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## Postdivorce parental roles: a descriptive study

Victor R. Congleton  
*Portland State University*

Lisa Christina Londos  
*Portland State University*

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POSTDIVORCE PARENTAL ROLES:

A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

by

VICTOR R. CONGLETON  
and  
LISA CHRISTINA LONDOS

A research practicum submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

MASTER  
OF  
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TO THE OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH:

The members of the Committee approve the research practicum of Victor R. Congleton and Lisa Christina Londos presented June 7, 1976.

APPROVED:



Kay Tohan



Stanley Cohen



Nolan Jones

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS . . . . .	iii
LIST OF TABLES . . . . .	v
CHAPTER	
I    PREFACE . . . . .	1
II   SURVEY OF LITERATURE . . . . .	3
Introduction . . . . .	3
Content . . . . .	7
III  METHODOLOGY OF PREVIOUS STUDIES . . . . .	25
Introduction . . . . .	25
Content . . . . .	28
IV  INTRODUCTION . . . . .	38
V   PRESENTATION OF DATA . . . . .	44
VI  FINDINGS . . . . .	96
VII RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS . . . . .	104
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	106
APPENDIX I . . . . .	117
APPENDIX II . . . . .	131
APPENDIX III . . . . .	138

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		PAGE
I A	. . . . .	49
I B	. . . . .	50
I C	. . . . .	51
II A	. . . . .	52
II B	. . . . .	53
II C	. . . . .	54
III A	. . . . .	55
III B	. . . . .	56
IV A	. . . . .	57
IV B	. . . . .	58
IV C	. . . . .	59
V A	. . . . .	60
V B	. . . . .	61
VI	. . . . .	62
VII	. . . . .	63
VIII A	. . . . .	64
VIII B	. . . . .	65
VIII C	. . . . .	66
VIII D	. . . . .	67
VIII E	. . . . .	68
VIII F	. . . . .	69

TABLE

PAGE

VIII G	. . . . .	70
VIII H	. . . . .	71
IX A	. . . . .	72
IX B	. . . . .	73
IX C	. . . . .	73
X A	. . . . .	74
X B	. . . . .	75
X C	. . . . .	75
XI A	. . . . .	76
XI B	. . . . .	77
XI C	. . . . .	77
XII A	. . . . .	78
XII B	. . . . .	79
XII C	. . . . .	79
XIII A	. . . . .	80
XIII B	. . . . .	81
XIII C	. . . . .	82
XIII D	. . . . .	83
XIV A	. . . . .	84
XIV B	. . . . .	85
XIV C	. . . . .	86
XIV D	. . . . .	87
XV A	. . . . .	88
XV B	. . . . .	89

TABLE

PAGE

XV C	. . . . .	90
XV D	. . . . .	91
XVI A	. . . . .	92
XVI B	. . . . .	93
XVI C	. . . . .	94
XVI D	. . . . .	95

## CHAPTER I

### PREFACE

Divorce is becoming an increasingly common phenomenon in American society. Its occurrence is increasing both in absolute and relative numbers, and also in its involvement of minor children.<sup>1</sup> As will be demonstrated below, very little is actually known about the process of divorce or about its impact on the members of the family. Of particular concern is the effect of divorce on the children involved, and the decisions and practice of the divorcing parents regarding their subsequent parenting relationship to the children.

The authors of this report intend to study a random sample of divorcing couples and to derive a descriptive analysis of their perceptions of the proper role of the non-custodial parent (usually the father) in regard to the child rearing process following separation and divorce. We will work with that portion of available data for which we have information from both parents in the divorcing family. Particular attention will be paid to issues of congruence or noncongruence in perceptions between the two members of the

<sup>1</sup>Julie Fulton, audio tape, University of Minnesota, 1974.

coparental couple (including each member's judgement of his/her partner's perceptions of the issues.

We believe that the ability of the divorcing parents to provide a stable and cooperative relationship in their parental roles is very important for the children to be assisted in adjusting to the divorce. Given this assumption, the extent of congruence or noncongruence in the perceptions of the parents about the role of the noncustodial parent in postdivorce child rearing may be very important in determining the degree of cooperation between them and the subsequent ease of adjustment of the children to the new family role relationships.

Our data will be taken from questionnaires and oral interviews with a random sample of divorcing couples, administered very soon after the official filing for the divorce. Longitudinal studies are planned to follow the subjects through the divorce process for as long as eighteen months after filing. These subsequent studies will not be reported here.

## CHAPTER TWO

### SURVEY OF LITERATURE

#### Introduction

Divorce in this country is becoming a more and more widespread phenomenon. The number of people affected by divorce increases every year. Not only is the number of couples who divorce increasing, but the number and proportion of divorcing families with minor children is increasing.<sup>2</sup> In 1971, 840,000 minor children were involved in divorce as compared to 700,000 in 1968, and 413,000 in 1960. In 1968 over 60 per cent of the divorces involved minor children and by 1973 almost 70 per cent of divorcing couples had minor children.<sup>3</sup> There are many researchers who work with divorce statistics, and the general consensus is that there is an increase in the number of divorcing couples, in the divorce rate, in the proportion of divorces involving families with children, and in the average number of children per divorce.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>David A. Olson, "Marital and Family Therapy: Integrative Review and Critique," in A Decade of Family Research and Action, ed. by Carlfred Broderick, National Council of Family Relations, 1972, pp. 5-17.

<sup>4</sup>Fulton, loc. cit.

According to researchers, it is estimated that of all the marriages in 1968, one out of four will end in divorce.<sup>5</sup> The most recent figures show that in 1975, nationwide, more than one-third of all marriages will end in divorce. While on the West Coast, the figure is closer to one-half.<sup>6</sup> In 1975, divorce in this country reached the one million mark.<sup>7</sup> In 1914 we had around 100,000 divorces. In 1970 there were 750,000 divorces.<sup>8</sup> Between 1967 and 1970 alone, the divorce rate increased 30 per cent. National statistics indicate that not only is the divorce rate increasing, but that the marriage rate is also increasing.<sup>9</sup>

Divorce laws are becoming more liberalized. Several states have now passed "no fault" divorce laws making divorces easier to obtain. This should contribute to the growing divorce rate. The increased longevity of parents and children will be a contributing factor as well, creating an increased possibility for divorce to occur.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Rebecca Stafford, Ph.D., "We Can't Live With Them-- We Can't Live Without Them," The Single Parent, March 1976, 5-9.

<sup>7</sup>The Sunday Oregonian, March 7, 1976.

<sup>8</sup>Stafford, op. cit., pp. 5-9.

<sup>9</sup>David Olson, op. cit., pp. 7-15.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

Goode, a leading divorce researcher, contends that a major reason for the increase is that in modern America there has been an ideological shift for greater individualism. The result of this is that people are more reluctant to remain in a marriage where their individual needs are not met.<sup>11</sup> In modern society, marriage partners need not come from backgrounds as homogenous as before. Partners may come from different cultural areas, possess varied levels of education, and have different expectations in regard to income and life style. There tends to be more opportunities in this situation for stress and conflict, and this is often accompanied by a decreasing effective compromise or even the desire to compromise.<sup>12</sup>

Divorce is a difficult and trying situation for those involved in that with the dissolution of marriage, the family is fragmented. The members have to deal with a great upset in their sense of interdependability. The relationship of the family members is altered. At least one, if not both, of the parents made a conscious choice to dissolve the marriage. The children, however, had little if anything to say about the decision. Their position is one of relative

<sup>11</sup>John Scanzoni, "A Social System's Analysis of Dissolved and Existing Marriages, Journal of Marriage and the Family, 30 (August 1965), 460.

<sup>12</sup>John Scanzoni, "A Reinquiry in Marital Disorganization," Journal of Marriage and the Family, 27 (November 1965), 483-91.

powerlessness. A child's emotional and affectional ties in our society are to his immediate family group, and divorce involves the alteration of these relationships. While this has a great impact on their lives, they have little influence over the situation and how it affects them.<sup>13</sup>

Divorce is the dissolution of marriage, a termination of the husband and wife relationship, but it is not a termination of the parental responsibilities. Only the sexual union has been dissolved. Parental rights and responsibilities are unchanged by divorce. The problem lies in carrying them out. In the case of divorce, there is no such thing as a single parent family. There are still two parents who must negotiate the parenting relationship between themselves.<sup>14</sup>

Divorce is often viewed as a tragic event in our society and those involved are often pitied. While it may be unfortunate that a marriage ends in divorce, it is the continuance of a destructive marriage that presents a tragic situation. Divorce in itself is no tragedy and may be a beneficial situation for all involved.<sup>15</sup> What is tragic is

<sup>13</sup>Martin Ploscowe, The Truth About Divorce (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1967), p. 220.

<sup>14</sup>Fulton, loc. cit.

<sup>15</sup>Morton M. Hunt, The World of The Formerly Married (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), pp. 40-45; and J. Louise Despert, Children of Divorce (Garden City, New York: Dolphin, 1962) pp. 20-25.

that in a society where divorce is as widespread as it is, we know so little about the effects on the parents and children involved.<sup>16</sup>

### Content

Although divorce affects so many people in this country, there is a dearth of published material on the subject. It is a recognized fact that divorce is becoming more widespread, but it is a little understood phenomenon and little is known about the ways in which people deal with divorce. It is viewed as a problem in our society; as something to be avoided. The social norm is permanency in marriage.<sup>17</sup> There exists a discrepancy, however, between the cultural norm and the personal reality for a growing number of people. Societal feelings about divorce appear to be ambivalent. For many there has been a conscious denunciation, loss of respect, or separation from society's institutions. The controls which have been set up by these powerful institutions, however, cannot be so easily denied. Being so powerful, they still govern our social consciences and feelings.<sup>18</sup> Divorce, therefore, still is seen as a

<sup>16</sup>Fulton, loc. cit.

<sup>17</sup>Hunt, op. cit., pp. 40-45; and Esther Oshivar Fisher, Divorce: The New Freedom (New York: Harper & Co., 1974), pp. 10-20.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 13.

deviation; although there does seem to be a more liberal attitude emerging.

Evidence of this more liberal attitude can be seen in the "no fault" divorce laws which are being adopted by more and more states. Divorcing persons are not currently as widely seen as self-gratifying, and there is not, as before, the same moral condemnation. An attitude prevails that divorce is a tragic event.<sup>19</sup> The divorcing couples are seen as having failed, and those involved are pitied.<sup>20</sup> Divorce is not an isolated event, but a process that alters the relationship of the members of the family and their inter-dependability. Although the husband and wife relationship is terminated, the parental relationship continues and the members are faced with a situation containing no socially prescribed roles.<sup>21</sup> In Rebecca Stafford's recent study, the divorcees felt that the norms for their behavior were unclear.<sup>22</sup>

In this country, socialization takes place primarily in the biparental nuclear family. Children are primarily

<sup>19</sup>Stafford, loc. cit.

<sup>20</sup>Bernard Steinzor, When Parents Divorce (New York: Random House, 1969), p. 5.

<sup>21</sup>Fisher, op. cit., pp. 10-25.

<sup>22</sup>Stafford, loc. cit.

dependent on their parents for emotional, physical and social support. A child gets his sense of belonging from the immediate nuclear family, and particularly from his/her mother and father.<sup>23</sup>

It is a commonly accepted belief that the children of parents who have been divorced are more susceptible to delinquency and personal and social problems than those children of families that remain intact.<sup>24</sup> There has been much research done on the relationship between broken homes and delinquency. While this research supports the fact that a relationship does exist here, many of the researchers feel that the parental relationship is of far greater importance than the fact that these children come from broken homes.<sup>25</sup>

The biological, social and emotional growth and development of children continues regardless of the circumstances in the family. The needs at different stages of development are still there and need to be met and understood.<sup>26</sup> In the nuclear family the development of the

<sup>23</sup>Steinzor, op. cit., p. 4.

<sup>24</sup>J. R. Udrey, The Social Context of Marriage (New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1971), p. 458; J. Westman, et al., "The Role of Child Psychiatry in Divorce," Archives of General Psychiatry, 23 (5) 1971 416-420; and Despert, op. cit., pp. 10-20.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Irving R. Stuart and E. Abt Lawrence, Children of Separation and Divorce (New York: Grossman, 1972), pp. 10-15.

individual is conditioned not only by his own biological, social and emotional needs, but by the needs of the other members of the family, and of the family as a whole.<sup>27</sup>

Divorce involves a fragmentation of this immediate family group, and therefore has a serious impact on the child.<sup>28</sup>

The relationship of the divorcing parents and their subsequent parenting style is felt by researchers and therapists to be of great importance in determining the behavior patterns, the sense of security and self-esteem of the children who are dependent on their parents. Parents who do not cooperate and work out their differences are believed not to be able to provide their children with the security that they need.<sup>29</sup> It therefore follows that the longer it takes for the parents to establish or re-establish a consistent parenting relationship, the more difficult it will be for the children to come to grips with the situation, and

<sup>27</sup> Paul Krantzler, Creative Divorce (New York: M. Evans and Co., 1974), pp. 195-220; and Frances H. Scherz, "Maturational Crises and Parent-Child Interaction," Social Casework, 52-6 (June 1971), 362-369.

