

SEPARATION AND INDIVIDUATION IN ADOLESCENT
WOMEN

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
ABBY LOREN GOLOMB
1982

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.
MAY BE RECALLED with earlier due date if requested.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE
JAN 21 2002		
100801		

ABSTRACT

SEPARATION AND INDIVIDUATION

IN ADOLESCENT WOMEN

By

Abby Loren Golomb

Forty-eight first year college women participated in this study of homeleaving and adjustment to college. There were selected on the basis of their Cohesion scores on Olson's FACES: subjects were either very high (enmeshed), very low (disengaged) or moderate on this dimension. Groups were then compared on several measures of adjustment in the global sense and with specific reference to adjustment to college. A curvilinear relationship was predicted between these measures and family cohesion, wherein young women from moderately cohesive families would be better adjusted than those from enmeshed or disengaged families. Results indicate, however, a linear relationship between these variables. High family cohesion levels seem to facilitate personal development and individuation. Students from less cohesive families reported more personal problems, their interpersonal relationships were less close, and they appeared less well adjusted to unbiased raters. However, their profiles suggest that they are psychologically healthier than Olson's term "enmeshed" implies.

SEPARATION AND INDIVIDUATION
IN ADOLESCENT WOMEN

by

Abby Loren Golomb

A MASTERS THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Psychology

1982

his

prove

also

for t

guson

patien

I the

for as

go to

who al

ties.

encoura

endeavo

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my chairperson, Gary Stollak, for his guidance, support and enthusiasm about this research. He has proven it possible to be both a researcher and a human being. I also thank my committee members, Robert Zucker and Linda Jackson, for their valuable guidance. I would also like to thank Lucy Ferguson for her help in designing this project and Necia Black for her patience and kindness in introducing me to the world of computers. I thank Wes Novak for sharing his enthusiasm about this topic, and for asserting his confidence in me as a researcher. Special thanks go to Bill Bukowski, Fred Rogosch, Jane Pearson and Sarah Witcher, who always made themselves available to help with computer difficulties. Most importantly, I thank my friends and my family, whose encouragement and patience were essential to the completion of this endeavor.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	v
LIST OF APPENDICES.	vi
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION.	1
Separation and Individuation.	2
Personality Development in the College Years.	6
FACES	14
Goals of the Present Study.	15
IV. METHOD.	20
Subjects.	20
Subject selection	20
Procedure	21
Analyses.	23
III. RESULTS	26
IV. DISCUSSION.	46
APPENDICES	57
REFERENCES	85

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE

1	Comparison of cohesion scores of the original screening sample with norms published by Olson (1979)	27
2	Cohesion and global measures of adjustment.	29
3	ANOVA of cohesion and global measures of adjustment . .	30
4	Cohesion group and number of significant others	32
5	Cohesion group and percent of contact points with family members, peers, and other adults	32
6	ANOVAs of cohesion group and percent of contact points with family members, peers, and other adults . .	33
7	Cohesion group and intensity of relationships	35
8	MANOVA of cohesion group and intensity of relationships	35
9	Cohesion group and number of positive and negative feelings reported about leaving home for college. . . .	36
10	MANOVA of cohesion group and positive and negative feelings reported about leaving home.	37
11	Cohesion groups and interviewer's ratings on adjustment.	39
12	MANOVA of cohesion and interviewer's ratings on adjustment.	40
13	Cohesion group and scores on cohesion, cohesion subscales, adaptability and social desirability	42
14	MANOVA of cohesion group and scores on cohesion, cohesion subscales, adaptability and social desirability.	43

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE

- | | | |
|---|---|----|
| 1 | Sixteen possible types of marital and family systems derived from the circumplex model. | 16 |
| 2 | Comparison of ranges of cohesion scores of project participants and Olson's standardization sample. . . . | 27 |

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX

A	Research consent form.	57
B	FACES questionnaire, Scoring sheet, Directions for hand scoring FACES, and Cohesion subscales . .	58
C	Social activity interview and interviewer's summary sheet.	66
D	Mooney Problem Checklist - Abridged form, Interpersonal Gridform and checklist subscales . .	70
E	Demographic Questionnaire and BDI-Short form . . .	75
F	Positive and negative adjectives describing homeleaving.	81
G	Demographic Data	82

Introduction

The goal of the present study was to examine the processes of separation and individuation during the college years, studying female students both in relation to their families and to the new environment of school. It was predicted that adjustment to college life would be easiest for students whose families are moderately bound together; for these students, family cohesion should be balanced by individual autonomy. Such a combination should facilitate movement away from the family nucleus during late adolescence, unaccompanied by feelings of isolation. The student who considers her family to be moderate in cohesion has a model of how to bond with others based upon experiences at home. During periods of difficulty in adjustment, she is able to turn to the family for support and encouragement. In contrast, the adjustment process was expected to be more turbulent for the student enmeshed in the family network. Because the primary attachments have been in the home, leaving the family and reestablishing oneself in a new environment was expected to be more difficult. Students who view their families as disengaged were also expected to face more difficulties during the separation process. While they may be more eager to leave home for college, it was predicted that their lack of experience with closeness to others would impact upon their ability to enter into new relationships; when frustrated and lonely, they would be less likely to seek support from members of their family.

Separation and Individuation

The adolescent phase of development is frequently described as turbulent and stressful; it is defined in terms of the dramatic physiological and psychological changes which differentiate children from adults. On the physiological level, the development of secondary sex characteristics can be considered as qualitatively different from any prior growth processes, but the concurrent psychological processes of separation and individuation are hardly new to the individual. According to Mahler (1975), the first three years of life can be described as subphases in the closely intertwined, but not identical, processes of separation and individuation. Separation is defined as the child's emergence from symbiotic fusion with the mother; individuation is the child's assumption of his or her own individual characteristics. These processes are repeated once more with the onset of adolescence. Comparing the two individuation processes, Blos (1967, p.163) writes that

both periods have in common a heightened vulnerability of the personality organization. Both periods have in common the urgency for changes in psychic structure in consonance with the maturational forward surge. Last but not least, both periods - should they miscarry - are followed by a specific deviant development (psychopathology) that embodies the respective failures of individuation.

According to Blos, the process of adolescent individuation is characterized by structural changes accompanying the emotional disengagement from internalized infantile objects. Hence it follows that adolescents typically struggle with intense dependency conflicts, coincident with the search for autonomy and personal identity (Abrams and Goldman, 1976).

In a general sense, the process of individuation denotes "increasing differentiation from a past or present relational context" (Karpel, 1976,p.66). Karpel defines fusion as a person's state of embeddedness in or undifferentiation within the relational context; personal identity is defined in terms of significant relationships. For the early adolescent, the concept of "self" is meaningful only in terms of the family. Individuation from fusion can hence be understood as a universal struggle and a fundamental organizing principle of human growth. During infancy, this process is demonstrated by attaining object constancy. In adolescence, individuation implies the shedding of dependencies and the development of a firm sense of self (Smith and Smith, 1976).

Development of self-confidence and a secure sense of personal identity is predicated upon the apparently paradoxical combination of secure attachments to the parents and separation from them. While lessened dependence on parents is necessary to achieve self-confidence, the child cannot achieve this without attachment to parents (Smith and Smith, 1976).

The separation from home is, like much adolescent behavior, two-headed. It is progressive, oriented towards the assumption of mature independence; it is beset at the same time by anxieties engendered by the giving up of comforts of earlier security and dependence. (Katz, 1975, p.46)

The fact that separation and individuation are bidirectional for the child or adolescent leads to another important point; these processes directly involve parents as well. As the child is re-defining the relationship with his or her parents, the parents must adjust appropriately. Alternatively, the child may be unable to

renegotiate his or her role in the family, because interpersonal rules already established preclude flexibility or change. It is essential, hence, to consider the role of the parents in this transaction. Stierlin (1972) describes the separation process as a gradually expanding spiral of mutual individuation and differentiation which, increasingly, leads to both parties' relative independence.

On the basis of his studies of adolescent runaways and their families, Stierlin describes extreme intergenerational interaction patterns, characterized by centripetal and/or centrifugal forces. Parents of centripetal families often bind their children in their commitment to the family, masking layers of anger and hostility with pseudomutuality. Binding can take place on the affective or cognitive levels, or it can occur through the exploitation of loyalty; the outcome of such binding is that the child's peer relations recede under the scepter of his or her parents' importance. Conflicts intensify because the child has no objects other than parents; at the same time, parent-child conflicts tend to blur. Family members communicate on elusive primary process levels, because there is no articulate separation of positions and boundaries. Ultimately, the bound child either acquiesces to the submissive and infantilized role, tries to numb out any awareness of inner strain, or retreats into a fantasy world.

In some families, strong centripetal forces are accompanied by conflicting but equally powerful centrifugal forces. Because of parental ambivalence about the family, the child is sent out of the

3

family while remaining closely tied to its nucleus. Such delegates are better integrated into their peer group than are those children who have been bound by their families, but delegates experience great conflict when their missions and loyalties are contradictory.

Finally Stierlin describes families whose relations are characterized by strong centrifugal forces. The child is rebuffed, neglected, and finally expelled. Because no loyalties were ever felt towards parents, expelled children are unlikely to feel them in later relationships; rather, they tend to view life as a power struggle. Their experience of subtle feelings or empathy is limited, they demand immediate gratification, and they value cognitive growth only as a means of becoming more cunning.

Each of these modes is important and legitimate during particular stages of the parent-child relationship: binding is necessary during infancy, and delegating becomes important during later stages of childhood. To a degree, expelling seems appropriate for adolescents, provided they are no longer totally dependent upon parental nurturance and care. However, legitimate parental modes of interaction "become exploitative and damaging to the child when they are inappropriately timed, mixed, or excessively intense" (Stierlin, 1972, p.124). In such instances, the negotiation of a mutual individuation and separation between parent and child is impeded. Stierlin's theoretical discussion is based upon a clinical population, in which these parental modes are dramatic and often destructive. Parallels in normal families must be drawn with caution, as little data is available on the frequency of such pathological



modes of interaction.

Personality Development During the College Years

While the processes of separation and individuation have their roots in early adolescence, they take on critical importance during the later teens. The progression from high school to college frequently symbolizes the transition "from the status of the dependent child to that of the presumably independent adult" (Roy, 1967, p.18), although there is great variation across individuals in when this process is recognized and when it is completed. Some adolescents seem to become autonomous with great speed and ease, while others never actually leave home, in either the physical or the emotional sense.

Katz (1975) argues that leaving home to go to college is an important catalyst for the development of personality and the growth of autonomy. Away from home, the student will necessarily be influenced by the experience of new activities and roles. Sanford (1962, p.267) concurs on this point:

The student is almost bound to encounter and take seriously values and roles that are different from some he has taken for granted; he is thus forced to make conscious choices and to take the first steps toward building a value system of his own. Again, when he is free of the expectations of family and community he is able to try new modes of behavior, stimulate new kinds of perceptions of himself by other people, and thus to expand his personality by trial and error along lines that in the long run will be in keeping with his fundamental inclinations.

Sanford is careful to note, however, that physical separation does not necessarily imply psychological disengagement. Through correspondence or visitation, parents may retain their importance in the

student's life. Furthermore, attendance at a particular college

may have the essential meaning of remaining in the gravitational field of the family: it may have been the father's or mother's college, there may be relatives or friends of the family or acquaintances from the home community there now, and they may effectively remind the freshman of his origins and of what is expected of him back home. Such circumstances may not only 'cushion the shock' of leaving home; they may actually bar the student, throughout his college career, from ever having the experience of standing in principled opposition to his parents. (p.267)

In essence, Sanford argues that physical separation is not a sufficient prerequisite for the process of individuation. According to Boszormenyi-Nagy (1972), it is not even a necessary condition. He argues against the overevaluation of physical separation as a means of individuation. While it may be valuable or even necessary in certain cases of marital separations, divorce, or of the adolescent's moving out when ready, separation should not be confused with differentiation as a means of maturation.

