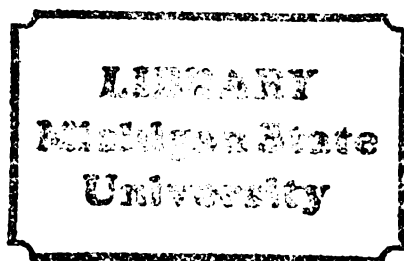


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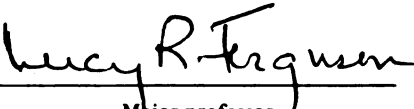


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THE ASSESSMENT OF DYNAMIC RELATIONAL  
PATTERNS WITHIN THE FAMILY SYSTEM

By  
Jerry Stuart Adams

A THESIS

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

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## ABSTRACT

### THE ASSESSMENT OF DYNAMIC RELATIONAL PATTERNS WITHIN THE FAMILY SYSTEM

By

Jerry Stuart Adams

The family forms a social system in which each individual's inner psychological world is interdependently tied to the psychological world of the other family members through the mechanism of projective identification. In order to examine this interdependence, twenty family triads (father, mother and adolescent son) were asked to create stories to six TAT cards, both individually and together as a family unit. The school records of ten of the adolescents contained three or more instances of school behavior problems; the ten controls had zero or one. It was assumed that in those families where the adolescent had a history of behavioral problems at school, the son was expressing the denied or split-off aggressive impulses of the parents. It was hypothesized that the fantasy stories of these families would differ in aggressive content from those of the control families. There were few significant findings, but the patterns evident in the data do generally support the theoretical model. Intra-familial differences in aggressive content suggest that the fathers of behavior problem adolescents are conflicted about their own aggressive tendencies and both the son and the mother appear to be intrapsychically involved in the father's conflict.

## DEDICATION

To Iva Zoe

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

This study will focus on the development of an assessment procedure appropriate for the evaluation of family dynamics. There is a growing body of primarily theoretical literature, clinical in origin, that emphasizes the interdependence between an individual's intrapsychic life and his/her family of origin. Individuals are perceived as functioning in a family system, and relational constructs are employed to understand both conscious and unconscious processes or dynamics. What was once the province of a strictly individual, intrapsychic approach, i.e., unconscious wishes, needs, affects and fantasies, is now under scrutiny from a family-system perspective. Thus, there is an attempt to combine the intrapsychic and interpersonal dimensions of human behavior. The assessment procedure developed in the present study, which will be referred to as the Thematic Apperception Family Interaction Test, (TAFIT), is an attempt to offer empirical support towards this integration of individual-intrapsychic and interpersonal-family dynamics.

#### Relevant Clinical and Theoretical Background

It is essential to provide a theoretical framework which emphasizes and describes the manner in which interactions within the family system are major determinants of individual behavior and

psychological functioning, focusing on what Framo (1972) refers to as the "family's personality-forming influence". This review will concentrate on those clinicians and theoreticians who stress the interdependence between the intrapsychic and interpersonal dimensions of behavior.

There are a number of basically similar theoretical concepts, e.g., "superego lacunae" (Johnson and Szurek, 1952), "scapegoating" (Vogel and Bell, 1968), "delineations" (Zinner and Shapiro, 1972), "irrational role assignment" (Framo, 1972, 1976) and "bound-up delegate" (Stierlin, 1976), which when grouped together form a substantial body of literature that presents the position that individual behavior and intrapsychic functioning can be understood from a relational-interpersonal perspective, and furthermore, that relational-family dynamics do have a significant effect on the individual's conscious and unconscious behavior. The underlying similarity of these various concepts is that they imply that a given person's implicit and explicit perceptions and interactions with another may become part of that other's intrapsychic dynamics, e.g., self-image and/or motivational system. In many respects Framo (1972, p. 271) exemplifies these various concepts when he states that individual family members "reciprocally carry part of each others' psychology and form a feedback system which in turn regulates and patterns their individual behavior." It is also important to point out that these various concepts derive, both directly and indirectly, from object relations theory which has proven extremely useful in clinical work with families (e.g., Stewart et al., 1975).



Johnson and Szurek's (1952) work on the etiology of "anti-social acting out", i.e., delinquent behavior, is of great historical significance and in fact has been referred to as a "classical contribution" (Stierlin et al., 1971). Even though Johnson and Szurek's observations, dating back to 1939, originate from a psychoanalytic intrapsychic orientation, their work is frequently referred to in the literature, some 35 years later, by those clinicians and theoreticians working from a family perspective. Their work on the dynamics involved in delinquency serves as a prime example of how the psychoanalytic-intrapsychic position has been, and can be, modified or extended into a family interaction viewpoint.

Superego Lacunae. Delinquent behavior was viewed traditionally as the individual being excessively guilty about conflicts or being driven by constitutionally unmanageable instinctual drives (Giffin, Johnson and Littin, 1968). But Johnson and Szurek perceived the child's delinquency, viewed as a circumscribed deficit in the superego, ("superego lacunae"), as an outgrowth of family relational dynamics. It is interesting to note that this change in perspective was the result of a change in therapeutic procedures. Operating from the traditional conceptual viewpoint, Johnson and Szurek (p. 339) reported having "failed repeatedly to understand relatively simple cases of acting out." They then engaged in "collaborative therapy" in which both child and parent were seen in individual dynamic psychotherapy and "the interchange between therapists (was) regular and frequent" (Giffin et al., 1968, p. 676). Thus, while

"collaborative therapy" is not conjoint family therapy, it does appear to have been an important step towards the gathering of clinical observations on the interdependence in intrapsychic functioning among family members. Many years later Framo (1972, p. 271) also points out the clinical usefulness of a relational conceptual orientation when he reports that his clinical experience in family therapy has shown that symptoms or disordered behaviors "which remain etiologically and dynamically obscure from the standpoint of individual (intrapsychic) psychology, can often be decoded when viewed within the matrix of their intimate social systems."

Johnson and Szurek's (1952) work with collaborative therapy at the Chicago Institute for Juvenile Research led them to the general observation "that the parental neurosis often provides the unconscious impetus to the child's neurosis" (p. 326). It was a logical extension when they arrived at their basic thesis regarding delinquency, namely, "that antisocial acting out in a child is unconsciously initiated, fostered, and sanctioned by the parents, who vicariously achieve gratification for their own poorly integrated forbidden impulses through a child's acting out" (Giffin et al., 1968, p. 671). Hence it appears that the child's behavior and intrapsychic life is intricately tied to the psychodynamics of other family members, in this case particularly the parents, and this interchange appears to cross even generational boundaries; the child's superego lacunae are seen to "correspond to similar unconscious defects of the parent's superego which in turn was derived

from the conscious and unconscious permissiveness of their own parents" (Johnson and Szurek, 1952, p. 324).

Stierlin et al. (1971, p. 411) point out that this type of conceptualizing implies a shift away from the traditional lines of psychoanalytic theory "which held that the primary locus of influence was the child who was conceived as internalizing his/her parents in part or whole--through imitation, introjection or identification." The work of Johnson and Szurek, as well as others to be reviewed, have "subsequently corrected this imbalance" by emphasizing the parent's active contributions to such internalizations; while in turn introducing, what at times appears to be the opposite imbalance in that effects are still seen as unidirectional, i.e., parent to child.

Scapegoating. Even though employing different terminology and beginning with a focus on the family and not the individual, Vogel and Bell (1968) have made observations similar to those stated above. Their position is that the disturbed child is the family scapegoat that "serves to condense a variety of social and psychological problems impinging on the family" (p. 416). Vogel and Bell observed that the child was seen by the parents to possess very undesirable traits. Even though the parents possess these same undesirable traits, the scapegoated child serves to keep the focus of attention away from the parents and onto the child. The parent's individual problems are projected onto the child, so that the parents deal with them as the child's problems rather than their own.

Congruent with the observations of Johnson and Szurek, Vogel and Bell comment on how the parents encourage their children to act out the parent's own repressed wishes. Additionally, it is noted that the child is chosen as an appropriate object to symbolize conflict and to draw off tensions which are typically the result of unresolved conflicts within the marital relationship. Vogel and Bell state that once the child has responded to the implicit wishes of the family, particularly the parents, it is difficult to differentiate the child playing the role from the child who has actually internalized the role and corresponding behaviors.

### Object Relations Theory

The concepts of "delineations" (Zinner and Shapiro, 1972) and "irrational role assignments" (Framo, 1965, 1972, 1976), both have their roots in the intrapsychic theory of object relations. In order to advance the present review it will be helpful to sketch briefly the contributions of object relations theory, since this will help highlight the psychic mechanisms which underlie the reciprocal interdependence in psychological functioning found between family members.

Delineations. The concept of "splitting" the object world into good vs. bad objects is attributed to Melanie Klein. This is a defensive mode evolving from an early infantile developmental stage which is characterized by splitting of the ego and objects as a defense against anxiety (Zinner and Shapiro, 1972). In order to bring this concept into an interpersonal domain, Zinner and Shapiro

focus on Klein's concept of "projective identification". This is a psychic mechanism which is defined as a combination of splitting-off parts of the self and projecting them onto another person, with the feeling of identification with the other because one has attributed qualities or attributes of one's own to them. The contents and dynamics of projective identification have been clearly examined by Zinner and Shapiro while observing the ways in which parents influence the adolescent's identity formation. These authors employ the concept of "delineations" to refer to those modes of parental perception and behavior which communicate to the adolescent the parent's image of him/her. Zinner and Shapiro point out, however, that many parental delineations reflect parental defensive needs rather than a realistic appraisal of the adolescent's attributes, i.e., this is an example of parental projective identification. Since these "defensive delineations" are an expression of parental defensive needs, there is a strong motivation to sustain these perceptions rather than taking into account the adolescent's actual behavior which might otherwise alter them. Zinner and Shapiro (p. 524) point out that "these defensive delineations are the expression, at an individual level, of family group behavior which is determined more by shared unconscious fantasies than by reality considerations."

These delineating communications are very important to the developing child in that they provide the raw material for adolescent internalization and subsequent identity formation. Zinner and Shapiro (p. 524) point out that the adolescent does identify with



these defensively distorted parental images, and thus his/her own "subjective self-experience is likely to be affected by parental efforts to diminish their own anxiety." It is interesting to note the striking similarities between these observations made from an object relations approach and those made by Johnson and Szurek from a more traditional psychoanalytic perspective. Giffin et al. (1968, p. 673) postulates that the dynamics involved in the transmission of the superego lacunae involves the child's identification with the parent, which "includes the subtleties of the parent's conscious and unconscious image of the child." The child internalizes not only the positive, socially acceptable attitude of the parents, "but also the frequently unexpressed antisocial feelings."

The work of Klein has been elaborated by Fairbairn, who postulates that the basic motivation of human behavior is the need for a satisfying object relationship (Framo, 1972). Framo (1972, 1976) provides a schematicized review of Fairbairn's basic formulations: The young child is placed in a precarious situation when the parent's behavior is perceived as threatening or anxiety producing, e.g., perceived as rejection, desertion and/or persecution. The child is not in a position to give up the parents as external objects, nor is the child frequently capable of making significant changes in the family structure or environment. Fairbairn proposes that the child handles such anxiety, frustration and disappointment by internalizing the "loved-hated" parent. Thus while not capable of modifying the external reality, the child is able to master and control the object in the inner psychic world. Framo (1972, p. 274)

points out that "it is the emotional relationship between the self and some external object which is internalized, not feelings as such." The internalized object is subsequently repressed and retained as an introject, a psychological representative. It is essential to point out that these internal objects, undergo various splits and become sub-identities and part of the structure of the personality. As Framo (Ibid.) dramatically describes, the internalized objects continue to have a life of their own, significantly affecting the individual's psychological functioning:

"The bad internal objects remain as 'internal saboteurs' or warring forces in the inner world--furious, guilty, hungry, anxious, conflictual--consuming psychic energy which the central ego should have available for evaluation of reality and investment in external relationships."

Framo (1972, 1976) points out that this inner psychological splitting of which Fairbairn speaks can be seen to have real external counterparts, in that people will seek representatives of their bad objects in their external relationships. People, especially intimates, are often perceived largely in terms of the individual's own needs, or as carrying one's own guilt-laden denied, split-off traits. Of special importance to understanding relational patterns within the family is Framo's (1976, p. 194) statement that:

"Life situations in outer reality are not only unconsciously interpreted in the light of the inner object world, resulting in distorted expectations of other people, but active unconscious attempts are made to force and change close relationships into fitting the internal role model."

Irrational Role Assignment. This provides the theoretical background for Framo (1972, p. 274), who views the family as a



unique setting in which human needs "operate most forcefully", with struggles over love, rejection, hurt, gratification and jealousy "being a continuous dynamic process from one generation to the next." Therefore, Framo's concept of "projective transference distortion" or "irrational role assignment"--role being defined as a pattern or type of behavior which a person builds up in terms of what others expect and demand of him/her--"reflects unconscious attempts of the parents to master, re-enact, or externalize their intrapsychic conflicts about these powerful needs, derived from relationship experiences in the family of origin" (Ibid.). Similarly, Zinner and Shapiro (1972) point out that parents' relations with their adolescents contain highly conflicted elements of an object relationship with the parent's own family of origin. While projective transferences, externalizations and vicarious participation all aid in the avoidance of inner anxiety and the maintenance of psychological equilibrium, Framo (1972, p. 279) suggests that "object possession" may be the "chief motive underlying irrational role assignments" since these mechanisms all serve the function of "recapturing the symbolically retained family members." According to Framo, this serves to delay the pain of loss and mourning. Zinner and Shapiro observed that the parents' projections, as inferred from parental delineations, contain elements of their own internalized relationships. Thus Zinner and Shapiro (p. 526) agree with Framo when they state that projective identification "serves not only a defensive function, but also a restorative one to bring back to life in the form of the offspring the parent's own lost objects, both good and bad."

Framo, and Zinner and Shapiro, respectively, point out that the processes they describe take place in normal as well as "pathological" families. Zinner and Shapiro state that the variables relevant to the development of psychopathology involve the content of the projected material, the capacity of the parents to differentiate themselves from the child and the intensity of the parental defensive requirements. Thus, depending on the nature of the interaction of these factors, "projective identification can endow a relationship with salutary empathic qualities or, to the contrary, generate binding attributions in which the child remains a creature of the parental defensive economy" (Zinner and Shapiro, 1972, p. 526). In a similar vein, Framo (1965, p. 192) states that the assigned roles within the family are infinite. He has observed that in multiple sibling families the various children "come to represent valued or feared expectations of the parents, based on parental introjects." Finally, Stewart et al. (1975, p. 176) also point out that while the child, seen as the identified client, becomes a carrier or container of the split-off, unacceptable impulses of the parents, "the child may be idealized just as he may be denigrated."

In order to complete this review it is essential to point out that an essential part of the picture is still missing. For example, Giffin et al. (1968, p. 674) observed that the delinquent child "wishes to do the things which he senses gives the parents pleasure, even though he may be punished. There is a positive undeniable drive towards acting in the manner which the parents unconsciously wish, even though it be antisocial in direction."

Quite simply put, it is essential to ask Why? How can this observation of irrational role assignment or scapegoating be accounted for in terms of the child, the recipient of these parental projections?

Projective Identification and Collusion. It will be helpful to return to the mechanism of projective identification in order to shed light on this important issue. Stewart et al. (1975, p. 166) points out that "an integral part of projective identification is the concept of collusion by which the recipient of the split-off part of the partner does not disown the projection but acts upon the conscious or unconscious message." Zinner and Shapiro (1972) also point out that the subject's behavior in projective identification is guided by two principles: 1) the subject interacts with that projected part of him/herself in the object as she/he would interact with the self were it internalized and 2) the subject must make an effort to involve the object (i.e., the other person) as a collusive partner in conforming with the way in which she/he is perceived. The disinheriting of the projected part is not so complete that the subject loses her/his capacity to experience vicariously a wide range of the object's feelings, including gratification as well as punishment and deprivation. Thus, for example, in the case of delinquency, the child's behavior becomes a means through which the "antisocial impulses of the parents are expressed through the child" (Giffin, 1968, p. 676), as well as keeping those impulses in check by vicariously experiencing the child's punishment. By externalizing

the conflict via projective identification, the parent is likely to experience a diminution in the intensity of anxiety compared to the parent's internalization of the conflict.

