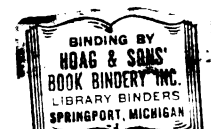


THE THREE-YEAR-OLD CHILD'S  
AWARENESS OF AFFECT IN SELF  
AND IN MOTHER

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## ABSTRACT

### THE THREE-YEAR-OLD CHILD'S AWARENESS OF AFFECT IN SELF AND IN MOTHER

By

Barbara Jo Brandt

The purpose of this study was to investigate the early manifestations of empathy in children, using three-year-old children as subjects. It was hypothesized that subjects would identify feelings of a child more accurately than feelings of a mother. Furthermore, subjects would identify a mother's feelings more accurately when her child had caused her feelings than when the father had been the cause of her feelings. Three different feelings were of interest: happy, sad, and angry.

Twenty-six three-year-old children (13 boys and 13 girls) participated in the study. Each subject was told 27 stories, accompanied by an illustrative picture in which the mother or the child might easily be perceived as feeling happy, sad, or angry. The sex of the child in the story was the same as the subject. At the conclusion of each story, the subject was asked what the

mother (or the child) was feeling. The subject indicated his response by pointing to one of three faces which depicted the emotions of happiness, sadness, and anger. The 27 stories were divided into 3 sessions for each subject, to help prevent boredom.

Results of the statistical analysis showed that for happy and sad feelings, there was no difference in the accuracy with which the subjects identified the child's and the mother's feelings; for angry feelings, subjects identified the child's feelings significantly less accurately than the mother's feelings ( $p < .01$ ). For all three emotions, there was no difference in the accuracy with which the subjects identified the mother's feelings when caused by the child or when caused by the father. Finally, subjects identified positive feelings significantly more accurately than negative feelings ( $p < .01$ ). Possible explanations of the results were discussed and directions for further research on empathy in young children were proposed.

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AFFECT IN SELF AND IN MOTHER

By

Barbara Jo Brandt

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To Mom, who has consistently supported and encouraged me in all of my intellectual endeavors--much love and gratitude.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES. . . . .	vi
INTRODUCTION. . . . .	1
Definition of Empathy . . . . .	2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE. . . . .	4
Research Literature . . . . .	4
Methodology . . . . .	4
Age . . . . .	6
Sex . . . . .	8
Intelligence. . . . .	9
Personality Traits. . . . .	9
Types of Emotion. . . . .	10
Objects of Empathy. . . . .	12
Theoretical Literature. . . . .	14
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND HYPOTHESES . . . . .	19
METHOD. . . . .	21
Subject Population. . . . .	21
Procedure . . . . .	22

TABLE OF CONTENTS.--cont.

	Page
RESULTS . . . . .	27
Source of Affect Main Effect. . . . .	27
Type of Affect Main Effect. . . . .	31
Source X Type Interaction . . . . .	32
Sex Differences . . . . .	35
Errors. . . . .	35
DISCUSSION. . . . .	38
Sources of Affect . . . . .	38
Child's Angry Feelings. . . . .	40
Positive Versus Negative Feelings . . . . .	44
Questionnaire . . . . .	45
Instrument. . . . .	47
SUMMARY . . . . .	49
BIBLIOGRAPHY. . . . .	51
APPENDIX A: RESPONSE CARD. . . . .	55
APPENDIX B: STIMULUS STORIES . . . . .	56
APPENDIX C: SAMPLE PICTURES. . . . .	63
APPENDIX D: QUESTIONNAIRE. . . . .	66

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Analysis of Variance of Accuracy in Identifying Emotions as a Function of Sex, Source of Affect, and Type of Affect .	28
2. Mean Numbers of Correctly Identified Emotions for Each Source of Affect. . . . .	29
3. Orthogonal Comparisons of Means from Source of Affect Main Effect . . . . .	30
4. Mean Numbers of Correctly Identified Emotions for Each Type of Affect . . . . .	31
5. Post-hoc Comparisons of Means from Type of Affect Main Effect. . . . .	31
6. Mean Numbers of Correct Identifications of Each Emotion for Each Source of Affect. . .	32
7. Post-hoc Comparisons of Means from the Type X Source Interaction . . . . .	33
8. Frequency in Each Response Category for Each Type of Affect for Each Source of Affect. . . . .	36

## INTRODUCTION

Empathy has long been recognized by developmental theorists as a critical process in the genesis of a social self in children. Sullivan (1972), Cooley (1969), Mead (1934), and Piaget (1932) all utilize the concept of empathy to explain, what Piaget terms, the child's switch from "egocentrism to social reciprocity." All too often, the process of empathy has been taken as a given, with little attention devoted to the question of how empathy develops or is acquired. Over two decades ago, Cottrell and Dymond (1949) expressed concern about the lack of research in the area of empathy. They offered two possible explanations for the apparent lack of interest--first, that the process of empathy seemed to be taken for granted, and second, that the nature of empathy might cause it to be difficult to study by the available techniques. Since then, empathic ability has come to be recognized as a critical therapist variable in effecting client change (Rogers, 1957, 1961; Truax, et al., 1966a, 1966b) and much research has been concerned with the role

of empathy in the counseling process (Wilson, 1972). With the growing interest in the process of empathy, it is surprising that the question of how empathy first develops still remains untouched by researchers. It is the purpose of this thesis to begin to answer this question.

### Definition of Empathy

The word "empathy" has been used to describe a variety of different psychological phenomena, encompassing an emotional linkage between mother and infant (Sullivan, 1953), a vicarious affective response triggered by the affect of another (Feshback and Roe, 1968), an awareness of the feelings in another (Borke, 1971), an appropriate response based on that awareness (Reif and Stollak, undated), and an ability to predict someone's responses on a sociometric test (Dymond, Hughes, and Raabe, 1952). The definition of empathy used in this study was: the ability to accurately identify the feelings of another. This definition is similar to what others have called "interpersonal perception" (Borke, 1971), "social perception" (Gates, 1923), "social comprehension" (Feshback

and Roe, 1968), "social sensitivity" (Rothenberg, 1970),  
or "emotional sensitivity" (Cheyne and Jahoda, 1971).

## REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

### Research Literature

The research that has dealt with empathy in children has employed a variety of techniques to both elicit and measure the child's empathic response. Since the particular methodology used by a study has a direct relationship to its results, the research on empathy in children will first be reviewed in terms of its methodology, before discussing various aspects of the results.

### Methodology

The first studies in empathy in children were concerned with the child's ability to attribute correctly emotional states to photographs of persons portraying various emotions. Both Gates (1923) and Walton (1936) showed pictures of adult facial expressions to children of a wide range of ages and asked the children to tell them what the person was feeling. More recently, Dupont (1959) showed children photographs of other children expressing either positive or negative feelings. He asked

the subjects to tell him about the child, and then asked them to explain why the child in the picture felt the way he did, thus allowing for a greater latitude of response.

Other researchers have shown children pictures which provide a situational context for the emotion (much like those used in apperceptive personality tests), and then asked the children to tell a story about each picture (Amen, 1941; Dymond, Hughes, and Raabe, 1952; Gilbert, 1969; Alexander, et al., 1971). The stories were then scored for the mention of intentions, thoughts, or feelings of persons in the pictures. Others have limited the response range to the pictures by asking specifically, "What is the child feeling?" (Burns and Cavey, 1959) or by giving the child a multiple choice of feelings (Ruderman, 1962).

To give a further context to the emotions, some researchers have added an accompanying narrative to each picture, either asking specifically what the child was feeling (Feshback and Roe, 1968) or providing a multiple choice (Borke, 1971). Hamsher (1971) gave additional context by presenting stories in the form of cartoons without words, and then asked the children to supply the story.



Other research has dealt with the child's ability to identify emotions from vocal expression. Both Dimitrovsky (1964) and Cheyne and Jahoda (1971) presented children with tape recordings of a short passage spoken in various intonations to convey several different emotions. Children indicated their response by pointing to one of four stick figures, portraying the emotions of happiness, anger, love, and sadness. Rothenberg (1970) added situational cues to the audio recordings by playing dialogues conveying various feelings, and asking, at the end, "What was he feeling?"

Flapan (1968) combined both vocal and visual components by showing children segments of a movie which contained much interaction and feeling. At the end of each segment, the child was asked to tell the story in his own words. He was then asked a series of questions specifically about the feelings, thoughts, and intentions of the people in the segment.

