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A COMPARISON OF THE MORAL ORIENTATION OF CHILDREN REARED IN TRADITIONAL FAMILIES AND THOSE REARED IN MATRIFOCAL FAMILIES

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A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Arts,
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg,
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the Degree of Master of Arts (Clinical Psychology).

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ABSTRACT i

The motivation for this study arose from the need to bring empirical evidence to bear on the assumptions underlying existing social and legal practices that discriminate against lesbian mothers on the basis of their sexual orientation. These practices appear to be rooted in myths and prejudices rather than being based upon factual data. In view of this need the present study aimed to determine whether adolescents' moral judgement was influenced by whether the mother had a partner in the home and whether the gender of the partner (male versus female) impacted upon such development. To achieve this aim, the performance of adolescents, matched as far as was possible in terms of age, sex and socio-economic status, but from three different family structures (lesbian couple, heterosexual single-mother and traditional heterosexual married couples), was assessed on a paper and pencil test of moral judgement, and was then compared. Statistical analysis of the data, using an Analysis of Variance procedure, revealed that the means of the three groups did not differ significantly. While the results did not confirm the hypothesis that the presence of a partner in the home would enhance the moral judgement of adolescents, the data supported the contention that

maternal lesbianism does not impact negatively on moral judgement.

DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Arts (Clinical Psychology) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination to any other University.

Signed on this 7th day of June 1994

.....

G.M. Bales

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CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION

" The vanishing nuclear family constitutes one of the most significant demographic and social transformations in recent history " (Edwards, 1987, p 355).

Numerous alternatives to the traditional nuclear family structure have arisen in recent years. The number of children growing up in two parent families in which the father goes out to work and the mother remains at home to look after the children has diminished drastically.

Between 1970 and 1980 there was a 43% increase in the number of fatherless families in America (Kamerman and Hayes, in Dilapi, 1989), making the matrifocal family one of the most rapidly growing family types in the USA (Zeidenstein, 1990).

The matrifocal family may take on a variety of different forms, one of which is the lesbian mother household.

To some, the term lesbian mother may appear to be a contradiction in terms, as lesbian couples are unable to achieve biological parenthood. However, although statistics for the South African context are unavailable, it is estimated that there are approximately 1,5 - 2 million lesbian women in the USA

who have children (Harvey, Carr and Bernheine, 1989 ; Hoeffer, 1981 ; Patterson, 1992) and estimates of the number of children of gay and lesbian parents range from 6 to 14 million (Patterson, 1992 ; Schulenberg, 1985). In fact, the 1980's have been termed the lesbian baby boom era within lesbian communities (Zeidenstein,1990).

While the majority of lesbian mothers conceive children during a previous heterosexual pertnership (Schulenberg, 1985), an increased number of lesbian women are becoming parents by means of artificial insemination (Clay, 1990).

Several factors have contributed to the emergence of the lesbian family as an alternative family form.

The women's liberation movement has led to a redefinition of male and female roles in society, and increased emancipation for women, making the formation of lesbian families economically viable. In addition, the removal of homosexuality from the APA's list of mental disorders in 1973, and political protest by gay rights activists, has led to an increasing recognition of homosexuality " as a lifestyle that can be chosen and celebrated rather than a condition into which pathologically-disordered women and men stumble ....."

(Elliot, 1986, Pg 189).

CHAPTER 2 : RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The motivation for the present study stems from the fact that existing social and legal policies do not adequately meet the unique needs of the lesbian family. In order to prompt policy makers to introduce policy changes which are tailored to the needs of such families, research which takes cognisance of the criticisms levelled against studies examining the impact of such family structures on child development is needed.

2.1 Difficulties confronting lesbian families as a result of existing social and legal policies.

Lesbian couples with children are rarely recognised by society as being a family unit. The lack of recognition of the legitimacy of lesbain families is problematic for such families as many decisions made in relation to lesbian parenting are based on social myths and prejudices rather than upon factual data.

Sexual orientation has frequently prevented lesbian mothers, particularly those actively involved in a relationship with a female partner, from gaining custody and/or visitation rights in litigation procedures. It is believed that the lesbian mother is unable to

provide a healthy psychological environment for the developing child (Cramer, 1986).

In addition, in a lesbian family the non-biological mother is unable to adopt her partner's children, as a step-parent cannot adopt a child if the child has a biological parent of the same sex as the step-parent, who is unwilling to relinquish his/her parental status. The lack of a legal relationship between the non-biological mother and the children in lesbian families leads to numerous difficulties (Polikoff, 1990).

In the event of the death of the biological mother in a lesbian family, guardianship of the children is only presumtively awarded to a legal parent. The child, already traumatized by the death of the biological mother, may also lose their second parent due to lack of legal status (Cullum, 1993).

Also, should a long standing lesbian relationship break up, courts are ill prepared to resolve disputes surrounding custody and visitation rights.

It has also been found that the desire to have children is not influenced by sexual orientation (Clay, 1990) . Weinberg and Bell, in Johnson, Smith and Guenther (1987) found not having children to be a source of great regret

in the lives of gay men and women. Zeidenstein (1990) found that 70% of lesbians in her study indicated that they would like to have children. However, social institutions such as social service agencies, medical facilities and legal systems determine who has access to alternate forms of parenting such as adoption, artificial insemination, etc. The lesbian woman, particularly if she is open about her sexual orientation, is frequently denied access to such services.

As indicated by Plummer, in Elliot (1986, p. 194) , gay couples fail to concur with the dominant family ideology and as a result the gay family is not sanctioned by society : " The law does not protect it, nor does the church give it its blessing. Family, community and society, if not outrightly hostile, refuse to recognise the couple as a unit ..... the tax man grants no reliefs, hospitals refuse to recognise partners as ' next of kin ' in emergencies ..... ".

2.2 Inadequacies in existing research

A large body of research exists, which will be reviewed in a subsequent chapter, which has compared children from single mother homes with those from intact homes on various indices of psychological adjustment. Deficits in

the functioning of the former group have been interpreted as resulting from the absence of a father in these homes. This would suggest that being reared within the context of a lesbian family would impact negatively on the child's development due to the absence of a father in such homes. However, the above mentioned studies have been criticised for various reasons which will be expanded upon in a subsequent chapter. It is possible that it is the single mother's lack of access to sources of support which impacts negatively on child development rather than father absence per se. The present study provides an opportunity of examining whether the presence of a partner in the lesbian mother household is able to ameliorate deficits in child development noted in heterosexual single mother studies.

Research on the development of children reared by lesbian mothers has been limited in certain respects.

Research has tended to compare children of lesbian mothers with those of divorced heterosexual mothers (Golombok et al, 1983 ; Green et al, 1986 ; Javaid, 1993) as it is felt that children in both groups have undergone the experience of parental divorce/separation and are thus comparable in terms of experiences other than maternal sexual orientation. However, it has been argued that comparisons with a group which also lacks a

father figure and has been shown to be disadvantaged are inadequate (Elliot, 1986). What needs to be established is whether the lesbian family structure is able to provide the child with a home environment which is equally as conducive to healthy psychological development as the traditional two parent (one female, one male) nuclear family structure. In order to meet this need comparisons of indices of psychological development in children from lesbian and traditional family structures have to be conducted.

Thus the present study aims to further research in the area of lesbian parenting by examining whether children reared by lesbian couples differ from children reared in other family structures in terms of a particular index of psychological development, namely, moral development. It aims to do this by comparing the moral judgement of adolescents reared by lesbian couples, single heterosexual mothers and married heterosexual couples.

Research in the area of lesbian parenting has also tended to focus on pre-pubescent children to the neglect of adolescents and young children (Kirkpatrick, 1987). This is a serious limitation as it may be only during adolescence that the child is able to fully grasp the implications of the mother's lesbianism on a cognitive level. It is also during this stage that peer group

demands for conformity become most intense, thus magnifying the impact living in an alternative family structure may have on the child. Thus, research on the impact maternal lesbiabism has on the adolescent's development is essential.

Finally, much research into the impact maternal lesbianism has on development has focused on the gender identity development of children reared in such family structures. Resea. h in the area of moral development is vitally important as lesbianism has long been condemned as being morally offensive by various social institutions.

The logical extension of this belief would be that the moral development of children reared by such parents would be retarded. In order to counteract such stigmatization, actual data on the impact maternal lesbianism has on the child's moral values is required.

A brief review of various theoretical perspectives relating to the role of the father in the moral development of the child will be presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 3 : THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Morality is a multi-faceted concept and theorists differ in terms of the aspects on which they concentrate in their attempts to explain the development of morality within the child. They also differ in terms of the extent to which they see the father as making a unique and specific contribution to the child's moral development.

These theories will now be explored with particular reference to the importance they ascribe to the role of the father, given his absence in the lesbian households that are the focus of this study.

3.1 Psychoanalytic theory

Psychoanalytic theory views the father as playing a vitaly important role in the child's, particularly boy's, moral development. It is through identification with the father that the male child internalizes society's norms and values and gains the control systems which ensure adherence to these values. This theory concentrates on the internal, emotional aspects of morality which manifest in the form of concsience development and the expression of emotions such as guilt

(Lamb, 1976).

Freud (1927, 1950) argued that morality was an outgrowth of the process of same-sex parental identification. Such identification is sparked by feelings of rivalry and hostility towards this parent as a result of the child's attraction to the opposite sex parent. The child fears retaliation by the parent or loss of parental love and identifies with the parent to avoid the anxiety evoked by such fears.
Anna Freud (1946) discusses two types of identification. Identification with the aggressor enables the child to avoid the punishment that the acting out of feelings of hostility towards the parent would entail. Instead the child identifies with the parent and directs feelings of hostility towards the self. These redirected feelings of hostility manifest in the form of guilt, which then acts as a control against enacting impulses to transgress parental prohibitions. In contrast, anaclytic identification provides the child with an ego ideal towards which to strive. The child models himself after the parent and incorporates his values in order to reduce anxiety experienced over the possible loss of the parent's love.

Thus it is through the relationship with the father that the child both gains access to societal values and is

provided with the motivation to incorporate these values.

3.2 Parson's socialisation theory

Parson (in Hoffman, 1971) sees the father as playing a unique role in the socialization process as the father is the parental agent through which society's norms and values are brought to the home. As, according to Parsons, the mother functions largely within the home setting she will have less exposure to these wider values. However, in view of the fact that in the USA participation in the labour market by women aged 20 - 24 rose from 57% in 1970 to 73% in 1988 (Smock, 1993) and that in this year 54% and 57% of the single and married mothers with pre-schoolers respectively were in the labour force, this postulation appears to be somewhat outdated. Parsons argues that the mother and father differ in terms of the function they perform in relation to the child : the mother's function is primarily expressive while that of the father is instrumental and he is thus implicated in the promotion or retardation of moral development in the child (Lamb, 1976).

3.3 Cognitive developmental theory

Cognitive developmental approaches, represented by

theorists such as Piaget and Kohlberg do not view the father as making a particularly unique or important contribution to the child's moral development. According to Kohlberg (1969, p. 428) " There are too many developmental and cultural factors tending to produce ' normal ' morality to see these attitudes as contingent on special unique relationships to parents .....". These approaches concentrate on moral reasoning and judgement, and see moral development as being closely related to the child's developing cognitive abilities (in Lamb, 1976).

Kohlberg (1969) views moral development as progressing through a series of stages in an invariant and universal manner. At the core of the various moral stages is the individuals evolving sense of justice - as the individual gains an increasingly sophisticated and complex understanding of rules and justice so their perspective on the rights and duties of the protaganists involved in a moral situation will change (Kohlberg, 1984).

Kohlberg (1969) hypothesized that moral development is dependant upon cognitive development and exposure to appropriate socio-moral experiences.

In order to achieve certain moral stages the individual

must have achieved a parallel level of cognitive development. In this regard Piaget (1932) argued that the move in the child's moral reasoning from locating sanctions regarding the rightness of behaviour externally to locating them internally is parallelled by a cognitive shift from concrete to abstract thought. Piaget viewed the motivation for structural reorganization as coming from a desire to restore equilibrium. Current ways of thinking are revealed as being inadequate which encourages evolution towards higher stages of reasoning in order to achieve a greater state of equilibrium. Disequilibrium may stem from internal or external sources, but Piaget saw external influences alone as being insufficient to explain development.

Kohlberg (1969) saw exposure to social environments which encourage cognitive conflict by giving the individual the chance to take on different roles as being the most important driving force behind moral development. The individual gains such experiences in his interpersonal relationships with friends and family and through his actual participation in the legal, economic and political institutions of society.

Piaget saw peer group interaction as being more conducive of moral development than family interactions.

Peer group interactions (based on co-operation and mutual respect) facilitate the shift from the belief in the immutability and absolute nature of rules (an orientation encouraged by the child's subordination to parental authority) to the recognition of the relativity of rules which Piaget saw as being central to moral development.

3.4 Social learning theory

In terms of social learning theory the absence of the father would be viewed as being problematic for the child's, particularly the boy's, development due to the lack of an appropriate same-sex role model within the home. However, it would be acknowledged that access to same-sex role models through the school setting, television programmes, etc. may work to counteract the effects associated with the absence of a masculine role model in the home.

Social learning theories focus mainly on the behavioural manifestations of morality and draw on the concept of reinforcement and modelling to explain the emergence of moral behaviours (Bandura and Walters, 1963).

Thus it would appear that all the theorists, with the exception of Kohlberg, stress the important role played by the father in moral development. Even in terms of Kohlberg's theory, an argument could be made for the importance of the father in terms of the opportunity he affords the child of taking on roles which differ in nature from those assumed in relation to the mother and the child's friends.

