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# The Relationship Between Residential Status and Perception of Psychological Separation Among Young College Students

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# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESIDENTIAL STATUS AND

# PERCEPTION OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SEPARATION

# AMONG YOUNG COLLEGE STUDENTS

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An Abstract Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of Lindenwood University in Partial Fulfillment of the

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between undergraduates' perception of psychological separation and residential status. Two groups of students, those who lived at home with their parents (n=31) and those who did not (n=55), were surveyed using the Psychological Separation Inventory (PSI). Using the four subscale scores from the PSI, a t-test for independent samples found no significant relationship between residential status and psychological separation. Additional statistical analysis failed to find a relationship between the scores and independent variables such as gender, age and years in college. It was concluded that this research failed to support the hypothesis that a relationship exists between a student's perception of psychological separation and residential status.

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**for the Degree of Master of Art August 2000**

Committee Members

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## Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my family-- for they are the ones who believed

I would finish this, even when I was not so sure.  I also dedicate this to my

"study pal" who was with me every step of the way.

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# Chapter I

## Introduction

A majority of adolescents and young adults pursue a college degree as a part of their continuing education. Many choices must be made in the initial decision to attend college. Of perhaps the greatest impact on a student's college career is the decision regarding which school to attend. There are many factors to consider, among which is the decision whether to continue to live at home with parents or to begin college life away from home.

The decision to stay at home or to move away is influenced in turn by many factors. However, the developmental task of separating from one's parents appears to be a core element in this issue. It has been noted that the adolescent may develop psychological disturbances if the separation process is difficult (Thomason & Winer, 1994). In fact, it has been hypothesized that many college students' emotional difficulties may be a result of the struggle for separation from parents that is a frequent part of this particular developmental period (Hoffman & Weiss, 1987). As this is such an integral piece of the developmental process, it is important to look at this separation task as it relates to adolescents and young adults. More specifically, it is important to examine the concept of *psychological*

*separation* and its impact on the relationship between young college students and their parents.

Psychological separation/individuation is a critical developmental task, the resolution of which is crucial for healthy psychosocial functioning (Lapsley, Rice & Shadid, 1989). It has been defined as a psychological process whereby the adolescent becomes less dependent on the family of origin and begins to increasingly accept responsibility for his or her own identity as a separate individual (Anderson & Fleming, 1986; Hoffman, 1984; Lapsley, et al., 1989; Schultheiss & Blustein, 1994). Although research has been done on the issue of separation from parents and college adjustment (Rice, Fitzgerald, Whaley & Gibbs, 1995), little research has been done that actually looks at students' perception of psychological separation in relation to residential status. Studies prior to this have looked at differences between those who live at home versus those who live away, but they have not looked at how individuals perceive psychological separation from their parents depending upon living arrangement.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between undergraduates' perception of psychological separation and residential status. Psychological separation is defined as an individual's ability to develop a sense of self that is separate from one's parents and will be measured by the Psychological Separation Inventory. Residential status

refers to whether an undergraduate student lives at home or in an alternative setting such as a college dormitory or an off-campus apartment. For the purpose of this study, college students are defined as young adults 25 years of age or less.

## Chapter II

### Review of the Literature

The transition from adolescence to young adulthood is a complex process that can be best understood by examining the adolescent developmental task of psychological separation-individuation. Thought to be one of the most critical developmental tasks that confronts late adolescents (Hoffman, 1984; Lapsley, Rice & Shadid, 1989; Lopez, Campbell & Watkins, 1988), it often coincides with an individual's decision to attend college. Although the process evolves throughout adolescence and into young adulthood, the transition reaches a higher level of awareness during this time of impending change. It is at this stage in development that individuals must confront the contradictory task of psychologically distancing themselves from their parents while simultaneously depending upon their parents to meet certain physical needs. The paradox of this adolescent task is that the individual must "increase independence from parents while maintaining affection and communication with them (Sullivan & Sullivan, 1980). Significant to the concept of separation-individuation in relation to college is the idea that "separation from family, or leaving home represents an important normative transition for late adolescents" (Moore, 1987, p. 298). In fact, Douvan and Adelson stated that "separation from the family is one of the universals of the adolescent experience" (as cited in Lapsley, et al., 1989, p. 287).

In order to understand the developmental process of separation-individuation, it is helpful to discuss different theorists and their ideologies in relation to late adolescence and early adulthood. A few theories are discussed here to note how these schools of thought address the issue of separation from one's family of origin.

Developmental Theorists/Psychosocial Approach

*Erik H. Erikson*

A major theoretical model for understanding life-span development has been that of psychosocial theorist Erik H. Erikson. Erikson " describes personality development as an hierarchically ordered sequence of stages which progress from initial narcissistic involvement with oneself through stages of identification and socialization, to increasing individuation and establishment of an individual identity" (Franz & White, 1985, p. 224). This process is characterized by eight stages of development, each defined by a particular psychosocial crisis. The resolution and integration of the preceding stage influences each subsequent stage. The positive resolution of each stage results in what Erikson termed a "virtue". Although the outcome of every crisis, which is defined by Erikson as a turning point, is reversible, each must be positively resolved in order to go on to the next stage (Allen, Stoltenberg & Rosko, 1990). Thus, "the healthy person is one whose ego is characterized by the eight virtues resulting from the positive solution of

each crisis in the eight stages of development" (as cited in Hergenhahn,

1994, p. 184). *See Table 1.*

***Table 1:*** *Erikson's eight stages of development and their associated crises and virtues*

| Stage/Year | Crisis | Virtue |
|---|---|---|
| Infancy (Birth-1) | Basic Trust versus Basic Mistrust | Hope |
| Early Childhood (1-3) | Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt | Will |
| Preschool Age (4-5) | Initiative versus Guilt | Purpose |
| School Age (6-11) | Industry versus Inferiority | Competence |
| Adolescence (12-20) | Identity versus Role Confusion | Fidelity |
| Young Adulthood (20-24) | Intimacy versus Isolation | Love |
| Adulthood (25-64) | Generativity versus Stagnation | Care |
| Old Age (65-death) | Ego Integrity versus Despair | Wisdom |

*Note:* From *An Introductory to Theories of Personality* (p. 184), by B.R. Hergenhahn, 1994 (4th ed.), Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

It is Erikson's fifth stage which specifically relates to the

adolescent's development of a separate identity. However, to completely

grasp the role of the development of identity in relation to Erikson's

theory of stage progression, a brief discussion of each of the eight stages is

necessary. Erikson's theory begins with the basic issue of trust versus

mistrust. During this time, if an infant's needs are met in a loving and consistent manner, the infant will develop a healthy balance of trust over mistrust, thereby allowing the virtue of hope to emerge (Hergenhahn, 1994).

