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SOME CORRELATES OF BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS:
A ROLE STUDY OF MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN IN FOSTER
CARE PLACEMENT.

The City University of New York, Ph.D., 1972
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SOME CORRELATES OF BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS:
A ROLE STUDY OF MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT

by

ELAINE NORMAN

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1972

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Sociology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

7/11/72
date

Patricia Kendall
Chairman of Examining Committee

7/11/72
date

Benjamin B. Ruzin
Executive Officer

Leonard S. Kogan
Eugene Litwak
Arnold Handel
Supervisory Committee

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ABSTRACT

SOME CORRELATES OF BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS:
A ROLE STUDY OF MOTHERS WITH CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE PLACEMENT

by

Elaine Norman

Adviser: Professor Patricia Kendall

The present study has attempted to isolate and rank in importance some of the correlates of perceived role expectations. The expectations explored were those existing in the role relationship between the dyad: mothers with children in foster care placement in New York City and caseworkers from the social agencies responsible for the care of their children. In the study the mothers occupied the focal position as ego, and the agency caseworkers the counter position as alter. The focus was exclusively upon the role expectations reported by the mothers as applicable to them in the specific situational context of a face-to-face talk with the caseworker.

The present study was an integral part of a five year longitudinal research program, called the Family Welfare Research Program, undertaken at the Columbia University School of Social Work. The major focus of the Family Welfare Research Program was upon the effects of New York City foster care placement upon the natural families of placed children. A section developed specifically for this dissertation and concerning the role relationship between the natural mothers

of placed children and their caseworkers from the foster care agencies was built into one of the questionnaires developed as part of the larger research program. The special section included questions designed to tap the role expectations held by the study mothers in the specific situational context of a conversation with the agency caseworkers.

Five concrete role expectations emerged from the interview responses of the 128 mothers who formed the present study sample. The mothers reported differing expectations. With that finding the study added further empirical evidence that conceptions of appropriate role behavior are variable, even among occupants of the same role.

However, the present study's main task was to determine some of the factors influencing the perception of differing behavioral expectations on the part of the study mothers, and to rank them in order of importance. Factors of a sociological and psychological nature were both considered important. Variables reflecting the seven following conceptual areas were included:

1. Orientational variables that form the background for the role relationship under consideration;
2. Organizational arrangements institutionalized as part of the system of which the focal role was a part;
3. Interactional variables specifically related to the mother-caseworker dyad;
4. Positions occupied in other social systems by incumbents of the focal role;
5. Commitment of the role incumbent to the focal role;
6. Motivation of the incumbent of the focal role to participate in it; and
7. Evaluation by the incumbent of the focal role of the rights and performances of the system to which the role was attached.

The first of those areas was seen as essentially orientational in nature. The three following areas were conceptualized as primarily sociological in scope, and the last three as primarily psychological. A series of multiple regression analyses were performed in an attempt to place each of these areas, and the variables they contained, in a rank order of importance as correlates of the role expectations. The results indicated that all of the included areas had some influence upon the perception of role expectations by the study mothers. However, the study findings suggested that perception of role expectations is determined by social structure to a greater extent than by orientational or psychological factors. And among social system variables themselves those of an interactional nature appear to have the greatest effect upon the perception of behavioral requirements attached to roles.

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I would like to express my sincere appreciation to a number of people and organizations who made this dissertation possible.

Dr. Patricia Kendall, my dissertation adviser, was a kind, thoughtful and concerned mentor. To her go my special thanks. To Dr. Gerald Handel and Dr. Leonard Kogan, members of my dissertation committee, who made numerous helpful suggestions for the improvement of the manuscript, I extend my sincere gratitude. Dr. Shirley Jenkins, the director of the Family Welfare Research Program from which the data for this thesis were derived, deserves particular thanks for her unending encouragement. Thanks are also due to the Research Center of the Columbia University School of Social Work at which the research was housed; and to the Division of Child Welfare Research and Demonstrations, Office of Research and Demonstrations of the Social and Rehabilitation Service of the U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare whose financial support sustained the project.

Without the assistance of those persons and organizations this dissertation could not have been completed. But the author alone bears final responsibility for its content.

Elaine Norman

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

In the present study it is our intention to focus on the behavioral expectations associated with roles, on role expectations, called norms by some,¹ prescriptions by others.² Whatever the label they are an essential aspect of the framework of role theory. Role expectations refer to a set of specifications for role appropriate behavior. They are ideas of what people think behavior ought to be with respect to a specific position in a social system. This study is basically interested in isolating and ranking in importance some of the social and psychological correlates of perceived role expectations.

The present work is concerned with the role expectations of natural mothers whose children have been placed in foster care in New York City in the specific situational context of a face-to-face talk with caseworkers from the administrative social agencies responsible for the care of their children. When they become involved in the New York City foster care system the natural mothers of placed children enter into role relationships with several types of personnel, among which are placement agency social caseworkers. The role-set of

¹George C. Homans, The Human Group (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1950).

²Bruce Biddle and Edwin J. Thomas, Role Theory: Concepts and Research (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966).

1) mothers with children in foster care--the complement of role relationships they have by virtue of occupying that status in that social system¹--is larger than just the dyad including mother and caseworker.² Personal interest and limited resources influenced the decision to limit this study to the mother-caseworker relationship.

Method

The study is an integral part of a longitudinal research program begun in 1964 at the Columbia University School of Social Work. The program is funded by the Division of Child Welfare, Office of Research and Demonstrations of the Social and Rehabilitation Service of the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare. The program was originally titled the Child Welfare Research Program and its overall intention was to study the effects of foster care placement, over time, upon placed children and their natural families. In 1970 that part of the research program concerned with the effects

¹The role-set concept was developed by Robert Merton, "The Role Set: Problems in Sociological Theory," British Journal of Sociology, 8 (1957), pp. 106-120, Merton, Bates and Gross, et al. all credit each other with developing similar concepts in this regard, although different terminology was used by them. Cf., Neal Gross, Ward S. Mason and Alexander W. McEachern, Explorations in Role Analysis, Studies of the School Superintendency Role (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1958), p. 69; Frederick L. Bates, "Some Observations Concerning the Structural Aspects of Role Conflict," Pacific Sociological Review, 5 (1962), pp. 75-76; and Robert Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (revised edition; Glencoe: Free Press, 1957), p. 369.

²There are several other equally important mother focused dyads in that role-set that are worthy of note. These would include the mother and her placed child; the mother and other members of her and/or the placed child's family (i.e., the child's father); the mother and the foster parents or other child care workers; and the mother and the placement agency casework supervisors. Eugene Weinstein discusses two of these other mother focused dyads, mother and child, and mother and foster child carer, in The Self Image of the Foster Child (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1960), pp. 7-15. Chapter Two of this manuscript will discuss the foster care system in detail. The decision to limit the present study to only the mother-caseworker relationship was influenced by the fact that resources were limited and my personal interests centered around that dyad rather than any other.

of placement upon the families of the placed children became a separate program itself, titled the Family Welfare Research Program. A section concerning the role relationship between the natural mothers of the placed children and their caseworkers from the foster care agencies was built into one of the Family Study data collection instruments specifically as the basic data for this dissertation.

As part of the Family Welfare Research Program three interviews with family members (particularly mothers) in their homes were conducted over a five year period. The first took place a few months after the child entered foster care. The second took place approximately two and a half years after the placement, and the third five years after entry into care.

A special section was included in the second family interview specifically for this dissertation which was designed to tap the role expectations held by the mothers in the specific situational context of a conversation with the agency caseworkers. During the interviews the mothers were directly asked about the picture they had of the caseworker's image of role appropriate behavior for them, and about their own image of role appropriate behavior for themselves, as follows:¹

- A. During a face-to-face talk (visit) with the agency caseworker, how do you think she expects you to behave (act)? What things would she expect you to do or say? What things would she expect you NOT to do or say?

(and)

¹A review of methods utilized by other researchers to obtain information about role expectations, and the rationale for posing the role questions in this particular manner for the present study, will be presented in Chapter Three.

- B. How do you yourself feel you should behave (act) in a talk (visit) with an agency caseworker? What things do you feel you should do or say? What things do you feel you should NOT do or say?

Taken separately the replies can be seen as alter (caseworker) and ego (mother) expectations, respectively, viewed from the perspective of ego's (mother's) focal position. Taken together they constitute the role expectations existing in the situation from the mothers' perspective.¹

Data on perceived role expectations, however, were only part of the material utilized to follow the interests of the present study. Our primary concern was with the determination of social and psychological factors associated with those behavioral expectations. The following areas were explored toward that end. The conceptualization of each of the areas and the rationale for including each is discussed in detail in following chapters, and the association of each with the perceived role expectations is extensively explored.