<sup>28</sup> Scherz, loc. cit.

<sup>29</sup> Stuart and Lawrence, loc. cit.; Ploscowe, op. cit., pp. 220-223; Krantzler, loc. cit.; Steinzor, op. cit., p. 35; and Scherz, loc. cit.

respond appropriately to the accompanying social and personal changes and demands of divorce.<sup>30</sup>

Divorce itself need not be a tragic event and the cause of personal and behavioral problems in children. Udrey summarized a number of sociological studies dealing with divorce and children and said that:

. . . children from happy marriages are better adjusted than those children from divorced marriages, but those from divorced parents are better adjusted than those from parents whose marriages are intact but unhappy.<sup>31</sup>

Similarly, Louise Despert, a child psychologist, believes that it is not divorce per se, but the amount of distress in the relationship between the parents that determines the amount of distress felt by the children. Divorce may be less destructive, Despert feels, than the marriage which has been terminated by divorce.<sup>32</sup>

In the literature on divorce, it is generally felt by psychologists, psychiatrists and physicians, that it is the uncertainty and ambiguity felt by the divorcing parents regarding their roles in relation to their children that

<sup>30</sup>J. Westman, "Effect of Divorce on a Child's Personality Development," Mental Health Digest, 4 (1972), pp. 24-28; and Scherz, loc. cit.

<sup>31</sup>Udrey, op. cit., pp. 458-460.

<sup>32</sup>Despert, op. cit., pp. 15-20.

negatively affects the behavior and emotional well-being of the children.<sup>33</sup>

When parents divorce, children have a sense of abandonment and vulnerability. Odier describes this postdivorce sense of abandonment as being characterized by "alternation between inner depression and outer aggressiveness; a grieving for the lost family unit, and feelings of being weak and intensely vulnerable."<sup>34</sup>

Cline, Kramer, Westman and Swift, in their studies of children of divorced parents from psychiatric clinics, found that in no case has there been a mutually satisfactory arrangement between the divorced pair in regard to the child-care arrangement. From their findings, they felt that, "the experience of divorce itself is less pathogenic than the nature of the parents' personalities and relationship with their children."<sup>35</sup>

Despert, Krantzler, and others, have found that children often feel that they are responsible for the breakup

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.; Krantzler, loc. cit.; Westman, op. cit., pp. 24-28.

<sup>34</sup>Edwin J. Anthony, "The Child in His Family," Public-International Congress of Child Psychiatry and Allied Professions, 7th, Jerusalem, 1970, pp. 20-40.

<sup>35</sup>Westman, et al., op. cit., pp. 416-420.

of their parents' marriage. When parents, after divorce, continue to act uncooperatively, the child may blame himself for any continued conflict.<sup>36</sup> John McDermott, a child psychiatrist, found this to be true, particularly when there were conflicts over child support since this focused directly on the child.<sup>37</sup>

Wallerstein, through her research on divorce in California, concludes that the guilt that children feel for causing the divorce may be a means to ward off feelings of powerlessness or lack of control over the situation that affects them so much.<sup>38</sup>

McDermott, Krantzler, Despert, and others, speak to the fact that when parents fail to work out cooperative parenting roles, they often use their children as pawns in their continued conflict. Children are sometimes used to deprive one of the parents of affection in retaliation for some wrongdoing to one of the parents. A child's security

<sup>36</sup>Krantzler, op. cit., pp. 195-200; McDermott, "Divorce and Its Psychiatric Sequelae in Children, Archives of General Psychiatry, 23, 5 (1970), pp. 421-27; and Judith S. Wallerstein and Joan Kelley, "Effects of Parental Divorce: Experiences of the Child in Later Latency, American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, Vol. 46, 2 (April, 1976), pp. 480-85.

<sup>37</sup>Westman, et al., loc. cit.

<sup>38</sup>Wallerstein and Kelley, loc. cit.

is threatened if he begins to realize that he is being manipulated in his parents' conflict.<sup>39</sup> On the other hand, the child may manipulate the parents when they have not worked out their relationship. The children may be either trying to reunite the parents, or trying to perpetuate the existing conflict. Children realize quickly when their parents are no longer a team working together but can be manipulated against each other. A child is not comfortable with the power to do this.<sup>40</sup>

As Grollman says in his book, Explaining Divorce to Children, "The sad truth is that in the parental battle for favorable position, most adults ignore the rights of their children."<sup>41</sup> It is felt that regardless of the situation between the parents, the child should be made aware of it. When the situation is unknown to the children, this is far more threatening than a clear, realistic picture. Even if the situation is painful, it is not left to the child to use his/her imagination to fill in the gaps. There is difficulty

<sup>39</sup>Stuart and Lawrence, loc. cit.; Westman, et al., loc. cit.; Despert, loc. cit.; Krantzler, loc. cit.

<sup>40</sup>Hunt, op. cit., pp. 60-8; Stuart and Lawrence, loc. cit.

<sup>41</sup>Grollman, E. A., Explaining Divorce to Children (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969).

in doing this if the parents themselves don't understand their postdivorce situation.<sup>42</sup>

Even if the parents realize the importance for the child of working out a cooperative relationship, a certain amount of ambivalence can be anticipated from the divorce. There may still be unresolved hurt or anger which makes their efforts more difficult.

Goode's findings from his 1948 study were wide-ranging and susceptible of almost endless correlation and interpretation.<sup>43</sup> A few that are generally relevant to the subject matter of this study will be mentioned. He found that discussion of the children (followed by issues of child support payments and division of property) were the most common of predivorce discussion of postdivorce arrangements between the parents. Also, the higher the educational levels of the parents, the more likely they were to have engaged in these kinds of discussions. At the same time, however, there was much less agreement (in the opinions of the mothers) on the appropriate arrangements for the children than there was on questions of division of property. Goode explained this phenomenon by postulating that there were no social norms to guide these decisions. The only universally accepted norm

<sup>42</sup>Despert, op. cit., pp. 18-29; Krantzler, op. cit., pp 204-20.

<sup>43</sup>William J. Goode, "Children in Divorce," Women In Divorce (New York: The Free Press, 1956)

was the continued existence of the two-parent nuclear family, and by deciding to violate that, there was nothing left for them to organize their feelings around.

The study found that there was a moderate positive correlation between the extent of these predivorce discussions of arrangements and a high frequency (once a week or more) of permitted visits between the fathers and their children. Similarly, the extent of the child's attachment to the father (in the mother's perception) was positively correlated with the mother's desire for him to visit the children. This desire for frequent visitation was negatively correlated with her residual desire for some kind of punishment of the ex-husband. If these finds appear to be truisms, it might be noted that this sociologist, before he did this study, believed that divorce was more frequent in the higher socio-economic strata than in the lower, and was among the first to find that this was not the case. Consistent with their decision to omit the father from their study, the Goode group assumed that if the mother was satisfied with the custody and visitation arrangements, that the father was also, due to prevailing role expectations and the social and family structure. This may not be accurate.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of Julie Fulton's previously cited work<sup>44</sup> is the extent to which it indicates

<sup>44</sup>Fulton, loc. cit.

that Goode was wrong in his assumptions of fundamental agreement between the divorcing spouses. Not only did 20 per cent of Fulton's respondents disagree on the educational level of the divorcing spouse, fully 50 per cent of them disagreed on the level of family income at the time of the separation, by several thousands of dollars. One couple even disagreed on the number of children their marriage had produced.

If these couples' responses are noncongruent on such factual historical information, we can expect that more subjective areas will be equally or even more nonconsensual. In fact this is true. Forty per cent of Fulton's couples did not agree at all in their responses as to why they divorced, or what they argued about. Fifty per cent of them agreed in part, and only 10 per cent really agreed on what had happened.

In the area of child rearing values, Fulton's work seems to validate the utility of Scheff's (1968) hierarchical conceptualization of consensus.<sup>45</sup> Scheff argued that mere agreement on an issue is not as important for cooperation as perceived agreement. Fulton found that the couples who were disputing custody of their children felt there was no consensus between themselves and their divorcing spouse as to child rearing values, and in many

<sup>45</sup>Thomas Scheff, "Toward a Sociological Model of Consensus," American Sociological Review, Vol. 32 (1) 1967, pp. 32-45.

cases found it difficult to even guess at what their ex-mate's values responses might be. In fact, these couples exhibited more agreement in this area than did the non-contesting couples--who were cooperating in the parental relationship and perceived a good deal of agreement between themselves.

Most of Fulton's custodial parents (primarily mothers) felt that they had no right to interfere with the relationship between the children and their father. They were also hard put to figure out what the real value of the visitation was, aside from the legal rights aspect.

In spite of liberalized divorce laws and a generally more liberal society, it is the feeling of several therapists and researchers who have written on divorce that divorce is still seen as a sign of failure. As a result, even though the divorce may be putting an end to a destructive marriage, the people involved feel that they have to justify their actions. There still exist ambivalent feelings about divorcing persons.<sup>46</sup> Stafford, in her studies, found that some divorcees experienced a certain amount of social ostracism and feelings of guilt. Many times friends or relatives do what they can to "fix up" the marriage or suggest marital counseling. There seems to be the assumption that the decision to divorce was not a rational adult

<sup>46</sup>Stafford, loc. cit.; Hunt, loc. cit.; Krantzner, loc. cit.

decision, but that things can be worked out.<sup>47</sup> Here is also the idea that divorce, in itself, has negative effects on children and the parents should try to make their marriage work, "if only for the sake of the children." Parents who decide to divorce may feel that they are acting selfishly or depriving their children of a "happy home." The ambivalence of people in regard to divorce can often be seen when they are informed of plans to divorce by a friend. People don't know whether to console and feel sorry for the person or to congratulate them.<sup>48</sup> From her studies, Stafford found the divorcees often express low levels of self-esteem as well as guilt. Divorcing people, it is found, are feeling embarrassed or guilty about their decision at a time when they need to feel assurance, self-esteem and support to enable them to work out the arrangements affecting their future and that of their children.<sup>49</sup>

Role disturbance is yet another factor contributing to the difficulty in establishing a consistent parenting relationship. Hunt believes that the loneliness felt by those involved in divorce is often largely due to this role

<sup>47</sup>Hunt, loc. cit.; Fisher, op. cit., pp. 10-15.

<sup>48</sup>Stafford, loc. cit.; and Willard Waller and Rueben Hill, The Family (New York: Dreydon Press, 1951), p. 419.

<sup>49</sup>Hunt, op. cit., pp. 60-65; Stafford, loc. cit.; Krantzler, loc. cit.; and Fisher, op. cit., pp. 10-20.

disturbance. The more specialized the roles the husband and wife experienced in marriage, the greater the disturbance felt by divorce.<sup>50</sup>

Also, the longer the couple has been married, the greater the personal and social commitment, the harder it will be to adjust to the new situation. It requires the disintegration or giving up of some patterns which existed a long time, and which carried with them great emotional investments.<sup>51</sup> Most of the roles we play are governed by tradition or societal definitions of what these roles entail. In this way we know what is expected from us and in many cases there are ideal standards to aspire to. There is no such frame of reference for divorcing persons. Divorce tells them that they are not married but it does not tell them what they are. They have no clear direction as to what their behavior should be. Divorcing persons find themselves in a social status for which there have been no clearly defined roles. They are no longer married, yet they are not really single.<sup>52</sup> Paul Krantzler in his book, Creative Divorce, describes this predicament:

<sup>50</sup>Krantzler, loc. cit.; and Hunt, op. cit., pp. 45-50.

<sup>51</sup>Robert R. Bell, Marriage and Family Interaction (Homewood, Ill.: Dorsey Press, 1967), pp. 330-335; and Krantzler, loc. cit.

<sup>52</sup>Stafford, loc. cit.; Fisher, loc. cit.; and Krantzler, op. cit., pp. 7 and 73.

For most of us marriage was the primary determiner of ourselves; it told us who we were, what to do, how to behave towards others, what to feel. It supplied the reasons for living and the rules by which we lived, although we may not have realized this while we were married.<sup>53</sup>

Before a person can perform satisfactorily in a new role or incorporate a new self-definition, they must know what is expected of them, both in terms of behavior and values. They need some type of social confirmation.<sup>54</sup>

For divorcing couples there is a great deal of disconnecting yet to be done after physical separation. Those who have children must maintain a parenting relationship. They can terminate their sexual relationship, but not their parental one. In our society these relationships are joined in the monogamous family. Even though the roles are inter-related and overlap, the parents must maintain some autonomy of the husband/wife relationship. How effective they are in developing a cooperative parenting relationship after divorce may be dependent on how well they separated these roles when they were married.<sup>55</sup>

Couples who become parents soon after they have been married have not had much opportunity to develop their husband-wife role first. After the children arrive, they

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>54</sup>Fisher, loc. cit.; Krantzler, op. cit., pp. 70-6.

