

PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE NON-CUSTODIAL
FATHER'S POST-DIVORCE INFLUENCE ON CHILDREN

Dissertation for the Degree of Ph. D.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
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ABSTRACT

PARENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE NON-CUSTODIAL FATHER'S POST DIVORCE INFLUENCE ON CHILDREN

By

Barbara Gerber Berkman

This study examined the non-custodial father's relationship with his children following a divorce. Differences and similarities between the perceptions of mothers and fathers were analyzed.

The sample consisted of twenty pairs of custodial mothers and their former husbands. Participating families included at least one child no younger than three at the time of separation and no older than fourteen at the time of the study. The source of data was a structured interview conducted with each parent.

The data were analyzed using the Wilcoxin, Mann-Whitney, Fisher's exact and chi-square tests. The following conclusions were drawn:

1. Mothers and fathers do not differ in their perceptions of the degree of the fathers' post-divorce influence on the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting nor in their perceptions of the importance of that influence.
2. Mothers perceived that fathers have less contact with the children than fathers perceive they have.

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3. Mothers and fathers do not perceive differences in the regularity of child support payments nor is regularity of child support payments a significant factor in the amount of parental influence.
4. Regular support payments were not a significant factor in the fathers' perceptions of the importance of their influence; however regularity of support payments was a significant factor among the mothers. Mothers who did not receive child support regularly or not on time felt that the father's influence was of greater importance than mothers who received payments regularly.
5. Neither mothers nor fathers perceived changes when comparing the fathers' pre and post-divorce influence with the exception of two aspects of parenting: decreases in influence over financial affairs and decision-making and increases in influence over religious development were perceived.

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ON CHILDREN

By

Barbara Gerber Berkman

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Marilyn Nagy gave the direction and guidance necessary to integrate data and ideas into a completed research project. Her willingness to provide support and ideas throughout my doctoral program is truly valued.

Other members of my doctoral committee, Jane Oyer and Larry Lezotte, have contributed to my doctoral education in unique ways. Their individual expertise is reflected in my own thinking about families and research. Although Barbara Ames was not a member of my advisory committee, her friendship, support and encouragement provided additional help and motivation.

A study such as this one required special participants-- individuals with enough openness and confidence to involve themselves in a situation that required the participation of a person who might

by an "adversary." Special thanks to the forty "co-parents" who made the completion of this project possible. Gratitude must also be expressed to the numerous people who provided names of potential participants.

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Finally appreciation must be expressed to the people closest to me. My parents, Max and Fay Gerber, have given of themselves in many ways over the years. My sons, Eric and Josh, demonstrated the ability to be helpful and understanding in ways far beyond what might be expected. Although they did not understand the entire process, they did understand the importance of the task. I hope that their response of "never" when asked if they wanted to complete graduate program or task of equal difficulty will change as they mature.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Need

The American family is changing. The traditional family is being replaced by a variety of family forms including the single-parent family and the reconstituted family. An increasing number of children are spending at least some of their childhood in a single-parent family.

Demographic studies (Espenshade, 1974; Glick, 1979) indicate that the largest increase of children under 18 in the United States living in one-parent families has occurred among children who live with a divorced parent as opposed to those who live in single-parent households created by desertion, death or the fact that the parent had never married. In 1980, 5.1 million children under 18 lived with a divorced parent. This represents a 400 percent increase in the number of children who lived with a divorced parent in 1970 (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1980).

While more children of divorce lived with their fathers in 1980 than in 1970, the largest proportion of these children continue to live with their mothers. In both years, 1980 and 1970, less than ten percent of all children whose parents were divorced lived with their fathers. Of those who lived with a single parent,

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approximately 90 percent lived with their mothers (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1980).

It should be pointed out, however that not all children whose parents divorce will live with a single parent from the time the divorce occurs until they reach 18 or become independent. Many divorced parents remarry. The reconstituted households include the children of previous marriages. However, the fact remains that the greatest proportion of children whose parents divorce remain with their mothers and may be separated physically and psychologically from their fathers.

Many changes occur within the mother-child, father-child, mother-father, and sibling relationships as the result of divorce. When the mother receives physical and legal custody of the child(ren), the father is usually required to provide financial support. He is also permitted to visit the children at specific times stipulated by the court granting the divorce or as agreed upon by the parents in the pre-divorce negotiations. Because the father no longer lives in the same house as the children, the father-child relationship may not have the same potential for spontaneity as it did prior to the divorce. It is also possible that the nature of the relationship with each child, in instances where there is more than one child, will differ. In addition, the degree of influence that the father retains or receives in decisions regarding the care and upbringing of the child depends upon the custodial mother's willingness to recognize the parental status of her former husband.

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Newsome (1976) found a positive relationship between the mother's recognition of the father's parental status and his continued involvement with the child(ren). Newsome did not find a significant relationship between amount of child support actually paid and paternal involvement. However he did not consider the relationship between regularity of child support payments and paternal involvement. Newsome did suggest that paternal outcomes might influence paternal inputs. There is a need to examine this aspect of the father mother-child relationship particularly as it applies to the regular payment of child support.

Much of the research on the impact of divorce focuses on the psychological outcomes of divorce. Kelly and Wallerstein (1980); Weiss (1979); Hetherington, Cox and Cox (1976) and Greif (1977) are a few of the researchers who have studied the psychological outcomes of divorce for parents and children. While they cited economic factors as having an effect on the psychological outcomes, they did not study those aspects of the relationship that encourage fathers to make regular child support payments or provide the resources that enable the child to maintain a level of living at or near the pre-divorce level of living.

It is recognized that divorce usually has a negative impact on the financial status of mothers and children as well as the father when incomes must stretch to help meet the financial needs of two households. Although divorced fathers are required by law to provide financial support for their children, only a small proportion

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continue to do so for an extended period of time (Gordon, Jones and Sawhill, 1978, pp. 17-20). In addition fewer than 50 percent of the fathers, who do provide financial support, provide more than ten percent of the total income of the mother-child household. Only five percent of the women who received child support payments in 1976 received more than half of their family income from this source (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1979).

The 1976 Survey of Income and Education (SIE) indicates that only 25 percent of the 4.9 million single women heading households that include children under 18 receive child support payments. This is of particular significance when one considers the fact that when child support is excluded from family income, the poverty rate for mothers who receive it increases from 12 to 19 percent. In addition the poverty rate of those who receive child support is 12 percent while the poverty rate of those who receive no child support is 32 percent (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1979). It is evident that the financial contributions of fathers are necessary if the needs of children are to be met.

While a large proportion of divorced fathers do not provide financial support, a small proportion do provide support and continue to do so for a period of five or more years beyond the time of the divorce. Newsome (1976) concluded that there is a positive relationship between paternal inputs and outcomes using data based on the mothers' perceptions.

There is a need for research to determine the degree to which the perceptions of the visiting father and custodial mother are

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congruent with relationship to issues of support, influence and involvement. In addition David Chambers (1979) in his discussion of a study of the Michigan Friend of the Court System suggests that empirical research on the relationship between fathers and their children following a divorce would be helpful in understanding why some fathers pay more regularly than others. Chambers points out that much of the information on why some fathers meet this obligation better than others is impressionistic--based on the opinions of judges, attorneys and counselors rather than empirical research.

Theresa Levitin (1979), in a review of research on the effects of divorce on children, emphasizes the need to study the post-divorce family system from perspectives other than that of the impact on the mother and child. Levitin feels it is necessary to understand the impact of the absence of the child on the father as well as the impact of the father's absence on the child. Levitin also states that it is necessary to consider the perspective of both parents on the social, psychological and economic effects of divorce on the family system.

Objectives

This study was designed to answer basic questions regarding the relationship of the divorced non-custodial father and his children from the perspective of both the custodial mother and the father. The post-divorce relationship is defined as the amount of contact the father has with the children, the amount of influence the father has over selected aspects of childrearing, the perceived importance

of his role on childrearing and the consistency of financial support. The perceptions of the custodial mothers were compared with those of their former husbands. The answers to the following questions were sought:

1. Do custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers have similar perceptions regarding the fathers' involvement and influence over the children?
2. Do divorced, non-custodial fathers who make regular child support payments differ in the extent of their involvement with their children from fathers who do not make regular child support payments?
3. Do divorced non-custodial fathers who make regular child support payments differ in their perceptions of the importance of a fathers' influence over the children from fathers who do not make regular child support payments?
4. Do custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers perceive differences in the father's pre and post divorce influence over the children?

Assumptions

The following assumptions underlie this study:

1. The father's absence from the home affects the extent of his involvement with the children.
2. Fathers have the resources with which to make child support payments.

3. The father's remarriage does not diminish his desire to maintain a relationship with the children of an earlier marriage.

Definitions

Custody. Control over the child.

Physical Custody. The right of the parent to have the child live with him or her.

Legal Custody. The right of the parent to make decisions regarding the child's upbringing.

Joint Custody. The sharing of the rights and responsibilities of parenthood by both mother and father. Joint custody may be physical, legal or both.

Child Support. A specified amount of money transferred from the non-custodial parent to the custodial parent in order to provide financially for the children.

Parent Roles. Greif (1977) identifies the roles and functions parents perform in order to meet the physical, social and psychological need of the children. These ten functions include:

1. Routine daily care and safety of the child. Activities include feeding, attending to grooming needs, adhering to the necessary activity schedule and providing transportation when needed.

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2. Intellectual development. Activities include reading to the child, attending to the child's education, discussing possible options regarding education and career alternatives.
3. Physical development. Activities include participating with or providing the opportunity for the child to engage in physical activities and encouraging the child to take an interest in his or her body.
4. Recreational Activities. Activities include encouraging the child to pursue hobbies and/or cultural interests and taking vacations together.
5. Teaching the Child How to Behave. Activities include disciplining the child, teaching manners and determining chores and responsibilities.
6. Emotional Development. Activities include helping the child to overcome fears and discussing feelings and worries.
7. Religious Development. Activities include discussing religious beliefs, establishing traditions, saying prayers and attending religious services and school.
8. Moral Development. Activities include teaching the child between right and wrong, the importance of telling the truth and instilling values.
9. Giving the Child a Sense of Being Part of the Family. Activities include participating in larger family

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gatherings and discussing relationships within the nuclear family as well as the extended family.

10. Financial Decision-Making Affecting the Child. Activities include giving the child an allowance and making minor or major financial decisions affecting the child.

Resources. The time, energy and money used by a parent in meeting the physical, social and psychological needs of a child.

Contact. The number of times in a typical month that the father has contact with the child. Contact includes letters, phone calls and visits. A contact score was calculated by weighting the number of letters, phone calls and visits. The weighting system was developed by Greif (1977) (see Appendix A for Contact Score Scale).

Importance of the Father's Influence. For each of ten aspects of parenting developed by Greif, each parent was asked to rate the extent which he/she believes it was important that the father have influence. A range "of very high importance" to "of very little importance" was provided. A total importance score was derived by summing the parents' ranks on each aspect of childrearing.

Satisfaction. Each parent was asked to rank his or her satisfaction with the father's current influence over each aspect of childrearing. Three responses, positive, neutral or negative, were possible. Degree of satisfaction with each aspect of

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childrearing was asked and a composite satisfaction score was derived by summing the individual ratings.

Conflict. The degree of conflict was determined by the way in which five issues surrounding the divorce were resolved. The five issues included child support, alimony, custody, living and visitation arrangements.

Degree of Influence. The ranking of "very high" to "very low" on each of the ten aspects of parenting provides an estimate of each parent's perception of the degree of influence the father had in that particular aspect just prior to the divorce and at the time of the interview.

Regularity of Child Support. The regularity of child support payments represents the number of times per year that the father had missed or was late in making his child support payments. Each parent was asked to indicate how often this had happened since the divorce.

Degree to Which Child Support Payments Meet the Costs of Child Rearing. The perception by each parent as to the extent that the support payments actually cover the costs of childrearing. This response is an estimate made by each parent with estimates ranging from "less than 25 percent", "25-50 percent", "50 percent", "50-75 percent", "75 to 100 percent", and "100 percent".

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Mother's Use of Own Resources. Each parent was asked to indicate the extent to which he or she believed the mother used her own resources, ie. time, energy and money to meet the needs of the children. The parents responded within the "very high" to "very low" framework.

Conceptual Framework

Newsome (1976) found that the post-divorce, co-parental relationship could be explained through the application of the exchange theoretic framework. Using data obtained from 84 divorced mothers in a mail survey, he found that bargaining does occur between parents in those aspects of the post-divorce situation that concern the children. The outcomes of the father (closeness to and influence over children) are directly related to the contributions he makes to the children and the former wife. Newsome recognized that one of the limitations of the study was that the perceptions of the father with regard to his inputs and outcomes were not included. In addition, he posited that the perceived outcomes of the father may influence his sentiments and concurrent inputs to his children (and former wife).

While Newsome's research was one of the first attempts to apply exchange theory to the post-divorce situation using empirical methods, others have implied that exchange and bargaining does indeed occur. Bohannon (1974), Chambers (1979), Fulton (1979), Greif (1976, 1979), Longfellow (1979), Scanzoni (1979), Weiss (1975, 1979), and Westman and Cline (1971) are among the writers and

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researchers who indicate the need to explore further the applicability of exchange theory in understanding the post-divorce parental relationship.

Foa and Foa's (1974) resource exchange framework includes six basic interpersonal resources: love, status, information, money, goods and services which are exchanged among family members. They view resources as particular and abstract, universal and concrete. Love, status and information are particular and abstract; money, goods and services are universal and concrete.

From a family ecological perspective, both parents exchange resources with one another and with the child. The exchange of these resources may take place in the family environment in which a divorce has occurred as well as when the mother, father and child reside in the same household. (A more detailed discussion of this resource exchange model as it applies to both intact families and families in which a divorce has occurred is included in the review of literature.)

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CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature important to this study is reviewed under the following general headings: the application of exchange theory to the post-divorce family; the need for research on the post-divorce family; the role of the parent in two-parent homes and changes in the parent-child system resulting from divorce.

Application of Exchange Theory to the Post-Divorce Family

Exchange Theory has its roots in psychology, sociology, and economics. It was first introduced as an explanation for human behavior and interpersonal relationships by Simmel (1950). Various explanations have been offered by Blau (1964), Ekeh (1974), Foa and Foa (1974), Homans (1961), Nye (1979), Rettig (1980), Scanzoni (1972), and Thibault and Kelley (1959).

Nye (1979) provides one general explanation of exchange theory. He said:

...humans avoid costly behavior and seek rewarding statuses, relationships, interaction and feeling states to the end that their profits are maximized....Of course, in seeking rewards they voluntarily accept some costs; likewise in avoiding costs, some rewards are foregone, but the person, group, or organization will choose the best outcome available, based on his, her, its perception of rewards and costs (pp. 5-6).

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Definitions of Rewards and Costs

Thibault and Kelley (1959) offer the following definition of rewards. They state rewards are, "...the pleasures, satisfactions and gratifications the person enjoys." Nye (1979) adds statuses, relationships, interactions and feelings that provide gratification to this definition. Costs are defined by Thibault and Kelley as any status, relationship, interaction or feeling than an individual dislikes. In addition costs include alternatives foregone because an individual chooses to invest in competing alternatives. The individual compares the rewards and costs of investing in a given relationship with the rewards and costs of investing in alternative relationships.

Nye expands upon this theory by indicating that it is necessary to take future outcomes into account. Relationships or positions with negative current outcomes can be predicted. Conversely choices that promise immediate rewards may be foregone because they endanger relationships or statuses likely to be profitable and effective in the future.

Custodial mothers may be willing to acknowledge the role of their former husbands in the lives of their children because they see the potential of his financial resources in providing for the needs of the child(ren) over the long run. In addition mothers may perceive that allowing the father to function as a co-parent will allow them (the mothers) to invest in themselves to a greater degree than if they maintained total control over the child. Fathers may

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perceive that the investment of time and dollars in the child may be a positive investment in that it lays the ground work for a filial relationship in later years. While Boulding (1973) points out that elderly parents are less likely to receive money from adult children than they were in the past, one aspect of reciprocity is that individuals help those who have helped them. In addition children can provide immediate direct rewards in the form of affection and respect when their physical and emotional needs are met. While negative societal sanctions in the form of possible imprisonment may be forthcoming if a divorced father fails to meet financial obligations to his children, perhaps the threat of loss of status as a parent as well as loss of the children's love are better motivators.

Reciprocity

Gouldner (1960) states that reciprocity is a norm found in all cultures; people help those who help them and should not injure those who help them. He believes that the norm of reciprocity and the difficulty of determining when a social act has been repaid lock individuals together with moral claims that add stability to the larger social structure. Interaction with an individual occurs until he or she has been repaid for a past service or gift. However even when repayment does occur it is difficult to know whether repayment was equal to or greater than the original service or gifts. Because exchange is of an ambiguous nature, reciprocities continue.

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In relating the concept of reciprocity to the post-divorce mother-father-child system, the ambiguities of the relationship are apparent. Both mother and father may be unsure of what proportion of the children's financial support should be provided by the father. The father may be unsure of what his parenting role should be. In addition he does not know how much status he holds as a father either in the perceptions of his former wife or of his children. Like most parents, he is unsure as to what kind of relationship he will have with his children when they become adults.

The custodial mother who is responsible for the children physically invests much of her time caring for them--possibly to the exclusion of her own needs for personal development. Do the monetary contributions of her former husband repay her for the time she has invested? What will be the effect on her own influence as a parent if she allows the father to substitute for his monetary contributions with time investments in the physical, social, and psychological aspects of parenting? What role will she continue to have in the lives of her children? Finally, what type of relationship will she have with the children when they become adults? Depending upon what caused the divorce and the way in which the adults restructure their lives, the importance of parental status as well as a continuing relationship with one's children may be of greater or lesser importance to the adults involved.

Scanzoni (1972, 1979) provides additional support for the application of exchange theory in attempting to develop an

understanding of the post-marital relationship (particularly those aspects of the relationship related to parenting). He said:

Exchange or reward-cost theory presents a theoretical explanation for divorce as well as the post-divorce relationship between spouses....Reward-cost theory assumes that persons (Actors) have goals that bring them into interdependence with others. At times the interdependence exists in the form of peaceful exchange, in which both Actor and the Other perceive their association to be fair and just, each believing that he or she is receiving the benefits they should receive relative to their inputs in the relationship. At other times the interdependence is better characterized as a 'regulated conflict' or a situation where by virtue of greater power, the Actor is able to impose a reward-cost ratio that the other deems unjust (1979, p. 20).

Social and Economic Exchange

One characteristic of exchange theory that is applicable to the post-divorce parental relationship is that the exchange that occurs includes elements of both social and economic exchange. The non-custodial father provides money and in some instances goods--both measurable in value terms. In return he receives recognition of his parental status--a non-measurable resource. It is difficult to determine how much recognition he must receive in exchange for the money and goods he provides for his children. Perhaps part of the answer can be found in Rettig's explanation of the cleavage between social and economic exchange (1980). It has already been stated that economic exchange involves a two-way transfer of measurable resources between two persons who are in agreement upon the specific obligations of both and who complete the transaction in a specified time period. It is possible to calculate the benefits of



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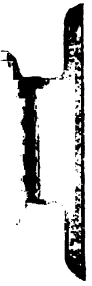
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this exchange without difficulty in determining whether or not the exchange is just and equitable (Rettig, 1980).

On the other hand, social exchange behavior involves the transfer of non-measurable resources with non-specified obligations, but with some expectation of direct or indirect reciprocity some time in the future. In reality, then, the exchange that occurs is not solely between father and mother. The children must be brought into the exchange. While child support payments are intended to provide for the material needs of the children, they are received by the mother who, in turn, is supposed to use them to meet the needs of the children in her custody. The mother must then recognize her former husband's status as a parent by allowing him access to the children. In turn the children recognize that their father does care for them and in their own way demonstrate that they care for their father.

Foa and Foa (1974) indicate that this range of exchange is what occurs in the family setting. The particularistic resources--love, status and information--as well as the universal resources--money, goods, and services--are exchanged among and between family members. The divorce decree alone does not sever the bonds between the non-custodial father and his children; thus it is possible to apply the principles of intra-family exchange to this relationship.

Exchanges from all resource categories are needed to satisfy the particularistic and universal needs of mother, father and children. Because the mother and father are no longer related except



through their children, both adults must look elsewhere for potential exchanges to provide for needs that cannot be met through the parent-child exchange relationship.

The Foa and Foa resource theory emphasizes that the exchange of the particularistic resources such as love and status does not ordinarily diminish the ability to give love and status in other relationships. Therefore the child could have separate relationships with both parents. This position conflicts with the position of Goldstein, Freud and Solnit (1973). They maintain that:

Children have difficulty in relating positively to, profiting from, and maintaining the contact with two psychological parents who are not in positive contact with each other. Loyalty conflicts are common and normal under such conditions and may have devastating consequences by destroying the child's positive relationship to both parents (p. 38).