Often the student's differentiation of himself or herself from the family identity results from the unbalancing of his or her equilibrium in some way. Sanford (1969) cautions, though, that too much strain can evoke defensive reactions, thereby inhibiting individual development. Clearly, the amount of challenge that stimulates one student may prove threatening or frightening to another. Brawer (1973) has identified some of the personality factors which may account for individual differences in adjustment to and development in college. She studied 1876 freshmen at urban, suburban and rural community colleges, using the Omnibus Personality Inventory and a holistic measure of "functional potential," which is defined

11

as "the degree to which a student incorporates various characteristics, offering a picture of the functioning individual in terms of the personal dynamics basic to his behavior and life style" (p.12). Briefly, the six dimensions contributing to functional potential are: 1) Relatedness/ Aloofness - involvement with others versus alienation, 2) Identity/ Amorphism - wholeness, sameness, directedness, versus diffusiveness or uncertainty of direction, 3) Flexibility/Rigidity - open versus closed systems of beliefs, 4) Independence/Dependence - autonomy and readiness to act on one's own versus inability to exist satisfactorily without the aid of others, 5) Progression/Regression - activity and fluidity versus passivity, immobilization and fixedness, and 6) Delay of Gratification/Impulse Expression - ability to use secondary control when necessary versus access to archaic impulses.

Assessment of a student's position on each of these continuous dimensions should predict how well he or she will adjust to college and its concomitant changes in lifestyle. In Brawer's study, a significant statistical relation was found between functional potential and persistence in college. Dropouts during the first year were more common among students in the low functional potential group than for those in the high or medium groups.

Ofcourse, there are far more subtle measures of success in college than dropout rates. Chickering (1969) suggests that growth during college can be measured in seven distinct areas: developing competence, managing emotions, becoming autonomous, establishing identity, freeing interpersonal relations, clarifying purposes and

1

developing integrity. Using the Omnibus Personality Inventory, a battery of questionnaires, and a series of essays written by students at various points during their careers at Goddard College, Chickering was able to chronicle the types of changes in personal and interpersonal style typical of this period. His results were further supported by Chickering, McDowell and Campagna's (1969) study of students at 13 small American colleges. On the basis of repeated administrations of the O.P.I. at the beginning and end of the freshman year they found trends towards

increased autonomy, increased awareness of emotions and readiness to express impulses in thought and action, and increased aesthetic sensitivities. These changes are accompanied by decreasing concern for practical achievement and material success. Relatively little change occurs in intellectual interests, in social relationships, or in concern for the welfare of others. (p.321)

Men and women changed in essentially the same directions, and change occurred without regard to the student's level at entrance to college. Finally, the direction of changes on all of Chickering's seven scales was highly consistent across colleges.

Chickering's primary focus in these studies is the development of autonomy, which involves three major dimensions of change: the development of emotional independence, the development of instrumental independence and the recognition of interdependence.

Emotional independence implies freedom

from continual and pressing needs for reassurance, affection or approval. The first step toward emotional independence is disengagement from the parents, a step taken with the support of peers, nonparental adults and certain institutional forms and practices. This step is followed by similarly reduced dependence upon those peers, adults and institutions which supported the primary disengagement. (Chickering, 1967, p.203)

Satisfying relationships with peers are hence prerequisites to achieving emotional independence. These friendships are characterized by mutual trust, permitting a fairly free expression of emotion, and allowing the shedding of privacies (although not inappropriately). They can absorb some conflict between the pair, and they allow for discussion of personally crucial themes; they facilitate self-enrichment through the encounter of differences (Douvan and Adelson, 1966). During the period of rebellious independence, such relationships replace the support of parents and authority. Later,

- as more firm independence from parents is established, as it becomes possible to appreciate the good about one's parents as well as the bad, then relationships with intimates become less symbiotic. Mutual support becomes more simple and strong, more implicit, more taken for granted. (Chickering, 1969, p.61)

Instrumental independence has two separate components: self-sufficiency, or the ability to carry out activities on one's own, and mobility, the ability to leave one place and get to another when such movement is either wished for or necessary.

Recognition and acceptance of interdependence is the capstone of autonomy. One realizes that

parents cannot be dispensed with except at the price of continuing pain for all; that one cannot comfortably continually be supported without working for it; that loving and being loved are necessarily complimentary. Only with clarification and resolution of the ranges within which one can give and receive do problems of dependence, independence, and autonomy become more settled. (Chickering, 1967, p.204)

Karpel (1976) considers a second dimension which must be integrated with the development of autonomy or independence from

1

parents, namely, the adolescent's relatedness to them. Both distance and relation can be evaluated as immature, transitional or mature. Hence on the relatedness dimension, relationships can be described as pure fusion, ambivalent fusion or mature dialogue. Stations along the distance dimension are unrelatedness, ambivalent isolation, and individuation.

Attaining a mature position on both of these dimensions is clearly a difficult task: adolescents must find ways to develop their own autonomy without jeopardizing parental relationships. In order to better understand how the adolescent balances these seemingly contradictory drives, Murphey et al. (1962) interviewed 20 students and their parents from the Washington, D.C. area during the spring and summer prior to college attendance and throughout the freshman year. Students were sorted into four groups depending on whether they were judged high or low on autonomy and on relatedness. The experiences of each group were then studied to determine whether the parent-child interactions showed any consistent patterns within each group. Autonomy was defined as

the ability to make separate, responsible choices, as demonstrated by the feeling of being a separate person rather than an extension of others, an awareness of freedom to make choices in selecting or rejecting outside influences, and assuming responsibility for one's own decisions. (p.645)

Relatedness was defined as satisfaction for the student in a predominantly positive relationship with his or her parents; criteria used to determine degree of relatedness included expression of feelings of growing equality with parents in which there was mutual pleasure, interest in their welfare, desire to communicate with them

and permission for emotional closeness.

Interview data from the students and parents involved in this study clearly differentiated the subjects in each of Murphey's four cells. Students rated high on both dimensions ($n=9$) quickly began to perform functions for themselves that were formerly carried out by parents or other adults. Taking on new responsibilities helped these students to appreciate their parents more, and to enjoy their company on a more equal basis when they returned home for visits. The parents of these students felt that they had made some mistakes, but that now it was time for their children to take more responsibility for themselves, experimenting within the framework of family standards. The children of these families were invited to share their problems with their parents; parental emphasis on autonomy and independence did not preclude support or respect for family members facing personal difficulties.

In contrast, students rated low in autonomy and in relatedness ($n=3$) had less of a feeling of their own selfhood, sometimes acting as extensions of their parents. They took little responsibility for their actions, and often found themselves unable to budget their time, or lacking in "will-power". They turned to others in the decision-making process, rarely aware of any personal freedom to make choices. Being away from home did not lead to new closeness with parents for students in this group. They visited home infrequently, and would not allow their parents to get close to them. In order to establish themselves as separate from their parents, these students often turned to extreme forms of negativism. They

1950

were not able to make full use of their assets, as part of the retaliatory struggle with the parents. The parents, in turn, were less able to define who they were or what they stood for. Communication gaps emerged from difficulties in expressing personal wishes; neither parents nor children recognized or met each other's needs. Finally, parents of this group were characterized by their marked lack of confidence in their children.

Students in the high autonomy - low relatedness group ($n=6$) became more independent during their first year of college, but at the cost of increased distance from their parents. They felt less comfortable at home than at college, as they had broken away from their assigned family roles. When they returned home to visit, their failure to revert to old ways typically led to clashes with their parents. Hence while the parents of these students had provided many of the necessary conditions for the development of autonomy, the rigidity of roles assigned to family members led to increased conflict rather than independence.

Because Murphey et al. interviewed only one family classified as low in autonomy and high in relatedness, no clear statement can be made concerning adjustment to college and separation from home in such families. In fact, the small sample sizes in all of their groups lead one to question the validity of their findings. On the whole, though, several types of prior positive experiences seemed to contribute to easy adaptation to college for subjects, regardless of family constellation. These included summer camp, extended independent travel and summer jobs away from home. During high school,

many of the high autonomy-high relatedness students

had already moved toward an investment in peer relationships in place of parents, thus establishing themselves a basis for confidence in their ability to live in the world of adults. For these students, then, there was little discontinuity between high school and college in terms of separation from parents. (p.645)

They valued their increasing independence, viewing it as a birth-right rather than as deprivation or abandonment.

Several points merit highlighting here. First, not all freshmen follow the same pathways to increased autonomy and self-actualization. While there may be growth in any or all of the dimensions studied by Chickering, or changes of the nature described by Sanford, such development is in large part a function of the student's relationship to his or her family. Secondly, the small sample upon which these results are based and the judging process used to interpret interview data preclude statistical analysis. Since only one of Murphey et al.'s subjects fell into the quadrant labeled low autonomy-high relatedness, it is impossible to even surmise the course of adjustment to college for such adolescents. The representation of both sexes in this small sample creates further interpretive problems. There is little empirical evidence supporting the assumption that autonomy and relatedness are orthogonal, and the criteria used here to determine a student's position on these dimensions appear more intuitive than empirical.

FACES

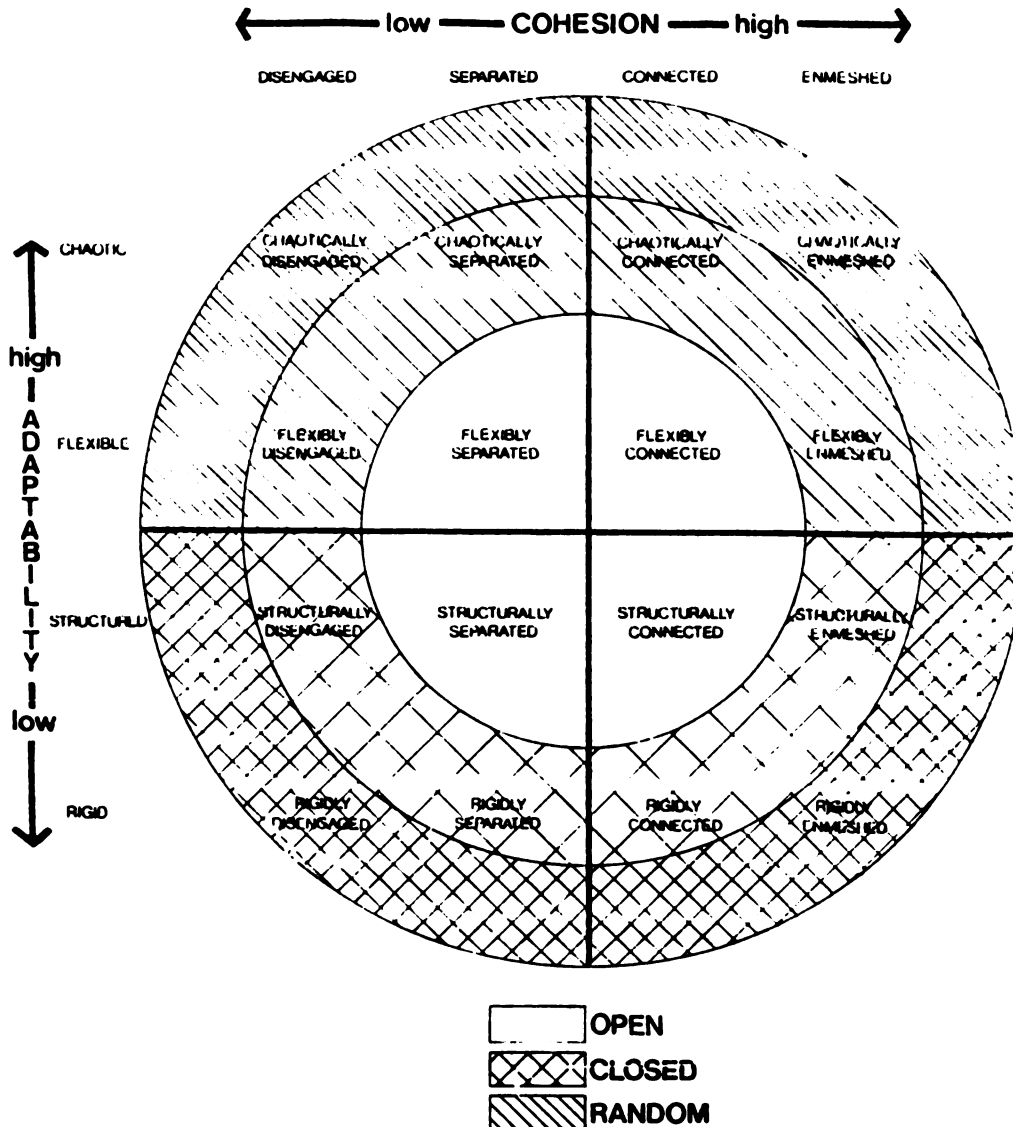
A more empirically sound measure of family cohesion has been developed by Olson, Sprenkle and Russell (1979, 1980). Their

instrument, the Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales (FACES), is a 111-item inventory designed to assess the individual's perceptions of cohesion and adaptability in his or her family. The orthogonal relationship between these factors has been demonstrated using factor analytic techniques (Russell, 1979); these dimensions can be considered together in a circumplex model of family interaction (Figure 1). Several studies of clinic and non-clinic families (Russell, Spenkle and Olson, 1978) indicate that high functioning families are moderate on both dimensions; extremely high or low scores on either cohesion or adaptability are considered pathological. Cohesion, as defined here, reflects "the emotional bonding members have with one another and the degree of individual autonomy a person experiences in the family system" (Olson et al, 1979, p.5). In extremely cohesive families, members are enmeshed and over-identified with the family, at the expense of individual autonomy. At the other end of the spectrum, disengaged families are characterized by low bonding and high autonomy. Olson et al. define adaptability as "the ability of a marital/family system to change its power structure, role relationships, and relationship rules in response to situational and developmental stress" (1979, p.12).