### Age

Despite the differences in methodology, the research in the area of empathy in children has consistently

found that empathic ability increases with age (Burns and Cavey, 1957; Ruderman, 1962; Dimitrovsky, 1964; Rothenberg, 1970; Alexander et al., 1971; Borke, 1971; Cheyne and Jahoda, 1971; Hamsher, 1971). Methods which allowed for greater freedom of response have further explicated the development of the child's awareness of feelings in others. Walton (1936) and Feshback and Roe (1968) both noted that younger children tend to think in terms of pleasant and unpleasant feelings, using a dual type of response. Walton noted that as children grew older, they added other dimensions to the dichotomy until a wide range of responses was available.

Other studies have found that young children, from ages 2 to 7 years, are much more concerned with the external details of a stimulus picture than with the internal thoughts and feelings of the people involved (Amen, 1941; Dymond, Hughes, and Raabe, 1962; Gilbert, 1969). Dupont (1959) further added that younger children tend to describe affect in terms of the action ("He's crying."), while older children are more likely to label the feeling ("He's sad."). While both Dupont (1959) and Flapan (1968) observed a substantial break between 7 and 9 years of age in being aware of internal states, Amen (1941) found that

children as young as age three could talk in terms of inner activity.

Some researchers have looked beyond the question of whether a child can identify various feelings to see if the child is aware of how those feelings come about (psychological causality). Flapan (1968) noted that younger children often saw people as merely reacting with feelings, while older children were more aware of the thoughts, intentions, and goals which accompanied the feelings. This age trend in seeing feelings as causally related is further supported by Dupont (1959), Whiteman (1967), Rothenberg (1970), and Hamsher (1971).

### Sex

Sex differences in empathic ability have been investigated by several researchers. While Dimitrovsky (1964) found that girls were consistently better at identifying feelings in vocal expressions, Cheyne and Jahoda (1971), in their replication of the study, failed to find significant sex differences. Other studies, measuring empathy somewhat differently, have reported finding no difference in empathic ability according to

sex (Gates, 1923; Dupont, 1959; Ruderman, 1962; Rothenberg, 1970).

### Intelligence

Those studies which have looked at the relationship between empathic ability and intelligence have all found a significant positive relationship. Empathic ability seems to be related to both verbal and non-verbal intelligence (Dimitrovsky, 1964; Rothenberg, 1970; Cheyne and Jahoda, 1971), but, according to Ruderman (1962), intelligence does not account for all the variance. Intelligence also seems more highly related to empathic ability in younger children than in older children (Dimitrovsky, 1964; Cheyne and Jahoda, 1971). It might be that at ages 5 and 6, the scores on intelligence tests also measure the child's ability to understand directions and to cope with the testing situation, which would explain the higher correlations.

### Personality Traits

Empathic ability has been found to be related to several personality traits. Murphy (1939) in her study

of sympathy in pre-school children found a positive correlation between sympathetic behavior and aggressive behavior. She explained this relationship in terms of both behaviors being part of a general outgoing tendency in extroverted children. Gilbert (1969) found 4 to 6-year-old, affect-aware children to be rated by their teachers as expressing a wide range of emotions, aware of the feelings of other children, mature and imaginative. Rothenberg (1970) found empathic third and fifth graders to be rated highly in interpersonal competence, especially in leadership, friendliness and sensitivity to others. Thus, empathy seems to be one aspect of general social maturity.

### Types of Emotions

Gates (1923) was interested in the age at which children could recognize various emotional states from photographs of facial expressions. Using 50% correct identifications as his criterion, he found that joy was identified at age three, anger at age seven, pain at age eight, fear at age ten, surprise at age eleven, and scorn at age twelve. This development in the identification of

emotions differs from Bridges' (1932) description of the development in the expression of emotions in infants. Bridges found that children first expressed distress and delight, which was then differentiated into anger, disgust and fear, then elation and affection, followed by jealousy and finally joy.

Most of the studies about empathy in children have looked at the emotions of happiness, sadness, anger, and fear. In general, children have more difficulty in identifying negative feelings than positive feelings (Dupont, 1959; Feshback and Roe, 1968; Rothenberg, 1970; Alexander et al., 1971; Borke, 1971). Alexander et al. (1971) noted that children use more positive than negative words in describing the stimulus pictures. Dupont (1959) found that children were less likely to admit to having felt negative emotions than positive emotions. Rothenberg (1970) found that children who were rated low on interpersonal adjustment had much more difficulty in recognizing negative emotions than positive emotions when compared with other children. While Borke (1971) suggests that the children's difficulty with negative emotions might be due to a lack of clear differentiation between anger, sadness, and fear, the above mentioned results suggest

that an additional explanation would be that negative feelings are anxiety arousing for children, and are subject to repression and denial.

It is interesting that the studies using vocal expression as the stimulus for empathy have found the opposite result--that children identify negative emotions more accurately than positive emotions. Apparently, positive feelings of happiness and love are harder to distinguish when vocal intonation is the only cue.

### Objects of Empathy

Studies have varied with respect to the object of the child's empathy, that is, with whom the child is to empathize. Some, feeling that the child would empathize best with those who are most like him, have used other children as the objects of empathy (Burns and Cavey, 1957; Dupont, 1959; Feshback and Roe, 1968; Borke, 1971; Hamsher, 1971). In fact, Feshback and Roe (1968) found that children empathized better with children of like-sex. Other researchers, arguing that empathy needs to be separate from identification, have used adults as the objects of empathy (Gates, 1923; Walton, 1936; Dimitrovsky,

1964; Rothenberg, 1970; Cheyne and Jahoda, 1971). Unfortunately, by limiting the objects of empathy to either children or adults, few researchers have addressed the comparative question of whether children identify other children's feelings more or less accurately than they identify adults' feelings. Of the few studies which have used both adults and children in the stimulus material (Dymond, Hughes, and Raabe, 1952; Ruderman, 1962; Flapan, 1968), only Flapan has looked at the difference in the child's awareness of children's and adults' feelings. She found that, while there was not much difference between subjects in identifying the children's feelings, the 9 and 12-year-old children commented significantly more often on the adults' thoughts and feelings, than did the 6-year-olds. Thus, it seems that children can empathize more easily with those who are most like them, and that as they get older, they are more able to be aware of peoples' feelings who are different from them.

Thus far, the research which has been concerned with empathy in children has indicated that empathic ability increases with age, is related to intelligence and social adjustment, is greater for positive than negative feelings and greater for child's feelings than



adult's feelings. While the research has elucidated some of the important parameters associated with empathy, very little attention has been paid to the process by which empathy is acquired and develops. The literature related to this more basic question is primarily of a theoretical nature.

### Theoretical Literature

Sullivan (1953, 1964) views empathy as a biological process, innate within the young infant. He defines empathy as a "peculiar emotional communication between the parent and the child," which is strongest between 6 and 27 months of age, but which endures through life for some people. Olden (1958) sees this early form of empathy as being based on a bodily sensing of one another. In the second and third year of life, empathy becomes more cognitive, with the child studying his mother's moods, guessing her reactions to possible actions of his, and becoming aware of her likes and dislikes. Hoffman (1963, 1970) proposes that empathy is influenced in part by the kind of discipline the parents use. He feels that discipline which uses reason, especially when it explains the

effect of the child's actions on someone else, helps the child to be more aware of the feelings of others. Ferguson (1970) further suggests that the "democratic" parent, who both expresses his own feelings and also is aware of the needs and wishes of his child, provides a model for empathy.

Slotkin (1952), a social anthropologist, describes in detail the various aspects of the socialization process, which have relevance for the development of empathy. He first describes "sensibility," which is the "process of inferring an activity of another--including his inner experiences" (p. 75). This arises from the infant's efforts to coordinate his actions with his mother to bring about a satisfying result. To do this, he needs to both anticipate the mother's response in a situation and to anticipate her expectations of his responses in that situation. This process of sensibility can be seen as early as three months when the child makes anticipatory movements prior to being lifted. Slotkin states that the infant learns this process "when it is subjected to the direct, harmonious and close social acts of ministering adults" (p. 75). This process which Slotkin has termed as "sensibility" has been observed in monkeys (Miller,

Banks, and Ogawa, 1962) who learned an avoidance task by observing another monkey who received the shock.