The second stage, autonomy versus shame and doubt, occurs from approximately the first year to the end of the third year. This is the time when a child develops basic skills, such as walking and talking, that begin to garner independence and allow the child to make decisions (Franz & White, 1985; Hergenhahn, 1994). It is up to the parents of this child to maintain a balance between steering the child's behavior into socially acceptable directions and being careful not to minimize the child's perception of self-control or autonomy.

Between the fourth and fifth year, the child is able to explore the concept of potential. During this third stage of initiative versus guilt, the child learns to test the limits of his/her self-initiated thoughts and behaviors. Children who lack support from their parents with regard to this task find themselves feeling guilty when the tendency to initiate their own behaviors arises. Thus, the child ignores the thoughts from within him/herself and tends to live within the constraints established by others.

The fourth stage is industry versus inferiority, which occurs between the ages of 6 and 11 years. If the child does not develop a healthy sense of industry during this time, it will be replaced by feelings of inferiority. This lack of confidence in the ability to contribute to society is

most often due to ridicule or lack of concern from the parents. The child's ability to develop a greater sense of industry over inferiority results in the virtue of competence.

Erikson's fifth stage of development is the one for which he is most noted and on which much of the theory of separation-individuation is based. Adolescents and young adults between the ages of 12 and 20 years mark this psychosocial stage as identity versus role confusion. It is at this time that the child must assimilate the information and qualities attained from previous stages and form an identity. Erikson defined this concept as an identity crisis. Young adults who do not satisfactorily end this stage of development with an identity may instead leave it with role confusion or a negative identity.

Erikson (1964) defines what he terms "psychosocial moratorium" as the interval between youth and adulthood wherein the young person "must let go of his safehold on childhood and reach out for a firm grasp on adulthood . . ." (p. 90). The development of an identity marks this transition into adulthood. The crucial point to any discussion of separation and individuation lies within this stage. Since leaving home is a transitional process (Fitzgerald, Whaley & Gibbs, 1995; Kenny, 1987), the issue of psychological separation becomes emphasized at this stage of development. According to Hergenhahn (1994), from this time forward, life is a matter of acting out one's identity. "The task of life becomes one of carrying 'that person' optimally through the remaining stages of life"

(p. 180). Therefore, the healthy resolution of this stage is essential for the success and satisfactory resolution of the final three stages of development. Just as all of the stages preceding stage five provide the materials and experience necessary to develop an identity, the last three rely on the positive resolution of stage five for their own success.

During the sixth stage, between 20 to 24 years of age, individuals go through what Erikson describes as the intimacy versus isolation stage. Those individuals who do not effectively develop this sense of intimacy in relationships will not emerge with the virtue of love. Instead, they will withdraw from and avoid others, thus developing a feeling of isolation. Only the individual who has successfully attained an identity can risk entering into a love relationship of any type, because the young adult emerging from the search for identity is eager to reach for intimacy (Hergenhahn, 1994). It is this individual's secure sense of identity that allows him/her to take such a risk. Thus, this testifies to the importance of stage five as essential to continued growth and development.

Stage seven, generativity versus stagnation, occurs in middle adulthood between the ages of 25 to 64. Generativity is defined as an individual's concern in establishing and guiding the next generation by passing on the circumstances that caused their own feelings of satisfaction and growth (Hergenhahn, 1994). If individuals have succeeded in developing a positive identity in the previous stages, they will desire to perpetuate that sense of well-being.

Erikson's eighth and final stage of development, integrity versus despair, occurs from age 65 to death. The individual who has a feeling of fulfillment and satisfaction with their life will not fear death. Those individuals who feel as if their life has not been fulfilling will experience a sense of despair. As can be seen, this final stage, which results in ego integrity, is dependent upon the success of all other stages (Hergenhahn, 1994).

According to Erikson's theory, the eight stages are essential to the psychological development of the individual. Of special interest, however, is that these stages each build up to, and then rely upon, the task of gaining a self-identity. It is believed that Erikson's fifth stage, identity versus role confusion, can be seen as a climax to the process of human development. Each prior stage builds toward the attainment of an identity, which is utilized to successfully progress through the final stages (Hergenhahn, 1994). From this perspective, it is easy to see that the period of late adolescence/young adulthood is an integral part of the psychological separation process.

By looking at Erikson's model, one can see how the process of gaining a healthy identity influences the development of a healthy, well-adjusted personality. Therefore, it is important to understand the factors that may impact this developmental process. As will be further detailed in the literature review, one may begin to see how residential status of young

college students may affect their identity formation and their perception of psychological separation from their parents.

It is believed that "achieving a psychological sense of autonomy from one's parents must be understood as a multidimensional task that is accomplished gradually over the course of later adolescence and early adulthood" (Newman & Newman, 1995, p. 471). This autonomy is much the same as that which is experienced in stages two and five of Erikson's theory. It refers to the increasing ability of individuals to guide their own decisions and actions without being unduly influenced or controlled by one's parents. As the adolescent moves into young adulthood, there seems to be a sense of moving away, at least psychologically, from the boundaries of the family. Peer relations gain importance and the need for support increasingly shifts to these relationships and away from the family (Moore, 1987).

Newman and Newman (1995) take Erikson's approach and go even further in an explanation of the process of identity formation in adolescence. Opportunities and situations that exist to the individual may influence both the content of identity and the emotions surrounding its formation. Residential status is such a condition that may have some impact on the separation and individuation of young college students. In fact, Newman and Newman postulate that there is a difference in autonomy formed by adolescents depending upon where they live. For example, living away from one's parent's house has, for many, become

synonymous with independence. Students who live at home are more
preoccupied with thoughts of parents and family than those who live away
at school. It is carefully noted that although leaving home for college is
seen as a common transition, it does not in *itself* bring a sense of
psychological autonomy from parents (1995). In light of this, however,
Newman and Newman do speculate on possible differences between those
students who live at home and those who live away, stating that

> Students who are living at college are more likely to rely on the
> mental representations of their attachment figures, whereas
> students who live with their parents continue to be involved daily
> with very concrete interactions. The issues of autonomy and
> control, establishing new guidelines and limits related to
> participation in family life, involvement in relationships with
> peers, and management of time and money are resolved in the
> absence of direct input from parents for most students who live at
> college, but these issues continue to involve parental input for
> students who live at home (p. 474).

This advances the theory that the psychological separation of a
college student may be influenced by residential status. In fact, students
who live at home are confronted with different issues in relation to their
psychological development than those who live at school or off campus in
an alternative arrangement (Newman & Newman, 1995). An attempt to
describe these differences will be discussed later, as well as whether
residential status may directly relate to the perception students have of a
separate identity and independence from parents.