Goals of the Present Study

The aim of the present investigation was to examine more empirically the effects of varied levels of family cohesion, or relatedness, upon adjustment to college. Only female students were studied here, in order to supplement the preponderance of investigations in

FIGURE 1: SIXTEEN POSSIBLE TYPES OF MARITAL AND FAMILY SYSTEMS DERIVED FROM THE CIRCUMPLEX MODEL



this area which have focused upon young men. The findings of Murphey et al. and Olson et al. lead to the expectation that students viewing their families as either extremely high or low on measures of cohesion face greater difficulties during their first year away from home than those whose ratings were moderate on this dimension. A balance between cohesion and autonomy, which are clearly interrelated dimensions, should allow the student to leave home and establish new relationships, while still maintaining family bonds. Students enmeshed in their family networks were expected to face considerably more difficulty in homeleaving, as they presumably have had little experience forming relationships with non-family members. At the other end of the spectrum, students who describe their families as disengaged have probably had little experience in any kind of relationship. While they are likely to be quite eager to leave home, it was expected that they would also face greater adjustment difficulties than those rating their families moderate in cohesion.

More specifically, the goal of this study was to test five hypotheses concerning the relationship between family cohesion and various measures of adjustment in young women; these measures address both situation-specific adjustment to college, and personal adjustment in one's life, in the larger sense.

Hypothesis 1

Students who perceive their families as moderate in cohesiveness will be personally better adjusted than students from enmeshed (high cohesion) or disengaged (low cohesion) families. This broad

application of "adjustment" is operationalized by the number of problems reported on the Mooney Problem Checklist (MPC), and by scores on the short form of the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI).

Hypothesis 2

Students who perceive their families as moderate in cohesiveness will be better able to form interpersonal relationships than students from extremely high or low cohesion families. This is measured by the number of significant others that students list when asked with whom they share their problems, and by analysis of the relationships of these confidants to the subject. Hence distinctions are made among family members, peers, and other adults unrelated to the subject.

Hypothesis 3

The interpersonal relationships of students who perceive their families as moderate in cohesiveness will be richer and more open than the relationships of students from enmeshed or disengaged families. Intensity, or depth of rapport, will be measured for family members, peers, and other adults.

Hypothesis 4

Leaving home for college will be viewed more positively by students and their parents when the family unit is perceived as moderate in cohesiveness. Students from enmeshed and disengaged families will report more negative feelings about home-leaving, both on the part of themselves and their parents.

Hypothesis 5

Students who perceive their families as moderate in cohesiveness should appear better adjusted to college to unbiased raters than students from enmeshed or disengaged families.

1

Method

Subjects

Female students at a large midwestern university were screened for this study at the beginning of their first year of college. All were enrolled in introductory psychology classes, receiving extra credit towards their course grade commensurate with the amount of their participation in the study. Based on the screening procedure, 48 women out of 273 were selected for participation; all were between the ages of 17 and 19 years. Their race, religion, social and economic backgrounds were varied, although most were raised in Michigan.

Subject selection

Prior to the administration of test materials, all students were informed of their rights to confidentiality and anonymity, and their right to discontinue participation in the project at any point; written consent was obtained for all subjects (Appendix A). Students agreeing to participate in this study were administered the Olson Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scales (FACES) in groups of approximately twenty. The FACES consists of 111 questions about family and home-life, which the subject must rate as true all the time, most of the time, some of the time, or none of the time (see Appendix B for a copy of the questionnaire and scoring procedure). All students were clearly instructed in advance that participation might further entail two sets of questionnaires and a personal interview, and that not all of the volunteers would be

recontacted.

Subjects were then selected according to their scores on the cohesion scale of the FACES. Three groups of 16 students each were selected for further study: the 16 highest and 16 lowest scorers on this dimension formed the high and low cohesion groups, respectively. Sixteen students with intermediate cohesion scores formed the moderate cohesion group.

In those instances where subjects declined further participation, they were replaced by the next most appropriate subject from the pool of the original sample. The nonparticipation rate for each group was carefully monitored.

Procedure

Each subject then participated in a 30-minute, semi-structured interview concerning social adjustment to college. Interviewers, blind to group membership of subjects, asked each student a series of questions about her friends and social life, and the ways in which these might be more satisfying. Oral responses to these Likert-type items were recorded by the interviewer, and supplemented with direct quotes from audiotape recordings. Finally, interviewers rated subjects on five scales, globally evaluating their social involvements, adjustment to college, mood and energy level during the interview (Appendix C). For the three pairings of raters, interrater reliability correlations were .40, .37, and .18.

Following the personal interview, each participant was administered an abridged form of the Mooney Problem Checklist, with the

following instructions:

This is not a test. It is a list of problems which often face students in college - problems of health, money, social life, relations with people, religion, studying, selecting courses and the like. You are to go through the list, and pick out particular problems which are of concern to you. Circle the number of each item that you find troublesome.

Upon completion of the checklist, subjects were instructed as follows:

Turn to the graph paper, or gridform you have been given. In the left-hand margin, copy the number of each problem you circled on the checklist, and repeat the label given or summarize the problem in the space provided, to remind yourself of the topic.

Along the top of the gridform, write down the names of important people in your life, with whom you feel comfortable discussing personal matters. This might include your mother, father, brothers, sisters, best friends from high school or college, boyfriend, counselor, minister, teacher or anyone else. In the space provided, list each of these people. Be sure to write their relation to you, and not just their names.

Now, consider each of the problems you have listed on the left-hand margin. With whom would you feel comfortable discussing each issue, if it were really bothering you? Place a checkmark below the name of each person for each problem that you would talk about with them.

The problem checklist and gridform are included in Appendix D.

Finally, each participant was administered a demographic questionnaire, focusing on prior experiences of separation from home and attitudes towards leaving home for college, and the short form of the Beck Depression Inventory (Appendix E).

At the close of the session, all subjects were thoroughly debriefed as to the purpose of this study. Students were invited to discuss with the interviewer and/or investigator their personal reactions to participation, and were offered summaries of research

findings. Although the need did not arise, interviewers were prepared to make referrals to the university counseling center in the case that subjects proved uncomfortable with the personal material that emerged as a result of participation.

All data was collected within two months of students' entrance into college.

Analyses

The data collected were combined prior to analysis to provide several summary scores for each subject.

1. Mooney Problem Checklist: This checklist is composed of 11 different 10-item subscales, each addressing major areas of student functioning. The number of problems reported in each area was added to form 11 subscores; the sum across problem areas was considered as well. (See Appendix D for subscales).

2. Gridforms:

a. The total number of significant others listed was counted for each subject.

b. "Contact point" was defined as the subject's reported willingness to discuss one problem with one person, as indicated by a checkmark on the gridform. Three percentages were used to evaluate the relative number of family members, peers, and other adults considered by the student to be significant others, or confidants.

$\%CP_{family} = \text{Contact points with family members} \times 100$

Total contact points

$$\%CP_{\text{peers}} = \frac{\text{Contact points with peers} \times 100}{\text{Total contact points}}$$

$$\%CP_{\text{other}} = \frac{\text{Contact points with other adults} \times 100}{\text{Total contact points}}$$

c. The "intensity" of subjects' relationships was evaluated by forming a ratio between the reported number of contact points and the total number of contact points possible for each subject. Three calculations of intensity, or openness of relationships were made:

$$INT_{\text{family}} = \frac{\text{Contact points with family members}}{\# \text{ family members listed} \times \text{total} \# \text{ problems}}$$

$$INT_{\text{peers}} = \frac{\text{Contact points with peers}}{\# \text{ peers listed} \times \text{total} \# \text{ problems}}$$

$$INT_{\text{others}} = \frac{\text{Contact points with other adults}}{\# \text{ other adults listed} \times \text{total} \# \text{ problems}}$$

3. Adjective checklist: The adjective checklists addressing feelings about leaving home for college (personal feelings and those of the subject's mother and father) were each analyzed in terms of the total number of positive and negative sentiments expressed. Six scores emerge here: PSELF, NSELF, PMOM, NMOM, PDAD, and NDAD (See Appendix F for breakdown).

All data were analyzed using multivariate analysis of variance,

1

with cohesion group as the independent variable. Prior to planned comparisons, omnibus F-tests were computed; for each hypothesis, two planned comparisons were performed. The moderate cohesion group was compared with the average of the high and low groups; high and low cohesion groups were also compared to each other.

Results

Before turning to the results of this study, it seems relevant to examine the cohesion scores of the original screening sample, and the scores of those subjects selected for further investigation. As shown in Table 1, there is a close parallel between the cohesion scores of the initial screening group and the norms established by Olson (1979), which were derived from data on 402 adults and 201 adolescents, members of either clinic or nonclinic families. The three groups of subjects selected for further study were entirely distinct on this independent variable: the high and low cohesion groups clearly met Olson's criteria for the labels "enmeshed" and "disengaged" respectively. The 16 subjects whose cohesion scores centered at the median of the screening sample would likewise be classified as moderate in cohesion according to Olson's norms; their scores lie at the low end of the "connected range" (Figure 2).

Of the 48 young women selected for further study, 9 declined to participate. There is little reason to suspect that these refusals reflected specific characteristics of the cohesion groups, as the nonparticipation rate was roughly equal across groups (Low=2, Moderate=4, High=3).

Results are presented in five parts, addressing the findings for each hypothesis separately.

Hypothesis 1

The hypothesis that students from moderately cohesive families are better adjusted in the global sense, as compared to those from

1

Table 1

Comparison of cohesion scores of the original screening sample with norms published by Olson (1979).

	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Range</u>
Screening Sample	273	251.49	20.31	172-301
Standardization Sample	603	251	19	162-303

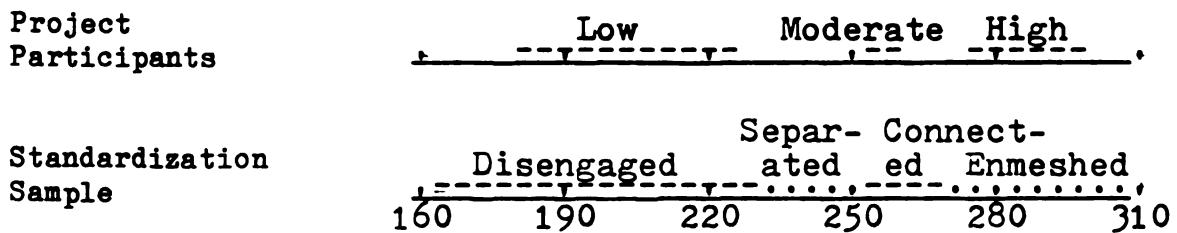


Figure 2

Comparison of ranges of cohesion scores of project participants and Olson's standardization sample.

low and high cohesive families, was not supported by analyses of scores on the Mooney Problem Checklist or the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI)(See Tables 2 and 3). No differences were found across cohesion groups when scores on the BDI were analyzed, although a significant difference emerged in the total number of problems reported by subjects ($F(2,45)=4.59, p<.05$). Planned comparisons revealed a significant difference between the extreme cohesion groups ($F(1,45)=5.47, p<.05$); however, these two groups considered together were not significantly different from the moderate cohesion group.