In the following chapter empirical research examining the role of the father in child development will be reviewed.

CHAPTER 4 : REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN FAMILY STRUCTURE AND CHILD ADJUSTMENT.

4.1 Comparisons of children from single parent and intact families.

A large body of research exists which has found deficits in various aspects of functioning in children from single-mother families. While these findings have been assumed to reflect the important contribution made by the father to the child's development, the real question concerning these findings is whether they should be interpreted to reflect the importance of father presence specifically or simply the importance of the availability of social support for the mother. This issue will be explored later following a review of the areas of functioning within which deficits have been found in children of single-mothers.

4.1.1 Cognitive functioning

In comparison with children from intact families, children from single-mother families have been found to perform more poorly on measures of academic achievement (Kinard and Reinherz, 1986 ; Kurdek and Sinclaire, 1988 Murray and Sandquist, 1990), educational aptitude

(Murray et al, 1990 ; Sutton-Smith, Rosenberg and Landy , 1968) and number of years of schooling completed (Beller and Chung, 1992 ;Murray et al,1992). It is commonly believed that this is because fathers engage in more cognitive and achievement oriented interactions with the child than mothers do. Thus the association between cognitive deficits and single-mother families has been explained in terms of the absence of a father who would provide such interactions

However, research investigating the actual nature of interactions between father and child has produced mixed results. While the results of researchers such as Parke, in Murray et al (1990) tend to support the previously cited assumption, other researchers (Collins and Russel, 1991) have found that mothers and fathers tend to be equally involved in the child's socialization with regard to cognitive and developmental issues. They do note, however, that mothers tend to be more directive and intrusive in their behaviours while fathers behave in a manner which facilitates instrumental interaction. It is possible that these differing interaction styles impact uniquely on the socialization process.

4.1.2 Sex role development, aggression and delinquency.

In his review of the literature Biller (1970) cites numerous studies which have found difficulties with sex role development among boys in single-mother families. In observations of parent-child interactions it has been found that while mothers display greater consistency in their treatment of children of both sexes, fathers treat boys and girls differently thus encouraging differentiation between masculine and feminine roles (Edwards, 1987).

Biller and David, in Edwards (1987), suggest that the father acts as a masculine role model which boys may imitate, whereas feminine identity is partially established through role reciprocity in the girl's interaction with the father.

Similarly, findings of increased levels of aggressive behaviour (Bacon, Child and Barry, in Moulton, Liberty, Burnstein and Altucher, 1966) ; difficulties with impulse control (Mischel, in Biller, 1970) ; and reduced levels of doll play aggression in single-mother children have been attributed by Hoffman (1971) to the absence of modelling opportunities provided to the child by the father figure. He argues that the discipline and opportunity for self control modelling provided by the father will discourage the overt expression of aggression in father-present boys, who will use fantasy

as a vehicle for the expression of such impulses. In contrast, boys in single-mother families who lack the controls necessary to inhibit aggressive acting out will have a reduced need to engage in aggressive fantasies.

Subsequent to the establishment of Juvenile Courts in the United States, it was found that 40% to 50% of delinquents came from broken homes (Rhodes, in Gregory, 1965).

A seminal study in the field of delinquency was that conducted by Glueck and Glueck (1950). In a comparison of 500 delinquent with 500 non-delinquent boys they found that 60% of delinquents as opposed to 34% of non-delinquents came from homes characterized by the absence of a parent : 41,2% of delinquents had absent fathers as opposed to 24,8% of non-delinquents and 15,6% and 7,2% of the delinquents and non-delinquents respectively had absent mothers. Several other studies have replicated the finding of an association between delinquency and single-parent, particularly single-mother, homes. (Bach and Bremer, 1947 ; Gregory, 1965 ; Monahan, 1957 Siegman, 1966.)

Parsons, in Siegman (1966), views father absence as playing a paramount role in delinquency. He argues that antisocial behaviour in males is associated with

difficulties encountered in sex role identification. Antisocial behaviour is an asserting of masculinity and rejection of femininity (which the child equates with " goodness ") in response to the young boy's primary identification with the mother, i.e. in order to counter his primary feminine identification the boy acts out in an exageratedly masculine fashion. Factors such as father absence, which intensify identification with the maternal figure, will thus encourage increased antisocial behaviour.

Moynihan, in Brownfield (1987, p.65), also cites " compulsive masculinity " as playing a central role in the development of delinquency in Negroes. He argues that " the Negro community has been forced into a matriarchal structure which, because it is so out of line with the rest of American society, seriously retards the progress of the group as a whole, and imposes a crushing burden on the Negro male ".

In contrast, Johnson (1986), argues that the high incidence of deviant behaviour by children from broken homes reported in official statistics may be more related to the response of officials to individuals coming from such family structures than to the actual behaviour of such individuals. Subsequent to his study comparing self reported delinquency acts and self

reported official trouble counts, he concluded that " the broken home may be producing more official delinquents without producing more delinquent behaviour ". (Johnson, 1986, p.79.)

4.1.3 Moral development

Based on his review of the literature Hoffman (1963) postulates that the role of the father in moral development is more central amongst older children. The mother's role appears to revolve around the development of feelings of guilt, which function to deter the acting out of aggressive and related impulses and encourages the child to make reparation for their wrong doings (Simons et al, 1993). In contrast, the father appears to play a more prominent role in encouraging the development of the self controls necessary to resist pressures to transgress moral standards, particularly amongst boys.

On the basis of his findings in his study comparing single-mother and intact family boys on various indices of moral development, and his comparison of boys who identify highly with the father with those who do not, Hoffman (1971 , p. 404/405) concludes " that whether or not the boy identifies with his father influences the degree to which he accepts moral standards, uses them as

a basis for judging right and wrong, and behaves in accordance with them in the presence of authority. The presence or absence of a father also bears on these patterns, but in addition influences the extent to which the boy applies moral standards to his own behaviour ".

A limitation of Hoffman's (1971) study was that no controls were provided for duration of, and reasons for, father absence. In support of Hoffman's conclusion, Hart (1986), based on his examination of data collected in Kohlberg's well known study of moral judgement development in males, found a relation between paternal identification and advanced levels of moral judgement in males. The relation between maternal identification and moral judgement was not significant. However, Gilligan (1982) has critized Kohlberg's approach to the assessment of morality as she argues that it is based on the assumption that all individuals approach moral issues from a justice perspective and is thus biased against women, who tend to focus on care perspectives in their approach to moral issues (Gilligan and Attanuci, 1988 ; Johnston, Brown and Christopherson, 1990). In view of this criticism it is likely that the impact on moral judgement of the child's identification with the mother is likely to be obscured by the use of a measurement scale such as Kohlberg's.

Weisbroth (1970), also using Kohlberg's Moral Judgement Interview, found high levels of moral judgement in males to be associated with close identification with both parents, while in females such high levels were associated with identification with the father. She noted that correlations obtained were significant but not large, indicating that other factors were also at play.

A further study conducted by Hoffman (1971) led him to believe that parental identification fosters the recognition that moral principles rather than external sanctions form the basis for making moral judgements of right and wrong. However, he concludes that moral indices such as guilt, confession and acceptance of blame, which relate to judgements regarding the child's own behaviour, are fostered more through encounters with parental discipline than through identification with the parent (the relation between moral development and parental discipline is discussed in more detail in Section 4.3.2.5).

4.1.4 General adjustment

In general, studies have found single-motherhood to be associated with difficulties in interpersonal problem solving skills (Stanley, Weikel and Wilson, 1986) ;

lowered self-esteem (Parish, 1987) ; increased psychiatric symptomatology (Pillay, 1987) ; decreased socialibility and self-confidence and increased depression and withdrawal (Peretti and Di Vittorio, 1993). These studies provide much evidence to support the claim that children from single parent families are more vulnerable to experiencing difficulties with adjustment and functioning. Researchers speculate that the increased vulnerability found in children from single-mother families is due to the absence of the unique contribution made by the father to roles, relationships, socialization and development within the family (Swanson, Holzer, Canavan and Adams, 1989).

The contention that it is father absence per se that has a negative impact on child development, however, has been challenged on many fronts. Firstly, research on the adjustment of children in reconstituted families has not produced results consistent with the father absence hypothesis. Secondly, various indirect consequences associated with father absence have been identified which appear to affect child adjustment more intensely than father absence per se. Finally, the methodological limitations associated with research on single-motherhood prevent any firm conclusions as to the causal factors involved in adjustment difficulties associated with children from single-mother families from being

reached.

4.2. Adjustment of children from reconstituted families

Contrary to what may be expected in terms of the assumption that it is the father's absence per se which negatively affects the development of children in single-mother families, research on the extent to which remarriage compensates for development deficits has produced mixed results.

Zimiles and Lee (1991) found adolescents from single-parent and remarried families to lag behind those from intact families in terms of academic achievement. The former two groups were also three times as likely to drop out of school than the latter, even after ability differences had been accounted for. Beller and Chung (1992) found remarriage to ameliorate the negative effects living in a single-mother family has on educational attainment at lower, but not higher, educational levels - the presence of a stepfather negatively affected college entrance, particularly amongst boys. The authors speculate that this may be due to a tendency in stepfamilies to encourage children to leave home early and become self-supporting.

Adolescents from reconstituted families were found to be

higher than those from single-parent families on certain measures of self-concept, but their overall self-concept was found to be lower than those from intact families (Studer, 1993). Parish and Dorstal (1980) found that children aged 11 - 14 years from single- and step-parent families perceive both themselves and their parents more negatively than do children from intact families. These findings were supported by a further study on self-esteem by Parish (1987).

The findings regarding behavioural indices of adjustment frequently point to the fact that children in reconstituted families tend to exhibit more behavioural difficulties than those from single-parent families (Brady, Bray and Zeeb, 1986 ; Peterson and Zill,1986). Brady et al (1986) speculate that the more severe behaviour problems in reconstituted families may be associated with the stress of having to adjust to yet another change in family structure. This specualtion was supported by Capaldi and Patterson's (1[illegible] finding of a linear relation between number of family transitions and adjustment problems amongst boys - increased adjustment problems were associated with greater numbers of transitions. The relationship between increased transitions and adjustment difficulties has also been found with girls (Peterson and Zill, 1986).

In support of the speculation that relationship and adjustment levels in stepfamilies will begin to approximate those in intact families over time, Hagan, Hollier, O'Connor and Eisenberg (1992) found that mother-child relationships in remarried families tended to deteriorate subsequent to the remarriage, but recovered over time, and by two years after the remarriage tended to approximate the relationship between non-divorced mothers and their children. Relationships between children and stepfathers were not shown to improve over time. The speculation that child adjustment will improve over time in reconstituted families was not supported by the findings of Lindner, Hagan and Brown (1992).

4.3 Father absence : antecedent events and indirect consequences

As a result of " the multivariate and complex nature of pre-divorce and post-divorce personality and relationship variables " (Emery, in Mutchler et al, 1992, p.116) research on the effects of father absence which has compared adjustment of children from different family structures has been obscured by inadequacies in controlling for events antecedent to father absence and the indirect consequences of father absence.

4.3.1 Antecedent events

One of the limitations of studies regarding the adjustment of children in divorced families is that they do not identify whether adjustment difficulties began before or after the divorce process (Weintraub and Wolf, 1983).

Families who get divorced may differ from intact families in terms of variables, other than structure, which relate to the dependent variables measured, and may have differed in terms of these variables even prior to divorce (Murray and Sandquist, 1990).

One variable in terms of which divorced and intact families may differ is conflict. Divorce is usually the end product of much discord and conflict within the home. In this regard a significant body of literature exists which has failed to find a relationship bewteen family structure per se and various indices of psychosocial adjustment, but has found a significant negative relationship between these variables and parental conflict (Holman and Woodroffe-Patrick, 1988 ; Kurdek, 1981 ; Raschke and Raschke, 1979 ; Slater and Haber, 1984).

The actual trauma of the divorce process itself is also

likely to impact negatively on the child. As indicated by Bowlby, in Van Voorhis, Cullen, Mathers and Garner, (1988) the emotional trauma and conflict associated with divorce and separation will negatively affect the child and place him under a great deal of stress.

4.3.2 Indirect consequences of father absence

Research has tended to ignore diversity within single parent family groups, and Biller (1970) has pointed to the need for research identifying the variables which mediate father absence by comparing maladjusted with well adjusted single-mother children. Recent studies have begun to consider the way in which the indirect consequences of father absence affect child development. Numerous studies support the argument that when confounding factors are adequately controlled for, family structure does not appear to be strongly related to various indices of adjustment. (Farnsworth, 1984 ; Grove and Crutchfield, 1982 ; Rosen, 1955.)

4.3.2.1 Lowered income and socio-economic status

Two related factors confounding research on father absence are income and socio-economic status.

In 1988 34% of all female headed single parent families

in the USA fell below the poverty line. In addition, the median income of female headed families was under one half of the income of married couple families (Beller and Chung, 1992). Bane and Ellwood, in Astone and McLanahan (1991), have also indicated that the poverty of single-mother households is more extreme than the poverty of other groups. Even when the father pays maintenance family income is considerably reduced. Richards and Schmiege (1993) note that under half of all single-mothers receive maintenance from their ex-husbands on a regular basis. In this regard studies have noted an association between income level and mothers' life strains and children's self-esteem (Nelson, 1993); children's perception of their social acceptance and parents ratings of their children's behaviour problems (Schnayer and Orr, 1989) ; and role strain amongst mothers (Campbell and Moen, 1992).
A study by Swanson, Holzer, Canavan and Adams (1989) indicated a clear relationship between income and psychopathology. They found that the risk for psychopathology amongst one or more family members was greater for poorer families. In their non-patient community sample families with a mentally ill member had a mean annual income of 75% less than families with no mentally ill members.