This collusion can easily be seen in regards to the marital relationship. The two partners engage in an implicit reciprocal agreement, or trade-off, with each partner colluding to carry a split-off part for the other (Dicks, 1963; Stewart et al., 1975). In terms of the child within the family, however, the motivation to collude is not as straightforward.

Zinner and Shapiro do provide a list of coercions and motivational forces which are involved in the adolescent's colluding with the parent's projective identification. Among these are 1) the opportunity for impulse gratification (e.g., the delinquent's behavior), 2) actualization of omnipotent fantasies supported by the child's power to determine his/her parent's self-experience, 3) tacit parental compliance with the adolescent's defensive needs, and 4) selective parental reinforcement of attributes of the adolescent which conform to the parental projection. In regards to the second alternative Stierlin (1976, p. 287) speaks of the schizophrenic child as a "bound-up delegate", raising the possibility that the parent's very own psychological and "perhaps even physical" survival now depends on the child. Thus the child, as the recipient of massive parental projections, is given meaning, a sense of great importance, a task and "perhaps most important" the child is given power. The child can deliver him/her-self as "living proof of (the parent's) own sickness and badness" (Stierlin et al., 1971, p. 425).

Additionally, in the extreme case, by letting him/her-self be exploited and ruined the child gains the upper hand in the relationship with the parents by operating the "guilt lever". On the other hand, there is also a sense of guilt which the child experiences over hurting the parents. Therefore, the child is motivated to collude with the unconscious parental needs and wishes, thereby exhibiting a genuine desire to serve and help his family. The child's collusion as an act of loyalty to the family captures, in large part, the essence of Boszormenyi-Nagy and Spark's (1973) concept of "invisible loyalties". Finally, it is interesting to note that support for the fourth alternative listed above is provided by Vogel and Bell (1968, p. 422). They point out that once the child had responded to the implicit wishes of the parents and acted disturbed, he/she was treated as disturbed and "the particular role assigned to the child was appropriately rewarded."

While these motivational forces listed above are seen to account, in part, for the child's collusion with the parent's projections, Zinner and Shapiro (1972) clearly point out that the adolescent's collusion with the parent's defensive system is most strongly motivated by the fear of object loss were the adolescent not to act according to the parent's unconscious wishes and needs. Framo points out that in some families veiled threats of emotional or even legal disowning are used on those who have strayed from their assigned roles. Stierlin et al. (1971) also focus on this same underlying dimension when they emphasize the importance of the child's dependent emotional tie. Thus as Framo (1972, p. 302) points

out, for the sake of parental approval and because abandonment has such disastrous consequences, the child will sacrifice whatever ego integrity is called for in order to survive.

"If the price for acceptance is to absorb unrealities, accept an irrational identity or role assignment, be persecuted, be scapegoated, be parentified, or what have you, this price will have to be paid; to be alone or pushed out of the family either physically or psychologically is too unthinkable."

Framo (1972, p. 280) appropriately cautions against labeling the family processes and phenomena described in this review as "conscious" or "unconscious". He suggests that these are "family systems phenomena" and are not the result of intent on the part of family members. These processes, outside the plan or control of anyone involved, have a "rhythmic and gyroscopic force of their own" which takes over as a regulatory mechanism. The external results of splitting, projection and collusion become the "family way" of seeing and doing things; they become automatic and unquestioned, "like the air one breathes."

### Summary

This review has presented clinical and theoretical support for the interdependence between the intrapsychic and the interpersonal dimensions of human behavior. Neither the intrapsychic nor the interpersonal levels of behavior can be replaced by the other, or reduced to the others. As Framo (1972, p. 302) suggests, both perspectives of understanding human behavior "are necessary for the whole picture even though the enormous complexity of the relationship between the two levels has only begun to be explored." Object

relations theory appears to be an extremely valuable tool in this approach towards a truly "interactional psychology." As Zinner and Shapiro astutely point out, object relations theory, and specifically the broadly defined concept of projective identification, provide an important and essential conceptual bridge "between an individual and interpersonal psychology, since our awareness of the mechanism(s) permit us to understand specific interactions among persons in terms of specific conflicts occurring within individuals" (p. 523).

Martin (1979) points out that there is currently a trend in marriage and family therapy towards losing sight of the uniqueness of each human being's personality. Conceptualizing the family solely from a "systems" perspective omits a considerable amount of important and crucial material. As Martin (p. 30) points out "the family is not merely a collection of relationships." Rather it is essential to stress the reciprocal interdependence between intra-psychic dynamics and relational-interpersonal, i.e., family-systems, dynamics. As noted above, the two cannot be separated. The literature reviewed in this section strongly points toward perceiving the family as a multiperson system in which each family member carries part of the motivation and behavior of the other; it is a system of intimate relationships where the other can become a structural part of the self. It appears that this perspective utilizes a systems approach without ignoring the uniqueness of each individual's inner world of psychological functioning. Therefore, this represents an attempt to apply psychodynamics to a transactional field, the family,





where neither the individual nor the system in which he/she is embedded is ignored.

One way to further expand our understanding of this intricate relationship between the intrapsychic and the interpersonal is to explore the interdependence in psychological functioning found between family members. The clinical literature strongly suggests that there is a reciprocal interdependence in psychic functioning among family members. Family members collusively carry psychic functions for each other, with mutual projection and transference of internal objects. It is these processes which, when taken together, appear to lie at the heart of this interdependency. In terms of psychopathology, this perspective would lead one to examine the ways in which a family member's abnormal behavior, e.g., delinquency, actually "fit" into the family system. It would be an important step towards increasing our understanding of these phenomena, if they could be brought under scrutiny and examined in a controlled experimental setting.

#### Empirical Background

Recent reviews of the literature (Riskin and Faunce, 1972; Jacob, 1975; Doane, 1978a) attest to the fact that there is now a substantial body of empirical literature focused on family interaction research. Rather than survey this entire literature, the present review will restrict its focus and thereby attempt to highlight two primary objectives. 1) To determine if there is empirical/experimental support for the theoretical positions reviewed in the

previous section. 2) It will be helpful to review the existent methodology in the literature which has contributed directly to the formation of the TAFIT. In order to reach this second objective, the present review will focus primarily on Interaction Testing (Roman and Bauman, 1960) and the "unrevealed differences technique" used by Ferreira and Winter (1968), as well as a variety of story telling techniques, especially the TAT, that have been employed in family assessment and interaction research.

In Support of the Theoretical Review. Along with the attention paid to highlighting the methodological shortcomings in family interaction research, a major goal of recent reviews of the literature (Riskin and Fauce, 1972; Jacob, 1975; Doane, 1978a), seems to be an attempt to isolate those variables which consistently appear to be significant factors in family interactions across a variety of studies. Jacob (1975, p. 56) does conclude, however, that while family interaction studies are based on a potentially "sound methodological strategy", in total the studies "have not yet isolated family patterns that reliably differentiate disturbed from normal groups." On the other hand, Doane (1978a, p. 372), who reviews the same literature as Jacob, concludes that "despite the difficulties inherent in family research, trends are evident." She cites as important variables "coalitions", "flexibility" and "communication". Similarly, Riskin and Faunce (1972) also notice the many contradictory findings in family interaction research, but they do point out that "humor", "agreement-disagreement", "support",

"acknowledgement-commitment-affirmation" and "clarity of communication" are all important family variables which represent "major areas of agreement."

While it is not possible to resolve this current controversy, especially the one between Jacob (1975; Jacob and Ground, 1978) and Doane (1978a, 1978b), it is important to point out that the variables under discussion do not easily lend themselves to the psychodynamically oriented theories reviewed previously. Most of the variables explored in family interaction research are not "depth" variables, i.e., they do not represent family functioning on a dynamic/unconscious level. For example, while communication clarity does appear to be a significant factor involved in family life, the current research does not attempt to assess possible underlying "depth" or unconscious motives and dynamics which may in fact be at the root of communication deviance. It is not the purpose of this review to argue that one level of observation/exploration, e.g., the overt, is more important than another level, e.g., the covert, but rather to point out that while the two levels coexist in actual family functioning, it is the more conscious overt level which receives primary attention and focus in the empirical literature.

Therefore, it still appears reasonable to agree with Framo's (1965, p. 409) conclusion, made 17 years ago, that "there is no body of formalized literature on systematic research on family dynamics with clear-cut stands taken on issues and specified limits from which departures can be made." In other words, the existent empirical literature appears to be lacking in systematic research

approaches to the "inner dynamics of family life." It is possible to speculate on why there is this apparent lack of attention to family dynamics. It is reasonable to suggest that the experimentally controlled exploration of, for example, "... deep, concealed, family relationship needs, which are unconscious, infantile and corrective of past hurts or perpetuations of past gratification..." (Framo, 1965, p. 447) is, as an example of understatement, a formidable undertaking. The complexity of such a dynamic perspective, with the heavy reliance on covert processes, appears at times to be an overwhelming challenge for an empirical approach. Additionally, there is the long standing problem of operationalizing, in a meaningful way, the various dynamic constructs. While the empirical approach is probably far away from capturing and manipulating these significant family life variables in their full complexity, Framo (Ibid.) does point out certain aspects that can be brought into laboratory focus. He suggests that certain family-interpersonal phenomena, e.g., double-bind situations, unconsciously shared fantasy systems, unconscious collusion or "other admittedly conceptually loose principles" do need systematic exploration.

Clearly then, there is not a body of empirical literature or support for the clinical and theoretical position reviewed in the previous section of this study. There are limited data, however, which can be taken as support for this perspective. Unfortunately, these data were not collected in experimentally rigid, replicable designs, but are rather more anecdotal and "impressionistic" in nature.

A prime example of this type of support for the theory is provided by Fisher and Mendell (1956, 1958; Mendell and Fisher, 1956, 1959; Mendel et al., 1968). These investigators approached individual psychopathology by viewing the patient as acting out conflicts which have concerned his or her family group over numerous generations. This position was explored and subsequently supported in a variety of studies all using a similar methodology. For example, in the initial investigation (Fisher and Mendell, 1956) there were 6 families with 3 generations of kin and 14 families with 2 generations of kin. Every family member was given a battery of projective tests and interviews and usually at least one from each family was seen for individual or group psychotherapy. In this initial study the projective data were analyzed and evaluated on a "blind basis" and a personality profile was written out for each person. The specific criteria or operational definitions for the formulations of the "over-all personality pattern of each family member" are not presented. Fisher and Mendell (1956, p. 42) state that the first important finding to emerge from this analysis was "that each family tends to be characterized by a special 'flavor' or 'atmosphere'. There seems to be a fairly specific core neurotic pattern which pervades the projective expression of members of each given family." This line of investigation suggests that any given family tends to be characterized by a distinguishing theme or problem area, e.g., themes of death, fear of destructive loss of self-control or disturbed concern with body image.

The fact that any given family tends to be characterized by a distinguishing theme or problem area is also supported by a different line of investigation. Ziegler and Muslinger (1977) are utilizing data from Sander's (1964) extensive and rigorous study of first-born infants and their mothers. Ziegler and Muslinger describe their pilot study in which they have recently revisited, some 15 years later, these same families, now focusing on the adolescent child and his/her family relationships. During the assessment of each adolescent and their family, (which was done "blind" in terms of the previous findings), a central issue was repeatedly observed. These same concerns or issues were reflected some 15 years prior in the mother-infant pair and within the family relationships. Ziegler and Muslinger (1977, p. 303) note that "while many other issues were attended to, resolved and disappeared from the data, (the early infant-mother data compared to the adolescent data), one particular theme in each family surfaced repeatedly." Furthermore, it is important to note that the index adolescent appeared to incorporate these themes or issues into his/her own personality functioning. For example, one adolescent girl whose family was characterized by issues concerning limit setting and control, revealed this similar theme or problem area during her individual testing and interviews. She spoke of her own needs to control different aspects of her life and the degree of apprehension she experienced when situations seemed unclear or were not well-defined. Even though this is clearly pilot data in that only 3 out

of the original 30 families had been recently revisited some 15 years after the original study, it was possible to discern the persistence of specific family themes or problem areas over this 15 year time period.

It is essential to note that from a strictly empirical perspective these studies have many significant shortcomings: e.g., no use of control groups, not providing of an index of reliability for the projective data and the lack of clear operationalized definitions for the assessment of various themes. In fact, Fisher and Mendell (1956) do point out that it would be more impressive if their data could be quantified instead of relying on an "impressionistic overview". They clearly point out that it would "be more striking if one could demonstrate in an objective quantitative manner that the similarity in projective responses of those in each family is greater than one would expect to find in a change aggregation of people" (p. 43), possibly utilizing Bodin's (1968) strategy of "synthetic families".

Nevertheless, even with this "impressionistic overview", these studies do provide some support for the stated theoretical position. Specifically the work by Fisher and Mendell clearly illustrates that it is possible to "identify fantasy patterns common to a given family." This observation becomes an essential ingredient in the formation of the present study. The fact that a key motif or family atmosphere can be discerned from the fantasy or projective responses of each family member strongly point towards the interdependence in psychological functioning across family members.

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Additionally, Mendell, Cleveland and Fisher (1968, p. 127) state that these family themes "represent aspects of family interaction that (are) forbidden or concealed."

A closer examination of Mendell, Cleveland and Fisher's (1968) most recent study in this area suggests even more specific support for the theory. In this study, opportunity to "trace the transmission of family fantasy patterns" across five generations was provided in the examination of 27 members of one family, plus two close relatives by marriage. The psychological tests were "neither administered nor interpreted blind in the sense that the subject and his test productions were unknown to the interpreter" (p. 129).

Once again a common family theme was exhibited. This is a dramatic finding when one considers that in addition to the immediate family, family members sharing no physical or social proximity, with no opportunity for collaboration, all revealed a similar theme or problem area during their individual testing. Furthermore, there are trends in the data which can be taken as evidence of the phenomena of unconscious collusion. Mendell et al., (1968, p. 129) state that in this family there was an unusual emphasis on "one or the other of two related themes: either the test fantasies were concerned with control, maintaining a fixed and rigid restraint over one's impulses, or there was a loose and unstructured quality expressed." The test reports made repeated references to family members' concerns, e.g., "concerned with acting in a proper and morally strict manner vs. being loose and uncontrolled." Framo

(1965, p. 452) points out that "the unconscious exchange frequently appears in the form of themes or recurrent problems between people who are deeply related; both parties in the interchange take a position vis-a-vis the problem." Thus, it seems very possible that the Mendell et al., (1968) data reveal this collusion with some family members expressing the impulse, e.g., "being loose or uncontrolled", while others reject the impulse, e.g., appearing "morally strict." It is reasonable to speculate that all family members are concerned with the exact same issue, but have worked out an unconscious relationship within which the defenses against the problem are opposite.

#### Interaction Testing and the Unrevealed Differences Technique.

These two similar procedures provide the framework for the TAFIT, the method used in the present study. Basically, these two techniques refer to the administration of a psychological test or research questionnaire as a two-stage procedure: first the instrument is administered individually to each member of a family or group and then re-administered to the group as a whole, requiring a group or family response. As Bodin (1968), in his review of family assessment techniques, points out, this type of paradigm yields three classes of data: 1) individual scores or comparisons, 2) conjoint/family or interaction scores, and 3) individual-conjoint comparisons.

Interaction Testing (Roman and Bauman, 1960; Bauman and Roman, 1966, 1968) utilizes this paradigm in the administration and analysis of psychological tests. This method includes projectives, even though the focus of this line of investigation has been on the

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WAIS in terms of "marital intelligence" (e.g., Bauman et al., 1967). In the analysis of these data Bauman and Roman stress the end product, focusing on both the individual and conjoint response. The important assumption underlying this "interaction product analysis" is the hypothesis of an individual-group psychological isomorphism. This assumption, which is essential to the formation of the TAFIT, states that the inner psychological organization of groups is fundamentally similar to that of individuals, e.g., both individuals and families show memory for past learning and experience; a group preserves characteristic behavior habits and structure, similar to the concept of personality; the group possesses drives which become more or less integrated in executive functions of nutrition, acquisition, aggression, defense, etc. As Bauman and Roman (1968, p. 331) point out "groups vary in dynamic integration analogously to the variations of individuals in character." Roman and Bauman (1960, p. 95) appropriately caution that this assumption of individual-group isomorphism in no way denies the existence of significant differences in structure between individuals and groups, but is offered rather as "a conceptual approach to the study of group behavior which seems promising."