<sup>55</sup>Stuart and Lawrence, loc. cit.; Fisher, loc. cit.

have much less time to do so. Then they are not only husband and wife, but mother and father also, and the separation of roles can become more difficult.<sup>56</sup> Dr. Nathan Ackerman, a family therapist, says,

. . . unfortunately many people dissolve the sexual union (in divorce) and in so doing, are incapacitated in terms of being able to maintain a continuity of the parental partnership for their offspring.<sup>57</sup>

There are certain titles used for divorced parents and often by the divorced themselves, which are ambiguous. The terms "single parents" or "parents without partners," intimate that there is only one parent. There are still two parents, however, as there cannot be an ex-parent or an ex-child.<sup>58</sup>

While divorce laws are becoming increasingly more liberalized and several states are adopting "no fault" divorce, the question of custody is still governed by the adversary process. This process serves as a further impediment in the development of the parenting relationship. Although some parents are able to work out a cooperative custody agreement, many couples end up in domestic relations court. There it will be determined which parent is "fit" and should be given custody for the "best interest of the

<sup>56</sup>Bell, op. cit., p. 335.

<sup>57</sup>Stuart and Lawrence, loc. cit.

<sup>58</sup>Grollman, op. cit., p. 43; and Fisher, loc. cit.

child." These ambiguous terms govern the award of custody. Exactly what is meant by "fit" parent or "the best interest of the child"?<sup>59</sup> In custody cases, compromise between the parents becomes difficult, if not impossible. After all, there must be a "winner" and a "loser."<sup>60</sup> The procedure actually may tend to sharpen any existing conflict between the parents. Through the conflicting charges, counter-charges, and recriminations, the judge must determine where the "best interests of the child" will be served. Each of the parents has a lawyer who is obliged not to bring into court anything which may hurt his client's case. If he has knowledge of facts concerning either of the parents or the children, he will not reveal this unless it will help his client.<sup>61</sup> The outcome of the case is also dependent upon the adeptness of the lawyers, how passive or aggressive the clients are, and the degree of harshness of the particular state laws.<sup>62</sup> This process would seem to make the situation even more difficult for those involved and to deteriorate the relationship between the parents instead of working to

<sup>59</sup>Dr. Jonas Freed and Prof. Henry H. Foster, Jr., The Shuffled Child and Divorce Court, Trial Magazine, p. 28.

<sup>60</sup>D. L. Bazelon, "Psychiatrists and the Adversary Process," Scientific American 230 (1974), pp. 18-23.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>N. Sheresky and M. Mannes, Uncoupling (New York: Viking Press, 1972, p. 145.

solve some of their problems. Blame, guilt, accusation and counter accusations do little for the development of a co-operative relationship.<sup>63</sup>

The whole divorce process does little to meet the social and psychological needs of those involved. There are no provisions available to help structure the roles and status of parents in the divorce process. The process is an impersonal one which sets up restrictions and limitations, but does not aid in the adjustment to and the re-establishment of new roles. The process is not relevant to the problems of the people involved.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., pp. 140-150; and Grollman, op. cit. p. 45.

<sup>64</sup> McDermott, op. cit., pp. 421-427.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY OF PREVIOUS STUDIES

#### Introduction

Given the frequency of divorce in this country and its tendency to rise as current data indicates, there has been an amazingly small amount of research done of the process of it. Most of the work that has been done is either (1) in the area of "how to do it" and the relevant laws of property and custody in the various states, with some suggestions for reform and explication of problem areas, or (2) clinically based studies on the responses of children to the fait accompli. Most of these latter have been drawn from reviews of case records of children and families that have experienced problems after the divorce, and have sought or required counseling or other types of professional intervention.

Information on how people actually proceed, within the family group, in the process of divorce is sorely lacking. It is widely agreed and recognized that divorce is associated with a wide range of problems: identification; feelings of abandonment; resentment; continued struggles on the part of the parties to the divorce; and, to some extent, juvenile delinquency and pathology in the involved children.

Unfortunately, most of the studies done on pathology are merely correlative. An equal amount of evidence is available to suggest that intervening variables--poverty, race, separation of the family, and interpersonal problems in the family while still intact--may well be more responsible than divorce per se for subsequent social and interpersonal problems in the children of divorce. Studies that have avoided this clinical bias and attempted to include as many divorced subjects as possible from the eligible population, have suffered from two different kinds of problems-- (1) a retrospective methodology, and (2) reliance on only half of the divorcing parental couple (the mother, who is, in about 90 per cent of the cases, the custodial parent). These kinds of studies (reviewed in some detail below) are quite valuable in that they give us a good picture of what the family unit looks and acts like, from the perspective of the head of the household, after the divorce has occurred. It allows us to look at the proportion of children of divorce who subsequently have problems. This is surely a more valuable piece of information than the more commonly cited proportion of children with problems who have been involved in a divorce. At least it is more valuable for purposes of evaluation and planning for the phenomenon of divorce.

There are two things glaringly lacking from even these superior studies: (1) a longitudinal methodology, and (2)

involvement in the study of the noncustodial parent--in the overwhelming majority of cases, the father. These are sources of information that are obviously crucial to the understanding of the divorce process and its effects on the people involved. To obtain information at a certain point in the process is to illuminate only that point--what went before and what comes after in the lives of the participants will remain beclouded. Perhaps even more important is the participation of the noncustodial parent. The necessarily subjective and possibly selective recollections of the mother concerning the tensions and conflicts leading to the divorce, the planning for custody, visitation and support money, etc., tell us less than half the story of the postdivorce parental relationship and its genesis.

The father's perceptions of this process and its components are equally as important to an understanding of its development. More important still is the relationship of these perceptions to each other. Do the parents accurately perceive the feelings, attitudes and desires of one another, or do the strains and conflict that led to the divorce also lead to misperceptions of the desired and intended coparental relationship after the divorce? It would seem that this is a case in which the whole might be greater than the sum of the parts--precisely the kind of information that has generally been lacking in previous studies of the process and effects of divorce.

There exists even less relevant information on the content area of this particular study--the role relationships of the divorcing parental couple regarding child rearing, with particular emphasis on the role of the non-custodial parent. The studies on pathological effects of divorce on the children deal with this issue only very indirectly, in terms of the child's perceived feelings concerning his or her parents. The retrospective studies (see below) are necessarily very limited in their coverage of the planned co-parental relationship. Any study that does not involve both parents, as pointed out above, leaves out not only the perceptions and intentions of the noncustodial parent, but the all important relationship between his perceptions of the divorce and the co-parental relationship, and that of the mother. This is information which is crucial to a competent understanding of the dynamics and process of divorce.

### Content

The study of divorce done by William J. Goode<sup>65</sup> and his associates in 1948 is the most comprehensive ever done, and to date constitutes the definitive sociological work done in this area. He drew from the court records the names of 892 women whose divorces were finalized at points two,

<sup>65</sup>Goode, loc. cit.

eight, fourteen, and twenty-six months prior to the date the study was to begin. A 121-item questionnaire was then administered to all of these women who could be located and who agreed to cooperate over a one and one-half month period. Four hundred twenty-five completed questionnaires were obtained. One hundred eighty-two potential subjects were dropped at the end of the study due to the time factor.<sup>66</sup>

Goode's rationale for this study was to gather as much information as possible on the adjustment to the existing social reality of divorce. His sample included women between the ages of twenty and thirty-eight, with minor children, currently living in metropolitan Detroit, Michigan. The choices of the subjects, re: the time elapsed since the divorce was granted, was made to obtain information on the change of perception and adjustment over time after the divorce. He felt that logistics and interviewee attrition over this period of time would prohibit using a panel of the same respondents over the same period of time. The six week time limit for interviewing was imposed in order to maintain the integrity of the time-elapsed-since-divorce categories. Eighty-one per cent of his respondents were white, and 19 per cent were black--as compared with an 85 per cent-15 per cent breakdown in the general population of Detroit at the time.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>66</sup>Ibid., Appendix I.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., Chapter 2.

Goode and his group generally discounted the importance of including the former husband (the father) in their study. They assumed that most of the information desired could be adequately supplied by either party, that there was only a very small amount of information that was the exclusive province of the father, and that since the children were almost universally living with the mother, this was where their focus should be. They proceeded on the assumption that whatever, if any, distortion of information occurred from using only the mother, that this would be random and would tend to be evened out over the entire study population.<sup>68</sup> They also assumed, without testing the assumption, that the parents would be in basic agreement about socialization of children issues.<sup>69</sup>

One of the major current criticisms of the Goode study is simply its age. The year 1948 was over a quarter of a century ago, and in many ways, the United States is now a very different place than it was then. However enlightening or accurate his findings may have been, there is clearly a need for current information on how people cope with divorce. However, his methodology also left a great deal to be desired. The retrospective nature of the study leaves some of his data at least suspect. One quarter of his

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., Chapter 2.

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., Chapter 21.

respondents had been divorced for over two years when the interviewers spoke with them. His published data gives no indication of differential response between the two-months-since-divorce and the twenty-six-month group. This is quite possibly an important omission--perceptions and memories certainly change a great deal over time, especially when associated with so emotionally charged an event, or series of events.

The second major criticism is even more important, especially in light of subsequent (see below) information available. The Goode group's assumption of the trifling differences in perception and historical information between the father and his former wife is simply not supportable. As a result, his admirably collected, analyzed, and interpreted data tell us a great deal about the ex-wife and mother who was interviewed (which was, to be sure, his intent). It tells us nothing about the ex-husband/father, and perhaps less than nothing (i.e., incorrect data) about the all-important relationship between the two of them.

The only study similar in intent and methodological strength that has been done since 1948 is one initiated in 1972 by Julie Fulton, a family sociologist from the University of Minnesota, in conjunction with a professor of Law from that school.<sup>70</sup> Their intent was to study the process

<sup>70</sup>Fulton, loc. cit.

of adjudication of custody in divorce proceedings. However, when they discovered the almost complete lack of baseline information, they were forced to expand the study to include the very basic stuff of who divorces, why, how, when, etc. Their inclination was to begin with newly marrying couples, and follow them throughout their marriages and divorces, but this was obviously too difficult in terms of time, money, cooperation, mobility, and logistics. They settled on doing a retrospective study with a multi-dimensional approach. They chose as their sample all divorcing couples with children from two rural and three urban Minnesota counties who contested divorce or custody, plus a 10 per cent random sample of noncontesting, nonintervention couples, whose divorce was final in 1970. They included, as far as was possible, all court records, the relevant ancillary court records (financial and custody material), all involved lawyers and judges, the children's teachers, and most important for our purposes, both the divorcing spouses.<sup>71</sup>

Of an original population of 585 divorcing couples, the Fulton group (after attrition due to inability to locate people, and located people refusing to cooperate) obtained interviews and auxiliary data on both members of 136 couples. Their data, conclusions and interpretations have not yet been published. Fulton has released an audio tape

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

containing some information on these 136 couples based on a preliminary data sort (see above). Some of her findings are relevant to our area of focus.

In addition to the conclusion of the noncustodial spouse, Fulton's study has other strengths when compared to Goode's. One is the combination of rural and urban respondents. This fact should make her work more generally applicable. Another is the ancillary data from sources other than the divorcing parents. The extent to which this data was adequately gathered is unknown at this time.

There are a couple of weaknesses. The necessity of dealing with five different county court systems was a limitation in terms of varying degrees of cooperation from judges and other officials. This may have built in some bias. Another is the retrospective nature of the study. As in Goode's work, some of the respondents had been divorced for over eighteen months when the interviews were done. This time lag may change some of the accuracy of the data. Third, as Fulton points out, the lack of a longitudinal panel limits the usefulness of the data. Custody and co-parental relationships are anything but static. They change over time as parents and children adjust to their new relationships and the world around them. Following these people over a period of time would provide an extra dimension of data that would be quite useful in looking at adjustment to the divorce process in a more complete way.

There have been a number of studies done on the effects of divorce on children from a psychological point of view. These are generally covered in another section of this paper. Louise Despert wrote a well-known book, drawing conclusions from her work as a child psychiatrist.<sup>72</sup> The obvious limitation of this work is that it tells us a great deal about the inner dynamics of some children who had problems and got help, and the relationship of these factors to divorce as a life experience. However, it tells us little or nothing about the family process of divorce, and about those children who didn't have problems, or about those who didn't get help if they did have problems.

J. F. McDermott has done approximately the same thing, albeit in a more systematic way.<sup>73</sup> He reviewed the records of nearly 1500 children who were treated over three years at a children's psychiatric hospital. Children who had experienced divorce were compared with those from intact families on a variety of issues (type of problem, duration, prognosis, etc.). Again, his findings are instructive as regards the kinds of problems that divorce can be associated with in children. However, less than 8 per cent of the children in his sample were part of a family of divorce, so his work is less about divorce per se than about one selected associated phenomenon.

<sup>72</sup>Despert, op. cit., pp. 15-20.

<sup>73</sup>McDermott, loc. cit.

Some of the most current work of this kind is being done by Judith Wallerstein in Marin County, California.<sup>74</sup> A strength of her study, she says, is that Marin County is well above the national average in social class, economic level, and quality of life. It is argued that in this environment, the specific consequences of divorce per se rather than the often correlated problems of poverty, urban over-crowding, mobility, etc., will be apparent. She again is studying the consequences (social and psychological) of divorce to children. Her study population consists of those children and their families who chose to take advantage of a counseling service of which the family was informed at the time of filing for the divorce. The self-selection bias of this sample is obvious, and her published work does not include the number of families or children who were eligible but did not choose to use this service. A strength of her study is the fact that she followed the children for a year after the divorce, and was able to draw some conclusions about the process of adjustment over time. These findings and conclusions are dealt with in another section of this paper.