On the univariate level, differences emerged in four problem areas: Health and Physical Development ($F(2,45)=4.0, p<.05$), Finances, Living Conditions and Employment ($F(2,45)=3.28, p<.05$), Social and Recreational Activities ($F(2,45)=3.20, p<.05$), and Home and Family ($F(2,45)=5.33, p<.01$). These findings reflect differences between high and low cohesion groups in all cases but Finances, Living Conditions and Employment, where planned comparisons revealed differences between moderate cohesion subjects and high and low cohesion subjects combined.

In summary, these data indicate that there is no significant relationship between family cohesion and depression as measured by the BDI. When individual problem areas are considered separately, statistically significant differences across groups emerged only in certain areas. Only when one considers the total number of problems faced by these young women do clear group differences emerge.

Table 2

Cohesion and Global Measures of Adjustment

Variable	Cohesion Group								
	<u>N</u>	<u>Low</u> <u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Moderate</u> <u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>High</u> <u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
BDI	15	6.66	7.93	16	4.63	4.01	16	3.88	8.45
HPD	16	3.25	1.69	16	1.88	1.02	16	2.13	1.59
FLE	16	2.81	2.14	16	1.31	1.20	16	2.00	1.51
SRA	16	3.00	1.67	16	1.69	1.40	16	1.81	1.76
SPR	16	1.81	1.33	16	0.81	1.05	16	1.62	1.89
PPR	16	3.00	2.22	16	1.94	1.18	16	2.00	1.83
CSM	16	1.88	1.54	16	1.19	0.98	16	1.06	1.53
HF	16	2.50	2.19	16	0.94	0.77	16	0.94	1.39
MR	16	2.31	1.74	16	1.31	1.08	16	1.56	0.96
ACW	16	4.00	2.73	16	3.69	1.79	16	3.19	2.34
FVE	16	2.69	1.62	16	1.56	1.71	16	1.56	1.46
CTP	16	2.44	1.59	16	2.00	1.46	16	2.44	2.40
TOTAL									
MPC	16	29.69	11.61	16	18.31	7.61	16	20.31	13.89

Note: BDI=Beck Depression Inventory, HPD=Health and Physical Development, FLE=Finances, Living Conditions and Employment, SRA=Social and Recreational Activities, SPR=Social Psychological Relations, PPR=Personal Psychological Relations, CSM=Courtship, Sex and Marriage, HF=Home and Family, MR=Morals and Religion, ACW= Adjustment to College Work, FVE=The Future: Vocational and Educational, CTP=Curriculum and Teaching Procedure, MPC=Total score on Mooney Problem Checklist.

Table 3

ANOVA of Cohesion and Global Measures of Adjustment

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
BDI	2,44	32.07	0.64	.531
MPC - Total	2,45	590.08	4.59	.015 *
Low vs High	1,45	703.13	5.47	.024 *
Low & High vs Mod	1,45	477.04	3.71	.060
HPD	2,45	8.58	4.00	.025 *
Low vs High	1,45	10.13	4.72	.035 *
Low & High vs Mod	1,45	7.04	3.28	.077
FLE	2,45	9.02	3.28	.047 *
Low vs High	1,45	5.28	1.92	.173
Low & High vs Mod	1,45	12.76	4.64	.037 *
SRA	2,45	8.40	3.20	.050 *
Low vs High	1,45	11.28	4.31	.044 *
Low & High vs Mod	1,45	5.51	2.10	.154
SPR	2,45	4.52	2.11	.134
PPR	2,45	5.69	1.77	.183
CSM	2,45	3.06	1.62	.209
HF	2,45	13.02	5.33	.008 **
Low vs High	1,45	19.53	8.00	.007 **
Low & High vs Mod	1,45	6.51	2.67	.109
MR	2,45	4.33	2.54	.090
ACW	2,45	2.69	.50	.610
FVE	2,45	6.75	2.63	.083
CTP	2,45	1.02	.29	.746

Note: BDI=Beck Depression Inventory, HPD=Health and Physical Development, FLE=Finances, Living Conditions and Employment, SRA=Social and Recreational Activities, SPR=Social-Psychological Relations, PPR=Personal Psychological Relations, CSM=Courtship, Sex and Marriage, HF=Home and Family, MR=Morals and Religion, ACW=Adjustment to College Work, FVE=The Future: Vocational and Educational, CTP=Curriculum and Teaching Procedure, MPC=Total Score on Mooney Problem Checklist.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Hypothesis 2

It was predicted that subjects who perceived their families as moderate in cohesiveness would be better able to form relationships, as measured by the number of people whom they consider confidants, compared to subjects from very high or low cohesion families. As shown in Table 4, the three cohesion groups were virtually identical in terms of the number of significant others they reported on the gridform. Statistically, groups did not differ on this dimension.

In contrast, significant differences did emerge when comparisons were made among relationships with family members, peers, and other adults. As shown in Tables 5 and 6, comparisons among all three groups yielded significant differences on percentage of problems discussed with peers ($F(2,45)=3.38, p<.05$); low cohesion subjects reported discussing a larger percentage of personal concerns with friends than did subjects in the high cohesion group. The moderate and high cohesion groups did not differ from each other on this measure.

Although the omnibus F-test did not reveal significant differences among groups on the percentage of problems discussed with family members ($F(2,45)=2.94, p<.10$), the planned comparison between the low cohesion subjects and the moderate and high cohesion subjects indicates that low cohesion subjects tend to confide less in members of their families ($F(1,45)=5.55, p<.05$). No differences emerged comparing moderate and high cohesion subjects on this dimension.

Table 4

Cohesion group and number of significant others

<u>Cohesion Group</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
Low	16	8.56	3.67
Moderate	16	8.19	2.97
High	16	8.13	3.74

Table 5

Cohesion group and percent of contact points with family members, peers, and other adults

<u>Cohesion Group</u>	<u>N</u>	Family		Peers		Other Adults	
		<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
Low	16	33.38	15.44	63.81	15.63	1.31	3.46
Moderate	16	42.94	14.14	52.50	12.87	4.25	6.63
High	16	46.06	16.57	50.75	17.44	1.94	5.54

3

Table 6

ANOVAs of cohesion group and percent of contact points with family members, peers, and other adults.

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Family Members	2,45	699.15	2.94	.063
Low vs Moderate and High Cohesion	1,45	1320.17	5.55	.023 *
Moderate vs High	1,45	78.13	0.33	.569
Peers	2,45	804.44	3.38	.042 *
Low vs Moderate and High Cohesion	1,45	1584.38	6.66	.013 *
Moderate vs High	1,45	24.50	0.10	.750
Other Adults	2,45	38.31	1.33	.275

* $p < .05$.

No differences were found across groups on the percent of problems discussed with other adults outside of the family.

Hypothesis 3

This hypothesis, which predicted a curvilinear relationship between family cohesion and intensity of interpersonal bonds, was not supported by the data. However, clear differences among groups suggest a linear relationship wherein intensity, or amount of sharing with significant others, increases with perceived family cohesion (See Tables 7 and 8).

Overall analysis of intensity of relationships was significant at the .05 level ($F(6,88)=2.29$); further analysis showed that this effect is primarily due to differences in the intensity of relationships with family members, comparing subjects in the high and low cohesion groups ($F(1,45)=6.45, p<.05$). No significant differences were found comparing these extreme cohesion groups with the moderate cohesion group; likewise, univariate analyses showed no differences in the intensity of bonds with peers or other with unrelated adults.

Hypothesis 4

Examining the data on feelings reported about leaving home for college, there is no support for the original curvilinear hypothesis that young women from moderate cohesion families are more positive or less negative than those from either of the extreme cohesion groups. As shown in Tables 9 and 10, no significant differences were found across groups on the number of positive or negative feelings attributed to oneself, one's mother, or one's father. However, planned comparisons revealed a near-significant trend when the low

Table 7

Cohesion group and intensity of relationships

		FAMINT		PEERINT		OTHERINT	
<u>Cohesion Group</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
Low	16	.413	.190	.560	.289	.025	.058
Moderate	16	.516	.236	.536	.217	.146	.226
High	16	.608	.224	.667	.265	.078	.195

Note: Famint = intensity of family relations, Peerint = intensity of peer relations, Otherint = intensity of relations with other adults.

Table 8

MANOVA of Cohesion group and intensity of relationships

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>	
Overall F-test	6,88	.271	2.29	.042	*
FAMINT	2,45	.153	3.24	.049	*
Low vs High	1,45	.306	6.47	.015	*
Low & High vs Moderate	1,45	.000	0.01	.934	
PEERINT	2,45	.077	1.15	.326	
OTHERINT	2,45	.056	1.84	.171	

Note: Famint = intensity of family relations, Peerint = intensity of peer relations, Otherint = intensity of relations with other adults.

*p<.05

Table 9

Cohesion group and number of positive and negative feelings reported about leaving home for college.

	Cohesion Group								
	Low			Moderate			High		
	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
PSELF	16	5.25	3.28	16	5.63	3.05	16	8.31	3.34
PMOM	16	2.94	2.43	16	3.56	2.31	16	4.88	2.80
PDAD	16	3.31	2.39	16	4.50	2.80	16	5.25	2.91
NSELF	16	3.50	2.61	16	3.69	2.60	16	3.44	2.99
NMOM	16	2.31	2.36	16	2.69	1.66	16	3.31	2.18
NDAD	16	1.25	1.61	16	2.13	2.06	16	1.81	1.60

Note: PSELF = one's own positive feelings about homeleaving, PMOM = mother's positive feelings about her daughter's homeleaving, PDAD = father's positive feelings about his daughter's homeleaving. In parallel, NSELF, NMOM, and NDAD refer to neative feelings about the daughter's homeleaving.

Table 10

MANOVA of cohesion group and positive and negative feelings reported about leaving home for college

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Positive Adjectives	6,88	0.21	1.73	.123
Low vs High Cohesion				
Overall F-test	3.43	0.16	2.71	.056
PSELF	1,45	75.03	7.21	.010 *
PMOM	1,45	30.03	4.71	.035 *
PDAD	1,45	30.03	4.09	.049 *
Low & High vs Moderate				
Overall F-test	3,43	0.06	0.88	.461
Negative Adjectives	6,88	0.09	0.72	.636

Note: PSELF = one's own positive feelings about homeleaving, PMOM = mother's positive feelings about her daughter's homeleaving, PDAD = father's positive feelings about his daughter's homeleaving. In parallel, NSELF, NMOM, and NDAD refer to negative feelings about the daughter's homeleaving.

* $p < .05$

and high cohesion groups were compared on positive attributions ($F(3,43)=2.71, p<.06$). Univariate analyses of positive adjectives attributed to oneself, one's mother and one's father were all significantly different at the .05 level when low and high cohesion groups were compared to each other. The data are equivocal but suggest a tendency for family members to be more positive about separation as a function of increasing cohesiveness.

Hypothesis 5

Finally, it was hypothesized that unbiased raters would view students who perceive their families as moderate in cohesiveness as better adjusted to college than students from enmeshed or disengaged families. The data do not support this hypothesis, but they lend further weight to the trend that has already emerged. Young women from low cohesion families not only describe themselves as less well adjusted than do students from more cohesive families; they appear less well adjusted as well. Subjects from the high cohesion group consistently received more positive ratings on each of four scales than did subjects from less cohesive families; $F(8,72) = 2.08, p<.05$ for the omnibus F-test, and $F(4,35)=3.55, p<.05$ for the comparison of the low and high cohesion groups. No significant differences emerged in the comparison of the moderate with the extreme cohesion groups, there was no effect of interviewer, and no group by interviewer interactions were significant (see Tables 11 and 12).