Bauman and Roman do provide some preliminary well controlled experimental support for the reliability, utility and the underlying assumptions of interaction testing. For example, Bauman et al., (1967) administered parts of the WAIS to 50 marital couples in order to determine the "marital IQ". Using a split-half reliability procedure these investigators found that the interaction product,

i.e., the marital IQ derived from the conjoint responses, was as statistically reliable, e.g., .85, as individual IQ scores. Additionally, they have developed four process categories in order to analyze the individual-conjoint comparisons: 1) Dominance - when the interaction response contains one member's individual response and the absence of the other's; 2) Combination - elements of both members' responses are found in the interaction product/response; 3) Emergence - the presence of a new response in the interaction product, and 4) Reinforcement - when the same response is given by both individuals and appears as the interaction response. Furthermore, the IQ scores outcomes of the decision-making process can be evaluated as a) +, indicating an increase in the accuracy of the response; b) -, indicating a decrease in the accuracy of the response or c) 0, indicating no change in terms of the accuracy of the response. Thus, the interaction product can be evaluated in terms of positive dominance, negative emergence, positive combination, etc.

On the basis of these evaluative procedures Bauman and Roman have conducted a few studies exploring the marital relationship. For example, Bauman and Roman (1966) studied dominance in 50 marital pairs. They found that the husband dominates more than the wife, the more competent spouse (i.e., higher individual IQ) dominates the less competent and that non-patients dominate more than their patient spouses do. In a later study (Bauman et al., 1967) it was found that post-hospital interaction products contained significantly more reinforcement and significantly less negative emergence than

during the interactions when one spouse was hospitalized. The importance of these studies is that they illustrate the usefulness of both interaction testing and this scoring method. Thus Bauman and Roman (1968, p. 331) take these preliminary findings as supportive of interaction testing and the underlying assumptions on which it is based:

"The scores and profiles from consensus protocols on traditional clinical tests are characteristic of the group--that is, reliable--and predictive of the group's functioning--that is, valid--in ways that are analogous to the scores derived from the same tests when administered to individuals."

While these data on marital intelligence were collected under experimentally controlled conditions, Roman and Bauman's work with projectives, primarily the Rorschach but including the TAT, is more a "one-of-a-kind case-study". Nevertheless, they do report that their work with projectives suggests the "fruitfulness" of this product-oriented approach to interaction testing (e.g., Roman and Bauman, 1960). Bauman and Roman (1968) do report that for projectives, in this case the Rorschach, the interaction response is found to act at least in some ways like the individual response. They point out that one of the "dividends" from this "interaction product analysis" is that conjoint responses can be used to derive inferred process scores, e.g., dominance, combination etc. Additionally, Bauman and Roman (1968) suggest it is useful to "turn the conceptual tables" and consider the group as a model for understanding individual behavior. In other words, interaction testing can reveal data about the effects of the group on the

personality functioning of those individuals in the group. A relevant example for the present study is provided by a case examination in which the Rorschach was used in interaction testing. In this case (Roman and Bauman, 1960, p. 129) there is evidence to suspect "profound unconscious collusion in which the son expresses his mother's deeper disturbance, thus helping her to avoid expressing it."

A similar methodological paradigm, which has been referred to as the "unrevealed differences technique", has been employed in the investigation of decision-making in "normal and abnormal families" (Ferreira, 1963; Ferreira and Winter, 1965, 1968). For this line of investigation, these researchers developed a questionnaire requiring preferences around "neutral content". The questionnaire was first administered individually. Then the family was brought together and, while not informed of each others' preferences, asked to complete the same questionnaire, this time representing the family's preferences. Ferreira and Winter employed the following categorization of the data: 1) Spontaneous Agreement (SA)--representing the amount of agreement or matched preferences by comparing the individually filled out questionnaire; 2) Choice Fulfillment (CF)--this is a measure of the number of instances where the individual preference was also the family preference, and 3) Decision-Time (DT)--the time the family took to complete the joint questionnaire. In the original study Ferreira (1963) employed somewhat different variables: majority decisions, dictatorial decisions and chaotic decisions; the latter corresponding to "emergence".

This line of investigation has not only provided support for the stability and reliability of these measures, but has also consistently found differences in the decision-making processes between normal and abnormal families. It has been found that normal families have a significantly higher rate of SA, less DT, and greater CF, even when the rate of SA is statistically controlled for, when compared to abnormal families. Ferreira and Winter (1965, 1968) interpret their data by suggesting that normal families are characterized by more open communication, sharing and warmth. Additionally, they interpret the DT and CF scores as exhibiting a more efficient decision-making process in which the family members are more personally satisfied. On the other hand, Ferreira and Winter characterize the abnormal families as having less communication, more conflict, less sharing of opinions and feelings and generally less information exchange. The abnormal families' lower CF score is seen as a reflection of their inefficiency in decision-making and is taken as an index of less personal satisfaction and fulfillment of needs and wishes. In order further to support this position Winter et al., (1973) examined these same processes in married couples as well as unrelated couples. As predicted, the married couples have a significantly greater rate of SA, but contrary to expectations the unrelated group did not show a difference in terms of CF.

Even though the overall interpretation of the decision-making data is reasonable and well formulated, it does appear possible to speculate that the rates for SA and CF in abnormal



families may also reflect underlying dynamic processes. For example, it seems reasonable to propose that in abnormal families there are more "delineations". Each person is more rigidly assigned a certain role in the family, affecting the member's psychological make-up as exhibited in their differing perceptions and attitudes or their likes and dislikes as revealed on the questionnaire.

The TAT and Family Research. A number of studies have used TAT productions in family interaction research, developing different techniques and focusing on differing dimensions. There are a number of studies which administer the TAT to families, either to each family member individually or to the family as a whole, where the primary focus of analysis is not on the stories' content/theme per se. Rather, in these studies, there is an emphasis on either the cognitive style exhibited in the stories or on different dimensions of family interaction and communication as evidenced during the formation of the family's response (Singer and Wynne, 1965, 1966; Ferreira et al., 1966; Friedman and Friedman, 1970; Lieber, 1977). Thus, these different investigations have used the TAT as a vehicle by which to capture and examine characteristic patterns of relating, communicating and/or thinking within the family. For example, Singer and Wynne (1966, p. 262) point out that they use the TAT not as a "specific test" but rather as "a convenient means of sampling verbal transactions under conditions in which a particular range and form of behavior can be expected." Therefore, while these studies employ the TAT in an examination of a number of interesting

variables, they are not particularly relevant to the focus of the present study. Rather, it is more important to review selectively those studies which exhibit a specifically content or thematic orientation in the analysis of the family produced TAT data.

Sohler et al. (1957) were able to successfully predict family interaction from a battery of projective tests, e.g., TAT, Rorschach, Draw-a-Person and Sentence Completion Test, administered individually to each family member. One of Sohler et al. (1957, p. 207) conclusions was that the TAT "seemed to be the best source of information about attitudes towards other members of the family." A review of more recent literature does in fact reveal that the TAT has been used for this purpose. For example, Werner, Stabenau and Pollin (1970; Stabenau et al., 1965) focused on those TAT stories produced by parents in which the manifest content revealed parent-child interactions. The parent-child interactions were analyzed using three general categories: a) child-centered, flexible interactions; b) impersonally involved, superficial interactions, and c) over involved, parent-centered interactions. On the assumption that you can infer patterns in living from TAT productions, the results were interpreted as demonstrating that "quite distinct patterns of parent-child interactions characterize parents whose children do well from those whose children become delinquent; and that both differ from parents whose children become schizophrenic" (Werner et al., 1970, p. 143). Similarly, Fisher, Boyd, Walker and Sheer (1959) were able to differentiate the TAT stories produced by parents of normals from the parents of neurotic

and schizophrenic patients by "level of aspiration" and "parental images, i.e., attitudes towards the parental figures.

A study of Goldstein et al. (1970) also focused on the family's "interpersonal themes" revealed in the TAT responses. They developed quantitative indices of interpersonal themes and compared the TAT stories of both adolescents and their parents, as they related to the child's specific behavioral disturbance. The stories were rated for the structure of interpersonal relationships (on a 5 point scale, 5 indicated a definite nuclear family unit and 1 reflected an absence of any identifiable interpersonal relationship) as well as for the nature of the relationship, ranging from positive involvement to negative involvement. The results indicated "certain consistencies" between the adolescent's psychopathology and the parent's TAT stories, and to a lesser extent consistencies among the various sub-groupings of the adolescent's TAT responses, but a direct comparison between adolescent and parent stories was not undertaken.

The few studies reviewed thus far do support the position that the TAT is a valuable tool in family research and in detecting differences across families. These differences appear to correspond to differing nosological categories or criterion groups. Underlying these studies is the assumption that there is a correspondence between the way family relationships are seen or projected in TAT stories and the actual relational patterns within the family. Support for this view comes from studies (e.g., Sohler et al, 1957; Fisher et al., 1959; Stabenau et al., 1965) which make comparisons

between the TAT data and other assessment techniques, or with direct behavioral observations, as well as those which use the TAT as a projective instrument (e.g., Murstein, 1963). There can be a correlation between the projected verbal response and overt behavior, provided that the scoring or analysis is sophisticated in order to pick up subtleties in the story's content, e.g., aggressive content associated with much guilt or inhibition would not be a good predictor of overt behavior. On the other hand, if a study relied exclusively on parental data, this would raise issues as to whether the content represented present family functioning, past family functioning (i.e., family of origin) or wishes for family functioning.

There is a different methodological paradigm which overcomes the limitations of relying on the parent's responses alone. This involves analyzing the interpersonal themes revealed by each individual member of a given family. This allows for an examination of the common and consistent themes, as well as providing data which could prove helpful in putting together the various individual perceptions which in actuality operate within the family at any given time. For example Kadushin et al. (1969, 1971) have employed this strategy with the Family Story Technique (FST), which uses TAT cards. These investigators analyze the TAT responses using Fine's (1955) method of scoring interpersonal themes. Each individual's stories are scored for a) affect related conditions, b) family interactions, and c) outcomes. The scoring of the interactions is based on Horney's categories of interpersonal relations, i.e.,

moving towards, moving against and moving away from. Kadushin et al. (1969) studied one family with this technique illustrating the way the FST "systematically points to a dynamic description of the family."

Minuchin et al. (1967; Elbert et al., 1964) have administered the Family Interaction Apperception Test (FIAT) which utilizes TAT-like pictorial stimuli. Thus the FIAT is a projective test, administered individually to each family member, with the data analysis focusing on the needs, wishes and affects, as well as the intra-familial perceptions of family members. In the original publication, a case study, these authors state that "in pooling the tests of all family members, constellations of congruent and dissonant perceptions of each other can be examined, as well as mutual satisfaction and frustration of needs and interlocking defensive systems" (Elbert et al., 1964, p. 886). For example, the case study involves a family with three delinquent sons. The mother's reaction to her son's aggression is revealed in one story in which she describes the aggressive action of her son "with relish": "So this 16 year old girl starts teasing my son and he hit her and he's only 8 years old and he split her lip. I had to laugh." This same mother, "known to be sexually delinquent", exhibited conflict and disturbance involving her own aggressive impulses. Elbert et al. (1964) state that the FIAT revealed that the mother is getting vicarious satisfaction from the children's acting out behavior.

Thus, the pooling of the family data provided these investigators with an understanding of the family dynamics. In fact,

this study could have very easily been reviewed in an earlier section as support for the proposed theory, since it clearly illustrates the interdependence in psychological functioning across family members. In that previous section the work by Fisher and Mendell (1956), which also administered the TAT to each family member, was reviewed. The common assessment methods of these various studies (i.e., Elbert, 1964; Fisher and Mendell, 1956; Kadushin, 1969; as well as the preliminary work (1960) of Roman and Bauman) consistently suggest that a fruitful methodological approach for the empirical investigation of "depth" variables within the family is to administer projective tests, in this case the TAT, to each family member. This method can provide a useful avenue for the empirical investigation of family dynamics by examining both the overt and covert relational patterns found within families.

Furthermore, it is important to point out that the data obtained in this way can be quantitatively scored and subjected to statistical analysis; thus the TAT can be a valuable tool in systematic family research. For example, the FIAT was later refined and employed in a research project on families with delinquent children (Minuchin et al., 1967). In this study the variables, e.g., control, guidance, acceptance of responsibility, nurturance, affection, cooperation, aggression and family harmony, were reported to be reliably scored by a quantitative rating system, i.e., 86% over-all agreement out of 110 categorized responses. Similarly, Kadushin et al. (1971) employed the FST in a pre- post-family therapy study. They state (p. 71) that "scoring by the system used

(in their study) or by many others available in the TAT literature provides convenient quantification for statistically oriented studies." Also, these researchers point out that the TAT technique provides a "fascinating fund of information" and "reorienting the TAT to productions of 'family stories' does not detract from, and may possibly augment, its yield" (Ibid).

Another important, and for the present study relevant, use of the TAT in family research is presented by Winter, Ferreira and Olsen (1965, 1966). These investigators were able to differentiate normal from abnormal groups of three person families on the basis of the family's conjointly produced TAT stories. For example, Winter et al., (1965) presented three sets of TAT cards, each set containing three cards, and asked the family to make up a story which would link up the three cards together in the order in which they were presented. These family-produced stories were scored by the method of Story Sequence Analysis developed by Arnold (1962). Focusing on the essential meaning or import of the sequential themes on the TAT protocols according to a complex criteria, the emphasis of Story Sequence Analysis is on the motivational system of the storyteller, in this case the family as a unit. The Winter et al. (1965) results indicated that compared to normal families, families with abnormal children (e.g., "emotionally maladjusted", schizophrenic or delinquent) are characterized by negative motivational patterns. This method of analysis did not, however, differentiate the three abnormal family groups from each other.

In the second publication on the same sample (Winter et al., 1966) these researchers attempted to differentiate the three abnormal groups in terms of the hostility themes revealed in the family-produced TAT stories. The protocols were scored along two dimensions: 1) Weighted Hostility - for this scale specified themes are given weights according to the degree of hostility they represent, e.g., a weight of 4 is assigned to those stories involving direct fighting or assault, and 2) Percentage of Overt Hostility - each hostile theme that is assigned a weight is judged according to criteria to be either Overt or Covert in nature. Thus this score is the ratio, in percentage, of the number of Overt Themes/ number of Overt + Covert Themes. By focusing the analysis on the hostility themes, Winter et al. (1966) were again able to differentiate the normal from the abnormal families. The results from this analysis, moreover, detected differing patterns among the four subgroupings of abnormal families. One particularly relevant pattern was exhibited by the male delinquent-family group. While this group had the highest scores for weighted hostility compared to the other male family groups, their percentage of overt hostility was no different from the normal family group. Winter et al. (1966) state that the results from this delinquent group were the "least clearly defined", and thus it appears that this pattern of hostility scores is open to speculation. On the basis of the theoretical positions reviewed previously, especially Johnson and Szurek (1952), it is reasonable to suggest that the family-produced TAT stories for the delinquent group revealed a lot of conflict and disturbance



around issues of aggression and hostility, i.e., this would account for the group's higher weighted hostility score. At the same time, it is the son who unconsciously colludes and is the only family member to act out these impulses for one or both of his parents; therefore, as a family group, they would have a lower ratio of overt hostility/total hostility than other types of families. Clearly, this speculative interpretation of the Winter et al. results needs further experimental support and exploration.

In conclusion, it is apparent that there is not an extensive body of literature on the TAT used with families, but the available evidence does consistently suggest that the TAT is a valuable tool in family research. One of the shortcomings in this existent TAT family literature is the lack of systematic approaches which attempt to combine the various methods, e.g., administering the TAT to parents, to each family member or to the family as a whole. It is only the preliminary work of Roman and Bauman (1960), reviewed in a previous section, which combines these various data gathering procedures into one paradigm, Interaction Product Analysis. It is in this paradigm, similar to the "unrevealed differences technique", that both individual and family responses can be analyzed, thus allowing for individual-family comparisons. Therefore, the researcher has an opportunity to explore the interdependence between both individual and family produced fantasy patterns, thus providing an important method for bridging the gap between intrapsychic and family-interpersonal dimensions of behavior.