*Peter Blos*

As with Erikson, Blos examined adolescence in relation to the human life-cycle (Blos 1979; Kroger 1996). However, use of terminology is among the differences that distinguish these two theories of adolescence. Blos refers to character as "that entity which restructures and consolidates during adolescence" (Kroger, 1996, p. 49), while Erikson uses the term ego identity to refer to that same process. Implementing an approach similar to Erikson, Blos described adolescence in terms of phases, with each phase representing "milestones of progressive development" (Blos, 1979, p. 141). According to Blos, the process of separation/individuation is marked by the adolescents attempt to transcend internalized infantile objects, allowing the individual to reformulate a sense of self (Rice, Cole & Lapsley, 1990). In order for this to occur, the adolescent must experience psychological changes in his/her developmental patterns. This results in a shifting and adaptation of the psychic structure (Blos, 1979).

Blos describes the four phases of adolescent character formation as challenges of which resolution is necessary to obtain healthy functioning during adult life (1967). Each of these challenges consists of a conflict, a maturational task and the resolution. In order for an individual to move forward to a higher level of differentiation from their parents, each phase (challenge) is reliant on the prior's success (Kroger, 1996). This is similar to Erikson's adolescent developmental model, which also relies on the

resolution of a particular phase before advancing to the next level. Blos'

four phases of character formation include: 1) the second individuation

process, 2) the reworking and mastery of child trauma, 3) ego continuity,

and 4) sexual identity (Kroger, 1996). While Blos considered all four of

these to be representative of some aspect of adolescent development, he

postulates that the essence of adolescence can be best explained by what

he refers to as the second individuation process. Therefore, for the

purpose of this brief review, the focus will be on an examination of Blos'

theory of the second individuation process. It is within this specific phase

that Blos' theory highlights the importance of a separation from parents in

the attainment of adolescent individuation.

Central to the four character challenges of adolescence is

regression, an essential psychic process that Blos finds to be an integral

part of adolescent development (Blos, 1979). Blos' theory is that during

adolescence, the individual returns to the parental representations of

childhood in order to break internalized object attachments (1979).

During this time, which Blos termed the second individuation process, the

individual is involved in a psychic restructuring (Kroger, 1996).

In both the first and second individuation processes, the individual

undergoes a psychic restructuring in conjunction with a surge toward

maturation (Blos, 1979; Kroger, 1996). However, during adolescence, the

individual experiences this in the opposite manner from that of the infant.

During infancy, the child attains separateness from a parent by the

"formation of internal regulatory faculties which are assisted and promoted by maturation advances" such as motor, perceptual, cognitive and verbal (Blos, 1979, p. 143). As Blos cites Mahler, separation in infancy is "a hatching from the symbiotic membrane to become an individuated toddler" (Blos, 1979, p. 142). In adolescence, the same internalized objects from infancy that were derived from the early parent/child relationship are let go as ego maturation occurs. In this way, adolescents attempt to transcend "infantile parental introjects and to reformulate a sense of self" (Lapsley, Cole & Rice, 1990, p. 195). If this disengagement from infantile objects does not occur in adolescence, negative consequences may arise. Perhaps the most important outcome of the disengagement process is the adolescent's newfound ability to find external attachment objects beyond the scope of the family. Object ties that were linked to the parental introjects of love and attachment in infancy are ultimately found beyond that realm in adolescence (Kroger, 1996).

In conclusion to this discussion of Blos' second individuation process, it is important to note that failure to disengage from infantile objects can lead to consistent regression and an inability to form meaningful love relationships in adolescence and young adulthood (Blos, 1979). However, Blos also cautions that to deliberately force individuation through physical distance from the family may be disadvantageous. According to Blos, this can be seen as a way of

avoiding internal separation by displaying a facade of separateness (1979).

This investigation of psychological separation in adolescence relies on

Blos' explanation of adolescents need to psychologically separate and

restructure themselves independent of their parental internalization. As

will be discussed, Hoffman used Blos' theory of individuation as the basis

in the development of the Psychological Separation Inventory.

Family Systems Approach

*Murray Bowen*

As an adolescent leaves home for college, there is not only a "need

to achieve independence . . ., but also to resolve a basic developmental

task relevant to family life" (Kunce & Priesmeyer, 1985, p. 40). In

support of this belief, family systems theorists focus on the impact of

family on the individuation process. Bowen (1978) states that the reason

the family is such an integral piece to this process is that they are the first

group to which an individual belongs. Based on this assumption, it is

believed that a close examination of an individual's family system is

essential to fully understanding that particular individual (Kunce &

Priesmeyer, 1985).

In order to discuss the family system and its relationship to an

adolescent's separation process, one must understand the constructs of

individuation and differentiation. Central to a family systems theory of

the separation process, individuation and differentiation have just recently

been defined as being distinctly different from one another (Sabatelli &

Mazor, 1985). While both are used in an explanation of the family's involvement in an individual's search for separateness, individuation is seen as an intra-individual process and differentiation is seen as an interpersonal process (Fleming & Anderson, 1986).

Sabatelli and Mazor (1985) define individuation as the process by which adolescents "increase the psychological distance between themselves and their parents" (p. 621). It is seen as a process necessary to psychological separation. However, as Bowen (1976) makes clear, physical distance alone does not indicate that individuation has occurred. During this process of individuation, adolescents or young adults begin to view themselves as separate and distinct within the context of their family group. Although they are still a member of the family system, the level at which they relate and function within the family begins to shift. Without the individuation process, the level of family interactions will not shift, and the individual becomes highly fused within the family system. Fusion describes an individual's state of embeddedness in a relational context, such as when family boundaries become indistinct , such as speaking and making decisions for one another (Fleming & Anderson, 1986; Karpel, 1976; Wilson, Anderson & Fleming, 1987). Therefore, the extent to which one experiences fusion within the family system reflects on the individuation process (Wilson, et al., 1987). The consequence of this for college students is that they have less invested in forming a commitment to college and developing a clear identity, because their energies are being

used in emotional interactions with the family. This also impacts the student's adjustment to college and feelings of low self-esteem. This is particularly true for commuters, who perceive themselves as significantly more fused with their parents than do those students who live in a campus setting (Wilson, Anderson & Fleming, 1987).