Other analyses

Two other analyses of these data were performed in order to gain additional information about subjects in this sample, aside

Table 11
Cohesion groups and interviewer's ratings on adjustment

Cohesion Group	Interviewer	Quality of soc. Involvements		Mood		Adjustment to college		Adjustment to Energy Level	
		N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean	N	Mean
Low	A	5	3.40	5	2.60	5	3.40	5	4.00
	B	5	2.80	5	3.00	5	2.60	5	3.40
	C	5	2.80	5	2.40	5	2.60	5	3.40
Moderate	A	5	3.80	5	3.60	5	3.00	5	2.20
	B	5	4.20	5	3.40	5	3.00	5	2.80
	C	6	3.67	6	3.67	6	3.83	6	2.50
High	A	5	4.40	5	3.40	5	3.40	5	3.00
	B	6	3.50	6	3.50	6	4.17	6	2.67
	C	5	4.20	5	4.40	5	4.20	5	2.20

Note: Ratings are based upon the following scales:
 Social involvement, 1=poor, 5=excellent
 Mood, 1=very depressed, 5=elated
 Adjustment, 1=very difficult, 5=very easy
 Energy level, 1=very high, 5=very slow

Table 12
MANOVA of cohesion and interviewer's
ratings on adjustment

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>
Interactions				
Group X interviewer	16,152	0.33	0.82	.617
Main Effects				
Interviewer	8,72	0.08	0.38	.926
Group	8,72	0.38	2.08	.049 *
Low vs High Cohesion				
Overall F-test	4,35	0.29	3.55	.012 *
Soc.Involvements	1,38	7.74	5.14	.029 *
Mood	1,38	9.09	8.21	.007 **
Adjustment to college	1,38	8.88	8.17	.007 **
Energy Level	1,38	7.36	5.63	.023 *
Low & High vs Moderate Cohesion				
Overall F-test	4,35	0.10	0.98	.430

*p<.05, **p<.01

from that pertaining to the major hypotheses. First, demographic information and responses regarding prior separations from home were analyzed. Of 54 separate analyses, only on three items were significant differences found. Low cohesion subjects reported that they were more self-sufficient financially than subjects from moderate or high cohesion families ($\chi^2=15.16, df=6, p<.05$); likewise subjects who perceived their families as low in cohesiveness were more likely to report that they needed jobs ($\chi^2=7.37, df=2, p<.05$). Finally, low cohesion subjects felt that they played a more active, agentic role in the decision to leave home for college relative to their fathers, than did subjects in the other cohesion groups ($F(2,45)=10.65, p<.001$). Since these findings could be due to chance, they will not be discussed further here. The results are presented in Appendix G.

Secondly, differences across cohesion groups were examined on the Adaptability and Social Desirability scales, and on the Cohesion subscales of the FACES (see Appendix B). Several important findings emerged here, as shown in Tables 13 and 14. The significant differences across groups on cohesion scores validates the distinction of subjects into three separate groups ($F(2,45)=476.62, p<.00001$). These differences emerge in most of the nine subscales that contribute to the total cohesion score. Significant differences across groups are also found on the Adaptability dimension ($F(2,45)=3.84, p<.05$) and on Social Desirability ($F(2,45)=50.02, p<.00001$).

Table 13

Cohesion group and scores on cohesion, cohesion subscales, adaptability and social desirability

	Cohesion Group								
	Low			Moderate			High		
	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>SD</u>
Cohesion score	16	206.50	9.99	16	254.31	0.70	16	284.75	7.51
EB	16	21.19	3.92	16	32.13	2.91	16	35.69	2.94
FB	16	28.25	3.71	16	31.38	2.80	16	32.38	3.01
T	16	19.06	2.05	16	23.69	3.20	16	26.69	3.72
F	16	23.81	3.82	16	27.63	3.12	16	30.19	2.48
IR	16	19.94	2.74	16	25.75	3.66	16	30.88	4.98
IND	16	22.75	3.32	16	32.56	2.28	16	37.31	4.24
COAL	16	25.75	4.76	16	29.63	3.56	16	34.63	3.48
S	16	22.25	3.53	16	25.50	3.27	16	26.75	3.82
DM	16	23.50	3.92	16	26.06	3.91	16	30.25	3.45
ADAP	16	176.81	16.63	16	187.88	16.10	16	194.19	20.75
SD	16	26.13	5.60	16	41.75	5.03	16	44.88	6.34

Note: EB = Emotional bonding, FB = Family boundaries, T = Time, IR = Interests and recreation, IND = Independence, COAL = Coalitions, S = Space, DM = Decision making, ADAP = Adaptability, SD = Social Desirability.

Table 14

MANOVA of cohesion group and scores on cohesion
cohesion subscales, adaptability and social desirability

<u>Source</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>p</u>	
Cohesion	2,45	24894.77	476.62	.00001	**
Low vs High	1,45	48984.50	937.83	.00001	**
Low & High vs Moderate	1,45	805.41	15.41	.0003	**
Cohesion Subscales	18,76	1.16	5.91	.00001	**
Low vs High	9,37	0.96	102.2	.00001	**
Low & High vs Moderate	9,37	0.47	3.61	.003	**
EB	2,45	913.52	84.30	.00001	**
Low vs High	1,45	1682.00	155.22	.00001	**
Low & High vs Moderate	1,45	145.04	13.39	.00007	**
FB	2,45	74.08	7.24	.00188	**
Low vs High	1,45	136.13	13.30	.00068	**
Low & High vs Moderate	1,45	12.04	1.18	.28	
T	2,45	236.08	25.07	.00001	**
Low vs High	1,45	465.13	49.39	.00001	**
Low & High vs Moderate	1,45	7.04	0.75	.39	
F	2,45	164.65	16.25	.00001	**

Table 14 (cont'd)

Low vs High	1,45	325.13	32.04	.00001	**
Low & High vs Moderate	1,45	4.17	0.41	.52	
IR	2,45	479.15	31.45	.00001	**
Low vs High	1,45	957.03	62.81	.00001	**
Low & High vs Moderate	1,45	1.26	0.08	.77	
IND	2,45	882.44	77.50	.00001	**
Low vs High	1,45	1696.53	149.00	.00001	**
Low & High vs Moderate	1,45	68.34	6.00	.02	*
COAL	2,45	316.75	20.41	.00001	**
Low vs High	1,45	630.13	40.60	.00001	**
Low & High vs Moderate	1,45	3.38	0.22	.64	
S	2,45	86.58	6.86	.00250	**
Low vs High	1,45	162.00	12.88	.00082	**
Low & High vs Moderate	1,45	10.67	0.85	.36	
DM	2,45	185.77	14.17	.00003	**
Low vs High	1,45	364.50	25.71	.00001	**
Low & High vs Moderate	1,45	7.04	0.50	.48	

Table 14 (cont'd)

Adaptability	2,45	1237.65	3.84	.029	*
Low vs High	1,45	2415.13	7.49	.009	**
Low & High vs Moderate	1,45	60.17	0.19	.67	
Social Desirability	2,45	1614.58	50.02	.00001	**
Low vs High	1,45	2812.50	87.13	.00001	**
Low & High vs Moderate	1,45	416.67	12.91	.00008	**

Note: EB = Emotional Bonding, FB = Family Boundaries, T = Time,
 F = Friends, IR = Interests and Recreation, IND = Independence,
 COAL = Coalitions, S = Space, DM = Decision Making.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

Discussion

The original hypothesis that young women from moderately cohesive families would be better adjusted, both in a global sense and in terms of adjustment to college than those from either enmeshed or disengaged families, was not supported by these data. While several of the measures employed here failed to detect any statistically significant differences across groups, where results were found, the evidence pointed to a linear relationship between adjustment and family cohesiveness. Subjects who consider their families to be tightly bound in the emotional sense reported fewer personal problems than did their peers from less cohesive families. Likewise their interpersonal relationships emerged as closer and more intimate, and they were rated by unbiased interviewers as better adjusted to college than subjects from less cohesive families.

The data on overall adjustment are mixed, but in general indicate a positive linear relationship between cohesion and global adjustment. Examining first the data from the Mooney Problem Checklist, students who describe their families as highly cohesive report fewer problems than those who view their families as disengaged. Individuals whose families are not closely bonded consider their lives to be more troubled than their peers from more cohesive families. That this trend was not dramatic enough to emerge in all eleven of the univariate analyses of the subscales comprising this checklist points to the generally high level of functioning of all young women in this study; differences do not emerge as clearly on

all of the 10-point scales. However, the statistical differences that were found on individual subscales indicate that young women who perceive their families as low in cohesiveness also feel more troubled about their home life, families, and social activities. Perhaps as a result of these difficulties, these students also report greater concern about their health and physical development. That students from disengaged families reported more problems than those from moderate or high cohesion families suggests that either they have less well developed abilities to cope with life problems, that their lives are, in fact, more difficult, or that they are more self-disclosing. Further discussion of these interpretations will be postponed, though, until the findings of this study can be interpreted as a whole.

In contrast to the findings from the problem checklist, no significant differences emerged across groups on the Beck Depression Inventory. The critical difference between these measures seems to be the narrowness of focus and the severity of disturbance measured by the BDI. While there are certainly many adolescents who would receive high scores on the BDI, wide variation on this measure of pathology would not be expected for a sample of 48 first year college students. Those individuals who are severely depressed may be less likely to participate in a study such as this; it seems reasonable to conjecture that others may have been less likely to leave home for college. As self-selection may already have interfered with the findings on the BDI, they are inconclusive; they lend support neither to the hypothesized curvilinear relationship between

mental health and cohesion, nor to the linear relationship that emerged from the problem checklist. The BDI seems to cover too wide a spectrum of maladjustment to detect those differences that do exist across subjects in this sample. Because the problem checklist was designed specifically to assess common student concerns, it proved more sensitive to differences across groups in the present study.

Data quantifying the relationships of these subjects indicate that adolescents from low cohesion families are not crippled by lack of experience in close relationships, nor are those individuals reared in closely knit families limited just to relationships within their families. Regardless of how cohesive their families were, subjects in all three groups generated lists of roughly the same number of significant others. However, when "significant others" were distinguished according to their relationships to subjects, differences did emerge. As family cohesion increases, female adolescents tend to share a larger proportion of their concerns with other family members. Individuals from less cohesive families tend to discuss more of their personal concerns with peers.

When subjects' relationships are evaluated qualitatively, it seems that those who view their families as cohesive are more open and honest with their significant others. In other words, while subjects reported roughly the same number of close, personal relationships regardless of degree of family cohesion, the amount of personal sharing that defined these "close" relationships varied greatly. Self-disclosure with peers does not vary with cohesion

group, but there are dramatic differences in the amount of discussion of personal matters with family members. The higher overall intensity of relationships of high cohesion subjects is attributable solely to their relationships with other members of their families. That no differences were found across groups in the number or intensity of close relationships with adults outside the family is probably attributable to the small number of such bonds reported by subjects. The friendships they have established outside of their families are almost exclusively with peers.

Summarizing these findings on interpersonal relationships, support is lent to the hypothesis that closeness among family members increases with cohesiveness. However, young women from less cohesive families seem able to supplement their weaker familiar bonds with friendships outside of the family. They are not socially isolated, or limited in their ability to enter relationships. Intra-familiar bonds are closer and more open among members of more cohesive families, but for the subjects in this study, the experience of such relationships does not seem to correlate with the formation of equally close relationships outside the family.

In his description of the development of emotional independence, Chickering (1967) discusses the gradual process of disengagement from parents and increased reliance upon peers, which is later followed by decreased dependence upon members of both groups. Clearly the subjects in the extreme cohesion groups are at different stations in this process, but it is not clear which group has reached the more mature or age-appropriate level. Guidelines are

not available to quantitatively measure the optimal degree of closeness between adolescents and their families and friends at age 18, and these data alone leave unanswered several crucial questions: Did subjects from low cohesion families experience adequate relationships with their families before they began to invest in outside friendships? Conversely, will adolescents from highly cohesive families be free enough to invest in friendships with peers and thereby reduce the intensity of intrafamilial bonds? Or, have these individuals already moved to a more mature station, where they feel freer of the need to be intimate with peers and are more able to be close with family members on their own adult terms? The answers to these questions are not easy ones; hopefully they will be elucidated with the discussion of the other findings of this study.

Data from the adjective checklists administered to subjects suggest that more positive attitudes towards homeleaving are associated with increasing levels of family cohesion. These data are equivocal and hence will not be further discussed, although they do lend support to the trend emerging from other measures.