Apart from the lower income brought in by single-mothers

there is likely to be more insecurity regarding income in such families. For example, if the mother becomes ill or is retrenched, etc., there is not another parent's salary to fall back on. Goldberg, Greenberger, Hamill and O'Neill (1992) found a significant positive association between income stability and mothers perception of their childrens behaviour.

It may be argued that the current costs of marital disruption for women are likely to be lower than they were in the past, due to increased participation by women in the labour market. Smock (1993) found post divorce median changes in income for women to have remained fairly stable over the past three decades. Smock explains this phenomenon in terms of the difficulties facing single women with young children attempting to compete on the labour market in view of the present absence of public policies that support child rearing activities and lack of affordable child care facilities. Smock (1993, p.368) concludes " However `prepared' for marital disruption women increesingly may be, they are not prepared in ways sufficient to cushion the economic costs. "

Socio-economic status has also been identified as being an important factor mediating the influence father absence has upon the child (Stevenson and Black, 1988)

Cobliner (1963) found that the likelihood of father absence being related to serious psychological difficulties is far stronger amongst lower than middle class individuals. This is not surprising in view of the fact that individuals in the lowest socio-economic classes are at greater risk for various major psychiatric disorders (Holzer, Shea, Swanson, Leaf, Myers, George and Bednarski, 1986) . Cobliner (1963) speculates that his findings may be attributed in part to the fact that middle class mothers have greater access to psychological and economic resources with which to mediate the effects of father absence than lower class mothers do.

While Doornbush (1985) found that controlling for socio-economic status did not influence the relationship between deviance and family structure in his study, several other studies have found that socio-economic status accounts for a major portion of the difference in academic functioning between children from single and two parent families (Bane, 1976 ; Hertzog and Sudia, 1973 ; Shinn, 1978 ; Swanson, Bringle and McLaughlin, 1987 ; Kinard et al, 1986 ; Kiecolt, 1989).

Thus there is strong evidence to suggest that the lowered income, and socio-economic status of single-mother families may strongly contribute to deficits

noted in the development of children from such families.

4.3.2.2 Maternal stress and soc' 1 support

Social support may be defined as being " the factors which lead individuals to believe they are cared for, are esteemed, and have people they can turn to in times of need " (Adamkos, Ryan, Ullman, Pascoe, Diaz and Chessare, 1986, p.464).

The single-mother is often lacking in social, emotional and economic support. She is having to adjust to a new lifestyle, and at the time she most needs support she is deprived of much of her former support system. Rands, in Buehler and Legg (1993) has indicated that the separated mother loses 40% of the social support network that she had access to during her marriage . As Longfellow, in Buehler et al,1993, p.23) indicates, marital separation appears to " intensify the separated mothers' need for an external support system, while at the same time it throws up obstacles against her ability to build or maintain such a network ".

Social support appears to affect maternal well-being indirectly by buffering the mother against the negative effects on psycho-emotional well-being of life change and stress (Buehler et al, 1993). This buffering

function against stress is vitally important as single-mothers have been found to have significantly higher levels of chronic stress and life events than married women (McLanahan, 1983 ; Weinraub and Wolf, 1983). Increased stress levels appear to be related to the fact that the break up of a former family unit is often a violent and stressful process. In addition, single-mothers have great demands placed on their time since they are solely responsible for earning a living and managing the household. (Strauss, Geller and Steinmetz, in Sack, Mason and Higgins, 1985).

The mothers access to social support also impacts on the child as maternal stress levels have been found to be associated with various indices of adjustment in the child (Forgatch, Patterson and Skinner, in Nelson, 1993 Nelson, 1993). Social support for the mother appears to impact on child adjustment by improving aspects of the mother-child relationship. Access to a wide range of social support has been found to be associated with the mothers' perceptions of their children (Goldberg et al, 1992) ; decreased stress in the mother-child relationship and increased stimulation of the child by the mother (Adamkos et al, 1986) ; and increased maternal sensitivity to the child's needs (Pianta, Stroufe and Egeland, 1989).

Hughes et al (1993) examined the type of support that was most closely associated with psychological well-being amongst recently divorced women. Little relationship was found between the provision of material and practical support and well-being. However, quality of relationship with people in the support network was significantly related to well-being. Relationships characterized by reciprocity and closeness were associated with well-being, while higher levels of conflict were associated with greater symptomatology.

These findings were supported by a study conducted by Lindblad, Goldberg and Dukes (1985, p.85) who conclude that " ..... it may be the quality of the social network, rather than the quantity per se, that determines the effectiveness of a family's functioning within the network " .

Gladow and Ray (1986) found that different aspects of well-being were influenced by support from different sources. Kinship support tended to alleviate isolation and total number of problems experienced, whereas friendship support played an important role in reducing loneliness and increasing happiness. The relationship between friendship and happiness was affected by the depth or intimacy of the friendship. Romantic involvement did not appear to correlate with loneliness

or happiness amongst single-mothers, but it did play a role in alleviating feelings of isolation. Gladow et al, (1986) speculate that romantic partners tended to be invloved with the children of single-mothers, making these mothers feel less isolated.

Social support appears to buffer the single-mother against the high stress levels associated with her situation. In this way it allows for a better relationship between mother and child and thus indirectly impacts on child adjustment.

4.3.2.3 Number of adults in the home

A further difficulty in the father absence research involves disentangling the effects of father absence per se from the impact the reduced number of adults in the single-mother household has on the child.

The presence of two adults in the home (regardless of their gender) may provide more stimulation and emotional security for the child than if there is just one parent. In addition, in order to try and mitigate the loss of income associated with father absence, the single-mother may spend increased amounts of time at the workplace, and thus " mother absence " may be an effect associated with the loss of the father (Beller and

Chung, 1992, p.44). The presence of an additional adult in the home may also work to alleviate high levels of role strain found amongst single-mothers (Kelly and Voydanhoff, in Campbell et al,1992).

In their comparison of low socio-economic status boys of single-mothers who had been exposed to weekly interactions with a substitute male adult role model with boys who had not received such exposure, Nelson and Valliant (1993) found the personality adjustment of the former group to be more positive than that of the latter. While this research indicates the benefits to the boy of a single-mother of spending time interacting with an additional adult, it does not indicate whether the benefits derived depend specifically on the gender of the adult.

Studies conducted in the area of juvenile delinquency have found the presence of an additional adult in the household to be associated with lower rates of delinquency (Doornbush, 1985 ; Marata, 1986) and susceptibility to antisocial peer pressure (Steinberg, 1987), except when the additional adult is a stepfather (Doornbush, 1985 ; Steinberg, 1987).

4.3.2.4 Maternal adjustment

The separated mother's psychosocial adjustment impacts on the child's post divorce adjustment as it influences the degree to which the mother is available to the child on a physical and emotional level (Buehler, 1989). In other words, the mother's psychosocial adjustment will impinge strongly on the quality of the mother-child relationship, a relationship which has been found to be a vitally important mediating factor in the child's post divorce adjustment (Bach, 1946 ; Colley, 1959 ; Lyon and Vanderberg, 1989 ; Peterson et al, 1986, and Mutchler et al, 1992).

In a retrospective study of adults whose fathers had died during their childhood, Hilguard, Newman and Fisk (1960) found that the widowed mothers' ego strength was strongly related to the individuals adjustment as an adult. Jensen et al (1981) found a relation between father absence and increased depression and anxiety in children, but once maternal psychopathology and stress were factored out, these effects disappeared.

Also to be noted is the fact that maternal character traits, such as antisocial traits, may negatively impact on child well-being independently of factors associated with father absence.

Bank, Forgatch, Patterson and Fetrow (1993) note the association found between antisocial qualities in divorced mothers and conduct disorders in boys in the literature. Lahey, in Capaldi et al (1991) argues that the association between conduct disorder and parental antisocial behaviour, and between parental antisocial behaviour and divorce, is a confounding variable in the association between parental divorce and conduct problems. In accordance with this view Matsueda and Heimer (1987) argue that researchers tend to assume that parents are transmitting conventional norms and definitions of behaviour to their children. When children in single-mother homes are found to lack conventional morality it is assumed that this is due to the absence of the father figure. An alternative explanation may be that antisocial behaviour amongst such children is fostered by the type of morality communicated by the father before he left or the type of morality communicated by the mother.

4.3.2.5 Parenting skills

Discipline problems have been found to occur frequently in single parent families, especially just after the divorce (Doornbush et al, 1985 ; Hetherington et al, 1977 ; Simmons et al, (1993) and Steinberg,(1987). Astone and McLanahan (1991), who were able to compare

the parenting practises of a group of parents, pre and post divorce, found that marital disruption was followed by a reduction in the time spent monitoring homework and supervising children, and a reduction in parent-child communication. McCord, in Patterson et al (1984) found that the probability of children being adequately supervised was 0.70 in intact homes, 0.50 in homes in which there was parental conflict and 0.20 in single parent homes with a non-affectionate mother.

Furthermore, maternal parenting skills, in particular disciplinary skills, have been identified as one of the important mechanisms through which the indirect consequences of father absence impact on the child. The level of stress to which the mother is exposed (Gaines, Sandgrund, Green and Power, 1978 ; Kretch and Johnston, 1992 ; Nelson, 1993) and maternal adjustment (Simons, Beuman, Conger and Chao, 1993) have been found to be associated with inadequate and abusive parenting.

Linked to the single-mother's experience of stress is is the finding that social support has been found to impact indirectly on parental practises through the influence it has on the mother's psychological well-being (Simons et al, 1993). Colleta (1979) found that single-mothers low on social support were significantly more punitive and less nurturant than those high on

social support.

A link between disciplinary practice and socio-economic status has also been well established. Bronfenbrenner, in Hoffman (1960) reports that working class parents approach child rearing in a more traditional manner than do middle class parents. The working-class approach focuses on obedience, while middle-class approaches focus on the needs of the child and take cognisance of modern developments in thinking on child development. That middle class parents employ disciplinary approaches more conducive to healthy adjustment in children than do working class parents has been supported by various studies (Biller, 1970 ; Colleta, 1979, and Hoffman, 1960). Bank et al (1993) found socio-economic disadvantage to impact on antisocial behaviour in boys through the influence this variable had on the single-mother's family management practices.

Although numerous disciplinary techniques have been identified by researchers these may be categorized under one of four basic approaches.

Inductive techniques involve pointing out to the child the direct consequences of his behaviour, and encouraging the child to recognise the impact his behaviour will have on others, limit setting, providing

explanations for the child and encouraging the child to express his own ideas. Hoffman (1963) suggests that these techniques owe their effectiveness to the following inherent characteristics.

(a) The message content involved gives the child information concerning parental values thus allowing for increased identification with the parent to occur.

(b) Creating an awareness within the child of the needs of others.

(c) Drawing on the child's natural capacity for empathy.

Power assertive techniques involve corporal punishment, threats, belittling and giving commands without explaining the rationale behind them (Hart et al,1992). Hoffman (1963) characterizes this approach as drawing upon parental power or status to force the child to modify behaviour without providing any reason or compensation for the required alteration in behaviour. He goes on to argue that such techniques deprive the child of information and experiences that will assist in developing an internalized set of controls. Impulse control fostered in this way will be based on fear of punishment, particularly by authority figures.

Love withdrawal techniques involve the parent directly expressing anger or disapproval at the child's actions

in a non-physical way. By withdrawing love the parent is focusing the child's attention on the negative consequences (ie. loss of love) the action has for the child. Hoffman (1963) speculates that the love withdrawal technique draws on the child's need for approval and thus encourages the control of impulses in order to gain such approval.

Finally, the permissive parenting approach allows the child to largely make his own decisions and requires little impulse control and maturity from the child (Baumrind, in Doornbush et al, 1985).

Different disciplinary approaches have been associated with different behavioural manifestations in children. Children whose parents employ a predominantly inductive approach have been found to be less disruptive and more prosocial (Hart et al, 1992) to show greater consideration for others (Hoffman, 1963) and to be more socially responsible and assertive (Doornbush et al, 1985) and to be more advanced 'n terms of their moral judgement capacities (Hoffman, 1963 ; Hoffman and Salzstein, 1967 ; Parikh, 1980).

In contrast, power assertive techniques have been found to be associated with hostility and related drives (Hoffman, 1963), and antisocial behaviour (Baldwin

and Skinner, 1989). Hoffman (1963) speculates that the employment of such techniques leads to the build-up of hostility within the child, a need to assert power over others, and an increased desire to resist attempts by others to influence him. With regard to moral development Hoffman (1963) has found that power assertive techniques tend to produce a moral orientation which has its roots in fear of authority. The findings of subsequent studies have supported this association between low levels of moral judgement and power assertive techniques (Hoffman et al, 1967 ; Shoffeit, in Parikh, 1980).

Love withdrawal appears to be associated with impulse control, decreased expression of hostility and an increased tendency to seek nurturance from adults (Hoffman, 1963). This approach has not been found to correlate significantly with moral judgement (Hoffman et al, 1967 ; Shoffeit, in Parikh, 1980).

Finally, permissive parenting has been found to encourage aggression, impulsivity, irresponsibility, lack of independence (Baumrind, in Doornbush et al, 1985) and high levels of deviance (Doornbush et al, 1985).