¹Combining alter and ego expectations and analyzing them as the expectational field existing in the situation from the mothers' point of view was done with the following rationale. Only the mothers in their focal position as role incumbents were asked to relate role expectations for the focal role. They did so for both themselves and the caseworkers. Data were not collected from the caseworkers at all. Since it was the role incumbents themselves who related both the ego and alter expectations, the combination of both can be seen to represent their definition of the situation. The meaning of the situation to the mothers, their system of orientation to it, can be seen to include all the expectations they perceived as existing in the situation, whether those expectations were viewed as held by themselves, by their role partners, or both. Most of the following analysis looks at role expectations from the situational perspective. Chapter Six, however, discusses separately the expectations the mothers noted the caseworkers held for them, and those they noted they held for themselves.

Social Factors

A. Orientalional variables that form the background for the role relationship under inspection, i.e., the circumstances surrounding the assumption of the focal role, (or in other words the main reason for the placement); and the length of time the role incumbents have been involved with the role; were seen as potentially playing an important part in determining an incumbent's view of the expectations attached to it.

B. The organizational arrangements institutionalized as part of the system of which the role was a part, i.e., the religious auspices of the placement agencies, the number of children served, and the type of placement for the children, were considered relevant.

C. Interactional variables specifically related to the mother-caseworker dyad, such as topics talked about when together and number of in-person contacts over a specified period of time, were also considered important.

D. Positions occupied in other social systems by incumbents of the focal role, such as ethnic group and socioeconomic status, were viewed as among the most relevant factors associated with the role expectations.

Intra-personal (Psychological) Factors

(Scales were constructed to measure each of the following:)

E. The commitment of the role incumbent to the focal role (maternal commitment) was seen as potentially important.

F. The motivation of the incumbent of the focal role to participate in it also was viewed as relevant.

G. The incumbent's evaluation of the rights and performances of the system to which the role is attached was likewise considered potentially influential.

The Sample

The sample for the Child and Family Welfare Research Programs included a cohort of 624 children who entered foster care as public charges from January to November 1966, and their 467 families. In order to maximize the number of families in the program a maximum of two children per family were included in the sample. These two were selected at random from family sibling groups who met the other eligibility criteria. The sample cohort of children included both boys and girls who themselves were entering foster care for the first

time and who had no siblings who had ever been in such a placement. This insured that the current placement was the families' first experience with foster care. The children ranged in age from birth through twelve years and entered the sample sequentially until their proportional age and sex quota was filled. The age and sex quotas were considered necessary so that the child sample would resemble, as closely as possible, the distribution of the population under thirteen years old in foster care. The age limit was set so as to insure that no sample child would reach his eighteenth birthday before the end of the five year period projected for data collection. To become a sample member the children also must have remained in foster care for a minimum of ninety days following entry, a time period considered the beginning of long-term care in the foster care field.

The field operations for the second family interview from which the data for this thesis was derived, spanned the summer and fall of 1968. For the second interview 304 families were seen. The reasons all the sample families were not interviewed included, in order of their frequency of occurrence: (1) the interviewer was unable to locate any relevant respondent (65 cases); (2) the respondent(s) approached refused to be interviewed (43 cases); (3) an adoption had been arranged for the child and therefore further interviewing of the natural family was suspended so as to avoid jeopardizing the adoption in any way (34 cases); (4) the placement agency

responsible for the child requested that "for casework reasons" an attempt to complete a research interview should be avoided (21 cases). Of those interviewed 243 were mothers.

One hundred thirty six of the 243 mothers seen were, at the time of the interview, still intimately related to the foster care system because their children were still in placement. These women were asked the role questions developed for the present thesis. The 128 women who responded to those role questions constitute the respondent group with which we will be concerned.¹

The interviewing procedure

A staff of twelve interviewers visited family members in their homes with a prepared research schedule. All but one of the interviewing staff were trained and experienced social workers. The one exception was trained as a psychologist. Several of the interviewers were bilingual, speaking both English and Spanish fluently. This was essential since there was a large number of Spanish-speaking families in the study. In order to insure uniformity of question wording, English and Spanish versions of the schedule were developed. Although the interviewers were told to initially ask the questions exactly as worded in the interviewing schedule, they were thereafter allowed leeway to probe on their own to obtain full answers.

Most of the areas covered in the research interview involved sensitive material. Social workers were considered preferable

¹Eight women did not, or could not, answer the role questions. Five of them were Spanish speaking suggesting the possibility that language may have been a barrier inhibiting their response.

interviewers because of their professional training in dealing with sensitive material with casework clients. However, the interviewers were cautioned not to consider the research respondents as clients. They were instructed to hold in abeyance during the interviewing session the service orientation which was an integral part of their usual professional commitment. In order not to influence the research process they were distinctly told not to offer any casework services to the respondents. Their only task was to obtain a clear and complete research interview. The following is an excerpt detailing just that, which was included in the printed instructions given to interviewers prior to their entering the field:

Conducting the interview: There are very real differences between casework interviewing and research interviewing. A "respondent" is not a "client." The research interviewer is not trying to encourage a respondent to change in any way, he is not trying to help the respondent to attain a greater understanding of himself or his situation, he is not offering service of any kind. The research interviewer is not "giving" or "offering" anything. He is, in effect, asking for something. He wants information. That information at times is in very sensitive and very repressed areas and that is why in most cases social workers because of their specialized professional training emphasizing those areas make exceptionally good research interviewers.

It is important that you always keep in mind that your role is one of research interviewer and not caseworker. Do not offer services...If you give the respondent any advice or help, you are changing your role and this will have unwanted effects during the remainder of the interview.

The interviewers reported that it was very difficult and time-consuming to locate respondents for the second family interview. Attrition due to inability to locate respondents is a situation faced by all repeat studies, but is particularly prevalent where the population is in a situation of crisis and disorganization

as was this one. Two main problems had to be faced. When children had remained in foster care for between two and three years, mothers were less tied down and tended to move residences a great deal. On the other hand for families where children had been discharged home from placement there was a natural tendency to want to forget the placement experience. Considering these factors the interview success was considered satisfactory.

The average interview took between one and a half to two hours to complete. The interviewers estimated that the role expectation questions consumed about twenty minutes of that time. They noted that the respondents found the role questions difficult to answer. In many cases the questions, or parts thereof, needed to be repeated several times before the respondents attempted to answer them. The interviewers were not sure whether it was reticence regarding the topic, lack of comprehension of what was actually being asked, or difficulty in putting into words relevant responses that caused the hesitation. Despite the apparent difficulty only eight of the mothers who were asked the role questions could not, or would not, answer them.

Theory

The concept of role is a key construct for modern social science. The pervasiveness of role concepts in contemporary sociology and social psychology led Biddle and Thomas to comment in their review of the literature that although role concepts cannot actually be considered the "lingua franca" of the behavioral sciences "they

presently come closer to this universal language than any other vocabulary of behavioral science."¹ The importance of the role framework was further attested to by Preiss and Ehrlich when in their recent examination of the field they commented that, "to reject role theory is to call for a revolution in social science, and such scientific revolutions demand the presentation of a new body of research or of a new paradigm which cogently reinterprets the existing body of relevant knowledge."²

Many writers have attempted to explain the attraction and usefulness of the role framework. The overall consensus seems to be that the attraction of the role concept stems from its interdisciplinary nature, its usefulness in approaching both the individual and the collectivity within a single framework. As Katz and Kahn note, the concept of role "...is at once the building block of social systems and the summation of the requirements with which the system confronts the individual member."³ Gross, Mason and McEachern comment in their major study of the school superintendent role that introduction of the role concept forced each social science discipline to attend to phenomena previously neglected or minimized. It emphasized for psychologists the importance of the cultural and social structural dimensions of social behavior. For cultural

¹Biddle and Thomas, op. cit., p. 8.

²Jack J. Preiss and Howard J. Ehrlich, An Examination of Role Theory. The Case of the State Police (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), p. 160.

³Daniel Katz and Robert L. Kahn, The Social Psychology of Organizations (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966), p. 171.

anthropologists it underscored the intimate link between social structure and culture. And for sociologists it reinforced "the need to bring evaluative standards and sanctions into analysis of social interaction and social structure."¹

The role framework has become known in the behavioral sciences as "role theory." That title implies more than is actually the case. The framework consists mainly of a set of constructs with little in the way of interrelated hypotheses, clear rules of correspondence, or even consensus on the nature and meaning of the primary concepts themselves. Biddle and Thomas note, "the role field exhibits much speculation, and there are certainly hypotheses and theories about particular aspects of the subject, but there is no one 'grand theory.'"² The constructs of role theory however, are rich in their applicability to the social world and in their "double reference to the individual and the collective matrix."³ As such they provide a highly useful conceptual framework for social scientists.

Perhaps because of the wide usage of role theory and the numerous attempts to elaborate upon it there is a good deal of vagueness and terminological difficulties. There have been many comments made about this state of affairs. In 1951 Neiman and Hughes stated, "In surveying the literature one is confronted with what seems to be a hopeless mass of different definitions, usages and implications of

¹Gross et al., op. cit., p. 320.