Taken as a group, the data from self-report questionnaires point to several possible conclusions. The first challenges the negative connotations of Olson's term "enmeshment"; the warmth, caring and support experienced in cohesive family environments seem to aid female adolescents in personal development, and in their negotiation of the separation process. While their involvements with family members are closer and more intimate than those of females reared in less cohesive families, this level of emotional

bonding does not seem to reduce availability to or ability to join in relationships with peers. These students do not seem bound to or smothered by their family bonds; rather, the data suggest that they have developed positive self-images, self-confidence, and the ability to cope as difficulties arise in their lives. While they may have been more sheltered from life problems than adolescents reared in less cohesive families, they seem capable and eager to face the new challenges of adulthood. Conversely, the subjects in this study who described their families as low in cohesiveness clearly experience their lives as more troubled and difficult. However, their ability to form meaningful relationships outside the family suggests that these individuals are less distressed than the terms "disengaged" and "centrifugal family" might imply. This less pathological view of adolescents from low cohesion families is further supported by the absence of differences across groups on depression or on attitudes towards leaving home for college.

An alternative interpretation, following the lines of Stierlin's work, suggests that adolescents raised in highly cohesive families operate under the laws of pseudomutuality. If this were the case, they would naturally report more positive feelings about leaving home on both their own and their parent's behalves, and few personal problems. From this perspective the finding that low cohesion subjects report more personal problems is easily explained: they have been raised in hostile and rejecting homes, and have never felt good about their lives. The centrifugal force pushing their

families apart left little opportunity for the growing child to develop coping abilities or a positive sense of self. However, this theory is contradicted by the present findings on the intensity, or closeness of relationships. For individuals reared in cohesive families, mutuality seems not to be superficial or feigned, but quite genuine. The lack of clear findings on attitudes towards home-leaving further weakens this interpretation.

A third possibility reduces these results to "Social Desirability." The finding that scores on Olson's Social Desirability Scale increased with scores on cohesion suggests that the subjects who qualified for the high cohesion group may have been trying to "appear good," by describing their families as close and warm. For the same reason they may have reported fewer problems on the checklist and overrated the closeness of their relationships. Conversely, those subjects who were less invested in making a good impression may have been freer to report the interpersonal distance in their families and extrafamilial relationships, and the problems in their lives. Implied here is the interpretation that these data were biased by differences in level of self-disclosure which varied as a function of cohesion group.

These explanations of the data are all based upon responses by subjects on self-report questionnaires, which yield information about how the individual views herself. Applying Leary's (1957) three-level analysis of personality, such data tap into the second level of personality; the conscious self-concept. Consideration of subjects' public communication (Level 1), however, leads to the

1

rejection of pseudomutuality, social desirability, or self-disclosure theories as adequate interpretations of the data. While low interrater reliability mitigates the strength of this argument, information about this level of personality can be derived from interviewer's ratings of subjects. A linear relationship was found wherein increasing family cohesion was associated with more favorable ratings on mood, energy level, quality of social involvements and adjustment to college. The fact that students' self-evaluations on problem checklists were closely paralleled by the ratings of trained interviewers indicates that the self-reports were probably not biased by pseudomutuality or social desirability. Were either of these potent influences on subject's self-descriptions, a larger discrepancy between Level 1 and Level 2 data should have emerged.

One additional factor should be considered before accepting the observed linear relationship between family cohesion and personal adjustment: family adaptability. This dimension, which is also measured by the FACES, was empirically found to be orthogonally related to cohesion (Russell, 1979). In contrast, the data from subjects in the present study suggest a positive linear relationship between cohesion and adaptability. In this sample, highly cohesive families tended to be more flexible than low cohesion families, although the adaptability scores of all subjects fell within bounds considered normal by Olson (1979). Unfortunately this dimension was not controlled for in the present investigation, and it may well have confounded findings attributed to family cohesion. Further research is called for to clarify the statistical

relationship between these variables, and to explore the effect of their interaction with measures of adjustment.

This consideration aside, several clear conclusions can be drawn from this investigation. Most significantly, for subjects in this study, high levels of family cohesion appear to be related to personal development and adjustment, in the general sense and with specific reference to separation from home. While children reared in more cohesive families may have been more sheltered from life problems, they seem well prepared and eager to separate from their families and to begin leading independent, adult lives. They do not appear overly-involved or enmeshed with their families; their experience in close interpersonal relationships should facilitate the formation of new extrafamilial bonds. These young women and their families are enthusiastic about entry into this new stage of life, probably because they have felt satisfied with the "holding environment" that preceded it.

Female adolescents from less cohesive families do not seem as well developed, or as eager to separate from their families, comparatively. Their family lives appear to have been more difficult and less satisfying; in response, they learned to meet interpersonal needs outside the family system. Reflected in their personal problems and greater difficulty adjusting to college is probably a deficit in the earlier experience of closeness. Because these individuals have not felt as satisfied with family relationships, they are not yet ready to let go of these bonds and enter into adulthood.

These findings concur with those reported by Murphey et al.

(1969), who found a positive relationship between family relatedness and adjustment to college. It seems that for college-bound females, close emotional bonds with family members facilitate later development. Perhaps at more extreme levels, family cohesion may limit the young person's ability or desire to individuate, as demonstrated in Stierlin's (1972) case studies. However, the results of this investigation suggest that Olson's criteria for pathological enmeshment may be too lax. For females entering college, high levels of family cohesiveness seem conducive to healthy development and individuation. Likewise the subjects studied here whose families were classified as "disengaged" were not as severely disturbed as had been predicted. In part this may be attributed to the self-selection process which preceded this investigation; severely distressed adolescents are less likely to appear in samples of first-year college students. Ofcourse, the generalizability of these findings is severely limited, as all subjects were females in their late teens. In fact, the discrepant findings of this study relative to other reports of adolescent separation may be a reflection of sex differences in sampling. To date, most research in this area has focused exclusively on males, or has combined data on young men and women together. Hence these findings cannot be directly compared to those already reported in the literature.

Future research with the FACES or other measures of family cohesion, using subjects representing other populations, would help broaden our understanding of the impact of family cohesion. More careful investigation is needed to clarify the relationship between

this dimension and family adaptability; clearly these are important factors impacting not only upon the processes of separation and individuation during adolescence, but upon all stages of personal development. Finally, the results of this study point to the absence of quantitative data in the literature on relationships in adolescence. Either longitudinal or cross-sectional studies of the changing number and strength of relationships during these years would aid in the interpretation of the present findings, and would deepen our understanding of the process of adolescent separation.

Appendices

Appendix A

Research Consent Form

Appendix A
Research Consent Form

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Department of Psychology

DEPARTMENTAL RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

1. I have freely consented to take part in a scientific study being conducted by: _____
under the supervision of: _____
Academic Title: _____
2. The study has been explained to me and I understand the explanation that has been given and what my participation will involve.
3. I understand that I am free to discontinue my participation in the study at any time without penalty.
4. I understand that the results of the study will be treated in strict confidence and that I will remain anonymous. Within these restrictions, results of the study will be made available to me at my request.
5. I understand that my participation in the study does not guarantee any beneficial results to me.
6. I understand that, at my request, I can receive additional explanation of the study after my participation is completed.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: _____

Appendix B

FACES Questionnaire, Scoring Sheet,

Directions for Hand Scoring FACES

and Cohesion Subscales

Appendix B

FACES Questionnaire

FACES

4 = true all the time 2 = true some of the time
3 = true most of the time 1 = true none of the time

1. Family members are concerned with each other's welfare.
2. Family members feel free to say what's on their mind.
3. We don't have spur of the moment guests at mealtime.
4. It is hard to know who the leader is in our family.
5. It's difficult for family members to take time away from the family.
6. Family members are afraid to tell the truth because of how harsh the punishment will be.
7. Most personal friends are not family friends.
8. Family members talk a lot but nothing ever gets done.
9. Family members feel guilty if they want to spend some time alone.
10. There are times when other family members do things that make me unhappy.
11. In our family we know where all family members are at all times.
12. Family members have some say in what is required of them.
13. The parents in our family stick together.
14. I have some needs that are not being met by family members.
15. Family members make the rules together.
16. It seems like there is never any place to be alone in our house.
17. It is difficult to keep track of what other family members are doing.
18. Family members do not check with each other when making decisions.
19. My family completely understands and sympathizes with my every mood.
20. Family ties are more important to us than any friendship could possibly be.
21. When our family has an argument, family members just keep to themselves.
22. Family members often answer questions that were addressed to another person.
23. The parents check with the children before making important decisions in our family.

-2-

FACES

4 = true all the time

2 = true some of the time

3 = true most of the time

1 = true none of the time

24. Family members like to spend some of their free time with each other.
25. Punishment is usually pretty fair in our family.
26. Family members are encouraged to have friends of their own as well as family friends.
27. Family members discuss problems and usually feel good about the solutions.
28. Family members share almost all interests and hobbies with each other.
29. Our family is not a perfect success.
30. Family members are extremely independent.
31. No one in our family seems to be able to keep track of what their duties are.
32. Family members feel it's "everyone for themselves."
33. Every new thing I've learned about my family has pleased me.
34. Our family has a rule for almost every possible situation.
35. We respect each other's privacy.
36. Once our family has planned to do something, it's difficult to change it.
37. In our family we are on our own when there is a problem to solve.
38. I have never regretted being with my family, not even for a moment.
39. Family members do not turn to each other when they need help.
40. It is hard to know what other family members are thinking.
41. Family members make visitors feel at home.
42. Parents make all of the important decisions in our family.
43. Even when everyone is home, family members spend their time separately.
44. Parents and children in our family discuss together the method of punishment.
45. Family members have little need for friends because the family is so close.
46. We feel good about our ability to solve problems.
47. Although family members have individual interests, they still participate in family activities.

-3-

FACES

4 = true all the time 2 = true some of the time
 3 = true most of the time 1 = true none of the time

48. My family has all the qualities I've always wanted in a family.
49. Family members are totally on their own in developing their ideas.
50. Once a task is assigned to a family member, there is no chance of changing it.
51. Family members seldom take sides against other members.
52. There are times when I do not feel a great deal of love and affection for my family.
53. When rules are broken, family members are treated fairly.
54. Family members don't enter each other's areas or activities.
55. Family members encourage each other's efforts to find new ways of doing things.
56. Family members discuss important decisions with each other, but usually make their own choices.
57. If I could be a part of any family in the world, I could not have a better match.
58. Home is one of the loneliest places to be.
59. In our family, it's important for everyone to express their opinion.
60. Family members find it easier to discuss things with persons outside the family.
61. There is no leadership in our family.
62. We try to plan some things during the week so we can all be together.
63. Family members are not punished or reprimanded when they do something wrong.
64. In our family we know each other's close friends.
65. Our family does not discuss its problems.
66. Our family doesn't do things together.
67. If my family has any faults, I am not aware of them.
68. Family members enjoy doing things alone as well as together.
69. In our family, everyone shares responsibilities.
70. Parents agree on how to handle children.

-4-

FACES

4 = true all the time	2 = true some of the time
3 = true most of the time	1 = true none of the time

-
71. I don't think anyone could possibly be happier than my family and I when we are together.
 72. It is unclear what will happen when rules are broken in our family.
 73. When a bedroom door is shut, family members will knock before entering.
 74. If one way doesn't work in our family, we try another.
 75. Family members are expected to have the approval of others before making decisions.
 76. Family members are totally involved in each other's lives.
 77. Family members speak their mind without considering how it will affect others.
 78. Family members feel comfortable inviting their friends along on family activities.
 79. Each family member has at least some say in major family decisions.
 80. Family members feel pressured to spend most free time together.
 81. Members of our family can get away with almost anything.
 82. Family members share the same friends.
 83. When trying to solve problems, family members jump from one attempted solution to another without giving any of them time to work.
 84. We have difficulty thinking of things to do as a family.
 85. Family members understand each other completely.
 86. It seems as if we agree on everything.
 87. It seems as if males and females never do the same chores in our family.
 88. Family members know who will agree and who will disagree with them on most family matters.
 89. My family could be happier than it is.
 90. There is strict punishment for breaking rules in our family.
 91. Family members seem to avoid contact with each other when at home.
 92. For no apparent reason, family members seem to change their minds.