This study has methodological antecedents in two studies done at the Portland State University School of Social Work in 1970 and 1971 under the direction of

<sup>74</sup>Wallerstein and Kelley, loc. cit.

Vince Glaudin, Ph.D. They both focused on child visitation patterns and issues in families of divorce and were concerned with methodological and sampling problems.

The 1970 study<sup>75</sup> utilized attempted telephone contacts with parents divorced one and five years previously. A random sample of respondents from Multnomah County (urban) and Benton County (rural) were investigated. They found that about 25 per cent of their sample had verifiable telephone numbers, and that approximately half of those would eventually agree to be interviewed. The more recent the divorce, the more likely an interview was to be ultimately completed. The unsatisfactory nature of this method of contact is heightened by their further finding that the small sub-population of persons ultimately interviewed was biased in terms of being older and higher in socioeconomic status than the noninterviewed subjects.

The 1971 study<sup>76</sup> capitalized on the time factor found relevant by Griffith and avoided the pitfall of the telephone. They mailed questionnaires concerning child visitation to all divorcing parents with minor children who filed for divorce in Multnomah County during a thirty day period.

<sup>75</sup>Barbara Griffith, "Post-Divorce Visitation of Minor Children: An Exploratory Study" (unpublished research practicum, Portland State University, 1970).

<sup>76</sup>Viola Cotter, "Post Divorce Visitation of Minor Children: Development of a Questionnaire" (unpublished research practicum, Portland State University, 1971).

They experienced about a 44 per cent return rate. A subsample of less than 30 per cent of these respondents were then interviewed to determine the reliability of the questionnaire data.

The Cotter group found that the mailed response set represented (probably) a bias upward in education and income as compared with the population, and that the bias was increased in the subsample who were willing to be interviewed.

While reliability was generally good on the "factual" questions, it dropped to the 60-80 per cent range (on the average) when feeling-opinion items were analyzed. This lack of reliability coupled with the sample bias (although superior to the 1970 study by telephone) clearly leaves a great deal to be desired.

## CHAPTER IV

### INTRODUCTION

The objective of this descriptive study is to analyze the attitudes and conceptions of a random sample of first married divorcing couples with regard to their projected parenting relationship after divorce. It is an attempt to ascertain the extent of ambiguity, uncertainty, disagreement and dissensus on the parts of both the parents as to the role each will play in the continuing parental relationship. Ambiguity on the part of the parents would presumably make it even more difficult for the children to deal with the already stressful situation of divorce. . . . When there exists . . . discontinuity and ambiguity in parenting roles, we believe it is difficult to establish and provide for a stable and secure environment for the children.

The general working thesis of this paper is based upon the theoretical considerations cited in earlier sections of this work. The adjustment of children to the fact of divorce in the family and to their lives subsequent to the divorce is dependent upon or affected by the consistency and stability of the role relationships their parents develop and maintain after the husband-wife relationship is severed. Further, we believe that the attitudes, beliefs, and per-

ceptions of the parents that exist at the time of filing for the divorce, concerning the co-parental relationship, will provide a basis for prediction of the actual co-parental relationship that is developed and maintained in subsequent months and years.

Scheff's<sup>77</sup> (1968) formulation of a hierarchy of agreement, consensus and realization is utilized in part in the development of the data for this paper. Dr. Scheff suggests that simple agreement between people on the answers to a question is not adequate to predict the degree of cooperation that will occur. He believes that there potentially exists an infinite progression of perceived agreement ("I think she feels the same way about this that I do"), realization of perceived agreement ("I think she knows that I know she agrees with me on this"), and so on, ad infinitum.

The higher levels of this realization progression become increasingly difficult to determine and manipulate, but provide a valuable conceptual framework for predicting cooperation. This study advances only to the second level of Scheff's formulation (perceived consensus). This is a very important level, since Scheff suggests that perceived agreement may, practically, be of more importance in achieving cooperation than actual agreement on the issues area (i.e., if the parents believe that they agree on a proper parenting role, they may well be more cooperative in carrying it out--

<sup>77</sup>Scheff, loc. cit.

even though they actually have different ideas--than if they actually agree and believe that they disagree).

Thus we suspect that the greater the extent of perceived agreement between the parents as to their proper and expected parenting roles at the time of filing for divorce, the greater the degree of stability and consistency that will subsequently be practiced. Subsequently, the children of parents who perceive agreement as to their proper parenting roles will experience a higher degree of adjustment to the new family relationships as compared with those whose parents perceive disagreement and conflict.

This study attempts to build and expand upon the work previously cited. The population studied is all first married divorcing couples in Clackamas County, Oregon (urban and rural) filing for divorce during a six-month period. The initial contact between the subjects and researchers was at the point of filing. The cooperation of the court was obtained (see Appendix III), and current addresses and telephone numbers were made available.

In view of the theoretical considerations and the Fulton corroboration thereof concerning differences in perception between the husband and the wife about areas and issues of disagreement, agreement and conflict, we will analyze only the data from couples for which we have responses from both members of the divorcing parental couple.

We obtained this data for forty-eight couples out of an original study sample of 106 couples.

The data here developed is that from a selected subsection of a larger data base collected by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration funded Impact of Divorce on Children and Their Parents study in its "first wave" questionnaire, (see Appendix I) administered within two months after filing. Subsequent data is being developed (at three and six-month intervals) but is not available now. The raw data was derived from a written questionnaire which was given to the respondent and completed by him/her in privacy with the researcher/interviewer present to answer any questions. After the questionnaire was completed, a series of "probe" questions was then administered by the interviewer (see Appendix II). These probes were designed to expand on the written schedule in specific information areas, particularly in areas of feeling and opinion. This method was thought to combine the salutary effects of time efficiency (self-completion of the schedule) and in depth and reliable reporting (the verbal interview). The verbal interviews were tape recorded to facilitate complete information retrieval.

This paper focuses on the role of the noncustodial parent. The data used is derived both from the written schedule and from the audio-taped interview, as the latter

was designed to supplement, support, and expand upon the former, particularly with regard to perceptions of the spouse's responses.

The questions used here are, from the Questionnaire:

(1) Q. 46. Should the noncustodial parent be allowed to help decide how the child support money will be spent? (2) Q. 52. What is the value of child visitation? (3) Q. 56. Should the noncustodial parent be active in childrearing? and Q. 57. In what areas pertaining to Question 56? The related "probes" for each of the questions taken from the audio-taped interviews are combined with the answers to the questionnaire questions.

These questions were chosen from the range of those possible, since they clearly focused on the issues in question here. They are concerned specifically with the differential roles of the parent in regard to child rearing practices, as opposed to related questions of custody, visitation arrangements, amount of support money, etc. These related areas would certainly be affected by the degree of cooperation that occurs in the family relationships. We felt, however, that the questions selected are specifically and exclusively relevant to the questions of the postdivorce differential co-parental relationship, and lend themselves well to analysis in terms of agreement and perceived agreement. They are also operationally relevant to direct

dealings with the children, and so provide a method of behaviorally testing the predictions made here, and of Scheff's hypotheses.

The answers to these questions are to be compared within couples, and descriptions of the extent of agreement and disagreement (and perceptions thereof) are generated. The data is to be analyzed in order to describe (1) the perceptions of these issues by the custodial parent, and (2) by the noncustodial parent, and also (perhaps more saliently for the theses of this study) (3) the degree of perceived agreement within the parental couple, and (4) the actual (as reflected in responses to the research instruments) agreement within the parental couple. This data will then be compared with pattern of desire for the divorce by each or both members of the couple to see whether this latter has any bearing on the degree of cooperation that can be expected.

## CHAPTER V

### PRESENTATION OF DATA

As noted above, this paper deals with data derived from four basic questions concerning the projected post-divorce co-parental relationship: (1) Question 46: Should the parent paying child support be allowed to help decide how the money will be spent? (2) Question 52: What do you think is the value of child visitation? (3) Question 56: Should the noncustodial parent take an active role in child rearing? and (4) Question 57: In which specific areas should the noncustodial parent take an active role? The data will be presented in order of increasing complexity of relationships.

The first question to be addressed will be whether these parents actually agree in their responses to the questions listed in Tables I through V. For two questions (numbers 46 and 56) this is rather straightforward and will be presented as such. Similarly, the couples' responses to question 34 (Do you want the divorce?)--a separate but possibly related question--will be presented in the same form. Questions 52 and 57 are somewhat more complex. Each is a series of values or specifics related to a broader question.

Each respondent could check any number of the possible sub-items. The frequency of response, by sex, is presented. In order for further analysis and comparison to be done, it was necessary to devise an overall agreement/disagreement score for each couple on each of these two questions. This score is expressed as a percentage of agreement which was derived by comparing the total number of categories checked by a couple with the number in which the spouses agreed; for example, if the father checked subitems 1, 2, and 3, while the mother checked numbers 2, 3, and 4, they agreed on two items. Four categories were checked, however, so this couple has an agreement score of 50 per cent. We used 60 per cent as a cut-off point: those couples scoring above 60 per cent are defined as in agreement and those below 60 per cent are defined as in disagreement. This is, of course, an arbitrary choice. We are ultimately concerned with the issue of cooperation between the parents. Therefore, we are concerned with positive agreement within the couple. Those couples with 50 per cent agreement or less could not be said to agree in the positive sense. Considering the variability of human response and the number of categories, we did not want to make the cut-off point so high as to be unrealistic. We decided on 60 per cent as the lowest feasible choice that would still demonstrate positive agreement.

This scoring method has the advantage of controlling for the differential number of categories checked by each couple. Such a consideration is particularly important in the case of question 57, since some of the subitems (driving, dating, etc.) are applicable only to children in certain age groups. At the same time, however, a couple who actively agree on four subitems might well be presumed (for predictive and cooperative purposes) to be in more agreement than one in which the couple agreed in only one or two subareas. Both of these couples would be assigned an agreement score of 100 per cent, however. Therefore, a tabulation of agreement score percentage categories compared with the number of "no responses" to subitems will be presented as a possible measure of the validity of agreement scores (refer to Tables VI and VII).

The second major variable is that of perceived agreement/disagreement. For each question (specifically on questions 46 and 56, and globally on questions 52 and 57) the respondent's perception as to whether his/her spouse would agree with his/her response to the question was obtained. These responses are first presented in raw form, dichotomized by sex, and by the couple's patterns of perception for each of the four questions (see Table VIII).

The perception patterns are then presented in combination with the patterns of actual response to the

questionnaire items. Thus, for instance, if a couple agreed that the noncustodial parent should be allowed to help decide how the support money is spent (question 46) and both parents perceived that their spouse would agree with this response, they would be differentiated from a couple who agreed but one parent perceived that they disagreed.

These combined agreement and perception categories are organized in the remaining tables in order of descending likelihood of co-parental cooperation. This ordering is made according to Scheff's theory that perceived agreement is of more importance than actual agreement on the issues. Those couples in which both members perceive agreement of the spouse would be more likely to work cooperatively in each area (even if they actually disagree) than those in which at least one member perceived the spouse to disagree. Those couples in which one member perceived the spouse to disagree would then be more likely to cooperate than those in which both members perceived disagreement.

This table is then condensed into two two-part tables for each of the four main questions. One of these condensed tables is based on the agreement pattern of the couple, and the other is based on their perception pattern (see Tables IX through XII).

The final set of tables combines the agreement/perception patterns of couples with patterns of wanting and not wanting the divorce. The six categories of agreement

and perception patterns are presented first with a tabulation of which parent (or both) wanted the divorce, and then with simply whether one or both wanted it. The agreement/perception categories are then condensed and presented in two tables, one based on agreement patterns and one based on perception patterns and compared with whether one or both parents wanted the divorce (see Tables XIII through XVI).

A note about attrition is in order. A study that allows for any variability of response will suffer a certain number of items that are, for one reason or another, not responded to. Further, when an "I don't know" or "undecided" category is included, responses to a questionnaire or interview schedule are going to be difficult to categorize. This occurred to a small, but perhaps significant extent in this study. This was a particular problem when coding the responses to the verbal interviews on the questions of perception of the spouse's response. Several study subjects were simply not asked what their perceptions of their spouse's responses would be. Thus, there are a number of "missing cases" for most questions. This problem becomes particularly acute in the case of a cross-tabulation involving several variables (as in the tables comparing agreement, perception and desire for the divorce). The lack of a response to any one of these questions--by either member of the couple--renders that case (couple) unclassifiable.

Thus, the unsatisfactory but unavoidable fact of only twenty-four couples represented in one table is accepted.

TABLE I A

	Response	No. of People	%	Adjusted %*
<u>Father</u>	Yes	28	58.3	63.6
	No	16	33.3	36.4
	No response	4	8.3	. .
Totals		48	99.9	100

Table I A This table represents the fathers' responses to question 34 (Do you want the divorce?).