Differentiation is defined by Sabatelli and Mazor (1985) as a "property of a system that encourages a pattern of family cohesion and adaptability" (p. 621). This pattern has an impact on an individual's developmental progress as it exists within the family system. It also impacts how the family system as an entity adapts to the individual's development. Dependent upon the pattern, each family system possesses a level of differentiation ranging from high to low. Fleming and Anderson (1986) state that there are two concepts that help define the family systems level of differentiation; fusion, which has already been explained, and triangulation. Triangulation occurs when an individual consistently becomes caught up in a highly fused manner of interaction between themselves and two family members. For example, the individual may either be used as a scapegoat for blame, or may be involved in a family relationship where one parent aligns themselves with the adolescent in an effort to distance themselves from the other parent. Triangulation becomes a way for two people to interact with one another through the use of a third party. A family system that has a higher level of differentiation functions with a high degree of adaptability. This permits the members to

remain a part of the family group while simultaneously maintaining their individuality (Sabatelli & Mazor, 1985). In a family that has low levels of differentiation, psychological separation and autonomy are seen as a threat to the system's stability (Allison & Sabatelli, 1988). In support of these theories on differentiation and its relationship to adolescent and young adult development, Fleming and Anderson's research (1986) concludes that "adolescents who perceived themselves as more triangulated or fused within their family of origin , would be more likely to experience difficulty solving developmental tasks such as college adjustment . . ." (p. 372).

*Bronfenbrenner/Ecological Approach*

Bronfenbrenner's work on human development is derived from an ecological perspective. He defines the ecology of human development as a scientific study of the progression and accommodation between an individual and the changing immediate environment in which he/she lives (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In keeping with the family systems theory on identity and separation, the ecological approach looks at the effects of environment and relationships on the human development. This approach considers the ecological environment to be made up of 4 levels and may also be applied to the transition of adolescents and young adults to college.

According to the ecological framework, the 4 levels of environment consist of the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. These 4 levels, respectively, progress from immediate

settings and relationships to larger cultural settings and concerns (Johnson, Staton & Jorgensen-Earp, 1995). The microsystem and mesosystem are of particular importance to research on the transition to college. However, a definition of all 4 levels will be given in order to clarify the concept of an ecological environment.

A microsystem refers to the relationship of the individual and his/her immediate environment, such as a family home or college campus setting. A mesosystem refers to the relationships among major settings such as interactions among family, school, and peer groups. The exosystem refers to social structures that influence the immediate setting, such as a government agency, but of which the individual is not an immediate part. Finally, the macrosystem refers to large systems, such as educational, economic and political, which influence the individual and both the immediate and intermediate environment (Johnson, Staton & Jorgensen-Earp, 1995).

In an ecological study, Johnson, et al. (1995) examined student relationships among individuals, their immediate settings and the larger context in which these settings exist. Based on Bronfenbrenner's premise that entrance into college is an ecological transition, they looked at the changes that take place at the micro- and mesosystems levels. According to Johnson, et al., many students are affected by change at the microsystem level (i.e., possible change in residence) and the changing relationships at the mesosystem level that occur as a result of the college

transition. Their study looked at 3 different residential settings of students, those living with parents, those living on campus and those living in Greek fraternity/sorority houses, and their reported changes at the mesosystem level. The findings supported their theory of the transition to college as being an ecological transition, with all 3 groups of students reporting family relationship changes. This is in agreement with the psychosocial and family systems theorists who view the adolescent/young adult years as a developmental process defined by transition and influenced by relationships and environments.

While the family systems approach also looks at separation as a task associated with older adolescent development, its perspective reaches beyond that of the psychosocial theorist's explanation. Similar to theories such as those of Erikson and Blos, the family systems approach also considers the transition to college as representing an important shift toward greater autonomy and personal independence (Allen, Stoltenberg & Rosko, 1990; Lopez, Campbell & Watkins, 1988). The difference is that the family systems theory looks less at the stage and its resolution, instead emphasizing the dynamics of the family and its impact on the separation-individuation process. "Since the individuation process as a phenomenon refers to the individual in relation to the family, the examination of individual personality growth seemingly must be viewed from both an individual and a family system frame of reference" (Sabatelli & Mazor, 1985, p. 623). In this way, it is believed that the family

systems theory offers much in the way of understanding psychological separation in relation to residential status. Lopez, Campbell and Watkins (1988) address this relationship in their research and literature by viewing the family

> as representing a significant environmental medium capable of influencing the emotional and psychological development of its members.. . . Indeed, from a family systems perspective, it is doubtful whether the young adult's successful move toward greater independence and extrafamily involvements can occur without corresponding adjustments within the family that support this developmental initiative (p. 402).

The family system, which is in constant motion, relies upon its members for balance in this ever-shifting continuum. Thomason and Winer (1994), state that any change introduced into the family group upsets the equilibrium and makes new adaptive demand of its members. It would seem then, that any change to this system, including the transition to college, would alter the dynamics of the family, thereby influencing the process of separation and individuation in an effort to maintain a balance. The individuation process is not a singular process, achieved by one individual. It requires a reworking of family relationships so that the adolescent may gain independence while also maintaining a close family bond. Although a certain level of disengagement is necessary in attaining independence, the individuation process must combine this separation with continued support from family members (Allison & Sabatelli, 1988). Therefore, individuals must differentiate themselves while retaining a sense of family connectedness (Bowen, 1976).

Also interested in the family relationships and their impact on psychological separation and adjustment in college life are attachment theorists. Researchers who have done studies on young students and psychological separation have investigated the role that attachment plays in adjustment to college (Lopez, Melendez, Saur, Berger & Wyssmann, 1998). As with family theorists, attachment theorist also look to the parent child relationship in regards to psychological separation and adjustment, stressing the importance of continuing ties between the parent and college student.

<u>Attachment and Psychological Separation</u>

According to Rice, Fitzgerald, Whaley and Gibbs (1995), attachment theory emphasizes the importance of significant emotional bonds for healthy development and adjustment. An attachment is "an enduring, long-term affectional bond between people" (p. 463), most often relied upon by individuals seeking security and comfort during times of distress. In its most effective form, attachment provides a secure base from which an individual can explore the environment, allowing the individual to increase autonomous functioning rather than cultivating dependency (Kenny, 1987; Kenny & Donaldson, 1991). Traditionally, attachment theory focused on the infant/parent bond, but recent research has applied this model to the adolescent/parent relationship (Berman & Sperling, 1991; Kenny, 1987; Kenny & Donaldson, 1991; Kenny & Rice, 1995).