-5-

FACES

4 = true all the time	2 = true some of the time
3 = true most of the time	1 = true none of the time

-
93. We decide together on family matters and separately on personal matters.
94. Our family has a balance of closeness and separateness.
95. Family members rarely say what they want.
96. It seems there are always people around home who are not members of the family.
97. Certain family members order everyone else around.
98. It seems as if family members can never find time to be together.
99. Family members are severely punished for anything they do wrong.
100. We know very little about the friends of other family members.
101. Family members feel they have no say in solving problems.
102. Members of our family share many interests.
103. Our family is as well adjusted as any family in this world can be.
104. Family members are encouraged to do their own thing.
105. Family members never know how others are going to act.
106. Certain individuals seem to cause most of our family problems.
107. I don't think any family could live together with greater harmony than my family.
108. It is hard to know what the rules are in our family because they always change.
109. Family members find it hard to get away from each other.
110. Family members feel that the family will never change.
111. Family members feel they have to go along with what the family decides to do.

Scoring Sheet

UM Human Social Science
University of Minnesota
297 McNeal Hall
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

FACES

ANSWER SHEET

1.	2	20.	3	39.	1	58.	1	76.	3	94.	2	DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE	ES	
2.	2	21.	1	40.	3	59.	2	77.	3	95.	1		AST	
3.	3	22.	3	41.	2	60.	1	78.	2	96.	1		FB	
4.	3	23.	2	42.	1	61.	3	79.	2	97.	1		CON	
5.	3	24.	2	43.	1	62.	2	80.	3	98.	1		T	
6.	1	25.	2	44.	2	63.	3	81.	3	99.	1		DIS	
7.	1	26.	2	45.	3	64.	2	82.	3	100.	1		F	
8.	3	27.	2	46.	2	65.	1	83.	3	101.	1		NEG	
9.	3	28.	3	47.	2	66.	1	84.	1	102.	2		IN	
10.	5-	29.	5-	48.		67.		85.		103.			SD	
11.	3	30.	1	49.	1	68.	2	86.	3	104.	2		IND	
12.	2	31.	3	50.	1	69.	2	87.	1	105.	3		RO	
13.	3	32.	1	51.	2	70.	2	88.	3	106.	1		GOAL	
14.	5-	33.		52.	5-	71.		89.	5-	107.			SD	
15.	2	34.	1	53.	2	72.	3	90.	1	108.	3		RU	
16.	3	35.	2	54.	1	73.	2	91.	1	109.	3		S	
17.	3	36.	1	55.	2	74.	2	92.	3	110.	1		SF	
18.	1	37.	1	56.	2	75.	3	93.	2	111.	3		DM	
19.		38.		57.									SD	

3

Directions for Hand Scoring FACES

Computation of Individual Row Scores

1. Begin by placing the transparent template on top of the answer sheet so that the boxes on the answer sheet line up with the boxes on the template.
2. Starting with the first row, multiply the individual responses by the number that appears in the upper right-hand corner of the corresponding box on the template. Add these weighted scores for all six items in Row 1 and enter the total in the box marked "EB" at the far right of the row on the answer sheet.
3. Continue in this manner, multiplying individual responses by the number in the corresponding template boxes and adding up each row, inserting the total in the appropriate box. Omit rows beginning with items 10, 14 and 19.
4. For rows beginning with Items 10, 14, and 19, if the box in the template contains the notation "5-", subtract the individual response from 5. This becomes the new score. Otherwise, add all the scores in the row and insert this total in the appropriate box (marked "SD" at the far right of each of these rows).

Computation of Dimension Scores

1. The Social Desirability Score is obtained by adding the numbers in the three SD boxes. Place in box provided at bottom right of answer sheet.
2. The Adaptability Dimension Score is obtained by adding the numbers in the second column of boxes (A, Adaptability; Con, Conflict; D, Discipline; N, Negotiation, Ru, Rules, SF, System Feedback). Place this number in the box marked "Adap".
3. The Cohesion Dimension Score is obtained by adding the numbers in the last column of boxes (EB, Emotional Bonding; FB, Family Boundaries; T, Time; F, Friends; IR, Interests and Recreation; I, Independence; Coal, Coalitions; S, Space. DM, Decision Making). Place this number in the box marded "Coh".

Cohesion Subscales

Subscales	Items
Emotional Bonding	1, 20, 39, 58, 76, 94
Independence	11, 30, 49, 68, 86, 104
Family Boundaries	3, 22, 41, 60, 78, 96
Coalitions	13, 32, 51, 70, 88, 106
Time	5, 24, 43, 62, 80, 98
Space	16, 35, 54, 73, 91, 109
Friends	7, 26, 45, 64, 82, 100
Decision Making	18, 37, 56, 75, 93, 111
Interests and Recreation	9, 28, 47, 66, 84, 102

Appendix C

**Social Activity Interview and
Interviewer's Summary Sheet**

Appendix C

Social Activity Interview

1. How many times have you visited your home since you entered college? _____
2. How many times have you gone elsewhere besides home for weekends or vacations since you entered college? _____
3. How often do you call your parents (times/week) _____
4. How often do your parents call you? (times/week) _____
5. How often do you call High School friends who are not at MSU? _____
6. How many of your High School friends came to MSU? Use a scale from one to five, where one indicates that none are here, and five means all high school friends are here.

1	2	3	4	5
None				All
7. Everything considered, how satisfied are you with your social life? Use a scale from one to five (1=dissatisfied, 5=very happy).

1	2	3	4	5
dissatisfied				very happy
8. Everything considered, how satisfied are you with your academic work? Use a scale from one to five (1=dissatisfied, 5=very pleased).

1	2	3	4	5
dissatisfied				very pleased
9. How often do you go out socially at night? _____
10. Ideally, how often would you like to go out? _____
11. What do you do when you go out? _____
12. What other things would you like to do? _____
13. How much time a week do you devote to sports activities? _____
14. Ideally, how much would you like to be involved in sports? _____

15. How much time a week do you devote to campus activities? _____
16. Ideally, how much time would you like to devote to campus activities? _____
17. Think of your closest same-sex friend:
 Is this friend at home or at college?
 Describe what your friendship is like.
 In what ways does this friendship differ from a casual acquaintance?
 Do you find yourself acting differently with your closest friend as compared to more casual friends? How?
 Do you talk about different subjects? What?
 Are your activities different?
 Are there things you wish you could express with your best friend that you can't express now? What?
 What do you think would bring you closer together?
 How would you describe the ideal friendship?
18. Think of your closest male friend:
 Is he a friend at MSU or one from home?
 Is this person your boyfriend, or just a friend?
 What is your friendship like?
 How intimate is it?
 In what ways is it the same or different from friends of your same sex?
19. How satisfied are you with the balance you have of close friends versus acquaintances? Use a scale from one to five. (1=dissatisfied, 5=very pleased).
- | | | | | |
|--------------|---|---|---|--------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Dissatisfied | | | | Very pleased |
20. On a scale from one to five, would you say that you have been happier or less happy since you came to college, as compared to how you felt in high school? (1=much less happy in college, 5=much happier in college).
- | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|---|---|--------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Much less happy | | | | Much happier |
21. When you need money, where is it most likely to come from? (e.g. parents, job, relatives etc.) _____
22. Do you have a job? _____
 Do you think you need one? _____
23. (For students who work)
 Describe your relationships with the people you work with on the job.

24. a. Who initiated your going away to college? Use a 5-point scale where 1=your mother, 5=you, and 3=both of you equally.

1	2	3	4	5
Mother		Both of us		Me

- B. Now evaluate who initiated your going away to college using a five-point scale, where 1=your father, 5=you, and 3=both of you equally.

1	2	3	4	5
Father		Both of us		Me

- C. Use a five-point scale to evaluate who initiated your going away to college, where 1=your mother, 5=your father, and 3=both of them equally.

1	2	3	4	5
Mother		Both of them		Father

Interviewer's Summary Sheet

1. The quality of this student's social involvement is

1	2	3	4	5
poor		average		excellent

2. Overall, the student's mood during the interview was

1	2	3	4	5
very depressed		average		elated

3. The student's primary social or interpersonal involvements are

1	2	3	4	5
home				college

4. Her adjustment to college has been

1	2	3	4	5
very difficult				very easy

5. This student's energy level during the interview was

1	2	3	4	5
very high		normal		very slow, sedate

Appendix D

**Mooney Problem Checklist - Abridged
form, Interpersonal Gridform
and checklist subscales**

Appendix D

Mooney Problem Checklist

1. Feeling tired much of the time
2. Being underweight or overweight
3. Not getting enough sleep
4. Not as strong and healthy as I should be
5. Too tall or too short
6. Managing my finances poorly
7. Going in debt for college expenses
8. Too many financial problems
9. Disliking financial dependence on others
10. Lacking privacy in living quarters
11. Not enough time for recreation
12. Too little chance to get into sports
13. Too little time to myself
14. Wanting to improve myself culturally
15. Awkward in meeting people
16. Being ill at ease with other people
17. Having no close friends in college
18. Wanting to be more popular
19. Being left out of things
20. Being talked about
21. Taking things too seriously
22. Finding it difficult to relax
23. Moodiness, "having the blues"
24. Having bad luck
25. Unhappy too much of the time
26. Too few dates
27. Afraid of losing the one I love
28. Going with someone my family won't accept
29. Loving someone who doesn't love me
30. Too inhibited in sex matters
31. Parents sacrificing too much for me
32. Worried about a member of my family
33. Friends not welcomed at home
34. Home life unhappy
35. Not getting along with a member of my family
36. Not going to church often enough
37. Doubting the value of worship and prayer
38. Science conflicting with my religion
39. Parents old-fashioned in their ideas
40. Affected by racial or religious prejudice

41. Not knowing how to study effectively
42. Not planning my work ahead
43. Having a poor background for some subjects
44. Forgetting things I've learned in school
45. Getting low grades
46. Restless at delay in starting life work
47. Doubting wisdom of my vocational choice
48. Purpose in going to college not clear
49. Wanting to change to another college
50. Needing to plan ahead for the future
51. Hard to study in living quarters
52. Teachers too hard to understand
53. College too indifferent to student needs
54. Dull classes
55. Not getting individual help from teachers
56. Frequent colds
57. Frequent headaches
58. Menstrual or female disorders
59. Trouble with digestion
60. Needing medical advice
61. Not getting satisfactory diet
62. Unsure of my future financial support
63. Needing a job during vacations
64. Working for all my expenses
65. Dissatisfied with my present job
66. Boring weekends
67. Wanting to improve my appearance
68. Wanting more worthwhile discussions with people
69. Too little social life
70. Nothing interesting to do in vacations
71. Speaking or acting without thinking
72. Disliking someone or being disliked by someone
73. Finding it hard to talk about my troubles
74. Hurting other people's feelings
75. Too easily led by other people
76. Losing my temper
77. Being careless or lazy
78. Not taking things seriously enough
79. Lacking self-confidence
80. Too easily led by other people

81. Wondering if I'll ever find a suitable mate
82. Being in love
83. Breaking up a love affair
84. Sexual needs unsatisfied
85. Thinking too much about sex matters
86. Clash of opinion between me and parents
87. Parents expecting too much of me
88. Being treated like a child at home
89. Getting home too seldom
90. Relatives interfering with family affairs
91. Wanting to feel close to God
92. Having a certain bad habit
93. Sometimes not being as honest as I should be
94. Having a troubled or guilty conscience
95. Giving in to temptations
96. Having too many outside interests
97. Not getting studies done on time
98. Unable to concentrate well
99. Worrying about examinations
100. Fearing failure in college
101. Not knowing where I belong in the world
102. Needing information about occupations
103. Doubting I can get a job in my chosen vocation
104. Wanting advice on next steps after college
105. Wanting to quit college
106. Classes too large
107. Too much work required in some courses
108. Forced to take courses I don't like
109. Grades unfair as measures of ability
110. Campus activities poorly co-ordinated

1

Interpersonal Gridform

[illegible]

1

Mooney Problem Checklist Subscales

	Item Numbers
HPD: Health and Physical Development	1-5, 56-60
FLE: Finances, Living Conditions and Employment	6-10, 61-65
SRA: Social and Recreational Activities	11-15, 66-70
SPR: Social-Psychological Relations	16-20, 71-75
PPR: Personal-Psychological Relations	21-25, 76-80
CSM: Courtship, Sex and Marriage	26-30, 81-85
HF: Home and Family	31-35, 86-90
MR: Morals and Religion	36-40, 91-95
ACW: Adjustment to College Work	41-45, 96-100
FVE: The Future: Vocational and Educational	46-50, 101-105
CTP: Curriculum and Teaching Procedure	51-55, 106-110

1

Appendix E

Demographic Questionnaire and BDI-Short Form

1

Appendix E

Demographic Questionnaire and BDI Short-Form

Below are 32 general questions. Please answer by either circling your response or by filling in the blank.