\*In this, and subsequent tables, the "adjusted percentage represents the percentage of respondents in each category for whom responses were available, thus eliminating from this percentage calculation those who did not respond to the question.

TABLE I B

	Response	No. of People	%	Adjusted %
<u>Mother</u>	Yes	39	81.3	84.8
	No	7	14.6	15.2
	No response	2	4.2	. .
<b>Totals</b>		48	100.1	100

Table I B. This table represents the mothers' responses to question 34.

TABLE I C

Number* Row % Column % Total %	Father's response		Row Total	
	Yes	No		
	Yes	<u>21</u>	<u>14</u>	35
		60	40	
		75	100	
		50	33.3	83.3
	No	<u>7</u>	0	7
<u>Mother's Response</u>		100	0	
		25	0	
		16.7	0	16.7
	Column Totals	28	14	42
		66.7	33.3	100

Six missing cases\*\*

Table I C. This table presents a comparison, by couples, of the spouses' responses to question 34.

\*The numbers in each cell are arranged such that the top number represents the actual number of cases appropriate to the cell. The second number (row percentage) represents the number of cases in the cell expressed as a percentage of the number of cases in the lateral row of the table. The

third number (column percentage) represents the number of cases in the cell expressed as a percentage of the number of cases in the vertical column. The fourth number (total %) represents the number of cases in the cell expressed as a percentage of the total number of cases for which data was available. The row totals and column totals are also expressed as a percentage of the total number of cases for which data was available. This format is also used on some subsequent tables.

\*\*The seemingly high number of missing cases is due to the fact that having no response from one member of a couple makes it impossible to categorize the couple in this manner. This phenomenon increases as the number of variables compared increases, and occurs throughout this paper.

TABLE II A

	Response	Number	%	Adjusted %
<u>Father</u>	Yes	31	64.6	67.4
	No	6	12.5	13
	I don't know	9	18.8	19
	No response	2	4.2	. .
<u>Totals</u>		48	100.2	100

Table II A. This table represents the fathers' responses to question 46 (Should the parent paying child support be allowed to help decide how the money will be spent?)

TABLE II B

	Response	Number	%	Adjusted %
<u>Mother</u>	Yes	15	31.3	31.9
	No	18	37.5	38.3
	I don't know	14	29.2	29.8
	No response	1	2.1	. .
<b>Totals</b>		48	100.1	100

Table II B. This table represents the mothers' responses to question 46.

TABLE II C

Number Row % Column % Total %	Father's response			Row Totals	
	Yes	No	I don't know		
Mother' Response	Yes	<u>14</u>	0	<u>1</u>	15
		93.3	0	6.7	
		45.2	0	11.1	
		31.3	0	2.2	33.5
	No	<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>	18
		50	16.7	33.3	
		29	60	66.7	
		20	6.7	13.3	40
	I don't know	<u>8</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	12
		66.7	16.7	16.7	
		25.8	40	22.2	
		17.8	4.4	4.4	26.6
Column Totals	31	5	9	45	
	68.9	11.1	20	100	

Three missing cases

Table II C. This table presents a comparison by couples of the spouses' responses to question 46.

TABLE III A

Subitem	No. of times checked by fathers	No. of times checked by mothers
To maintain a contact between parent and child . . . . .	38	38
Parent has a right to visit the children .	18	20
To help the child feel secure and loved . .	38	31
Discipline the children . . . . .	12	8
To help in other deci- sions concerning the children . . . . .	29	14
No value . . . . .	0	0
Totals	135	111

Table III A. This table represents the number of times each subitem was checked, by fathers and by mothers, on question 52 (What do you think is the value of child visitation?).

TABLE III B

	Agreement % Range	No. of Couples	%
Disagree- ment	0-19	6	12.5
	20-39	12	25
	40-59	13	27.1
Agreement	60-79	6	12.5
	80-100	11	22.9
Totals		48	100

Table III B. This table represents the number of couples who fell into various categories of agreement percentage on question 52. The formula for computation of the agreement score percentage is found in the text above.

TABLE IV A

Response	Number	%	Adjusted %
Yes	35	72.9	72.9
No	4	8.3	8.3
I don't know	9	18.8	18.8
No response	0	. .	. .
Totals	48	100	100

Table IV A. This table represents the fathers' responses to question 56 (Should the noncustodial parent take an active role in child rearing?).

TABLE IV B

Response	Number	%	Adjusted %
Yes	24	50	52
No	10	20.8	21.7
I don't know	12	25	26.1
No response	2	4.2	. .
Totals	48	100	100

Table IV B. This table represents the mothers' responses to question 56.

TABLE IV C

Number Row Column Total %	Father's response			Row Totals	
	Yes	No	I don't know		
<u>Mother's Response</u>	Yes	<u>15</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>7</u>	24
		62.5	8.3	29	
		51.7	66.6	100	
		38.5	5.1	17.5	
	No	<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>	0	8
		87.5	12.5	0	
		24.1	33.3	0	
		17.1	2.6	0	
	I don't know	<u>7</u>	0	0	7
		100	0	0	
		24.1	0	0	
		17.9	0	0	
Column Totals	29	3	7	39	
	74.4	7.7	17.9	100	

Nine missing cases

Table IV C. This table presents a comparison, by couples, of the spouses' responses to question 56 (Should the noncustodial parent take an active role in child rearing?).

TABLE V A

Subitem	No. of items checked by fathers	No. of items checked by mothers
School involvement . .	30	23
Social activities . .	25	19
Dress . . . . .	16	7
Driving . . . . .	15	8
Dating . . . . .	13	8
Discipline . . . . .	24	16
Allowance . . . . .	16	7
Health . . . . .	25	17
Religious training . .	21	10
Use of child support money . . . . .	10	6
None of these . . . . .	2	0
Totals	197	121

Table V A. This table represents the number of times each subitem was checked, by mothers and by fathers, on question 57 (In which areas should the noncustodial parent take an active role?).

TABLE V B

	Agreement % Range	No. of Couples	%
Disagree- ment	0-19	33	68.75
	20-39	5	10.42
	40-59	5	10.42
Agreement	60-79	3	6.25
	80-100	2	4.16
Totals		48	100

Table V B. This table represents the number of couples who fell into various categories of agreement percentage on question 57.

TABLE VI

Agreement % Range	Number of Items No Response						Row Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
0-19	0	4	0	2	0	0	6
20-39	3	4	5	0	0	0	12
40-59	4	3	0	6	0	0	13
60-79	3	2	1	0	0	0	6
80-100	3	0	3	2	3	0	11
Totals	13	13	9	10	3	0	48

Table VI. This table presents the number of couples in each percentage of agreement category compared with the number of sub-items which were not responded to by either member on question 52 (What do you think is the value of child visitation?).

TABLE VII

Agreement % Category	Number of Items No Response											Row Totals
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	
0-19	3	3	2	2	3	2	4	6	5	2	2	34
20-39	1	..	..	..	1	..	1	1	..	..	..	4
40-59	..	1	1	..	2	..	1	..	..	..	..	5
60-79	..	1	1	..	..	..	..	1	..	..	..	3
80-100	2	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2
Totals	6	5	4	2	6	2	6	8	5	2	2	48

Table VII. This table presents the number of couples in each percentage of agreement category compared with the number of subitems which were not responded to by either member on question 57 (In which areas should the noncustodial parent take an active role?).

TABLE VIII A

Perceived Agreement	Father	%	Adjusted %	Mother	%	Adjusted %
Yes	25	52.1	59.5	33	68.8	78.6
No	17	35.4	40.5	9	18.8	21.4
No response	6	12.5	. .	6	12.5	. .
Totals	48	100	100	48	100	100

Table VIII A. This table represents the responses, by father and mother, to the question, "Do you think your spouse would agree with your answer to this question?" These "perceptions" are based on question 46 (Should the parent paying child support be allowed to help decide how the money will be spent?).

TABLE VIII B

Perceived Agreement	Father	%	Adjusted %	Mother	%	Adjusted %
Yes	33	68.9	78.6	38	79.2	90.5
No	9	18.8	21.4	4	8.3	9.5
No response	6	12.5	. .	6	12.5	. .
Totals	48	100	100	48	100	100

Table VIII B. This table represents the responses, by father and by mother, to the question, "Do you think your spouse would agree with your answer to this question?" These "perceptions" are based on question 52 (What do you think is the value of child visitation?).

TABLE VIII C

Perceived Agreement	Father	%	Adjusted %	Mother	%	Adjusted %
Yes	29	60.4	70.7	32	66.7	78
No	12	25	29.3	9	18.8	22
No response	7	14.6	. .	7	14.6	. .
Totals	48	100	100	48	100	100

Table VIII C. This table represents the responses, by father and by mother, to the question, "Do you think your spouse would agree with your answer to this question?" These "perceptions" are based on question 56 (Should the noncustodial parent take an active role in child rearing?)

TABLE VIII D

Perceived Agreement	Father	%	Adjusted %	Mother	%	Adjusted %
Yes	33	68.9	78.6	38	79.2	90.5
No	9	18.8	21.4	4	8.3	9.5
No response	6	12.5	. .	6	12.5	. .
Totals	48	100	100	48	100	100

Table VIII D. This table represents the responses, by father and by mother, to the question, "Do you think your spouse would agree with your answer to this question?" These "perceptions" are based on question 57 (In which areas should the noncustodial parent take an active role?).

TABLE VIII E

Pattern of Perception	Number	%	Adjusted %
Father yes, mother yes . . . . .	16	33.3	41.
Father yes, mother no . . . . .	6	12.5	15.4
Father no, mother yes . . . . .	14	29.7	35.9
Father no, mother no . . . . .	3	6.25	7.69
No response . . . . .	9	18.75	. .
Totals	48	100	100

Table VIII E. This table presents, by couple, the patterns of perception of the spouse's agreement with the respondent's answer to question 46 (Should the parent paying child support be allowed to help decide how the money will be spent?).

TABLE VIII F

Pattern of Perception	Number	%	Adjusted %
Father yes, mother yes . . . . .	23	47.9	59
Father yes, mother no . . . . .	5	10.4	12.8
Father no, mother yes . . . . .	8	16.6	20.5
Father no, mother no . . . . .	3	6.3	7.6
No response . . . . .	9	18.75	. .
Totals	48	100.	100

Table VIII F. This table presents, by couple, the patterns of perception of the spouse's agreement with the respondent's answer to question 52 (What do you think is the value of child visitation?).

TABLE VIII G

Pattern of Perception	Number	%	Adjusted %
Father yes, mother yes . . . . .	30	62.5	71.42
Father yes, mother no . . . . .	3	6.3	7.14
Father no, mother yes . . . . .	8	16.7	19
Father no, mother no . . . . .	1	2.1	2.4
No response . . . . .	6	12.5	. .
Totals	48	100	100

Table VIII G. This table presents, by couple, the patterns of perception of the spouse's agreement with the respondent's answer to question-56 (Should the noncustodial parent take an active role in child rearing?).

TABLE VIII H

Pattern of Perception	Number	%	Adjusted %
Father yes, mother yes . . . . .	15	31.25	53.6
Father yes, mother no . . . . .	7	14.6	25
Father no, mother yes . . . . .	5	10.4	17.9
Father no, mother no . . . . .	1	2.1	3.6
No response . . . . .	20	41.6	. .
Totals	48	100	100

Table VIII H. This table presents, by couple, the patterns of perception of the spouse's agreement with the respondent's answer to question 57 (In which areas should the noncustodial parent take an active role?).

TABLE IX A

Agreement and Perception Pattern	Number	%	Adjusted %
Parents agreed and both perceived agreement . . . . .	8	16.7	20.5
Parents disagreed and both perceived agreement . . . . .	8	16.7	20.5
Parents agreed and differed in their perception of agreement . . . . .	9	18.8	23
Parents disagreed and differed in their perception of agreement . . . . .	11	22.9	28.2
Parents agreed and both perceived disagreement . . . . .	0	0	0
Parents disagreed and both perceived disagreement . . . . .	3	6.2	7.7
Missing cases	9	18.75	. .
Totals	48	100	100

Table IX A. This table presents, by couple, combined categories of agreement/disagreement and perceptions of the spouses' responses for question 46 (Should the parent paying child support be allowed to help decide how the money is spent?).

TABLE IX B

Agreement Category	Number	%	Adjusted %
Parents agreed . . . .	19	39.6	42.2
Parents disagreed . .	26	54.2	57.8
Missing cases . . . .	3	6.3	. .
Totals	48	100	100

Table IX B. This table presents, by couple, simple patterns of agreement on question 46.

TABLE IX C

Perception Category	Number	%	Adjusted %
Both parents perceived their spouses agreed .	16	33.3	41
At least one parent perceived their spouse disagreed . . . . .	23	47.9	59
No response . . . . .	9	18.75	. .
Totals	48	100	100

Table IX C. This table presents, by couple, simple patterns of perception of the spouse's response to question 46.