Research indicates that the parent-child relationship greatly influences a young adults psychological separation and adjustment to college (Kenny, 1987; Lapsley, Rice & Shadid, 1989; Rice, Fitzgerald, Whaley & Gibbs, 1995). In fact, Berman and Sperling (1991), propose that during times of intense transition, such as that to college, an adolescent's or young adult's attachment to a parent may increase. Based on an attachment perspective, they state that "the most significant normative separation beyond childhood occurs during adolescence . . . and college may be the most clearly identifiable landmark in this departure from parental attachments and close familial involvement" (p. 429). Berman and Sperling (1991) recognize adolescence as a time when emotional and behavioral problems may emerge as a result of problems in the transition and separation from parental attachments. The degree to which adolescents must separate from these attachments has been the subject of much research (Brack, Gay & Matheny, 1993; Kenny & Rice, 1995; Rice, Cole & Lapsley, 1990).

Kenny & Rice (1995) stressed the importance of adolescents maintaining both a connection and a separation in regard to the parental relationship. The results of their study supported the theory that a balance between support and autonomy is necessary and that close parental attachments are most adaptive when combined with a family structure that encourages individuation. This agrees with earlier research by Kenny and Donaldson (1992) that concluded that individuation takes place optimally

"within a parent-offspring relationship that is transformed, rather than broken during adolescence" (p. 432).

Residential Status

Much important research has focused on the college student's educational outcome and college adjustment as associated with living arrangement (Pascarella, 1985). However, little research has specifically looked at how living arrangement may affect a student's sense of individuation. It is believed that a better understanding of residential status is necessary in examining the possible impact that living arrangement may have on a college student's perception of psychological separation.

Anderson and Fleming (1986) performed research that broadened the concept of individuation to include other factors such as economic independence, separate residence, personal control and emotional attachment. In a study of undergraduate students, they predicted that these factors would be positively associated with self- reports of maturity levels, ego identity, and successful separation from parents. They concluded that "while individuation . . . and emotional attachment to parents . . . were significant predictors of both ego identity and college adjustment, economic independence and *having one's own residence separate from parents* (emphasis added) also were significant predictors" (p. 457). These findings agree with earlier research done by Moore (1984), who also looked at factors such as economic independence, residence and

physical separation in regard to their importance to perceptions of the adolescent-from-parent separation process.

Research has shown many differences in the problems faced by college students depending on residential status (Cooney & Nonnamaker, 1992; Johnson, Staton & Jorgensen-Earp, 1995; Pascarella, 1985; Tryon, 1984). The unique situations experienced by those college students living at home compared to those who live away are evident in the problems brought to college counseling centers (Lapsley, Rice & Shadid, 1989; Tryon, 1984). In fact, some researchers now conclude that the differences in emotional problems that prompt counseling in college may be associated with impaired psychological separation (Lapsley, et al., 1989). That this impairment may be linked to residential status indicates a need to better ascertain how residence may influence the developmental process.

Student involvement is thought to be a major factor in student development (Pascarella, 1985). Pascarella found that living on campus promoted higher levels of interaction and involvement among students and, thus, was positively associated with student development. He believed that residence status may, at the least, indirectly impact student development by increasing student involvement in social and cultural experiences. Conversely, researchers cite that commuter students indicate low levels of peer involvement and increasing complaints of lack of self-confidence, with limited opportunities to become involved in traditional college life (Cooney & Nonnamaker, 1992; Tryon, 1984).

It is thought that students living at home have more problems "with peers, finances, academics and family than do residence hall students" (Tryon, 1984, p. 215). This research suggested that, while students who live on campus may seek counseling more often, perhaps it is due to the increase in personal growth experienced by those students living away from their parents. While both groups of students experience changes within their family relationships as a result of the transition to college, it is thought that these changes may be of a much more personal and individual level for those who leave home to attend college. The student focuses more on him/herself and less on the issues within the family. (Johnson, Staton & Jorgensen-Earp, 1995). The act of leaving home to attend college promotes an adolescent's development of independence from parents (Wilson, Anderson & Fleming, 1987). Cooney and Nonnamaker's research recognized students who lived at home as "attending college intellectually, but whose living at home limits opportunities to become involved in traditional college life" (1992, p. 395).

In this way, not only have researchers looked at the disparity of problems associated with residential status, but they have also established an association between these factors and the influence on the developmental process in college students. Thus, it is important for students to feel as if they have a secure base derived from a positive relationship with their parents. However, it is also important that this be

balanced with a greater emphasis on the students feeling separate from their parents and in control of their own lives (Anderson & Fleming, 1986).

Development of Psychological Separation Inventory

Jeffrey Hoffman is best known for his research on the developmental process of college students. Specifically, he has addressed the issue of psychological separation-individuation as a critical task confronting late adolescents (Hoffman, 1984). In agreement with Blos (1979), Hoffman believes that the separation-individuation process occurs twice during an individual's life-span, and that a healthy resolution each time is essential to psychological development. The first of these occurrences of separation-individuation takes place during infancy and reflects on the later separation-individuation process in adolescence (1984). However, Hoffman conceptualized a more descriptive definition of the integration of these two separation-individuation phases. In doing so, he defined the process of psychological separation in adolescence according to 4 subscales (Hoffman, 1984; Schultheiss & Bluestein, 1994). The Psychological Separation Inventory (PSI), developed by Hoffman, is a result of the conceptualization of these 4 scales. It has been used often in research on college adjustment (Rice, 1992; Schultheiss & Blustein, 1994). The 4 subscales, which were designed to measure psychological separation according to the adolescent's perspective, are: 1) emotional

independence (EI),  2) conflictual independence (CI),  3) functional independence (FI), and  4) attitudinal independence (AI).

Emotional independence is defined as freedom from an excessive need for approval, closeness, togetherness, and emotional support in relation to the adolescent's parents.  Conflictual independence is defined as freedom from guilt, anxiety, resentment, mistrust and anger in relation to the parents.  Functional independence measures the extent to which the adolescent can manage practical and personal affairs without the help of their parents.  Attitudinal independence assesses the image of oneself as being unique, having one's own beliefs and values separate from one's parents (Hoffman, 1984: Lucas, 1997; Rice, 1992).

Most of Hoffman's work has focused on psychological separation solely in relation to college adjustment, although later research by Hoffman and  Weiss (1987) did focus on family dynamics and the important role they play in counseling students, even in the physical absence of the parent.  That there is a continual influence on psychological development even when the student does not live at the parent's home is important to the current study on residential status and psychological separation.  Differing theoretical models of psychological separation hold unique hypotheses as to what the relationship is between psychological separation of adolescents and their interfamilial relationships and environments.  The unifying factor to these many theories is that adolescents do separate from their parents at some level and that the

college years represent a marked change in their transition to adulthood. Although recent research on separation individuation has been informative, there has been little done to discern whether there is a relationship between residential status and a student's perception of his/her own psychological separation from parents. The present study attempts to use the information derived from the previous research, as well as from the theories of human development, in order to establish whether such a relationship exists.