Further evidence of the important link between

disciplinary approaches and child adjustment is provided by the effectiveness of clinical interventions, aimed at improving parental skills, in reducing antisocial behaviour in children (Bank et al, 1993).

An interesting point with regard to disciplinary practices and moral development made by Hoffman (1963, p.310) is that in psychoanalytic theory the superego is seen as being " a potentially harmful psychological force - something to be tolerated only as a necessity of social existence or reduced to a bearable level in treatment ". Following this argument he speculated that high scores obtained on parental identification, ability to resist temptation and guilt associated with transgression may be reflective of pathological process associated with a harsh and punitive superego rather than a healthy balance between impulse and moral standards.

Hoffman et al, (1967) differentiated between subjects with a humanistic moral orientation and those with a more conventionally punitive one. The former group took account of extenuating circumstances and human need in making moral judgements, while the latter tended to focus on convention and authority and exclude consideration of circumstances in making moral judgements. The former group were also able to bear the

anxiety associated with contemplating a transgression, and guilt associated with transgressions was moderated by the severity of the consequences. In contrast, the conventional group tended to lump minor with serious consequences. An association was found between parental disciplinary practices and these two orientations. Mothers of the conventional group more frequently employed " ego attack " (Hoffman et al, 1967, p.311) techniques, eg. " Can't you do anything right ", while the mothers of the humanistic group more frequently expressed disappointment in the child for failing to live up to their expectations.

Walker and Taylor (1991) identified parental discussion style as being an important factor influencing lavels of moral judgement. Styles characterized by supportive and representational interactions (asking child's opinion, asking for clarification, ensuring that the child understands, and paraphrasing) were associated with advanced judgement.

In contrast, operational (challenging the child's statements, critisizing the child's position and providing counter-arguments) and informative discussion style were associated with limited advancement in moral development. Walker and Taylor (1991) speculate that operational and informative styles may be perceived by

the child as being hostile, critical and patronising and thus evoke defensiveness in the child rather than growth.

These findings have been replicated by Holstein, in Walker et al (1991) and Parikh (1980) who both found advanced moral development to be associated with parental encouragement of child participation. Powers (1988) found a positive correlation between levels of moral judgement and non-competitive sharing of perspectives (ie. cognitive stimulation) within the context of supportive behaviour within the family. Family conflict, particularly conflict between the adolescent and the mother, was negatively correlated with moral judgement.

Developmental deficits and adjustment difficulties found in children from single-mother families may be largely due to the inadequate parenting skills of certain mothers. Hoffman (1971) argues that the stress operating on the single-mother as a result of father absence may encourage her to focus on immediate rather than long term goals in her interactions with the child. The disciplinary practices she employs will thus aim at evoking immediate compliance from the child (ie. power assertion) rather than focusing on techniques such as

induction which make bigger demands on the single mother's already limited time and psychological resources.

4.4 Methodological limitations

Research examining the association between family structure and child adjustment has been fraught with severe methodological inconsistencies which call into question the validity of many of the results reported in the literature.

Firstly, many studies have failed to control adequately for potentially confounding variables such as socio-economic status and income (Biller, 1970 ; Edwards, 1987 ; Nelson, 1993). Certain studies (Hoffman et al, 1988 ; Johnson et al, 1988 ; Parish, 1987, and Siegman, 1966) failed to provide any control for socio-economic status while others have provided inadequate controls. Sutton-Smith et al (1968) controlled for current socio-economic status of college students, but failed to control for socio-economic status during the period of father absence. Kiecolt et al (1990), Kinard et al (1986), Murray et al (1990) and Zimilies et al (1991) used mothers' level of education as a control for socio-economic status, which does not adequately control for changes in income and lifestyle that accompany divorce.

Doornbush et al (1985) categorized subjects according to their income level : those earning below 5000 dollars, from 5000 - 10 000 dollars, and over 10 000 dollars. The income range within each of these categories is very wide and thus socio-economic status was not adequately controlled for.

Beller and Chung (1992) also note that the economic well-being of the child in remarried families may be lower than that suggested by family income. It is unclear how much of the additional income brought into the family by remarriage is available for child specific expenses eg. stepfathers may not be willing to finance the child's college education. Goldberg et al (1992) also comments that in controlling for income, studies have failed to take cognisance of 1) the predictability of the source of income and 2) the extent to which income adequately meets the families needs. For example, an eight member family will require greater income than a three member family does.

Many studies have also employed small, non-representative samples and thus results cannot be generalized to the general family population (Edwards, 1987). Hudgins et al (1973) and Santrock et al (1979) used small samples which were not randomly selected, while Brady et al (1986) and Peretti et al (1993) used

samples drawn from clinic populations.

A minimum requirement of scientific research is the provision of a control group (Kerlinger, 1986). Peretti et al (1993) failed to provide any control group for their study of children receiving treatment as a result of symptomotology associated with parental divorce. Nelson et al (1993) speculate about the important function played by a male role model in the child's development but failed to provide a comparison group which controlled for gender of role model.

Edwards (1987) also argues that studies have frequently used instruments of questionable reliability and validity to measure dependant variables under investigation. Gaining and Coleman (1986) critisize research on family structure as it often draws heavily on self-report using only a questionaire. A method so vulnerable to inaccurate responding should employ some method, either gaining collateral from other individuals or using an additional measure of the dependant variable, to guard against inaccuracy. Both Peretti et al (1993) and Siegman (1966) used self-report without obtaining collateral in their studies. Other studies (Brady et al, 1986 ; Jensen et al, 1989 ; and Schnayer et al, 1989) have used maternal ratings to assess behavioural adjustment in children. This measure of

adjustment has proven to be problematic as Griest, Wells and Firehand (1979) found that maternal symptomotology influences perception of child behaviour.

Bach (1946) and Bach and Bremer (1947) used projective tests to measure the dependant variables in which they were interested. Such instruments are the most controversial of psychological measurements and their reliability and validity are questionable (Kerlinger, 1986). The interpretation of such measures also involves a great deal of subjectivity.

A further weakness in the single-mother literature is is that many studies (Astone et al, 1991 ; Hoffman, 1971 ; Parish et al, 1987 ; and Stanley et al, 1986) do not control for duration of father absence. Longitudinal studies have indicated that several years lapse between parental divorce/separation and reorganization of the family and that adjustment is fluid during these years (Felner, Farber and Primavera, 1980). In addition, comparisons of children from various family structures often do not take variations within a particular structure into account. For example, children from divorced, widowed and never married families (Astone et al, 1991 ; Johnson, 1986 ; Kurdek et al, 1988 ; Murray et al, 1990 ; and Van Voorhis et al, 1988) are lumped together into the single category of one parent

families. The specific effects associated with different causes of father absence remain uncontrolled.

Finally, the bulk of studies conducted in the area of father absence have been of a cross sectional nature. Such studies, and the accompanying reliance on correlational analysis, indicate a statistical association between two variables, but are unable to determine cause and effect. While certain studies have found an association between child adjustment difficulties and divorce, it is not known whether divorce caused adjustment difficulties or whether the adjustment difficulties contribute towards divorce. The use of longitudinal designs, which are costly and time consuming, would remedy the limitations associated with cross sectional studies.

In his review of the methodological flaws in the research literature, Edwards (1987, p.367) concludes " There are numerous and serious methodological pitfalls to overcome. These extend all the way from problems of sampling and questions of measurement to the choice of appropriate analytical techniques ".

In conclusion, interpretations of research data which explain deficits in child functioning in single-mother families in terms of the absence of a father-figure per

se appear to lack validity. The present review of the literature suggests that events antecedent to, and the indirect consequences of, father absence appear to contribute more powerfully to deficits in child functioning noted in such families than father absence per se. In addition, the mother-child relationship (in particular, the disciplinary practices employed within this relationship) has been identified as being the central mechanism through which the indirect consequences of father absence impinge on the child.

The following chapter reviews child adjustment in lesbian families - a family structure which represents a unique form of father absence.

CHAPTER 5 : RESEARCH ON THE IMPACT OF MATERNAL LESBIANISM ON CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Prior to the APA's decision in 1973 to remove homosexuality from its list of mental disorders, virtually all research in the field was directed at identifying factors which would shed light on the etiology of the " illness " (Stein, 1988).
In recent years research has begun to broaden its focus to a more encompassing examination of gay living patterns.

One area of this lifestyle that is beginning to receive increasing attention is homosexual, particularly lesbian, parenting. It is only in the last 17 years that research has been conducted systematically comparing the children of gay and lesbian parents with the children of heterosexual parents. In the early 1970's case reports on children of homosexuals began to appear, but it was only from 1978 that systematic research on such children began to appear in professional journals.

Due to the tendency of law courts to deny custody and/or visitation rights to homosexual parents (Patterson, 1992) research has focused on addressing issues which militate against lesbian and gay parents in such proceedings. As a result proposed negative outcomes of

homosexual parenting have been investigated while other issues pertaining to such parenting have not yet been explored.

5.1 Concerns raised in custody litigations

In litigation procedures in which lesbian mothers have been denied custody or visitation rights it has been argued that awarding custody would not be " in the best interests of the child " due to the following concerns :

a. It is feared that being raised by a sexually atypical parent will result in abnormal psychosexual development in the child (Cramer, 1986 ; Dilapi, 1989 ; Golombok, Spencer and Rutter, 1983 ; Hall, 1978).

b. Children reared by lesbian parents will be denied access to male role models (Dilapi, 1989).

c. Children will be isolated and rejected by their peers as a result of the stigma attached to the mother's sexual orientation (Cramer, 1986 ; Golombok et al, 1983 ; Hall, 1978 ; Patterson, 1992).

d. Children of lesbian parents will be more vulnerable to developing psychological problems (Golombok et al, 1983 Patterson, 1992).

e. Lesbian women are unfit parents because :

- they are mentally ill
- they are less maternal and nurturant than heterosexual women
- due to over-involvement with their partners they will not allow sufficient time for the parent/child relationship

Research conducted on lesbian mothers and their children has indicated that the bulk of these fears are unfounded.

5.2 Research into the validity of these concerns

5.2.1 Sexual Identity

Sexual identity has been identified as being made up of three components (Green, 1978 ; Patterson, 1992).

Gender identity refers to the persons perception of themselves as a male or female.

Gender role behaviour refers to engagement in occupations and behaviours that are culturally labelled as masculine or feminine.

Sexual partner choice which may reflect a homosexual, heterosexual or bi-sexual orientation.

Social learning theory explains the development of sexual identity within the child in terms of exposure to role models and direct reinforcement for sex-appropriate behaviours (Hoeffer, 1981). Thus it would appear that exposure to atypical sex role models would encourage atypical sex role development within the child.

However, research has consistently indicated that children of lesbian and heterosexual mothers do not differ in terms of their gender identity or their gender role behaviours (Golombok et al, 1983 ; Green, 1978 ; Green et al, 1986 ; Hoeffer, 1981 ; Kirkpatrick, Smith and Roy, 1981). In this regard it is interesting to note that daughters of lesbian mothers tend to have a more flexible gender role orientation than those of heterosexual mothers in that they display less sex-typed preferences in their play activities (Green et al,1986). However, engagement in opposite sex gender behaviours was not beyond the normal range.

The sexual orientation of children raised by lesbians has been found to be predominantly heterosexual (Golombok et al, 1983 ;Green, 1978) and the incidents of homosexuality among such children is approximately equivalent to that among the general population (Clay, 1990). The view that lesbian women will rear homosexual children also fails to coincide with the fact that most

homosexuals have heterosexual parents (Hall, 1978).

An explanation for the fact that no evidence of disturbance of sexual identity amongst children of lesbian mothers has been found is the fact that the child does not live in a social vacuum. Children are exposed to conventional family styles through the media, television, peer group, etc. Role models for gender acquisition are not provided exclusively by the family (Green, 1978).

A shortcoming of these studies, which could be kept in mind when interpreting results, is that most of the children had spent approximately the first two years of life within the context of a heterosexual home. In this regard it has been noted that gender identity and sex role orientation are formed early in the pre-school years (Rutter, in Golombok et al, 1983).

5.2.2 Exposure to male role models

It is frequently assumed that being reared within the context of a lesbian household is equivalent to being reared in an environment in which there are no male adults, no exposure to heterosexual relationships and negative attitudes towards men. Such an attitude fails to recognise that many lesbian women do not have

negative attitudes towards men. In fact, lesbian mothers have been found to have better relationships with their ex spouses than divorced heterosexual women have, and that their children have more frequent contact with their fathers than children of divorced heterosexual women (Golombek et al, 1983 ; Hare and Richards,1993). Kirkpatrick et al, (1981) also found that lesbian mothers made stronger attempts to ensure that their children gained exposure to adult men than did single heterosexual mothers.

5.2.3 Stigmatization and peer interactions

Homosexuals are frequently labelled as being maladjusted or pathological. Thus children of gay parents may find themselves growing up in a family that is disapproved of by society.

Clinical experience with children of lesbian mothers (Kirkpatrick, 1987) reveals that such children have fears regarding how their mothers lesbianism will influence their relations with people outside of the home. While Green (1978) found that only 3 of the 21 children he interviewed recalled being teased about their mother's sexual orientation, Riddle and Arguelles (in Cramer, 1986) indicate that stigamtization and peer rejection become more significant during

adolescence. They found that 79% of their sample had encountered negative feedback from peers regarding parental homosexuality.

Due to fear of prejudice and discrimination many lesbian women hide their sexual orientation. This may result in family members becoming increasingly socially isolated. This problem may be particularly intense for the children in such families who do not have a lesbian/gay support network to turn to (Rohrbaugh, 1992) Provision of a group context for discussing fears appears to be of much benefit for these children (Lewis, 1980).