²Biddle and Thomas, op. cit., p. 14.

³Daniel J. Levinson, "Role, Personality, and Social Structure in the Organizational Setting," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 58 (March, 1959), p. 170.

the role concept."¹ Fifteen years later in 1966 Preiss and Ehrlich made a very similar statement, "...if one were simply to array all of the terms introduced into the literature of role theory, one would confront a rather sizeable glossary of overlapping, vague and imprecise terms."² Biddle and Thomas made the same kind of statement. "At present the language of role is a partially articulate vocabulary that stands midway in precision between the concepts of the man in the street, who uses what the common language just happens to offer as a terminology, and the fully articulate, consensually agreed-upon set of concepts of the mature scientific discipline."³

A number of writers have suggested that the vagueness, overlap and terminological difficulties stem from the different orientations and problem definitions of the several behavioral sciences.⁴ For example, the frame of reference of anthropologists is whole societies. Their professional goal is to describe whole cultures with brief and convenient approximations of existing conditions. This macro-cultural level of analysis leads to an emphasis on the normative patterns that influence behavior and a tendency to treat role as a culturally derived blueprint for behavior. Ralph Linton, who along with George Herbert Mead has been the most influential contributor

¹Lionel J. Neiman and James W. Hughes, "The Problem of the Concept of Role--A Re-survey of the Literature," Social Forces, 30 (December, 1951), p. 142.

²Preiss and Ehrlich, op. cit., p. 163.

³Biddle and Thomas, op. cit., p. 13.

⁴Cf., Gerald Gordon, Role Theory and Illness, A Sociological Perspective (New Haven, Connecticut: College and University Press, 1966), pp. 21-33; and Gross, et al., op. cit., pp. 11-20.

to the field of role, epitomizes the anthropological framework. Although Linton proposed the classic distinction between status and role, except for the positional function he assigned to status it is hard to distinguish the two concepts in his work. However, in Linton's formulation the stress can be seen to be on the cultural and normative aspects of the dual concept, rather than the behavioral.

A status, in the abstract, is a position in a particular pattern...A status, as distinct from the individual who may occupy it, is simply a collection of rights and duties... A role represents the dynamic aspect of status...Role and status are quite inseparable, and the distinction between them is only of academic interest...all statuses and roles derive from social patterns and are integral parts of patterns.../to individuals/ the combined status and role represent the minimum of attitudes and behavior which he must assume if he is to participate in the overt expression of the pattern.¹

The psychologist's focus of interest is upon individual behavior. Cultural and social phenomena are subsidiary interests, important only as they relate to the behavior of individuals. As a consequence the psychologist's outlook in the role framework tends to be behaviorally oriented.² Newcomb, for example, defines role as "the ways of behaving which are expected of any individual

¹Ralph Linton, The Study of Man (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1936), pp. 113-114.

²George Herbert Mead is at times misleadingly identified as a psychologist. He was actually a philosopher. The Meadian perspective does not include overt behavior or conduct in its role context. Although Mead never actually defined role he made it quite clear that role taking was a mental, empathic activity, a symbolic process by which one "put himself into the other's place" and imagined thereby the situationally relevant behavioral expectations. G.H. Mead, Mind, Self and Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist, ed. C.W. Morris (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934).

who occupies a certain position..."¹ And in Sarbin's definition role is "a patterned sequence of learned actions or deeds performed by a person in an interaction situation."² In both examples behavior is clearly emphasized.

Sociologists have tended to employ role concepts in both normative and behavioral contexts. The subject matter of American sociology has traditionally been larger than the individual but less than entire societies. Especially in the field of role the concentration has been upon the reciprocal relationship, "the socially preconditioned interaction of two or more persons."³ Within that interaction situation, for sociologists, the identities of the participants have often been seen in terms of status and role. Although they generally agree that status refers to social location or position in a particular system of social relationships, sociologists differ in their particular definition of the role concept, disagreeing as to whether role includes only the normative prescriptions attached to a position or also includes their behavioral enactment.

Davis and Merton, for example, view role in its behavioral aspect. Merton has described role as "the behavioral enacting of the patterned expectations attributed to a position."⁴ Davis has

¹Theodore M. Newcomb, Social Psychology (New York: Dryden Press, 1951), p. 280.

²Theodore R. Sarbin, "Role Theory," Handbook of Social Psychology, ed. Gardner Lindzey, Vol. I (Massachusetts: Addison Wesley Publishing Co., 1954), p. 225.

³Gordon, op. cit., p. 28.

⁴Merton, op. cit., p. 368.

stated, "How an individual actually performs in a given position we call his role."¹ Homans, Bates and Coutu see role solely in its normative context. Homans has written, "[roles] are not behavior itself, but what people think behavior ought to be."² Bates also emphasized the normative aspect of role, noting "...a social role is not the behavior of a person occupying a position... but it is a nonbehavioral structural sub-unit consisting of norms."³ Coutu stated the same thing with, "...a role represents what a person is supposed to do in a given situation by virtue of the social position he holds."⁴ In Parsons' work it is difficult to distinguish the normative and behavioral dimensions as separate aspects of his definition of role. The combination can be seen in the following quotation from an essay in which he reviews his theoretical system:

The essential property is mutuality of orientation, defined in terms of shared patterns of normative culture. Such normative patterns are values; the normatively regulated complex of behavior of one of the participants is a role... A role may be defined as the structured, i.e., normatively regulated, participation of a person in a concrete process of social interaction with specified concrete role partners.⁵

¹Kingsley Davis, Human Society (New York: Macmillan Co., 1949), p. 90.

²George C. Homans, op.cit., p. 124.

³Frederick L. Bates, "Position, Role and Status: A Re-formulation of Concepts," Social Forces, 34 (May, 1956), p. 315.

⁴Walter Coutu, "Role Taking: An Appeal for Clarification," American Sociological Review, 16 (April, 1951), p. 180.

⁵Talcott Parsons, "An Outline of the Social System," Theories of Society, Foundations of Modern Sociological Theory, eds. Talcott Parsons, Edward Shils, Kaspar D. Naegle and Jesse R. Pitts, Vol. I (Glencoe: Free Press, 1961), p. 42.

For the sociologist whether or not behavior is itself included in the definition of role, reference to behavioral expectations is almost always included. The assumption behind this being that to a considerable extent behavior is influenced by expectations which role incumbents hold for themselves and which others hold for them.¹

Gross et al. point out that until recently much of the work done in the area of role expectations was based on the "assumption that consensus exists on the expectations applied to the incumbents of particular social positions."² In other words, ideas of appropriate behavior attached to particular social positions have been assumed to be uniform. Responsibility for the assumption of consensus lies at least partially with the holistic approach of social science in general, and with the much respected Lintonian model of role theory in particular, with its focus on the identification of uniform cultural patterns and regularities in social behaviors. Many writers however--Levinson, Preiss and Ehrlich, Gordon and Gross, Mason and McEachern among them--have made the point that the amount of agreement on the behavioral prescriptions of a position are open to empirical examination. And there are many research findings

¹Mead and Cooley were particularly responsible for the diffusion of that idea among social scientists. Mead, op. cit.; and Charles H. Cooley, Human Nature and the Social Order (New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1922).

²Gross, et al., op. cit., p. 21.

attesting to the variability of role expectations. For example, for the female role,¹ the policeman,² the social welfare client,³ the nurse,⁴ the sick person,⁵ the mental patient,⁶ the school superintendent,⁷ and the mother with a child in foster care as will be seen in the present study.

Gordon and Gross, et al., note that one consequence of reliance on the assumption of consensus has been that when empirically faced with its refutation the inclination among investigators has been to use deviance or pathology as explanations. The assumption that everyone holds similar expectations as to how any

¹Cf., Arnold M. Rose, "The Adequacy of Women's Expectations for Adult Roles," Social Forces, 30 (October, 1951), pp. 69-77; Mirra Kamarovsky, "Cultural Contradictions and Sex Roles," American Journal of Sociology, 52 (November, 1946), pp. 184-189; Talcott Parsons, "Age and Sex in the Social Structure of the United States," in his Essays in Sociological Theory (Revised edition; Glencoe: Free Press, 1954), pp. 89-103; Paul Wallin, "Cultural Contradictions and Sex Roles: A Repeat Study," American Sociological Review, 15 (April, 1950), pp. 288-293; Carol Slater, "Class Differences in Definition of Role and Membership in Voluntary Associations Among Urban Married Women," American Journal of Sociology, 65 (1960), pp. 616-619.

²Preiss and Ehrlich, op. cit.

³John E. Mayer and Noel Timms, The Client Speaks, Working Class Impressions of Casework (New York: Atherton Press, 1970).