The position of Goldstein, Freud and Solnit represents a major difficulty in integrating social and economic exchange in the family system under consideration. Whatever social exchange does occur between divorced parents is usually highly restricted. Ekeh (1974) characterized restricted social exchange in the following way:

1. unusual attempts to maintain equality and strong emotional reactions when the equality rule is breached;
2. a quid pro quo attitude that common investments and goods from which individuals can usually gain directly and ultimately are not workable; and



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3. a brittle nature of the relationship resulting in mechanical solidarity and frequent lack of trust.

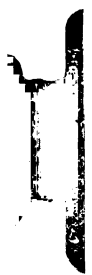
In summary, the post-divorce parent-child relationship can be described to some extent by a generalized approach to family exchange as presented by Foa and Foa. However this relationship is qualified by the sometimes "brittle" or tenuous nature of the relationship that exists between the mother and father.

The Need for Research On The Post-Divorce Family

The search of literature on the impact of divorce on fathers, particularly that which deals with his role as a non-custodial, visiting father, is very limited. In fact, rather than exploring what role the divorced father has in the lives of his children, much of the literature deals with the impact of father absence on children. In addition, much of what has been written about the impact of divorce on fathers is primarily impressionistic rather than empirical data.

Atkin and Rubin (1974) provide guidelines for the part-time or visiting father. These guidelines are based on impressions developed from their clinical practices. Seagull and Seagull (1977) discuss the psychological problems of the non-custodial father based on impressions from their experience with clients.

Nye (1967) stated that most of the studies concentrate on the period of the divorce process rather than the period of adjustment and reorganization. Although this has changed somewhat, reviews



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of literature consistently point out gaps in the literature covering the post-divorce role of the non-custodial father and his relationship with his children.

Price and Bonham (1976) developed an extensive bibliography on fathering and related issues. They include sections on the impact of father absence and the situation of the father alone but no section on the role of the non-custodial father. Pederson (1976) indicates the need for study and conceptualization of specific components of the father-child and father-mother relationship in place of the "deficit-oriented" global classification of the environment.

Moore and Davenport's 1979 review of literature on custody and visitation found contradictory opinions, little empirical evidence and no conceptual framework for addressing the issues. Levitin (1979) stated that the major deficit in the literature on the impact of divorce on families is its failure to consider the impact of divorce on fathers. Most of the research focuses on mothers and children. In addition most of the research that does focus on the non-custodial father is based on information provided by the mother which may be biased.

The general literature concerned with the impact of divorce on the family system does point out the devastating financial impact, particularly on women and children (Bane, 1976; Brandwein, Brown, and Fox, 1974; Chamber, 1979; Glick, 1979; Espenshade, 1979; Hoffman, 1977; Sawhill, 1975; Sawhill and Ross, 1976). The statistics which

illustrate the extent of the problem are drawn primarily from census data. Chambers (1979) conducted an extensive study on the Michigan Friend of the Court System which is the agency that oversees all official matters pertaining to divorce and paternity. He contends that "even if we assume a link between visitation and payments the nature of the link is not fully clear" (p. 128). Chambers stated that research exploring the nature of this relationship is warranted in order to develop appropriate policy on issues related to child support. In attempting to understand this relationship it is necessary to consider the role and interaction of the mother and father in both married and divorced family systems.

Roles of Parents in Two-Parent Households

Although the roles of both men and women as parents have changed in recent years, the mother has been defined partially by the fact that she is the one who bears and nurses the child. For physiological reasons the father does not have an active role in these aspects of parenting. Biller and Meredith (1974), Lynn (1976), Benson (1968), and Lamb (1976) all point out that mothers and fathers have somewhat different roles in parenting. Fromm (1956) states that fathers and mothers stand for two different modes of loving the child. The love of the mother is usually unconditional; the mother loves the child merely because it exists. On the other hand, the father's love must be earned and it cannot be taken for granted.



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Parson and Bales (1955) state that the father's occupational role is central to his family role whereas the parenting role of the mother is more expressive:

In our opinion the fundamental explanation of the allocation of the roles between the biological sexes lies in the fact that the bearing and early nursing of children establish a strong presumptive primacy of the relation of mother to the small child and this in turn establishes a presumption that the man, who is exempted from these biological functions, should specialize in the alternative direction (p. 23).

In essence, the mother assumes the homemaker role and consequently is more involved with the children than the breadwinner-father whose work place is usually removed from home and family. The defined gender roles are not peculiar to the United States. Reiss (1980) states that female ties to childrearing and male ties to economic and political power are the salient features of gender roles in many cultures.

While recent social and political movements, particularly the Women's Movement, and to a lesser degree the Men's Liberation Movement as well as the movement of women into the paid work place have done much to alter the viewpoint that men and women have distinct family roles, this notion still exists to some degree both in the work place and in the family. Even Parsons recognized that these roles are somewhat flexible. He stated:

In the distribution of instrumental tasks the American family maintains a more flexible pattern than most societies. Father helps mother....Mother can supplement the income of the family by working outside. Nevertheless the American male, by definition must "provide" for his family. He is responsible for his wife and children. His primary area of performance is the occupational role, in which his status inheres; and his primary function in the family is to supply an "income", to be the "breadwinner" (p. 339).



This role distinction still exists in many families although it is now recognized that both parents can have instrumental and expressive roles.

Although the role of the mother is still associated primarily with expressive functions, many fathers have indicated and have been urged by psychologists and sociologists to express a desire to become more involved in the "expressive aspects of parenting". Benson (1968) distinguishes between two dimensions of fatherhood. The survival dimension includes the male role in reproduction and the provision of material support. In addition he serves as a teacher, a censor, and a promoter of the roles of social interaction. He teaches survival skills and transmits basic health habits. He "symbolizes Manhood" (p. 54), handles crises, and teaches the child to cooperate with others. The expressive dimension of fatherhood includes providing bodily comfort to the children, showing love and respect, playing with them, and giving their lives a sense of immediate significance.

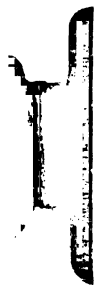
Areas of Parenting in Which Fathers Might Participate

In his book, The Father's Role In Child Development, David Lynn delineates four specific areas of parenting that are enhanced by paternal involvement: scholastic aptitude, achievement motivation, moral development and sex role identification. He cites studies that indicate the importance of paternal involvement in these aspects of parenting.

Billler and Meredith (1974) identify nine aspects of child development in which the father might be a source of influence. These nine areas include: sexual identity; self confidence and achievement; nurturance; moral and discipline; social and sexual relationships; physical growth and body pride; intelligence and competence; school and education; and work and career choice. Michael Lamb's (1976) review of research identifies four aspects of the fathering role: sex role adoption; moral development; academic performance; and adjustment and interpersonal interaction.

One of the earliest systematic research studies on the activities and attitudes of fathers in regard to their paternal role was conducted by Louise Tasch in 1952. She studied 85 fathers of 160 children to determine the different ways in which fathers interact with their children. In descending order of importance the categories of report involvement include: routine daily care and safety; development of motor ability and skills; development of intellectual abilities; recreational activities; development of social standards and control; emotional development; moral and spiritual development; maintaining the family unit; assignment of chores and allowance; development of artistic interests; development of personality characteristics; radio, movies and comics; giving material objects and presents.

Judith Brown Greif (1977) derived ten parameters along which a father might influence the growth and development of children upon which she based the questionnaire for her research on the post-divorce



father-child relationship (see Appendix A). These ten parameters include: routine daily care and safety; intellectual development; physical development; recreational activities; teaching the child how to behave; emotional development; moral development; religious development; giving the child a feeling of being part of the family; and financial decision making affecting the child (see Table 1 for a Summary of Parenting Roles).

Understanding the dimensions of fatherhood is essential. However it is necessary to understand both the impact of the relationship between the father and child and the impact of the relationship between the father and mother on the father's relationship with the child.

The Impact of the Father-Mother Relationship on the Father-Child Relationship

Maureen Green makes the following statement regarding the rewards for the father who seeks to be actively involved with his children: "If a man can find a way to enjoy, as well as work at, the task of bringing up his children, he will not only make his own life more satisfying but guarantee satisfactions ahead for his children (1976, p. 180). Feigen-Fasteau (1976) said, "The rewards of taking care of a child are real, but essentially hard to hang on to" (p. 98).

The impact of the father-mother relationship on the father-child relationship are somewhat easier to define than the impact of the child on the father. LeMasters points out that it is

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TABLE 1.--Summary of Areas of Parenting Over Which Fathers May Have Influence

Lamb	Billler and Meredith	Tasch	Greif*
1. Sex Role Adaptation	1. Sexual Identity	1. Routine Daily Care and Safety	1. Routine Daily Care Safety.
2. Moral Development	2. Self Confidence and Achievement	2. Development of Motor Ability	2. Intellectual Development
3. Academic Performance	3. Nurture	3. Development of Intellectual Abilities	3. Physical Development
4. Adjustment and Interpersonal Interaction	4. Moral Development and Discipline	4. Recreational Activities	4. Recreational Activities
	5. Social and Sexual Relationships	5. Development of Social Standards and Control	5. Teaching the Child How to Behave
	6. Physical Growth and Body Pride	6. Emotional Development	6. Emotional Development
	7. Intelligence and Competence	7. Moral and Spiritual Development	7. Moral Development
	8. School and Education	8. Maintaining the Family Unit	8. Religious Development
	9. Work and Career Choice	9. Assignment of Chores and Allowance	9. Giving the Child a Feeling of Being Part of the Family
		10. Development of Artistic Interest	10. Financial Affairs and Decision Making
		11. Development of Personality Characteristics	
		12. Radio, Music, and Comics	
		13. Giving Material Objects and Presents	

*Areas used in development of research instrument as derived from Lamb, Biller and Meredith, and Tasch.

difficult for a man to be a good father if he is not a good husband. He states, "The father's parental role in the United States is peculiarly tied to the success or failure of the pair-bond between himself and his wife" (1970, p. 145). Lamb provides additional support with his statement:

...the father-child relationship is but one in a network within and outside the family, that the father's role is defined in part by his relationship with the child's mother, that the child's perception of the father is influenced by its mother's attitude toward him, and vice versa (1976, p. 34).

This final statement appears to be true for both married and divorced fathers.

Changes In The Parent-Child System Resulting From Divorce

The major change that occurs in the parent-child system following a divorce is the new living pattern for all concerned. New households are formed. This change has implications for the person with legal and physical custody and the way in which the child(ren) are financially supported.

Physical and Legal Responsibilities. In his article "The Six Stations of Divorce", Paul Bohannon (1976) distinguishes between physical and legal responsibility for children following a divorce. "Physical custody" is defined as the right of the parent to have the child live with him or her. With physical custody go the responsibilities of maintaining a home, feeding, clothing and caring for the child in general. If the parent is employed outside of the



home, the available time and human resources may be stretched to the limit. Buehler and Hogan (1980); Kohen, Brown and Feldberg (1979), Stack (1974), and Weiss (1979) all discuss the stress that results in the single-parent household when the work formerly accomplished by two adults must now be handled by one adult. On the other hand Kohen, Brown and Feldberg and Weiss also found that in some instances the mothers were relieved because they were no longer responsible for meeting specific needs of their former husbands. In addition they had greater feelings of being in control of their own lives.

Although the trend toward joint custody--a form of custody in which both parents share legal and possibly physical custody--is increasing, most children continue to live with their mother following a divorce. Much of the recent literature concludes that a joint custody arrangement or an arrangement similar to joint custody can be beneficial for parents and children (Abarbanel, 1970; Ahrons, 1980; Blood and Blood, 1970; Galper, 1978 and Roman, 1978). One benefit of joint custody (legal as well as physical) is that parents may share the burdens as well as the rewards of caring for and nurturing a child.

"Legal custody" is defined as the right of the parent to make decisions about the lifestyle of the child as well as educational, recreational, and cultural choices. The parent with sole legal custody may or may not choose to involve the other parent in these decisions.



Kohen, Brown and Feldberg (1979) conducted a study of 30 divorced mothers in the Boston area. They found that these women felt both relieved and burdened in having sole responsibility for the lives of their children. However, even those mothers who felt that having sole responsibility for their children was somewhat of a burden did not indicate a desire to share this responsibility with the father.

If the feelings of the Boston mothers are typical, the rights of the parent who has neither physical nor legal custody are generally limited to the right to visit the child at reasonable times. There are varying viewpoints on what rights the non-custodial parent should have. Galper (1978), Roman (1978) and Stack (1976) are among the growing number of researchers and practitioners who advocate joint custody as a means of facilitating a continuing relationship between the child and both parents following a divorce. However, many clinicians, attorneys and judges continue to be skeptical with regard to the workability of joint custody and whether or not such an arrangement is truly beneficial for children. In their influential book, Beyond The Best Interests of the Child, Goldstein, Freud and Solnit state:

Once it is determined who will be the custodial parent, it is that parent, (not the court), who must decide under what conditions he or she wishes to raise the child. Thus, the non-custodial parent should have no legally enforceable right to visit the child, and the custodial parent should have the right to decide whether it is desirable for the child to have such visits (1973, p. 38).

Roman (1978) perceives that a relationship between custody and economics exists. Although not referring to the payment of child

support, per se, he is of the opinion that many property settlements award the parent with greater control over the children, a smaller "slice" of the marital economic pie. This pattern in divorce settlements is one factor in the reduced economic status of divorced mothers with custody.

Financial Situation Following Divorce

Situation of the Mother. Studies by Bane and Hoffman indicate that divorced mothers are usually less well off financially following a divorce than when they were married (unless the husband was a poor provider). Bane (1976) stated that one reason for the economic slide is that even those women who were employed during the marriage are likely to have lower incomes because two households must be supported by the income that formerly supported one household. In addition the earned income of women has always been lower than that of men because of irregular labor force participation and work in lower paying occupations (Levitin, 1981). Hoffman (1977) stated that women's incomes decrease in spite of alimony and child support. Child support, even when it is paid, does not compensate for the actual costs of childrearing.

Child Support. Divorced women may receive a portion of their income from their former husbands in the form of alimony, child support, or both. Child support is defined as a transfer of money from the non-custodial parent to the custodial parent in order to meet the expenses of rearing a child. Bohannon feels it is based on the



principle that "as long as he is able to do so, the responsibility for rearing children lies with the father". There is a trend to view childrearing costs as a joint responsibility, with each parent contributing proportionately (Melson, 1979). The actual amount may be set by the court or it may be negotiated by the divorcing parents. The payment of child support is legally enforceable via garnishment or court order. In a few jurisdictions a man might be jailed if he refuses to pay, but few states resort to this tactic.¹

Alimony like child support is awarded on the basis of a court order. The idea behind alimony is that the husband is obligated to help support his ex-wife. Although alimony may be granted to the husband in some instances, the frequency with which this occurs is relatively low. In addition as women's roles have changed so that women are increasingly expected to support themselves following a divorce, the frequency with which alimony is granted is declining. When alimony is granted, it may be temporary to allow a period of rehabilitation. For example the woman who has been a homemaker

¹Michigan does have a mechanism for enforcing the payment of child support. The Friend of the Court System is responsible for the collection of child support and transferring the payment to the custodial parent. David Chambers' empirical study of the Michigan Friend of the Court system found that the degree to which the Friend of the Court exercises its authority to enforce the payment of child support varies from county to county.

A second study In the Best Interests of the Child: A Study On The Friend Of The Court In Michigan completed by the Michigan Women's Commission in 1979 also found that enforcement varies from county to county. Both studies found that Genesee County was the most effective in collecting child support. Genesee County has a collection rate of 80 percent. Ingham County was not explicitly discussed in either of these studies.

may be granted temporary alimony in order to return to school to prepare herself for employment.

Judith Brown Greif (1976) found that 92% of the 40 divorced fathers in her study did make child support payments. She briefly discussed their feelings about child support in a general way but did not relate attitudes toward child support to other aspects of the father-child relationship.

In their study of the post-divorce adjustment of children over the five year period following the divorce of their parents, Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) found that 68% of the fathers paid regularly and only 13% were totally delinquent. They found that there was a relationship between the emotional stability of the father and the payment of child support but did not discuss the relationship between regular child support payments and involvement with the child.

Several studies including those by Coletta (1979), Desimone-Luis, Mahoney and Hunt (1979) and Kelly and Wallerstein (1980) indicate the need for regular, adequate child support payments. Kelly and Wallerstein found that insufficient income or decreased economic resources of the custodial mother had a direct relationship to the adjustment problems of the children when the parents divorced. Coletta (1979) studied 72 mothers (both married and divorced). She found that there were no significant differences in childrearing practices between the two groups except when income was taken into consideration. In a similar study on the adjustment of children to

divorce, Desimone-Luis, Mahoney and Hunt (1979) asked the parents of 25 children between the age of seven and thirteen to complete a behavioral checklist. Five children received "deviant" ratings from their parents. Each of these children lived in a household where income declined at least 50 percent following the divorce.

In summary not one study reviewed indicated that divorced mothers heading households were able to make ends meet without seriously reducing their pre-divorce level of living unless they received child support payments. This was true even in situations where the mother had income from employment. The fact that not all fathers pay with regularity can be gleaned from census data as well as data obtained from research on various aspects of divorce adjustment. While the reasons for the absence of payments are not totally clear, changes that occur in the father-mother and father-child relationship after divorce may provide some clue.

Post-Divorce Role of the Non-Custodial Father

Access and Visitation. The non-custodial father's access to his children following a divorce is limited by the visitation agreement decided upon in the pre-divorce negotiations. Variations from the agreement or additional time with the children are subject to the mother's willingness to be flexible on access and visitation. Much of the literature indicates that mothers are often unwilling to be flexible although it may be to their benefit.

Weiss (1975) found that custodial mothers generally felt that visitation limited their control over the children. Because such a limitation of control is a contradiction of the meaning of custody some custodial parents try to impose rules and limitations regarding visitation. In this situation the non-custodial father might react by limiting his investment in the children.

Fulton (1979) conducted a study involving 250 fathers and 310 mothers. Ninety-four of the mothers had custody and were awarded child support. By the end of the second year following the divorce only 48 percent of the mothers received the amount of money awarded. Only 20 percent of the non-custodial parents visited regularly following the divorce. However, 40 percent of the custodial mothers refused to let their former husbands see the children at least once. Refusal to allow visitation was more for punitive reasons than because the children wished otherwise or because the mothers were concerned about the child's well being. Most of the custodial parents did not involve their former spouse in matters concerning the children. These parents gave the impression that they did not intend to involve the non-custodial parent.

Weiss (1978) found that while custodial parents acknowledge the importance of the non-custodial parent's visits, their behavior following divorce is often incongruent with what they believe is important. These findings were based upon experiences with divorced parents in counseling.

Robert Weiss (1979) provides an accurate description of the visitation problem. He stated, "...most custodial parents find non-custodial parents more nearly a burden than a resource" (p. 142). He adds:

What is good for the children is not necessarily good for the mother.

She wants a situation in which the father has only the most restricted access to the family. But this produces a conflict of interest between the mother and the children, for the children want contact with the father to be as little restrained as possible (p. 159).

The Father's Felt Need For A Continuing Relationship With The Children

Much of the literature indicates that the salient problem for women following divorce is the need to adjust to fewer economic resources. For men the salient problem is coping with limited access to their children. Jessie Bernard (1979) states that the social and economic costs of divorce are higher for women while the psychological costs are higher for men.

One of the findings in Hetherington, Cox and Cox's (1976) study on the impact of divorce on pre-school age children and their parents was the fathers' pervasive concern over the sense of the loss of their children. The fathers in this study felt a lack of identity, rootlessness and complained of a lack of structure in their lives.

Dominic and Schlesinger (1980) reported that the nine non-custodial fathers in their study indicated that paying child support was psychologically important because it gave them a feeling of

providing for their children. Greif (1976) found that 75 percent of the 40 fathers in her study felt the same way.

Gersick (1979) compared fathers who had custody with fathers who did not have custody. He found that those without custody felt a sense of loneliness and abandonment. These fathers felt that home was where their children were. Rosenthal and Keshet (1978) found that fathers who spent more time with their children were better able to work out the crisis issues of divorce.

Although most of the findings on the impact of divorce on fathers are based on small samples, there is a growing body of evidence that divorced fathers do care about their children and desire to maintain a relationship with them even though the costs of maintaining such a relationship may be high. Moore and Davenport (1979) identify two needs of children following a divorce: a stable supportive environment, and attachment bonds with both parents. They point out that the mother defends the first need and the father the second. In the next section the benefits for the children and, to some extent, the mother when there is a close relationship with the father will be discussed.