Studies on the impact parental sexual orientation has on actual peer interactions have, on the whole, produced positive results.

Wyers (1987) finding that 58.6% of children of lesbian mothers experienced relationship difficulties due to maternal sexual orientation has not been supported by other studies. Such children have been found to have normal peer relations : the quality of these relations (Golombok et al, 1983) and the children's popularity and social skills (Green et al, 1986) have not been found to differ significantly from that of the off-spring of heterosexual mothers.

Huggins (1989) found the self-esteem of both male and female adolescents (an age group most vulnerable to the effects of peer group stigmatization) to be unaffected by maternal sexual orientation. Instead a positive correlation was found between levels of self-esteem in the child and the mother. Interestingly, she found the self-esteem scores of children of both lesbian and heterosexual mothers to be higher if the mother had remarried or was co-habiting with her partner.

5.2.4 Psychological functioning

Kirkpatrick et al (1981) assessed the psychological functioning of children reared by lesbian and single heterosexual mothers by means of projective tests and psychiatric interviews. No difference in the type or frequency of pathology was found between the two groups. These findings were supported by a subsequent study conducted by Golombek et al (1983), who, in addition, noted that the few differences that were detected were in the direction of psychiatric difficulties being more common in the heterosexual single-mother group. The authors speculate that this may be due to the fact that many of the heterosexual single-mothers were living alone and thus did not have access to the support offered to the lesbian mothers, many of whom were living

with their partners. The fact that Hotvedt, Green and Mandel, in Polikoff (1990) found that children raised by lesbian couples were better adjusted emotionally than those reared by single lesbian mothers, lends support to this specualtion.

Further studies measuring locus of control (Puryear, in Patterson, 1992), intelligence (Green et al, 1986) and mora' judgement (Rees, in Patterson, 1992) have failed to find significant differences in scores obtained by the children of lesbian and heterosexual mothers.

5.2.5 Parenting abilities

Despite contentions that lesbian mothers are unfit parents, various studies indicate that the parenting abilities and behaviours of gay and heterosexual parents do not differ significantly (Hoeffer, 1981 ; Harris and Turner, 1986 ; Rees, 1980) and that homosexuality is compatible with effective parenting.

In terms of the encouragement of sex-appropriate behaviours Hoeffer (1981) found the similarities between lesbian and heterosexual mothers to be greater than the differences. While lesbian mothers showed a tendency to prefer a more equal mixture of

masculine and feminine sex type toys for their children, the mothers choice of play materials and activities for their children was more influenced by child preferences than maternal choice. This suggests that the child's sex role behaviour is also influenced by models other than the mother.

Javaid (1993) found that lesbian mothers did not express a greater desire for their children to lead a homosexual life style than did a comparable group of heterosexual single mothers. However, lesbian mothers did appear to be more tolerant of possible homosexuality in their children.

Bozett, in Clay (1990), found the ability to nurture to be unassociated with sexual orientation, and lesbian and heterosexual mothers have been found to share similar maternal attitudes. (Mucklow and Phelan, 1979 ; Stein, 1988).

Finally, it has been well established that for lesbian women as for heterosexual women motherhood, rather than sexual orientation, is the most salient aspect of identity (Cramer, 1986).

In conclusion, studies conducted to date have not found growing up in a lesbian household to compromise the

child's development in any way. There is also an indication in the literature (Golombok et al, 1983 ; Huggins, 1989) that child development is enhanced when the lesbian mother lives with her partner.

Thus in summarising the literature presented in chapters 4 and 5 it would appear that further research into a) the factors which mediate the impact father absence has on the child and b) the impact maternal involvement in a lesbian relationship (as opposed to maternal lesbianism per se) has on adolescent (as opposed to child) development is needed. This study aims to shed further light on these issues by examining whether the presence of the mother's partner in the home enhances moral judgement in the adolescent and whether the gender of this partner impacts upon such judgement.

CHAPTER 6 : RESEARCH AIMS AND HYPOTHESES

6.1 Research Aims

The basic aim of the present study is to determine whether any significant differences exist in the level of moral development evidenced by adolescents reared in homes where their mothers are living with partners as opposed to those reared by mothers who do not live with their partners. Further, it aims to determine whether the gender of the mother's partner is related to moral development in the adolescent, when the confounding effects of age and sex of the adolescent, and socio-economic status of the family, are controlled.

In order to achieve this aim the performance of adolescents from three different family structures (lesbian couple,heterosexual single-mother and traditional heterosexual married couples) on a test of moral development will be compared. For the sake of convenience the terms " lesbian couples ", " single-mother " and " traditional couples " will from now on be used to denote these family structures (when these terms are used it should be noted that reference is being made to the adolescents within these family structures, who are the subjects of this study, and not to the parents !)

The problem to be examined may be stated as follows :

Is there a difference in the moral judgement of adolescents reared by lesbian couples, single-mothers and traditional couples ?

6.2 Research Hypotheses

Substantive Hypothesis

The scores of a group of adolescents reared by lesbian couples on a measure of moral development will not differ significantly from those of a group reared by traditional couples but the scores of both groups will be significantly higher than the scores of a comparable group of adolescents reared by single-mothers.

Null Hypothesis

There will be no significant difference in scores obtained on a measure of moral development by a group of adolescents reared by lesbian couples, single-mothers and traditional couples respectively.

CHAPTER 7 : METHOD

The present study aims to determine whether the presence of the mother's partner in the home influences moral judgement within the child, and whether the gender of this partner impacts upon such judgement.

In order to achieve this aim, the performance on a test of moral judgement of adolescents reared by lesbian couples is compared with the performance of a comparable group of adolescents raised by single-mothers and a group raised by traditional couples.

7.1 Sample size

The original sample was comprised of 48 adolescent subjects but six protocols had to be discarded as they were invalid -two protocols from each sub-group proved to be invalid.

The final sample group thus consisted of 42 subjects divided into three sub-groups on the basis of family structure. Each sub-sample was comprised of a total of 14 subjects.

7.2 Sample composition

7.2.1 General Demographic Data

The entire sample consisted of 42 subjects, and the distribution of variables on which the subjects were matched was as follows :

7.2.1.1 Age

The subjects ranged from 13 to 21 years in age. Adolescence is the stage during which cognitive development is characterized by the consolidation of concrete-operational thought, Hill, in Santrock (1986) and the development of the ability to engage in formal operational thought. Thus during this stage diversity in level of moral judgement is likely to be great. Older subjects were not used as it was felt that the impact home environment has on moral judgement of individuals would be lessened by the competing influence of events such as college attendance, marriage, etc.
The mean age of the group was 17.6 years with a standard deviation of 2.4 years. Subjects from the different groups were matched in terms of age as far as possible (with no more than a twelve month leeway being allowed in this regard).

Table 1 reflects the age distribution of subjects within the different groups.

AGE	Lesbian	Single	Traditional	Total
21	2	3	2	7
20	1	1	2	4
19	2	1	1	4
18	3	3	3	9
17	1	2	1	4
16	1	0	1	2
15	3	3	3	9
14	0	0	0	0
13	1	1	1	3
Total	14	14	14	42
Mean	17.5	17.7	17.6	

Table 1: Age Distribution of the Sample.

As can be seen from the above table, there is little discrepancy in the distribution of age across the different groups. The mean ages of the lesbian couple, single-mother and traditional couple groups were 17.5 years, 17.7 years and 17.6 years respectively.

7.2.1.2 Sex

The group was made up of 15 males and 27 females. In each sub-group there were 5 males and 9 females.

7.2.1.3 Residential Area

The sample was drawn from a wide range of areas in the PWV region and a diverse spectrum of socio-economic levels was represented in the sample.

7.3 Composition of the sub-groups

7.3.1 The children of lesbian couples

Inclusion of subjects into this group was based on the following criteria :

The subject was living with his/her mother, who was separated/divorced from the subject's father and was involved in a co-habiting lesbian relationship of at least two years duration. The reasons for stipulating a minimum time period for duration of relationship were twofold :

a) To control for the impact initial conflicts in a relationship may have on the adolescent's moral judgement.

b) To ensure that the adolescent had been exposed to the altered family structure for a sufficient time period to allow the influences associated with this structure to take effect.

Table 2 outlines the distribution of age and sex within this subgroup.

AGE	MALE	FEMALE
21	2	0
20	1	0
19	1	1
18	0	3
17	0	1
16	0	1
15	0	3
14	0	0
13	1	0
TOTAL	5	9

Table 2: Distribution of age and sex in the Lesbian couple sub-group.

Further demographic characteristics of this sub-group are presented below :

7.3.1.1 Period of separation from father

The length of time for which the subjects' mothers had been separated/divorced ranged from 4 years to 18 years, with a mean of 12.4 years and a standard deviation of 3.8 years.

Table 3 reflects the number of years for which mothers of these subjects had been separated or divorced.

YEARS	FREQUENCY
17-20	2
13-16	5
9-12	6
5- 8	0
1- 4	1
TOTAL	14

Table 3: Number of years separated/divorced from husband. (Lesbian couple families.)

7.3.1.2 Duration of current relationship

A minimum cut-off point for duration of current relationship was set at two years. The mean duration of the relationship between lesbian mothers and their partners was 7 years, with a standard deviation of 3.3 years. The number of years for which the various couples had been involved is represented in Table 4.

YEARS	FREQUENCY
13-15	1
10-12	3
7- 9	2
4- 6	7
1- 3	1
TOTAL	14

Table 4: Duration of current relationship.

7.3.1.3 Duration of involvement in lesbian relationships

The number of years for which mothers had been actively engaged in lesbian relationships ranged from 4 years to 20 years, as is reflected in Table 5.

YEARS	FREQUENCY
17-20	1
13-16	3
9-12	4
5- 8	5
1- 4	1
TOTAL	14

Table 5: Duration of involvement in Lesbian relationships.

Two of the subjects in the group had been reared within a lesbian mother household since shortly after birth, with the mean duration of time spent in such a family structure being 10.9 years.

7.3.1.4 Disclosure of sexual orientation

A dilemma facing many lesbian mothers is whether or not to disclose their sexual orientation to their children. In the present study 10 subjects were aware of their mother's sexual orientation, and 4 subjects were, to the mother's knowledge, unaware of it.

7.3.2. Children of single heterosexual mothers

Subjects included in this group were adolescents from single-mother families who had been living in such families for a period of at least 2 years. For the sake of convenience this group will be referred to as single-mothers which refers not to their marital status per se but to the absence of someone subjectively perceived to have the status of a partner living in the home. These subjects were matched with the lesbian couple group as far as possible in terms of age and sex of the adolescent,and residential area,which served as a rough index of the socio-economic status of the family.

Table 6 reflects the distribution of age and sex within this sub-group.

AGE	MALE	FEMALE
21	3	0
20	0	1
19	1	0
18	0	3
17	0	2
16	0	0
15	0	3
14	0	0
13	1	0
TOTAL	5	9

Table 6: Distribution of age and sex in single-mother sub-group.

7.3.2.1 Number of years separated from father

The profile of this group in relation to number of years separated from fathers, is reflected in Table 7.

YEARS	FREQUENCY
17-20	1
13-16	1
9-12	5
5- 8	3
1- 4	4
TOTAL	14

Table 7: Number of years separated from father. (Single-mother families.)

Subjects had thus lived apart from their fathers and in a situation in which their mothers did not have a partner living in the home for a period ranging from 2 years to 17 years, with a mean of 8.2 years and a standard deviation of 4.4 years.

7.3.3 Children of traditional couples

This group consisted of adolescents from traditional mother/father family structures matched with the lesbian and single-mother groups as far as possible in terms of age, sex and socio-economic status. This group had been living in its current family structure for a minimum

AGE	MALE	FEMALE
21	2	0
20	1	1
19	1	0
18	0	3
17	0	1
16	0	1
15	0	3
14	0	0
13	1	0
TOTAL	5	9

Table 8: Distribution of age and sex in the Traditional sub-group.

7.4 Sample selection

As previously indicated the subjects included in the sample were not randomly selected, as there were many difficulties associated with obtaining a sample of adolescents living with lesbian parents and this prohibited the use of such a selection procedure.

Subjects included in the lesbian couple group were obtained by means of the ' friendship pyramid ' or ' snowballing ' procedure (Knight, 1989). The researcher was referred to lesbian couples who had adolescent children by friends. Permission was obtained to contact the adolescents regarding the study, and the mothers were then requested to refer the researcher to

other lesbian couples with children.

Subjects included in the lesbian couple group were also asked to refer the researcher to two individuals of the same age, sex and similar residential area as themselves who lived with their mother and father. Subjects in this group were in turn asked to refer the researcher to two individuals suitable for inclusion into the single-mother comparison group. Two referrals were requested to make provision for the event of invalid protocols (see section 7.5.2) and subjects who were unwilling/unable to participate in the study. Altogether 49 subjects were approached and 48 agreed to participate in the study. The subject who was unable to participate came from the single-mother group

7.5 Measuring instruments

Demographic data was collected in the first instance through telephonic contact with the mothers of the subjects (see Appendix B). In the second instance it was collected by attaching a questionaire to the test booklet (see Appendix A).

Moral Judgement

The instrument employed to assess the subjects moral

orientation was Rests (1979) Defining Issues Test (DIT; see Appendix C). The test has been widely used and the reliability and validity of this instrument has been well established.

Rest (1979) reported internal consistency and test-retest reliabilities for the DIT to be in the high 0.70's and low 0.80's respectively. Numerous studies have found that subjects are unable to fake high on the DIT (Hau,1990 ; McGeorge, 1975 ; Napier, 1979).