### Summary and Hypotheses

There are a variety of clinical and theoretical perspectives which perceive the family as a social system with both overt and covert, i.e., unconscious, relational patterns. The processes of object splitting, projective identification and psychological collusion are said to account for the fact that family members "reciprocally carry part of each others' psychology and form a feedback system which in turn regulates and patterns (the) individual behavior" (Framo, 1972, p. 271). Thus, it is reasonable to suggest that within the family there are behavioral roles, e.g., organizer, leader or provider, as well as "psychological roles", e.g., scapegoat or bound-up delegate, and that these psychological roles can serve a homeostatic function for the family-system, e.g., in the case of the delinquent child expressing and releasing the aggressive impulses for the family.

The systematic patterning of these psychological roles within the family is the focus of the present study. It does appear that the family can be characterized by a partitioning of psychological functions and intrapsychic content among family members, and this partitioning takes place in all family systems. In a "pathological" family system, the partitioning takes place within rigid, nonoverlapping boundaries, while in normal families there is a more fluid cooperative type of partitioning. Additionally, as Zinner and Shapiro (1972) point out, it is the nature of the intrapsychic content which is partitioned or assigned and subsequently carried by

one family member that can account for the development of psychopathology.

These presumed covert family-system dynamics form the basic thesis of this study: The intrapsychic functioning of each family member is bound within a reciprocal interdependent family-system, which is governed by both overt and covert relational patterns. It is the goal of this investigation to subject this dynamic relational family-system perspective to systematic empirical exploration.

Our understanding of intrapsychic functioning has been expanded by the use of projective instruments. Covert or unconscious family dynamics may also be explored via projective assessment procedures. In fact, the literature does point towards the usefulness of these procedures in understanding family dynamics. The present study is an attempt to offer support for the appropriateness and further development of such an assessment procedure. The TAFIT, which follows closely on the footsteps of Interaction Product Analysis (Roman and Bauman, 1960), is designed to explore the covert relational patterns/dynamics found within families.

Given the basic methodology and the study's thesis, as stated, an essential question still remains unanswered. How can one find empirical support for this thesis or theoretical position? If in fact the psychological functioning of each family member is part of a reciprocal interdependent family-system, then the intrapsychic content, or projected content, of each individual family member should fit into a predictable, specified pattern. If covert relational dynamics actually govern the intrapsychic functioning of

each family member, then the interdependency in intrapsychic functioning will operate according to systematic principles. Therefore, fantasy content, for example, should fit into an intelligible and systematic pattern. If this predicted systematic pattern is in fact obtained, this will support the stated theoretical position, as well as offer support for the appropriateness of the TAFIT as a family assessment procedure.

This study explores the patterns in the TAT fantasy material produced by three person family triads, tested both individually and conjointly, in which the child has a history of disruptive or rebellious behavior at school. This study is not strictly concerned with the dynamics involved in this type of family per se, but rather this type of family provides an opportunity to begin an empirical examination of the interdependency in psychological functioning found between family members. This approach will further provide a reasonable test of the efficiency and usefulness of the TAFIT. This type of family allows for a set of predictions, following closely the logic and rationale of Johnson and Szurek, about the patterning of the fantasy content. If the results support the predicted patterning of fantasy content, this won't prove that in all families the intrapsychic world of the members is interdependently tied, but it will be a first step, as well as suggesting that the TAFIT is a valuable tool for further empirical investigation.

The theoretical position proposes that the behavioral problems at school reflect the adolescent's inner psychological

world and this inner world can be understood from a family-systems perspective. It is proposed that the adolescent's behavior is sustained by the family since he/she is unconsciously colluding to act-out and express the denied or split-off disruptive/aggressive tendencies of either one or both parents. This theoretical position, which clearly exemplifies the interdependence in psychological functioning, would make specific predictions about patterns of TAT hostility content based on these relational dynamics. If the adolescent with behavior problems at school is viewed as unconsciously colluding to carry the uninhibited or overt aggression for the family, it is expected that this dynamic will be revealed in the fantasy patterns, when comparisons are made across individual members.

### Hypotheses

The following definitions will be useful for a clear understanding of the hypotheses:

Weighted Hostility Score: This score reflects the degree of hostile content appearing in the TAT stories. A judgment is made for each theme, using a scale ranging from a low of 0 (no hostile content) to a high of 4.

Number of Overt Hostility Themes: Overt hostility is that hostility which is manifest and direct. The number of overt hostility themes is the total number of themes across a set of stories judged to be overtly hostile.



Number of Covert Hostility Themes: Covert hostility is that hostility which is insidious, indirect, disguised or latent. The number of covert hostility themes is the total number of themes across a set of stories judged to be covertly hostile.

Percentage of Overt Hostility: This is the ratio of themes judged to be overtly hostile to the total number of themes that were rated, expressed in terms of a percentage, i.e., (number of overtly hostile themes/number of overtly hostile themes + number of covertly hostile themes) X 100.

Predicted Family Score (PFS): The PFS is the arithmetic mean of the mother's, father's and son's individual scores. For example, if the weighted hostility scores in a given family were mother = 20, father = 22 and son = 24, then the PFS would be  $(20 + 22 + 24)/3$  or 22.

Influence Score: The "influence" score is a difference score. It is the difference between an individual's score and his/her family's score. For example, if a son had a weighted hostility score of 30, and the stories produced by the family group had a weighted hostility score of 23, then the son's influence score would be 7. Thus the lower this score, in terms of the absolute value, the greater the individual's "influence" on the family score.

Hypothesis 1. This hypothesis predicts differences in the content of the TAT stories produced by the adolescent's with behavioral problems and the normal adolescents.

- 1-A. The behavioral problem adolescent's stories will exhibit an amount of weighted hostility significantly different from the normal adolescent's stories.
- 1-B. The behavioral problem adolescent's stories will exhibit a percentage of overt hostility significantly different from the normal adolescent's stories.
- 1-C. The behavioral problem adolescent's stories will exhibit a number of overt hostility themes significantly different from the normal adolescent's stories.

Hypothesis 2. This hypothesis predicts differences between the content of the stories produced by the adolescents with behavioral problems and the content of their parents' stories and that these differences in story content will not be found between the normal adolescent's and their parents.

- 2-A. The stories produced by adolescents with behavioral problems will have a number of overt hostility themes significantly different from the arithmetic mean of their parent's number of overt hostility themes and this difference will not be found in the normal families.
- 2-B. The stories produced by adolescents with behavioral problems will have an amount of weighted hostility significantly different from the arithmetic mean of



their parent's weighted hostility and this difference will not be found in the normal families.

- 2-C. The stories produced by adolescents with behavioral problems will have a percentage of overt hostility significantly different from the arithmetic mean of their parent's percentage of overt themes and this difference will not be found in the normal families.

Hypothesis 3. This hypothesis predicts differences in the variability of the influence scores for the adolescents with behavioral problems compared to the normal adolescents.

- 3-A. The influence scores, derived from the number of overt hostility themes, of adolescents with behavioral problems will exhibit a variance different from the variance of influence scores exhibited by the normal adolescents.
- 3-B. The influence scores, derived from the weighted hostility scores, of adolescents with behavioral problems will exhibit a different variance from the variance of influence scores exhibited by the normal adolescents.
- 3-C. The influence scores, derived from percentages of overt hostility, of adolescents with behavioral problems will exhibit a variance different from the

variance of influence scores exhibited by the normal adolescents.

Hypothesis 4. This hypothesis predicts that the family stories produced by those families with an adolescent with behavioral problems will have different content from those stories produced by normal families.

- 4-A. The family stories produced by those families with an adolescent with behavioral problems will have a significantly different amount of weighted hostility from those stories produced by normal families.
- 4-B. The family stories produced by those families with an adolescent with behavioral problems will have a significantly different percentage of overt hostility from those stories produced by normal families.
- 4-C. The family stories produced by those families with an adolescent with behavioral problems will have a significantly different number of overtly hostile themes from those produced by normal families.

Hypothesis 5. This hypothesis predicts that the difference between the predicted family scores and the actual family scores will be a variable that discriminates the families of adolescents with behavioral problems from normal families.

- 5-A. The absolute difference between the predicted family score for weighted hostility and the actual family score (i.e., PFS for weighted hostility minus actual weighted hostility for the family stories) will be a variable that significantly discriminates the families of adolescents with behavioral problems from normal families.
- 5-B. The absolute difference between the predicted family score for overt hostility (number of themes scored) and the actual family score will be a variable that significantly discriminates the families of adolescents with behavioral problems from normal families.
- 5-C. The absolute difference between the predicted family score for the percentage of overt hostile themes and the actual family score will be a variable that significantly discriminates the families of adolescents with behavioral problems from the normal families.

Hypothesis 6. This hypothesis predicts that the stories produced by the parents of adolescents with behavioral problems will have different content from the stories produced by "normal" parents, i.e., the parents of the normal adolescents.

- 6-A. The combined weighted hostility scores of the parents of adolescents with behavioral problems, (i.e.,

father's score + mother's score), will be significantly different from the combined scores of the "normal" parents.

- 6-B. The parents of adolescents with behavioral problems will exhibit a significantly different combined score for the number of overt hostility themes from the combined scores of the "normal" parents.
- 6-C. The parents of adolescents with behavioral problems will exhibit a significantly different combined percentage of overt hostility from that of the "normal" parents.
- 6-D. The stories produced by fathers of adolescents with behavioral problems will have a significantly different amount of weighted hostility from those stories produced by "normal" fathers.
- 6-E. The stories produced by fathers of adolescents with behavioral problems will have a significantly different number of overt hostility themes from those stories produced by "normal" fathers.
- 6-F. The stories produced by fathers of adolescents with behavioral problems will have a significantly different percentage of overt hostility from those stories produced by "normal" fathers.

- 6-G. The stories produced by mothers of adolescents with behavioral problems will have a significantly different amount of weighted hostility from those stories produced by "normal" mothers.
- 6-H. The stories produced by mothers of adolescents with behavioral problems will have a significantly different number of overt hostility themes from those stories produced by "normal" mothers.
- 6-I. The stories produced by mothers of adolescents with behavioral problems will have a significantly different percentage of overt hostility from those stories produced by "normal" mothers.

## CHAPTER 2

### METHOD

#### Participants

The participants in this study were 20 family units consisting of a father, mother and an adolescent son. There were three families, (two Experimental and one Control), in which there had been a previous separation or divorce between the natural parents. In these three families the step-parent had been living within the reconstructed family unit for four years, 12 years and 12 years, respectively, thereby exhibiting involvement in the adolescent's development. The participating families were divided into two groups, with 10 families in each of the following groups:

Experimental Group. The families in this group had an adolescent son attending high school whose educational background/record contained a history of behavioral problems which can be characterized as disobedience, disruptiveness, aggressiveness or rebelliousness. As shown in Table 1, the actual school records of these boys exhibited a wide range of disruptive behaviors. Placement in the Experimental Group required that the adolescent son have a minimum of three such offenses recorded on his record for the current academic year. The actual number of offenses ranged from 3 to 11, with the mean number of offenses being 5.5 (SD = 2.66).

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TABLE 1.--Types of Offenses Reported in the School Records of  
the Adolescents With Behavioral Problems

- 
1. Insubordination
  2. Talking back
  3. Fighting
  4. Shoving
  5. Inappropriate classroom behavior
  6. Throwing of objects in the classroom
  7. Disruption
  8. Foul language and/or gestures
  9. Fire setting
  10. Refusing to work
  11. Door slamming and/or banging
  12. Disobedience
  13. Not following instructions
  14. Horseplay
  15. Rude and/or talking rude
  16. Yelling
  17. Misconduct
  18. Disrespectful
  19. Shoving furniture and/or kicking doors
  20. Lying, cheating and/or stealing
  21. Temper problems
  22. "Mouthing"
-



Control Group: These ten families were selected from the same high school population. The students in this group did not have an educational history indicating behavioral problems. Four of the students in this group did have one offense recorded on their current school record, while the other six students had no reported offenses. These ten families were to be matched as closely as possible to the Experimental Group on the following two variables: student's grade level (ranging from 9th to 12th grade) and student's percentile rank in English and Mathematics on the Stanford Achievement Test, administered in the 8th and 10th grade.

#### Participant Selection

The participants in this study were selected from the same high school population. The high school, with an enrollment of 611 students, is in a mostly rural farming area, (population approximately 3,000), located about 20 miles from Lansing, Michigan, the state capital.

The principal of the high school was involved in the selection procedure. He selected a pool of families who he believed met the criteria for the Experimental Group and then, matching as closely as possible on the variables of student's grade level and Stanford Achievement Test scores, selected a pool of Control Group families. The names, addresses and telephone numbers of these families were then provided to the researcher.

Both a letter describing the study and a cover letter written by the high school principal were sent in the mail to those selected

families, (both letters appear in Appendix A). Within a few days of mailing this introductory and informational letter, the researcher contacted each family by telephone. The families were not told about the specific basis for their selection. During the telephone conversation it was determined if the family wanted to participate in the study and an appointment time was scheduled.

#### Matching and Demographic Variables

The means and standard deviations of both the two matching variables and the other demographic variables for both groups are shown in Table 2. The descriptive variables were student's grade point average (past two years of all classes taken in high school--for 9th graders this included their course grades from the 8th grade), family income, parent's education and the number of offspring in each family. Data on these variables were obtained during the experimental procedure, i.e., after the selection process was completed.

A two-tailed t-test for comparing dependent samples was performed on both the matching variables, (student's grade level and Stanford Achievement Test scores) and on each descriptive variable. With only one exception, the t-tests were not significant ( $p > .05$ ), thereby indicating sufficient similarity between the two groups in these characteristics. The one exception was grade point average (GPA). The Control Group had a significantly higher GPA than the Experimental Group,  $t(9) = 3.00$ ,  $p < .01$ . Finally, as would be expected by the selection criteria, the Experimental Group

TABLE 2.--Participant Variables.

|                                 | <u>Experimental Group</u> |           | <u>Control Group</u> |           |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|
|                                 | <u>Mean</u>               | <u>SD</u> | <u>Mean</u>          | <u>SD</u> |
| Student's Grade                 | 10.1                      | .943      | 10.2                 | .978      |
| SAT-English <sup>a</sup>        | 45.2                      | 24.8      | 49.6                 | 27.4      |
| SAT-Math <sup>a</sup>           | 38.7                      | 24.1      | 51.5                 | 23.9      |
| G.P.A.                          | 1.77                      | .493      | 2.73                 | .300      |
| Family Income <sup>b</sup>      | 35.5                      | 13.0      | 35.3                 | 12.5      |
| Parent's Education <sup>c</sup> | 27.4                      | 4.36      | 28.4                 | 4.54      |
| Siblings                        | 4.8                       | 3.16      | 4.1                  | 2.17      |

<sup>a</sup>Percentile rank on the Stanford Achievement Test.

<sup>b</sup>The unit is dollars, multiplied by 1,000.

<sup>c</sup>The combined total years of education for mothers and fathers.

had a significantly higher number of behavioral offenses at school than the Control Group,  $t(9) = 5.59$ ,  $p < .001$ .

### Assessment Procedure

Each family met with the researcher at the high school for one session lasting an hour to an hour-and-a-half. The researcher knew to which group the families belonged, i.e., the researcher was not blind as to group membership. At the beginning of the session all participants were asked to sign a consent form and to fill out the Family Information Sheet (both forms are in Appendix B). Item 5 of the consent form released the student's educational records for review by the researcher. The Family Information Sheet, also in Appendix B), provided data on family income, number of siblings and the parents' educational background.

After these forms had been completed the TAFIT was then administered. The administration of the TAFIT involved a two-stage procedure in which 6 Thematic Apperception Test cards were first individually presented to each family member, and then the same six cards were presented to the family as a whole during the conjoint administration.

Individual Administration. For the individually administered stage of the TAFIT the following instructions were read to the participants:

"You now have six cards with pictures of people engaged in different activities. I would like you to look at each picture, one at a time, and write down a story for each picture. Write down a story about what is going on in the picture. Make sure that each story has a beginning

(what led up to the picture), a middle (what is happening in the picture), and an ending (what happens after the picture). There are no right or wrong stories, so any story you want to make-up and write down is completely up to you. You can really let your imagination have a good time as you create a story trying to describe who the people are, what they are like, what are their relationships like, how do the people behave and act and what do the people think and feel. Please take about five minutes for each story."