The Benefits For Children When A Relationship is Maintained

Hess and Camara (1979) studied children from divorced and intact families. They found that the negative effects of divorce were greatly mitigated when a positive relationship with both parents was maintained. The child's relationship with the non-custodial



parent was as important as the continuing relationship with the mother.

The Kelly and Wallerstein (1980) study found that children who made the most satisfactory adjustment to the divorce situation had frequent contact with their fathers. They also found that it was possible for close relationships to develop even when the pre-divorce relationship between father and child was not a close relationship. Kelly and Wallerstein also indicate that the age and sex of the child has bearing on the closeness of the father-child relationship following the divorce.

Hetherington, Cox and Cox (1976) found that frequent father contact was associated with both the positive adjustment of the child and positive interaction between the mother and the child. Rosen (1976) interviewed 92 children between the ages of 9 and 28 whose parents had divorced six to ten years prior to the study. The data indicated that the children preferred frequent contact with the non-custodial parent and felt more satisfied when access to the father was not regulated by the mother.

Blood and Blood (1979) discussed the benefits of a post-divorce restructuring of the family that is similar to joint custody if not joint custody. They indicate that even though joint custody is based upon the concept of equal sharing of the responsibilities for childrearing--including the sharing of financial responsibility--there may be occasions when a mother with low income is in need of financial assistance from a higher income father. In this situation

the father is more apt to provide child support regularly if he does not feel deprived of his role as father.

Summary

The review of literature related to the topic of the post-divorce family system identified several areas where additional information is needed. Much of the research on the impact of divorce is concerned with the impact on the mother-child unit. While there is a growing concern with the impact of divorce on the father, research in this area as well as that on the mother and/or children is based on the perception of that parent. That is research is either from the perspective of the mother or the father. This study addressed the father-child relationship using the perceptions of both parents. Hypotheses were developed to test whether mothers and fathers had different perceptions of the father's post-divorce influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of childrearing. In addition the regularity of child support payments was used as an additional variable in exploring this relationship.



CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

The procedures used in this study have been divided into five parts: selection of the sample and data collection, description of the sample, selection and description of the instruments, statement of research hypotheses and data analysis.

Selection of Participants and Data Collection

Twenty pairs of custodial mothers and their former husbands who met the criteria for participation and who were willing to participate were selected for the study. All of the participants resided in a three-county area in mid-Michigan (Ingham, Eaton and Clinton Counties). The criteria for participation were: a legal decree of divorce; at least one child who was no younger than three years of age at the time of the separation and no older than 14 at the time of the interview; the mother not be remarried and the father living within a 60 mile radius of the mother's home and available to participate in the study.

The original intent was to identify potential participants through records maintained by the Ingham County Circuit Court. This method was not feasible because the court's recordkeeping system did not provide information that identified individuals who



met the research criteria. Also addresses on court records were the addresses at the time the individuals filed for divorce rather than current addresses. For these reasons it was necessary to obtain the sample by other methods.

Contacts were made with single parent/single adult social and support groups, the Women's Resource Center at the local university and community college, extension home economists in the three counties, three attorneys and three counselors. Three area school districts were contacted and asked to place announcements in the bulletins that were sent home to parents of elementary school children and to other appropriate groups within the school district. Colleagues of the researcher suggested potential participants. Announcements were placed in apartment complexes and shopping centers throughout the area. An advertisement was placed in the personal column of the local newspaper. Some individuals were also able to suggest others who might be willing to participate.²

A total of 73 potential families were obtained from these sources. Of these 73 families, 20 families met the criteria and were willing to participate. The sample, a convenience sample,

²A recently published study by Keshet and Rosenthal (1981) discussed the difficulty in obtaining samples of divorced fathers for research purposes. Although their study was conducted in the Boston-Cambridge area and limited to fathers whose children were seven years of age or younger, court records, day care centers and attorneys were not productive sources of participants. Advertisements and individual contacts were the primary sources of data.



consisted of 20 pairs of divorced mothers and their former husbands³ (see Tables 29, 30 and 31 in Appendix B for a summary of sample selection procedures).

The researcher attended meetings of single parent/single adult organizations and explained the nature of the study. Those in attendance who considered participating were given information forms which they were asked to complete and return to the researcher either at the meeting or by mail if they wished to think about it further. Individuals who contacted the researcher after seeing a notice were sent information forms which they were asked to complete and return to the researcher if they chose to participate. Self addressed, stamped envelopes were provided for mail returns.

Potential participants suggested by colleagues were contacted in one of two ways. In some instances the intermediary provided the letter describing the study and asked the individual to return it to the researcher. In other instances the intermediary provided the name and the researcher contacted the individual by phone to determine if the participation criteria were met and if there was a willingness to participate. Participants were given the option

³Three families indicated that some type of joint custody arrangement existed but that the father was not considered to be the primary parent. A transfer of money from father to mother occurred in two families. The third family with a joint custody arrangement indicated that the children lived primarily with the mother.

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of contacting their former spouses or having the researcher make this contact.⁴

The Interview

Interviews were generally held at the home of the participant. However five fathers and one mother asked the researcher to come to their place of work. One father and one mother asked to come to the researcher's office. One father and one mother suggested that the interview take place over lunch in a restaurant. In all, ten of the 40 interviews took place outside of the participant's home.

At the start of the interview the purpose of the study was reviewed with each participant. Those who had not signed the consent form were asked to do so. In some instances children were present. Participants were reminded that they would be discussing issues pertaining to the children and given the option of having the children remain in the room or leaving. Some did ask the children to go into another room or outside; others indicated that the children's presence did not bother them. The presence of the children did not appear to affect the quality of the answers. (Mothers who allowed children to be present indicated that there was little they had not said to the children on the issues under discussion.) However when children were present they made demands on the parent that interrupted the interview. The telephone was

⁴McLanahan, Wedemeyer and Adelberg (1981) obtained a sample of 45 divorced mothers using similar methods. They obtained the names of 20 divorced mothers through a variety of sources. These 20 mothers were able to provide additional names of mothers whom they knew through work, the neighborhood or social activities.

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also a frequent interruption during the home interviews. Those interviews that took place in an office setting took less time and had fewer interruptions than the home interviews.

The interviews took place during the five month period between April and September of 1981. The mean interview time for fathers was 74.5 minutes with a range of 50 minutes to two hours. The mean interview time for mothers was 88.5 minutes with a range of 70 minutes to two hours.

Description of the Sample

The sample included 40 individuals. A group of twenty divorced mothers with custody of at least one child no younger than three years of age at the time of separation and no older than fourteen years of age at the time of the interview and a group of non-custodial fathers, the former husbands of the mothers.

The 20 participating families included a total of 43 children. No family had more than three children. Three families had one child, 11 families had two children and six families had three children. Not all of the children in each family were considered in the study. One of the requirements for participation was that the children under consideration were no younger than three years of age at the time of the separation and no older than 14 at the time of the interview. Each child under consideration was required to live primarily with the mother or not primarily with their father in a situation where joint custody existed. Thus the number of children in each family considered in the study differs from the total number of children in each family (see Table 2).

TABLE 2.--Family Size and Number of Children Participating in the Study.

Total Family Size	No. of Families	%
1 Child	3	15
2 Children	11	55
3 Children	<u>6</u>	<u>30</u>
	20	100

No. of Children In Study	No. of Families	%
1	8	40
2	10	50
3	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>
	20	100

Age of Children

The children in the participating families were primarily preschoolers or in the early elementary grades at the time their parents separated. The mean age of the children at the time their parents separated was 7.25 years for the first child, 5.33 years for the second child, and 3.5 years for the youngest child in each family. The mean age of the children at the time of the interview was 11.1 years, 9.5 years, and 7.5 years (see Table 3 for a summary of the ages of the children at the time their parents separated and at the time of the interview).

Ages of Parents At The Time of the Interview

The fathers who participated in the study were slightly older than their former wives. The mean age of the fathers was 38.7 years; the mean age of the mothers was 35.7 years. Two mothers and two fathers were under 30 at the time of the interview. Five mothers and seven fathers were 40 years of age or older at the time of the interview (see Table 4 for a summary of the age of the parents).

Education of the Parents

The level of education completed by the fathers was slightly higher than that completed by the mothers. It should be noted that all of the participants completed high school. This sample was over-representative of individuals with higher levels of education. Over 50 percent of the mothers and fathers were college graduates.



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TABLE 3.--Ages of Children at Time of Separation and at Time of Interview.

Age of Children at Time of Separation	Child 1		Child 2		Child 3	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
3 - 4	3	15	4	33.3	2	100
5 - 7	5	25	7	0		
8 - 9	10	50	0	58.3		
10 - 12	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>18.3</u>		
Total	20	100%	12	100%	2	100%

Age of Children at Time of Interview	Child 1		Child 2		Child 3	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
6 - 8	3	15	4	33.3	2	100
9 - 11	7	35	6	50.0	-	-
12 - 14	<u>10</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>16.7</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total	20	100	12	100	2	100

Mean Age of Child at Time of Interview

Child 1 11.1 years

Child 2 9.5 years

Child 3 7.5 years

TABLE 4.--Ages of the Parents at Time of Interview (N = 40).

Age	Mothers (N = 20)		Fathers (N = 20)	
	No.	%	No.	%
Under 30	2	10	2	10
30 - 34	5	25	3	15
35 - 39	8	40	8	40
40 - 44	5	25	5	25
over 45	<u>-</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>
Total	20	100	20	100

Mean Age				
Mothers	35.7 years			
Fathers	37.8 years			

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Nationally, 27 percent of the men and 21 percent of the women between 25 and 34 completed college, 25 percent of the men and 16 percent of the women between the ages of 35 and 44 are college graduates, 20 percent of the men and 11 percent of the women between 45 and 54 are college graduates (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1980) (see Table 5).

TABLE 5.--Level of Education Completed by Mothers and Fathers.

Level	Mothers (N = 20)		Fathers (N = 20)	
	No.	%	No.	%
12 years of H.S.	1	5	3	15
1 - 3 years college, business or technical school	8	40	3	15
4 years college	3	15	5	25
Post-Bachelor work	4	20	1	5
Master's Degree	2	10	2	10
Post Master's course work	1	5	2	10
Ph.D., Ed.	1	5	2	10
Professional Degree	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>
Total	20	100	20	100

Income

Household incomes were reported by both the mothers and fathers. The fathers' incomes were more widely distributed than the



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mothers. Mothers included child support, alimony and welfare in reporting their incomes. Fathers who were remarried included the income of their present wives.

The sample was over representative of families in higher income brackets. Over 65 percent of the mothers reported total household incomes of at least \$15,000 and 70 percent of the fathers reported household incomes of \$25,000 or more. This differs somewhat from the population. Nationally, 33 percent of the families headed by white females have household incomes over \$5,000 and 40 percent of the white households including a husband and wife have reported incomes over \$25,000 (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1980). Nationally in 1980 36.7 percent of all white families had incomes over \$25,000. In this sample 37.5 percent had incomes over \$25,000. Nationally 75% of the white households headed by women reported incomes under \$15,000, while only 40 percent of the mothers in this sample had incomes under \$15,000 (see Table 6 for a summary of the household incomes of the sample mothers and fathers).

Occupations

The sample was not representative of occupations as present in the population. There was an over-representation in the managerial/technical occupations and under-representation in the unskilled labor and service worker jobs. Nationally 23 percent of employed women are employed in professional jobs, (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1980) and 28 percent of employed men are employed in managerial or



TABLE 6.--Total Household Incomes of Mothers and Fathers.

Level	Mothers (N = 20)		Fathers (N = 20)	
	No.	%	No.	%
Under \$5,000	2	10	-	-
\$ 5,000 - \$ 9,999	1	5	1	5
\$10,000 - \$14,999	5	25	1	5
\$15,000 - \$24,999	11	55	3	15
\$25,000 - \$29,999*	1	5	2	10
\$30,000 - \$39,999*	-	-	6	30
\$40,000 - \$49,999*	-	-	3	15
Over \$50,000	-	-	3	15
Not reported	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>
Total	20	100	20	100

*Census reports combine these three categories.

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professional jobs. Sixty percent of the mothers and 65 percent of the fathers in the sample were employed in professional and managerial positions (see Table 7 for a summary of the occupational status of the mothers and fathers).

Marital Status of Fathers

Twelve of the 20 fathers had not remarried at the time of the interview. Of the eight fathers who were remarried, four had natural children with their present wives. Two fathers had stepchildren in their present marriages, but had no children with their present wives.

Time Lapse Since Separation

The number of years separated ranged from two to eight years. Although there was some variation in the parents reports, the largest proportion of families had been separated for approximately four years (see Table 8).

Selection and Description of the Instrument

Careful consideration was given to the fact that participants would be sensitive to the fact that their former spouse was also being interviewed. It was also thought that some questions might cause discomfort for one or both parents. On the basis of these considerations an instrument that focuses primarily on the father's influence over the upbringing of the children was selected.

The interview schedule developed by Judith Brown Greif for her research on the relationship of divorced fathers and their

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TABLE 7.--Occupational Status of the Mothers and Fathers

Occupation Type	Mothers (N = 20)		Fathers (N = 20)	
	No.	%	No.	%
Professional	10	50	12	60
Manager	2	10	2	10
Salesworker	-	-	1	5
Clerical	5	25	2	10
Skilled Craftsmen	-	-	3	15
Student	2	10	-	-
Unemployed	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total	20	100	20	100



TABLE 8.--Time Lapse Since Separation As Reported by Each Parent

No. of Years	Mothers (N = 20)		Fathers (N = 20)	
	No.	%	No.	%
2	4	20	4	20
3	4	20	4	20
4	6	30	5	25
5	3	15	4	20
6	2	10	2	10
7	-	-	-	-
8	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>
Total	20	100	20	100

Mean:

Mothers 3.95 years

Fathers 4.0 years

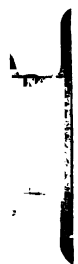
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children was selected (see Appendix A for the complete instrument). Permission was obtained from Greif to use this instrument. The four parts of this instrument will be discussed as they relate to the research questions.

Part I: Part I of the interview schedule was designed to elicit descriptive information regarding the number, sex and age of the children, the living and visitation arrangements and the amount of contact the father had with the children. Contact was defined as the number of letters exchanged, the number of phone calls and the number of visits that occurred between the father and each child in a typical month. Greif devised a weight scale to derive a total contact score. Letters received the lowest number of points and visits the highest. Contact scores could range from zero to 47 (see Appendix A for the derivations of the contact score).

Part II: This section of the interview schedule was designed to measure the parents' perceptions of change in the fathers' influence over ten aspects of parenting as a result of the divorce as well as both parents' satisfaction with this change in each of the ten areas of influence that make up the "father" role. The following questions were asked:

a) Just prior to the separation, do you feel you had influence in this area of your child's growth and development? (Yes - No)



- b) If yes, how much influence do you feel you had?
(Very High - High - Medium - Low - Very Low)
- c) Do you feel you have influence in this area now?
(Yes - No)
- d) If yes, how much influence do you feel you have now?
(Very High - High - Medium - Low - Very Low)
- e) How do you feel about that change (no change).
(Positive - Neutral - Negative)
- f) Why do you feel that way?

Parts "a" through "e" provided a common base of information. Part "f" allowed for greater depth in interpreting the answer to Part "a" through "f". The question was repeated for each aspect of parenting and two or three examples were given to clarify the meaning of each aspect of fathering. A total "satisfaction score" was derived by summing each parent's response to Part "e" for each aspect of the ten aspects of parenting. A "positive" response equalled one point, a "neutral" response equalled two points and a "negative" response equalled three points. Satisfaction scores could range from ten signifying "high satisfaction" to fifty signifying "high dissatisfaction".

Part III: This section was designed to measure the importance placed upon the influence of the father in each of the ten aspects of parenting. Each parent was asked to rate each area of parenting on a scale of one to five ("of

very high importance", "of high importance", "of medium importance", "of little importance", "of very little importance"). A individual importance score (1-5) was derived for each area and a total importance score (10-50) was calculated. This section of the interview schedule questionnaire was completed in writing by each participant.

Part IV: This section examined various aspects of the divorce process. Each parent was asked whether the issues of custody, visitation, living arrangement, child support and alimony were resolved mutually, with the assistance or negotiated by the attorneys, or by court action. In addition participants were asked whether the attorneys and/or court system helped or hindered the fathers relationship with the children. Each parent was also asked to indicate what he/she felt were the most positive and negative aspects of the fathers' post-divorce relationship with the children and the positive and negative aspects of their own post-divorce relationship with their former spouse. Questions pertaining to the regularity of support, the perceived general adequacy of child support and the perceived use of the mothers' own resources in meeting the needs of the children were asked at this point in the interview. Demographic information regarding the parents' age, income and religious affiliation was requested at this point in the interview.

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Validity and Reliability. Greif (1977) established content, construct and face validity for the instrument. She tested Parts II and III of the instrument for reliability by use of the test-retest method. Responses to Part II were found to be reliable 92.9% within one degree of difference and Part III 96% reliable to one degree of difference (in testing for reliability Greif considered responses the same if the respondent deviated by no more than one answer on the continuum "very high", "high", "medium", "low" and "very low").

Because Greif used only fathers in her research, she included only fathers when testing for reliability. Because mothers were included in the current research, the reliability of the instrument with mothers was established by means of the test-retest method. Spearman Rho Rank Order Correlation Coefficients were computed for Parts II and III of the interview. The correlation Coefficient for Part II was .714 and for Part III was .663.⁵

Human Subject Approval

Approval was received from the Michigan State University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) before families were contacted to participate in the study. Consent forms for use of human subjects are in Appendix C.

⁵The differences between the reliability coefficients in Greif's study and in the current study can be explained by two factors. In the current study responses were considered to be correct only if the same response was given at both administrations. In addition three of the five mothers who participated in the reliability study indicated that they might have been responding to stressful events that had occurred during the week between the first and second administration of the instrument.

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Research Hypotheses

In this section each of the twelve hypotheses tested is stated in the null and alternative forms.

Hypothesis 1:

H0: Null Hypothesis

Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers do not differ in their reports of the amount of contact the father has with the children.

H1: Alternative Hypothesis

Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers differ in their reports of the amount of contact the father has with the children.

Hypothesis 2

H0: Null Hypothesis

Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers do not differ in their reports of the degree of influence the father has over the physical, social and psychological aspects of childrearing.

H1: Alternative Hypothesis

Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers differ in their reports of the degree of influence the father has over the physical, social and psychological aspects of childrearing.

Hypothesis 3

H0: Null Hypothesis

Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers do not differ in their reports of the regularity of child support payments.

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HI: Alternative Hypothesis

Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers will differ in their reports of the regularity of child support payments.

Hypothesis 4H0: Null Hypothesis

Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers do not differ in their perception of the importance of the fathers influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.

HI: Alternative Hypothesis

Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers differ in their perception of the importance of the fathers influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.

Hypothesis 5H0: Null Hypothesis

Fathers who make regular child support payments do not differ from fathers who do not make regular child support payments in the amount of contact they have with their children.

HI: Alternative Hypothesis

Fathers who make regular child support payments differ from fathers who do not make regular child support payments in the amount of contact they have with their children.

Hypothesis 6H0: Null Hypothesis

Mothers who receive regular child support payments and mothers who do not receive regular child support payments do not differ in their perceptions of the amount of influence the father has in physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.



HI: Alternative Hypothesis

Mothers who receive regular child support payments and mothers who do not receive regular child support payments differ in their perceptions of the amount of influence the father has in physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.

Hypothesis 7H0: Null Hypothesis

Fathers who make regular child support payments and fathers who do not make regular child support payments do not differ in their perception of the amount of influence they have over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.

HI: Alternative Hypothesis

Fathers who make regular child support payments and fathers who do not make regular child support payments will differ in their perception of the amount of influence they have over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.

Hypothesis 8H0: Null Hypothesis

Fathers who make regular child support payments do not differ from fathers who do not make regular child support payments in their perceptions of the importance of a father's influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.

HI: Alternative Hypothesis

Fathers who make regular child support payments differ from fathers who do not make regular child support payments in their perceptions of the importance of a father's influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.

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Hypothesis 9H0: Null Hypothesis

Mother's who do not receive regular child support payments and mothers who do receive regular child support payments, do not differ on the perceived importance of the father's influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.

HI: Alternative Hypothesis

Mother's who do not receive regular child support payments and mothers who do receive regular child support payments, differ on the perceived importance of the father's influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.

Hypothesis 10H0: Null Hypothesis

Fathers who have not made regular child support payments do not differ in their recognition of the mother's use of her own resources from fathers who have made regular child support payments.

HI: Alternative Hypothesis

Fathers who have not made regular child support payments differ in their recognition of the mother's use of her own resources from fathers who have made regular child support payments.

