previous year .... 1-3 years ago.... over
Father has died   .... during previous year .... 1-3 years ago --- over
Parents have separated   .... during previous year .... 1-3 years age ... over
Parents have divorced   .... during previous year .... 1-3 years ago ... over
Mother married again   .... during previous year .....1-3 years ago ... over
Father married again   .... during previous year .....1-3 years ago ... over
Mother has been married before ....
Father has been married before ......

Here please write in the **number** of the following people who actually live in your hom

Mother ..   Halfsisters .... ages ....
Father ..   Halfbrothers ... ages ....
Stepfather ..   Stepsisters ... ages ....
Stepmother ..   Stepbrothers ... ages ....
Foster father ..   Granmothers ...
Foster mother ..   Grandfathers ...
Sisters   ...   ages ....   Other relatives ...
Brothers   ...   ages   Other males ....
                                   Other females ....

Primary Questionnaire - Main Study

PLEASE DO <u>NOT</u> WRITE YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS ANYWHERE ON THESE SHEETS.

The details and answers you give are confidential and will not be shown to anyone else, including your teachers.

Thank you for helping with this!

I am interested in what you and people of your age think about marriage and family life. There are no right or wrong answers, I am interested in <u>your</u> ideas.

First of all will you start by completing the sentence below. You can make this a short sentence or a longer one if you wish.

Please complete:-

A Family is ....

_____

Now we can move on to the main part of this questionnaire. I have listed a number of statements and I want you please to give them a grade according to whether you agree or disagree.

You can give each one a number between 0-5. A grade of 0 will mean you strongly disagree and a grade of 5 will mean you strongly agree and you can give a grade between these numbers when you wish.

strongly
disagree   0   1   2   3   4   5   strongly
agree

For instance, if the statement was:-

I think ice-cream is the best dessert. ____

Some of you will give this a grade of 5 because ice-cream is your very favourite dessert and you strongly agree and others might give an 0 grade because they hate ice-cream and therefore strongly disagree with the statement. Others will give a mark between because they neither love nor hate ice-cream.

Again, there are no right or wrong answers - I am interested in what <u>you</u> think or feel about these ideas.

1. The happiest times I spend are with my family. _____

2. A child can be brought up just as well by one parent as by two. _____

3. Divorce should be made easier to obtain. _____

4. I think of marriage as something that will last a lifetime. _____

5. Step-parents are not as fond of the child as the children's own parents. _____

6. I will only get married if I want to have children. _____

7. A woman should not go out to work when she has small children. _____

8. Marriage will be a more important aim in my life than a career. _____

9. If I were to have only one child, I would like a daughter. _____

10. Children need two parents to bring them up. _____

11. People who marry for the second time are usually more unhappy in that marriage. _____

12. Children should always put their parents' wishes first. _____

13. A mother alone can manage a household and family as well as two parents. _____

14. Men should be the only ones who go out to work. _____

15. I would not like my marriage to be like my parents. _____

16. Children of my age should not be expected to help regularly around the house. _____

17. When there are two parents in a family, the husband should be boss. _____

18. The institution of marriage is thought of as old-fashioned by people of my age. _____

19. When there is only one parent with children it is not a family. _____

20. Housework should be done by women only. _____

21. Children from single-parent families have extra problems. _____

22. Children are most influenced by their families in their ideas about marriage and divorce. _____

23. Happy families never argue. _____

24. I would want to get married before I had children. _____

25. The best person to bring up a child is the father. _____

26. Families are people you can depend on for help in a crisis. _____

27. A member of the family is not the best person to discuss a personal problem with. _____

28. When there are two parents in a family, neither should be boss. _____

29. Society has the right to interfere when there is violence in the family towards a wife. _____

30. Out of school I spend most of my time with my friends. _____

31. Men are the best people to manage the household money. _____

32. Parents should sacrifice everything for their children. _____

33. When there are problems between parents, they should stay together for the sake of the children. _____

34. As an adult I would like to have children of my own. _____

35. A father alone can manage a household and family as well as two parents. _____

36. A couple without children is still a family. _____

37. Women are the best people to manage the household money. _____

38. A marriage based on romantic love is likelier to be happier. _____

39. Our parents' generation is very good at understanding people of my age. _____

40. If I were to have only one child, I would like a son. _____

41. Divorce is the best solution if there are problems between a couple without children. _____

42. If I marry I expect I will be divorced one day. _____

43. Children without fathers have greater difficulties than children without mothers

44. I expect to get married one day. _____

45. If I have children I will expect them to help around the house. _____

46. Children are most influenced in their ideas about marriage and divorce from talking with their friends. _____

47. I have no clear idea of the number of children I would like to have. _____

48. Children without mothers have greater difficulties than children without fathers

49. When there are two parents in a family, the wife should be boss. _____

50. I think I will bring up my children in the way I am being brought up. _____

51. People who marry young are more likely to divorce. _____

52. The happiest times I spend are with my own age group. _____

53. I think I would feel very unhappy about it if I never married. _____

54. Society has the right to interfere when there is violence in the family towards the children. _____

55. Out of school I spend most of my time with my family. _____

56. Life is happier for children who have sisters and/or brothers. _____

strongly 0 1 2 3 4 5 strongly
disagree   agree

57. I would want to have children even if I weren't married. _____

58. When there are two parents in a family, the household money should be handled jointly. _____

59. The best person to bring up a child is the mother. _____

60. There are more divorces today than twenty years ago. _____

T H E   E N D   and Thank you!

Supplementary Questionnaire - Main Study

1.   What is your age? .... years   ..... months.

---

2.   Please check (✓)   ....Male   ...... Female.

---

3.   Please check (✓) I live with :-

        Both my parents ....