The researcher monitored the time and told the participants every five minutes how much time had passed. At the 10 and 20 minute points, the researcher announced which story the participants should be working on. At 40 minutes the participants were asked to finish their story writing. All participants completed writing the six stories within 45 minutes, with approximately 80% of the participants completing their story writing within 35 minutes.

Conjoint Administration. The following instructions for the conjointly produced stories were read to the family:

"I am now going to show you the same pictures again. This time, though, I would like you, as a family, to make up a story together. Try to make it a story that the family as a unit can agree upon; a story you are all involved in creating; one that originates and comes from all of you. In other words, it should be the (family's name) story. Again, the story should have a beginning, a middle and an end. So, together as a family let your imaginations have a good time as you create a story trying to describe who the people are, what they are like, what their relationships are like, what do they think and feel and how do they behave and act.

Every family goes about creating a family story in their own unique way. It is important to remember, though, that the story you make up should, as much as is possible or reasonable, come from all of you.

This time the tape-recorder will be turned on (at this point the tape-recorder was actually turned on) and so when you are ready to tell me the story you have created together, let me know."

#### TAT Card Selection and Rationale

The six TAT cards selected for this study are, in order of presentation, 3BM, 6BM, 7BM, 8BM, 9BM and 13MF. The rationale for choosing these cards stems from the combination of three sources: Karon (1981), Hafner and Kaplan (1960) and Matranga (1976).

Karon (1981) presents a basic set of TAT cards which tap significant dimensions/aspects of one's life. For clinical use he suggests: Card 1 - childhood the way it was; Card 3BM - the most pressing current problem; Cards 6 and 7 - relationship to parents; Cards 4 and 13 - heterosexual adjustment. Thus it is reasoned that these cards would tap the projected hostility content in significant domains of the participant's life. Following this line of reasoning, Card 9BM was added to assess the projected hostility that may be involved in peer relationships.

The scoring system for this study, to be discussed below, is the Hafner-Kaplan Hostility Content Analysis (Hafner and Kaplan, 1960). In the development of this scoring system they used 22 TAT cards, including 6BM, 7BM, 8BM and 13MF. Card selection for the present study was not limited solely to those cards used by Hafner and Kaplan for the following two reasons: 1) an analysis of the relationship between cards and scoring system was never undertaken (personal communication), and 2) an examination of the scoring system strongly suggests that it is a general scoring system and

not stimulus specific or stimulus bound. In other words, the scoring system does not provide a rigid basis for card selection since it can apparently be used to score hostile content originating from a variety of experimental procedures. In fact, the development of this scoring system was undertaken simultaneously for use with both the Rorschach and the TAT.

Finally, Matranga (1976) lists cards 3BM, 8BM, 12M and 13MF as four cards which usually elicit aggressive themes. This is an important consideration since one dimension of the Hafner-Kaplan scoring system is the distinction between overt and covert hostility. It was reasoned that in order to include this as a meaningful dimension, i.e., have the ability to differentiate the two groups with respect to the type of hostility expressed, the use of some cards which typically elicit aggressive themes is advisable.

A summary of the rationale for TAT card selection is as follows:

- |      |                                                                                                           |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3BM  | assesses most pressing current problem (Karon); elicits aggressive themes (Matranga)                      |
| 6BM  | assesses mother-son relationships (Karon); used by Hafner and Kaplan                                      |
| 7BM  | assesses father-son relationships (Karon used by Hafner and Kaplan)                                       |
| 8BM  | elicits aggressive themes (Matranga); used by Hafner and Kaplan                                           |
| 9BM  | assesses peer relationships; used by Hafner and Kaplan                                                    |
| 13MF | assesses heterosexual adjustment (Karon); elicits aggressive themes (Matranga); used by Hafner and Kaplan |

### Scoring System

Both the individually and conjointly produced TAT stories were scored for hostility content according to a system developed by Hafner and Kaplan (1960). (Copies of the scoring manual provided by the authors, as well as the actual manual used in the present study, which has slight modifications and additions, appear in Appendix C and D). This system scores two aspects of hostility: a "weighted hostility" and an overt-covert hostility dimension.

Weighted Hostility. This dimension assesses the degree of hostile content appearing in the stories. It is a scaled score ranging from 0 (no hostile content) to a high of 4. The following is a brief description of the criteria for assigning weights.

- 4 points: themes involving direct physical hostile acts between people or towards the self
- 3 points: themes involving hate; thoughts, feelings, dreams or threats of direct physical acts between people; themes involving punishment, permanent debilitating injury and death; themes of direct physical hostile acts involving animals
- 2 points: themes involving verbal hostility; derogatory descriptions of people; anti-social acts; people forced by others to do things; hostile or negative emotionality; rejections; illness and accidents involving injury; destruction of inanimate objects; predatory animals; destructive forces of nature; weapons
- 1 point: themes involving emotional deprivation; guilt feelings; escape; misfortune; death symbols; broken objects; the military
- 0 points: themes without hostile content



Each hostile theme is assigned a weighted score and therefore, within any given story, multiple weights can be assigned.

Overt-Covert Scale. Each theme that was assigned a weight was also judged as either overt hostility or covert hostility. Overt hostility is hostility which is manifest and direct. Covert hostility is hostility which is insidious, indirect, disguised or latent. (Examples are provided in the scoring manual which appears in Appendix C and D).

Hafner and Kaplan (1960) report the overall inter-scorer reliabilities as .87 for the weighted scale, .76 for the overt scale and .78 for the covert scale. All coefficients are significant at the .01 level. Further, they report the intercorrelations among these three scales as follows: Overt vs. Covert scale is  $-.44$ ; Overt vs. Weighted scale is  $.66$  and Covert vs. Weighted Hostility scale is  $.72$ .

### Raters

The data was scored and rated by two undergraduates enrolled in Psychology 490. The raters were blind as to the nature of the study, the hypotheses and the group membership of the participants.

Training. The raters met together with the researcher for approximately 15 hours of training. The training was conducted on pilot data, i.e., TAT stories collected from non-participating families. Training for each of the two scales took place

simultaneously, since agreement in terms of the overt/covert dimension was easily obtained once the actual weighted score was assigned.

The training emphasized familiarization and learning of the scoring manual. The format for each training session followed a similar course. Each rater would independently rate the same 10 to 15 stories. This was followed by a group discussion, emphasizing the points of disagreement. Disagreement between the raters appeared to be the result of carelessness, hostile themes in the pilot data not specifically mentioned in the Hafner and Kaplan manual and lack of consensus regarding the difference between a repetition of the same theme, (which was not scored twice) compared to an elaboration of a theme, which was scored separately. As arbitrary decisions needed to be made, i.e., decision points not clearly spelled out in the Hafner and Kaplan manual, the researcher made these judgements and then appended onto the scoring manual the general decision rule with the example(s) from the pilot data.

A test for the criterion level of inter-rater agreement, i.e., 80%, was conducted at periodic points in the training. In order to determine the percentage of agreement, each rater was given the same 15 stories to score independently. When the percentage of agreement reached 84% for the Weighted Hostility scale, (97% for the Overt/Covert Scale) the training was terminated.

#### Determination of Inter-rater Reliability

Since data analysis was performed on individual total scores and family total scores, it is useful to think of the data in terms

of "story-packets", with each packet comprised of 6 stories. Each packet was assigned a total score for a) weighted hostility, b) number of overtly hostile themes, and c) number of covertly hostile themes. There was a total of 80 story packets, i.e., 60 individually produced packets and 20 family produced packets. A total of 65 story-packets were separately and independently scored by the raters, with one rater scoring 32 packets and the other 33 packets. The story packets were randomly assigned to each rater.

The remaining 15 story-packets, which were scored by both raters independently, provided the data for calculating the overall inter-rater reliability. The 15 packets were scored three packets at a time by both raters at predetermined points, i.e., after each rater individually completed 6 story-packets. Additionally, these five occasions also allowed for a periodic check of the percentage of agreement, which for the Weighted Hostility scale ranged from 74% to 96%.

On the basis of these 15 story-packets which were rated independently by both raters, the inter-rater reliability coefficient for the Weighted Hostility scale was  $r = +.83$ . The percentage of agreement on the overt/covert dimension was 97%.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESULTS

#### General Considerations

The statistical test for each hypothesis, with the exception of Hypothesis 3, is a two-tailed t-test for dependent/matched samples. This is the method accepted after considering the possibility that a co-variate type of analysis might be required, in order to control for the influence of some independent variables systematically related to the dependent variable. Two such variables were examined: 1) grade point average (GPA), and 2) the number of words in the TAT stories.

GPA. As mentioned in the Methods section, the Control Group had a significantly higher GPA than the Experimental Group,  $t(9) = 3.00$ ,  $p < .01$ . However, calculating the correlation between the GPA and dependent measures reveals that they are not related: a) the relationship between GPA and the Weighted Hostility Score is  $r = -.20$ ; b) the relationship between GPA and the Number of Overt Themes is  $r = -.28$ , and c) the relationship between GPA and the Percentage of Overt Themes is  $r = -.22$ . None of the three correlations, each with  $N = 20$ , is statistically significant ( $p > .10$ ). Therefore, since GPA is not related to the dependent measures, a co-variate type of procedure is not required.

Further, it seems on a rational basis that it would be an error to control statistically for the difference in GPA between the two groups. At the high school from which the sample was drawn the students are assigned a single course grade, i.e., there is no separate evaluation of work habits, cooperation or conduct. Conduct or behavioral considerations are taken into account in the assignment of course grades, from which the GPA was computed. Logically, the number of behavioral offenses and GPA are related and one would expect the Experimental Group, with many more behavioral offenses, to have a lower GPA. In fact, the correlation between GPA and the number of behavioral offenses, ( $N = 20$ ), was statistically significant,  $r = -.79$ ,  $p < .01$ . Therefore, to control for the effect of GPA on the dependent measures would in fact remove the effect of the independent variable "Number of Offenses", i.e., the variable which defines the two groups.

Additionally, given the method of assigning course grades at the high school from which the sample was drawn, it appears that the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) scores probably provide a purer or more accurate index of academic achievement or ability. As detailed in the Methods section, the two groups do not differ significantly in terms of their SAT scores in both English and Mathematics. Finally, the SAT scores in English and Mathematics, respectively, are not significantly correlated to any of the dependent measures. Thus, academic achievement or ability, whether defined from the point of view of GPA or SAT scores, is not significantly related to any of the dependent measures.

Number of Words in the TAT Stories. An issue raised in the literature, e.g., Winter, Ferreira and Olson (1966), is that the longer the TAT story the greater the chance or opportunity for hostile (or other) themes to be introduced into the participant's stories. Thus this "verboseness" is a potentially important variable that needs to be examined in terms of a co-variate type of analysis. In the present study, however, the number of words produced in the TAT stories is not related to the Weighted Hostility Score; for the entire sample, (mothers, fathers, sons -  $N = 60$ ) the correlation between Weighted Hostility and the number of words in the TAT stories was not significant,  $r = .14$ ,  $p > .10$ . The same results occur when examining the correlations just for the sons' stories ( $N = 20$ ,  $r = .14$ ,  $p > .10$ ) or the parents' stories, ( $N = 40$ ,  $r = .26$ ,  $p > .10$ ). The relationship between the number of words and the Weighted Hostility Score for the family produced stories is also not significant,  $r = .01$ ,  $p > .10$ . Additionally, the number of words actually produced in the TAT stories did not differentiate the two groups. Therefore, since the variable "number of words in the TAT stories" did not differentiate the two groups and is not related to the dependent measure Weighted Hostility, a co-variate analysis is not required.

Organization. What follows is a report of the statistical results for the six hypotheses. Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 involve statistical comparisons between the two groups of adolescent sons, while Hypotheses 4 and 5 involve comparisons between the two groups

of families and Hypothesis 6 is concerned with comparisons between the parents of adolescents with behavioral problems and the parents of normal adolescents. The following presentation will adhere to this grouping.

### Comparisons Between Adolescent Sons

Tables 3 and 4 present the results for Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3. These three sets of hypotheses involve predictions about the content of the TAT stories produced by adolescents with behavioral problems compared to the stories produced by adolescents without behavioral problems.

#### Hypothesis 1

The prediction (Hypothesis 1-A) that the adolescents with behavioral problems would have a significantly different amount of weighted hostility (WH) from the normal adolescents was not supported,  $t(9) = .25$ ,  $p > .05$ . Similarly, the prediction (Hypothesis 1-B) that there would be a significant difference between the two groups in terms of the Percentage of Overtly Hostile Themes (% Overt) was not supported,  $t(9) = 1.053$ ,  $p > .05$ . Finally, Hypothesis 1-C was not supported since the two groups did not differ significantly in the Number of Overtly Hostile Themes (# Overt) produced,  $t(9) = .913$ ,  $p > .05$ .

#### Hypothesis 2

This set of hypotheses involve a comparison between each son's score, on a given dimension, and the arithmetic mean of his

TABLE 3.--Comparisons Between Adolescent Sons' and Average Parents' Scores

|                | Experimental Group |       | Control Group |       | t-Score <sup>a</sup> |
|----------------|--------------------|-------|---------------|-------|----------------------|
|                | Mean               | SD    | Mean          | SD    |                      |
| <u>WH</u>      | 25.1               | 14.22 | 24.85         | 9.62  | .05                  |
| <u>% Overt</u> | 41.37              | 15.32 | 34.26         | 18.85 | 1.053                |
| <u># Overt</u> | 4.75               | 3.76  | 3.8           | 2.44  | .913                 |
| <u># Overt</u> |                    |       |               |       |                      |
| Parents        | .725               | .596  |               |       |                      |
| Sons           | 4.75               | 3.76  |               |       | 3.163 <sup>b</sup>   |
| Parents        |                    |       | .975          | .884  |                      |
| Sons           |                    |       | 3.8           | 2.44  | 2.861 <sup>c</sup>   |
| <u>WH</u>      |                    |       |               |       |                      |
| Parents        | 15.26              | 4.05  |               |       |                      |
| Sons           | 25.1               | 14.22 |               |       | 1.883 <sup>d</sup>   |
| Parents        |                    |       | 15.42         | 3.75  |                      |
| Sons           |                    |       | 24.85         | 9.62  | 2.562 <sup>c</sup>   |
| <u>% Overt</u> |                    |       |               |       |                      |
| Parents        | 8.84               | 7.62  |               |       |                      |
| Sons           | 41.37              | 15.32 |               |       | 5.78 <sup>e</sup>    |
| Parents        |                    |       | 13.95         | 14.58 |                      |
| Sons           |                    |       | 34.26         | 18.85 | 2.12 <sup>d</sup>    |

<sup>a</sup>2-tailed t-test for dependent samples (n = 10; df = 9)

<sup>b</sup> $p < .02$

<sup>c</sup> $p < .05$

<sup>d</sup> $p < .10$

<sup>e</sup> $p < .001$

\*(Mother's score + Father's score) / 2



TABLE 4.--Test of the Difference Between Two Variances for Matched Groups. Summary of the Deviation-score X Group ANOVA.

| Source                        | <u>df</u> | <u>MS</u> | <u>F*</u>         |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------------|
| Influence Score<br># Overt    |           |           |                   |
| Deviation Scores<br>(Between) | 1         | 5.11      | 1.355             |
| Matched Pairs                 | 9         | 6.33      |                   |
| Group X Pairs<br>(Error)      | 9         | 3.77      |                   |
| Influence Score<br>WH         |           |           |                   |
| Deviation Scores<br>(Between) | 1         | 82.83     | 1.076             |
| Matched Pairs                 | 9         | 78.55     |                   |
| Group X Pairs<br>(Error)      | 9         | 76.91     |                   |
| Influence Scores<br>% Overt   |           |           |                   |
| Deviation Scores<br>(Between) | 1         | 418.43    | 3.64 <sup>a</sup> |
| Matched Pairs                 | 9         | 80.44     |                   |
| Group X Pairs<br>(Error)      | 9         | 114.77    |                   |

\*None of the F ratios are statistically significant at the .05 level.

<sup>a</sup>p < .10

parents' scores, e.g., (mother's score + father's score) / 2. The hypotheses predict differences between the behavioral problem sons' scores, on a given dimension, and the arithmetic mean of their parents' scores, and that these differences will not exist within the normal families. (The results relevant to these hypotheses appear on Table 3.)