Hypothesis 11H0: Null Hypothesis

Fathers do not perceive changes in their influence over the ten aspects of parenting at the current time as compared to before the separation.

HI: Alternative Hypothesis

Fathers perceive changes in their influence over the ten aspects of parenting at the current time as compared to before the separation.

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Hypothesis 12H0: Null Hypothesis

Mothers do not perceive changes in their perceptions in the father's influence over the ten aspects of parenting at the current time as compared to before the separation.

H1: Alternative Hypothesis

Mothers perceive changes in their perceptions in the father's influence over the ten aspects of parenting at the current time as compared to before the separation.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from all the participants were key punched on computer cards and verified with the aid of staff consultants in the Office of Research Consultation (ORC) at Michigan State University. The Northwestern University Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) computer program was used in some of the data analysis.

The Statistical tests used in this study included the chi-square test, Fisher's exact test, Mann Whitney test and the Wilcoxin test. These non-parametric tests were selected because the data collected were ordinal in nature; hence parametric tests were not appropriate measures for this study.

Chi-square is a test of statistical significance which helps to determine whether a systematic relationship exists between two variables. The cell frequencies which would be expected if there were no relationship present between the two variables is compared to the actual frequencies found in the contingency table. When there are large discrepancies between the expected and actual

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frequencies, the value of chi-square increases. Large values of chi-square indicate that some systematic relationship exists between the two variables under consideration (Nie, et al, 1975). While the chi-square test can be performed with tables of any number of cells, the small sample in this particular study required the use of two by two tables in order to avoid empty cells.

When 2 x 2 tables are used, the Fisher's exact test is computed to obtain exact significance levels. The formula used is

$$\frac{(F(., 1)) (F(., 2))}{(F(1, 1)) (f(1, 2))} \\ (F^N(1, 1))$$

to calculate the probability of the observed 2 x 2 table and the probability of all other 2 x 2 tables which display more association between the two variables than the observed table (Midas, 1976, p. 181).

The chi-square test was used to test Hypothesis 3; the Fisher Exact test was used to test Hypothesis 10.

The Mann-Whitney test is a non-parametric test which indicates if the scores in one population, N_A are higher than the scores in another, N_B . The procedure by which this test is carried out is as follows:

1. Designate the smaller group as N_1 and the larger group as N_2 .
2. Rank all of the scores in the combined sample. Scores will range from 1 to $N_A + N_B$.

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3. Compute U_A and U_B ; the smaller score is called U .
4. Determine whether the computed U is smaller than the critical value of U for a sample size of N_1/N_2 at the selected level of significance (Terrace, 1971).

The Mann Whitney test was used to test Hypotheses 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9.

The Wilcoxin test is used with matched scores to test whether the scores in one set are higher than the scores of another. In order to perform the Wilcoxin test, the difference between each pair of matched scores is computed by subtracting each score in the second group from the corresponding score in the first group. The differences (d_i) are ranked and given the sign of d_i (+ or -). Each set of signed ranks is summed. T is the smaller sum of the like-signed ranks.

The obtained T is compared to the critical value of N at the selected level of significance. If the obtained T is less than the critical value H_0 is rejected. The critical value for all statistical tests was set at $\alpha = .10$. The Wilcoxin test was used to test Hypotheses 1, 2, 4, 11 and 12 (see Table 9 for a summary of statistics used to test each of the hypotheses).



TABLE 9.--Summary of Statistics Used In Testing Research Hypotheses.

Statistic	Hypothesis(es)
Chi-square	3
Fisher's exact test	10
Mann-Whitney test	5, 6, 7, 8, 9
Wilcoxin test	1, 2, 4, 11, 12

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of the study in three sections. The first section includes a discussion of the descriptive data related to the nature of the pre and post divorce situation of the families who participated in the study. The second section includes a discussion of the results of the statistical analysis for each hypothesis. The final section discusses responses to open-ended questions which addressed specific issues of concern in the study.

Descriptive Data

Contact Between Fathers and Children

A post-divorce contact score based on the number of visits, phone calls and letters that were exchanged between the fathers and children was derived for each father-child pair. The "contact score" was derived from three questions:

"How many times do you have contact with your child in an average month?"

By phone? _____

By letter? _____

By face to face visits? _____

Points were assigned for the number of phone calls, letters and

visits (see Appendix A, for Actual Contact Scale). Contact Scores could range from "0" to "47". A contact score of "0" indicated that no phone calls, no letters and less than two visits occurred in a typical month. A score of "47" indicated that at least 20 phone calls, three or four letters and 15 visits occurred in a typical month. Contact scores were derived from the responses of both the mothers and fathers.

Scores were derived for each father-child relationship. In families with more than one child an average score was derived for the purpose of performing statistical tests. There was only a small discrepancy between the contact mean scores reported by the mothers and the mean scores reported by the fathers. The means reported by the mothers were 24 for the first child and 27 for the second child. The mean scores reported by the fathers were 28 for the first child and 30 for the second child. Both mothers and fathers reported mean contact scores of 15 for the third child; however only two families had three children in the study, thus the means are not representative of the entire sample (see Table 10). Over half of the mothers and the majority of the fathers reported contact scores of 21 or higher indicating that at least four visits and eight phone calls occurred in a typical month. While comparison data is not available, it does not appear that these fathers were isolated from their children. Responses to open-ended questions lend further support to this conclusion.

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TABLE 10.--Monthly Contact Scores for Each Child As Reported by Mothers and Fathers, Based on No. of Letters, Phone Calls and Visits by Non-Custodial Parent.

Scores	Child 1 N = 20				Child 2 N = 12				Child 3 N = 2			
	Mother		Father		Mother		Father		Mother		Father	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
0 - 10	1	5	1	5	1	8.3	1	8.3	1	.5	1	.5
11 - 15	2	10	2	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16 - 20	4	20	-	0	1	8.3	-	-	-	-	-	-
21 - 25	5	25	5	25	4	33.3	4	33.3	1	.5	1	.5
26 - 30	1	5	3	15	2	16.7	-	-	-	-	-	-
31 - 35	2	10	4	20	1	8.7	3	25.0	-	-	-	-
36 - 40	3	15	1	5	-	-	1	8.3	-	-	-	-
40+	1	5	4	20	3	.25	3	.25	-	-	-	-
Total	20	100	20	100	12	100	12	100	2	100	2	100
Range	9-42		0-45		9-45		9-45		9-21		9-21	
Mean	24		28		27		30		15		15	

Conflict

Each participant was asked to indicate the way in which five basic issues pertaining to the children were resolved prior to the finalization of the divorce. These issues were custody, child support, alimony, living arrangements and visitation. The possible responses were "mutual", "by the attorneys", or "through court action". The composite conflict score could range from "0" indicating that all issues were resolved mutually to "10" indicating that court action was required to resolve all of the issues.

The mean conflict score for both mothers and fathers was "2". The greatest degree of conflict occurred over the issue of child support. Seven mothers (35%) and nine fathers (15%) indicated that the involvement of the courts was necessary to resolve the child support issue. While child support was an issue of conflict for approximately 40 percent of the families, none of the families reported conflict over the alimony decision. No conclusion can really be drawn from those findings as only one respondent was awarded alimony and that was temporary alimony (see Table 11 for a summary of the way in which each of these five issues were resolved by the participating families). It appears that there was little or no conflict in the areas of alimony, custody and living arrangements and a moderate amount of conflict over visitation arrangements. The decision over the amount of child support caused the greatest amount of conflict for these families.

TABLE 11.--Resolution of Divorce Issues As Reported By Divorced Mothers and Fathers

	<u>Agreements on Amount of Child Support Payments</u>			
	<u>Mothers</u>		<u>Fathers</u>	
	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>%</u>
Mutual	8	40	9	45
Lawyer	3	15	4	20
Court Action	9	45	7	35
Total	20	100	20	100
<u>Alimony</u>				
Mutual	20	100	20	100
Lawyers	--	--	--	--
Court Action	--	--	--	--
Total	20	100	20	100
<u>Custody of Children</u>				
Mutual	16	80	15	75
Lawyers	4	20	3	15
Court Action	--	--	1	5
Other	--	--	1	5
Total	20	100	20	100
<u>Living Arrangement</u>				
Mutual	18	90	15	75
Lawyers	2	10	2	10
Court Action	--	--	2	10
Other	--	--	1	5
Total	20	100	20	100
<u>Non-Custodial Parents Visitation Arrangement</u>				
Mutual	13	65	13	65
Lawyers	4	20	1	5
Court Action	1	5	4	20
Other	2	10	2	10
Total	20	100	20	100
Mean Conflict Score	1.750		2.000	
Range	0-5		0-8	

Child Support

Each participant was asked two questions regarding the payment of child support and the regularity of child support payments.

The two questions were:

1. Do you (pay, receive) child support? Yes No
2. How regularly have (you, your former husband made these payments?

Has Never Missed a Payment

Misses or is late 1-3 payments per year

Misses or is late 4-6 payments per year

Misses or is late more than 6 payments per year

Nineteen of the 20 families indicated that the fathers were required to make child support payments. One family indicated that child support payments were not part of the divorce settlement; however the mother could not make ends meet without periodic financial assistance from the father.

Regularity of child support payments was not a problem for 16 (80%) of the 20 families. These mothers and fathers indicated that payments had always been made or received within a few days of the due date. With the exception of the one family where payments were not a part of the divorce agreement, the other mothers indicated that as many as six payments per year were late or missing. The fathers' statements were congruent with those of the mothers.

It should be noted that the Friend of the Court in the county where most of the families lived does make an effort to enforce regular payments. It should also be noted that the Friend of the

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Court indicated that regularity of child support payments is generally not a problem when fathers are employed or do not have recurring periods of unemployment. All of the fathers in this study had stable employment records. (Seventeen of the twenty mothers were employed at the time of the study. All but four had stable employment records. Three of these four mothers had been in school.)

The families in this sample differ somewhat from the national sample with regard to the number of divorced mothers who were awarded child support and those who actually receive it. Ninety-five percent of the mothers were awarded child support as compared to 79.8% of the currently divorced mothers in the national sample. The sample differs slightly from the national sample with regard to actual receipt of child support payments. Eighty percent of the mothers in the sample received all of their payments on time; 73.3 percent of the currently divorced mothers in the national sample actually received child support payments (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1980). Sixteen (80 percent) of the mothers in the study received the full amount of support awarded as compared to 49 percent in the national sample.

In summary, respondents in this study were more likely to have been awarded child support and to be receiving it regularly than is true of the population as a whole. However they were fairly typical of mothers who receive child support regularly.

Alimony

To elicit the response about alimony, the following questions were asked. Each participant was asked the question:

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"Do you pay/receive alimony?" Yes No

"How do you feel about that?" Positive Neutral Negative

None of the fathers indicated that they were paying or had ever paid alimony. (It should be noted that two mothers indicated that they were receiving or had received alimony on a temporary basis.) All 20 fathers felt positively that they did not pay alimony. In general they saw no reason to provide financial support for their former wives.

Eight mothers felt positively about not receiving alimony or having been awarded alimony only for rehabilitative purposes. Ten mothers reported neutral feelings with regard to not receiving alimony. Two mothers had somewhat negative feelings. One of these two mothers was no different from the majority of the participants with regard to age, income, or occupational level. The second mother at the time of her divorce was younger than the majority of the mothers, had less education and had very small children. Her income was also lower than the median income of the participants in the study. This mother indicated that rehabilitative alimony should be part of the system.

Alimony was not a cause of concern for most of the parents in this study. None of the fathers felt that it was incumbent upon them to pay alimony and the majority of mothers preferred not to receive it.

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Perceived Adequacy of
Financial Support

In order to determine whether the participants believed that child support payments were adequate the following questions were asked:

1. To what extent do you believe child support payments cover the costs of childrearing?
2. To what extent do you believe child support payments should cover the costs of childrearing?

Possible responses to both questions were:

100 percent

more than 75 percent, but less than 100 percent

more than 50 percent but less than 75 percent

50 percent

more than 25 percent but less than 50 percent

less than 25 percent.

Although the majority of the mothers and fathers indicated that child support payments were always on time, there was less agreement about the perceived adequacy of child support payments as well as the extent to which these parents believed child support payments should cover the costs of childrearing.

Eleven mothers (55%) indicated that child support payments covered less than half of the expenses incurred in rearing children. Eleven mothers also indicated that child support payments should cover more than half of the costs of childrearing given the fact that the fathers usually had higher incomes. All 20 fathers indicated that they believed that their child support payments covered

50 percent of more of the childrearing expenses. Half of the fathers (10) indicated that they felt child support payments should cover exactly one half of the costs of childrearing. It should be noted that both mothers and fathers indicated that the 50 percent figure was equitable only when incomes were equal (see Table 12 for a summary of the participants perceptions of the adequacy of actual child support payments and the extent to which they believed child support payments should cover the costs of childrearing).

Generally the fathers' and mothers' perceptions of each parent's role in financial support were similar. However, fathers tended to underestimate the actual costs of raising children and how much their payments actually covered as compared to mothers estimates of what proportion of the costs were actually covered.

Perceived Importance of Father's Influence

In order to determine the degree to which the participants considered it important that the father influence the growth and development of their children, the following set of questions was asked:

Please consider how important you consider each of these areas

Influencing the ROUTINE DAILY CARE AND SAFETY of the child.

Influencing the INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT of the child.

Influencing the PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT of the child.

Influencing the RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES of the child.

TABLE 12.--Perceived and Desired Adequacy of Child Support Payments
As Reported By Divorced Mothers and Fathers

Percent of Expenses	Proportion of Expenses Covered				Proportion of Expenses Desired			
	Mothers		Fathers		Mothers		Fathers	
	(N = 20)		(N = 20)		(N = 20)		(N = 20)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
100 percent	-	-	3	15	-	-	3	15
75 to 100 percent	2	10	7	35	5	25	-	-
50 to 75 percent	7	35	7	35	6	30	7	35
50 percent	1	5	-	-	7	35	10	50
25 to 50 percent	6	30	2	10	2	10	-	-
less than 25 percent	5	25	-	-	-	-	-	-
No response	1	5	1	5	-	-	-	-
Total	20	100	20	100	20	100	20	100

Teaching the child MANNERS AND HOW TO BEHAVE.

Influencing the EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT of the child.

Influencing the RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT of the child.

Influencing the MORAL OR ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT of the child.

Helping the child to experience BEING PART OF A FAMILY.

Influencing the FINANCIAL DECISIONS AFFECTING the child.

The possible responses were:

Very High Importance

High Importance

Medium Importance

Little Importance

Very Little Importance

In order to determine which aspects of parenting the sample considered most important, points were assigned to each response (1 = very high importance, 2 = high importance, 3 = medium importance, 4 = little importance, 5 = very little importance).

Both mothers and fathers indicated for the most part that it was "of very high importance" or "of high importance" that the fathers have influence on all aspects of parenting with the exception of religious development.

The combined rankings of both mothers and fathers were highest in the same four aspects of parenting. These four areas were: "intellectual development", "moral development", "emotional development", and "giving the child a feeling of being part of the family" (see Table 13 for a summary of the responses).

TABLE 13.--Rank Ordering of 10 Aspects of Childrearing.

Mothers		Fathers	
1. Intellectual Development	1.3	1. Intellectual Development	1.2
2. Feeling of Being Part of a Family	1.3	2. Emotional Development	1.3
3. Moral Development	1.4	3. Moral Development	1.35
4. Emotional Development	1.4	4. Feeling of Being Part of a Family	1.4
5. Physical Development	1.5	5. Manners and Behavior	1.5
6. Financial Decision making	1.7	6. Daily Care and Safety	1.55
7. Behavior	1.8	7. Physical Development	1.6
8. Recreation	1.8	8. Financial Decision Making	1.9
9. Daily Care and Safety	2.0	9. Recreation	2.0
10. Religion	2.3	10. Religion	2.35

It is interesting that both the mothers and fathers in the current study evaluated the importance of the father's influence in the ten aspects of parenting in very much the same way as the fathers in Greif's (1976) study. In both studies "intellectual development", "emotional development", "moral development" and "giving the child a feeling of being part of the family" were given the highest ratings by all three groups. Influence over "religious development" was rated less than "of high importance." Greif's sample was similar to the current sample with respect to the fathers' education and occupations. The major difference was that those participants who indicated religious preference in the current study were Catholic or Protestant while those who indicated a religious preference in Greif's study were primarily Jewish.

It appears that mother and fathers tend to agree on those aspects of parenting that are most important for the father to have influence over. The same four areas are consistently rated "of very high importance". Only one aspect, religion, is not considered to be an area of high importance for the greatest proportion of divorced parents.

Hypotheses

This section presents the results of the study in relation to each of the twelve hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1

Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers differ in their reports of the amount of contact the father has with the children.

Mothers and fathers each reported the amount of contact the father had with each of the children included in the study (for an explanation see section 1 of descriptive findings). A mean contact score was derived for each family with more than one child in the study. Family means ranged from 9 to 40 for the mothers and 9 to 45 for the fathers. The Wilcoxin test was then used to determine whether there were differences between paired scores using a two-tailed test (see Table 14).

The analysis indicated that the contact scores reported by the mothers did differ significantly from the contact scores reported by the fathers.

The mothers reported less contact time than the fathers. The null hypotheses that custodial mothers and their former husbands will not differ in their reports of the amount of contact the father has with the children is rejected. This result provides support for the research hypothesis: Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers differ in their reports of the amount of contact the fathers have with the children.

Hypothesis 2

Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers differ in their reports of the degree of influence the father has over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.

Mothers and fathers were asked to rate the degree of influence the father currently had in each of the ten aspects of parenting. Ratings ranged from "1" signifying "very high influence" to

TABLE 14.--Results of the Wilcoxin Test for Family Contact Scores
Reported by Mothers.

Ranges	Median Contact Score	Obtained Value of T	Critical Value of T
Mother	25	+39*	α .05 = 52
Father	28.50	-142.5	α .02 = 43

*Results are significant if obtained T is less than the tabled T.

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"6" signifying "no influence". The Wilcoxin test was used to test this hypothesis for each of the ten aspects of childrearing. Ten separate tests were performed to complete this analysis (see Table 15 summarizes the degree to which each parent perceived the father had influence in the ten aspects of parenting).

In all but two aspects of parenting, "giving the child a feeling of being part of a family" and "recreation" the mothers reported that the fathers had less influence than the fathers reported they had. However the Wilcoxin test, indicated that pairs of mothers and fathers differed significantly in their reports of the fathers influence in only two aspects of childrearing--"teaching the child how to behave" and "giving the child a feeling of being part of a family" (Table 16 presents the results of the Wilcoxin test for each of the ten aspects of parenting).

The research hypothesis that pairs of mothers and fathers will differ in their reports of the father's influence over each of ten aspects of parenting can be supported for only two of the ten aspects of parenting--"teaching the child how to behave" and "giving the child a feeling of being part of the family." Thus parents do not differ significantly in their perceptions of the degree of influence that the non-custodial father has in eight of ten aspects of childrearing.

Hypothesis 3

Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers differ in their reports of the regularity of child support payments.

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TABLE 15.--Median and Mode of Parents' Reports of Father's Influence over Aspects of Parenting.

Aspects of Childrearing	Median		Mode	
	Mothers	Fathers	Mothers	Fathers
Daily Care and Safety	4.000	2.833	5	2
Intellectual Development	3.167	2.833	3	2
Physical Development	3.100	2.389	3	2
Recreation	2.786	2.389	3	2
Behavior	2.833	2.056	2	2
Emotional Development	3.25	2.500	3	2
Religious Development	4.00	2.833	4	2
Moral Development	2.833	2.125	3	2
Feeling of Being Part of a Family	2.357	2.750	2	2
Financial Affairs	3.50	2.357	5	2

"Very High Influence" was assigned a rank of "1".

"No Influence" was assigned a rank of "6".

TABLE 16.--Results of Wilcoxin Tests for Difference In Perception of Pairs of Mothers and Fathers of Fathers' Influence Over Physical, Social, and Psychological Aspects of Parenting.

Aspect of Parenting	Obtained Value of T	Critical Value of T at .05 level
1. Teaching the child how to behave	47.5*	52
2. Giving the child a feeling of being part of a family	38.0*	50
3. Daily Care and Safety	52.5**	52
4. Financial Affairs	63.5	52
5. Recreational Activities	104.5	52
6. Physical Development	62.5	52
7. Intellectual Development	96.5	52
8. Moral Development	64.0	52
9. Religious Development	66.5	52
10. Emotional Development	69.0	52

* significant at $p < .05$.