⁴Cf., L. Reisman and J.J. Rohrer (eds.), Change and Dilemma in the Nursing Profession (New York: Putnam, 1957); C. Argyris, Human Relations in a Hospital (New Haven: Labor and Management Center, 1955); T. Burling, Edith Lentz and R.N. Wilson, The Give and Take in Hospitals (New York: Putnam, 1956).

⁵Cf., Gordon, op. cit.; Earl Lomon Koos, "Illness in Regionville," Sociological Studies of Health and Illness, ed. Dorian Apple (New York: McGraw Hill, 1960), pp. 9-14.

⁶M. Greenblatt, D.J. Levinson and R.H. Williams (eds.) The Patient and the Mental Hospital (Glencoe: Free Press, 1957).

⁷Gross, et al., op. cit.

particular role incumbent should act in a given situation, (including the role incumbent himself), could easily lead to the conclusion of pathology in variant cases. When the assumption of consensus is questioned, however, the possibility that such variation may be structurally related to the social system clearly presents itself. And one is led to ask, in what ways? What factors are related to variations in role expectations? Are some of those factors more important determinants of role expectations than others? That is actually the problem addressed in the present study.¹

There have been hundreds of studies in the field of role. These studies have focused on many types of roles and role phenomena. Occupational roles, for example, have been extensively explored (i.e., teachers, school superintendents, physicians, ministers, policemen). Deviant roles such as the juvenile delinquent, the drug addict, the alcoholic, the fool, have also been studied. Roles particularized by the specialized activity of the incumbent have been looked at (i.e., "group leader," "scapegoat"). Any major institutionalized roles such as sister and brother, husband and wife, have likewise received much investigation. In addition, the role perspective has been used in studies of large scale organizations

¹From the foregoing discussion it should be clear that this study will focus on the normative expectations attached to a particular position (or status) in the New York City foster care system. The position itself (that of a mother with a child in placement), is not actually the focus of the study, nor is the behavioral enactment of the role requirements attached to that position. Rather, it is the normative expectations themselves and social and psychological factors which relate to them, that is the central theme of this study.

(i.e., prisons, welfare departments), as well as in studies of small discussion or work groups (i.e., classrooms, juries).

The role we are focusing upon in the present study has components of some of the role types explored in the other studies described above, but conceptually is not exactly like any of them. First, the role of mother is being inspected in a deviant aspect from its major institutional identification. Since their children are in foster care the women studied are not performing a primary function defining their mother role. That is, they are not caring for their natural children themselves. Secondly, the role is specified in a delimited situational context; the mother talking with her agency caseworker. The study thereby focuses upon a dyadic work activity. But, as part of the foster care system that work activity takes place within the confines of a complex, bureaucratized, organizational structure.

The unique set of circumstances surrounding the role being studied appears to suit it well for the problem we are investigating. Variation in role expectations can indeed be expected to be reported by the study women, and therefore the identification of social and psychological factors related to variations in behavioral expectations should remain the primary focus of the study.

Variability can derive from a range of phenomena. Three sources are particularly noteworthy. (1) The particular role under consideration in this study is poorly defined with respect to the larger society in which it is placed. Abrogation of child care by a natural mother, for whatever reason, is universally considered deviant in the extreme. Clear-cut behavioral expectations for the role do not exist

in the larger society, (even legal rights and responsibilities are largely non-existent or ambiguous). With few guides available before actual entrance into the role, variability upon entrance can be expected to be high. (2) With entrance of their children into foster care the mothers become attached to a large, highly complex social system. The particular part (or parts) of the system to which they become attached will in all likelihood represent only a limited aspect of the whole, i.e., only one of at least three types of care, only one of three types of religious auspices, only one of many sizes of agencies. Variability in role expectations is indeed likely under such diverse circumstances of organizational structure. (3) All of the focal role incumbents occupy positions in social systems other than the one under consideration, (i.e., different socioeconomic and ethnic group membership). To the extent that they are diversely located in the larger societal structure incumbents potentially bring to the focal role different values, interests and attitudes which in turn potentially influence variation in perceptions of expectations attached to the focal role. In the following analysis each of these three areas and others, will be inspected.

Before beginning the description and analysis of the role expectations and the factors associated with them, further information about foster care would be useful. The next chapter deals with just that, "Foster Care Nationally and in New York City."

CHAPTER TWO

FOSTER CARE NATIONALLY AND IN NEW YORK CITY

What is foster care?

There exists in the United States today a large network of foster care services available to children whose own families cannot care for them. What is foster care? The idea of fostering refers to nurture or parental care and supervision given to a child by persons not related to him through blood or legal ties. As it exists as a service system offered to dependent, neglected or emotionally disturbed children in this country, foster care refers to care provided by public or licensed private child welfare agencies in institutional or congregate facilities, or in foster family boarding homes supervised by those child welfare agencies. The definition of foster care does not include the care given to the adopted child, the physically handicapped or mentally retarded child placed in a hospital setting, or the delinquent child remanded to a correctional institution. The social welfare service systems of which those cases are a part are economically, legally and administratively different from those of foster care.¹

Throughout the country some 320,000 children are living in foster care institutions or foster family homes supervised by

¹See Alfred Kadushin, Child Welfare Services (New York: Macmillan Co., 1967).

social agencies.¹ At the time the study sample was selected in New York City alone on any one day approximately 25,000 children were receiving such care.²

Parental rights and responsibilities

Children enter foster care placement because their parents cannot, or will not, fulfill their traditional role obligations to care for, guide and protect them.³ When a child is placed in a social agency, however, the parents are not thereby indefinitely relieved of the rights and burdens of parenthood. The agency obtains legal custody but not legal guardianship. Legal custody is generally transferred from the parents to the agency through parental consent or court order. It is widely held that the Due Process clause of the fourteenth Constitutional Amendment guarantees custody as a parental right.⁴ Parental consent or court order giving legal custody of the child to the placement agency is therefore generally obtained. As legal custodian the agency becomes accountable

¹Hannah M. Adams, Child Welfare Statistics, 1969 (Washington, D.C.: Department of Health, Education and Welfare, National Center for Social Statistics, 1969), Table 8.

²New York City Department of Social Services, Summary Analysis of Monthly Reports Submitted by Foster Care Agencies: Children Remaining in Care, December 31, 1966 (Mimeographed).

³Chapter Four includes a discussion of reasons for foster care placement.

⁴Patricia Garland Morisey, "Continuum of Parent-Child Relationship in Foster Care," Foster Care in Question: A National Re-assessment by Twenty-One Experts, ed. Helen D. Stone (New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1970), pp. 148-156.

for the child's ongoing care and is permitted to determine where and with whom the child shall live. The agency can move the child from one foster home to another, or from one institution to another, or can return him to the home of a parent or relative.

Although the placement agency has legal custody of the child the parent(s) retain legal guardianship, giving them rights and decision making powers in some crucial aspects of their placed child's life. "Only the parent can consent to surgery for the child, or consent to his marriage, or permit his enlistment in the armed forces, or represent him at law. Only with a change of guardianship (as in adoption) is the natural parents' tie to the child completely severed."¹ It is generally recognized that the parents also retain the right to reasonable visitation of the child, to information about him and to the determination of his religious affiliation.² Legally the parents also retain the responsibility to support the child, in the sense of meeting all or part of the costs of his care in accordance with their ability to do so. When the child's placement is governmentally subsidized, in whole or in part, he is considered to be in placement at public charge. In the present study, only a small number of the study group were able to contribute even a small sum toward the cost of their children's care and all of the children of the study group were in placement at

¹Alfred Kadushin (1967), op. cit., pp. 354-355.

²Patricia Garland Morisey, op. cit.

public charge.¹ To summarize then, even though their child is in foster care placement:

The parent retains the duty to support, the right to make far-reaching decisions such as consent to major medical treatment, adoption, marriage, or enlistment in the armed forces, power to represent the child, in legal action and to determine his religious affiliation. Further, he had the right to visitation and the duty to exercise this for the child's welfare, except as temporarily limited by the court.²

Professional, parental and community attitudes concerning these rights and responsibilities follow those just outlined above. In a recent foster care study which included the exploration of attitudes concerning natural parent and agency rights on the part of three groups: placement agency workers, foster parents and community residents. Martin Wolins found that all three groups studied felt that the agency had the right of legal custody of the child specifically in terms of child rearing, supervision and decision making authority, and felt that the natural parent has "the right of legal guardianship, the right to visit with his child and the right to be first in his child's affections."³

¹In New York City at the end of 1965 ninety five percent of the children in foster care were public charges. Bureau of Child Welfare, New York City Department of Welfare, Summary Analysis of Monthly Population Reports Submitted by Foster Care Agencies: December 31, 1965. (Mimeographed.)

²Child Welfare League of America, Standards for Foster Family Care Service (New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1959), p. 15.

³Martin Wolins, Selecting Foster Parents (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), pp. 18-22.