Slotkin adds that as the child develops, he learns that various people behave differently in similar situations and may expect quite different responses from him ("differential sensibility"). Around the same time, as the child becomes aware of his own reactions to certain situations, he imputes the same reactions to others in these situations ("identical sensibility"). This latter process seems to be similar to what others have termed as "projection." From Slotkin's theory, one could postulate that the child would first be able to empathize in those situations where he has a part in the interaction and where he needs to anticipate the responses of others, before he could empathize in situations where he has no part in the interaction. Murphy (1937), in her study of the development of sympathy in pre-school children, found that children first exhibit sympathy towards those with whom they are most familiar. Looking at the transition to being able to empathize with someone with whom the child is not interacting, Murphy noted that children show sympathy to others who are confronted by situations which the child himself has experienced previously and thus has

first-hand knowledge of the feelings involved. Using Slotkin's phrase, perhaps the child is able to empathize with someone with whom he is not interacting first through the process of identical sensibility.

Another question which is relevant to the development of empathy is whether the child first becomes aware of the feelings of others by first being aware of his own, or whether he becomes aware of his own feelings by first perceiving how others feel. Piaget's theory of cognitive development (1932) would predict that the child would first be aware only of his own feelings and then become aware of the feelings of others. He views the young child as primarily "ego-centric," unable to adopt another's point of view. Around the age of seven, the child is capable of "social reciprocity," or coordinating his point of view with that of another. What Piaget says about the development of moral behavior might apply to the development of awareness of feelings: "It is . . . obvious that to judge [in terms of intentions] will require a greater effort in the case of other people's actions than in that of our own" (p. 180).

Thus, one could postulate that empathy develops first from the child being aware of his feelings and then

being able to project those feelings on to others who are in similar situations. Furthermore, the child first would be aware of the feelings of another when he is interacting with that person and is the causative agent of those feelings, before he would be aware of the feelings of another when someone else is the causative agent of those feelings.

## STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND HYPOTHESES

It was the purpose of this study to investigate the early manifestations of empathy in children in order to understand how the process of empathy begins. Three-year-old children were selected as subjects, since this age is about as young as one could expect to be able to respond to the demands of the experimental situation. Also, Ames (1952) noted that age three marks the beginnings of social awareness as evidenced by their verbal behavior. It was decided to place the emotions within the setting of the family, the setting with which the three-year-old child is most familiar. The child's ability to identify feelings in three different contexts was explored: 1) the child's ability to identify his own feelings when they are caused by another; 2) the child's ability to identify another's feelings when he is the causative agent of those feelings; and 3) the child's ability to identify another's feelings when someone else is the causative agent. Within the context of the family, the following situations were specifically

investigated: 1) the child's feelings caused by the mother; 2) the mother's feelings caused by the child; and 3) the mother's feelings caused by the father. The following hypotheses were made:

#### Hypothesis 1

Subjects will more accurately identify the child's feelings than the mother's feelings, whether the mother's feelings are caused by the child or the father.

#### Hypothesis 2

It seems that the transition for the child from being aware only of his own feelings to being aware of others' feelings might be marked by the child's being aware of feelings in another when he has been the causative agent of those feelings. Therefore, subjects will more accurately identify the mother's feelings when the child has been the causative agent of those feelings than when the father has been the causative agent.

## METHOD

### Subject Population

The subjects for this study came from three local day care centers. The criteria for inclusion in the study were:

1. Subjects must have had their third birthday by the time of testing and must not have had their fourth birthday before the testing was concluded.
2. Subjects must be judged by their teachers to be of at least average intelligence.
3. Subjects must have both mother and father present in the home. (Since the stimulus pictures involved both a mother and a father, it was felt that children from one-parent families might be at a disadvantage.)

Thirty-one children (15 girls and 16 boys) met the three criteria. The mothers of these children were telephoned by the experimenter who asked their permission for their three-year-old child to participate in a study concerned with the development of empathy in children. In addition, they were asked if they would be willing to have the experimenter visit their home for one half hour some evening to talk with them about their child and to have them fill out a short questionnaire. All of the 31 mothers



agreed to participate in the study. Five children (2 girls and 3 boys) were eventually excluded from the final sample, four for extensive absences during the testing and one for lack of cooperation in the testing itself. Therefore, the final sample included 26 children (13 girls and 13 boys). The ages ranged from 3 years, 0 months to 3 years, 11 months, with a mean age of 3 years, 6 months (median = 3 years, 7 months). The children had all attended a day care center for at least two months, and were predominantly from middle class homes.

### Procedure

The method used to test the child's empathic ability was similar to that used by Borke (1971). She found that by using a non-verbal measure, children as young as three years of age were able to demonstrate empathic ability, whereas with methods that demanded a verbal response, empathy in young children had been undetected.

Each child was seen by the experimenter in an empty room at the day care center for a total of three sessions, each less than 10 minutes in length and not

more than a week apart.<sup>1</sup> The time span of the three sessions for each child ranged from 4 to 10 days. The same procedure was used for all three sessions.

Each child was first shown a response card with three faces depicting the emotions of happiness, sadness, and anger (See Appendix A). The child was asked to label the emotions, and was helped on any with which he had difficulty, until he could correctly label the three faces. Next, the child was told stories in which either the mother or the child might easily be perceived as feeling happy, sad, or angry (See Appendix B). Each story was accompanied by an illustrative picture (See Appendix C for sample pictures).

To help the child identify with the stories, so that his responses would be indicative of how he or his mother would feel in such situations, and not some fictitious child and his mother, each story was introduced by a question which asked the child if he had ever experienced what was about to be described in the story (for example, "When you go to the grocery store with your

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<sup>1</sup>One subject, who was being withdrawn from the day care center, was seen on the same day for his last two testing sessions, with a two hour break, including a trip to the park, between the sessions.

mother, does she ever buy you a candy bar?"). To further aid in identification, the child in each picture was of pre-school age and of indeterminant sex. The child was described in the stories as being of the same sex as the subject. In general children seemed to identify with the stories. In the pilot test, children made comments such as "That's my mom and my dad," or "That's what happened to me."

Following the presentation of each story, the experimenter asked the child to point to the face that best showed how the mother (or child) in the story was feeling. If the child hesitated in answering, he was further asked what kind of face he thought the mother (or child) would have. If he said that he did not know, he was urged to make a guess, and finally told that he had to choose one of the faces. At the end of each testing session, the child was asked to label the emotions on the response card once again, to insure that he had remembered the correct feelings during the testing.

A total of 27 stories were presented to each child, involving three types of affects (happy, sad, and angry), three sources of the affect (child's feelings caused by the mother, mother's feelings caused by the

child, and mother's feelings caused by the father), and three situations for each type-source combination. The 27 stories were divided into three sub-tests with nine stories in each. Each sub-test contained one situation for each type-source combination. Each sub-test was presented to the subjects in a separate session to help prevent boredom. The order of the sub-tests was counter-balanced among the subjects and the order of the stories within each sub-test was randomized for each subject, using a random numbers table.

Questionnaires were given to the mothers of the subjects in which the same situations as were presented to the children were described and the mothers were asked to circle the emotion (happy, sad, or angry) which most closely indicated how she or her child typically responded to such a situation (See Appendix D). Originally it was intended to exclude from the study any child whose mother responded to one or more situations differently from that which was expected, since, for example, it would be difficult to interpret the responses of a subject whose mother typically reacted with anger to sad situations. In the pilot test, however, it was discovered that both mothers and college psychology students consistently gave

one to four atypical responses to the questionnaire. It was then decided to score the subjects' responses according to what was typically regarded as the correct responses, and to use the mothers' questionnaires in comparison with her child's responses to generate hypotheses for further research.

## RESULTS

For every subject, the 9 questions on each sub-test were scored either 1 or 0 according to whether the emotions were correctly identified or not. Since each subject was given all three sub-tests, each subject received a score from 0 to 3 for every emotion for each source of the emotion. The data were analyzed by a 2x3x3 factorial analysis of variance for repeated measures design. Geisser and Greenhouse's rules for interpreting analysis of variance for repeated measures designs (Kirk, 1968) were followed, using a conservative F test of significance. The summary table for this analysis is given in Table 1.