**significant at $p < .10$.

Each participant was asked two questions in order to determine the regularity of child support payments:

1. Do you pay/receive child support? Yes No
2. How regularly have you/has he made child support payments?

All payments are on time

Misses or is late 1-3 payments per year

Misses or is late 3-6 payments per year

Misses or is late 6 or more payments per year

The frequency count indicated that all fathers (20) provided financial support. The majority (75%) made all payments on time. Four fathers and three mothers indicated that not all payments were made on time. The fourth mother received Aid To Dependent Children (AFDC) benefits and did not know the degree of regularity with which her former husband paid. (He was one of the four fathers who indicated that payments were "not regular".) Given the small sample size the data were recoded to form two groups: one in which fathers made "regular" payments and one in which the payments were "not regular".

The chi-square analysis indicated that there was no significant difference between the mothers and fathers with regard to the regularity of child support payments. With the exception of the mother who received AFDC, there was complete agreement on the regularity of child support. The null hypothesis that there is no difference cannot be rejected and the research hypothesis cannot be supported.



Hypothesis 4

Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers differ in their perception of importance of the father's influence in the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.

Mothers' and fathers' responses to Part III of the instrument were totaled to develop an importance score for each participant (Table 17 provides a summary of the median, range and mode importance scores for both mothers and fathers).

TABLE 17.--Mode, Median and Range of Total Importance of Fathers' Influence Scores for Mothers and Fathers.

	Mode	Median	Range
Mothers	10*	14.5	10-31
Fathers	14	15.5	10-26

*10 signifies father's influence was rated of "very high importance" in all aspects of parenting.

The Wilcoxin test was used to determine whether pairs of parents differed in their perceptions of how important it was for fathers to have influence in each of the ten aspects of parenting. The tabled value of T at the $\alpha = .05$ level was 52; the obtained value was 99. The obtained value of T was higher than the tabled value the null hypothesis that mothers and fathers do not differ in the perceived importance of the fathers' influence in the physical,

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social and psychological aspects of parenting cannot be rejected. Therefore the research hypothesis cannot be supported.

Hypothesis 5

Fathers who make regular child support payments differ from fathers who do not make regular child support payments in the amount of contact they have with their children.

Fathers were divided into two groups based upon their response to the questions. "Do you pay child support?" and "How regularly have you made these payments?" Only four of the 20 fathers indicated that either they did not pay child support or had not always made payments on time. Those 16 fathers who made regular payments were placed in the group labeled "regular support" the other four fathers were placed in the group labeled "not regular support."

The Mann Whitney test was used to determine whether the fathers who made regular support payments had higher contact scores than fathers who did not make regular support payments. Table indicates the range and median of the Contact Scores for the two groups of fathers. The range for the fathers who were not regular was from 21 to 36 and the median was 25.5. The range for the 16 fathers who made support payments regularly was 9 to 45; the median for these fathers was 34.

The Mann Whitney statistic was then calculated to test the difference between the groups. The rank sums were 36.5 for the "not regular" group and 173.5 for the "regular" group the tabled

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TABLE 18.--Range and Median of Contact Scores of Fathers Who Did Not Make Regular Support Payments and Fathers Who Did Make Regular Support Payments.

Group	Range	Median
Not Regular	21-36	25.5
Regular	9-45	34.0

*Contact Scores could range from "0" to "47".

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value of I was for $N_1 = 4$, $N_2 = 16$, the U for the "not regular" group was 37.5 and the U for the "regular" group was 26.5. The results of the Mann Whitney U for this hypothesis are summarized in Table 19.

TABLE 19.--Results of Mann Whitney U Test on Contact Scores for Fathers Who Did and Did Not Make Regular Support Payments.

	Sum of the Ranks	Obtained Value of U	Critical Value of U at .05 level
Regular Support	36.5	37.5	11
Not Regular Support	173.5	26.5	11

Because the obtained value of U for both groups was higher than the tabled value of U the null hypotheses cannot be rejected and the research hypothesis that fathers who make regular child support payments differ from fathers who do not make regular child support payments in the amount of contact they perceive they have with their children cannot be supported.

Hypothesis 6

Mothers who receive regular child support payments and mothers who do not receive regular child support payments will differ in their perceptions of the amount of influence the father has in the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.

The Mann-Whitney test was carried out using the mothers' responses to the questions regarding the receipt of child support and the regularity with which it was received to divide the mothers

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into two groups, "not regular" and "regular". Mothers who did not receive child support or did not always receive it on schedule were placed in the "not regular" group. Those who always received their payments on schedule were placed in the "regular" group. Ten Mann-Whitney tests, one for the mothers' perceptions of the fathers' current influence of each aspect of parenting, were performed. None of the test results were significant. Thus the null hypothesis, that mothers who receive regular child support payments and mothers who do not receive regular child support payments will not differ in their perceptions of the amount of influence the father has in the physical, social and psychological aspects of childrearing, cannot be rejected and the research hypothesis cannot be supported (see Table 20 for a summary of the Mann-Whitney tests).

Hypothesis 7

Fathers who make regular child support payments and fathers who do not make regular child support payments differ in their perception of the amount of influence they have over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.

The Mann Whitney test was carried out using the fathers responses to the question on payment of child support and regularity of child support to divide the fathers into two groups, "not regular" and "regular". Fathers who did not pay child support and those who had missed or were late with their payments were placed in the "not regular" group; fathers who always made their payments on time were placed in the "regular" group. Ten Mann-Whitney Tests, one for the fathers perceived influence in each of the ten aspects of parenting,

TABLE 20.--Mothers' Perceptions of Fathers' Influence Over Aspects of Parenting Based Upon Regular Receipt of Child Support Payments.

Aspect of Parenting	Obtained Value of U (Na = 4, Nb = 16)	Critical Value of U at .05 level
Daily Care and Safety	30	11
Intellectual Development	31	11
Physical Development	20	11
Recreation	28.5	11
Teaching the Child How to Behave	23	11
Emotional Development	26.5	11
Religious Development	13	11
Moral Development	27.5	11
Giving the Child a Feeling of Being Part of a Family	16	11
Financial Affairs	22.5	11

a = Not regular.

b = Regular.



TABLE 21.--Summary of Mann-Whitney Test for Fathers' Perceived Influence Over Aspects of Parenting Based on Regularity of Child Support Payments

Aspect of Parenting	Obtained Value of U (Na = 4, Nb = 16)	Critical Value of U at .05 level
Daily Care and Safety	23	11
Intellectual Development	30	11
Physical Development	22	11
Recreation	28	11
Teaching Child How to Behave	22.5	11
Emotional Development	32	11
Religious Development	21.5	11
Moral Development	21	11
Giving Child a Feeling of Being Part of a Family	30.5	11
Financial Affairs	15	11

Na = "Not Regular".

Nb = "Regular".



were performed. None of the test results indicated significance. Thus the null hypothesis that fathers who make regular child support payments and fathers who do not make regular child support payments will not differ cannot be rejected. The research hypothesis cannot be supported (see Table 21 for a summary of the Mann Whitney test).

Hypothesis 8

Fathers who make regular child support payments differ from fathers who do not make regular child support payments in their perceptions of the importance of a father's influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.

The Mann Whitney U test was used to determine whether differences did exist between the two groups on the composite "importance scores". The "importance scores" for the fathers who were in the "not regular" group ranged from 15 to 22 with a median of 17.5 the scores for the fathers in the "regular" group ranged from 10 to 26 with a median of 15.5 (see Table 22 for summary).

TABLE 22.--Range and Median Importance Scores for Fathers in "Not Regular" and "Regular" Support Payment Groups.

Group	Range	Median
Not Regular Supporters (N = 4)	15-22	17.5
Regular Supporters (N = 16)	10-26	15.5

The results of the Mann Whitney U test for this hypothesis are: the sum of the ranks for the "not regular" group was 49.5 and

the value of U was 24.5. The sum of the ranks for the "regular" group was 160.5 and the value of U was 39.5. Table 24 presents the results of the Mann-Whitney U test for this hypothesis.

TABLE 23.--Results of Mann-Whitney U Test for Difference in Fathers' Perceived Importance of Influence Based on Regularity of Child Support Payments.

Group	Sum of the Ranks	Obtained Value of U	Critical Value of U at .05 level
Not Regular Supporter (N = 4)	49.5	24.5	11
Regular Supporter (N = 16)	160.0	39.5	

Because the value of U exceeded 11 the null hypothesis that fathers who are regular supporters and fathers who are not regular supporters do not differ in their perceptions of the importance of the fathers influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting cannot be rejected. The research hypothesis that the two groups of fathers differ cannot be supported.

Hypothesis 9

Mothers who do not receive regular child support payments and mothers who do receive regular child support payments will differ on the perceived importance of the fathers influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of childrearing.

The mothers were divided into two groups based upon the regularity with which they received child support payments in order to determine if the perceived importance of the father's influence

in the physical, social and psychological aspects of childrearing differed. The median importance score for the "not regular" group was 11.5 and the range was between 10 and 13. (A low score is indicative of greater perceived importance.) The median importance score for the mothers in "regular" group was 17.5 and the range was between 10 and 31.

The Mann Whitney U test was then computed to test this hypothesis. The rank sum for the "not regular" group was 18 and the U for "not regular" was 56. The rank sum for "regular" was 192 and U was 8 (Table 24 summarizes the results of the Mann Whitney U Test for this hypothesis).

TABLE 24.--Results of Mann-Whitney Test for Difference In Perceived Importance of Fathers' Influence Over Ten Aspects of Parenting By Mothers Based on Regularity of Receipt of Child Support Payments.

Group	Sum of the Ranks	Obtained Value of U	Critical Value of U at .05 level
Not Regular (N = 4)	18	56	11
Regular (N = 16)	192	8	

U_B is less than 11 the tabled value of U for $N_a = 4$, $N_b = 16$ at .05. Thus the null hypothesis that the mothers do not differ in their perceptions of the importance of the father's influence is rejected and the research hypothesis that there is a difference is supported.

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Hypothesis 10

Fathers who have not made regular child support payments differ in their recognition of the mother's use of her own resources from fathers who have made regular child support payments.

Each parent was asked the following questions:

1. Do you use your own resources to meet the needs of the children? (mothers) Yes No
2. Does your former wife use her own resources to meet the needs of the children? (fathers) Yes No
3. To what degree?

Very high

High

Medium

Low

Very Low

Because of the small sample size the responses to these questions were recoded into two categories. Fathers who indicated that their former wives used their own resources to a "very high" or "high" degree were placed in the "high" category and fathers who indicated that their former wives use of their own resources ranged from "medium" to "none" were placed in the "low" category. Seven fathers (35%) indicated that their former wives used their own resources to a "high" degree. Of these seven, six always made their payments as scheduled. Thirteen fathers (65%) indicated that their former wives did not use their own resources to a "high" degree. Three of these fathers indicated that their support payments were not always "regular".



The results of the Fisher's Exact test were not significant. Thus the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between fathers who do and do not make regular support payments, on their perceptions of the mother's use of her own resources, cannot be rejected. Therefore, the research hypothesis cannot be supported.

Hypothesis 11

Fathers differ in their perceptions of the influence they have over the ten aspects of parenting at the current time as compared to before the separation.

The Wilcoxin test was performed in order to determine if the fathers perceived differences in their influence over the ten aspects of parenting at the time of the interview as compared to before the separation (see Table 25). Ten Wilcoxin tests (one test for each aspect of parenting, were performed.

In all aspects of parenting, with the exception of religion, the fathers perceived a slight decrease in their influence at the present time. The fathers' perceptions of a change in influence over the religious development was significant at the .10 level. In addition the perceived difference in influence over "Financial Affairs" and "Decision-making" was significant at the .05 level. Thus with the exception of the changes in influence over "religious development" and "financial affairs and decision making", the null hypothesis cannot be rejected and the research hypothesis cannot be supported (see Table 25 for summary of Wilcoxin tests).



TABLE 25.--Summary of Wilcoxin Test for Fathers' Perceived Changes in Influence Over Ten Aspects of Parenting.

Aspect of Parenting	Median Response		Obtained Value of T	Critical Value of T
	Before Divorce	Now		
Routine Daily Care and Safety	2.071	2.833	68.5	$\alpha .05 = 52$
Intellectual Development	2.5	2.833	73.0	$\alpha .10 = 60$
Physical Development	2.2	2.389	88.5	
Recreational Activities	3.318	2.389	76.5	
Teaching the Child How to Behave	2.0	2.056	90.0	
Emotional Development	2.2	2.5	71.0	
Religious Development	3.5	2.8	56.5**	
Moral Development	1.9	2.125	98.0	
Giving Child a Feeling of Being Part of a Family	2.125	2.750	95.0	
Financial Affairs and Decision Making	2.071	2.357	45.0*	

* = Significant at $\alpha = .05$.

**= Significant at $\alpha = .10$.

Hypothesis 12

Mothers perceive differences in the fathers' influence over the ten aspects of parenting the current time as compared to before the separation.

The Wilcoxin test was performed to determine if the mothers perceived differences in their former husbands' current influence, over the ten aspects of parenting, as compared to the period prior to the separation. Ten Wilcoxin tests (one for each aspect of parenting) were performed. Mothers reported that the fathers' current influence was higher in all but three aspects of parenting. The decreases in influence occurred over "Routine Daily Care" and "Safety", "Moral Development", and "Financial Affairs" and "Decision making". Although there were slight changes in all aspects of parenting not all changes were significant. The differences in influence over financial affairs was significant at the .05 level. Reported differences in influence over "Intellectual Development", "Recreational Activities" and "Religious Development" were significant at the .10 level. Thus for mothers the null hypothesis cannot be rejected for the change in fathers' influence over six of the ten aspects of parenting. The research hypothesis can be supported for three aspects of parenting (Intellectual Development, Recreational Activities and Religious Development) at the .10 level and for the change in influence over financial affairs at the .05 level (see Table 26 for a summary of the Wilcoxin tests).



TABLE 26.--Summary of Wilcoxin Test for Mothers' Perception of the
Change in Fathers' Influence Over Ten Aspects of Parenting.

Aspect of Parenting	Median Response		Obtained Value of T	Critical Value of T
	Before Divorce	Now		
Routine Daily Care and Safety	3.54	4.0	90.5	
Intellectual Develop- ment	4.76	3.167	52.5*	.05 = 52
Physical Development	3.5	3.1	81.0	.10 = 60
Recreational Activities	3.7	2.7	60.0*	
Teaching the Child How to Behave	3.071	2.833	83.0	
Emotional Development	3.357	3.250	57.0	
Religious Development	5.00	4.00	48.0**	
Moral Development	2.786	2.83	93.0	
Giving Child a Feeling of Being Part of a Family	2.83	2.357	62.5	
Financial Affairs and Decision Making	2.33	3.5	34.5**	

*Significant at .10

**Significant at .05

Other Findings

One objective of this study was to explore the relationship between financial support and the fathers' involvement with and influence over their children following the divorce. The results of the study indicated several things of interest. Regularity of support was not a problem for the majority of families who participated in this study. Fathers and mothers did differ in their perceptions of the adequacy of support payments. There was general agreement among the fathers and mothers that the fathers' influence over financial affairs and decision making as it affected the children had changed following the divorce. An important issue to address is "How do parents (mothers and fathers) feel about the perceived change in the fathers influence over financial affairs?" given that the father transfers money to the mother but may have little or no influence over how that money is used. The responses of both parents to the question:

"How do you feel about the change (or lack of change) of influence over financial affairs?"

Positive

Neutral

Negative

and the open-ended question "Why do you feel that way?" provide some insight to problem related to the perceived adequacy of financial support. A pair by pair analysis of the responses will be presented in order to illustrate the feelings of the participants. The literature (Chambers, 1974; Weiss, 1979) indicates that a link



between contact with the child and continued provision of financial support exists. In order to address this issue the pairs of parents were grouped into "high contact" and "low contact" groups. "High contact" fathers were those fathers whose contact scores ranged between 32 and 45. "Low contact" fathers were those whose contact scores ranged between 9 and 30. The median contact scores reported by the fathers was 31 (see page 9 for a discussion of the manner by which contact scores were computed). Because the median was used as the dividing point between high and low contact, each group consisted of ten fathers.

Responses to Questions Regarding Satisfaction
Change In Influence Over Financial
Affairs - Fathers

Fathers Who Did Not Have "High
Contact" With The Children

Pair 1.--This father indicated that his influence over financial matters had decreased since the divorce. His negative feelings about the decrease in influence are expressed by the following statement: "(There is) no guarantee child support is spent on (him). I would like to know support money goes for the child." He indicated that his former wife used her own resources to a high degree but felt she should "by virtue of the fact that he's (child) living there... if she doesn't she's not assuming responsibility." Although this father did not have the amount of contact that he would have liked, he did not indicate that his former wife limited his contact with the child. The responses of the mother reinforce this. Although

she felt very negative about the father's low influence over financial affairs as well as the erratic provision of a small portion of what she felt it costs to care for the child, she stated that "(She) wants him (son) to have as much time with his father as possible." This mother indicated that the "lack of involvement and general caring bothered her more than money."

Pair 2: The father indicated a decrease in influence over financial affairs following the divorce--however he had neutral feelings. He said, "She (mother) is responsible enough to do this. I pay child support." He indicated that the mother did use her own resources to a very high degree and felt negatively about this. He said, "She's too wrapped up in him." He felt that his contact with the child was limited by the mother. One problem was the mother's unwillingness to allow the child to spend extended periods of time with him (the father) during the summer even though the mother worked during the summer while he did not.

The mother in this situation was dissatisfied with the level of support provided as well as the fact that the father had no influence over financial affairs. She stated:

He pays child support and thinks it takes care of things
In reality it covers only babysitting and extras. (His)
attitude is that he's paying (me) to babysit (the child).

This mother admitted that she does present obstacles to contact between the father and the child. However, she felt it was necessary because of the child's problems adjusting to the divorce and restructured family.



Pair 7: The father in this situation indicated "high influence" both prior to and following the divorce over some aspects of financial affairs but "low influence" in other areas. He indicated he provided the major proportion of financial support but that he had no control over how it was used. He stated "(I) feel the kids are getting the short end of the stick. (Their) clothing is inadequate. The kids are earning money for this (clothes)." He felt positively in the sense that he had high influence over the children's attitudes toward money and they they were developing a work orientation.

The mother in this situation indicated that the father's influence over financial matters had dropped. Her feelings were neutral in that she felt he was not doing his share in providing "for the financial well-being of the children" and her use of her own resources was disproportionate given the differences in income. She was pleased, however, that he was "instilling the work ethic" when the children were with him.

Both parents expressed concerns over different parenting styles that had an impact on the amount of time the father had with the children. The father felt it was necessary to adhere to a regular schedule of visitation; however, the mother indicated that this was difficult as the children were older (11 and 13) and often their own plans interfered with scheduled visits.

Pair 8: Both parents indicated a drop in the father's influence over financial matters. The father had negative feelings about this drop: He said, "I don't feel child support money is being

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used only for the kids." The mother's feelings on this issue were somewhat ambivalent. She stated that she would like him to give more money but not be involved in actual decision-making. Although the father fell into the "low contact" group he did not indicate that it was the fault of the mother. Instead he indicated that he could not afford the gas money to see the children more frequently. The mother indicated that while contact was "low", there was a need for the children, particularly the son, to have more time with the father.

Pair 10: The father indicated that his influence over financial affairs was "high" before but he did not know how much influence he had at the present time by virtue of the fact that his former wife was an Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) recipient. He felt the support he provided was limited by his own financial constraints--" (I) would like to have more to give them." This father pointed out that there was unequal treatment of men and women. He was threatened with jail for not paying child support while he was trying to go to school at the same time his former wife was receiving welfare payments that allowed her to go to school.

The mother, in this instance, indicated a slight increase in the father's influence over financial affairs in general. She had mixed feelings in that she did not necessarily agree with (his) priorities on this issue. Although contact with the children was not high, the father indicated that he was not sure he would use more time to everyone's benefit. The mother did not indicate that she placed a

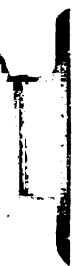


limit on the father's contact with the children. Instead, she stated that increased involvement with the children would be beneficial as it would encourage a sharing of responsibilities and more free time for herself.

Pair 13: This father indicated a decrease in influence over financial affairs but was not bothered by the decrease. He stated, "They can spend the money the way they want." He recognized that his financial support was lower than it might be but felt that the mother contributed more because, "She has the resources to do it." He was concerned about the limited amount of time he spent with the child but indicated that the decisions over the amount of contact were within his control.

This mother indicated that the father had little influence over financial affairs before the divorce and none at the present time. She had negative feelings in that she believed "He could do better financially." She felt he was not doing his share either moneywise or timewise. She indicated that the child would like to see more of the father and do more with him but the father made little effort to become more involved.