2-A. The prediction that the adolescents with behavioral problems would produce a significantly different # Overt Themes from the arithmetic means of their parents' # Overt Themes was supported,  $t(9) = 3.163$ ,  $p < .02$ , but the prediction that this difference would not exist for the Control Group was not supported, i.e., the normal adolescents also produced a significantly different # Overt Themes from their parents' average production,  $t(9) = 2.866$ ,  $p < .05$ .

Thus, both groups of adolescent sons did produce a significantly greater # Overt Themes than did their parents. A post hoc analysis was undertaken to compare the two groups of adolescents directly. In other words, this analysis was undertaken in order to determine if the "difference scores", i.e., (son's # Overt Themes) - (arithmetic mean of the parent's # Overt Themes), for the adolescents with behavioral problems was significantly different from the normal adolescents' "difference scores." The analysis indicates that the "difference scores" are not significantly different for the two groups,  $t(9) = 1.0978$ ,  $p > .05$ .

2-B. This hypothesis, which cannot be accepted, predicted that the adolescents with behavioral problems would have a significantly different WH score from the arithmetic mean of their parents' WH score, and that this difference would not exist for the Control Group. In fact, the results were reversed. The WH scores of the adolescents' with behavioral problems did not differ significantly from their parents' average WH score,  $t(9) = 1.883$ ,  $.10 > p > .05$ , but the Control Group sons' scores did differ significantly from their parents' average WH score,  $t(9) = 2.562$ ,  $p > .05$ .

Thus, both groups of sons had a higher WH score than the arithmetic mean of their parents' WH scores, but this difference was statistically significant only for the Control Group. Again, a post hoc analysis was performed in order to compare the two groups directly. The analysis indicates that the "difference scores", i.e., (son's WH score) - (arithmetic mean of their parents' WH scores), are not significantly different for the two groups,  $t(9) = .069$ ,  $p > .05$ . An examination of Table 3 reveals the similarities in Means for both a) the two groups of adolescent's WH scores, and b) the two groups of parents' WH score. Thus, the Mean of the "difference scores" for the two groups are all but identical; the Mean "difference score" for the Experimental Group is 9.83 and for the Control Group is 9.43. Yet the Control Group differed significantly from their parents, while the Experimental Group does not. What accounts for the statistical difference in the Control Group is a lower variance in the "difference scores" ( $SD = 11.04$ ) compared to the variance in "difference scores" for the Experimental Group

( $SD = 15.67$ ). However, a comparison of variances between the two groups of "difference scores" reveals that the variances are not statistically different.

2-C. The results indicate that this hypothesis can be accepted. The results support the prediction that the adolescents with behavioral problems would exhibit a significantly different % of Overt Hostility from the arithmetic mean of their parents' % of Overt Hostility,  $t(9) = 5.78, p < .001$ . As predicted, the Control Group did not exhibit this difference,  $t(9) = 2.12, .10 > p > .05$ .

Thus, while both groups of adolescents exhibited a higher % of Overt Hostility than the arithmetic mean of their parents' % of Overt Hostility, this difference was statistically significant only for the Experimental Group. Once again, a post hoc analysis was performed in order to compare the two groups directly. This analysis indicates that the "difference scores", i.e., (son's % Overt Hostility) - (arithmetic mean of their parents' % of Overt Hostility), are not significantly different for the two groups,  $t(9) = 1.19, p > .05$ .

### Hypothesis 3

This set of hypotheses predicts differences, between the two groups of adolescents in the variability of their influence scores. A common statistical procedure to test for differences in variance between two groups is  $S^2 / S^2 = F$ . This test of variance, however, is very sensitive to the assumptions of independence, which the

present study does not meet. Thus, the procedure employed to analyze this hypothesis, one that is reasonably robust, is as follows: for each group, the mean of the influence score was calculated. Then, the deviations from the mean, in absolute values, were used in a one-way ANOVA, i.e.,  $I$  = influence score;  $M_i$  = groups mean of the influence scores;  $D = |I - M_i|$  and it was the  $D$  scores that were used in the ANOVA (for matched pairs) calculations.

As shown in Table 4, there were no significant differences between groups in the dispersions of the influence scores. Hypothesis 3-A cannot be accepted since the ANOVA did not indicate a significant difference in the dispersion of the influence scores for the # Overt Themes,  $F(1, 9) = 1.355$ ,  $p > .05$ . Similarly, Hypothesis 3-B cannot be accepted as the ANOVA did not reveal a significant difference in the dispersion of the influence score for WH,  $F(1, 9) = 1.076$ ,  $p > .05$ . Finally, the prediction (Hypothesis 3-C) that the two groups would have a significantly different dispersion in the influence scores for % Overt Hostility was not supported,  $F(1, 9) = 3.64$ ,  $.10 > p > .05$ . The Experimental Group had a greater variability of influence scores for % Overt Hostility,  $SD = 21.30$  than the Control Group,  $SD = 10.99$ .

#### Comparisons Between the Families

Table 5 shows the results for Hypothesis 4 and 5. These hypotheses deal with comparisons between the two groups of families.

TABLE 5.--Comparisons Based on Family Stories.

|                         | Experimental Group |       | Control Group |       | t-Score             |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------|---------------|-------|---------------------|
|                         | Mean               | SD    | Mean          | SD    |                     |
| Family's WH             | 19.15              | 3.46  | 23.05         | 4.91  | - 2.03 <sup>a</sup> |
| Family's<br>% Overt     | 32.83              | 16.7  | 20.87         | 20.03 | 1.867 <sup>a</sup>  |
| Family's<br># Overt     | 2.9                | 1.51  | 2.15          | 2.0   | 1.23                |
| PFS-Actual <sup>b</sup> |                    |       |               |       |                     |
| WH                      | 5.5                | 3.67  | 5.36          | 3.94  | - .08               |
| # Overt                 | 1.56               | .892  | 1.26          | 1.52  | .155                |
| % Overt                 | 16.04              | 15.81 | 14.03         | 12.96 | .346                |

<sup>a</sup>.10 > p > .05

<sup>b</sup>This is the difference score, in terms of absolute value, between the Predicted Family Score and the actual family score.

#### Hypothesis 4

This hypothesis predicts that the family stories produced by those families with an adolescent with behavioral problems will have different content from those stories produced by normal families. The prediction (Hypothesis 4-A) that the family stories produced by those families with an adolescent with behavioral problems would have a significantly different amount of WH from the family stories produced by normal families was not supported,  $t(9) = -2.03$ ,  $.10 > p > .05$ . (The Control Group had a higher WH score than the Experimental Group.) Contrary to what was predicted (Hypothesis 4-B), the two groups of family-produced stories did not differ in the % Overt,  $t(9) = 1.867$ ,  $.10 > p > .05$ . (The Experimental Group had a higher % Overt than the Control Group.) Finally, the two groups of family-produced stories did not differ significantly in the # Overt Themes,  $t(9) = 1.23$ ,  $p > .05$ .

#### Hypothesis 5

This set of hypotheses predicted that the difference score, in terms of absolute value, between the Predicted Family Score (PFS) and the actual family score, would be a variable on which the two groups would significantly differ. Hypothesis 5-A cannot be accepted as there was not a significant difference between the two groups of families in this difference score for WH, (i.e., WH PFS - Actual Family WH),  $t(9) = -.08$ ,  $p > .05$ . Similarly, this difference score for # Overt Themes (Hypothesis 5-B) was not significantly different for the two groups,  $t(9) = .155$ ,  $p > .05$ . Finally (Hypothesis 5-C),

the two groups of families did not differ significantly in terms of the difference score for % Overt,  $t(9) = .346$ ,  $p > .05$ .

### Comparisons Between Parents

#### Hypothesis 6

Table 6 shows the results of the  $t$ -test comparisons made for the two groups of parents. Hypothesis 6-A cannot be accepted since the parents' score, i.e., (father's score + mother's score), for WH was not significantly different,  $t(9) = .190$ ,  $p > .05$ , for parents of behavioral problem adolescents as compared to controls. Neither can Hypothesis 6-B be accepted since the two groups of parents did not differ in terms of the # Overt,  $t(9) = -.0670$ ,  $p > .05$ . Finally, the parents' combined score for % Overt did not significantly differentiate the two groups, (Hypothesis 6-C),  $t(9) = -.828$ ,  $p > .05$ .

Comparisons between the fathers did reveal a significantly different # Overt, with the fathers of normal adolescents producing a greater number of overtly hostile themes, (Hypothesis 6-D),  $t(9) = -2.273$ ,  $p < .05$ . It is important to point out that the actual number of words used in the TAT stories produced by the fathers of behavioral problems adolescents was not significantly different from the number of words used by the Control Group fathers,  $t(9) = .676$ ,  $p > .05$ . Contrary to the prediction of Hypothesis 6-E, the two groups of fathers did not differ in terms of their WH score,  $t(9) = -1.41$ , nor their % Overt (Hypothesis 6-F)  $t(9) = -1.53$ ,  $p$  (for both  $t$ -scores)  $> .05$ . Thus, while the differences are not statistically significant, the Control Group fathers produced both a higher



TABLE 6.--Comparisons Between Parents

|                      | Experimental Group |       | Control Group |       | t-Score             |
|----------------------|--------------------|-------|---------------|-------|---------------------|
|                      | Mean               | SD    | Mean          | SD    |                     |
| Parents <sup>a</sup> |                    |       |               |       |                     |
| WH                   | 30.55              | 8.09  | 29.85         | 7.55  | .190                |
| # Overt              | 1.45               | 1.19  | 1.95          | 1.77  | - .670              |
| % Overt              | 17.68              | 15.25 | 27.89         | 29.1  | - .828              |
| Fathers              |                    |       |               |       |                     |
| WH                   | 12.5               | 6.0   | 16.65         | 6.7   | -1.41               |
| # Overt              | .4                 | .49   | 1.45          | 1.31  | -2.273 <sup>b</sup> |
| % Overt              | 6.78               | 10.30 | 22.03         | 28.07 | -1.53               |
| Mothers              |                    |       |               |       |                     |
| WH                   | 18.05              | 8.05  | 13.2          | 4.07  | 1.92 <sup>b</sup>   |
| # Overt              | 1.05               | 1.15  | .5            | 1.02  | 1.632               |
| % Overt              | 10.91              | 10.81 | 5.86          | 11.72 | .977                |

<sup>a</sup>This is the combined mother and father score.

<sup>b</sup> $p < .05$

WH score and a higher % Overt Themes than did the Experimental fathers.

The predictions that the mothers of the adolescents with behavioral problems would produce different TAT stories from that produced by the normal mothers were not supported. The two groups of mothers did not produce significantly different WH scores, Hypothesis 6-G,  $t(9) = 1.92$ ,  $.10 > p > .05$ . Even though the two groups of mothers did not differ significantly, the mothers of behavioral problems adolescents did produce higher WH scores, on the average, than the Control Group mothers. The two groups of mothers did not differ in either the # Overt Themes (Hypothesis 6-H)  $t(9) = 1.632$ , with the Experimental mothers producing a greater # Overt than the Control Group mothers; nor did they differ in terms of % Overt, (Hypothesis 6-I),  $t(9) = .977$ ; for both  $t$ -scores  $p > .05$ .

## CHAPTER 4

### DISCUSSION

In general, the a priori predictions about the differing patterns of fantasy content between the two groups of families did not gain statistical support. In attempting to account for this state of affairs, the present section will also attempt to explore two related issues: 1) Is the lack of statistically significant results a strong statement against the general theoretical framework from which the hypotheses were generated?; 2) While the a priori predictions cannot generally be accepted, do the data nevertheless "fit" the general theoretical model? Given the exploratory nature of this study, i.e., viewed as a "pilot study" in size and scope, it is legitimate to examine any trends and patterns actually exhibited in the data that are of sufficient magnitude to suggest the usefulness of further research in this area.

One important consideration relevant to the present study is the issue of statistical power, i.e., the ability to reject the hypothesis of no difference. The present study appears to have had a lack of statistical power due, to a large extent, to the small sample size. Given the actual differences in group means found in the present study, sometimes referred to as the obtained "effect size", Table 7 indicates what sample size, with  $N$  = matched family pairs, would have been needed to have reached statistical

TABLE 7.--The Number of Family Pairs Needed to Have Significant Results Given the Obtained Effect Size\*

|                                                    |       |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Comparisons Between Sons:                          | N**   |
| WH                                                 | 15366 |
| % Overt                                            | 36    |
| # Overt                                            | 47    |
| Comparisons Between Sons & Average Parents' Score: |       |
| Experimental-WH                                    | 13    |
| Control - % Overt                                  | 11    |
| Comparisons Between Families:                      |       |
| WH                                                 | 12    |
| % Overt                                            | 13    |
| # Overt                                            | 25    |
| Comparisons Between PFS-AFS <sup>a</sup> :         |       |
| WH                                                 | 6002  |
| # Overt                                            | 466   |
| % Overt                                            | 163   |
| Comparisons Between Combined Parents:              |       |
| WH                                                 | 1064  |
| # Overt                                            | 87    |
| % Overt                                            | 58    |
| Comparisons Between Fathers:                       |       |
| WH                                                 | 21    |
| % Overt                                            | 18    |
| Comparisons Between Mothers:                       |       |
| WH                                                 | 13    |
| # Overt                                            | 17    |
| % Overt                                            | 47    |

\*The difference in group means obtained in this study.

\*\*N is the number of matched pairs. Thus an N = 15 refers to 15 families in each group for a total of 30 participating families.

<sup>a</sup>This is the Predicted Family Score - Actual Family Score.

significance for each hypothesis not actually supported in this study. Clearly, in order to have certain hypotheses supported the number of participants needed in the study would have been prohibitive to obtain. On the other hand, 8 hypotheses would have been supported if the number of matched family pairs had been 25. This strongly suggests that certain trends do in fact exist in the data and that these trends might have reached statistical significance if the sample size was larger, yet still within reasonable and acceptable limits.

For purposes of participant selection, how adequate was the operationalized definition of "behavioral problem adolescents"? In the present study the independent variable Number of Behavioral Offenses (# Offenses) found in the school records was used operationally to define and discriminate the two groups of adolescent boys. Correlations between # Offenses and each of the three dependent measures yielded the following relationships ( $N = 20$ ): with WH,  $r = .316$  ( $p > .10$ ); with % Overt,  $r = .438$  ( $p < .06$ ) and with # Overt,  $r = .491$  ( $p < .05$ ). Not all the correlations are significant, but this is due, in part, to the limited range of # Offenses for the Control Group, which was 0-1. In fact, when the same correlations are performed just for the Experimental Group, the relationship between # Offenses and the dependent measures are as follows, ( $N = 10$ ): with WH,  $r = .581$  ( $p < .09$ ); with % Overt,  $r = .761$  ( $p < .02$ ) and with # Overt,  $r = .733$  ( $p < .02$ ). These correlations support the relationship between behavioral indices, e.g., # Offenses, and TAT content, especially the relationship with %

Overt, and generally speak favorably about the appropriateness and adequacy of the operational definition.

The above correlations also suggest that if the # Offenses selection criterion for the Experimental Group had been higher, this would have systematically enhanced the differences between the two groups of adolescents on the dependent measures. If, for instance, the criterion level for group membership had been 6 instead of 3 behavioral offenses, this would have systematically raised the Experimental Groups' scores on the dependent measures, and hence would have made the two groups of adolescents more distinct. In fact, a post hoc analysis was performed on the % Overt score using the three adolescent boys having 6 or more behavioral offenses and their matched Control participants. This was a post hoc re-evaluation of Hypothesis 1-B, which originally indicated that the Experimental Group exhibited a higher % Overt hostility, but the difference was not significant. The post hoc analysis, however, using only three Experimental participants, did reveal a significant difference,  $t(2) = 8.439$ ,  $p < .02$ . While this can obviously be a spurious finding, it nevertheless supports the position that the lack of statistically significant differences between the two groups of adolescents may have been the result of not using a more stringent criterion for selecting the Experimental Group with behavioral problems.