### Source of Affect Main Effect

Hypothesis 1 concerned the difference in the accuracy with which the subjects identified the child's feelings and the mother's feelings. It was expected that

TABLE 1.--Analysis of Variance of Accuracy in Identifying Emotions as a Function of Sex, Source of Affect, and Type of Affect.

Source	SS	df	df	MS	F
		actual	conservative		
Between subjects					
A (Sex of subjects)	.017	1	1	.017	.011
Subjects within groups	35.368	24	24	1.474	
Within Subjects					
B (Source of emotions)	7.214	2	1	3.607	8.819**
AB	.239	2	1	.120	.293
BxS within groups	19.658	48	24	.410	
C (Type of emotion)	81.060	2	1	40.530	25.899***
AC	.239	2	1	.120	.076
CxS within groups	75.145	48	24	1.566	
BC	20.786	4	1	5.197	10.804**
ABC	1.966	4	1	.491	1.020
BCxS within groups	46.137	96	24	.481	

\*\*p < .01

\*\*\*p < .001

subjects would identify the child's feelings more accurately than the mother's feelings.

Hypothesis 2 concerned the difference in the accuracy with which the subjects identified the mother's feelings, when those feelings were caused by the child and when they were caused by the father. It was expected that subjects would identify the mother's feelings more accurately when the child was the causative agent of those feelings than when the father was the causative agent.

The main effect of the source of the affect was found to be significant at the .01 level. The mean scores for each source are given in Table 2.

TABLE 2.--Mean Numbers of Correctly Identified Emotions for Each Source of Affect (Maximum = 3).

Child's Feelings (B <sub>1</sub> )	Mother's Feelings/Child (B <sub>2</sub> )	Mother's Feelings/Father (B <sub>3</sub> )
1.590	1.974	1.949

To specifically test for the hypotheses, planned orthogonal comparisons using an F ratio were performed to



locate the source of the variance. The results of this analysis are given in Table 3.

TABLE 3.--Orthogonal Comparisons of Means from Source of Affect Main Effect.

Comparison	F
Child's Feelings ( $B_1$ ) X Mother's Feelings $(\frac{B_2+B_3}{2})$	46.500***
Mother's Feelings/Child ( $B_2$ ) X Mother's Feelings/Father ( $B_3$ )	2.273

\*\*\*p < .001

The orthogonal comparisons show that subjects identify mother's feelings more accurately than child's feelings; thus, Hypothesis 1 is not supported. The comparisons also show that there is no difference in the accuracy with which subjects identify the mother's feelings when they are caused by the child or the father; thus, Hypothesis 2 is not supported.

Type of Affect Main Effect

The main effect for the type of affect was found to be significant at the .001 level. The mean scores for each type of affect are given in Table 4.

TABLE 4.--Mean Numbers of Correctly Identified Emotions for Each Type of Affect (Maximum = 3).

Happy ( $C_1$ )	Sad ( $C_2$ )	Angry ( $C_3$ )
2.667	1.487	1.359

Scheffe's method for post-hoc comparisons (Kirk, 1968) was used to test for the source of variance. The results of this analysis are given in Table 5.

TABLE 5.--Post-hoc Comparisons of Means from Type of Affect Main Effect.

Comparison	Difference
Positive Feelings ( $C_1$ ) - Negative Feelings $\left(\frac{C_2 + C_3}{2}\right)$	1.244**
Sad ( $C_2$ ) - Angry ( $C_3$ )	.128

\*\*p < .01

The comparisons of the means show that subjects identify positive feelings much more accurately than negative feelings ( $p < .01$ ). There is no difference in the accuracy with which the subjects identify sad and angry feelings.

#### Source X Type Interaction

The interaction between the source of the affect and the type of affect was significant at the .01 level. The mean scores for the type of affect for each source of the affect are given in Table 6.

TABLE 6.--Mean Numbers of Correct Identifications of Each Emotion for Each Source of Affect (Maximum = 3).

	Child's Feelings ( $B_1$ )	Mother's Feelings/Child ( $B_2$ )	Mother's Feelings/Father ( $B_3$ )
Happy ( $C_1$ )	2.692	2.577	2.731
Sad ( $C_2$ )	1.538	1.423	1.500
Angry ( $C_3$ )	.538	1.923	1.615

Scheffe's method of post-hoc comparisons was used to test for the source of variance of the interaction. The results of this analysis are summarized in Table 7.

TABLE 7.--Post-hoc Comparisons of Means from the Type X Source Interaction.

Comparison	Difference
For happy feelings ( $C_1$ ):	
Child's ( $B_1$ ) - Mother's ( $\frac{B_2+B_3}{2}$ )	.038
Mother's/Child ( $B_2$ ) - Mother's/Father ( $B_3$ )	-.154
For sad feelings ( $C_2$ ):	
$B_1 - \frac{B_2+B_3}{2}$	.076
$B_2 - B_3$	-.077
For angry feelings ( $C_3$ ):	
$B_1 - \frac{B_2+B_3}{2}$	1.231**
$B_2 - B_3$	.308
-----	
For Child's feelings ( $B_1$ ):	
Positive ( $C_1$ ) - Negative ( $\frac{C_2+C_3}{2}$ )	1.654**
Sad ( $C_2$ ) - Angry ( $C_3$ )	1.000
For Mother's feelings/Child ( $B_2$ ):	
$C_1 - \frac{C_2+C_3}{2}$	.904*
$C_2 - C_3$	-.500
For Mother's feelings/Father ( $B_3$ ):	
$C_1 - \frac{C_2+C_3}{2}$	1.173**
$C_2 - C_3$	-.115

\*p &lt; .05

\*\*p &lt; .01

The results of the Scheffe' tests have implications for the interpretation of the source of affect main effect. The results as shown in Table 7 reveal that, for happy and sad feelings, subjects do not differ in the accuracy with which they identify the child's feelings or the mother's feelings; it is only with angry feelings that subjects identify the mother's feelings more accurately than the child's feelings. Thus, the significance of the source of affect main effect is primarily due to the difference in the accuracy with which the subjects identified angry feelings.

The results summarized in Table 7 also have implications for the interpretation of the type of affect main effect. For all sources of the affect, subjects identify positive feelings more accurately than negative feelings. While there is no difference in the accuracy with which subjects identify mother's sad and angry feelings, in identifying the child's feelings, subjects identify sad feelings more accurately than angry feelings. Thus, while in terms of the type of affect main effect, there was no difference in the accuracy of identifications of sad and angry feelings, considering child's feelings alone, sad

feelings were identified more accurately than angry feelings.

### Sex Differences

As seen in Table 1, there was no difference due to sex, either by itself or in any of the interactions.

### Errors

In order to look at the kinds of errors which were made by the subjects, the frequency of each response category was calculated for each type of affect for each of the three sources of affect (Table 8).

For both happy and sad situations, regardless of the source of affect, the type of errors seem to be random; that is, the frequencies are similar for each pair of incorrect responses. The pattern of errors for the angry situations is more complex. For mother's feelings, the ratio of happy to sad errors is approximately 1:2.5. For child's feelings, the ratio is about 1:4. In fact, it appears that children consider sad the correct response for the angry situations, as the frequencies of happy

TABLE 8.--Frequency in Each Response Category for Each Type of Affect for Each Source of Affect.

Type of Affect	Sources of Affect							
	Child's Feelings			Mother's Feelings/Child			Mother's Feelings/Father	
	Response			Response			Response	
	Happy	Sad	Angry	Happy	Sad	Angry	Happy	Angry
Happy	.897	.026	.077	.859	.051	.090	.910	.051
Sad	.256	.513	.231	.282	.474	.244	.205	.295
Angry	.179	.641	.179	.103	.256	.641	.128	.538

and angry responses are equal and considerably less than the frequency of sad responses.

Excluding child's feelings-angry from Table 8, there is no difference among the sources of affect, for both correct and incorrect responses.



## DISCUSSION

### Sources of Affect

While it was hypothesized that (1) subjects would identify the child's feelings more accurately than the mother's feelings and that (2) subjects would identify the mother's feelings when caused by the child more accurately than when the mother's feelings were caused by the father, neither hypothesis was supported. Instead, with the exception of child's angry feelings, subjects identified happy, sad, and angry feelings across sources of the affect with equal accuracy.