Pair 15: This father indicated a drop of influence over financial affairs but did not indicate negative feelings. He said, "It's better to let her (mother) have influence here." He did not feel the mother was using her own resources to the extent that she should and that it was not necessarily fair that he "pays and she



gets" (one of the three children currently lived with the father). This father was concerned about the lack of quality time he had with the children. He said "You can't do much on an alternate weekend basis." On the other hand he expressed negative feelings over the mother's desire for him to spend more time with the child. He said "She wants me to be the babysitter".

The mother indicated a drop in influence over financial affairs. She stated that the father's influence was not important. "I make these decision--some things are best separate." The mother felt negatively about the disproportionate use of her own resources, both time and money. She indicated that the father could have the child for vacations and/or holidays but usually did not do so.

Pair 17: This father indicated that his influence over financial affairs had increased as a result of the divorce. His influence was limited to monetary contributions. He would have liked more influence over the way in which the money is used as he differed with the mother on this issue. He perceived that the mother was not contributing her fair share and the kids needed things the mother wasn't giving. He was upset over a recent court action that raised the level of support payments and was not sure this was a good idea because, "It took money from things (I) would have normally done."

The mother in this situation also indicated an increase in influence over financial affairs. She viewed this negatively. She said "His control makes a difference in what the kids have. Child support controls things." She indicated that her own resources were

being used to a high degree and felt it was hard not to have enough for herself. (She was one of the mothers whose total income was less than \$10,000 a year.) Neither parent was concerned that contact was not higher than it was given the ages of the children and the distance between the homes. (The children were 10 and 14 and becoming more independent and involved in their own activities. The 20 mile distance between homes complicated visitation during the school year.)

Pair 19: This father indicated a pronounced drop in influence over financial affairs. His feelings over the drop were ambivalent in that he had no control on a daily basis but was doing long term planning. This father was the one of three fathers who rarely had contact with his children (Contact Score 9) but the only father who indicated that he preferred it this way. He said that he would prefer not to see the children at all, except for an extended period in the summer, but would provide financial support. He was the only parent who indicated that more frequent visitation would be "bouncing the children back and forth." He also preferred to avoid conflict over different attitudes toward parenting. (Of the three fathers who expressed a concern about the mother's possible move from the area, this father was the only one who thought such a move might be a good idea.)

His former wife expressed different feelings about his lack of involvement. While she indicated that financial support was not adequate she was more concerned about his lack of involvement. She

stated that his not seeing them has hurt the children. The mother indicated that the father made little use of the flexible visitation privileges.

Pair 20: This father indicated that while he had very high influence over financial affairs prior to the divorce and now--his feelings were ambivalent because

I have a lot of influence through support and my own plans for future. However my impact on teaching about finances is limited. There is conflict between the two parents on philosophy and what I can control is highly influenced.

He also said: "I have no control over the way the money is spent and that child support could be spent on what is basically alimony.

This father was concerned about the difficulty of building a close relationship with the children on a "weekend basis". He did not attempt to have more involvement with the children although increased involvement was possible.

The mother felt there was a decrease in the father's influence over financial affairs and was satisfied with this decrease.

She said

When married, he controlled the money. It was a source of conflict. His attitudes about money prohibit him from enjoying life. He was too security-oriented.

She felt she was using her own resources to a "high" degree and it was "fair" given that she had these resources. She did indicate that she would like the father to become more involved. He could see the children whenever he wanted. She stated it was good that he had assumed some responsibility for caring for the children, by

virtue of the fact that he had the children alternate weekends and all day Sunday, but wished he would do more.

In summary, the fathers who did not have "high contact" with their children for the most part did generally perceive a decrease in influence over financial affairs particularly when it came to way in which the money was used. These fathers did not believe the mother's use of money was always in the best interests of the children. In addition they tended to feel that they were doing more than their share financially and had mixed feelings about the situation. Although their contact was not "high" there was generally no indication from either mothers or fathers that visitation was used as leverage to assure continued financial support. Three of the fathers who did not or had not provided financial support on a "regular" basis were in the group where contact was "not high". They felt that their influence in this area was not what it was prior to the divorce and were not satisfied with the situation. On the other hand those fathers who had always provided regular support payments had negative feelings because they perceived a "lack of control", and felt child support might be "alimony" to some extent. The way in which these fathers compare to fathers who have "high contact" with their children on issues related to financial support and contact with the children will be discussed in the next section. The mothers for the most part would have liked more contact between the fathers and children. These mothers expressed resentment over the way they were controlled by child support.

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Fathers Who Had "High Contact"
With the Children

Pair 3: The father indicated an increase in influence over financial affairs and felt positively over this increase. Control over use of money was not the primary reason--he indicated that as his daughter matured there has been more need and opportunity for an increase in influence. He felt that what he was contributing financially to the child was equitable and felt positively that there was a sharing of resources by both parents. He did indicate that he had difficulty communicating with his former wife on issues related to visitation but a system of flexible regularity had been established with court assistance.

The mother also indicated that an unspecified visitation arrangement caused problems that have since been resolved. The mother indicated that the father's influence over financial affairs had dropped slightly but was still "high". She felt positively about the high influence because she was "satisfied with support" and that the father "provides extras which I appreciate."

Pair 4: The father indicated that there was a slight decrease in influence over financial affairs since the divorce but felt positively because it "has ended up being more of a division of labor." However he did feel that he bears the major burden of the monetary costs but that he did not mind paying as long as there was an income discrepancy.

His former wife indicated a decrease in influence over financial affairs but felt this decrease was positive because "he uses

money as a holdover; i.e. threats over allowances." She did not feel his contribution was sufficient given the inequality of income, however, she did enjoy spending on the kids. She did not feel it was just that she receive no support in the summer when children were with their father. She did feel positively about the amount of time the children spent with their father although she did not care for the differences in parenting styles.

Pair 5: This father indicated a decrease in influence over financial affairs but had no real feelings about the decrease because "We both have similar standards so I don't care how its (money) handled." It was interesting that he felt he was not providing what he should be providing. He indicated that support probably covered 25 percent to 50 percent of the expenses but should cover 50 to 75 percent of the expenses. He indicated that a "very loose" visitation arrangement worked well although he missed "total involvement" with the children.

The mother in this case indicated that the father's influence over financial affairs was "medium" prior to and since the divorce. She felt somewhat negative because of his attitude toward money. She said, "He's (father) a free spender and this is a negative influence." Like the father she indicated that less than 50 percent of the children's expenses were covered by child support and more should be covered. She was the only mother who felt that mothers should not have to work. She added that, "This is unrealistic given



that the father has other responsibilities." She also indicated that the flexible visitation arrangement has worked well.

Pair 6: Both parents indicated that the father's influence over financial affairs had been "very high" before the divorce and has remained that way. Both parents had positive feelings about the high degree of influence. The father indicated that

This area doesn't have emotional involvement for me. What's good for me is good for the kids. I feel good about helping the kids manage money.

The mother stated, "He does well and above his share and is very good about this." She did indicate that college expenses scare her but she felt the father would not end support when the children reach 18.

Both parents indicated that the flexible visitation arrangement has worked well, particularly as the children have gotten older. (This couple was the one couple that had been separated for eight years. The children, who were 3 and 5 at the time, are now middle school age. There was a discrepancy in contact time because the father often dropped in during the week after school hours before the mother returned from work. She did not always know when this occurred or whether one of the children telephoned their father.)

Pair 9: The father (joint custody father) indicated that influence over financial affairs has remained high and felt "positively" about this. He said, "I want them to have security and not be disadvantaged as a result of the divorce." He indicated that he

believed he covers almost all of the children's expenses in that he pays for private school, clothes, and medical care in addition to actual support payments. He felt that he did more than his share and stated, "Men end up this way because they have higher salaries." He did recognize that the mother used her own resources to a moderate degree. He felt positively about her using her own resources and stated that "Men shouldn't have to finance everything."

The mother felt that the father's pre and post-divorce influence over financial affairs was low but that, "It wasn't all that important and she feels the girls will be well provided for." This mother indicated that child support covered less than 25 percent of the expenses of raising children but did not mind using her own resources because "They're my children." This couple was one of two couples that had a joint custody arrangement. Both parents expressed satisfaction with the arrangement.

Pair 11: Both parents indicated that the father currently had high influence over financial affairs and were satisfied with this influence. The father felt positively because, "Children need to learn money management and decision making". The mother felt positively and stated, "I respect his way of dealing with finances."

This pair did not have a stipulated support agreement but some transfer of money from father to mother did occur. Both felt the transfer was relatively fair. The visitation arrangement was flexible and was frequently rearranged to accommodate the needs of

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both the children and the parents. Each parent felt the other compensated for his or her own weaknesses as a parent.

Pair 12: The father indicated that his influence over financial affairs had remained "very high" and felt positively because, "Its just part of my role as a father." Even though a joint custody-shared parenting arrangement existed, regular child support payments were made. The father stated "Child support is alimony but I cannot take the tax deduction. However child support is helping her buy a house and the kids live there." Although child support was paid and parenting was shared, he indicated the mother used her own resources to a "very high" degree and felt she ought to "if she is independent."

The mother indicated that the father's influence over financial affairs had dropped from "high" to "low". She preferred it this way because, "He's very irresponsible financially. I can offer a different example." She did indicate a high use of her own resources but didn't mind because she liked being independent. She felt that the amount of child support covers less than 25 percent of the costs of childrearing but that this wasn't a real concern.

Both parents were fairly well satisfied with the "flexible co-parenting" arrangement and preferred not to use the term "visitation" when describing the access of one parent when the children were with the other.

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Pair 14: Both parents indicated that the father had little influence over financial affairs at the current time. The father felt negatively because, "I don't have a say so in this area. I see a lot of buying now that wasn't done before. I wonder if its bribery."

The mother felt negatively for a different reason. She stated that "She (daughter) needs this from her father as well as her mother." Both parents were in agreement as to the proportion of expenses that were covered by the child support and that the mother used her own resources to a "high degree." Both felt positively about this. The mother stated, "It is my responsibility" and the father stated, "It is fair". The father indicated that he felt he was particularly generous in that "I gave her the house making it difficult for me to start over." However, he did not mind giving the mother the house because it allowed the children to remain in the same school district.

Pair 16: Both parents indicated that the father's influence over financial affairs was "very high" before the separation. The mother indicated that the influence has remained at the same level, however, the father indicated a decrease. The father reported mixed feelings over the decrease but generally felt positive in the sense that, "I can provide support for a lifestyle similar to that of the community." The mother felt that the father's influence in this area was positive, "As long as it's related to the kids." The original amount of child support was set by the court and there have

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been few problems related to the payment of support. However there was disagreement on the proportion of the expenses that were actually covered by the support provided. Both parents indicated that the mother used her own resources to a "high" degree and had positive feelings about it (the mother's use of her own resources). However the mother indicated she was currently unemployed and this did present a problem. The father indicated that sharing the expenses to a degree was "good". He said, "Both parents can provide better than adequate housing and opportunities."

Both parents indicated that they felt the current flexible visitation arrangements meet the needs of both the adults and the children and that the children had the opportunity to do things with one parent that they would not with the other parent. Finally, both parents indicated that they can cooperate despite different views of parenting.

Pair 18: The father indicated that he has maintained "high influence" over financial affairs and felt positively about this because of his "teacher" role. He has encouraged the children to work and can discuss the value of money with them. He indicated that the level of support was disproportionately high because his former wife is a student. He felt she would contribute more evenly when she completes her college education and enters the work world. The mother felt that support was at an appropriate level but that she still used her own resources to a "very high" degree. She did

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indicate that her use of resources "Gives her pleasure." Both parents were satisfied with their visitation pattern which was relatively flexible. The mother said, "It was good for the children to be with the father and know him better."

The mothers in both groups--those whose former husbands had "high contact" with the children and those whose former husbands did not have "high contact"--indicated the children's involvement with the father was important. However, the mothers in the "high contact" group appeared more willing to overlook differences, were less resentful about the use of their own resources and more satisfied with the level of support provided even when it was not proportionate. In addition the fathers who had "high contact" with the children appeared less resentful even when they felt they were providing more than their share of financial support. In general the terms "control" or "lack of control" were not as prevalent in the responses of the parents where the father had more contact with the children. The "high contact" fathers also indicated more than the fathers who did not have "high contact" that they found their relationship with their children rewarding despite the difficulties that occurred because they no longer lived in the same house. The fathers who did not have "high contact" were more concerned about the artificiality of an "alternate weekend" visitation arrangement.

Summary

Fathers who were willing to give more of themselves to their children, despite difficulties, found their relationships with their

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children more rewarding. Their former wives also tended to express more positive feelings toward them as parents than the former wives of fathers who did not have high contact with the children. Although there appeared to be greater dissatisfaction over the amount of child support among both fathers and mothers in the group where the fathers did not have high contact, there was no apparent tendency to use access to children in exchange for money. The mothers, for the most part, were pleased with the quality and quantity of the time the fathers spent with the children even in those situations where they would have liked additional financial support.

The mothers, on the whole, did not appear to be threatened by the fathers' continued relationship with the children. Instead they welcomed this relationship. They were willing to accept input from their former husbands as long as that input pertained to the children and not to the mothers themselves. Although all of the mothers expressed this to some degree, those whose former husbands were in the "high" contact group were most explicit in their views. The willingness to accept the father's perspective on issues related to the children implies acceptance of the father's parental status.

The quantitative analysis of the data indicated that fathers and mothers both perceived it to be of "high importance" that fathers be an influence on the lives of their children. Both fathers and mothers perceived that fathers did generally have at least a moderate amount of influence in childrearing matters. Furthermore, the mothers were of the opinion that the father's influence was not destructive and they recognized the children's need and desire for a

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continued relationship with the father. The mothers were not highly threatened by this relationship even when their viewpoint differed from that of the father, conforming their acknowledgement of the fathers' parental status.

The finding of this study, would then confirm the belief of Foa and Foa that the exchange of love and status in one relationship does not prevent similar exchanges in other relationships. For the child of divorce, particular and abstract resources are exchanged with two environments: the maternal family system and the paternal family system. While conflicting ideas between two parents might exist, such conflict need not preclude the development of a satisfactory relationship with both parents. The scope and quality of the exchanges which might occur between mothers, fathers and children are characterized in Table 27.

TABLE 27.--Father-Mother-Child Exchanges In The Post-Divorce Family.

Father to Mother		Mother to Father
Money	Child Support Payments	
Time ¹	Time spent with children that allows mother to meet her own needs. ²	Time with children to allow for direct parent-child exchanges.
Information	1. Another perspective on issues and problems related to childrearing. ² 2. That his desire to be with and care for children does not diminish maternal role.	1. That father's monetary contributions are in fact being used to provide for children's needs. 2. Information regarding child's development and knowledge that his inputs are welcome.
Status	Recognition of mother's parental status.	Recognition that father is still a parent and has right to be with and know about children.
Goods		
Services	Care of children.	Care of children.
Love		
Parents to Children		Children to Parents
Money	Father's Child Support Payments Mother's Supplements from own income.	While money exchanges are not the norm they may be appropriate in some instances.
Time ¹	Time spent by either parent with children in parenting activities.	Time spent with either parent.
Information	Information that fosters intellectual, social, moral, and physical development.	Possibly related to love and status; children respond to both parents.
Status	Like children whose parents are not divorced, they have two caring parents.	Recognizes parental role of both mother and father.
Goods	Provision of food, clothing and shelter as well as other goods that enable children to develop physically, mentally, and socially. Father might provide in addition to support payments. Mother might supplement from other income sources.	As child develops, gifts may be exchanged at appropriate times.(ie. those made in school.
Services	Both provide caretaking services, i.e. transportation, meal preparation, maintaining a home, help with schoolwork.	As child develops appropriate skills, services can be provided to either parent, i.e. help with housekeeping tasks.
Love	Father's desire to continue relationship. Mother's willingness to defer her own needs to meet those of children (difficult to define precisely).	Ideally love for one parent does not diminish love for the other; appropriate (?) responses to provision of resources by parents.

¹Time has been added because of the recognition by a growing number of economists that time is valuable resource for both individuals and groups. Time used in meeting the needs of children is not available for other activities. Generally the custodial parent makes the greater time commitment. Methods for determining the appropriate levels of exchange of time and money inputs have not yet been determined.

²Literature indicates that divorced mothers express that they are often overburdened by time demands as well as the absence of the other parent's perspective on childrearing issues.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the post-divorce father-child relationship from the perspective of both the custodial mother and the non-custodial father, her former husband. The primary research objectives were:

1. To determine whether custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers have similar perceptions regarding the fathers' involvement with and influence over the children.
2. To determine whether non-custodial fathers who made regular child support payments differ in the extent of involvement with their children from fathers who have not made regular child support payments.
3. To determine whether non-custodial fathers who made regular child support payments differ in their perceptions of the importance of a father's influence over the children from fathers who have not made regular child support payments.

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4. To determine whether custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers perceive a difference between the father's pre and post-divorce influence over the children.

Methodology

The study was exploratory research using a convenience sample of 20 pairs of divorced parents living in Ingham, Eaton and Clinton counties, the three counties comprising the Lansing, Michigan metropolitan area. The 20 sets of parents (custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers) were obtained through single parent organizations, a newspaper advertisement, announcements in community bulletins and newsletters, and through personal referrals of colleagues and other professionals who worked with families. The twenty sets of parents met the following criteria:

1. The parents had a legal decree of divorce.
2. The families had at least one child who was three years of age or older at the time of the separation and no older than 14 at the time of the interview. (Fourteen year olds were included if they had not yet entered the ninth grade.)
3. The mother had not remarried.
4. The father lived not more than 60 miles from the home of the mother and was available to participate in the study.

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The 20 participating families had a total of 34 children upon whom the study was based. Eight families had one child, ten families had two children and two families had three children. At the time of the interview the children ranged from six to fourteen years of age. The mothers ranged in age from 28 to 42 years, with a mean age of 35.7 years and the fathers ranged in age from 28 years to 47 years with a mean age of 37.8 years. Both mothers and fathers were generally well-educated and employed in professional or managerial positions. Over half (12) of the mothers and almost all (18) of the fathers had total household incomes greater than \$15,000 a year. The modal income for mothers fell in the \$15,000-\$24,999 category and for fathers the mode fell in the \$30,000-\$39,999 category. Less than half of the fathers (8) had remarried and four of the remarried fathers had natural children with their present wives.

A structured personal interview was conducted by the researcher with each parent. The instrument was originally developed by Greif (1976) for her research on divorced fathers. It is a four-part questionnaire designed to measure the parents' perceptions of change in the fathering role as well as the perceived importance of the father's influence with regard to the children. The instrument was tested for reliability with fathers by Greif and was over 90 percent reliable. As part of the current research the instrument was tested for reliability with mothers by means of a test-retest. A reliability coefficient of .696 was obtained. The data were analyzed using the Wilcoxin, Mann-Whitney, Fisher's Exact and chi square tests.

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Discussion

The significant findings of this study are generalized only to the sample. Seven null hypotheses were accepted, two were rejected and three were partially rejected (see Table 28).

Mothers and fathers did perceive differences in the amount of contact the father had with the children. Mothers indicated that the amount of contact the fathers had with the children was lower than the amount of contact the fathers indicated they had. An examination of the data indicated that in several families the father's access to the children was so unregulated that mothers did not know when the father or children spoke to each other by telephone or dropped in on one another during the course of a day or week. There is little evidence of support for this finding in the literature. One objective of this study was to determine if there were differences in the perceptions of mothers and fathers in the amount of contact that existed. This finding contradicts to some extent the finding of Weiss (1975) that mothers felt free contact between father and child limited their own control over the children.

A possible explanation for this difference is that the mothers in Weiss' sample were in the transition stage while the majority of the mothers in the current sample were well past the transition. In addition Weiss' results were based on data obtained in the early 1970s when the number of divorces was beginning to climb and alternative family lifestyles had not yet gained acceptance.

The mothers' and fathers' perceptions of the degree of the influence the father has over the physical, social and psychological

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TABLE 28.--Summary of Hypotheses Tested and Decision Rule.