Statement of Hypothesis

Although much research has been done on the adjustment of students to college life, few studies have specifically looked at residential status and its relationship to perception of psychological separation. It is hypothesized that undergraduate students who remain living at home perceive themselves as less psychologically separate from their parents than those undergraduate students living in a college dormitory or alternative residential arrangement.

Method

<u>Subjects</u>

Eighty-six undergraduate students from Lindenwood University were recruited to take part in this study. All of the students were enrolled in an introductory psychology course and received minimal extra credit for their participation. All subjects were chosen on a voluntary basis.

A demographic questionnaire was completed by all students (see Appendix B). The study looked at two groups based on living arrangement. The first group was comprised of students who live at home with their parents while attending college (n=31). Those students who lived away from their parents in an alternate arrangement, such as apartments or dormitories, made up the second group (n=55). Although it was the intent of the researcher not to unduly influence the results of the research, the developmental nature of this study made it necessary to set limitations on age. For the purpose of this study, only information obtained from young adults is useful. Therefore, only data collected from those students age 25 and younger were compiled. An initial item in the demographic survey determined age appropriateness, thereby eliminating individuals who did not pertain to this study.

The mean age of all participants was 18.34 years old. Of the eighty six studied, 36% (n=31) lived with their parents while attending college, while 64% (n=55) lived away in other living arrangements. The

students who lived with their parents were 45% (n=14) male and 55%

(n=17) female. Those who lived in another type of arrangement were

33%(n=18) male and 67% (n=37) female. Only 3% (n=1) of students who

lived with their parents were African American, with the majority, 97%

(n=30), being of the Caucasian race. Of the students who lived away from

their parents, 82% (n=45) were Caucasian and 18% (n=10) were African

American. The students who lived in an alternate setting without their

parents consisted of 64% (n=35) freshman, 27% (n=15) sophomores, 6%

(n=3) juniors and 4% (n=2) seniors. Those students who continued to live

with their parents were made up of 61% (n=19) freshmen, 29% (n=9)

sophomores, 10% (n=3) juniors, and no seniors. *See Table 2.*

***Table 2:*** *Demographic statistics of participants*

| Demographic Variables | | Living w/Parents(n=31) | | Alternate Arrangements (n=55) | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | n | % | n | % |
| Gender: | Male | 14 | 45 | 18 | 33 |
| | Female | 17 | 55 | 37 | 67 |
| Race: | Caucasian | 30 | 97 | 45 | 82 |
| | African Amer. | 1 | 3 | 10 | 18 |
| Years in College | Freshman | 19 | 61 | 35 | 64 |
| | Sophomore | 9 | 29 | 15 | 27 |
| | Junior | 3 | 10 | 3 | 6 |
| | Senior | 0 | 0 | 2 | 4 |

Instrument

*Psychological Separation Inventory (PSI)*

The Psychological Separation Inventory (PSI) (Hoffman, 1984) is an individual or group-administered written test designed to assess the adolescent's independence from parents (Rice, 1992). It is a paper and pencil test, requiring no training to administer, and should take approximately 12 minutes to complete. Consisting of 138 self-report items, the PSI is a 5 point Likert-type scale. Respondents are asked to score items from 1 to 5, with 1 being "not at all true of me" to 5 being "very true of me". The higher the score on the PSI, the greater the separation or independence from parents (Hoffman, 1984; Lapsley, Rice & Shadid, 1989; Rice, 1992).

The PSI provides a score for each of four dimensions that theoretically underlie the construct of psychological separation (Lopez, Campbell & Watkins, Jr., 1986). Sixty- nine of the questions are geared at gathering information about separation from the mother while the other half (69) pertains to information about separation from the father. Although these two parts may be used and scored separately if the researcher is only interested in gathering information about one parent, all questions were administered for this study as it was the intent to gather general information. In combining both parts of the test, internal consistency is slightly improved. Used separately, the coefficient alphas

range from .84 to .93 (Lopez, Campbell, & Watkins, 1988). Together, they range from .91 to .94.

The highest degrees of internal consistency are found within the CI scale (.90) and the AI scale (.88). Test-retest reliability after 2-3 weeks ranged from .49 to .94 for males, with a median of .86, and ranged from .70 to .96 for females, with a median of .83 (Hoffman & Weiss, 1987; Lopez, Campbell & Watkins, 1988). According to the literature available, scale validation is minimal. However, Schultheiss & Blustein state that "evidence for the validity of the measure can be inferred from significant associations between the PSI and academic adjustment and emotional problems" (1994, p. 161). Support for this was also found in other research which stated that construct validity was shown by the significant association between degree of separation from parents and problems involving interpersonal and academic adjustment (Hoffman & Weiss, 1987; Lopez, Campbell & Watkins, 1986; Lucas, 1997).

Procedures

Packets were distributed to male and female undergraduate students enrolled in an Introduction to Psychology course. Each packet included a consent form, a personal data sheet, and the Psychological Separation Inventory. Students were chosen through a cluster sample of three introductory psychology classes at Lindenwood University. Permission for students to take the inventory was requested of each course professor, with the agreement that all student volunteers would receive 5

extra credit points. Students were assured that participation was voluntary and anonymous. The personal data sheet was given to each student to enable researchers to eliminate students of an age not pertaining to the study (over 25), as well as to allow for comparisons between living arrangement, gender and possible racial differences. The information was also used to detect any unexpected results as related to unforeseen extraneous factors.

Chapter IV

Results

The hypothesis being tested was that undergraduate students who
remain living at home perceive themselves as less psychologically
separate from their parents than those undergraduate students living in a
college dormitory or alternative residential arrangement. Due to the gender
imbalance in the two groups, t-tests were run to test for gender difference
on the PSI subscales and no significant differences were found, which
supports that separate gender analysis was not necessary. An independent
t-test $(p<0.05)$ was run with living arrangement (at home versus away
from home) as the independent variable and the PSI subscales as the
dependent variable. No significant difference was found between the two
groups. Therefore, this research failed to reject the null hypothesis.
Descriptive statistics for these results are reported in Table 3.