Rather than explaining the development of empathy in terms of a switch from the child's being aware of his own feelings to being aware of the feelings of another, and from being aware of someone else's feelings when he has caused them, to being aware when someone else has caused them, one might conceptualize empathy at this age as the learning of rules which predict someone's feelings in a given situation. Once the child has learned the rules, he can apply them to a variety of people. Thus,

he has learned that people feel happy when they get something they want, that people feel sad when others are hurt or sick and that people feel angry when someone does something that they do not like. The question of whether the child first learns the rules through his own experience or through the observations of others, can not be answered from this study. By the age of three, the child seems to be equally aware of his own and other's feelings.

Several other researchers have used Piaget's theory of cognitive development to hypothesize that children below the age of eight should have difficulty in recognizing the thoughts and feelings of others (Dupont, 1959; Flapan, 1968; Rothenberg, 1970; Borke, 1972), and yet, consistently, researchers have found that children as young as three have some awareness of the feelings of others (Amen, 1941 and Borke, 1972). Perhaps two different processes are involved in taking a person's visual perspective into account and in being aware of another person's feelings. The first process involves ignoring one's own visual perspective, while the second involves combining visual, auditory, and situational cues to form a judgment. Piaget's theory might hold, however, in the instances where another person's experience is quite different from what the child might feel

in the same situation; in these cases, the younger child might have difficulty in ignoring what his own feelings would be and attending to the cues which the other person is giving. Thus, one would predict that while empathic ability gradually increases with age, there should be a sharp increase in ability around age eight. Such an increase has been noted by several researchers (Dupont, 1959; Flapan, 1968; Rothenberg, 1970), although it has not been attributed to a switch in the child's ability to recognize someone else's feelings which are different from his own.

### Child's Angry Feelings

Subjects identified the child's angry feelings significantly less accurately than the mother's angry feelings. In fact, by inspecting the types of errors which were made by the children, it would seem that subjects felt that "sad" was the correct response for the angry situations.

One explanation would be that in young children, the behavioral response to feelings of sadness and anger is often the same (crying), while in mothers, anger and sadness is usually differentiated behaviorally. It is

interesting that the mothers of the subjects, while completing the questionnaires, often remarked that they were not sure how their child would feel in the child-angry situations. While the majority of the mothers chose "angry" as the way their child would feel, the variability of response on the questionnaire was greatest for the child-angry situations.

Confusion over sad and angry feelings, however, is not a sufficient explanation of the child's difficulty in responding to the child-angry situations. If the children were simply confused, one would predict that they would make an equal number of sad and angry guesses, but instead, children chose "sad" about four times as often as they chose "angry." Another explanation would be that children as early as three years of age have been taught by our culture that it is not acceptable to be angry, and so they repress or deny their feelings of anger and respond "sad." Other studies have found that, while children will label a negative emotion in another child, they are less likely to react with a similar vicarious affective response to that child's feelings (Feshbeck and Roe, 1968) or to admit to having ever experienced a similar negative feeling (Dupont, 1959). Furthermore, many

adults are afraid to feel angry towards a significant other, for fear that if they expressed that anger, the other person would reject them and the relationship would be destroyed. If three-year-old children have similar fears, it would be very threatening to feel angry towards their mother, on whom they are totally dependent.

A third explanation stems from the child-angry situations in themselves. All three situations involve the child being deprived of something he wants (to play outside, to stay up when it is bedtime, and to have a candy bar). While Jersild (1946), in his discussion of emotional development, mentioned that frustration of wishes, plans, or desires leads to anger in the three-year-old child, it could be possible that many children experience sadness in such situations, but that adults impute their feelings to be that of anger. It is of interest that most of the highly empathic children in the study consistently responded "sad" in the child-angry situations, while responding correctly to all, or almost all, of the other situations. In considering what causes someone to be angry rather than sad in a situation involving a deprivation of some kind, it seems that people most often feel angry when they feel that rightfully they

should not have been deprived; whereas, when they feel that they do not have the rights to have something they want, they would probably feel sad. Accordingly, Blacks did not start to be militant until they felt that they were entitled to have what others in society had. Likewise, perhaps three-year-old children do not feel that they have the right to have a candy bar or to stay up past their bedtime if their mother says no, and thus feel sad.

Further research is definitely needed to elucidate how children actually feel in such situations. An interesting study would involve asking children to make up "angry stories" where various people (mother, father, siblings, friends) have caused the child's anger. In fact, a wide range of ages could be sampled to see if there is a developmental change in the kinds of situations which lead to anger. Then, in terms of acceptance of angry feelings, it would be interesting to give those situations to another sample of children and see how the recognition of anger changes with age and also varies with the kind of person who causes the anger. It might be that a pre-school child would label anger when caused by a peer, but not when caused by a parent; whereas, an adolescent might

be less likely to label anger involving a peer and more likely when involving a parent.

### Positive Versus Negative Feelings

Subjects identified positive feelings significantly more accurately than negative feelings. This finding is very consistent with the literature (Dupont, 1959; Feshbeck and Roe, 1968; Rothenberg, 1970; Alexander et al., 1971; Borke, 1972). Borke (1972) postulated that this discrepancy might be due to the fact that, while the response to happy situations is fairly unambiguous, both anger and sadness are often appropriate responses to the same situation: "While some individuals react to the frustrating agent and feel angry, others respond primarily to the deprivation resulting from the frustration and feel sad" (p. 269). Following Borke's argument, one would expect children to make very few "happy" errors and to respond with a negative emotion to the sad and angry situations. While the data from the angry situations somewhat support Borke's hypothesis, the errors from the sad situations were evenly divided between happy and angry. The greater variability of errors in the sad situation could

indicate that those situations involved a more complex response. Whereas the feelings of anger and happiness were reactions to the actions of someone, the sad feelings involved a sympathy towards the misfortunes of someone (while one felt happy because someone gave him a present, one felt sad because someone was sick).

Another explanation, proposed by several researchers (Dupont, 1959; Feshbeck, 1968; Rothenberg, 1970) and discussed in the preceding section, is that negative emotions arouse anxiety in children and thus are subject to repression and denial. Rothenberg (1970) postulates that the amount of anxiety aroused and the concomitant amount of errors in recognizing negative emotions is related to ego-strength in children. One could further postulate that younger children and more disturbed children would have more difficulty in identifying negative feelings.

### Questionnaire

The mothers' responses to the questionnaire closely corresponded to the expected answers. The average number



of errors per questionnaire was about 1.5, with the range being from 0 to 4 errors.

Comparing the responses of each child to those of his mother, it was interesting to note that in terms of the mother's feelings, the child seldom made the same error as his mother, whereas with the child's feelings, the child often made the same error as his mother. Thus it seemed that in identifying the mother's feelings, the child responded in terms of mothers-in-general, without being aware of his own mother's idiosyncracies. In terms of the child's feelings, the subjects responded with their own feelings, which might differ from the norm at times, but which were similarly perceived by their mothers. While the situations were chosen to be as unambiguous as possible, it would be interesting to construct situations which might elicit a variety of feelings from different people, and look at mother-child agreement in terms of the feelings involved. Perhaps the amount of agreement for each situation would be related to the degree of ambiguity inherent in the situation, rather than the feelings involved.

In retrospect, the questionnaire could have been of more value had an interview based on the mother's

responses been conducted after completing the questionnaire. Helpful questions would have been: Do you think your child knows how you would feel in this situation? How do you let him know? How do you know that your child feels that way? What kinds of cues does he give you? How sure are you of your answer? Such questions would have been useful in interpreting both the mothers' and children's responses.

### Instrument

The instrument used in this study proved to be an effective measure of empathy in three-year-old children. Only one child of 27 was unable to understand the task. Since it utilizes a non-verbal measure of empathy, it might even be used with children from 2-1/2 years of age.

The test seems to discriminate among children. The total scores ranged from 9 to 24. The next question would seem to be to find what kinds of social behaviors are related to high and low scores on the test.

In the sample used in this study, it seemed that low scores were related to social immaturity. The seven children who were superficially judged by the experimenter

to be immature, received the lowest scores in the group (scores from 9-15). The only other child to receive a score in this low range, was a child whose parents were on the brink of divorce and who consistently chose "happy" to be the mother's feelings, as if to deny the situation at home. While a relationship between empathy and social maturity can only be hypothesized from these observations, it would be interesting to study the relationship more rigorously.

## SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the early manifestations of empathy in children, using three-year-old children as subjects. It was hypothesized that subjects would identify feelings of a child more accurately than feelings of a mother. Furthermore, subjects would identify a mother's feelings more accurately when her child had caused her feelings than when the father had been the cause of her feelings. Three different feelings were of interest: happy, sad, and angry.

Twenty-six three-year-old children (13 boys and 13 girls) participated in the study. Each subject was told 27 stories, accompanied by an illustrative picture in which the mother or the child might easily be perceived as feeling happy, sad, or angry. The sex of the child in the story was the same as the subject. At the conclusion of each story, the subject was asked what the mother (or the child) was feeling. The subject indicated his response by pointing to one of three faces which depicted the emotions of happiness, sadness, and anger.

The 27 stories were divided into 3 sessions for each subject, to help prevent boredom.

Results of the statistical analysis showed that for happy and sad feelings, there was no difference in the accuracy with which the subjects identified the child's and the mother's feelings; for angry feelings, subjects identified the child's feelings significantly less accurately than the mother's feelings ( $p < .01$ ). For all three emotions, there was no difference in the accuracy with which the subjects identified the mother's feelings when caused by the child or when caused by the father. Finally, subjects identified positive feelings significantly more accurately than negative feelings ( $p < .01$ ). Possible explanations of the results were discussed and directions for further research on empathy in young children were proposed.

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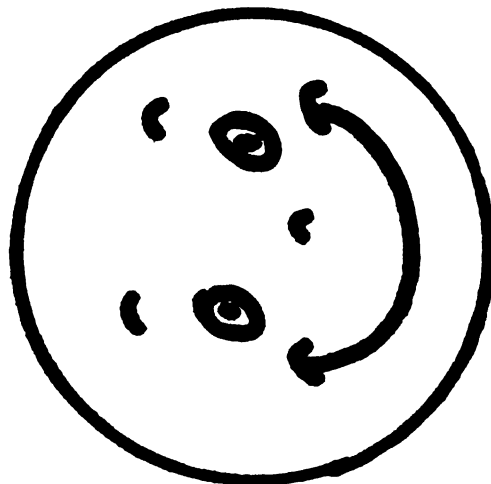
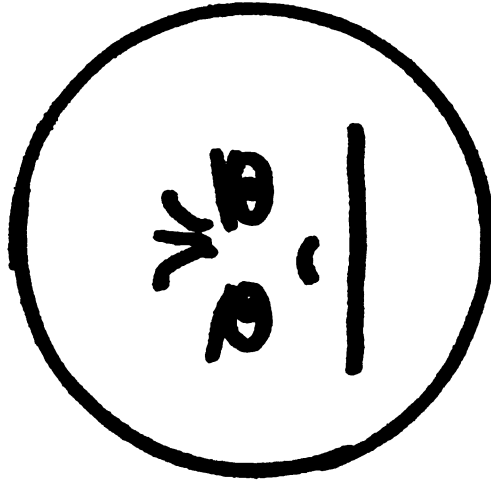
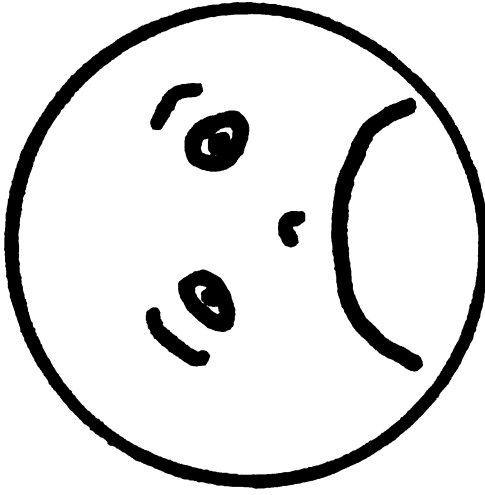
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APPENDIX A  
RESPONSE CARD

## APPENDIX A

## RESPONSE CARD



(In the original, faces were 3 inches in diameter and 1 inch apart.)

APPENDIX B  
STIMULUS STORIES

APPENDIX B  
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Sub-test A:

I. Child's feelings caused by mother.

- A. Happy: When you go to the grocery store with your mommy does she ever buy you some candy? Well, this little boy<sup>1</sup> was shopping with his mother and he saw a candy bar that he really wanted. He asked his mother if he could have a candy bar and she said, "Sure you can. Go over and pick out the candy bar that you'd like." See, here she's giving him the candy bar. How does this little boy feel cause his mother is giving him a candy bar?
- B. Sad: Did your mother ever plan something really special for you, and then something happened and you couldn't do it after all? Well, this little boy had always wanted to go to the zoo. His mother said that she would take him one day, and they both couldn't wait. Well, when that day came, his mother was sick and they couldn't go to the zoo after all. See how the mother is sick in bed? How does the little boy feel cause he can't go to the zoo after all?
- C. Angry: Does your mommy ever make you go to bed when you really don't want to? Well, this little boy was having so much fun playing with his toys that he really didn't want to go to bed. He wanted to stay up and play lots more. But his mother said, "No, you have to go to bed right

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<sup>1</sup>These stories are told in respect to male subjects. For female subjects, "little girl," "she" and "her" was substituted for "little boy," "he," and "his."

now!" See how the little boy is going upstairs? How does the little boy feel cause his mother is making him go to bed?

## II. Mother's feelings caused by child

- A. Happy: Do you ever give your mommy a big kiss and tell her that you love her? Well, that's what this little boy did. He ran in from play, gave his mom a big hug and kiss, and said, "Oh, Mommy, I love you!" See how he's just about to give his mom a kiss? How does the mother feel cause the little boy gave her a kiss and said that he loved her?
- B. Sad: Do you ever fall down and hurt yourself? Well, this was in the winter time--see how there's ice on the sidewalk? Well, this mother and her little boy were out walking when it was winter and the little boy slipped on the ice and fell down and really hurt himself. See how the little boy fell down? How does the mother feel because her little boy fell down?
- C. Angry: Did you ever eat something that your mother told you not to eat? Well, this mother had worked all afternoon to make a special cake for a party. You know what happened? This mother came into the room and found that her little boy had taken a chunk out of the cake and was eating it. See how part of the cake is gone? How does the mother feel because her little boy took a piece out of the cake?

## III. Mother's feelings caused by father

- A. Happy: Does your daddy ever give your mother a present? Well, this dad knew that the mother really liked flowers. So one day, he brought home a whole bunch of flowers for her as a special surprise. See how he's giving her the flowers? How is the mother feeling cause the father is giving her some flowers?

- B. Sad: Did your daddy ever get so sick that he had to go to bed? Well, that's what happened to this father. He was so sick that he might have gone to the hospital. See how the father is in bed and the mother is standing by him? How does the mother feel cause the father is so sick?
- C. Angry: Does your daddy ever mess up the house? Well, this mother had worked very hard to clean up the house for company. After she had worked so hard to clean up the family room, look what happened. The father messed up the whole room. See how there are newspapers all over the place? How does the mother feel cause the father messed up the family room?

#### Sub-test B

##### I. Child's feelings caused by mother

- A. Happy: Does your mother ever give you a present? Well, this little boy had wanted a certain toy for a long time. One day his mother saw the toy in a store and bought it for her little boy. See, here she's giving her little boy the toy, all wrapped up. How does the little boy feel cause his mother is giving him a present?
- B. Sad: Does your mom ever get so sick that she has to go to bed? Well, this mother was so sick, she might even have to go to the hospital. See how she's in bed? How does the little boy feel cause the mother's so sick?
- C. Angry: Did you ever go to the grocery store with your mother and want some candy, but your mother wouldn't get you any? Well, that's what happened to this little boy. He really wanted some candy and he asked his mother again and again, but she said, "No, you can't have any." See how she's walking away? How does the little boy feel cause he can't have any candy?