7.5.1 Theoretical foundation

The DIT is an objective measure of moral judgement and is based on Kohlberg's (1969) cognitive-developmental theory of moral judgement. Kohlberg (1969) postulated that moral development progresses through six stages which may be divided into three levels in terms of the moral orientation revealed at each stage. These six stages of moral development may be set out as follows :

Level I **Premoral**

Type 1 Right is defined in terms of obeying authority and avoiding harm and punishment.

Type 2 Right is defined in terms of facilitating one's own interests and desires and allowing

others to do so as well.

Level II Morality of conventional role conformity

Type 3 Individual interests are seen as being subservient to shared feelings, expectations and agreements.

Type 4 The focus is on maintaining the social order and the welfare of society by keeping to the law and performing one's duty.

Level III Morality of self-accepted moral principles

Type 5 Right is defined in terms of standards that have been democratically agreed upon.

Type 6 Right is defined in terms of universal ethical principles.

The DIT measures the subjects quantitive usage of each stage. It also allows a P score to be assigned to the subject, which reflects the degree of importance the subject attributes to principled (stages 5 and 6) thinking. In terms of the DIT, stage 5 is further sub-divided into 5A and 5B which reflect " the morality of

humanism " respectively (Rest, p. 4-3).
In addition to tapping the relative importance the subject gives to each of the stages outlined by Kohlberg (1969), the DIT also taps the extent to which the subject's moral judgements draw on an " anti-establishment " orientation. Such an orientation " condemns tradition and the existing social order for its arbitrariness or for its corruption by the rich for the exploitation of the poor " (Rest, 1979, P 4-3). Such an orientation may serve as a transitional phase as the individual progresses from a conventionally based to a more principled moral orientation (Rest, 1979).

7.5.2 Structure

The DIT is a recognition rather than a production test, and subjects tend to appear more advanced on this test than they do on Kohlberg's (1973) Moral Judgement Interview.

The DIT consists of six hypothetical dilemmas in which two moral values are in opposition. For example, should Heinz steal an over-priced drug which he is unable to afford in order to save his wife's life ?

The subject is first asked to indicate what he feels the appropriate course of action would be. The subject is

then asked to rate on a 5 point scale (ranging from great importance to no importance) the importance of twelve issue statements in resolving the dilemma. Most of these statements are representative of Kohlberg's (1969) six stages of moral development. However, certain nonsensical statements are included as reliability checks.

Finally, the subject is asked to select from the twelve issue statements the four statements they consider to be most important, and to rank these in order of importance. The correspondence between the subject's rating of the twelve issue statements and the ranking of the four most important statements serves as a further reliability check. In the present study six protocols had to be discarded due to lack of validity.

7.6 Procedure

Having obtained permission from their mothers, each participant was contacted telephonically by the researcher. Following a brief description of the research and an explanation of what participation would entail, the researcher asked whether the person would be willing to participate. A meeting was then arranged to take place in their own homes. Subjects were asked to

first fill in the demographic questionaire and then to complete Rest's (1979) DIT.

The length of time spent completing the test differed for each subject and varied between thirty to sixty minutes. Rest (1979) suggests that the participant be encouraged to complete the test within one hour. Prior to administering the test the researcher spent some time explaining what was required of the subject and ensuring that instructions were understood by the subject. Following completion of the questionaire the researcher answered queries which the subject had regarding the research.

7.7 Data analysis

7.7.1 Scoring

Rest (1979) suggests that the DIT may be scored in two different ways.

a. The P score is the weighted sum of the ranked principled choices (stages 5 and 6) made by the subject across the six dilemmas. It reflects the degree of importance attributed to principled moral concerns in making choices regarding the presented moral dilemmas.

b. The subject may also be classified under a particular moral stage (2,3,4,A,5A,5B, or 6) based on exceptional usage of that stage.

The P score approach was used in the present study as it has been found to be the most valid and reliable index of moral judgement (Rest, 1975).

7.7.2 Statistical procedures employed

The mean P scores obtained by the three groups were subjected to statistical examination employing an Analysis of Variance procedure. In addition, various descriptive analyses were performed on the data obtained.

The results of these analyses are presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 8 : RESULTS

The results of various analyses performed on the data obtained will be presented in this chapter.

8.1 Statistical comparison of group means

Table 9 reflects the results of a comparison of group P score (degree of importance attributed to stated moral concerns) means using an Analysis of Variance procedure. The 0.05 significance level was used as the cut-off point.

Comparison	Df	Anova SS	Mean Square	F-value	Pr>F
Lesbian\Single-Mother\ Traditional	2/39	210.33	105.16	0.47	0.63

Table 9: Results of an analysis of variance conducted on the data.

Table 9 indicates that the differences between group means failed to reach significance ($p > 0.6$).

8.2 Overview of performance on the Defining Issues Test (DIT)

The results of various descriptive analyses conducted on the data will be presented.

8.2.1 Degree of importance attributed to principled moral concerns

The following group trends emerged upon analysis of P scores obtained by subjects.

Groups	Range *	Mean	Standard Deviation
Lesbian	13-65	31	12.3
Single-mother	3-60	25.8	14.6
Traditional	3-70	29.9	16.6

* Highest Possible Score 95
Lowest Possible Score 0

Table 10: Group performance on the DIT.

Table 10 indicates the mean P score obtained by each group. The lowest P score obtained was 3 and the highest was 70, obtained by a traditional couple group subject. There was less scatter in lesbian couple group scores than in the other two groups -particularly noticeable was the absence of exceptionally low scores in this group. The lesbian couple group obtained the highest mean P score, followed very closely by the traditional couple group, and, finally, the single-mother group. The means of the different groups are

graphically represented in Figure I.

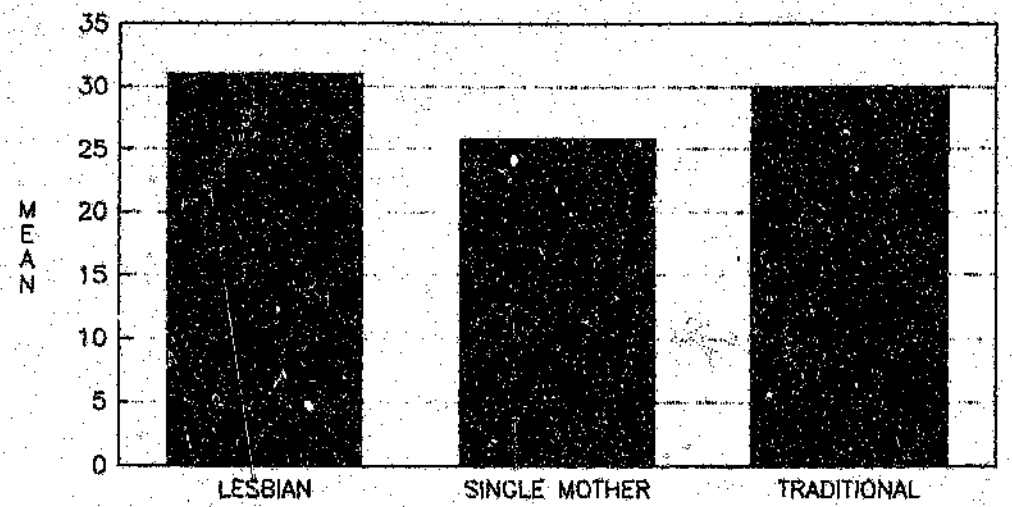


FIGURE I:
Group performance on the DIT.

8.2.2 Relation between family structure and degree of importance attributed to the different moral stages

The relationship between degree of importance attributed to the different moral stages, based on the conversion of raw scores to standard scores (see Rest, 1979), and family structure is reflected in Figure II.

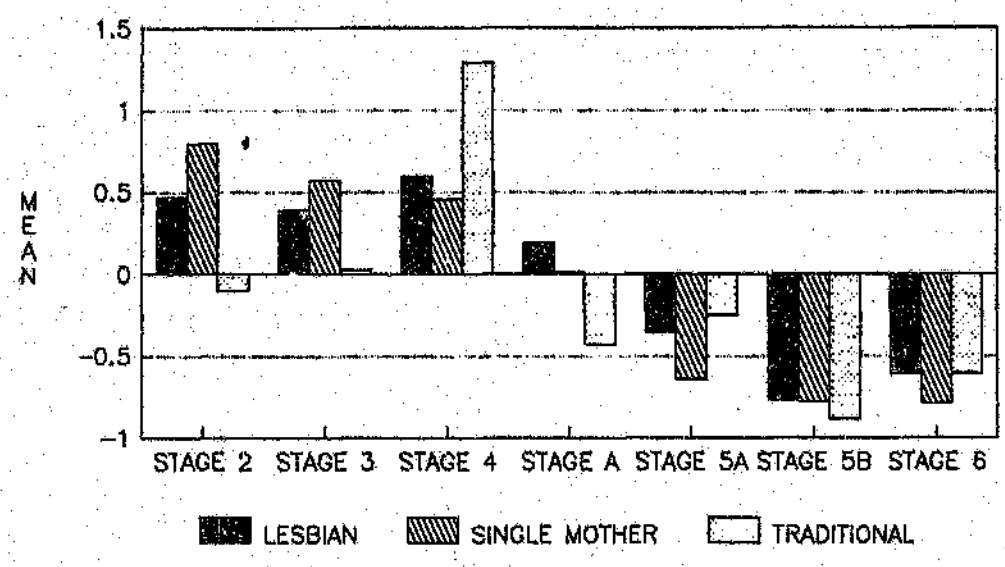


FIGURE II
Group means based on conversion of raw scores to standard scores at each stage.

As can be seen from Figure II, stage 2 considerations were endorsed more frequently by single-mother subjects as a whole, in their selection of the four most important considerations in each of the six moral

moral stage. Stage 4 considerations were endorsed most frequently by lesbian couple and traditional couple group subjects.

8.2.3 Group trends which emerged from stage typing of subjects

8.2.3.1. Number of subjects from each Family structure represented in the different moral stages

Figure III reflects the number of subjects from each of the family structures typed under each of the stages measured by the DIT.

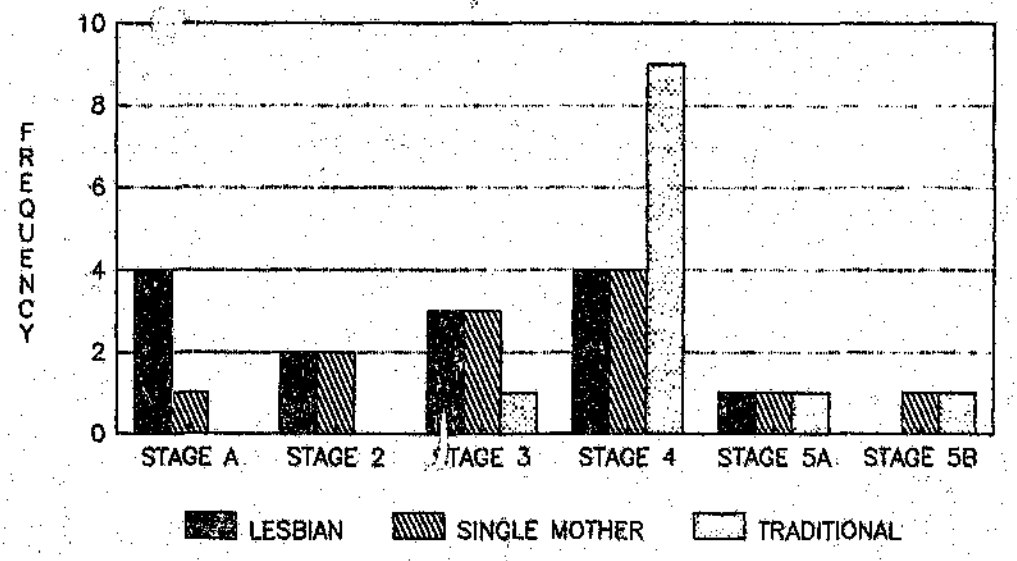


FIGURE III
Number of subjects from each family structure and stage of moral development

As can be seen from Figure III, stage 4 was the modal

stage type of both traditional and single-mother group subjects. Lesbian couple group subjects were most frequently typed under stage 4 and the anti-establishment stage. It is interesting to note that four subjects from lesbian family structures were classified as having an anti-establishment moral orientation while only one subject from the single-mother group and none from the traditional group were so classified.

None of the subjects had reached stage 6 of Kohlberg's (1969) moral development hierarchy. This is not unusual in view of the fact that attainment of this level is rare (Kohlberg, in Santrock, 1986).

8.2.3.2 Consolidation of moral orientation

With regard stage typing, Rest (1979) has indicated that a subject may endorse more than one stage to an exceptional extent (exceptional being defined as being one standard deviation above average). In such an instance the subject is typed according to the stage which they have endorsed to the greatest extent, with a sub-dominant type of the other score exceeding the average by one standard deviation or more. In addition, certain subjects may not endorse any stage to an exceptional extent and thus cannot be typed.

Figure IV represents the number of subjects from each group that were typed, 1) under a single orientation 2) under a mixed orientation (i.e. were classified as having both a dominant and sub-dominant orientation) 3) failed to endorse any orientation to an exceptional extent.