**_Table 3_**---*Descriptive Statistics for the PSI subscales scores.*

|        | PSI | Group     | N    | M     | SD    | t      | p    |
|--------|-----|-----------|------|-------|-------|--------|------|
| Mother | CI  | Live-home | 31   | 47.65 | 14.18 | .022   | .982 |
|        |     | Live-away | 55   | 47.56 | 17.22 |        |      |
|        | AI  | Live-home | 31   | 40.35 | 12.38 | -1.169 | .246 |
|        |     | Live-away | 55   | 43.78 | 13.41 |        |      |
|        | EI  | Live-home | 31   | 47.52 | 18.60 | .912   | .365 |
|        |     | Live-away | 55   | 44.25 | 14.23 |        |      |
|        | FI  | Live-home | 31   | 35.03 | 11.74 | .501   | .617 |
|        |     | Live-away | 55   | 33.73 | 11.51 |        |      |
| Father | CI  | Live-home | 28*  | 39.50 | 15.30 | -1.528 | .130 |
|        |     | Live-away | 55   | 45.96 | 19.52 |        |      |
|        | AI  | Live-home | 28   | 35.39 | 15.42 | -.818  | .416 |
|        |     | Live-away | 55   | 38.31 | 15.32 |        |      |
|        | EI  | Live-home | 28   | 37.46 | 15.81 | -.209  | .835 |
|        |     | Live-away | 55   | 38.18 | 14.25 |        |      |
|        | FI  | Live-home | 28   | 26.04 | 10.26 | -.258  | .797 |
|        |     | Live-away | 55   | 26.73 | 12.12 |        |      |

*Difference in N between parent groups due to absence of father.

Chapter V

Discussion

The present study failed to support the original hypothesis that undergraduate students who remain living at home perceive themselves as less psychologically separate from their parents than those living in a college dormitory or alternative arrangement.

Limitations of this study that likely influenced the results include the disproportionate number of white females who participated in this study. Due to this imbalance in regard to gender and ethnicity, the sample used in the study is not representative of the general college population. In addition, volunteers from introduction to psychology classes were used in the study, which further limits the generalizability, and perhaps creates a bias in the sample. That this study relied on a self-report method may also have placed limitations on the significance of the results. Participants may have felt compelled to respond to the test items in what they believed was the most socially acceptable manner. Finally, students reported a loss of interest in the survey due its lengthiness.

The research discussed within this paper illustrates the differences among students' adjustment to college dependent upon many factors (Anderson & Fleming, 1986; Brack, Gay, Matheny, 1993;Cooney & Nonnamaker, 1992). These may be developmental issues, socioeconomic factors, personality factors and family dynamics, to name but a few. In addition, the level of attachment and separation in regard to the

parent/student relationship has varied dependent upon a number of variables (Berman & Sperling, 1991; Tryon, 1984).

Despite the absence of a statistical relationship between these psychological separation and residence, it is important that researchers continue to investigate the impact residence may have on a student's perceived level of psychological separation. In addition, it may be helpful for future researchers to assess psychological separation of the adolescent not only from the adolescent's perspective, but that of their parents to obtain an all-encompassing view of the dynamics involved in separating from the family of origin. It may prove to be insightful to examine the difference between the parents' perception of the adolescent's level of psychological separation and that of the student's self report.

Given the strong relationship between separation issues and adjustment to college, it is important that researchers conclude whether residence influences the student's perception of independence and separateness from parents. Johnson, Staton & Jorgensen-Earp (1995) research shows that there are differences between commuters and campus residents in the problems presented in college counseling centers. It is possible that there may be differences that exist within the individual prior to their decision to leave home. The current research does not consider that personality factors may also affect the decision regarding which college living arrangement is most suitable for an individual. In addition,

adolescent/parent relationships that have already been established before a student enters college may also increase the vulnerability to adjustment problems after the transition to college occurs. In consideration of this, future research may benefit from a pre- and post-test comparison of individual's scores on the PSI.

It stands to reason that with the stress involved in the transition into young adulthood, the likelihood is high that a student will seek personal counseling. Whether the student lives at home or away from home may influence the counselor's approach to selecting effective treatment. It is important for college counseling centers to know the population with whom they may be working, and the factors involved, in order that they will be able to provide assistance and support to these students.

## Appendix A

### Consent Form

I agree _____, do not agree _____, to take part in this study of undergraduate students at Lindenwood University.  It is my understanding that this information is to be used strictly for the intended research purposes and is to remain absolutely confidential.

Appendix B

Demographic Questionnaire

Please fill out the following information as it applies to you.  Circle, or fill in, the appropriate answer.  This information will only be used in a statistical analysis of the research.

Gender:    Male    Female

Age: _____

Ethnicity: _____

How many years have you been in college? _____

What year are you in?    Freshman    Sophomore    Junior

Senior

Marital Status _____

Where do you live?        1            2            3
4
                    With parents    Apartment    Dormitory
Other
                                    Off campus

If applicable, how many roommates? _____
(do not answer if you live with your parents)

Appendix C

Psychological Separation Inventory

Instructions: The following list of statements describes different aspects of students' relationships with both their mother and father. Imagine a scale ranging from 1 to 5 that tells how well each statement applies to you. In the space next to the statement, please enter a number from "1" (Not at all true of me) to "5" (Very true of me). If the statement does not apply enter "1". Please be completely honest. Your answers are totally confidential and will be useful only if they accurately describe you.

| Not at all True of me | A little bit true of me | Moderately true of me | Quite a bit true of me | Very true of me |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

___ 1. I like to show friends pictures of my mother.
___ 2. Sometimes my mother is a burden to me.
___ 3. I feel longing if I am away from my mother too long.
___ 4. My ideas regarding racial equality are similar to my mother's.
___ 5. My mother's wishes have influenced my selection of friends.
___ 6. I feel like I am constantly at war with my mother.
___ 7. I blame my mother for many of the problems I have.
___ 8. I wish I could trust my mother more.
___ 9. My attitudes about obscenity are similar to my mother's.
___ 10. When I am in difficulty I usually call upon my mother to help me out of trouble.
___ 11. My mother is the most important person in the world to me.
___ 12. I have to be careful not to hurt my mother's feelings.
___ 13. I wish that my mother lived nearer so I could visit her more frequently.
___ 14. My opinions regarding the role of women are similar to my mother's.
___ 15. I often ask my mother to assist me in solving my personal problems.
___ 16. I sometimes feel I'm being punished by my mother.
___ 17. Being away from my mother makes me feel lonely.
___ 18. I wish my mother wasn't so overprotective.
___ 19. My opinions regarding the role of men are similar to my mother's.
___ 20. I wouldn't make a major purchase without my mother's approval.
___ 21. I wish my mother wouldn't try to manipulate me.
___ 22. I wish my mother wouldn't try to make fun of me.
___ 23. I sometimes call home just to hear my mother's voice.
___ 24. My religious beliefs are similar to my mother's.
___ 25. My mother's wishes have influenced my choice of major at school.
___ 26. I feel that I have obligations to my mother that I wish I didn't have.
___ 27. My mother expects too much from me.
___ 28. I wish I could stop lying to my mother.
___ 29. My beliefs regarding how to raise children are similar to my mother's.
___ 30. My mother helps me to make my budget.
___ 31. While I am home on a home vacation I like to spend most of my time with my mother.
___ 32. I often wish that my mother would treat me more like an adult.
___ 33. After being with my mother for a vacation I find it difficult to leave her.
___ 34. My values regarding honesty are similar to my mother's.
___ 35. I generally consult with my mother when I make plans for an out of town weekend.
___ 36. I am often angry at my mother.
___ 37. I like to hug and kiss my mother.
___ 38. I hate it when my mother makes suggestions about what I do.
___ 39. My attitudes about solitude are similar to my mother's.
___ 40. I consult with my mother when deciding about part-time employment.
___ 41. I decide what to do according to whether my mother will approve of it.