## II. Mother's feelings caused by child

- A. Happy: Do you ever pick up your toys before your mom even tells you to? Well, that is what this little boy did. See, he has already started to pick up his toys and his mother didn't even ask him to. How is the mother feeling because the little boy is picking up the toys?
- B. Sad: Did your mom ever plan something special for you and then you got sick? Well, this little boy had always wanted to go to the zoo and so his mother said she would take him one day. Well, that day came and look what happened. The little boy was sick in bed and they couldn't go. How does the mother feel cause they can't go after all?
- C. Angry: Did your mom ever get you dressed to go somewhere and told you to stay clean, but you forgot and got dirty? That's what happened to this little boy--They were going to the doctor's and she told him not to get dirty and look what he did. When his mom was ready to leave, he was playing in the sandbox and was dirty from head to toe. How does the mother feel cause the little boy got all dirty and they're going to be late?

## III. Mother's feelings caused by father

- A. Happy: Does your daddy ever give your mother a big kiss and tell her that he loves her? Well, that's what this dad did. When he came home from work, he gave the mother a big hug and kiss and said, "Honey, I love you." How does the mother feel cause the daddy gave her a kiss and said that he loved her?
- B. Sad: Does your daddy ever hurt himself? Well, this was winter time--see how there is ice on the sidewalk? Well, this mother and father were taking a walk, when it was winter and the father slipped on the ice and fell down and really hurt himself. See how the father fell down? How does the mother feel cause the dad fell down?

- C. Angry: Did your daddy ever eat something that your mommy told him not to? Well, that's what this daddy did. This mother had worked all afternoon to make a special cake and then look what happened! This dad helped himself to a piece of cake. How does the mother feel cause the dad ate a bite of the cake?

Sub-test C:

I. Child's feelings caused by mother

- A. Happy: Does your mother ever let you stay up late, after your bed-time? Well, this little boy was having so much fun playing with his toys that he didn't want to go to bed. This night his mother said, "Well, tonight can be a special night. I'll let you stay up a while longer and you can play some more. You don't have to go to bed right now." See, here, the boy is still playing. How does the little boy feel cause his mother said he didn't have to go to bed?
- B. Sad: Does your mother ever hurt herself? Well, this was winter time--see how there is ice on the sidewalk? Well, this mother and her little boy were out walking when it was winter and the mother slipped on the ice and fell down and really hurt herself. See how the mother fell down? How does the little boy feel cause his mother fell down?
- C. Angry: Does your mom ever call you to come inside when you're having so much fun playing? Well, that's what happened to this boy. See, he's having so much fun playing in the sandbox--he really didn't want to go inside. But his mother said, "You have to come in, right now." How does the little boy feel cause he has to go inside?

II. Mother's feelings caused by child

- A. Happy: Do you ever draw a special picture for your mother? Well, that's what this little boy did. He made a special picture in nursery school

and gave it to his mother as a present. See, here he's giving her the picture. How does the mother feel cause the boy is giving her a present?

B. Sad: Do you ever get sick and have to stay in bed? Well, that's what happened to this little boy. He was so sick that he might have to go to the hospital. See how the little boy is in bed and the mother is standing by him? How does the mother feel cause the boy is so sick?

C. Angry: Do you ever mess up the house when your mother doesn't want you to? Well, this mother had worked very hard to clean up the house for company. After she had worked so hard to clean up the family room, look what happened. The little boy messed up the whole room. Look how there are toys all over the place? How does the mother feel cause the little boy messed up the room?

### III. Mother's feelings caused by father

A. Happy: Does your daddy ever help your mommy clean up the house? Well, this mother was having company and had lots of work to do. So the father said he would help her get the house clean for company. See how he's sweeping. How does the mother feel because the father is helping her clean up the house?

B. Sad: Did your daddy ever plan something special for your mother and then something happened and they couldn't go? Well, this mother really wanted to go to a special play and the father was going to take her and they both couldn't wait to go. Well, when the night came to go, the father was sick and so they couldn't go. See how the father is sick in bed? How does the mother feel cause they can't go to the play after all?

C. Angry: Does your daddy ever make your mommy late when they are going some place? Well, that's what this dad did. The mother and father were going some place and look, here the mother is all ready

and the daddy is sitting reading the newspaper. He hasn't even changed his clothes and they are going to be late. How does the mother feel because the dad has made them late?