Placement agency rights and responsibilities

Along with the rights and responsibilities that are retained by the natural parents of placed children there exists also the expectation that the parent(s) work toward the eventual return of their child home.¹ The actual day-to-day care of the placed child is delegated by the responsible agency to institutional child care workers or to foster parents and a caseworker is assigned to each case with the general responsibility to plan for, and supervise, the care of the child and to work with the child's parents so that they may "more readily accept" the child's placement and so that they may work toward the return of the child home.² The foster care literature abounds with statements recognizing the placement agency's responsibility to help the parents in this regard. Ideally, "the natural parents are being helped [by the placement agencies] to make whatever changes are necessary to permit the child to return home."³ For example, the importance of adequately trained staff working with natural parents so that among other things, they may "open the door

¹In this respect the role we are considering is akin to the sick role as described by Talcott Parsons. According to Parsons one of the institutionalized expectations attached to the sick role is the obligation "to want to 'get well,'" and to work toward that goal. Both our mothers and sick persons are expected to work toward the amelioration of the factors placing them in their respective roles. However, other institutionalized expectations for the sick role mentioned by Parsons are not applicable to the role we are studying. For example, the exemption from social responsibilities and the obligation to seek technically competent help (e.g., a physician). Talcott Parsons, The Social System (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1951), pp. 436-437.

²Dorothy Zeitz, Child Welfare: Services and Perspectives, 2nd edition (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1969), p. 75.

³Alfred Kadushin (1967), op. cit., p. 413.

for return (of the placed children) to their own homes," is emphasized by Maas and Engler in their conclusions to an extensive study of foster care in this country.¹ And a Child Welfare League of America publication notes that among the services offered by the agency, casework with parents toward acceptance of the placement while it lasts and the eventual termination of it, are particularly important. "Casework with the parents should help them to allow the child to remain in (care) as long as necessary for his welfare, and at the same time...parents should be helped to work towards reassuming responsibility for making a home for the child when this is indicated..."² Further exploration of the natural parents' and the placement agency caseworkers' responsibilities developed in pursuit of those goals are important for the interests of the present study.

What actually does "casework with natural parents" involve? In two publications intended to specify standards for the profession, the Child Welfare League of America discusses casework with natural parents of placed children from the point of view of the responsibilities of professional caseworkers involved.³ With the overall purpose to give parents "continuing help so that they can maintain a relationship with their child...and prepare for his return to the family...",⁴ the CWLA standards state the many facets

¹Henry S. Maas and Richard E. Engler, Jr., Children in Need of Parents (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959), p. 392.

²Child Welfare League of America (1959), op. cit., p. 22.

³Ibid., pp. 13-14, 20-23; and Standards for Services of Child Welfare Institutions (New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1964), pp. 72-74.

⁴Ibid., (1964), p. 72.

of the caseworkers' responsibilities with reference to the parents. These include arranging regular interviews with the parents during which the child's progress and adjustment to placement are discussed, arranging parental visits to the child, helping with emotional and environmental problems of the parent(s) particularly as they bear upon their inability to carry out their parental responsibilities, and helping to prepare the parents for the eventual discharge of the child to his own home.

The caseworker should be responsible for continuing work with parents.

The caseworker should arrange for regular interviews with the parents during the period of placement.

The caseworker should discuss with the parents the child's needs, how he is developing, and how he is adjusting to (the placement experience)...

The caseworker should arrange with parents the frequency of visits and the scheduling of time in relation to children's needs, the parents' situation (and the agency's rules about visiting)...

The caseworker should provide help to parents with problems affecting their relationship with the child and their ability to carry parental responsibilities or establish a home...

Although services to parents are provided on behalf of the child, the caseworker must at the same time convey to parents that they are regarded as persons with rights and needs of their own, and with problems and anxieties with which they may need help. The caseworker should make available such help as they may need to deal more effectively with the environmental or emotional stress that has impaired parental functioning and contributed to the child's problems, and with the added conflict and stress that may arise in reaction to placement of the child.¹

Appropriate services should be made available to help parents with health, economic, marital, personality and

¹Ibid., (1964), pp. 72-73.

other (material and emotional) problems so that they can resume their parental responsibilities, and children need not remain unnecessarily in foster care.¹

There should be the continuous evaluation of the kind of help the parents need and can use, and referral to appropriate resources for service which is not offered by the agency.²

During the discussion of casework with parents in the two CWLA publications only one responsibility of the parents themselves in the casework relationship is explicitly stated, that of keeping the worker informed about any changes in their personal lives.

Parents should be expected to keep the social worker informed about what is happening in the family and the effects on the child, e.g., changes in marital status, new children in the family, how parents are getting along together without the child, experiences during their visits with the child, etc.³

Implicit, however, is the expectation that parents will work toward the discharge of the child from placement. The League standards state that particular expectation several times but do so in terms of caseworker assistance in that regard. "Parents should be helped to work toward reassuming responsibility for making a home for the child... The caseworker should help parents prepare for termination of placement..."⁴ "The caseworker should be

¹Child Welfare League of America (1959), op. cit., p. 21.

²Ibid., (1959), p. 20.

³Child Welfare League of America (1964), op. cit., p. 73.

⁴Child Welfare League of America (1959), op. cit., p. 22.

responsible for helping parents to plan for and be prepared for the child's...return home..."¹

The reality of casework service

This picture of the agency caseworker's responsibilities toward natural parents is very much an ideal formulation. More often than not caseworker services offered parents are minimal or nonexistent. In a nationwide study of foster care done in 1961 Helen Jeter found as many as one-third of the foster care cases they studied were receiving no purposeful, planned casework services.² And Henry Maas, referring to findings from the national study of foster care done by him and Richard Engler, commented on the paucity of casework services given to parents. "Agency relationships with most fathers and mothers of the children in care are such that, if parental conditions are to be modified, the process will have to be one of self-healing without the assistance of casework services."³

The general inadequacy of casework services available to natural parents can be attributed to many things. Agencies do not have enough trained staff to meet current needs in this regard and

¹Child Welfare League of America (1964), op. cit., p. 74; for a further discussion of the casework process in general, see: Florence Hollis, Casework, A Psychosocial Therapy (New York: Random House, 1964).

²Helen R. Jeter, Children, Problems and Services in Child Welfare Programs (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963), pp. 85-86.

³Henry Maas, "Highlights of the Foster Care Project: Introduction," Child Welfare, 38 (July, 1959), p. 5.

therefore caseloads per worker are high and there is a consequent lack of time to work with individual parents;¹ staff turnover is high and therefore continuity in casework is often jeopardized;² the diffuseness of the services the caseworker is expected to offer strains the resources of even the best trained and dedicated worker;³ since service is offered within an agency setting agency regulations and procedures have the potential to restrict effective

¹Draza Kline, "Service to Parents of Placed Children, Some Changing Problems and Goals," Changing Needs and Practices in Child Welfare, Seventy-fifth Anniversary Papers of the Illinois Children's Home and Aid Society (New York: Child Welfare League of America, 1960), p. 37. Also see Kadushin (1967), op. cit., p. 413; and Maas and Engler (1959), op. cit., p. 396. They later state, "Child welfare services are woefully inadequate...the best-trained social worker cannot give adequate care to a caseload of fifty to a hundred...Yet this is not an uncommon load in the majority of... agencies, in the United States."

²Tollen reports that for every four workers on an agency staff at the beginning of a year one will leave by the end of that year. William Tollen, Study of Staff Losses in Child Welfare and Family Service Agencies (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1960).

³W. Richard Scott, "Professional Employees in a Bureaucratic Structure: Social Work," The Semi-Professions and Their Organizations, (Glencoe: Free Press, 1969), pp. 82-140. While discussing relationships between social workers and clients in a public welfare agency, Scott notes the kind of difficulty that is also often encountered by foster care placement agency caseworkers, "Workers were not really specialists but were expected to deal with a large number of problem areas presented by clients. At various times, caseworkers found themselves assisting clients in such varied and complex areas as substandard housing, insufficient clothing, special diets, insurance, arranging for medical care, child-rearing, delinquency, marital adjustment, employment, mental illness, unwed motherhood, and so on...few human problems were automatically excluded from the social worker's care." Pp. 124-125.

service;¹ and finally, middle-class, educated, predominantly white caseworkers relating to lower class, poorly educated, predominantly minority group clients present striking differences in life styles and problem-solving outlooks,² again potentially restricting effective service.

¹Specifically with regard to child welfare social work Kadushin notes that workers face conflict between professional ideology and the needs of agency structure, "between the professional culture and bureaucratic needs... The worker desires to devote his energies to service and finds himself enmeshed in red tape...bureaucratic efficiency requires that the client be categorized (rather than individualized as per the professional commitment) ...Regulations and procedures restrict the professional exercise of autonomous judgment and decision.