Hypotheses	Decision Rule Null Hypothesis was:
<u>Hypothesis 1:</u> Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers will differ in their reports of the amount of contact the father has with the children.	Rejected
<u>Hypothesis 2:</u> Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers differ in their reports of the degree of influence the father has over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.	Not rejected for 8 of 10 aspects of parenting. Rejected for 2 aspects of parenting.
<u>Hypothesis 3:</u> Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers differ in their reports of the regularity of child support payments.	Not Rejected
<u>Hypothesis 4:</u> Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers differ in their perception of the importance of the fathers influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.	Not Rejected
<u>Hypothesis 5:</u> Fathers who make regular child support payments differ from father who do not make regular child support payments in the amount of contact they have with their children.	Not Rejected
<u>Hypothesis 6:</u> Mothers who receive regular child support payments and mothers who do not receive regular child support payments differ in their perceptions of the amount of influence the father has in physical, socila and psychological aspects of parenting.	Not Rejected
<u>Hypothesis 7:</u> Fathers who make regular child support pyaments and fathers who do not make regular child support payments differ in their perception of the amount of influence they have over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.	Not Rejected
<u>Hypothesis 8:</u> Fathers who make regular child support payments differ from father who do not make regular child support payments in their perceptions of the importance of a father's influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.	Not Rejected
<u>Hypothesis 9:</u> Mother's who do not receive regular child support payments and mothers who do receive regular child support payments, differ on the perceived importance of the father's influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting.	Rejected
<u>Hypothesis 10:</u> Fathers who have not made regular child support payments differ in their recognition of the mother's use of her own resources from fathers who have made regular child support payments.	Not Rejected
<u>Hypothesis 11:</u> Fathers perceive changes in their influence over the ten aspects of parenting at the current time as compared to before the separation.	Not Rejected for 2 of 10 aspects of parenting (religious, financial affairs and decision making).
<u>Hypothesis 12:</u> Mothers perceive changes in their perceptions in the fathers' influence over the ten aspects of parenting at the current tiem as compared to before the separation.	Not Rejected for 4 of 10 aspects of parenting (financial affairs and decision making, intellectual development, recreational activi-ties, and religious development. Rejected for 6 aspects of parenting.

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aspects of childrearing did not differ significantly in seven out of ten aspects of parenting. The three aspects of parenting where significant differences between pairs of parents in perceptions of the father's influence occurred were: "Teaching the Child How to Behave", "Giving the Child a Feeling of Being Part of the Family" and "Daily Care and Safety." A possible explanation for this finding might be that the father's opportunity to have influence over these areas are less visible to the mother than they are to the father. The mother may have little information regarding what actually occurs when the children spend a weekend, a week or an extended vacation with their father. Other explanations may be the mother's feeling that she is overburdened by having the major responsibility for the child(ren) much of the time. Buehler and Hogan (1980); Kohen, Brown and Feldberg (1979), Stack (1974), and Weiss (1979) all address the stress felt by mothers who carry the major responsibility for maintaining a home, feeding, clothing and caring for the child in general.

Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers did not differ in their reports of the regularity of child support payments. The composition of the sample might have had some relationship to the outcome of this hypothesis. Sixteen out of 20 (80%) sets of parents indicated that child support payments had always been made on time. In only one case did the mother, who was on Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) recipient, not indicate the degree of regularity payments were made. Her former husband reported that he did not make support payments regularly. He had in fact been threatened with jail. Perhaps there would have been differences in the

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reports of regularity of child support payments had the sample consisted of a larger number of pairs in which irregularity of absence of child support payments was more frequent than in the population under study.

Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers did not differ in their perceptions of the importance of the father's influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting. Using the same instrument Greif (1976) found that divorced fathers considered their influence to be at least of "high importance" in all aspects of parenting with the exception of religion. The fathers in the current study had similar perceptions of the importance of their influence. Although the Greif study did not include mothers' perceptions of the importance of a father's influence over the ten aspects of parenting, the mothers in this study had perceptions that were similar to those of both sets of fathers. More important the three sets of parents were consistent in their rankings of the areas over which they felt a father's influence were most important. The four areas of highest importance were emotional development, moral development, intellectual development and giving the child a feeling of being part of the family.

Fathers who were "regular supporters" and those who were not "regular supporters" did not differ in the amount of contact they had with their children nor did they differ in their perceived influence over the ten aspects of parenting. Mothers who received regular support payments and mothers who did not receive regular

support payments regularly also reported no difference in the amount of influence the fathers had over the ten aspects of parenting.

These results must be considered with care because of the small number of cases where child support payments were not made with regularity. Although three of the four fathers whose child support payments were "not regular" were in the group of fathers whose contact with their children was "not high", they were not among the fathers who had the least amount of contact with their children. While there was no support for Chambers' (1980) hypothesis regarding the possibility of a relationship between "high contact" and "regularity of child support", this issue deserves further exploration. It may be necessary to explore the issue as well as other issues in connection with the relationship between paternal involvement and influence and regularity of child support in research that is not centered on pairs of divorced parents. This might increase participation among fathers whose child support payments are delinquent as well as mothers who prefer that the fathers have little parental influence.

Fathers who make regular child support payments did not differ from fathers who did not make regular child support payments in their perceptions of the importance of a father's influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of childrearing. On the other hand those mothers who did not receive regular child support payments did differ on the perceived importance of the father's influence over the physical, social and psychological

aspects of parenting. The small group of mothers who did not receive regular support payments perceived it to be of greater importance that the fathers have influence than those who did receive regular child support payments. Perhaps these differences between the two groups of mothers can be attributed to their feelings that they were doing the greatest proportion of parenting in addition to working, furthering their education or both. Three of these four mothers felt that the fathers needed to be more involved as parents. One indicated that "general caring was more important than money"; another indicated that the father's involvement with the children allowed her to pursue her own interests. A third mother recognized that influence from both parents was desirable in order to compensate for each other's "strengths and weaknesses."

An alternative explanation to the finding that mothers who did not receive financial support on a regular basis may be based on Newsome's (1976) finding that while economic considerations are important, actual contact and involvement are more important. Again care must be taken in interpreting this finding because of the small number of cases where child support payments were not paid or received on a "regular" basis.

There was no significant difference between fathers who did and did not make regular support payments in their recognition of the mothers' use of their own resources. Neither group of fathers felt that mothers used their own resources to a high degree. Less than half of the fathers who provided support on a regular basis



felt that mothers used their own resources to a "high" degree while only one of the four fathers whose support payments were not regular indicated that the "mother's use of her own resources" was high. On the other hand 19 out of 20 mothers indicated a high use of their own resources. Perhaps some explanation might be found in the individual parent's interpretation of the term "resources." It is possible that the fathers interpreted resources to mean money while the mothers used a broader interpretation that included money, time and energy. Additionally while the fathers were not isolated from the children, perhaps the separation from the mother-child unit "blurred" their perceptions of the time and energy required in parenting in addition to the monetary expenses.

Fathers perceived changes between their pre and post divorce influence over two of the ten aspects of parenting: religion and financial affairs. They perceived a decrease in influence over financial affairs and decision making and an increase in influence over their children's religious development. The decrease in influence over financial affairs is consistent with their expressed concern that they have little control over how the money is used. This finding is consistent with Greif's finding that the fathers were not sure that the money was used for the children. Open-ended responses to questions related to financial affairs and decision making reinforce this finding, particularly for fathers who did not have "high contact" with their children. These fathers were more

concerned over their lack of influence in this area than were fathers in the "high contact" group.

There is little in the literature to indicate that divorced fathers experience an increase in influence over their children's religious development. It may be that religious activities lend structure to the weekend when the children are most likely to be with their father. Another interpretation for this increase may be that when children reach middle childhood the actual participation in religious activities may be more realistic than when they were pre-schoolers. A third explanation is that the fathers themselves felt a greater desire to practice their religion than they did before the divorce. Two fathers did indicate that their interest in religion had been renewed since the divorce occurred.

Mothers perceived significant differences in the fathers' influence in four out of ten aspects of parenting as compared to before the separation. In general they perceived a decrease in their former husbands' influence over financial affairs and decision making. This is consistent with the findings that the fathers also perceived a decrease in influence in this area. Unlike the fathers, the mothers, particularly those whose former husbands' contact with the children was not high, preferred that the fathers not have a great deal of influence in this area. The mothers in the group where the fathers did not have "high contact" expressed feelings that the father's influence would be controlling. This is consistent with the findings of Kohen, Brown and Feldberg (1979). The

mothers in the "high contact" group were less concerned about control and more concerned about the example the fathers set for the children with regard to the handling of money; however, they did indicate that the children could learn from both parents. Six of the ten mothers in the "high contact" group indicated that they valued their former husbands' influence in this area. One mother indicated that "I respect his way of dealing with money."

The mothers perceived an increase in the fathers' influence over intellectual development, recreational activities and religious development. The mothers' perceptions of the increase in the fathers' influence over intellectual development are of interest because the fathers in this study as well as in Greif's study perceived "high" but not statistically significant decreases in this area. Greif offered the explanation that perhaps the fathers' influence did not increase to the extent that they would have liked as the children grew older. It is possible that the mothers in the current study saw the fathers asserting more influence as the children grew older and the opportunity for influence in this area increased.

While the fathers did not perceive differences in their influence over recreational activities the mothers did perceive a significant increase in the fathers' influence over this area. The mothers' perceptions of increased influence in this area are consistent with the literature. Researchers and practitioners including Kelly and Wallerstein (1980), Weiss (1979), Seagull and Seagull (1977) and Atkin and Rubin (1974) all address the issue



of the divorced father's "over participation" in recreational activities. Increased paternal participation in recreational activities was not a problem for the mothers in this study. They tended to view it as beneficial to the children. Their only concern was that they themselves often did not have the financial resources to provide similar or complementary activities.

Like the fathers, the mother perceived an increase in influence over religious development. A small proportion (20%) of the mothers indicated that their former husbands had become more church-oriented in recent years.

Conclusions

The following conclusions may be drawn from the results of this study and pertain only to this study.

1. Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers do not differ in their perceptions of the fathers' post-divorce influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting nor do they differ in their perceptions of the importance of this influence.
2. Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers perceive differences in the actual amount of contact the father has had with the child(ren).
3. Custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers do not differ in their perceptions of the regularity of child support. Regularity of child support is not a major



factor in the amount of contact the father has with the children nor is it a major factor in the amount of influence he has over the physical, social and psychological logical aspects of parenting.

4. There was no significant difference between fathers who did and did not make regular support in their perceptions of the importance of their influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting. However, their former wives did differ. The mothers who did not receive "regular" child support payments considered the fathers' influence to be of greater importance than those mothers who did receive regular child support payments.
5. Fathers who do and do not make regular child support payments do not differ significantly in their perceptions of the mothers' use of their own resources. In general the fathers did not perceive that the mothers used their own resources to a very high degree. This is in a direct contrast to the mothers' perceptions of the degree to which they used their own resources. All of the mothers indicated a high degree of use of their own resources. Similarly the fathers tended to underestimate the actual expenses incurred in raising a child when compared to the mothers' perceptions of what

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proportion of childreading expenses were actually covered by the payments received.

6. Both fathers and mothers perceived changes between the fathers' pre and post-divorce influence over the physical, social and psychological aspects of parenting in only two areas. Both parents perceived decreases in influence over financial affairs and decision making and an increase in influence over religious development.

Limitations of the Study

1. The sample was a convenience sample and probably not representative of the general population of divorced parents. It was representative of mothers who received child support regularly. The sample was over-representative of white upper middle class respondents. No minorities were included. Care should be taken not to generalize beyond the group represented by the sample.
2. Limitations placed upon the sample such as that fathers and mothers live in the same general locale as well as the fact that both parents be willing to participate may have biased it in favor of those families who had developed workable post-divorce relationships. Those families who agreed to participate may have been more accepting of the changes in the role of both parents required by divorce.

3. The findings of the study represent perceptions of parental influence and involvement rather than observations of interaction between fathers and children.
4. Data were obtained only from mothers and fathers. Children's perceptions pertaining to the amount of involvement and influence their fathers had were not ascertained.

Implications for Practical Use

The results of this study could be useful to families who are experiencing or have experienced divorce as well as professionals who work with both adults and children in facilitating adjustment to divorce. There are implications for both custody decisions and financial decisions necessitated by divorce.

Joint custody arrangements of one type or another are evolving as a method of restructuring families in which separation or divorce has occurred. It appears that joint custody or an arrangement like it was either implicitly or explicitly desired by the majority of the parents who participated in this study. Those parents who shared the non-monetary aspects of childrearing were more accepting of one another than parents who did not share. They were also more accepting of perceived inequities in financial arrangements.

While the majority of parents who participated in the study indicated that the regularity of child support payments was not an issue of concern, most expressed a concern about the adequacy and

equity of actual support payments. More attention should be given to the development of support schedules that take into account the actual needs of children and the ability of both parents to provide for those needs over a period that might extend for eighteen or more years. The possibility of mediation in settling disputes related to support payments should not be overlooked. Both mothers and fathers expressed the concern that some of the inequities were related to the greater earning potential of the father as well as the impact of inflation on the adequacy of support payments. Perhaps more attention should be given to the transitional needs of the mother who has been a homemaker or who has been employed in a low-paying occupation. When the spouse's finances permit, the mother (or father) might be given the opportunity to retrain for more remunerative employment that would eventually allow for the assumption of a greater proportion of the financial support of the children.

Finally, there is evidence from this study that contradicts the assumption that the non-custodial parent (mother or father) is an absent parent. Unlike the Fulton (1979) study in which only 20% of the fathers saw their children regularly after a divorce, over 75 percent of the fathers in the current study saw their children on a regular basis.

Divorced fathers can and do play a significant role in the lives of their children. Perhaps the term "single parent family" is a misnomer when applied to families in which a divorce has occurred. Professionals who work with such families to facilitate the transition might alter their objectives in order to facilitate the

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development of a co-parental relationship. The transition might be to that of a single adult who shares the responsibilities of parenting with a former spouse rather than to the status of single parent.

The family system created by divorce does not operate in isolation from other systems. The most salient example is the interaction of the family system with the school system. School personnel would be advised to recognize that children from families in which a divorce has occurred usually have two concerned parents; hence communication with and involvement of both parents by the schools should be encouraged. In addition alternative family structures should not be viewed as the source of learning difficulties. School personnel might develop programs to sensitize teachers to the needs of students whose lives have been touched by divorce as well as to methods of involving both parents on educational decisions affecting the child. There is a need that family and school professionals recognize that the divorced family is not necessarily a deprived or deficit family.

Implications for Theory and Research

1. Exchange Theory is of value as researchers and practitioners attempt to understand the changes that occur in families as the result of divorce. While money has typically been transferred from one parent to the other, closer attention should be given to other exchanges that might occur. Attempts to measure the non-monetary

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contributions of the non-custodial parent should be made. For example are time and services adequate substitutes for money? Researchers might develop methods for measuring the time and money investments of both the custodial and non-custodial parent.

2. Research could be conducted from a critical theory perspective. The researcher who studies both the custodial and non-custodial parent might act as a mediator with the parents in resolving issues pertaining to parenting. This researcher (or research team) has access to information pertaining to the concern of both parents as well as knowledge of the perceptions of either parent of the others parent's strengths and shortcomings. With the consent of the participants this information might be shared as a means of resolving problems related to parenting issues.
3. While large samples are valuable for certain types of research, in depth ethnographic studies utilizing case studies could be of greater use in grounding theory. Replication with families of different socioeconomic levels and in different geographic areas would enhance the development of theory as it pertains to a variety of family lifestyles.
4. Both mothers and fathers indicated that a situation resembling joint custody might be acceptable when families are restructured following a divorce.

Although much has been written on the pros and cons of joint custody further research comparing a variety of possible shared arrangements is warranted.

5. One objective of this study was to determine whether or not pairs of divorced parents concurred in their perceptions of the extent of the non-custodial father's relationship with and influence over the children as well as the perceived importance of the father's relationship with the children. In general, both mothers and fathers had similar perceptions regarding the nature of the relationship as well as the importance of the relationship with and influence of the father. However the emphasis of this study on pairs of parents brings forth additional questions. Did the requirement of the participation of both parents limit participation to families in which the regularity of child support payments was not an issue or to families who had for the most part made adjustments that were acceptable if not comfortable to parents and children? Further research should involve pairs: however, larger samples of unrelated mothers and fathers would add depth to the understanding of the relationship between financial support and continued involvement in parenting.
6. Divorce is becoming a more frequent occurrence among middle and upper middle income families. More research on the impact of divorce on middle and upper middle



class families is needed. Possible questions might be directed toward the way in which child-related goals are established, the determination of a post-divorce level of living for the children and the division of labor between the parents. Post-transition adjustment of the children should also be studied.

7. The parents who participated in this study lived within close proximity of one another. Research on families in which either the parent-child unit or the parent without custody has moved across the state or across the country would be helpful in understanding the impact of divorce on parents and children.
8. This study was based on the premise that the mother was the custodial or primary parent. Replication with families in which the father is the custodial or primary parent and the mother is separated from the parent-child unit would be of use in understanding the impact of divorce.
9. There has been little research on the child's perspective of his or her relationship with either parent following a divorce. There is also little research on the child's perceptions of what material and non-material resources are contributed by either parent to his or her development. The development of an instrument to measure the perceptions of children between six and fourteen and children of high school age as they

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relate to these issues would be of use in understanding how children in traditional families as well as families in which a divorce has occurred view the contributions of their parents.

Divorce has an impact on the extended family as well as the individuals directly involved (mothers, fathers and children). Future research might examine the impact of divorce on maternal and paternal grandparents as well as the extent of the contribution of resources by either set of grandparents to the father-child and mother-child subsystems.

10. The identification of divorced parents for research is not an easy task because of changes that occur in the lives of one or both parents, ie. relocation to another community and/or remarriage. In addition court records do not provide current addresses and agencies and professionals who work with families are not at liberty to provide researchers with names of potential participants.

This study has attempted to look at questions pertaining to the relationship between the divorced non-custodial father and his children. Continued research in this area will help professionals who work with families to understand the nature and result of the changes in family life that evolve from divorce. Research findings might also assist all families as they attempt to live with and understand those families whose structures differ from their own.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

4

PARENT'S INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE
Part I

As you know, the purpose of this study is to find out how parents view the father's relationship with their children after a marital separation or divorce. I will therefore be asking you a number of questions about yourself and your child. I do want to assure you that whatever you say will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shared with anyone.

Case # _____ Mother _____ Father _____

First we have some general background questions:

What is your occupation? _____

What is the highest level of education you completed? _____
(Socioeconomic Status _____)

1. What was the date of your most recent marriage? _____
Were you ever married before this? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, how many times? _____

2. What is your current marital status:
Separated _____ Who initiated the separation:
When? _____ Husband _____ Wife _____
Divorced _____ Mutual _____
Date of Divorce Decree _____ Remarried _____
When did you initially separate? _____ Date of Remarriage _____

3. If remarried, do you have natural born children or stepchildren by this marriage? Yes _____ No _____
Natural born children _____ Stepchildren _____

4. How many children do you and your (husband, wife) have? (The last marriage only). What are their names? How old are they? What is their sex? With whom do they live? Where do they live? Are any of them adopted? When interviewing mother: on the information form you indicated that you had _____ children and go on to question 4.

Name	Age	Sex	Lives With	City	Adopted
a) _____					
b) _____					
c) _____					
d) _____					
e) _____					
f) _____					

5. Let's now just talk about: a _____ b _____ c _____ d _____ e _____ f _____

6. Who has custody? Father _____ Mother _____ Joint _____ Other _____

7. What is the child's living arrangement?

8. What is the visitation agreement?

9. How many times (does your former husband, do you) have contact with your child in an average month:

By phone? _____ Who usually makes the call? _____

By letters? _____ Who usually writes? _____

By face to face visits? _____

(Does he, do you) visit on a regular basis, i.e., a set day and time, or is it more flexible? _____

If more flexible, who usually sets up the time of visit? _____

10. Where (does he, do you) usually see your child now? _____

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PARENTS INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Part II

One of the things we are interested in learning is the different ways that parents feel they influence the growth and development of their children. I will therefore be asking you about different ways (you, or your former husband) may have had input into the life of your child before the separation, and ways you feel you have input into the life of your child now. We realize that not all fathers play the same role in regard to their children, but I will be going through a range of possible areas in which fathers could affect the lives of their children.

	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	N.A.	DK
1. a. In the period just prior to the separation, do you feel (he, you) had influence on the ROUTINE DAILY CARE AND SAFETY of your child? (For example, your child's grooming, bedtime, activity schedule...)	Y		N				
b. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he had, you had)?							
c. Do you feel (he has, you have) influence in this area now?	Y		N				
d. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he has, you have) now?							
e. How do you feel about (this change that has taken place?) (there having been no change?)	P		DK		N		
f. Why do you feel that way?							
2. a. In the period just prior to the separation, do you feel (he, you) had influence on the INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT of your child? (For example, reading, homework, schooling, career choice ...)	Y		N				
b. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he had, you had)?							
c. Do you feel (he has, you have) influence in this area now?	Y		N				
d. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he has, you have) now?							
e. How do you feel about (this change that has taken place?) (there having been no change?)	P		DK		N		
f. Why do you feel that way?							