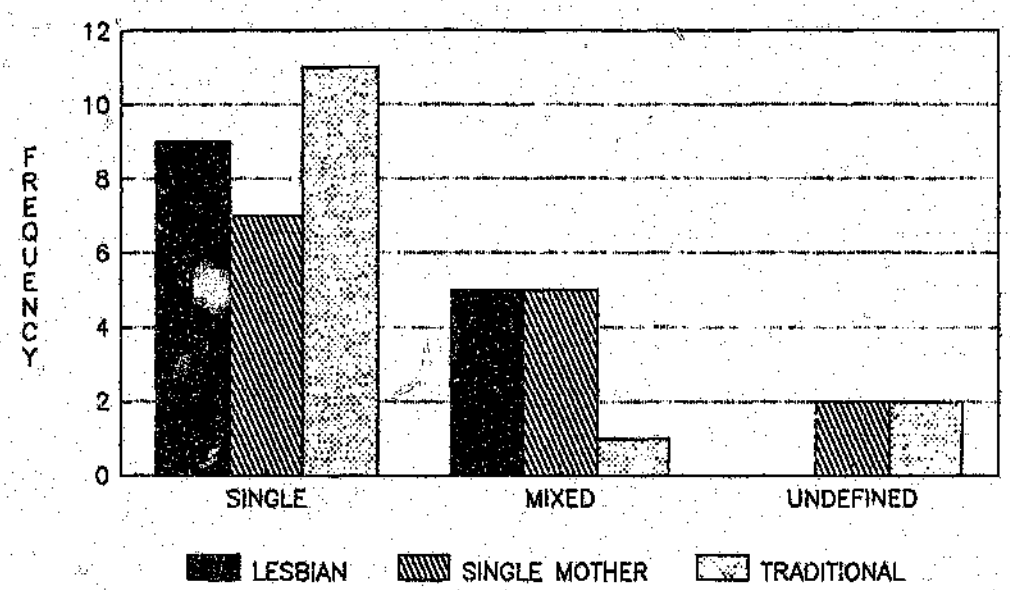


FIGURE IV:
Consolidation of moral orientation.

The majority of subjects from both the lesbian and traditional groups (nine and eleven subjects respectively) had a consolidated moral orientation, whereas half (seven) of the subjects in the single-mother group manifested greater inconsistency in their approach to moral dilemmas.

CHAPTER 9 : DISCUSSION

In this chapter the results of the present study, which were briefly outlined in the previous chapter, will be discussed in greater detail. The focus of the discussion will be on the extent to which these results support hypothesized relations between family structure and moral development in children which emerged from a review of the literature.

9.1 Summary of results

The aim of the present study was to determine whether the presence of the mother's partner in the home impacted on moral development within the child, and whether the gender of the partner (male versus female) influenced moral development. It was hypothesized that the presence of a partner would enhance moral development in the child, and that the gender of the partner would not impact significantly on the child's moral development. Thus, it was hypothesized that while there would be no differences in the moral judgement levels of the lesbian couple and traditional couple groups, the mean of the single-mother group would be significantly lower than the means of the two former groups.

Although obtained differences in group mean scores were in the predicted direction, the differences in regard to adolescents of single-mothers were not found to be statistically significant just as the differences between scores of adolescents in lesbian and traditional couple groups were not found to differ significantly (Chapter 8.1). Thus, the contention that the nature of the primary relationship in which the mother is involved (homosexual versus heterosexual) does not affect moral development in the child was not challenged by the statistical data. However, the contention that the presence of a partner in the home will enhance moral development in the child was not supported.

9.2 Discussion of results

9.2.1 Relation between the presence of a partner in the home and moral development in the child

The finding that there was no significant difference between group means obtained by adolescents in the single-mother group and adolescents in either the traditional or lesbian couple group was surprising in view of the fact that a significant body of research exists (Chapter 4.1 ; Bach et al, 1947 ; Bacon et al, 1966 ; Beller et, 1992 ; Biller, 1970 ; Glueck et al, 1950 ; Gregory, 1965 ; Kinard et al,1986 ;

Kurdek et al, 1988 ; Murray et al, 1990 ; Parish, 1987 ; Peretti et al, 1993 ; Pillay, 1987 ; Siegman, 1966 ; Stanley et al, 1986 ; Sutton-Smith et al, 1968) which attests to the detrimental impact single-motherhood has upon various aspects of child development, including moral development (Hoffman, 1971). Two possible explanations may account for the incongruence between the findings of the present study and the results of previous research conducted in the area.

a) The present study attempted to control for the confounding effect age, sex and socio-economic status may have on moral development in the child . These variables have been identified as influencing moral development. In fact, there is much support for the notion (Chapter 4.3.2.1 ; Bane, 1976 ; Cobliner, 1963 ; Hertzog et al, 1973 ; Kiecolt, 1989 ; Kinard et al, 1986; Nelson, 1993 ; Snin, 1978 ; Svanum et al, 1987) that it is not the father absence associated with single-motherhood that negatively impacts upon various indices of child development, but rather the lowered income and socio-economic status which inevitably accompanies this absence. Thus the findings of the present study add to the growing body of research studies which attribute developmental deficits noted in children of single-mothers to the indirect socio-economic consequences of

indicating that when socio-economic status is controlled, discrepancies between indices of moral development in children from father absent and father present families diminish.

b) Secondly, it must be noted that the finding of non-significant differences between group means may be due to the small size of the sample employed in the present study. This limitation of the study receives further attention in section 9.3.1.

A point that is also worth noting before concluding this section is that in spite of the absence of significant differences between group means certain qualitative indicators emerged which suggested that the performance of the single-mother group was compromised to a degree in comparison with the performance of the two groups coming from homes characterised by the presence of the mother's partner in the home. Firstly, stage 2 considerations were more popular amongst single-mother group subjects as a whole that considerations from any other stage. In contrast, lesbian and traditional couple group subjects on the whole favoured the more advanced stage 4 considerations. In addition, single-mother group subjects evidenced less consolidation in their thinking regarding moral issues than did lesbian and traditional group subjects.

9.2.2 Relation between maternal sexual orientation and moral development in the child

The absence of significant differences between the means of the three different groups supports the conclusion, based on previous research studies (Chapter 5.2 ; Golombok et al, 1983 ; Green, 1978 ; Green et al, 1986 ; Hoeffer, 1981 ; Huggins, 1989 ; Kirkpatrick et al,1981) that maternal lesbianism does not have a negative impact on child development. In accordance with the preliminary findings of Golombok et al (1983) and Hotvedt et al, (1990) that the psychological adjustment of children raised by lesbian couples was superior to that of children raised by single-mothers (lesbian or heterosexual), the present study found that differences in moral development between children raised by lesbian couples and those raised by heterosexual single-mothers, although not statistically significant, were in the direction of enhanced moral development amongst the former group.

It is also interesting to note the absence of a significant difference between the means of the traditional and lesbian mother group. In spite of the fact that in the present study all of the subjects included in the lesbian mother group had experienced the divorce/separation of their biological parents, an event

which has been found to be associated with developmental deficits in the child (Chapter 4.3.1 ; Holman et al, 1988 ; Kurdek, 1991 ; Raschke et al, 1979 ; Slater et al, 1984), the moral development of this group was not found to be compromised in any way in comparison with that of the traditional group.

The findings of the present study thus allow a greater degree of confidence to be invested in the conclusion that maternal lesbianism does not impact negatively upon child development.

In view of the fact that many of the discriminatory practises employed by social institutions in relation to lesbian parents (Chapter 2.1) have their roots in the myth that the moral character of lesbian individuals is questionable, the finding of the present study that the moral development of children reared by lesbian couples is in no way compromised, makes an important contribution to research in the area.

As has alrady been indicated the results of the present study provide support for the argument that controlling for the lowered socio-economic status which frequently accompanies single-motherhood contributes significantly towards reducing developmental deficits which have been noted in children reared in such family structures. In

addition, the results indicate that maternal sexual orientation does not impact negatively upon the child's moral development. In the light of these findings, it is suggested that current legal and social practises which discriminate against the parenting rights of individuals on the basis of their sexual orientation, need to be reviewed.

While the present study has made an important contribution to existing research knowledge, it has been subject to certain limitations, which will be discussed in the next section.

9.3 Limitations of the study

9.3.1 One of the major limitations of the study was the small size of the sample. As previously indicated, research access to the children of lesbian mothers is limited by the fact that mothers fear discrimination and custody concerns should their sexual orientation be publically disclosed (Pagelow, 1980). Identification of subjects for inclusion in the study proved to be very difficult, and small sample size was an insurmountable limitation of the study.

In this regard, Kerlinger (1986) cautions against the use of small samples as they reduce the accuracy and

power of statistical procedures. The use of small samples, as a result, increases the likelihood of making a type II error in the interpretation of research results, (J Duckett, Personal Communication), which involves accepting the null hypothesis when it is actually false (Runyon and Haber 1980). Thus actual differences which existed between the sub-groups of the present study may have been masked as a result of the small sample size.

9.3.2 A further limitation which emerged as a result of the difficulty encountered in identifying subjects for inclusion in the study was that subjects were drawn from a fairly wide age range (13 - 21 years of age). This factor may have been responsible for the large Standard Deviation which characterised the scores within each of the sub-groups, and may thus have masked actual differences which existed between the sub-groups

9.3.3 The present study also failed to assess a) whether the mothers of adolescents in the lesbian and traditional couple groups perceived the partner with whom they co-habited as being supportive and b) the disciplinary approach adopted by the mothers of adolescents in each sub-group. Obtaining information on these variables may have allowed greater clarity on the relationship between variables of interest in this study to have emerged. It is suggested that future research in this area take these variables into consideration

9.3.4 In addition, the non-random selection of subjects used in the present study limits the generalizability of the findings. It is also important to note that, in

general, the subjects included in the lesbian mother sample were born into, and reared, within the context of a heterosexual household for the first few years of their life, and thus the findings of the study cannot be generalized to children born into a lesbian family.

9.3.4 The use of Rest's (1979) DIT to measure moral development was problematic in certain regards. While this test is a paper and pencil measure of moral judgement and thus allows for quick and easy administration and objective scoring, the fact that it is a recognition rather than a production task limits the degree of input the subject may contribute, which means that valuable information regarding the subjects approach to moral dilemmas is lost. In this regard many subjects expressed frustration at having to approach the dilemmas in terms of pre-determined considerations, and one subject noted " None of the considerations which I consider important have been listed " beneath her response to a particular dilemma.

In addition to the above-mentioned difficulty, the DIT is a limited measure of moral development in that it focuses on the cognitive aspects of morality, and fails to provide information on the affective and behavioural dimensions of this construct. Future research may

projective tests, which tap moral emotions such as guilt, etc., and also behavioural observations to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the subjects moral functioning.

9.4 Implications for future research

The implications for future research which have emerged from the present study are twofold. Firstly, until recently research in the area of child adjustment in lesbian and gay families has been motivated by homophobic and heterosexist concerns, and has tended to focus on the possible negative consequences of being reared within such a family structure may have for the child (Patterson, 1992).

Future research may broaden its perspective and concentrate on issues such as the possible benefits growing up in such families may have, identifying factors which promote optimal child development in such families, etc.

Secondly, it is vitally important that, despite the difficulties involved, future studies recruit larger samples in order that more statistically meaningful results may be obtained.

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APPENDIX A

(Demographic questionaire given to lesbian couple group subjects.)

Age 13... 14... 15... 16... 17... 18...
19... 20... 21...

Gender Male ... Female ...

Residential
Area .....

Name and telephone number of two people (living with both their mother and father) of the same age, gender and residential area as yourself.

Name ..... Surname .....
Telephone number .....
Name ..... Surname .....
Telephone number .....

APPENDIX A

(Demographic questionaire given to traditional couple group subjects.)

Age 13... 14... 15... 16... 17... 18...
19... 20... 21...

Gender Male ..... Female .....

Residential
Area .....

Name and telephone number of two people (living with only their mother) of the same age, gender and residential area as yourself who may be contacted to complete this questionaire.

Name ..... Surname .....
Telephone number .....
Name ..... Surname .....
Telephone number .....

APPENDIX A

(Demographic questionaire given to single-mother group subjects.)

Age 13... 14... 15... 16... 17... 18...
20... 21...

Gender Male ..... Female .....

Residential
Area .....

For how long have your parents been separated/divorced
eg. 3 years .....

APPENDIX B

Telephonic interview with mothers of lesbian group subjects.

1. What is the duration of your current relationship ?
2. Do you live with your partner ?
3. Is your child aware that you are gay ?
4. For how many years have you been separated/divorced from your husband ?
5. For how many years have you been actively involved in gay relationships ?

APPENDIX C

REST'S DEFINING ISSUES TEST

TEST BOOKLET

Dear Participant

I am an MA (Clin Psych) student at the University of the Witwatersrand and I am currently researching the way in which family structure impacts upon the individual's moral judgement. Your participation in this study will help to further insight into this area.

You will be asked to read six stories, each containing a moral dilemma. Following this you will be asked to rate items according to their importance in finding a solution to the given dilemma. Please answer as honestly and as openly as possible, bearing in mind that there are no right or wrong answers and what I am interested in is your opinion.

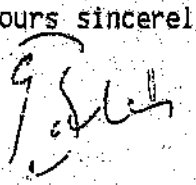
I would like to assure you that your answers will be treated as strictly confidential. Under no circumstance will your answers be used for anything other than this study. In order to ensure confidentiality you will be identified by number rather than by name. Following completion of the study the questionaire you have completed will be destroyed.

Please remember that your participation is completely voluntary and you are free to discontinue your participation at any stage.

Should you have any enquiries regarding the study please feel free to ask me questions. Alternatively, I may be contacted at 011 487 3302.

Thank you for your help.

Yours sincerely.