The professional orientation emphasizes ends rather than means--offering the best possible service to the client, helping the client to solve his problems, and so on. The bureaucratic orientation emphasizes means rather than ends--offering the service in compliance with rules and regulations, following agency procedures and so on." Kadushin (1967), op. cit., p. 602. This is consistent with findings in studies of other professions. Amitai Etzioni has commented on the conflict between professional and organizational principles "arising from the fact that the authority of knowledge and the authority of administrative hierarchy are basically incompatible ...The ultimate justification for a professional act is that it is, to the best of the professional's knowledge, the right act...The ultimate justification of an administrative act, however, is that it is in line with the organization's rules and regulations, and that it has been approved--directly or by implication--by a superior rank." Amitai Etzioni, (ed.), The Semi-Professions and Their Organizations, op. cit., pp. viii-xii.

²Mayer and Timms in a study of client-caseworker relationships in England found clients "and their workers had different ways of thinking about and coping with personal problems. Specifically, the clients interviewed tended to view their problems as stemming from the other party (e.g., their spouses); moreover, they felt that they could only be solved if coercion were brought to bear on the culprit. The social workers, on the other hand, had a more sophisticated view of the causes involved and gave high priority to the therapeutic effects of self-awareness. In brief, the two parties had different cognitive orientations to problem-solving." John E. Mayer and Noel Timms, The Client Speaks, Working Class Impressions of Casework (New York: Atherton Press, 1970), p. 155.

Foster care in New York City

In New York City problems of this kind also restrict the delivery of casework services to natural parents. This is partially due to the same factors as exist nationwide, and may also be partially due to the particular structure of the New York City foster care system.¹

Section 398 of the New York State Social Services Law assigns to the local public welfare official the responsibility to "receive and care for," "assume charge of and provide support for" neglected, abandoned and destitute children within their territorial jurisdiction. In New York City that local public welfare official is the Commissioner of Social Services. While the Commissioner of Social Services retains primary responsibility the task of executing and carrying out that responsibility is delegated to the Director of the city's Bureau of Child Welfare.

Although children may enter placement as public charges in New York City from several referral sources the Bureau of Child Welfare and the Family Court are the central sources through which

¹The following description of the structure of the New York City foster care system is based on the following materials: Eugene B. Shinn, "The New York City System of Foster Care: A Descriptive Overview of Resources Serving the Child Through Age Twelve," (New York: Child Welfare Research Program, Columbia University School of Social Work, March 1970), (Mimeographed;) Policy Planning Council, City of New York, Office of the Mayor, Preliminary Report, Staff Study of Child Protective Services, October 15, 1970; (Mimeographed;) and Policy Planning Council, City of New York, Interagency Council on Child Welfare, Design Considerations for a Child Welfare Services Management Information System, May 20, 1971, (Mimeographed).

all such cases are processed.¹ Upon referral a study is made of the necessity or desirability of foster care placement. If the recommendations of this intake study include placement, the case, with all of the necessary information to identify the nature of the placement needed and other psychosocial characteristics of the child and his family, is sent to the allocation division of the BCW which has the job of locating a child care agency which can accept the child for care.

Most communities in the United States provide foster care services mainly through public child care facilities. There are, however, only five public child care agencies in New York City. The city is unique in that it purchases care for more than 87 percent of its placed children² from a network of approximately 70 independent, private child care agencies set up for that purpose in and around the city.³ The cooperative responsibilities of the public

¹The Family Court refers cases to BCW needing placement for such reasons as severe neglect and abuse of the child, antisocial acting out behavior of the child, and voluntary relinquishment of the child by his parents. Social agencies, psychiatrists, school guidance counselors and other community professionals also refer cases to BCW, as do friends, relatives and natural parents themselves.

²Interagency Council on Child Welfare, op. cit., p. 7. For comparison, the lowest figure in this regard is found in the state of Alabama which in 1967 purchased care from private agencies for only one-third of one percent of its placed children. The highest figure in this regard (next to New York City and State) belongs to the state of Pennsylvania which in 1967 purchased 33 percent of its needed placements from private agencies. Shinn, op. cit., p. 3.

³The Bureau of Child Welfare's own budget is used to meet the costs of care for children placed in the public child care facilities. Funds to purchase foster care services for New York City children from private agencies come from the New York City Charitable Institutions Budget. The appropriations for that budget for 1965-1966 amounted to close to 70 million dollars. Shinn, op. cit., p. 3.

administrative agencies (e.g., BCW, Family Court) and the private, voluntary foster care placement agencies is formalized in a written agreement which spells out their respective responsibilities.

"Within the context of this agreement, the public administrative agencies, BCW and the Court, are responsible for completing the intake study and locating a child care agency that can accept the child for care, the private agencies, typically assume major responsibility for the custodial care or treatment of the child, casework services, (including services to natural families), and discharge planning."¹

Delivery of service to parents is hampered by many conditions with which both the private and the public New York City placement agencies are grappling today. Some of those conditions are enumerated in an analysis of interviews conducted with New York City placement agency executives by the Columbia University Child Welfare Research Program during the months of June to September 1965.² All of the interviewed agency executives agreed that the agencies were committed to "provide casework services to parents and relatives in order to strengthen family relationships, to rehabilitate the family, and to facilitate return of the child to his family at the earliest possible

¹Shinn, op. cit., p. 7. Another unique characteristic of the New York City foster care system, that of the strong religious affiliation of the majority of the private placement agencies, is discussed in Chapter Four; also discussed in that chapter are the various kinds or types of placements available to New York City children.

²Frances Kroll, Perspectives on Foster Care for New York City (New York: Child Welfare Research Program, Center for Research and Demonstration, Columbia University School of Social Work, June 1967).

time."¹ It was quite evident to all, however, that practice lagged behind those expressed goals. The major reasons advanced for this were the depth and breadth of the problems these parents faced, and the shortage of trained social workers to help them.

The question was often raised by the executives as to whether anything short of large-scale community programs and basic social and economic changes could serve the great needs of the parent group. "Especially for the agencies primarily serving minority groups, the problem (appeared) to be not merely how to work more adequately with the families of children in placement, but how to help rehabilitate a whole sector of the community where great personal and social inequities had led to many instances of parental failure and family breakdowns."² Generally, the executives felt impotent with regard to effecting change for these families through agency casework. The problems and the people did not "respond to the conventional casework approach" which was all most had to offer at this time.

The shortage in the field of social work of professionally trained social workers is felt by New York City child care agencies. Child welfare work was described by the executives as "demanding," "arduous," and "lacking in glamour." Salaries and personnel fringe benefits are not competitive even within the field of social work. Staffing in New York City presents a special problem because of the very many social work employment opportunities available in other fields than foster care. And the budgets of placement

¹Ibid., p. 41.

²Ibid.

agencies are quite lean. As a consequence the foster care agencies continually have chronic staff shortages, and caseworkers generally have to carry exceedingly large caseloads. To alleviate some of this shortage many agencies hire college graduates without formal graduate school training in casework and utilize in-service, on-the-job training programs to orient them. As many as half of the caseworkers in some placement agencies are of this type.

Conditions such as these gave one researcher recently studying the New York City foster care system the following impression, (formed after reviewing available literature, making field observations, and talking to key informants):

The picture which emerges is that of a complex, heavily bureaucratized network of agencies manned by untrained or partially trained staff, beset by constantly increasing demands for the limited resources to which they had access, usually coming from clients of limited education, living in strained family situations, often on inadequate welfare allotments, and escaping the pressures of their lives through mental illness, temporary or permanent desertions, alcohol, or drugs.¹

This chapter has attempted to introduce the reader to some aspects of foster care placement particularly as they relate to the casework relationship between the natural parents of placed children and placement agency caseworkers. The generally accepted rights and responsibilities of the two participants in that relationship were described. Emphasis was then placed on the difficulties the placement agencies and their caseworkers have to contend

¹Deborah Shapiro, "Agency Investment and Consequences for Clients: The First Year of Placement," (New York: Child Welfare Research Program, Columbia University School of Social Work, September, 1970), p. 9. (Mimeographed.)

with in the delivery of service to the natural parents of the children they are caring for. With this background in mind we now turn to the focus of this study, a consideration of some correlates of the role expectations the natural mothers perceive exist in the caseworker-parent relationship.

CHAPTER THREE

THE ROLE EXPECTATIONS

This study is basically interested in isolating and ranking in importance some of the crucial determinants of perceived role expectations. The data essential to a study of this kind include: (1) the role expectations noted by incumbents of the focal role under consideration, (2) the variables thought to be influential correlates of those perceived expectations, and (3) some measures of the relationship between the two. The following four chapters will present that information.

This chapter will give an overview of the role expectations as reported by the study sample. It will note how they were obtained, will give qualitative illustrations of their meaning, and will report the frequency with which they were mentioned, and will report the frequency with which they were mentioned. Following chapters will present the variables considered to be important correlates of the perceived role expectations and will report the study findings concerning the relationship between those variables and the reported expectations.