__ 42. Even when my mother has a good idea I refuse to listen to it because she made it.
__ 43. When I do poorly in school I feel I'm letting my mother down.
__ 44. My attitudes regarding environmental protection are similar to my mother's.
__ 45. I ask my mother what to do when I get into a tough situation.
__ 46. I wish my mother wouldn't try to get me to take sides with her.
__ 47. My mother is my best friend.
__ 48. I argue with my mother over little things.
__ 49. My beliefs about how the world began are similar to my mother's.
__ 50. I do what my mother decides on most questions that come up.
__ 51. I seem to be closer to my mother than most people my age are.
__ 52. My mother is sometimes a source of embarrassment to me.
__ 53. Sometimes I think I am too dependent on my mother.
__ 54. My beliefs about what happens to people when they die are similar to my mother's.
__ 55. I ask for my mother's advice when I am planning my vacation time.
__ 56. I am sometimes ashamed of my mother.
__ 57. I care too much about my mother's reactions.
__ 58. I get angry when my mother criticizes me.
__ 59. My attitudes regarding sex are similar to my mother's.
__ 60. I like to have my mother help me pick out clothing I buy for special occasions.
__ 61. I sometimes feel like an extension of my mother.
__ 62. When I don't write my mother often enough I feel guilty.
__ 63. I feel uncomfortable keeping things from my mother.
__ 64. My attitudes regarding national defense are similar to my mother's.
__ 65. I call my mother whenever anything goes wrong.
__ 66. I often have to make decisions for my mother.
__ 67. I'm not sure I could make it in life without my mother.
__ 68. I sometimes resent it when my mother tells me what to do.
__ 69. My attitudes regarding mentally ill people are similar to my mother's.
__ 70. I like to show my friends pictures of my father.
__ 71. Sometimes my father is a burden to me.
__ 72. I feel longing if I am away from my father too long.
__ 73. My ideas regarding racial equality are similar to my father's.
__ 74. My father's wishes have influenced my selection of friends.
__ 75. I feel like I am constantly at war with my father.
__ 76. I blame my father for many of the problems I have.
__ 77. I wish I could trust my father more.
__ 78. My attitudes about obscenity are similar to my father's.
__ 79. When I am in difficulty I usually call upon my father to help me out of trouble.
__ 80. My father is the most important person in the world to me.
__ 81. I have to be careful not to hurt my father's feelings.
__ 82. I wish that my father lived nearer so I could visit him more frequently.
__ 83 My opinions regarding the role of women are similar to my father's
__ 84. I often ask my father to assist me in solving my personal problems.
__ 85. I sometimes feel like I'm being punished by my father.
__ 86. Being away from my father makes me feel lonely.
__ 87. I wish my father wasn't so overprotective.
__ 88. My opinions regarding the role of men are similar to my father's.
__ 89. I wouldn't make a major purchase without my father's approval.
__ 90. I wish my father wouldn't try to manipulate me.
__ 91. I wish my father wouldn't try to make fun of me.
__ 92. I sometimes call home just to hear my father's voice.
__ 93. My religious beliefs are similar to my father's.
__ 94. My father's wishes have influenced my choice of major at school.
__ 95. I feel that I have obligations to my father that I wish I didn't have.
__ 96. My father expects too much from me.
__ 97. I wish I could stop lying to my father.

___ 98. My beliefs regarding how to raise children are similar to my father's.
___ 99. My father helps me make my budget.
___ 100. While I am on a vacation I like to spend most of my time with my father.
___ 101. I often wish that my father would treat me more like an adult.
___ 102. After being with my father for a vacation I find it difficult to leave him.
___ 103. My values regarding honesty are similar to my father's.
___ 104. I generally consult with my father when I make plans for an out of town weekend.
___ 105. I am often angry at my father.
___ 106. I like to hug and kiss my father.
___ 107. I hate it when my father makes suggestions about what I do.
___ 108. My attitudes about solitude are similar to my father's.
___ 109. I consult with my father when deciding about part-time employment.
___ 110. I decide what to do according to whether my father will approve it.
___ 111. Even when my father has a good idea I refuse to listen to it because he made it.
___ 112. When I do poorly in school I feel I'm letting my father down.
___ 113. My attitudes regarding environmental protection are similar to my father's.
___ 114. I ask my father what to do when I get into a tough situation.
___ 115. I wish my father wouldn't try to get me to take sides with him.
___ 116. My father is my best friend.
___ 117. I argue with my father over little things.
___ 118. My beliefs about how the world began are similar to my father's.
___ 119. I do what my father decides on most questions that come up.
___ 120. I seem to be closer to my father than most people are.
___ 121. My father is sometimes a source of embarrassment to me.
___ 122. Sometimes I think I am too dependent on my father.
___ 123. My beliefs about what happens to people when they die are similar to my father's.
___ 124. I ask for my father's advice when I am planning my vacation time.
___ 125. I am sometimes ashamed of my father.
___ 126. I care too much about my father's reaction.
___ 127. I get angry when my father criticizes me.
___ 128. My attitudes regarding sex are similar to my father's.
___ 129. I like to have my father help me pick out the clothing I buy for special occasions.
___ 130. I sometimes feel like an extension of my father.
___ 131. When I don't write my father often enough I feel guilty.
___ 132. I feel uncomfortable keeping things from my father.
___ 133. My attitudes regarding national defense are similar to my father's.
___ 134. I call my father whenever anything goes wrong.
___ 135. I often have to make decisions for my father.
___ 136. I'm not sure I could make it in life without my father.
___ 137. I sometimes resent it when my father tells me what to do.
___ 138. My attitudes regarding mentally ill people are similar to my father's.

*Psychological Separation Inventory* (PSI) by Jeffrey A. Hoffman. 1985.
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