TABLE X A

Agreement and Perception Pattern	Number	%	Adjusted %
Parents agreed and both perceived agreement . . .	9	18.8	22
Parents disagreed and both perceived agreement . . .	20	41.7	48.8
Parents agreed and differed in their perception of agreement . . .	6	12.5	14.6
Parents disagreed and differed in their perception of agreement . . .	5	10.4	12.2
Parents agreed and both perceived disagreement .	0	0	0
Parents disagreed and both perceived disagreement . . . . .	1	2.1	2.4
Missing cases . . . . .	7	14.6	. .
Totals	48	100	100

Table X A. This table presents, by couple, combined categories of agreement/disagreement and perception of the spouses' responses for question 52 (What do you think is the value of child visitation?).

TABLE X B

Agreement Category	Number	%
Parents agreed . . . . .	19	39.6
Parents disagreed . . . . .	29	60.4
Totals	48	100

Table X B. This table presents, by couple, simple patterns of agreement on question 52.

TABLE X C

Perception Category	Number	%	Adjusted %
Both parents perceived their spouse agreed . . . . .	29	60.4	70.7
At least one parent perceived their spouse disagreed . . . . .	12	25	29.3
Missing cases . . . . .	7	14.6	. .
Totals	48	100	100

Table X C. This table presents, by couple, simple patterns of perception of the spouses' responses on question 52 (What do you think is the value of child visitation?).

TABLE XI A

Agreement and Perception Category	Number	%	Adjusted %
Parents agreed and both perceived agreement . . .	10	20.8	25.6
Parents disagreed and both perceived agreement . . .	14	29.2	35.9
Parents agreed and differed in their perception of agreement . . . . .	6	12.5	15.4
Parents disagreed and differed in their perception of agreement . . . . .	7	14.6	17.9
Parents agreed and both perceived disagreement .	0	0	0
Parents disagreed and both perceived disagreement . . . . .	2	4.2	5
Missing cases . . . . .	9	18.6	. .
Totals	48	100	100

Table XI A. This table presents, by couple, combined categories of agreement/disagreement and perceptions of the spouses' responses for question 56 (Should the noncustodial parent take an active role in child rearing?).

TABLE XI B

Agreement Category	Number	%	Adjusted %
Parents agreed . . . . .	16	33.3	41
Parents disagreed . . . . .	23	48	59
Missing cases . . . . .	9	18.6	. .
Totals	48	100	100

Table XI B. This table presents, by couple, simple patterns of agreement on question 56.

TABLE XI C

Perception Category	Number	%	Adjusted %
Both parents perceived their spouse agreed . . . . .	24	50	61.5
At least one parent perceived the spouse disagreed . . . . .	15	31.3	38.5
Missing cases . . . . .	9	18.6	. .
Totals	48	100	100

Table XI C. This table presents, by couple, simple patterns of perception of the spouses' responses to question 56 (Should the noncustodial parent take an active role in child rearing?).

TABLE XII A

Agreement and Perception Category	Number	%	Adjusted %
Parents agreed and both perceived agreement . . .	1	2.1	3.6
Parents disagreed and both perceived agreement . . . . .	14	29.2	50
Parents agreed and differed in their perception of agreement . . . .	1	2.1	3.6
Parents disagreed and differed in their perceptions of agreement . . .	11	22.9	39.3
Parents agreed and perceived disagreement . . .	0	0	0
Parents disagreed and both perceived disagreement . . . . .	1	2.1	3.6
Missing cases . . . . .	20	41.7	. .
Totals . . . . .	48	100	100

Table XII A. This table presents, by couple, combined categories of agreement/disagreement and perception of the spouses' responses for question 57 (In which areas should the noncustodial parent take an active role?).

TABLE XII B

Agreement Category	Number	%
Parents agreed . . . . .	7	14.6
Parents disagreed . . . . .	41	85.4
Totals	48	100

Table XII B. This table presents, by couple, simple patterns of agreement on question 57.

TABLE XII C

Perception Category	Number	%	Adjusted %
Both parents perceived their spouse agreed . . . . .	15	31.3	53.6
At least one parent perceived the spouse disagreed . . .	13	27.1	46.4
Missing cases . . . . .	20	41.7	. .
Totals . . . . .	48	100	100

Table XII C. This table presents, by couple, simple patterns of perception of the spouses' responses to question 57 (In which areas should the noncustodial parent take an active role?).

TABLE XIII A

Agreement and Perception Category	Mother Only	Father Only	Both	Total
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . . . . .	1	3	4	8
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . . . . .	3	0	4	7
Parents agreed and differed on perception of spouse's response . . . . .	4	1	3	8
Parents disagreed and differed on perception of spouse's response . . . . .	1	3	5	9
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	0	0	0	0
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	3	0	0	3
Totals	12	7	16	35
13 missing cases				

Table XIII A. This table presents, by couples, the combined agreement/disagreement and perception categories for question 46 (Should the parent paying child support be allowed to help decide how the money will be spent?), compared with which spouse (or both) wanted the divorce.

TABLE XIII B

Agreement and Perception Category	One Wanted	Both Wanted	Total
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . . .	4	4	8
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . . . . .	3	4	7
Parents agreed and differed on perception of spouse's agreement . . . . .	5	3	8
Parents disagreed and differed on perception of spouse's disagreement . . . . .	4	5	9
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	0	0	0
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	3	0	3
Totals	19	16	35
13 missing cases			

Table XIII B. This table presents, by couples, the combined agreement/disagreement and perception categories for question 46, compared with whether one or both parents wanted the divorce.

TABLE XIII C

Perception Category	One Wanted	Both Wanted	Total
Both parents perceived agreement . . . . .	7	8	15
At least one parent perceived the spouse's disagreement . . .	12	8	20
Total	19	16	35
13 missing cases			

Table XIII C. This table presents, by couple, simple categories of perception of the spouses' response to question 46 (Should the parent paying child support be allowed to help decide how the money will be spent?), compared with whether one or both spouses wanted the divorce.

TABLE XIII D

Agreement Category	One Wanted	Both Wanted	Total
Parents agreed . . . . .	9	7	16
Parents disagreed . . . . .	10	9	19
Total	19	16	35
13 missing cases			

Table XIII D. This table presents, by couples, simple categories of agreement on question 46, compared with whether one or both spouses wanted the divorce.

TABLE XIV A

Agreement and Perception Category	Mother Only	Father Only	Both	Total
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . . . . .	2	1	4	7
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . . . . .	5	2	13	20
Parents agreed and differed in perception of spouse's agreement . . . . .	2	2	1	5
Parents disagreed and differed in perception of spouse's agreement . . . . .	3	2	0	5
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	0	0	0	0
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	1	0	0	1
Totals	13	7	18	38
10 missing cases				

Table XIV A. This table presents, by couple, the combined agreement/disagreement and perception categories for question 52 (What do you think is the value of child visitation?), compared with which spouse (or both) wanted the divorce.

TABLE XIV B

Agreement and Perception Category	One Wanted	Both Wanted	Total
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . . .	3	4	7
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . . . . .	7	13	20
Parents agreed and differed in perception of spouse's agreement . . . . .	4	1	5
Parents disagreed and differed in perception of spouse's agreement . . . . .	5	0	5
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	0	0	0
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	1	0	1
Totals	20	18	38
10 missing cases			

Table XIV B. This table presents, by couple, the combined agreement/disagreement and perception categories for question 52, compared with whether one or both spouses wanted the divorce.

TABLE XIV C

Perception Category	One Wanted	Both Wanted	Total
Both parents perceived agreement . . . . .	10	17	27
At least one parent perceived spouse's disagreement . . . .	10	1	11
Totals	20	18	38
10 missing cases			

Table XIV C. This table presents, by couple, simple categories of perception of the spouses' responses to question 52 (What do you think is the value of child visitation?) compared with whether one or both spouses wanted the divorce.

TABLE XIV D

Agreement Category	One Wanted	Both Wanted	Total
Parents agreed . . . . .	11	5	16
Parents disagreed . . . . .	15	13	28
Totals	26	18	44
4 missing cases			

Table XIV D. This table presents, by couple, simple categories of agreement on question 52, compared with whether one or both spouses wanted the divorce.

TABLE XV A

Agreement and Perception Category	Only Mother	Only Father	Both	Total
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . . . . .	4	1	4	9
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . .	2	0	6	8
Parents agreed and differed in perception of spouse's agreement .	4	2	2	8
Parents disagreed and differed in perception of spouse's agreement .	0	2	3	5
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	0	0	0	0
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	2	2	1	5
Totals	12	7	16	35
13 missing cases				

Table XV A. This table presents, by couple, the combined categories of agreement/disagreement and perception for question 56 (Should the noncustodial parent take an active role in child rearing?), compared with which spouse (or both) wanted the divorce.

TABLE XV B

Agreement and Perception Category	One Wanted	Both Wanted	Total
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . .	5	4	9
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . . . . .	2	6	8
Parents agreed and differed in perceptions of spouse's agreement . . . . .	6	2	8
Parents disagreed and differed in perceptions of spouse's agreement . . . . .	2	3	5
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	0	0	0
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	4	1	5
Totals	19	16	35
13 missing cases			

Table XV B. This table presents, by couple, the combined categories of agreement/disagreement and perception for question 56, compared with whether one or both spouses wanted the divorce.

TABLE XV C

Perception Category	One Wanted	Both Wanted	Total
Parents perceived agreement . . .	7	10	17
At least one parent perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	12	6	19
Totals	19	16	35
13 missing cases			

Table XV C. This table presents, by couple, simple categories of perception of the spouses' responses for question 52 (Should the noncustodial parent take an active role in child rearing?), compared with whether one or both spouses wanted the divorce.

TABLE XV D

Agreement Category	One Wanted	Both Wanted	Total
Parents agreed . . . . .	11	6	17
Parents disagreed . . . . .	8	10	18
Totals	19	16	35
13 missing cases			

Table XV D. This table presents, by couple, simple categories of agreement on question 52, compared with whether one or both spouses wanted the divorce.

TABLE XVI A

Agreement and Perception Category	Mother Only	Father Only	Both	Total
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . . . . .	1	0	0	1
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . . . . .	4	2	6	12
Parents agreed and differed on perception of spouse's agreement . . . . .	1	0	0	1
Parents disagreed and differed on perception of spouse's agreement . . . . .	1	3	5	9
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	0	0	0	0
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	1	0	0	1
Totals	8	5	11	24
24 missing cases				

Table XVI A. This table presents, by couple, the combined agreement/disagreement and perception categories for question 57 (In which areas should the noncustodial parent take an active role?), compared with which spouse (or both) wanted the divorce.

TABLE XVI B

Agreement and Perception Category	One Wanted	Both Wanted	Total
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . . .	1	0	1
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's agreement . . .	6	6	12
Parents agreed and differed on perception of spouse's agreement . . . . .	1	0	1
Parents disagreed and differed on perception of spouse's agreement . . . . .	4	5	9
Parents agreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	0	0	0
Parents disagreed and both perceived spouse's disagreement . . . . .	1	0	1
Totals	13	11	24
24 missing cases			

Table XVI B. This table presents, by couple, the combined agreement/disagreement and perception categories for question 57, compared with whether one or both spouses wanted the divorce.

TABLE XVI C

Perception Category	One Wanted	Both Wanted	Total
Parents perceived agreement . .	7	6	13
At least one parent per- ceived disagreement . . . . .	6	5	11
Totals	13	11	24
24 missing cases			

Table XVI C. This table presents, by couple, simple categories of perception of the spouses' responses to question 57 (In which areas should the noncustodial parent take an active role?), compared with whether one or both spouses wanted the divorce.

TABLE XVI D

Agreement Category	One Wanted	Both Wanted	Total
Parents agreed . . . . .	3	1	4
Parents disagreed . . . . .	20	20	40
Totals	23	21	44
4 missing cases			

Table XVI C. This table presents, by couple, simple categories of agreement for question 57, compared with whether one or both spouses wanted the divorce.

## CHAPTER VI

### FINDINGS

Since this is a descriptive study only, no specific relationships among the variables examined can or will be drawn. Generally, the data presented in the preceding tables serves the purposes for which this work is intended. Some tendencies indicated in the data are discussed below, however. This discussion is presented in the order of the development and presentation of the previous tables and is organized by type of tabulation done, rather than by specific questions. Some implications are presented following discussion of the data.

Table I presents data concerning the desire for the divorce by individuals and by couples. In approximately one-half these couples, both members wanted the divorce. Of the other half, the mothers wanted the divorce at a rate twice that of the fathers.

Table II deals with responses to the question, "Should the parent paying child support be allowed to help decide how the money will be spent?" by individuals and by couples. Two-thirds of the fathers, but only one-third of the mothers answered yes to this question. And three times as many mothers as fathers answered no. In almost all the cases in

which the mother answered yes, the father also answered yes, but in half the cases in which the mother said no, the father disagreed.

Table III describes the number of times each specific value of child visitation was checked, by mothers and by fathers. It also presents the number of couples who fell into various ranges of global percentage of agreement on question 52. The subitems, "to maintain contact between parent and child," and "to help the child feel secure and loved," were checked most often by both parents. The fathers checked somewhat more areas over all than did the mothers. This trend was most pronounced for the subitem "to help in other decisions concerning the children." Thirty-five per cent of the couples fell into the "agreement" category (over 60 per cent agreement) and 65 per cent were in "disagreement."