The role expectations

As noted in Chapter One two series of questions intended to elicit role expectations were included in the interview with the study mothers. One group of questions asked about the ways of behaving the study mothers felt were expected of them (by their role partners) when they were together with foster care administrative agency caseworkers, as follows:

During a face-to-face talk (visit) with the agency caseworker, how do you think she expects you to behave (act)? What things would she expect you to do or say? What things would she expect you not to do or say?"

The other group of questions asked about the ways of behaving the mothers expected of themselves in such circumstances, as follows:

How do you yourself feel you should behave (act) in a talk (visit) with an agency caseworker? What things do you feel you should do or say? What things do you feel you should not do or say?

Research studies have utilized various methods of obtaining data on behavioral expectations other than the open type of interview questions used in this study. In an attempt to derive the role expectations of Mexican and American students Nall utilized responses to constructed stories.¹ Wispe used lists of items

¹F.C. Nall II, "Role Expectations: A Cross-Cultural Study," Rural Sociology, 27 (1962), pp. 28-41.

reflecting desirable traits to ascertain expectations for insurance salesmen.¹ Forty-three statements describing the type of behavior expected of ministers was used in a study by Bentz.² Role playing and sentence completion helped Thomas, Polansky and Kounin derive data on the expected behavior of persons in the helping professions.³ Sarbin and Jones used a 200 word adjective checklist to note those qualities that characterized a daughter in contemporary American society.⁴ And Sherwood obtained his data about the role requirements for Bantu clerks from essays on the topic she asked them to write.⁵

¹L.G.A. Wispe, "A Sociometric Analysis of Conflicting Role-Expectations," American Journal of Sociology, 61 (1955), pp. 134-137.

²W. Kenneth Bentz, "Consensus Between Role Expectations and Role Behaviors," Community Mental Health Journal, 4 (August, 1968), pp. 301-306.

³Edwin Thomas, Norman Polansky and Jacob Kounin, "The Expected Behavior of a Potentially Helpful Person," Human Relations, 8 (1955), pp. 165-174.

⁴Theodor R. Sarbin and D. Jones, "An Experimental Analysis of Role Behavior," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 51 (1956), pp. 236-241.

⁵Rae Sherwood, "The Bantu Clerk: A Study of Role Expectations," Journal of Social Psychology, 47 (1958), pp. 285-316.

Given the survey interviewing situation of the present study, questioning the mothers directly was considered preferable to any of those methods. Role playing was impossible and essay writing was impractical. Constructed stories, checklists of traits, adjectives or statements based on an outsiders a priori inferences as to expected role behavior seemed less likely to produce as complete and meaningful data as would reliance on respondents' unstructured expression of ideas, feelings and perceptions on the subject. This, matched with the fact that the person-to-person interviewing context allowed for follow up and probing by interviewers in order to clarify ambiguous or unclear statements, argued in favor of direct open type questioning.

The responses to the questions concerning how to, or not to, act in face-to-face contacts with caseworkers were grouped by the author into five broad, but consistent, categories developed on an ad hoc basis after reading and studying every interview. All five categories were mutually exclusive in the sense that each was a complete, exclusively defined entity onto itself, conceptualized and refined so that any one answer to the role questions fit into one and only one of the categories. However, since mothers gave multiple replies to the role questions the different replies of any one mother could fit into several expectation categories. The expectations were titled for convenience in the following manner:

1. Be undisguised,
2. Be controlled,
3. Be formal,
4. Be acquiescent, and
5. Display concern for the child.¹

Be undisguised. This expectation was made up of several dimensions, each conveying a sense of obligation to be undefended, overt, expressive, unconcealed and comprehensive about events, experiences and conscious emotional feelings. Since the mothers' relationships with the workers differed, the content and direction of the verbalizations of this expectation sometimes differed but the same essential umbrella meaning was conveyed.

The expectation was sometimes phrased simply as a requirement to be honest and frank. The mothers made such statements as: "I should not tell lies or be dishonest." "I should tell the truth." "Don't pretend." "Be honest, truthful, don't hide or deliberately lie." "Don't color anything for them." "Be frank." At other times the expectation was stated as a requirement to be "natural," "normal," "relaxed." "The same as I do any other time."

Most often however, the expectation was expressed in terms of an obligation to be candid and open. In a talk with the agency caseworkers the mothers felt they should: "Say whatever comes to my mind." "Tell her everything." "Sometimes you say what you do not want to say and that's what they want to hear." "I should say what I feel." "Not be afraid to express feelings." "Get excited,

¹As will presently be explained two other persons subsequently judged this categorization.

scream." "Talk freely." "Not hold back." "Talk about things that annoy me." "Talk about intimacies." "Talk about myself, my husband, my drinking." "Talk about my doubts." "Talk about my husband's cruelty."

Be controlled. Here the mothers conveyed the impression that in their relationship with the workers they felt obliged to hold back the verbal and active expression of feelings, particularly angry and hostile feelings, and to exclude a wide range of topics from conversation. They considered themselves obliged to be controlled, censoring, reined.

About half of the time the mothers phrased this general expectation as a requirement to contain anger, hostility, disruptive behavior and foul language in the presence of the worker. They made statements noting that they should: "Not get excited or upset." "Not be angry." "Not act up or make a scene." "Get hold of myself, control myself." "Not show anger or curse her." "Not create unpleasant scenes." "Not yell or raise my voice." "Don't use foul language." "Not act violent." "Not hit them." "Not put her through a wall."

The other half of the time the mothers phrased the obligation for control in terms of excluding subjects to talk about, particularly covering themselves or their feelings. With the caseworker they commented they should: "Not tell her my personal problems." "Not involve them in things that are personal like my husband." "Not tell them private things." "Not trouble her about my own problems." "Don't tell anything confidential." "Not complain about

foster mother." "Not talk against the foster mother." Not say the bad part, show everything is good."

Be formal. This general expectation conveys a requirement to behave in a reserved, distant, and polite manner. It includes the idea of courteousness and good manners with limited involvement. The mother's statements regarding this expectation were as follows. They said they should: "Be nice and polite." "Behave well." "Not be rude." "Be polite and formal." "Be well-mannered." "Be polite." "Treat her cordially." "Be reserved." "Behave properly." "Act like a lady." "Be friendly." "Act courteous, well-mannered."

Be acquiescent. Acceptance of the worker's decisions with regard to themselves and their children, and cooperating with the workers by giving all requested information, and by not pressing for discharge of child or more frequent visits with child, conveys the concrete meaning of this expectation. Statements such as the following appeared. One should: "Not run their business." "Accept what they say." "Listen to her." "Not interfere in their plans." "Don't interfere with her authority." "Work with them, not tell them what to do." "Be cooperative." "Answer all their questions." "Tell whatever I know." "Give necessary information." "Not to push for unrealistic action." "Not to pressure to get child back." "Not ask for extra visiting hours." "Have patience."

Display concern for child. The fifth general expectation conveyed the obligation felt by the mothers to show the workers that they were concerned about their children, to indicate interest in their children in some way, whether it be by asking about how they are getting along, their health, schoolwork, friends, behavior, by

pressing for frequent visits, or by showing affection directly to the child.

In this context, the following statements were made. (I should) "Be an interested mother." "Be concerned about the kids." "Ask how the children are doing, getting along." "Talk about child's progress." "Ask how he behaves." "Talk about child's problems, school, health." "Ask to take children home." "Say I'm taking child." "Be eager to get child back." "Let them know you want your children." "Visit regularly." "Ask to visit child." "Promise to visit child." "Hold the baby." "Show love to the boy." "Show affection for the child."

Coding the expectations

Three judges participated in coding the expectations from the mothers' answers to the pertinent questions. Every case was coded twice. One judge (the present author) developed the code after reading and studying every interview, constructed a detailed description of each expectation category, and coded every interview. Two other judges each repeat coded one-half of the interviews basing their decisions on the detailed category descriptions supplied to them. The results of the double coding on each case were compared and where a difference occurred the third judge (the one who had not normally participated in coding that particular case) was consulted and after discussion between all three judges the third made the decision as to the final coding to be utilized. Differences occurred between two judges in the coding of fourteen percent of the expectations. Judge III resolved the issue by

deciding as Judge I had done 52 percent of the time, and as Judge II had done 48 percent of the time.¹ Such figures seem to indicate no notable biasing of the final data through the influence of the personal viewpoint of any one of the judges.

The expectations--basic frequencies

It has previously been explained that the mothers were asked about their own image of role appropriate behavior, and about the picture they had of the caseworkers' image of role appropriate behavior for them. Taken separately the replies can be viewed as ego (mother) and alter (caseworker) expectations, respectively, seen from the perspective of ego's (mother's) focal position. Taken together they constitute the role expectations existing in the situation from the mother's perspective.