The way in which the operational definition of behavioral problems, or "acting-out" behavior, is dealt with lies at the heart of the answer as to whether the lack of significant results is a

statement against the theoretical model. The theoretical model states that the adolescent's behavioral problems can be understood from a family-dynamics systems perspective. It is assumed that to the extent that one can examine a population in which the behavioral symptom is exaggerated or extreme, then this should correspond to an exaggeration of the hypothesized underlying family dynamics. The analogy of magnification is useful; the greater the magnification, the greater the likelihood of detecting a real phenomenon. A review of those families contacted (both parents in the home and the son having 3 or more behavioral offenses) but refusing to participate is enlightening. The range of behavioral offenses for those 16 non-participating adolescents was 3-17, with the mean number of offenses = 8.5 ( $SD = 4.1$ ). A one tailed  $t$ -test reveals that these adolescents had a higher number of behavioral offenses than the actual Experimental adolescents,  $t(24) = 1.96$ ,  $p$  (one-tailed) < .05. This suggests that the Experimental Group in the present study may in fact exhibit, on a continuum, only "moderate" behavioral problems, while the group of "non-participants" would have ideally been more appropriate for testing the hypotheses. On the other hand, to the extent that the patterns and trends in the present data with a sample of "moderate behavioral problems" do conform to the theoretical model, then this can be viewed as strongly suggestive evidence in favor of a dynamic family-systems perspective.

Quite clearly, to the question as to whether the lack of statistical results is a strong statement against the general theoretical framework from which the hypotheses were generated, the

answer is "no", not from this single study. The present study suffered from small sample size, and very likely a lack of sufficient discrimination between the two populations studied. Furthermore, the trends that are evident in the data do closely follow patterns logically predicted and expected from the theoretical model. Thus, the remainder of this chapter will examine and review these trends, in order to determine if they are persuasive to the point of suggesting further research.

A useful starting point to begin the examination of the data is with a review of the hostility content exhibited in the family-produced stories. As can be inferred from Table 7, (as well as Table 5 in the Results section), the differences in both the WH and % Overt scores between the two groups of family-produced stories approach significance and the trends and patterns of these scores are worth noting. The data indicate that the actual amount of hostile fantasy content produced by normal families is higher than that produced by families with an adolescent with behavioral problems. However, the % Overt Hostility was greater for the Experimental families than for the normal family units. It appears that the hostility expressed within the Experimental families is more direct, overt and perhaps "primitive". Thus, the expression of aggression for these families is more dangerous since the fantasy is loaded with direct forms and meanings, exhibiting less control over the hostile tendency/impulse. Therefore, it is logical that such aggression needs to be more strongly guarded against, defended or suppressed, and the lower WH score can be taken as evidence of



such forces operating within the Experimental families. Overall, the content of the family-produced stories can be seen as supportive of the basic theoretical position: The families with behavioral problem adolescents are in fact conflicted about the expression of hostile/aggressive tendencies, and this conflict is generally dealt with by a suppression of hostile thought by the family unit. The data suggests that these families may suppress aggression since the families' aggressive tendencies are more loaded with direct forms and meanings.

It is important to note that the results of the family-produced stories are contrary to what has been reported previously. Winter, Ferreira and Olson (1966) report that the family-produced stories of their male "Delinquent" group had a higher WH than "any other group", but their % Overt was "close to that of the normals"; the present results are a reversal of this finding. There are a variety of procedural differences between the two studies which make direct comparisons or contrasts between the discrepant results difficult. One procedural difference worth noting, however, is the different stimulus presentation. While the present study attempted to elicit aggressive themes, as a way of assessing how the family deals with hostility, this was not the intent of the Winter et al. study. In fact, they presented only one TAT card which typically elicits hostile themes, as well as using a variety of "GF" cards. It is reasonable to suggest that the use of the opposite gender TAT cards allows for less identification, or a distancing from the stimulus. If we assume that the experimental families, in both

studies, are in fact conflicted around the expression of aggression, then the Winter et al. stimulus presentation does not activate or elicit the conflict with the same intensity or purpose as in the present study. Thus, it seems plausible to speculate that this important difference in the stimulus content may account, at least in part, for the differing patterns of scores exhibited in the family-produced stories.

Two other hypotheses, 3 and 5, do provide an indirect avenue for examining the family-produced stories. Unfortunately, the results of both these hypotheses do not lend themselves to clear interpretation. For example, Hypothesis 5 predicted that the difference between the Predicted Family Score (PFS) (i.e., (mother's score + father's score + son's score) / 3), and the Actual Family Score (AFS) would be less for the Control Group families. The goal of this hypothesis was to examine whether the sum of hostile tendencies within the Normal families was equally partitioned or shared by the individual members, and thus the average of their individual productions, e.g., the PFS, would be a good predictor of the AFS. It was reasoned that if the behavioral problem adolescent was in fact carrying the hostile tendencies for his family, then the PFS would be a misleading indicator or predictor of the AFS. Underlying this speculation was the assumption that the family-produced story represented for the Normal families an averaging of the three individual inputs, but this averaging process would not consistently take place within the Experimental families since the son's input might be rejected or barred from entering the family-system. The

results clearly do not support this speculation and yet this lack of support is not a clear statement about the theoretical model's validity. What appears to be in error is the assumption of a differing averaging process, or even perhaps the overall assumption that the family-produced story represents additive processes. It remains a possibility that the adolescent with behavioral problems is the carrier of split-off aggressive tendencies, but the averaging process underlying the family-produced stories remains the same. In other words, the Experimental son's input, while more hostile due to his "unique" or "special" role within the family, is not in fact rejected, but rather accepted into the family-produced story. Hence, the ability of the PFS to predict the AFS would be the same for the two groups of families.

Additionally, Hypothesis 3 does not lend itself to a clear test. This hypothesis is concerned with the son's "influence score", i.e., son's score - family score. The actual results are difficult to interpret since the data were actually difference scores and "influence" can only be indirectly inferred. It is interesting to note, however, that the dispersion/variability of the "influence scores" for % Overt was greater for the adolescents with behavioral problems than for the Normal adolescents ( $p < .10$ ). Furthermore, the normal adolescents produced, on the whole, lower "influence scores". To interpret these data as supporting the position that normal adolescents generally had a greater influence on the family-produced stories might very well be erroneous. What is clear is that the Control Groups' % Overt scores were on the average closer

to their family's % Overt score. The data do indicate that the behavioral problem adolescents, when compared to the normals, exhibit a different relationship to their family's stories in terms of the % Overt. This does closely fit the theoretical model which suggests that the experimental sons have a special role within the family; they are the expressors of the family's aggression, i.e., % Overt. In a very general sense, the data on the "influence scores" for % Overt can be seen to support this notion, but unfortunately the results do not aid in providing a clearer understanding of the family dynamics.

In the present study a variety of comparisons were made between the adolescents with behavioral problems and the "normal" adolescents. In general, the adolescents' TAT content was similar, with the behavioral problem adolescents producing a noticeably higher percentage of Overt Themes. Additionally, there were comparisons made between the adolescent's score and his parents' average score, e.g., son's score - (mother's score + father's score/2). Both groups of adolescents produced higher scores, on all three dependent measures, than their parents' average score. Some of these differences were significant, others were not. But the differences between the son's and parents' average that were not significant, were all approaching significance. Further, direct comparisons between the difference scores reveals that they were very similar for the two groups of adolescents. Thus, the suggested conclusion is that all adolescents produce a greater amount of hostile TAT content than their average parents' production, and the dynamics involved in the

family of behavioral problem adolescents do not significantly alter this state of affairs.

On the other hand, using the "parents' average production" can be misleading. The "parents' average production" is a gross measure which in fact obscures the real underlying dynamics, especially within the Experimental families. What is lost or obscured with the "average production" score, or even the "combined parents' score", is the individual parent's contribution to that score. It is only by simultaneously examining the comparisons between fathers and mothers, fathers and sons and mothers and sons, that the adolescents' problem behavior becomes understandable from a family-dynamics perspective. In other words, support for the psychological interdependence between family members begins to emerge clearly when the focus is on the father-mother-son triadic relationship.

Table 6 (p. 77) presents the means for the two groups of combined parents' scores (e.g., mother's score + father's score). All the means look very similar except for % Overt, which is nevertheless not significantly higher for the Control parents. (In fact, if the "outlyer" score is removed, see Table 8, then the combined % Overt mean for the Control group is 19.22, which again is very similar to the Experimental parents.) An interesting pattern begins to emerge from the data when examining the mothers' and fathers' respective contributions to this combined score. On the three measures where the Experimental fathers have a lower score than the Control group, the Experimental mothers have a higher score than the Control mothers. This pattern suggests that the Experimental

TABLE 8.--Percentage of Overt Themes for the 60 Participants

| <u>Experimental Families</u> |             |             |              |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
|                              | Son         | Mother      | Father       |
| 1.                           | 62.5        | 11.1        | 33.3         |
| 2.                           | 16.66       | 33.33       | 11.11        |
| 3.                           | 42.86       | 23.53       | 0.           |
| 4.                           | 44.44       | 0.          | 9.09         |
| 5.                           | 36.37       | 7.69        | 0.           |
| 6.                           | 44.44       | 0.          | 0.           |
| 7.                           | 38.5        | 0.          | 0.           |
| 8.                           | 35.7        | 20.0        | 0.           |
| 9.                           | 22.2        | 10.0        | 0.           |
| 10.                          | <u>70.0</u> | <u>3.45</u> | <u>14.28</u> |
| Mean =                       | 41.37       | 10.91       | 6.78         |
| <u>SD</u> =                  | 15.32       | 10.81       | 10.30        |
| <u>Control Families</u>      |             |             |              |
| 11.                          | 46.15       | 0.          | 0.           |
| 12.                          | 10.0        | 0.          | 25.0         |
| 13.                          | 18.18       | 30.0        | 0.           |
| 14.                          | 25.0        | 0.          | 100.0**      |
| 15.                          | 70.57       | 0.          | 0.           |
| 16.                          | 16.66       | 28.57       | 32.14        |
| 17.                          | 46.2        | 0.          | 14.3         |
| 18.                          | 15.38       | 0.          | 10.0         |
| 19.                          | 44.44       | 0.          | 16.66        |
| 20.                          | <u>50.0</u> | <u>0.</u>   | <u>22.22</u> |
| Mean =                       | 34.26       | 5.86        | 22.03**      |
| <u>SD</u> =                  | 18.85       | 11.72       | 28.07        |

\*\*When the 100% Overt score is removed, the new group mean for Control Fathers (N = 9) is 13.36 and the SD = 11.18.

mothers' and fathers' scores are systematically related; this is the first clear indication of a reciprocal interdependence in psychological functioning.

This position is further advanced by examining Table 8. The following observations are worth noting: a) the mean % Overt for the Experimental fathers is close to that of the Control mothers; b) the pattern of actual scores reveals that 6 out of 10 Experimental fathers do not produce a single overtly aggressive theme; (the only group with a greater absence of overt hostility is the Control mothers); c) the Normal fathers % Overt score is 3 times greater than the Experimental fathers score and even with the "outlier" datum removed, their % Overt score is about twice that of the Experimental fathers, and d) the Experimental mothers' mean % Overt score is about twice that of the Control mothers. Additionally, five Experimental mothers produce more overt hostility than their husbands, and this occurs only once in the Control group. A post hoc analysis comparing the mother - father difference scores for the two groups reveals that the difference between husband and wife is significantly greater for the Experimental group,  $t(9) = 2.039$ ,  $p < .05$  (one-tailed). Finally, it is important to note that the above observations, as well as the remainder of this chapter, emphasize the patterns and results in terms of % Overt scores since the reciprocity in content is most clearly exhibited on this dimension. However, the patterns are similar, though less striking, for the other two dimensions. For example, the Experimental fathers

as a group produced the lowest WH score and their # Overt themes is practically the same as the Control mothers.

In our society the male is stereotypically more aggressive than the female. This appears to be part of the socialization process by which we are all inevitably influenced. It is the male who is more overtly aggressive and this is generally accepted within our society. This stereotypical pattern is in fact clearly exhibited within the husband-wife relationship in the Normal families. But in the families with a behavioral problem adolescent this pattern is not exhibited. As a group, the Experimental fathers appear to be inadequate or deficient in the expression of overtly hostile themes. Similarly, their lower WH scores strongly suggest the denial or repression of any hostile content from their fantasies, or intrapsychic world. Together, this strongly suggests that in the Experimental families it is the fathers who are conflicted around issues of aggression or hostility and have difficulty in the expression or release of these tendencies. It seems reasonable to postulate from the above observations that the mother/wife compensates for her husband's intrapsychic conflict and this can be viewed as consistent with Dicks' (1963) position that within the marital relationship the two partners engage in a trade-off, with each partner colluding to carry a split-off part for the other. The pattern of the TAT content clearly indicates that the intrapsychic worlds of the husband and wife are interdependent.

The essential question of this study still remains unanswered: Is the Experimental sons' behavior at school related to, or the



result of, the family dynamics? Is there evidence to suggest that the school behavior is related to the fathers' proposed intrapsychic conflict? The data, while only suggestive, strongly point towards an affirmative answer. A post hoc comparison of sons' and fathers' % Overt scores reveals a significant difference for the Experimental participants,  $t(9) = 8.03$ ,  $p < .002$ ; while the Normal sons also have a higher % Overt score than their fathers, this difference is not significant,  $t(9) = .096$ ,  $p > .05$ . A direct comparison between these difference scores, (sons' - fathers' scores) shows that the adolescents with behavioral problems differ significantly more from their fathers' % Overt scores than do the Normal adolescents,  $t(9) = 1.728$ ,  $p < .05$  (one-tailed). Furthermore, all of the Experimental sons had a higher % Overt score than their fathers, while only 7 of the 10 Normal sons had a higher score than their fathers. Thus, not only do the Experimental adolescents differ significantly more from their fathers, but their difference scores also exhibit significantly less variability,  $F(1, 9) = 5.775$ ,  $p < .05$ . To highlight the meaning and importance of these patterns, the same comparisons between sons and mothers were conducted. Both groups of adolescents produced a significantly higher % Overt themes than their mothers and the son - mother difference scores were roughly similar. Hence, it appears that in the % Overt score, the Experimental sons' relationship to their mothers is no different than the Normal adolescents. This is not the case, however, in the Experimental sons' relationship to their fathers. The data clearly indicate that in terms of the proportion of overtly hostile themes produced, the adolescent with

behavior problems has a unique and different relationship to his father that is not exhibited by the normal adolescent. The difference is in the direction strongly to support the theoretical model.

In summation, the theoretical model states that there is a psychological interdependence between family members. The son's problem behavior at school was conceptualized via a dynamic family-systems framework: It is proposed that the adolescent son is the "carrier" of the denied or split-off aggressive tendencies of one or both parents, and his behavior at school is an "acting-out" of these tendencies. In the present study it was reasoned that if this theoretical model is in fact accurate, then the individual family members' production of hostile fantasy content, viewed as a representative of intrapsychic functioning, should systematically follow this theoretically proposed pattern.

Even though the interpretation is speculative, the data exhibit patterns that would be expected from the theoretical model. It seems reasonable to propose that it is the fathers of behavioral problem adolescents who are psychologically conflicted about their own aggressive tendencies. These fathers appear to deny and/or repress their own aggressive thoughts, the content of which exhibits a striking absence of hostility that is overt in nature. It remains a logical possibility that fathers exhibiting this low production of hostile fantasy content might live with and be related to wives and sons who also have an unusually low level of aggressive fantasy content. This pattern would be contrary to the theoretical model for behavioral problem adolescents and in fact is not supported by

the data. Both the wives and sons of these fathers produce a higher amount of overtly hostile fantasy content than their Normal counterparts. The adolescents with behavioral problems exhibit a unique relationship to their fathers. Unlike the relationship between the normal adolescents and fathers, these sons produce a significantly greater amount of overtly hostile fantasy content than their fathers. It is reasonable to interpret this as evidence that these sons are compensating for their fathers and the content of both fathers' and sons' intrapsychic world, as assessed through fantasy content, clearly exhibits a reciprocal interdependence. What the father must deny, disregard or disown possibly as a way to decrease his own anxiety, is carried and expressed by his son. When viewing the data from this perspective it becomes reasonable to suggest that the son's behavior at school may also be a compensation for, or in fact an "acting out" of the father's split-off aggressive tendencies. Finally, the data strongly suggest that the mother also plays an essential role in these dynamics. She too appears to be compensating for and/or intrapsychically involved in the father's conflict. Compared to the normal mothers, these mothers produced a greater amount of overall hostile fantasy, with a larger proportion of that being overt in nature. It is reasonable to suppose that these mothers communicate permission to their sons for the expression of hostility. All together, the evidence points favorably towards a reciprocal interdependence in psychological functioning that effects the intrapsychic domain for each individual in the triadic relationship.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

Dear Parents:

I am conducting a study that examines the family and various processes that take place within the family unit. As you have probably noticed in recent newspaper and magazine articles, movies and television shows, there is a growing interest in our society regarding the increasing variety of family units and family life-styles. The present study is being undertaken in the hope of providing further understanding of family relationships. I am interested in exploring the themes of creative stories produced by high school students, as well as the themes of those stories produced by the student's parents.