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	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	N.A.	OK
3. a. In the period just prior to the separation, do you feel (he, you) had influence on the PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT of your child? (For example, sports, interest in one's body...)	Y		N				
b. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he had, you had)?							
c. Do you feel (he has, you have) influence in this area now?	Y		N				
d. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he has, you have) now?							
e. How do you feel about (this change that has taken place?) (there having been no change?)	P		OK		N		

f. Why do you feel that way?

4. a. In the period just prior to the separation, do you feel (he, you) had influence on the RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES of your child? (For example, arts, and crafts, cultural interests, vacations...)	Y		N				
b. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he had, you had)?							
c. Do you feel (he has, you have) influence in this area now?	Y		N				
d. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he has, you have) now?							
e. How do you feel about (this change that has taken place?) (there having been no change?)	P		NS		N		

f. Why do you feel that way?

5. a. In the period just prior to the separation, do you feel (he, you) had influence on TEACHING YOUR CHILD HOW TO BEHAVE? (For example, discipline, manners, chores and responsibilities ...)	Y		N				
b. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he had, you had)?							
c. Do you feel (he has, you have) influence in this area now?	Y		N				
d. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he has, you have) now?							
e. How do you feel about (this change that has taken place?) (there having been no change?)	P		NS		N		

f. Why do you feel that way?



	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	N.A.	DK
6. a. In the period just prior to the separation, do you feel (he, you) had influence on the EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT of your child? (For example, overcoming fears, discussing feelings...)	Y		N				
b. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he had, you had)?							
c. Do you feel (he has, you have) influence in this area now?	Y		N				
d. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he has, you have) now?							
e. How do you feel about (this change that has taken place?) (there having been no change?)	P		NS		N		

f. Why do you feel that way?

7. a. In the period just prior to the separation, do you feel (he, you) had influence on the RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT of your child? (For example, prayers, religious beliefs...)	Y		N				
b. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he had, you had)?							
c. Do you feel (he has, you have) influence in this area now?	Y		N				
d. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he has, you have) now?							
e. How do you feel about (this change that has taken place?) (there having been no change?)	P		NS		N		

f. Why do you feel that way?

8. a. In the period just prior to the separation, do you feel (he, you) had influence on the MORAL OR ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT of your child? (For example, the importance of telling the truth, not to steal...)	Y		N				
b. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he had, you had)?							
c. Do you feel (he has, you have) influence in this area now?	Y		N				
d. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he has, you have) now?							
e. How do you feel about (this change that has taken place?) (there having been no change?)	P		NS		N		

f. Why do you feel that way?



	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	N.A.	DK
9. a. In the period just prior to the separation, do you feel (he, you) had influence on giving your child a feeling of BEING PART OF A FAMILY? (For example, discussing relationships within the family, attending family gatherings...)	Y		N				
b. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he had, you had)?							
c. Do you feel (he has, you have) influence in this area now?	Y		N				
d. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he has, you have) now?							
e. How do you feel about (this change that has taken place?) (there having been no change?)	P		NS		N		
f. Why do you feel that way?							

10. a. In the period just prior to the separation, do you feel (he, you) had influence on the FINANCIAL AFFAIRS of your child? (For example, allowance, or making minor and major financial decisions affecting the child's life...)	Y		N				
b. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he had, you had)?							
c. Do you feel (he has, you have) influence in this area now?	Y		N				
d. If yes, how much influence do you feel (he has, you have) now?							
e. How do you feel about (this change that has taken place?) (there having been no change?)	P		NS		N		
f. Why do you feel that way?							

PARENT'S INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Part III

Case # _____

We have just discussed ten areas in which fathers can influence the growth and development of their children. Below you will find a list of those ten areas. Please indicate how important you consider each of these areas.

	Very High Importance	High Importance	Medium Importance	Little Importance	Very Little Importance
Influencing the ROUTINE DAILY CARE AND SAFETY of the child.					
Influencing the INTELLECTUAL DEVELOPMENT of the child.					
Influencing the PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT of the child.					
Influencing the RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES of the child.					
Teaching the child MANNERS AND HOW TO BEHAVE.					
Influencing the EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT of the child.					
Influencing the RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT of the child.					
Influencing the MORAL OR ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT of the child.					
Helping the child to experi- ence BEING PART OF A FAMILY.					
Influencing the FINANCIAL DECISIONS affecting the child.					

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PARENT'S INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Part IV

I'd like to go back and discuss more fully some of the areas we covered in the beginning of the interview.

1. You explained your custody arrangement to me. Could you also tell me:

- a. How was custody decided: Mutually by father and mother _____
 Negotiated via lawyers _____
 By court action _____
 Other (specify) _____
 Not applicable _____
 Doesn't know _____

b. What custody arrangement had you (mother, father) wanted?

Mother _____
 Father _____
 Joint Physical _____
 Joint Legal _____
 Joint Physical and Legal _____
 Other _____

2. You explained your child's living arrangement. Could you also tell me:

- a. How was that decided: Mutually by father and mother _____
 Negotiated via lawyers _____
 By court action _____
 Other (specify) _____
 Not applicable _____
 Doesn't know _____

b. What living arrangement had you (mother, father) wanted?

With Mother _____
 Primarily With Father _____
 Alternating between Mothers and Fathers home _____
 Other _____

3. You explained the visitation agreement.

- a. How was that decided: Mutually by father and mother _____
 Negotiated via lawyers _____
 By court action _____
 Other (specify) _____
 Not applicable _____
 Doesn't know _____

b. What visitation agreement had you (mother, father) wanted?

4a. Just prior to the separation, how many hours, if any, did (you, your husband) spend with your child alone in an average week? _____

b. And now? _____

c. How do you feel about (this change that has taken place?) (there having been no change?)

5a. Just prior to the separation, how many hours, if any, did (you, your, husband) spend with your child together with others in an average week? _____

b. Who were the "others"?

c. And now? _____ Who are the "others"?

How do you feel about (this change that has taken place?) (there having been no change?)

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6. How many rooms are there in the apartment or house where you live now?

How many people share this apartment or house? _____

Does that living arrangement pose any problems in being with your child? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, please explain:

7. Do you (pay, receive) child support? _____

Yes _____ No _____

How regularly have you (has he) made these payments?

Has Never Missed a Payment _____
Misses or is late 1-3 payments per year _____
Misses or is late 3-6 payments per year _____
Misses or is late more than 6 payments per year _____

How was the amount decided:

Mutually by father and mother _____
Negotiated via lawyers _____
By court action _____

Are (you, your wife) currently receiving AFDC payments

Yes _____ No _____

Have (you, your husband's) wages been garnished?

Yes _____ No _____

8. Do you (pay, receive) alimony?

How do you feel about that?

How was the amount decided:

Mutually by father and mother _____
Negotiated via lawyers _____
By court action _____

- 9a. To what extent to you believe child support payments cover the costs of childrearing? 100% 75-100% 50-75% 50% 25-50% less than 25%

- b. To what extent do you believe child support payments should cover the costs of childrearing?

10. Custodial mothers often invest considerable amounts of time, energy, and money from sources other than child support in caring for their children.

Do you (does your wife) use (your, her) own resources to meet the needs of the children?

Yes _____ No _____

If yes, to what extent?

Very high _____ High _____ Some _____ Little _____

How do you feel about this?

Very Little _____

Why do you feel this way?

Positive _____ Not Sure _____ Negative _____

11. Would you tell me your income? _____

12. (Social Class _____)

13. Do (you, your husband) have periods of unemployment?

Yes _____ No _____

14. Would you tell me your religion

Protestant _____ Catholic _____ Jewish _____ Other _____
None _____

15. a. Were your parents divorced or separated? Yes _____ No _____

b. If yes, how old were you at that time? _____

16. Separated and divorced parents often have considerable involvement with lawyers. Do you feel that in your particular situation lawyers have helped or hindered your relationship (your former spouse's relationship) with your child, or did they have no effect?

Can you explain?

17. Many separated and divorced parents are involved in court action around issues of child custody, visitation, child support, etc.

Were you? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, do you feel that in your particular situation your involvement with the courts helped or hindered (you, your spouses) relationship with your child, or did they have no effect?

Can you explain?

18. This must have been a time of significant stress for you. Could you tell me: Have you developed any physical problems or symptoms since the separation or divorce? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, can you describe them?

Did you consult a doctor? Yes _____ No _____

19. Have you or your child been hospitalized since the separation or divorce?

Mother:	Yes _____	No _____
Father:	Yes _____	No _____
Child:	Yes _____	No _____

If yes, for what reasons?

Mother:	_____	When?	_____
Father:	_____	When?	_____
Child:	_____	When?	_____

20. Were you or your child ever hospitalized before the separation or divorce?

Mother:	Yes _____	No _____
Father:	Yes _____	No _____
Child:	Yes _____	No _____

If yes, for what reasons?

Mother:	_____	When?	_____
Father:	_____	When?	_____
Child:	_____	When?	_____

21. a. What have you found to be the most difficult or troublesome aspect of (you, your husband's) relationship with your child following the separation and/or divorce?

b. What have you found to be the most positive aspect of (you, your husband's) relationship with your child following the separation and/or divorce?

22. What have you found to be the most difficult or troubling aspect(s) of your relationship with your (husband and/or wife) following the divorce?

What have you found to be the most positive aspect(s) of your relationship with your (husband and/or wife) following the divorce?

1

Please indicate your age:

Under 25 _____

25 - 29 _____

30 - 34 _____

35 - 39 _____

40 - 45 _____

45 - 49 _____

Over 50 _____

Please indicate your approximate family income:

Under \$5,000 _____

\$5,000 - \$ 9,999 _____

\$10,000 - \$14,999 _____

\$15,000 - \$24,999 _____

\$25,000 - \$29,999 _____

\$30,000 - \$39,999 _____

\$40,000 - \$49,999 _____

Over \$50,000 _____

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Contact Score Weights

	Frequency Per Month	Score
Phone Calls	0	0
	1-3	3
	4-7	6
	8-12	9
	13-19	12
	20+	15
Letters	0	0
	1-2	1
	3-4	2
Visits	0-1	2
	2-3	6
	4-6	12
	7-10	18
	11-14	24
	15+	30

Judith Brown Greif. Child Absence: Fathers' Perception Of Their Relationship To Their Children Subsequent to Divorce. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Adelphi University, 1977.

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APPENDIX B

TABLE 29.--Sources for Locating Participants.

Source	No. Who Participated N = 20	Number Who Did Not Participate N = 53
Newspaper Ad	1	8
Announcements on Bulletin Boards and Newsletters	1	2
Single Parent/Single Adult Organizations	1	9
Community Contacts (Colleagues, Acquaintances)	17	34
Attorneys, Ministers	<u>0</u>	—
Total	20	53

TABLE 30.--Summary of Sources Contacted To Obtain Sample

	Potential Participants	Actual Participated
Single Adult Groups: 9 Groups	9	1
Community Contacts:		
5 Ministers	0	0
3 Attorneys	0	0
4 Extension Home Economists	1	1
Other Colleagues	33	16
Newspaper Ad	8	1
Announcements on Community Bulletin Boards and Newsletters	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	53	20

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TABLE 31.--Summary of Reasons for Non-Participation (N = 53).

Reason	No.	%*
Father Lived too Far	9	17
Divorce Not Final	5	9
Mother Remarried	3	6
Mother Refused	13	25
Father Refused	9	17
Father Agreed/Mother Could Not Be Reached	2	4
Mother Agreed/Father Could Not Be Reached	1	2
Children Did Not Meet Age Requirements	6	11
Current Litigation Regarding Custody Arrangements	4	8
Mother Did Not Know Whereabouts of Father	1	2

*Percentages are rounded.

APPENDIX C

Information for Review of Projects
Involving Human Subjects

Mothers' and Fathers' Perceptions of Non-Custodial
Fathers' Post-Divorce Relationship To Their Children

1. This study is an investigation of the relationship between divorced non-custodial fathers and children in the custody of their former wives. This relationship will be examined from the perspective of both non-custodial fathers and custodial mothers. Steps in the study include developing the same design, establishing the sample, developing the interview schedule, and collecting and analyzing the data.

- a. Assess the degree to which non-custodial fathers indicate actually are involved in the physical, psychological, and social-economic aspects of parenting.
- b. Assess the degree to which custodial mothers indicate that the non-custodial fathers should be and actually are involved in the physical, psychological and social-economic aspects of childrearing.
- c. Compare the degree of congruency between the responses of the non-custodial fathers and custodial mothers.

- d. Assess the relationship between the regularity of child support payments and the degree of involvement or desired involvement in the above-mentioned aspects of childrearing based upon the perceptions of the custodial mother and non-custodial father.

2. The population under investigation includes divorced parents of elementary school-aged children resident in the Lansing area. To control for distance, both parents must reside within a one-hour driving distance of each other. At the time the divorce was granted, the child(ren) under consideration must have been no less than five years of age. The child(ren) will be no older than 12 years at the time the parents participate in the study.

The sample will be drawn from court records of divorces obtained in Ingham County during the years of 1977, 1978, and 1979. These records are open to the public. A letter will be sent to custodial mothers explaining the nature of the study. If the mother is willing to participate she will be asked to complete and return the enclosed information form and sign the consent form. The custodial mothers will be asked to indicate whether they think their former husbands would be willing to participate in the study and if so, to provide information about their address and phone numbers. Following the receipt of information from custodial mothers, a letter explaining the nature of the study will be sent to non-custodial

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fathers. The investigator will then contact both mothers and fathers to set up separate appointments for the interviews.

- 3 a. The risk to participants should be minimal since they are free to refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the interview at any time. There may be a slight risk to the custodial mother in that she is being asked to provide information about her former husband, however, the fact that the provisions of this information is voluntary should eliminate any persons who have reservations about discussing relationships or providing the address and phone number of a former husband.
- b. All data will be held in strict confidence. Names will not appear on interview schedules. Income will be ascertained by having the participant mark a slip and return it to the interviewer in an envelope. The interviewer has been trained to respect the confidentiality of participants. The research report will be prepared in a way that individual participants cannot be identified.
- c. The investigation will help identify the expectations the divorced parents have of each other in their efforts to meet the physical, psychological and social-economic needs of their children. This information will be of use to divorced and divorcing

families as well as attorneys, the court system, counselors, and other providers who may be involved with these families.

The number of divorces that involve children increases each year. The custodial mother and non-custodial father are often unsure of what role each parent has in meeting the needs of their child(ren). As these parents review the post-divorce parenting system that has evolved, they may see themselves and/or their former spouse in a more positive light or begin to consider how they might work together as parents wanting the best solution possible for their child(ren).

4. The consent form will be mailed to custodial mothers with a letter explaining the study. The signed form as well as the completed information form will be returned to the researcher in the envelope provided.

The consent form will also be mailed to the non-custodial father with a letter explaining the study. The form will be collected at the time of the interview. The interviewer will have additional copies of the letter and consent form in the event that the original has been lost or misplaced.

5. Consent forms attached.

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6. Interview Schedule attached.

The interview will be conducted by the investigator or other trained interviewer individually with each parent at a time and place convenient to the parent. The interview setting will be the home or work place of the parent, or any other setting convenient to the parent (i.e. the researcher's office, library, etc.).

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MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF HUMAN ECOLOGY

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DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CHILD ECOLOGY

(LETTER FOR CUSTODIAL MOTHER)

I am a doctoral student at Michigan State University. As part of the requirements for my degree, I am conducting a study that explores the way in which divorced parents make decisions about childrearing, visitation, and financial support. The information obtained from the results of this study will be of use to divorced or divorcing parents, attorneys, counselors, and court personnel in addressing decisions regarding children.

I would like to visit you in your home, at your place of business or at another location that is convenient. I would discuss your former husband's relationship with you and your children on issues concerning the children. Because I am interested in learning how both custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers feel about childrearing, support and visitation, I would like to conduct a similar interview with your former husband. If your former husband lives no more than one hour's driving distance from your home, his visitation privileges have not been restricted by the courts in order to protect the safety of you and/or the children, and you think he would be willing to participate in this study, please write his name, current address, and phone number in the space provided on the back of this letter.

During our visit you are free to not answer any questions, ask questions of me, and end our visit at any time. Our discussion will be between you and me, with no one else seeing your answers, including your former husband if he participates in the study. The research report will be prepared in a way that no participant is identified.

If you would be willing to participate in this study, please sign in the space below, complete the information form on the reverse side of this letter, and return it to me in the enclosed stamped envelope. Following the return of the information form, I will contact you to set up a convenient time for the interview. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (517) 353-9578 or (517) 349-6113 (after 5:00 p.m.).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Barbara G. Berkman

Barbara G. Berkman

I have read the above letter and understand what is asked of me. I would like to participate in this study.

Date _____

Signature _____

INFORMATION FORM

Name: _____

Current Address: _____

Phone Number(s): Home _____ Work _____

1. You may contact me at work: Yes _____ No _____

2. Please indicate the following information on each child of the marriage that ended between 1977 and 1980.

First Name	Age	Sex	Lives With	Adopted (yes or no)
------------	-----	-----	------------	------------------------

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

f. _____

3. At the time of your divorce, was your husband ordered to pay child support? Yes _____ No _____

4. If your former husband was ordered to pay child support, with what degree of regularity has he made this payment?

Has never missed a payment _____
 Misses or is late 1 to 3 payments per year _____
 Misses or is late 3 to 6 payments per year _____
 Misses or is late more than 6 payments per year _____

5. Have his wages been garnished? Yes _____ No _____

6. Does your former husband have periods of unemployment: Yes _____ No _____

7. Are you currently receiving AFDC payments? Yes _____ No _____

8. Does your former husband live within a one-hour driving distance from your home? Yes _____ No _____

9. Name, Address, City and Telephone Number of your Former Husband.

Thank You For Your Assistance



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DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CHILD ECOLOGY

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(LETTER FOR NON-CUSTODIAL FATHER)


I am a doctoral student at Michigan State University. As part of the requirements for my degree, I am conducting a study that explores the way in which divorced parents make decisions about childrearing, visitation, and financial support. The information obtained from the results of this study will be of use to divorced or divorcing parents, attorneys, counselors, and court personnel in addressing decisions regarding children.

I would like to visit you in your home, place of business or at another location that is convenient and ask you questions about your relationship with your children and your former wife on issues concerning your children.

During our visit you are free to not answer any questions, ask questions of me, and end our visit at any time. Our discussion will be between you and me, with no one else seeing your answers, including your former wife who is also participating in the study. The research report will be prepared in a way that neither you nor your children might be identified by the reader.

I will contact you within the next few days to set up a convenient time for the interview. Please keep this letter as I will be collecting the consent form at the time of the interview.

Sincerely,



Barbara G. Berkman

CONSENT FORM - NON-CUSTODIAL FATHER

I understand the objectives of this study and would like to participate. I understand that the information I provide will be confidential and no individual will be identified. I further understand that the information I provide will not be discussed with my former wife.

Date _____ Signature _____

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DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CHILD ECOLOGY

(LETTER FOR EITHER PARENT)

I am a doctoral student at Michigan State University. As part of the requirements for my degree, I am conducting a study that explores the way in which divorced parents make decisions about childrearing, visitation, and financial support. The information obtained from the results of this study will be of use to divorced or divorcing parents, attorneys, counselors, and court personnel in addressing decisions regarding children.

I would like to visit you in your home, at your place of business or at another location that is convenient. I would discuss your former spouse's relationship with you and your children on issues concerning the children. Because I am interested in learning how both custodial mothers and non-custodial fathers feel about childrearing, support and visitation, I would like to conduct a similar interview with your former spouse. If your former spouse lives no more than one hour's driving distance from your home, his (your) visitation privileges have not been restricted by the courts in order to protect the safety of you and/or the children, and you think he/she would be willing to participate in this study, please write his/her name, current address, and phone number in the space provided on the back of this letter.

During our visit you are free to not answer any questions, ask questions of me, and end our visit at any time. Our discussion will be between you and me, with no one else seeing your answers, including your former spouse if he/she participates in the study. The research report will be prepared in a way that no participant is identified.

If you would be willing to participate in this study, please sign in the space below, complete the information form on the reverse side of this letter, and return it to me in the enclosed stamped envelope. Following the return of the information form, I will contact you to set up a convenient time for the interview. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (517) 353-9758 or (517) 349-6113 (after 5:00 p.m.)

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Barbara G. Berkman

Barbara G. Berkman

I have read the above letter and understand what is asked of me. I would like to participate in this study.

Date _____

Signature _____

INFORMATION FORM

Mother's Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Phone Number: Home _____ Work _____

May be contacted at work? Yes _____ No _____

Father's Name _____

Address _____

City _____

Phone Number: Home _____ Work _____

May be contacted at work? Yes _____ No _____

Please provide the following information for each child

	First Name	Present Age	Age at Time of Separation	Lives With	Type of Custody
a.					
b.					
c.					
d.					
e.					

Thank You For Your Assistance

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