        My mother but not my father .....

        My father but not my mother .....

        None of these..... (please explain) ....

        ....

---

4.   Please check (✓)

        I am an only child ......

        I have sisters .... ages.................

        I have brothers.... ages ....

---

5.   Please check (✓)

    Would you describe your religion as:-

        Protestant ...

        Roman Catholic ...

        Jewish ...

        Moslem ...

        Other ...

        None ...

    Do you go to services:-

        Often...

        Occasionally ...

        Never ...

---

6. Please check (✓) whether you spent the following times over the past week, mostly with your family or mostly with your own age group.

Monday evening.   Family ...   Friends ...
Tuesday evening.   Family ...   Friends ...
Wednesday evening.   Family ...   Friends ...
Thursday evening.   Family ...   Friends ...
Friday evening.   Family ...   Friends ...
Saturday during day. Family ...   Friends ...
Saturday evening.   Family ...   Friends ...
Sunday during day.   Family ...   Friends ...
Sunday evening.   Family ...   Friends ...

7. Could you please check (✓) any jobs you do at home on a regular basis - perhaps once a day or once a week.

Make own bed ...

Wash dishes ...

Clean own room ...

Cleaning in house ...

Shopping for groceries ...

None ...

Please add here any other jobs you do ....
                              at home

8. Again, please check (✓) any of the following which apply to you.

Parents living together...
Parents married ...
Mother has died; during previous year ... 1-3 years ago ... over 3 years ...
Father has died; during previous year ... 1-3 years ago ... over 3 years ...
Parents have separated; during previous year ... 1-3 years ago... over 3 years ...
Parents have divorced; during previous year... 1-3 years ago... over 3 years ...
Mother married again ; during previous year... 1-3 years ago... over 3 years ...
Father married again; during previous year ... 1-3 years ago... over 3 years ...
Mother has been married before ...
Father has been married before ...

9. If your parents have separated or divorced do you see the parent who
    doesn't live with you;-

    Daily ...   Every two weeks ...   Holidays ...
    Weekly ...   Monthly ...   Never ...

10. Here please write in the <u>number</u> of the following people who actually live
    in your home. (Don't count yourself).

    Mother...   Halfsisters ... ages ......
    Father ...   Halfbrothers ... ages ......
    Stepfather ...   Stepsisters ... ages ......
    Stepmother ...   Stepbrothers ... ages ......
    Foster father ...   Grandmothers ...
    Foster mother ...   Grandfathers ...
    Sisters ... ages ...   Other relatives ...
    Brothers .. ages ...   Other males ...
                                       Other females....

11. Which of the following people <u>living in your home</u> go out to work?

    Mother ...... Please describe the work ....
    Father ...... Please describe the work ....
    Stepfather... Please describe the work.................................
    Stepmother .. Please describe the work.................................
    Foster father... Please describe the work ....
    Foster mother .. Please describe the work. ....
    Other males .... Please describe the work ....
    Other females .. Please describe the work ....

12. When you were small did your mother (or stepmother or fostermother)
    work outside the house?
                    Fulltime ....   Part time .....   Not at all .....

Copy of approval letter (to undertake survey)
sent to parents and guardians

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
Department of Social Administration
23 BUCCLEUCH PLACE, EDINBURGH EH8 9LN
031—667 1011 6377
TELEX 727442 (UNIVED G)

Dear Parent (s),

Your child's school has given me permission to write to you and all parents in your child's school year concerning research work based at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland which I am currently undertaking. The research concerns the attitudes and expectations of teenagers to marriage and family life and will be a comparative study between children in Scotland and children in California. I have lived in both these places and have three teenage children of my own.

The research will take the form of a questionnaire which approximately 400 school students will be asked to complete by agreeing or disagreeing with a series of statements. The students will be asked also in the questionnaire about the composition of the family in which they live. The 'Scottish side' of the research has already been completed and the students in the schools there seem to have found it interesting to take part.

I would like to emphasise that the questionnaires will be filled in anonymously and the responses will be treated in the strictest confidence. A summary will be made from the individual responses and there will be no follow-up study or further information required. The school will not be providing me with any names and addresses and at no time will the children be asked for these details.

I hope that you and your child will have no objection to him or her taking part in this research, which I hope to begin within the next few days. If you wish to withhold your permission then perhaps you could contact the school during this period. If you would like further details I will be pleased to discuss them with you and my telephone number can be obtained from the school,

APPENDIX 'F'

Copy of approval letter (to conduct interviews)
sent to parents and guardians

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
Department of Social Administration
23 BUCCLEUCH PLACE, EDINBURGH EH8 9LN
031—667 1011 6377
TELEX 727442 (UNIVED G)

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which I am currently undertaking. The research concerns the
attitudes and expectations of teenagers to marriage and family life
and is a comparative study between children in Scotland and children
in California. I have lived in both these places and have three
teenage children of my own.

As part of this study I would like to conduct an informal
interview with a small number of children chosen at random at the
school and discuss with them their own expectations of the family
life they might have as adults. I would like to emphasise that the
responses will be treated in the strictest confidence. A general
summary will be made from the individual responses and there will be
no follow-up study or further information required. The school will
not be providing me with any names and addresses and at no time will
the children be asked for these details.

I hope that you and your child will have no objection to him or
her taking part in this research, which I hope to begin within the
next few days. If you wish to withhold your permission then perhaps
you could contact the school during this period. If you would like
further details I will be pleased to discuss them with you and can
be reached at the phone number above.

Yours sincerely,

(Mrs) S.A. Parry