Table IV contains the responses, by individuals and by couples, to the question, "Should the noncustodial parent take an active role in child rearing?" While almost three-fourths of the fathers replied in the affirmative, only about one-half of the mothers did so. Over twice as many mothers as fathers thought that he should not. More than half the time when one parent said yes to this question, the other did also, but in 87.5 per cent of the cases in which the mother said no, the father disagreed.

Table V details the responses by individual to the subitems of the question, "In which areas should the non-custodial parent take an active role?" and lists the number of couples who fell into various global percentage categories of agreement on this question. In every subitem, the fathers responded more than the mothers. The fathers' response was over twice as frequent as the mothers' in the areas of dress, allowance, and religious training. Discipline also had a wide differential, while school involvement was the most often checked by either parent.

Despite the fairly high agreement on the general question of whether the noncustodial parent should take an active role in child rearing, these couples had very low agreement (five of forty-eight) in the specific areas of this activity. Almost 70 per cent of the couples scored below 20 per cent on this question.

Table VI compares the percentage of agreement category for couples on question 52 with the number of subitems they did not respond to. As noted above, this may provide further predictive ability as to actual agreement and cooperation. The number of categories responded to per couple was 3.5. There does not seem to be a relationship between the number of responses and the agreement score for a couple.

Table VII is similar to Table VI in that it describes the same relationship, but for the subitems of question 57.

The mean number of responses per couple for this question was 5.5. But for the few couples who had an agreement score of over 60 per cent, they checked an average of eight sub-items, while those who were below that cut-off point responded to an average of only five items.

Table VIII lists the responses, by individual and by couple, to the question, "Do you think your spouse would agree with you on this?" for each of the four primary questions of this study. For all four questions, the mother perceived agreement more than the father did, with the fathers expecting disagreement almost twice as often as the mothers.

The most common perception category was that in which both parents perceived the agreement of the spouse. On questions 46, 52 and 56, the next most common response was the mother perceiving agreement and the father not. On question 57, the second most common category was that of the mother perceiving disagreement and the father perceiving agreement.

Tables IX through XII present, for each of the four questions, a frequency distribution of six combined agreement and perception pattern categories. Those six categories are then condensed into two bipolar tables, one based on the agreement pattern, and one based on the perception pattern.

In all four questions, there were no couples in which parents perceived disagreement when they actually agreed. But there were a large number of cases in all four questions in which they both perceived agreement when they actually disagreed. The smallest number of cases were those in which both members of a couple perceived disagreement. On questions 52 and 57, half the cases for which we have data actually disagreed but both parties perceived agreement.

For questions 46, 52, and 56, approximately 40 per cent of the couples for whom we have data agreed in their answers, and 60 per cent disagreed. Question 57 is something of a deviant case, perhaps, as only about 15 per cent agreed in this area. For questions 52 and 56, in 60-70 per cent of the couples both parents perceived agreement. About one-half did so for question 57, and only about 40 per cent did for question 46.

Tables XIII through XVI present (for each of the four primary questions) the six combined agreement and perception categories as compared with (1) which parent (or both) wanted the divorce and (2) whether one or both parents wanted it. It then condenses the six agreement and perception categories into bipolar tables based on (1) agreement and (2) perception of the spouse's responses, and compares them with (1) which parent (or both) wanted the divorce and (2) whether one or both parents wanted it.

There appear to be no discernable patterns in comparing the agreement and perception categories with which spouse wanted the divorce. In the case of both spouses agreeing and perceiving agreement, the frequency is equally divided between one person and both people wanting the divorce. In the case of both parents disagreeing and both perceiving that disagreement, almost all couples are those in which only one person wanted the divorce. Otherwise there appears to be no pattern in these tables containing the six agreement and perception categories.

When the couples are combined into simple perception categories, there is a tendency for couples in which both parents wanted the divorce to perceive agreement more often than those in which only one parent wanted it (especially in question 46). Similarly, in cases where only one person wanted the divorce, there is a tendency for more perceived disagreement to exist than if both parents wanted it (again, especially on question 46).

When the couples are combined into simple agreement categories, there seems to be no relationship with a pattern of wanting the divorce for those who disagree. However, for those who agree, they tend (somewhat) to be more likely to be a couple in which only one person wanted the divorce. This is a somewhat puzzling phenomenon.

Taken together, the data presented in this paper contradicts Goode's<sup>78</sup> (1956) assumption that obtaining divorce data from only one parent is adequate since both parents are thought to agree in most areas of child rearing. In our study sample, 60 per cent or more of the couples disagreed in these four fairly specific areas of postdivorce parenting practices. Over 85 per cent of the couples disagreed in the specific areas of parenting responsibility that the non-custodial parent should be involved in. This result alone makes suspect any divorce study involving only one parent.

In regard to postdivorce cooperation in the parenting relationship, if Scheff's<sup>79</sup> (1967) theory of perception of attitudes and cooperation is used, the picture is somewhat brighter. In over 70 per cent of our couples, both parents perceived that the spouse agreed with them on precisely the same question (57) that 85 per cent of them disagreed on. For the other three questions, this co-perception of agreement occurred in between 40 per cent to 60 per cent of the couples. These couples, in which both parents perceive the agreement of the spouse on the issue are, according to Scheff's theory, more likely to be able to work out a cooperative co-parental relationship than those who perceive the spouse's disagreement.

<sup>78</sup>Goode, loc. cit.

<sup>79</sup>Scheff, loc. cit.

We assume that a cooperative and consistent postdivorce co-parental relationship with the children will enhance the children's adjustment to the family fragmented by divorce. Whether actual co-parental agreement or co-parentally perceived agreement is used as the measure of the probability of this cooperative relationship occurring, it seems clear that in about half of our sample of divorcing families, there will likely be some moderate to severe difficulties in establishing and maintaining such a relationship.

## CHAPTER VII

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The findings and implications of this study could be helpful in planning for a domestic relations court service devoted to helping divorcing couples work out their co-parental relationship. This information could be used for determining the allocation of resources for such a service.

If the data presented here is interpreted according to Scheff's theory of the likelihood of a couple developing a cooperative co-parental relationship, some predictions as to the relative number of couples requiring service can be made. In approximately 50 per cent of divorcing couples, both parents perceive the spouse to be in agreement with them on co-parenting issues, and could be presumed to be relatively more likely to develop a cooperative relationship. Approximately 5 per cent would be in very serious need of some kind of service, since both parents perceive disagreement on these issues and would therefore be likely to experience a good deal of conflict. The other 45 per cent (approximately) would be expected to be at a somewhat lesser degree of risk, since only one parent perceives disagreement on these issues.

In order to make the data presented here definitively functional, however, a follow-up study should be conducted. Two suggested areas of follow-up are: (1) an evaluation of the predictive value of co-parental agreement at the time of filing for divorce (as described in this paper) as related to the actual co-parental relationship that is developed following divorce, and (2) the extent of the relationship between the actual co-parental relationship and the subsequent social and emotional adjustment of the children to the fact of divorce and the fragmented family. This kind of follow-up study would also, incidentally, provide an opportunity to empirically test the practical utility of Dr. Scheff's theory that the perception of agreement is more important for cooperation than actual agreement on the issues.<sup>80</sup>

The Impact of Divorce on Children and Their Parents Study intends, over the next year, to obtain precisely this kind of follow-up data with the same panel studied for this paper. It would therefore be quite possible to assess the utility (both theoretical and practical) of the hypotheses and methodology developed for this descriptive, preliminary study.

<sup>80</sup>Scheff, Ibid.

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APPENDIX I

IMPACT OF DIVORCE ON CHILDREN  
AND THEIR PARENTS

QUESTIONNAIRE

ID \_\_\_\_\_

1. How many children do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

<u>Age</u>	<u>Sex</u>	<u>Grade level</u>	<u>School Name</u>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

2. Please check the following to indicate those people NOW living with you:

\_\_\_\_\_ No one, \_\_\_\_\_ Children, \_\_\_\_\_ Mother and/or Father,  
\_\_\_\_\_ Mother-in-law and/or father-in-law, \_\_\_\_\_ Other relatives,  
\_\_\_\_\_ Housekeeper, \_\_\_\_\_ Friends, \_\_\_\_\_ Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

3. Religious preference:

\_\_\_\_\_ Protestant, \_\_\_\_\_ Catholic, \_\_\_\_\_ Jewish, \_\_\_\_\_ Other, \_\_\_\_\_ None

4. Did you have a religious ceremony at the time of your marriage?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes  
\_\_\_\_\_ No

5. Do you attend church or synagogue?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes  
\_\_\_\_\_ No

6. If yes to #5, how often do you attend?

\_\_\_\_\_ Daily  
\_\_\_\_\_ Weekly  
\_\_\_\_\_ Once a month  
\_\_\_\_\_ Few times a year

7. Do any of your children attend Saturday or Sunday School?

Yes

No

8. If yes to #7, how often do they attend?

Daily

Weekly

Once a month

Few times a year

9. What part did your religious belief play in you and your spouse's decision to file for divorce?

Not important

Somewhat important

Very important

10. Race/ethnic identification:

Caucasian,  Black (Negro),  Chicano (Mexican American),

Oriental,  Native American (American Indian)

11. Are you currently working?  Yes,  No

12. If yes to #11, are you working  Full time,  Part time,  Other  
(describe) \_\_\_\_\_

13. What is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

14. How long have you been working at present job?  1 month or less,  
 1 - 6 months,  7 - 11 months,  1 - 2 years,  More than 2 years

15. What is your monthly income before anything is taken out?  Less than \$200,  
 \$200 - \$399,  \$400 - \$599,  \$600 - \$799,  \$800 - \$999,  \$1,000 -  
\$1199,  \$1200 - \$1399,  \$1400 - \$1599,  \$1600 - \$1799,  \$1800 & up

16. If you are not working, how long have you been out of work?  
\_\_\_\_ Less than 1 month, \_\_\_\_ Between 1 - 6 months, \_\_\_\_ Between 7 months -  
1 year, \_\_\_\_ Over 1 year, \_\_\_\_ Never worked
17. Are you a student or involved in a work training program? \_\_\_\_ Yes, \_\_\_\_ No
18. If yes to #17, are you involved \_\_\_\_ Full time, \_\_\_\_ Part time
19. If no to #17, do you plan to seek more schooling or other training?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes, \_\_\_\_ No
20. What was your work history before marriage?  
\_\_\_\_ Never worked, \_\_\_\_ Worked full time, \_\_\_\_ Worked part time
21. What has been your work history during marriage?  
\_\_\_\_ Never worked, \_\_\_\_ Worked full time, \_\_\_\_ Worked part time
22. How many jobs have you held during the past five years? \_\_\_\_ None, \_\_\_\_ 1,  
\_\_\_\_ 2, \_\_\_\_ 3, \_\_\_\_ 4 or more
23. If you are working, who takes care of your children on a regular basis?  
\_\_\_\_ Other parent, \_\_\_\_ Relatives, \_\_\_\_ Child care center, \_\_\_\_ Baby sitter,  
\_\_\_\_ Take care of themselves, \_\_\_\_ Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_
24. How many times have you and/or your spouse filed for divorce?  
\_\_\_\_ This is the first time  
\_\_\_\_ 2 times  
\_\_\_\_ 3 or more times
25. Had you ever considered separating before deciding to file for this divorce?  
\_\_\_\_ Yes  
\_\_\_\_ No

26. If yes to #25, how long had you considered a separation before filing for divorce?

Less than a week,  1 - 3 weeks,  1 - 3 months,  4 - 6 months,  
 Over 6 months,  1 year & over

27. Are you and your spouse now living apart?  Yes,  No

28. If yes to #27, for how long?  Less than a week,  1 - 3 weeks,  
 1 - 3 months,  4 - 6 months,  over 6 months,  1 year & over

29. Have you ever talked to anyone about those problems leading to you and your spouse filing for divorce?

Yes

No

30. If yes to #29, please check with whom you have talked about these problems.

Relatives

Clergyman

Family doctor

Attorney

Psychiatrist

Psychologist

Marriage & family counselor

Social worker

Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

31. Are you now receiving professional counseling about those problems leading to you and your spouse filing for divorce?

Yes

No

32. If yes to 31, please check to whom you have talked about these matters.

Family Doctor

Psychiatrist

Psychologist

Marriage & family counselor

Social Worker

Clergyman

Other \_\_\_\_\_

33 Describe briefly some of the reasons you or your spouse decided to file for divorce. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

34 Do you want the divorce?  Yes,  No.

35 Has the divorce been discussed with your children?  Yes,  No.

36 With whom will the children be living if you and your spouse separate or divorce?  Me,  Spouse,  Other,  Has not been decided.

37 How did you arrive at the decision about who will have custody of your children?

Discussion with spouse

Discussion with children

Discussion with relatives

Consultation with my attorney

Professional counseling

Court decision

Other (Describe) \_\_\_\_\_

Has not been decided

38 What issues were discussed or are being discussed in deciding who should have custody of your children?

Age of children,  Sex of children,  Wishes of children,  
 Schooling for children,  Special health problems,  Child care  
arrangements,  Money,  Relationships of children to parents,  
 Relationships of parents with other people,  Remarriage of either  
parent,  Other \_\_\_\_\_,  
 None of these have been decided or discussed

39 Which of the following activities of the parents were discussed or are being discussed in deciding who should have custody of your children?