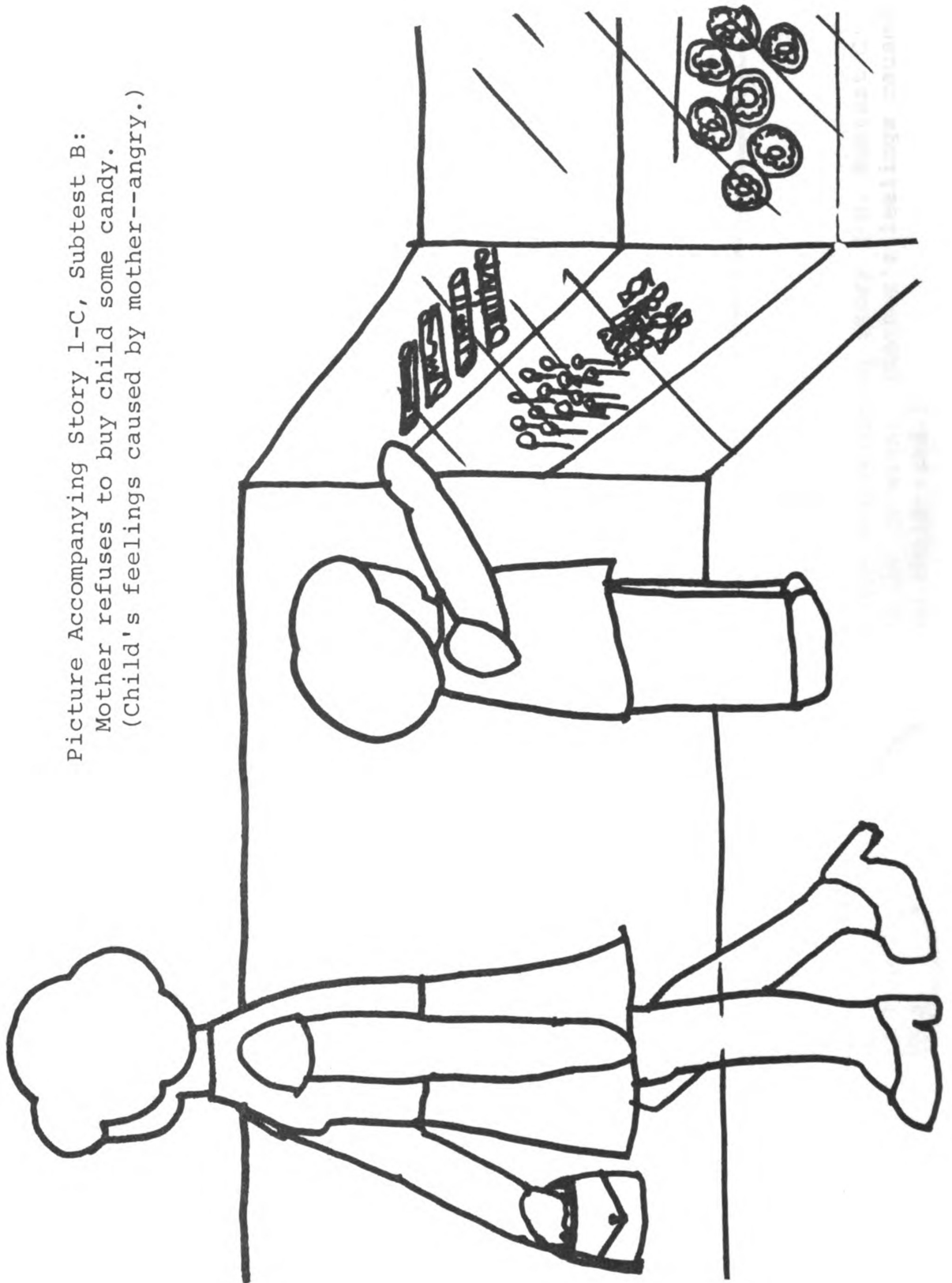
APPENDIX C

SAMPLE PICTURES

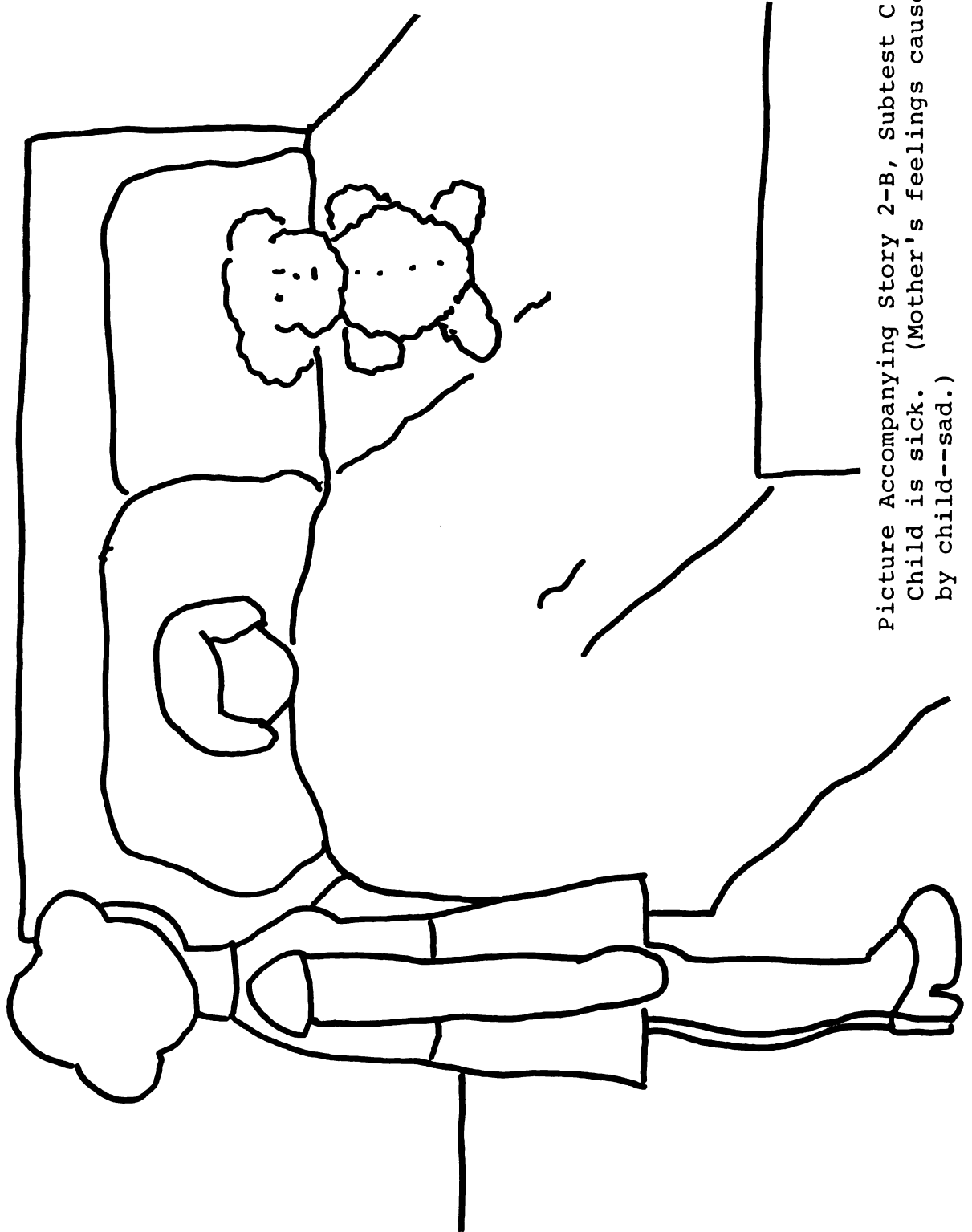
APPENDIX C  
SAMPLE PICTURES



Picture Accompanying Story 3-A, Subtest A: Father gives mother a present.  
(Mother's feelings caused by father--happy.)



Picture Accompanying Story I-C, Subtest B:  
Mother refuses to buy child some candy.  
(Child's feelings caused by mother--angry.)



Picture Accompanying Story 2-B, Subtest C:  
Child is sick. (Mother's feelings caused  
by child--sad.)



APPENDIX D  
QUESTIONNAIRE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please read the following situations, and for each situation, circle the word that most closely describes how you would typically feel in such a situation. Each word represents a range of emotion (eg. angry can mean annoyed or furious; happy can mean pleased or overjoyed.) Circle one and only one answer for each situation. There are no right or wrong answers--- I am interested in how mothers might feel in such situations.

1. Your child gives you a picture that he has drawn "just for you".

Your                      happy                      angry                      sad

2. husband is very sick and might have to go to the hospital. He is lying in bed right now, feeling miserable.

                    happy                      angry                      sad

3. You have spent the whole afternoon making a cake for a special occasion. You come into the kitchen to find that your husband has helped himself to a piece of the cake.

                    happy                      angry                      sad

4. You and your husband are going to pick up another couple to go to a movie. As you dash downstairs, you find your husband engrossed in the evening newspaper. He still has to change his clothes and shave, and you are going to be quite late.

                    happy                      angry                      sad

5. Your child runs in from play, throws his arms around you, gives you a big kiss and says, "oh, Mommy, I love you!"

                    happy                      angry                      sad

6. Your child has a doctor's appointment. You have gotten him all ready and told him to be careful and keep himself clean while you get dressed. When it is time to go, you find him outside in the sandbox, dirty from head to toe, and you are going to be quite late.

                    happy                      angry                      sad

7. Your child is quite sick and might have to go to the hospital. He is lying in bed right now, feeling miserable.

                    happy                      angry                      sad

8. You have just cleaned the family room in preparation for entertaining tonight. The next thing you know, your husband has messed up the entire room, scattering newspapers here and there, and leaving an empty beer can and potato chip crumbs around the sofa.

                    happy                      angry                      sad

9. You and your child are walking on a cold, icy winter's day, when your child slips on the ice, falling and hurting himself.

happy                      angry                      sad

10. You and your child had planned a special trip to the zoo, and you both were looking forward to it. Today is the day, but your child is sick, so you won't be able to go.

happy                      angry                      sad

11. Your husband brings you a bouquet of flowers as a special surprise.

happy                      angry                      sad

12. You and your husband are walking on a cold, icy winter's day, when your husband slips and falls on some ice, hurting himself.

happy                      angry                      sad

13. You are expecting some guests soon and your husband offers to help you finish straightening the house.

happy                      angry                      sad

14. You have spent all afternoon baking a cake for a special occasion. You come into the kitchen to find that your child has dug his hand into the cake and is eating a chunk of it.

happy                      angry                      sad

15. Your husband comes home, gives you a big kiss and tells you that he loves you.

happy                      angry                      sad

16. You have just cleaned up the family room and are expecting guests any minute. Though you told your child to stay out of the family room, you come in to find that your child has scattered his toys from one end of the room to the other.

happy                      angry                      sad

17. You and your husband had planned a special night-on-the-town, and you both were really looking forward to it. Tonight is the night, but your husband came home from work sick, so you won't be able to go.

happy                      angry                      sad

18. Your child spontaneously picks up his bedroom, which previously was littered with toys.

happy                      angry                      sad



Now read the following situations, and for each situation, circle the word that most closely describes how your child would feel in such a situation. Remember, each word represents a range of emotion. Give one and only one answer for each situation. Again, there are no right or wrong answers--- I am interested in how children might feel in such situations.

1. You and your child are at the grocery store, and your child sees a candy bar that he really wants. He asks you several times if you will buy it for him and each time you say no.

happy                      angry                      sad

2. You are really sick and might have to go to the hospital. Your child understands that you are feeling miserable.

happy                      angry                      sad

3. It is your child's bed-time, and he is engrossed in his play. He is adamant about not wanting to go to bed, but you insist.

happy                      angry                      sad

4. Your child has wanted a particular toy for a long time. On a whim, you buy it for him and give it to him as a special surprise.

happy                      angry                      sad

5. You and your child planned a special trip to the zoo, and you both were looking forward to it. Today is the day, but you are sick, so you won't be able to go.

happy                      angry                      sad

6. You and your child are at the grocery store, and your child sees a candy bar that he really wants. You buy it for him.

happy                      angry                      sad

7. Your child is right in the midst of some very exciting play, when you call to him and tell him that it is time to come inside.

happy                      angry                      sad

8. You and your child are walking on a cold winter's day, when you slip and fall, hurting yourself.

happy                      angry                      sad

9. It is your child's bed-time and he is engrossed in his play. You tell him that he can stay up a few minutes longer.

happy                      angry                      sad

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