I, Jerry Adams, am a graduate student in Psychology at Michigan State University. I will be working on this study under the close supervision of Dr. Lucy Ferguson, Professor of Psychology at Michigan State.

I am writing this letter to personally ask you and your son to participate in this study. The design of this study is quite simple and straightforward: Each participating family, (husband, wife and high school student), will meet with me for only one session lasting for 1-1½ hours. This session will be scheduled at your convenience. During the session I will ask each family member to create a few stories based on some pictures and then ask the family to make-up some stories together. As can be expected, all obtained information will be held strictly confidential. The stories will be coded to protect the individual identity of each participant.

The principal of the high school, has approved and endorsed this study, the results of which may provide educators, parents, students and psychologists with important information regarding the ways in which a family is organized and functions. As soon as the study is completed, the results and implications will be shared with all participating families. Past experience suggests that participating families will enjoy their story telling session. The opportunity to participate in this study, together as a family, should prove to be an interesting and rewarding experience.

I will be contacting you by telephone during the upcoming week to determine if you are interested in participating and to schedule a convenient time for our session together. I will also be able to answer any further questions you might have regarding this study.

Thank you,

Jerry S. Adams

Dear Parents:

Mr. Jerry Adams, has asked for the cooperation of this high school in his graduate research at M.S.U. He has picked a sample of families, including yours, to interview as part of his study. We would like to cooperate with him as much as possible, and while you certainly are not obligated, we would appreciate your help.

Please feel free to call me at school if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Principal

## APPENDIX B



## CONSENT FORM

1. We have freely consented to participate in a scientific study being conducted by Jerry S. Adams, under the supervision of Dr. Lucy Ferguson, Professor of Psychology at Michigan State University.
2. The study has been explained to us and we understand the explanation that has been given and what our participation will involve.
3. We understand that we are free to discontinue our participation in the study at any time without penalty.
4. We understand that the results of the study will be treated in strict confidence and that we will remain anonymous. Within these restrictions, results of the study will be made available to us at our request.
5. We agree to let Jerry Adams review the school record of our son in order to obtain background information. We understand that this is solely for research purposes and that all obtained information will remain strictly confidential.
6. We understand that, at our request, we can receive additional explanation of the study after our participation is completed.

Signed by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Father)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Mother)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Son)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Family Information Sheet

Please answer all questions as completely as possible.

1. Father's Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mother's Age: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Son's Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many children are there in your family? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please list the children's ages:  
 Boys: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_  
 Girls: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
3. Mother's relationship to son? (Please check one)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Natural Parent  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Step-Parent  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 How many years have mother and son been living together? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Father's relationship to son? (Please check one)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Natural Parent  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Step-Parent  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
 How many years have father and son been living together? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What is the highest level of education completed?  
 (Please be specific, e.g., 11th grade of high school)  
 Father's Education: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mother's Education: \_\_\_\_\_
6. State your type of employment. (Please be specific, e.g., English teacher at Junior High School)  
 Father's Employment: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mother's Employment: \_\_\_\_\_
7. The approximate annual family income is: (Please check one)  

|                         |                         |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| _____ Below \$4,000     | _____ \$30,000-\$34,000 |
| _____ \$5,000-\$9,000   | _____ \$35,000-\$39,000 |
| _____ \$10,000-\$14,000 | _____ \$40,000-\$44,000 |
| _____ \$15,000-\$19,000 | _____ \$45,000-\$54,000 |
| _____ \$20,000-\$24,000 | _____ \$55,000-\$64,000 |
| _____ \$25,000-\$29,000 | _____ \$65,000-\$74,000 |
|                         | _____ Above \$74,000    |

## APPENDIX C

Hafner and KaplanTAT HOSTILITY SCALE  
WEIGHTED SCORE SCALE4 points

Themes involving direct physical hostile acts between people or towards the self. (criminal assault; fighting; knifing of people; murder; physical torture; rape, shooting of people; suicide, war)

3 points

Themes involving hate; thoughts, feelings, dreams or threats of direct physical hostile acts between people; themes involving punishment, permanent debilitating injury, and death; themes of direct physical hostile acts involving animals, (accidental death; animals attacking humans; animals fighting; capital punishment; dreams or thoughts of death, fighting, murder, self-injury, sexual attack, and suicide; drowning, feelings of hate; hunting; people dying; persons harming animals; punishment involving deprivation; readiness to kill or physically attack; revenge; threats of harm or punishment)

2 points

Themes involving verbal hostility; derogatory descriptions of people; anti-social acts; people forced by others to do things; hostile or negative emotionality; rejections; illness and accidents involving injury; destruction of inanimate objects; predatory animals; destructive forces of nature; weapons. (anger; arguing; cheating; coercion; criminals; criticality; criticism of others; domination; dreams of illness; drunkenness; embezzlement; forgery; inconsiderate people; jealousy; kidnapping; lying; mentally retarded person; negativism; people ignoring or snubbing one another; people smashing things; people with physical deformities; plagiarism; policemen; readiness for verbal attack; robbery; sarcasm; self-depreciation; someone forced to do something against their wishes; surgery; swearing; tornadoes; truancy; verbal disagreement; verbal rebuke; verbal threat other than physical harm)

1 point

Themes involving emotional deprivation, guilt feelings; escape, misfortune; death symbols; broken objects; the military. (cemetaries and graves; people hiding; people running away from something; remorse; sadness; shame; soldiers)

0 points

Themes without hostile content. (economic hardship; insects)

Hafner and KaplanTAT HOSTILITY SCALE  
Overt - Covert Scale

OVERT HOSTILITY: Hostility which is manifest and direct.

Themes involving animals fighting; animals attacking humans; arguing; capital punishment; cheating; coercion; criminal assault; criticality; criticism of others; destruction of objects; derogatory description of people; feelings or dreams of anger; feelings or dreams of hate; fighting; harm to things of nature, such as trees or plants; kidnapping, killing, knifing people; murder or thoughts or dreams of murder; people snubbing one another; people yelling at each other; persons doing harm to animals; physical restraint; physical torture; punishment involving deprivations; rape or thoughts and dreams of sexual attack; readiness to kill or for physical or verbal attack; revenge; robbery; shooting people; someone forced to do something against their wishes; strangling; swearing/ threats of punishments; truancy; verbal disagreement; verbal rebuke; verbal threat including dreams of verbal threat.

COVERT HOSTILITY: Hostility which is insidious, indirect, disguised, or latent.

Themes involving accidental death; accidental injury or self-injury including dreams and thoughts of broken objects; cemeteries or graves, criminals; destructive forces of nature (tornadoes, hurricanes, etc.); domination; dreams or thoughts of death; drowning; drunkenness; embezzlement; emotional deprivation; forgery; guilt feelings; hunting; illness--including dreams of injury involving permanent disability; jealousy; lying; misfortune; negativism; people described as neurotic, psychotic or mentally defective; people hiding; people ignoring one another; people in the process of dying; people running away from something; people with physical deformities; people who are inconsiderate of one another; plagiarism; policemen; predatory animals; rejecting; remorse; sadness; sarcasm; self-deprecating; shame; soldiers; suicide--including thoughts of surgery; thoughts of arguing; war; weapons.

## APPENDIX D

GENERAL GUIDELINES\*

1. Before the actual scoring or assigning of weights, read the entire story and then go back and score the hostility themes.
2. For every theme which is assigned a score of weighted hostility, a score on the overt-covert dimension should also be made.
3. If a scorable object (e.g., gun) is mentioned or involved in a scorable act (e.g., murder) only score the act.  
     4 Points = He picked up the gun and shot her.  
     If however, only the object is mentioned then score it.  
     2 Points = anger  
     2 Points = gun
4. If a scorable emotion or motivation is articulated, then it should be scored, even if the emotion is part of a scorable act or behavior.  
     1 Point = sad  
     3 Points = thoughts of suicide  
     He was so sad he thought about suicide.  
     Also remember, the emotion or motivation must be clearly stated in order to be scored; don't score emotionality if the judgment is based on inference.
5. "Or Rule": If a list of scorable acts are stated, none of which are subsequently chosen, then score the lowest point value act. In other words, if there is a listing of possible scorable acts, and it remains unclear which act is actually happening, then score the lowest act.  
     1 Point = sadness  
     Maybe this is about murder or perhaps suicide or maybe sadness. It's not clear.  
     If however, one of the acts is eventually developed then score that act.
6. If a scorable act is later articulated score both the act and the articulation or elaboration.  
     1 Point = anger  
     3 Points = thoughts about murder  
     3 Points = feelings of hate  
     He was really angry. He was so angry he even thought about murdering him, as he felt so much hatred towards the men.

---

\*These guidelines were created for the present study and were applied to the Hafner and Kaplan scoring system.

7. If the same scorable act takes place twice in the same story, but is performed by two different people, score both acts.
  - 3 Points = Man's threat of physical harm
  - 2 Points = Verbal argument
  - 2 Points = Boy's verbal threat

The man and the boy were involved in a verbal argument. The man threatened to beat the boy. The boy then threatened that he would run away and never come back.
8. If the idea remains unclear, arbitrary or is contradicted, score with the lowest point value that is applicable.
9. Be sparing with inferences; unless clear and obvious do not infer.
10. If there is a caricature, treat as if it is a real person.
11. Drugs and Drunkenness--if within a social context do not score, e.g., "two friends had a drink". Only score if:
  1. it is a theme of excess (loss of memory, hangover, passing-out)
  2. anti-social drug use (addiction, trafficking, etc.).
12. Punishment - 2 categories apply:
  - 3 Points = all physical and threats of legal punishment
  - 2 Points = grounded, sent to room, can't use the car, etc.



### Scoring System

O = Overtly Hostile Theme

C = Covertly Hostile Theme

#### 4 Points

1. Themes involving direct physical hostile acts between people or towards the self:
  - a. criminal assault - O
  - b. physical fighting - O
  - c. knifing of people - O
  - d. murder - O
  - e. physical torture - O
  - f. rape (sexual attack, includes molestation) - O
  - g. shooting of people - O
  - h. suicide - attempt but not contemplation - C
  - i. war (only descriptions - don't include mere mention, e.g., "looks like WWII") - C
  - j. strangling - O
  - k. actual self injury - C

#### 3 Points

1. Themes involving hate: (all are Overt)
  - a. feeling of hate
  - b. despise
  - c. hatred as a motivation (must be clearly stated)
  - d. dreams of hate
  - e. revenge or vengeful acts (must be clearly articulated e.g., "getting back")
2. Themes involving thoughts, feelings, dreams and/or threats of direct physical hostile acts between people or towards self (nonperformed acts)
  - a. fighting - O
  - b. murder - O
  - c. self-injury - C
  - d. sexual attack - O

- e. suicide - C
  - f. readiness to kill or physically attack - 0
  - g. threats of physical harm - 0
3. Themes involving punishment
- a. capital punishment - 0
  - b. punishment involving deprivation (usually legal in nature, e.g., jail, prison, arrest, reform school) - 0
  - c. threats of physical punishment - 0
  - d. actual physical punishment - 0
  - e. physical restraint - 0
4. Themes involving permanent debilitating injury:  
(not the result of accident or illness)
- a. blindness - C
  - b. deafness - C
  - c. paralysis - C
5. Themes involving death:
- a. accidental death (car accident; drowning; plane crash) - C
  - b. dreams or thoughts about death - C
  - c. people dying - C
  - d. terminal or incurable disease - C
6. Themes of direct physical hostile acts involving animals:
- a. hunting - C
  - b. animals attacking humans - 0
  - c. animals fighting - 0
  - d. person harming or torturing animals (with intent) - 0

## 2 Points

1. Themes involving verbal hostility
- a. arguing - 0
  - b. readiness for verbal attack - 0
  - c. swearing - 0
  - d. verbal disagreement - 0
  - e. verbal threat other than physical harm - 0
  - f. verbal provocation (teasing, insulting) - 0
  - g. yelling at each other - 0

2. Themes involving derogatory descriptions of people
  - a. inconsiderate people - C
  - b. mentally retarded persons - C
  - c. self-depreciation - C
  - d. criminal - C
  - e. neurotic, psychotic, mentally defective - 0
3. Themes involving anti-social acts
  - a. drunkenness or intoxication - C
  - b. embezzlement - C
  - c. forgery - C
  - d. kidnapping - 0
  - e. lying - C
  - f. plagiarism - C
  - g. truancy - 0
  - h. cheating - 0
  - i. robbery - 0
  - j. bribery - C
  - k. drug trafficking - 0
4. Themes involving people forced by others to do things  
(includes attempts to do things, success is not a criteria)
  - a. coercion - 0
  - b. domination - C
  - c. grounding - sent to room without dinner - 0
  - d. punishment not included under 3.3 (firing-as punishment;  
expulsion from school)
5. Themes involving hostile or negative emotionality:
  - a. anger - 0
  - b. criticality - 0
  - c. criticism of others (blaming) - 0
  - d. jealousy - C
  - e. sarcasm - C
  - f. negativism - C
  - g. frustration - C
  - h. bitterness - C
  - i. resentment - C
6. Themes involving rejections: (a break up of a relationship  
is not scored unless rejection is specifically mentioned)
  - a. people ignoring one another - C
  - b. the silent treatment - C
  - c. people snubbing one another - 0
  - d. person feeling rejected - C

7. Themes involving illness and accidents involving injury:
  - a. dreams of illness - C
  - b. people with physical deformities - C
  - c. surgery - (only in a medical sense) - C
  - d. autopsy - C
  - e. hunting or shooting accident - C
8. Themes involving destruction of inanimate objects:
  - a. people smashing things or objects - 0
  - b. breaking windows - 0
  - c. smashing of inanimate objects (includes crashing e.g., auto accidents without injury) - 0
  - d. harm to things of nature (trees, plants) - 0
9. Themes involving predatory animals:
  - a. stalking prey - C
10. Themes involving destructive forces of nature:
  - a. earthquakes - C
  - b. tornadoes - C
  - c. hurricanes - C
  - d. tidal waves - C
  - e. volcanoes - C
11. Themes involving weapons:
  - a. knives, guns, bombs, etc. - C
  - b. policemen - C

1 Point

1. Themes involving emotional deprivation: (must be very clear - more than just mention of someone leaving--has to include misery or loss of person who has been left)
  - a. deprivation of love, support, comfort - C
2. Themes involving guilt feelings - all Covert
  - a. remorse or (bitter) regret
  - b. shame
  - c. feeling terrible about something done

3. Themes involving death symbols: all Covert
  - a. funerals
  - b. cemeteries - caskets and graves
  - c. cremations
  - d. widows/widowers
4. Themes involving escape - all Covert (primarily involves escape from people or animals or physical objects (place or situation, e.g., jail); only refers to emotional or internal escape when it is clearly stated as such, e.g., "he was feeling so bad he got drunk to escape his worries."
  - a. people running away from something
  - b. people hiding
5. Themes involving the military - all Covert
  - a. soldiers
  - b. refers to a war without descriptions ("looks like WWII")
  - c. army base
  - d. naming of a branch of the military (army, marines, etc.)
6. Themes involving broken objects: all Covert
  - a. a clock that doesn't work
  - b. a door that is too rusty to open
  - c. flat tire
7. Themes involving misfortune: all Covert
  - a. sadness
  - b. crying
  - c. upset, depression
  - d. suffering
  - e. sorrow
  - f. grief
8. Themes involving illness and accidents involving injury to animals:
  - a. animals with illness - C
  - b. animals with physical deformities - C
  - c. veterinary surgery - C
  - d. accidental injury to animals - C

### 0 Points

Themes without hostile content (economic hardship, insects)

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