Work schedule,  Time away from home,  Housing arrangements,  
 Outside time commitments,  Amount of time spent with children,  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 None,  Have not been discussed or decided

40 Did you ever consider any custody arrangement other than the present one?

Yes,  No

41. What reason(s) would influence you to change the present custody arrangement?

Change in financial ability to provide by either parent  
 Child neglect or abuse by either parent  
 Change in either parent's ability to take care of the children  
 Change in living arrangements by either parent that affects the children  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 Haven't decided on custody arrangement

42 Are you satisfied with the present custody arrangement?

Yes

No

Have not decided on custody arrangement

43. Is child support being paid?  Yes,  No

44. If no to #43, will child support be paid in the future?

Yes

No

I don't know

45 What issues have been or are being discussed regarding child support?

Income of spouse

Number of children

Ages of children

Opportunity to modify support in future

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Nothing has been discussed

46 Should the parent paying child support be allowed to help decide how the money will be spent?

Yes

No

I don't know

47 How did you arrive at the decision made regarding child support?

Discussion with spouse

Consultation with my attorney

Discussion with relatives

Court decision

Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

Haven't decided regarding child support

48. Do you agree with the amount that is being paid?  Yes,  No

49. What issues have been or are being discussed regarding alimony (spousal support)?

Income of spouse who will pay alimony

Income of spouse who will get alimony

Child support payments

Working capability of spouse who will get alimony

Other economic resources of each spouse

Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

Has not been discussed

50. Has a decision been made regarding alimony (spousal support)?

Yes

No

Not decided

51. How did you arrive at a decision regarding alimony?

Discussion with spouse

Consultation with my attorney

Court decision

Discussion with relatives

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Not decided

52 What do you think is the value of child visitations?

To maintain a contact between parent and child

Parent has a right to visit the children

To help the child feel secure and loved

Discipline the children

To help in other decisions concerning the children

Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

No value

53 How did you arrive at a decision regarding visitation arrangements?

Discussed with spouse

Consultation with my attorney

Discussion with relatives

Professional counseling

Court decision

Children's wishes

Other \_\_\_\_\_

Have not decided

54. How frequently do you think visitation should take place?  Any time,

About once a week,  More than once a week,  Twice a month,

Every few months,  On special occasions or vacations only,  Never

55 Are you satisfied with present visitation arrangement?

Yes

No

Have not decided on visitation arrangement

56 Should the non-custodial parent take an active role in child rearing?

Yes

No

I don't know

57 If yes to #56, please check areas in which the non-custodial parent should take an active role.

School involvement,  Social activities,  Dress,  Driving,  Dating,  
 Discipline,  Allowance,  Health,  Religious training,  Use of  
child support money,  Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

None of these

58 Have you noticed any change in your children's behavior since the divorce filing?

Yes

No

I don't know

59 If yes to #53, please check those areas of change.

HEALTH:  Eating,  Sleeping,  Complaints of feeling sick,  Fearfulness,  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL:  Attendance,  Grades,  Classroom behavior

RELATIONS WITH:  Brothers & Sisters,  Parents,  Neighbors,  
 Playmates & Friends,  Grandparents,  Other relatives

60. Are any of your children in trouble with the police or other juvenile authorities?

Yes

No

I don't know

61. If yes to #60, are they under the supervision of the Juvenile Court or other agency?

Yes

No

I don't know

62. If yes to #61, what agency is providing supervision?

Juvenile Court,  Children Services Division,  Maclaren School,

Hillcrest School,  Youth Care Center,  Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

63. Have any of your children been in trouble with the police or juvenile authorities in the past?

Yes

No

I don't know

64. If yes to #63, what agency was providing supervision?

Juvenile Court,  Children Services Division,  Maclaren School,

Hillcrest School,  Youth Care Center,  Other (describe) \_\_\_\_\_

65. Have any of your children been in any trouble that would ordinarily lead to contact with police or juvenile authorities?

Yes

No

I don't know

66. During the divorce proceedings, do you think it would be helpful to have someone sit down with you and your spouse in order to work out a parenting relationship that would be the most beneficial for your children?

Yes

No

67 If such a service was offered by the court, would you attend?

Yes

No

I don't know

68 Would you be willing to attend a court sponsored service at this time?

Yes

No

I don't know

69 Would you be willing to come if your ex-spouse was also involved?

Yes

No

I don't know

70. Please write down the name, address and telephone of a relative or friend who will always know where you can be reached.

Name

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX II

## INTERVIEW SCHEDULE PROBES

The following format should be used in probing questions as indicated. When appropriate, please obtain information about the persons with whom subjects talked in the following order: Spouse, relatives, professionals (family doctor, psychiatrists, social workers, M and F Counselors, psychologists, clergyman, and attorneys). If we take the data in this order, the rating of the data will be done more easily. Your probes of course will depend on the responses from the subjects. In other words you may not get data from each of the possible sources, since subjects may not have talked with all the persons listed.

Please verify each item checked on the questionnaire by repeating them to the subject. Make any deletions or additions necessary on the questionnaire. Then take each item checked and ask the following probes.

#9 Review questions 3 through 8; if response on question 9 is consistent with previous responses or "if not important" is checked, probe lightly. On other responses or discrepant responses probe about before and since filing dimensions. Check if both spouses agree/disagree on this dimensions.

#30 Persons talked to about (Problems leading to divorce). Just probe on a-h on question #30.

### PROBES:

- a. When did you talk with \_\_\_\_\_ about the problems?
  1. Here is where you get before/during/after data (see and/or remember the definitions).
- b. Who(of the spouses) decided to talk to \_\_\_\_\_.
  1. Spouse, subject or both.
- c. Who talked with \_\_\_\_\_.
  1. Spouse, subject, together, etc.
- d. How often or frequently did you talk with \_\_\_\_\_.
- e. How important was this talk in decisions you made about your marriage.
  1. What was their opinion - agree or disagree with subject.
- f. Did this talk help in agreement between you and spouse in solving your problems.
  1. In what ways did it help or not help - examples please.
- g. How important was this talk in getting subject and spouse to cooperate with each other?
  1. In what ways did it help or not help - have subject give examples.
- h. (Omit for question 35 only) Were children a part of this talk with \_\_\_\_\_
  1. Have them elaborate in areas of agreement and cooperation.
- i. (Add for questions 37, 47, 51, and 53)  
After discussion \_\_\_\_\_ (issue) with all the people, what person was most important in the decision made about the \_\_\_\_\_ (issue)
  1. spouse, me, me and spouse, attorney, etc.

\* #32 (Professional Counseling at Present )  
Same as #30 (a-h)

#33 (Reasons for Divorce) This is a "before" question. Probe "What situation or event led up to filing; what were areas of disagreement?"  
"Give examples of disagreement."

#34 (Want the Divorce)

- a. Before filing, did you want the divorce? (yes, no; ambivalent, etc.)
- b. Before filing, did your spouse want the divorce? (Yes, no, ambivalent, etc.)
- c. At present, do you want the divorce? (yes, no, ambivalent, etc.)
- d. At present, does your spouse want the divorce? (yes, no, ambivalent, etc.)

\* #35 (Divorce Discussed with Children)  
Same as # 30 except omit h, add i.

#36 Probe "before filing" parenting relationship.

"We would like some information about your parenting relationship with your spouse before the divorce was filed..."

"How would you describe the relationship? For example, who was most responsible for the children? (self, spouse, shared, etc.)

"Who was most responsible for

- discipline
- health matters
- use of money for the children
- dress
- religious, moral training

The following apply only to school age children.

- school matters
- dating
- social activities
- allowance
- driving
- other (please probe)

"How did your parenting pattern come to be ? (agreed between parents, just happened, etc.)

"How would you describe the parenting relationship prior to filing?

- in terms of agreement (attitudes) between the parents. (examples?)
- in terms of cooperation (behavior) between the parents (examples?)
- in terms of your relationship to the children. (examples?)
- in terms of your spouse's relationship to the children (examples?)

\* #37 (Custody Decision)  
Same as #30 a-h, add i.

#38. (Issues in Custody - Child Related)

We should like to get more information about the issues: The importance of each issue, agreement, any cooperation.

a. When were the issues discussed? (Before/Since Filing)

For each issue checked:

b. How important is (issue) to you? Why?

c. Does your spouse agree with you about the importance of (issue)?

d. Are you and your spouse cooperating (working together) in the discussion of these issues?

e. If "None" or "Has not been discussed" is checked, ask "How will the decision be made?"

If no issues checked ask subject: "Which issues are important to you?" As they reply ask: "Does your spouse agree with you about the importance?"

\*\* #39 (Issues in custody - Parent-related) Same as #38

#40 (Other custody arrangements) If yes, what other arrangement has been considered? (tied into #41). If yes, what would be reasons for change?

#42 (Satisfaction with Custody)

a. Are you satisfied with present ( custody ) arrangement? (Examples?)

b. Is your spouse satisfied with the present ( custody ) arrangement? (examples?)

c. What do you think the final(custody) decision will be?

\*\* #45 (Issues in Child Support) Same as #38

#46 On "Yes" or "no" -

a. Does your spouse agree with you?

Probe the following regardless of answer:

b. Who had the most responsibility for deciding how much money was spent before?

(I did - Did your spouse agree?)

(Spouse did - Did you agree?)

(Both - Did you and your spouse agree?)

c. Has this changed since filing?

d. Cooperation:

Did you and your spouse work together in deciding how money was spent (even though you disagreed)? Do you work together now (in agreeing about who is responsible and deciding on how money is spent?)

\* #47 (Decision regarding child support) Same as #30, a-h, add i

\*\* #49 (Issues in Alimony) Same as #38

\* #51 (Decision regarding spousal support) Same as #30, a-h, add i.

#52 (Value of child visitation)

On each item checked:

- a. How important is this to you? Why?
- b. Does your spouse agree?

#53 (Decision regarding visitation) Same as #30, a-h, plus i

\*\*\* #55 (Satisfaction with visitation) Same as #42

#56 (Role of non-custodial parent - Child rearing)

- a. Does your spouse agree with you?
- b. Who had the most responsibility for child-rearing before?

(I did - Did your spouse agree with that?)

(Spouse did - Did you agree with that?)

(Both - Did you and your spouse agree?)

#57 (Areas - Non-custodial parent activity)

- a. Was "Non-custodial parent" active in this area before filing for divorce?
- b. Has this changed since filing for divorce?
  - How important is (his/her/your) participation in this activity?
  - Does your spouse agree about the importance of (his/her/your) participation?
  - Do you and your spouse cooperate (work together) to make (his/her/your) participation possible?

Operational Definition: Non-custodial parent - The parent with whom children are not living (or will not be living with after divorce is final).

If NONE is checked:

- c. In what areas was the non-custodial parent active before filing for the divorce?
- d. Did you and your spouse work together (cooperate) in these areas of parenting before filing? (examples?)

#59 (Children's Behavior)

"We wish to get information on your (child's/children's) behavior before filing and during the divorce action. You have a \_\_\_ year old (boy/girl), a \_\_\_ year old (boy/girl), etc. We are concerned with three areas: health: eating, sleeping, complaints of feeling sick, etc; school: which because you have no school age children we won't go into OR attendance, grades, classroom behavior, etc.; relations with others: with brothers/sisters, yourself, your spouse, neighbors, friends, other relatives.

First, let's take your oldest, the \_\_\_ year old (boy/girl):

1. Before filing did (he/she) have any health problems? (examples? - eating habits, sleeping, etc.)
2. Before filing did (he/she) have any problems in school? (examples? attendance, grades, behavior, etc.)
3. Before filing did (he/she) have any problems in relating to others? (examples? brother, sister, spouse, yourself, etc.)
4. Since filing has (he/she) developed any health problems (Examples?)
5. Since filing has (he/she) developed any problems in school? (examples?)
6. Since filing has (he/she) developed any problems in relating to others? (examples?)

REPEAT FOR EACH CHILD 1-6

#66-69 Suggestion for brief explanation when needed of court service as noted in series of last interview questions.

"The service would provide an opportunity for couples to sit down and discuss their role as separated parents, focusing on decision making around some of the areas already discussed in the interview I.E. custody, visitation, and child support."

APPENDIX III

The Circuit Court for Clackamas County is very concerned about the welfare of the children of divorcing parents. We are asking for your help in better understanding the problems of adjustment to divorce.

We are cooperating with a team from Portland State University who are studying the impact of divorce on children and their parents. You have been asked to participate in the study, and will be contacted for an initial interview shortly by either Dr. Stanley N. Cohen or Mr. Nolan Jones. All the interview information is confidential and will not be used or made available to the court. You will be paid \$20.00 by PSU after the interview has been completed.

The Clackamas County Bar Association has endorsed this project. Your attorney will be notified regarding your selection for participation.

As a parent, I am sure you are as concerned as I am about helping children adjust to divorce. Therefore, I am counting on you to cooperate in carrying out this important study. We hope to do a better job for both children and their parents when this study is completed.

Thank you again for your cooperation.

Dale Jacobs (Signed)

cc: To attorney of record (petitioner & respondent)