DIT

Defining Issues Test

University of Minnesota
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Opinions about Social Problems

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help us understand how people think about social problems. Different people have different opinions about questions of right and wrong. There are no "right" answers to such problems in the way that mat'i problems have right answers. We would like you to tell us what you think about several problem stories.

You will be asked to read a story from this booklet. Then you will be asked to mark your answers on a separate answer sheet, with a #2 pencil. Please cross the square clearly.

The identification Number at the top of the answer sheet may already be filled in when you receive your materials. If not, you will receive special instructions about how to fill in that number.

In this questionnaire you will be asked to read a story and then to place marks on the answer sheet. In order to illustrate how we would like you to do this, consider the following story:

Frank and the Car

> *Frank Jones has been thinking about buying a car. He is married, has two small children and earns an average income. The car he buys will be his family's only car. It will be used mostly to get to work and drive around town, but sometimes for vacation trips also. In trying to decide what car to buy, Frank Jones realised that there were a lot of questions to consider. For instance, should he buy a larger used car or a smaller new car for about the same amount of money? Other questions occur to him.*

We note that this is not really a social problem, but it will illustrate our instructions.

first on the answer sheet for each story you will be asked to indicate your recommendation for what person should do. If you tend to favour one action or another (even if you are not completely sure), indicate which one. If you do not favour either action, mark the square by "can't decide".

Second, read each of the items numbered 1 to 12. Think of the issue that the item is raising. If that issue is important in making a decision, one way or the other, then mark it by "great". If that issue is relevant but not critical, mark "much", "some", or "little" -- depending on how much importance that issue has in your opinion. You may mark several items as "great" or any other level of importance) -- there is no fixed number of items that must be marked at any one level.

Third, after you have made your marks along the left hand side of each of the 12 items, that at the bottom you will be asked to choose the item that is the most important consideration out of all the items printed there. Pick from among the items

provided even if you think that none of the items are of "great" importance. Of the items that are presented there, pick one as the most important (relative to the others), then the second most important, third, and fourth most important.

SAMPLE ITEMS and SAMPLE ANSWERS

FRANK AND THE CAR

☐ Buy a new car ☐ Can't Decide ☒ Buy used car

Great	Much	Some	Little	No	
			X		1. Whether the car dealer was in the same block as where Frank lives
X					2. Would a used car be more economical in the long run than a new car
		X			3. Whether the colour was green, Frank's favourite colour
				X	4. Whether the cubic inch displacement was at least 200
X					5. Would a large, roomy car be better than a compact car
				X	6. Whether the front connibilies were different

Most important item	1	X	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Second Most important	1	2	3	4	X	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Third most important	1	2	X	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Fourth most important	X	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

Note that in our sample responses, the first item was considered irrelevant; the second item was considered as a critical issue in making a decision; the third item was considered of only moderate importance; the fourth item was not clear to the person responding whether 200 was good or not, so it was marked "no"; the fifth item was also of critical importance; and the sixth item didn't make any sense, so it was marked "no".

Note that the most important item comes from one of the items marked in the far left hand side. In deciding between item #2 and #5, a person should reread these items, then put the most important, and the other item as second, etc.

Here is the first story for your consideration. Read the story and then turn to the separate answer sheet to mark your responses. After filling in the four most important items for the story, return to this booklet to read the next story. Please remember to cross the square clearly and completely erase all corrections.

HEINZ AND THE DRUG

In Europe a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost to make. He paid $200 for the radium and charged $2,000 for a small dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband, Heinz went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about $1,000, which is half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying, and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said, "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it." So Heinz got desperate and began to think about breaking into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife. Should Heinz steal the drug?

ESCAPED PRISONER

A man had been sentenced to prison for 10 years. After one year, however, he escaped from prison, moved into a new area of the country, and took on the name of Thompson. For eight years he worked hard, and gradually he saved enough money to buy his own business. He was fair to his customers, gave his employees top wages, and gave most of his own profits to charity. Then one day, Mrs. Jones, an old neighbour, recognized him as the man who has escaped from prison eight years before, and whom the police had been looking for. Should Mrs. Jones report Mr Thompson to the police and have him sent back to prison?

NEWSPAPER

Fred, in senior high school, wanted to publish a mimeographed newspaper for students so that he could express many of his opinions. He wanted to speak out against the use of the military in international disputes and to speak out against some of the school's rules, like the rule forbidding boys to wear long hair.

When Fred started his newspaper, he asked his principal for permission. The principal said it would be all right if before every publication Fred would turn in all his articles for the principal's approval. Fred agreed and turned in several articles for approval. The principal approved all of them and Fred published two issues of the paper in the next two weeks.

But the principal had not expected the Fred's newspaper would receive so much attention. Students were so excited by the paper that they began to organize protests against the hair regulation and other school rules. Angry parents objected to Fred's opinions. They phoned the principal telling him that the newspaper was unpatriotic and should not be published. As a result of the rising excitement, the principal ordered Fred to stop publishing. He gave as a reason that Fred's activities were disruptive to the operation of the school. Should the principal stop the newspaper?

DOCTOR'S DILEMMA

A lady was dying of cancer which could not be cured and she had only about six months to live. She was in terrible pan, but she was so weak that a good dose of pain-killer like morphine would make he, 'ie sooner. She was delirious and almost crazy with pain, and in her calm periods, she would ask the doctor to give her enough morphine to kill her. She said she couldn't stand the pain and that she was going to die in a few months anyway. Should the doctor give her an overdose of morphine that would make her die?

WEBSTER

Mr. Webster was the owner and manager of a gas station. He wanted to hire another mechanic to help him, but good mechanics were hard to find. The only person he found who seemed to be a good mechanic was Mr Lee, but he was Chinese. While Mr Webster himself didn't have anything against Orientals, he was afraid to hire Mr Lee because many of his customers didn't like orientals. His customers might take their business elsewhere if Mr Lee was working in the gas station.

When Mr Lee asked Mr Webster if he could have the job, Mr Webster said that he had already hired somebody else. But Mr Webster really had not hired anybody, because he could not find anybody who was a good mechanic besides Mr Lee. Should Mr Webster have hired Mr Lee?

STUDENT TAKE-OVER

Back in the 1960s at Harvard University there was a student group called Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). SDS students were against the war in Vietnam, and were against the army training program (ROTC) that helped men to fight in Vietnam. While the war was still going on, the SDS students demanded that Harvard and the army ROTC program as a university course. This would mean that Harvard students could not get army training as part of their regular courses work and not get credit for it towards their degree.

Harvard professors agree. . th the SDS students. The professors voted to end the ROTC program as a university course. But the president of the University took a different view. He stated that the army program should stay on campus as a course.

The SDS students felt that the President of the University was not going to pay attention to the vote of the professors, and was going to keep the ROTC program as a course on campus. The SDS students then marched to the University's administration building and told . everyone else to get out. They said they were taking over the building to force Harvard's President to get rid of the army ROTC program on campus for credit as a course.

Were the students right to take over the administraion building?

Please make sure that all your marks are dark, cross the squares, and that all erasures are clean.

THANK YOU.

DEFINING ISSUES TEST
University of Minnesota
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				0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
				0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
				0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
				0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
				0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

HEINZ AND THE DRUG

☐ Should Steal ☐ Can't Decide ☐ Should not Steal

Great	Much	Some	Little	No	
					1. Whether a community's laws are going to be upheld.
					2. Isn't it only natural for a loving husband to care so much for his wife that he'd steal?
					3. Is Heinz willing to risk getting shot as a burglar or going to jail for the chance that stealing the drug might help?
					4. Whether Heinz is a professional wrestler, or has considerable influence with professional wrestlers.
					5. Whether Heinz is stealing for himself or doing this solely to help someone else.
					6. Whether the druggists rights to his invention have to be respected.
					7. Whether the essence of living is more encompassing than the termination of dying, socially and individually.
					8. What values are going to be the basis for governing how people act towards each other.
					9. Whether the druggist is going to be allowed to hide behind a worthless law which only protects the rich anyway.
					10. Whether the law in this case is getting in the way of the most basic claim of any member of society.
					11. Whether the druggist deserves to be robbed for being so greedy and cruel.
					12. Would stealing in such a case bring about more total good for the whole society or not.

Most important item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Second Most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Third most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Fourth most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

ESCAPED PRISONER

☐ Should Report Him ☐ Can't Decide ☐ Should not Report Him

Great	Much	Some	Little	No	
					1. Hasn't Mr Thompson been good enough for such a long time to prove he isn't a bad person?
					2. Everytime someone escapes punishment for a crime, doesn't that just encourage more crime?
					3. Wouldn't we be better off without prisons and the oppression of our legal system?
					4. Has Mr Thompson really paid his debt to society?
					5. Would society be failing what Mr Thompson should fairly expect?
					6. What benefits would prisons be apart from society, especially for a charitable man?
					7. How could anyone be so cruel and heartless as to send Mr Thompson to prison?
					8. Would it be fair to all the prisoners who had to serve out their full sentences if Mr Thompson was let off?
					9. Was Mrs Jones a good friend of Mr Thompson?
					10. Wouldn't it be a citizen's duty to report an escaped criminal, regardless of the circumstances?
					11. How would the will of the people and the public good best be served?
					12. Would going to prison do any good for Mr Thompson or protect anybody?

Most important item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Second Most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Third most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Fourth most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

NEWSPAPER

☐ Should Stop It ☐ Can't Decide ☐ Should not Stop It

Great	Much	Some	Little	No	
					1. Is the principal more responsible to studentsor to parents?
					2. Did the principal give his word that the newspaper could be published for a long time, or did he just promise to approve the newspaper one issue at a time?
					3. Would the students start protesting even more if the principal stopped the newspaper?
					4. When the welfare of the school is threatened, does the principal have the right to give orders to the students?
					5. Does the principal have the freedom of speech to say "no" in this case?
					6. If the principal stopped the newspaper would he be preventing full discussion of important problems
					7. Whether Fred was really loyal to his school and patriotic to his country
					8. Whether the principal's order would make Fred lose faith in the principal
					9. What effect would stopping the paper have on the students education in critical thinking and judgement
					10. Whether Fred was in any way violating the rights of others in publishing his own opinions
					11. Whether the principal should be influenced by some angry parents when it is the principal that knows best what is going on in the school
					12. Whether Fred was using the newspaper to stir up hatred and discontent

Most important item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Second Most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Third most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Fourth most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

DOCTORS DILEMMA

	He should give the lady an overdose that will make her die	
	Can't Decide	
	Should not give the overdose	

Great	Much	Some	Little	No	
					1. Whether the woman's family is in favour of giving her the overdose or not
					2. Is the doctor obligated by the same laws as everybody else if giving an overdose would be the same as killing her
					3. Whether people would be much better off without society regimenting their lives and even their deaths
					4. Whether the doctor should make it appear like an accident
					5. Does the state have the right to force continued existence on those who don't want to live
					6. What is the value of death prior to society's perspective on personal values
					7. Whether the doctor has sympathy for the woman's suffering or cares more about what society might think
					8. Is helping to end another's life ever a responsible act of co-operation
					9. Whether only God should decide when a person's life should end
					10. What values the doctor has set for himself in his own personal code of behaviour
					11. Can society afford to let everybody end their lives when they want to
					12. Can society allow suicides or mercy killing and still protect the lives of individuals who want to live

Most important item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Second Most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Third most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Fourth most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

WEBSTER

☐ Should have hired Mr Lee ☐ Can't Decide ☐ Should not have hired him

Great	Much	Some	Little	No	
					1. Does the owner of a business have the right to make his own business decisions or not?
					2. Whether there is a law that forbids racial discrimination in hiring for jobs
					3. Whether Mr Webster is prejudiced against orientalshimself or whether he means nothing personal in refusing the job
					4. Whether hiring a good mechanic or paying attention to his customers wishes would be best for his business
					5. What individual differences ought to be relevant in deciding how society's rules are filled?
					6. Whether the greedy and competitive capitalistic system ought to be completely abandoned
					7. Do a majority of people in Mr Webster's society feel like his customers or are a majority against prejudice?
					8. Whether hiring capable men like Mr Lee would use talents that would otherwise be lost to society?
					9. Would refusing the job to Mr Lee be consistent with Mr Webster's own moral beliefs?
					10. Could Mr Webster be so hard-hearted as to refuse the job, knowing how much it means to Mr Lee?
					11. Whether the Christian commandment to love your fellow man applies to this case
					12. If someone;s in need, shouldn't he be helped regardless of what you get back from him?

Most important item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Second Most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Third most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Fourth most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12

STUDENTS

☐ Take it Over ☐ Can't Decide ☐ Not take it over

Great	Much	Some	Little	No	
					1. Are the students doing this to really help other people or are they doing it just for kicks.
					2. Do the students have any right to take over the property that doesn't belong to them.
					3. Do the students realize that they might be arrested and fined, and even greater, expelled from school.
					4. Would taking over the building in the long run benefit more people to a greater extent.
					5. Whether the president stayed within the limits of his authority in ignoring the faculty vote
					6. Will the take over anger the public and give all students a bad name
					7. Is taking over a building consistent with principles of justice
					8. Would allowing one student take-over encourage many other student take-overs
					9. Did the president bring this misunderstanding on himself by being so unreasonable and unco-operative
					10. Whether running the university ought to be in the hands of a few administrators or in the hands of all the people
					11. Are the students following principles which they believe are above the law
					12. Whether or not university decisions ought to be respected by students

Most important item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Second Most Important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Third most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Fourth most important	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12



Author: Bales Gillian Margaret.
Name of thesis: A comparison of the moral orientation of children reared in traditional families and those reared in matrifocal families.

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