Age _____

Major _____

Number of brothers _____ Ages _____

Number of sisters _____ Ages _____

1. Are your parents living together? Yes No
2. If no, what was the cause of separation? (Death, divorce, etc)

_____ Year _____

3. Has either of your parents remarried? Please give year, and circle which parent you live with.

Mother _____ (year)

Father _____ (year)

4. How far away do you live from M.S.U.?

- a. Less than one-half hour away
- b. Between one-half hour and one hour away
- c. Between one and two hours away
- d. Further than two hours away

5. How many times have you moved to a new home? _____

6. Think of your closest relatives in your extended family. What is their relation to you? (Grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins etc.) _____

How close do you live to them?

- a. Less than one-half hour away
- b. Between one half-hour and one hour away
- c. Between one and two hours away
- d. Further than two hours away

The following questions (7-13) refer to the first occasion you can recall spending what is for you a significant amount of time away from home:

7. The main reason for being away from home was:
- Major illness or death in the family; whose? _____
 - Divorce or separation of parents
 - School
 - Vacation or summer camp
 - Visiting relatives
 - Other _____
8. The period of time away from home which you feel to be significant in this case is:
- A day or less
 - A week or less
 - A month or less
 - More than a month
9. On this occasion, who initiated this home-leaving?
- | | | | | | | |
|---------|---|---|------------|---|---|----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Parents | | | Both of us | | | Me |
10. How far away from home did you go?
- Less than a half-hour away
 - Between one half-hour and one hour away
 - Between one and two hours away
 - Further than two hours away
11. During this separation from home, who did you stay with?
- Parents
 - Other close relatives, but not parents
 - A close friend
 - Other people, but no one with whom you felt close
 - Alone
12. How old were you at this time of leaving home?
- Less than 6 years of age
 - 6 to 8 years of age
 - 9 to 11 years of age
 - 12 to 14 years of age
 - 15 or older
13. On the whole, how would you describe this experience away from home?
- | | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|---------|---|---|-------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| Very | | | Neutral | | | Great |
| Difficult | | | | | | |

14. All together, how many occasions can you recall when you spent a significant amount of time away from home? _____

15. Who initiated these homeleavings?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Parents			Both of us			Me

16. On the whole, how would you describe these experiences away from home?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Very Difficult			Neutral			Great

17. Below is a list of adjectives. Circle each one that describes how you feel about going away to college.

Abandoned	Excitement
Amusement	Fear
Anger	Frustration
Anxiety	Gaiety
Apathy	Greif
Boredom	Guilt
Cheerfulness	Happiness
Confidence	Hope
Contentment	Inspiration
Delight	Nervousness
Depression	Panic
Determination	Pride
Disgust	Relief
Dislike	Remorse
Elation	Resentment
Enjoyment	Sadness

18. Consider the list of adjectives below. Circle each adjective that describes how you think your mother feels about your leaving home for college.

Abandoned	Excitement
Amusement	Fear
Anger	Frustration
Anxiety	Gaiety
Apathy	Greif
Boredom	Guilt
Cheerfulness	Happiness
Confidence	Hope
Contentment	Inspiration
Delight	Nervousness
Determination	Pride
Disgust	Relief

Dislike	Remorse
Elation	Resentment
Enjoyment	Sadness

19. Consider the list of adjectives below. Circle each adjective that describes how you think your father feels about your leaving home for college.

Abandoned	Excitement
Amusement	Fear
Anger	Frustration
Anxiety	Gaiety
Apathy	Greif
Boredom	Guilt
Cheerfulness	Happiness
Confidence	Hope
Contentment	Inspiration
Delight	Nervousness
Determination	Pride
Disgust	Relief
Dislike	Remorse
Elation	Resentment
Enjoyment	Sadness

On questions 20-32 you will find groups of statements. Please read the entire group of statements of each category. Then pick out the one statement in that group which best describes the way you feel today, that is, right now! Circle the number beside the statement you have chosen. If several statements in the group seem to apply equally well, circle each one. Be sure to read all the statements in each group before making your choice.

20. 3. I am so sad or unhappy that I can't stand it.
 2. I am blue or sad all the time and I can't snap out of it.
 1. I feel sad or blue.
 0. I do not feel sad.
21. 3. I feel that the future is hopeless and that things cannot improve.
 2. I feel I have nothing to look forward to.
 1. I feel discouraged about the future.
 0. I am not particularly pessimistic or discouraged about the future.
22. 3. I feel I am a complete failure as a person (parent, husband, wife).
 2. As I look back on my life, all I can see is a lot of failure.
 1. I feel I have failed more than the average person.

- 0. I do not feel like a failure.
- 23.
 - 3. I am dissatisfied with everything.
 - 2. I don't get satisfaction out of anything anymore.
 - 1. I don't enjoy things the way I used to.
 - 0. I am not particularly dissatisfied.
- 24.
 - 3. I feel as though I am very bad or worthless.
 - 2. I feel quite guilty.
 - 1. I feel bad or unworthy a good part of the time.
 - 0. I don't feel particularly guilty.
- 25.
 - 3. I hate myself.
 - 2. I am disgusted with myself.
 - 1. I am disappointed in myself.
 - 0. I don't feel disappointed in myself.
- 26.
 - 3. I would kill myself if I had the chance.
 - 2. I have definite plans about committing suicide.
 - 1. I feel I would be better off dead.
 - 0. I don't have any thoughts of harming myself.
- 27.
 - 3. I have lost all of my interest in other people and I don't care about them at all.
 - 2. I have lost most of my interest in other people and have little feeling for them.
 - 1. I am less interested in other people than I used to be.
 - 0. I have not lost interest in other people .
- 28.
 - 3. I can't make any decisions at all anymore.
 - 2. I have great difficulty in making decisions.
 - 1. I try to put off making decisions.
 - 0. I make decisions about as well as ever.
- 29.
 - 3. I feel that I am ugly or repulsive-looking.
 - 2. I feel that there are permanent changes in my appearance and they make me look unattractive.
 - 1. I am worried that I am looking old or unattractive.
 - 0. I don't feel that I look any worse than I used to.
- 30.
 - 3. I can't do any work at all.
 - 2. I have to push myself very hard to do anything.
 - 1. It takes extra effort to get started at doing something.
 - 0. I can work about as well as before.
- 31.
 - 3. I get too tired to do anything.
 - 2. I get tired from doing anything.
 - 1. I get tired more easily than I used to.
 - 0. I don't get any more tired than usual.

32. 3. I have no appetite at all anymore.
2. My appetite is much worse now.
1. My appetite is not as good as it used to be.
0. My appetite is no worse than usual.

1

Appendix F

Positive and Negative Adjectives

Describing Homeleaving

Appendix F

Positive and Negative Adjectives

Describing Homeleaving

POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Amusement	Abandoned
Cheerfulness	Anger
Confidence	Anxiety
Contentment	Apathy
Delight	Boredom
Determination	Depression
Elation	Disgust
Enjoyment	Dislike
Excitement	Fear
Gaiety	Frustration
Happiness	Grief
Hope	Guilt
Inspiration	Nervousness
Pride	Panic
Relief	Remorse
	Resentment
	Sadness

Appendix G

Demographic Data

Appendix G

Demographic Data

Significant Findings

Source of income

Students needing jobs

Initiator of student's homeleaving for college

Nonsignificant Findings

Age

Major

Number of Brothers

Number of sisters

Total number of children in family

Subject's age rank in family

Parent's marital status

Cause of parent's separation

Year of parent's separation

Year mother remarried

Year father remarried

Parent subject lives with

Distance between college and home

Number of times subject has moved to a new home

Closest relatives in extended family

Distance to closest relatives

Reason for first homeleaving

GENERAL INVESTIGATIVE DIVISION

Duration of first homeleaving
Initiator of first homeleaving
Distance from home during first homeleaving
People with subject at first homeleaving
Age at first homeleaving
Total rating of first homeleaving
Total number of homeleavings
Initiator of later homeleavings
Total rating of later homeleavings
Number of visits home since beginning college (2 mos)
Number of trips elsewhere since beginning college (2 mos)
Frequency of telephone calls to parents per week
Frequency of telephone calls from parents per week
Frequency of telephone calls to H.S. friends per week
Number of H.S. friends at college with subject
Satisfaction with social life
Satisfaction with academic life
Social Activities - number of nights per week
Social Activities - ideal number of nights per week
List of social activities
List of ideal social activities
Sports - number of times per week
Sports - ideal number of times per week
Satisfaction with balance of close friends vs acquaintances
Happiness in college vs high school
Subject holds a job

Initiator of going to college, Mother vs. self

Initiator of going to college, Mother vs. Father

Interviewer's ratings on locus of social involvements

References

References

- Abrams, J.C. & Goldman, J. Separation-individuation in relation to learning inhibition in adolescence. J. Clinical Child Psychology, 76(Spr), Vol 5(1): 41-44.
- Beck, A.T., Rial, W.Y. & K. Rickels, Short form of depression inventory: cross-validation. Psychological Reports, 1974, 34: 1184-1186.
- Bloom, B.L. A university freshman preventitive intervention program: Report of a pilot project. J. Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 1971, 37: 235-242.
- Blos, P. The second individuation process of adolescence. The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child, 1967, 22: 162-186.
- Boszormenyi-Nagy, I, Loyalty implications of the transference model of psychotherapy. Archives of General Psychiatry, 1972, 27: 374-380.
- Brawer, F.B. New Perspectives on Personality Development in College Students. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1973.
- Chickering, A.W. The development of autonomy. American J. Orthopsychiatry, 1967, 37: 203-204.
- Chickering, A.W. Education and Identity. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1969.
- Chickering, A.W., McDowell, J. & D. Campagna, Institutional differences and student development. J. Educational Psychology, 1969, 60(4): 315-326.
- Douvan, E.A.M. & Adelson, J. The Adolescent Experience. New York: Wiley, 1966.
- Karpel, M. Individuation: From fusion to dialogue. Family Process, 1976, 15: 65-82.
- Katz, J. Psychodynamics of development during the college years. In Bloom, B.L. (ed), Psychological Stress in the Campus Community: Theory, Research and Action. New York: Behavioral Publications, 1975, 43-76.
- Leary, T.F., The Interpersonal Diagnosis of Personality. New York: Ronald, 1957.

Mahler, M.S., Pine, F. & A. Bergman, The Psychological Birth of the Human Infant. London: Hutchinson, 1975.

Murphey, E., Silber, E., C.Coelho, D. Hamburg & I. Greenberg, Development of autonomy and parent-child interaction in late adolescence. American J. Orthopsychiatry, 1969, 33: 643-652.

Olson, D.H., Russell, C.S. & D.H. Sprenkle, Circumplex model of marital and family systems II: Empirical studies and clinical intervention. Advances in Family Intervention, Assessment and Theory, Vol. 1, JAI Press, 1980, 129-179.

Olson, D.H., Sprenkle, D.H. & C.S.Russell, Circumplex model of marital and family systems I: Cohesion and adaptability dimensions, family types and clinical applications. Family Process, 1979 (Apr), 18(1): 3-28.

Roy, R.S. The changing adolescent. In Usdin, G.L. (ed), Adolescence: Care and Counseling. London: Lippincott, 1967.

Russell, C. Circumplex model of marital and family systems III: Empirical evaluation with families. Family Process, 1979, 18: 29-45.

Sanford, N. (ed.) The American College: A Psychological and Sociological Interpretation of Higher Learning. NY: Wiley, 1962.

Smith, R.M. & Smith, A.R., Attachment and educational investment of adolescence. Adolescence, 1976(Fall), 11(43): 349-357.

Stierlin, H. Separating Parents and Adolescents. New York: Quadrangle, 1972.