Combining alter and ego expectations and analyzing them as the expectational field existing in the situation from the mothers' point of view would seem to be a legitimate undertaking. Only the mothers in their focal position as role incumbents were asked to relate expectations for the focal role. They did so for both themselves and their role partners (the caseworkers). Data was not collected from the caseworkers at all. Since it was the role incumbents themselves who related both the ego and alter expectations, the combination of both can be seen to represent their definition of the situation (at least as far as role expectations are concerned).

¹Table A-1 in the Appendix indicates the number and direction of changes in the coding of the five role expectations.

In this sense the meaning of the situation to the role incumbents, their system of orientation to it, can be seen to include all expectations they perceive as existing in the situation, whether those expectations are viewed as held by themselves, by their role partners, or both.

This chapter, and the following two, will be concerned with role expectations from the situational perspective. Chapter Six will discuss separately the expectations the mothers felt the caseworker (as alter) held for them when they were together, and those the mothers (as ego) held for themselves.¹

Table III-1 below indicates the percent of mothers mentioning each of the expectations as present in the situation when they are together with the caseworker.

TABLE III-1
EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT
TO THEM IN TALK WITH CASEWORKER

	Percent of Mothers Mentioning (N=128)
Undisguised	73
Controlled	55
Concerned	50
Formal	29
Acquiescent	29

¹In addition, Tables A-II through A-VI in the Appendix indicate the relationships between alter and ego expectations and the twelve correlate variables included in the study. These were relegated to the Appendix rather than placed in the main text for two reasons. A situational perspective was considered more appropriate for an analysis of the social and psychological correlates of perceived role expectations; and the number of women who mentioned the expectations for themselves only, or for the caseworker only, was relatively small, making alter and ego comparisons with respect to the correlate variables difficult.

In a face-to-face talk with the caseworker the role expectation most frequently mentioned by the mothers was "to be undisguised." About three-quarters of the mothers mentioned that expectation for that situation. The second and third most frequently mentioned expectations, each noted by about half of the mothers, was "to be controlled," and "to display concern for the child." Somewhat less than one-third of the women mentioned formality and the same proportion saw "to acquiesce to the caseworker" as expectations.

Total number of expectations mentioned

When asked how they were expected to act with the caseworkers, the replies of the individual mothers tended to be a series of rephrasings of the same general expectation. As a consequence, the average number of expectations mentioned was 2.3. Eighteen percent of the mothers noted only one expectation, 37 percent noted two, another 37 percent noted three, seven percent mentioned four, and one mother mentioned all five role obligations. Most, three-quarters, of the mothers, therefore, mentioned either two or three expectations.

Pairs of expectations mentioned

Since the greater number of mothers mentioned two or more expectations apiece the frequencies with which any pair of expectations were mentioned together is of interest. Table III-2 below

indicates the percent of mothers noting each of the possible pairs of expectations.

TABLE III-2
PAIRS OF EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM
IN TALK WITH CASEWORKER

Expectation Pair	Percent of Mothers Mentioning Pair (N=128)
Undisguised and controlled	43
Undisguised and concerned	34
Controlled and concerned	26
Undisguised and acquiescent	19
Undisguised and formal	18
Controlled and formal	17
Controlled and acquiescent	13
Concerned and acquiescent	13
Concerned and formal	11
Formal and acquiescent	7

Some pairs were mentioned by a relatively large proportion of the women. The most frequently mentioned pair of expectations was "to be undisguised" and "to be controlled." It was noted by 43 percent of the women.¹ When one remembers that undisguised was mentioned by 73 percent of the mothers and controlled by 55 percent, it is not surprising to find that large a percentage mentioning both. The second most often mentioned pair of role obligations was "to be undisguised" and "to display concern for the

¹As noted previously the seeming contradiction implied in this pairing will be discussed in Chapter Six.

child," mentioned together by 34 percent of the women and separately by 73 percent and 50 percent of the mothers respectively.

A further discussion of pairs of expectations will be presented in Chapter Six. The following two chapters will consider the individual role expectations in the light of related variables.

CHAPTER FOUR
SOME RELATED VARIABLES

Many variables can be considered to be important determinants of the expectations reported by role incumbents to be attached to any particular focal role. The perception is influenced both by messages sent by role partners, and those received by role incumbents, as well as the properties of the situation in which the role interaction takes place. An attempt was made in this study to cover as many potential influences as possible. The following seven areas were considered. Each included several variables as indicators.

1. Orientational (background) aspects of the focal role,
2. Organizational aspects of the system of which the focal role was a part,
3. Interactional aspects of the role relationship,
4. Positions occupied in other systems by the incumbent of the focal role,
5. Commitment of the incumbent to the focal role,
6. Motivation of the incumbent for role incumbency,
7. Evaluation of the incumbent of the performance of the system.

Each of these areas will be discussed in turn below. The relationship among them will be considered in Chapter Five.

Orientational Aspects of the Focal Role

In looking at factors relating to perceived role expectations two variables which provide an orientation to, or background for, the role relationship being analyzed, seem particularly relevant as starting points. These are, first, the length of time the role incumbent has been involved with the role, and second, the path by which the role incumbent became attached to the role. The indicator utilized for the first variable was simply the number of months the children of the sample mothers had been in foster care placement at the time of the study interview. The indicator utilized for the second variable was the primary reason the child was originally placed in foster care.

Number of months since child placed

On the day her child entered foster care each of the women in the study became incumbents of the role presently being considered. One might hypothesize that the amount of time a role has been occupied should influence the expectations incumbents perceive as being attached to that role. The underlying idea being that a developmental role learning process goes on over time. Lewis Yablonsky has dubbed that role learning process the "role warm-up," describing its basics in the following terms:

A person in an interaction situation doesn't commence to individuate his role in the same manner as one would start an automobile engine by turning on the ignition. The perceptual field of the situation and the group involved must begin to develop some meaning in the immediate purview of the actorial role involved.¹

¹Lewis Yablonsky, "An Operational Theory of Roles," Sociometry, 16 (1953), p. 351.

Table IV-1 below shows the data from the present study relating to the relationship between duration of role occupancy and perceived role expectations. The table includes the following: (1) the mean average number of months since the placement occurred for the total sample, and for those mentioning each expectation and those not doing so, (2) the variance for the mentioners and the non-mentioners of each expectation,¹ and (3) the results of a t-test comparing the mentioners of each expectation with those not mentioning it.² It should be apparent that the table is actually a compilation of five separate tables.³

The children of some of the study mothers had been in placement as few as 24 months and others as long as 41 months at the time the interviews took place. The child of the average mother entered placement 31.28 months prior to the interview. That average mother, therefore, had been an incumbent of the focal role for approximately two years and seven months.

Mentioners and non-mentioners of the five expectations being considered differed only slightly, and in no instance statistically significantly, from each other. Only in the case of seeing or not

¹F-ratios were computed in order to determine whether the variances for the mentioners and non-mentioners of each expectation differed significantly. This was done so as to more precisely interpret t-test results. There is an assumption behind the use of the t-test that the two groups being compared have equal variances. If the F ratio results proved the variances under consideration to be significantly different then interpretation of the t-test results would be difficult. In Table IV-1 and all subsequent similar tables only one value of F was significant at even the .10 level. That one instance is later discussed in the text.

²The significance test probability is shown if it was at, or below, the 0.10 level.

³Tables IV-3 through IV-5, and IV-7 through IV-14 which follow are each also a compilation of five separate tables.

seeing formality as an expectation was there even a difference worth noting, and that difference was equivalent to only approximately three weeks of time. These data seem to indicate that length of time these mothers had been involved with the focal role had little, if any, effect on the expectations they saw to be associated with it.

The possibility exists, however, that rather than interpreting these data to indicate that the amount of time a role has been occupied does not influence the expectations incumbents perceive as being attached to that role, one can reflect upon the possibility that there is some peak time in learning role expectations after which little or no additional learning takes place. In the case of our sample two years could possibly represent that time peak. To use Yablonsky's concept, "the role warm-up" for our sample could have been completed prior to the time period studied in this research.¹

Primary reason for placement of child

The circumstances surrounding the assumption of a role can play an important part in determining an incumbent's view of the expectations attached to that role. The path by which the children of the study mothers entered placement, or more precisely the central reason compelling the placement, is the variable which most clearly indicates that relevant situation as it existed for these women at the time they assumed the focal role.

As part of the larger Family Welfare Research Program information concerning the main reason the child entered foster care was gathered from several sources: the New York City Bureau of Child

¹Data on role expectations was only collected after 2½ years of placement had elapsed. Comparative data for placements of shorter duration were therefore not available.

TABLE IV-1

EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY NUMBER OF MONTHS SINCE PLACEMENT

Number of Months Since Placement				
	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>t-test</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	(128)	31.28		
Undisguised mentioned	(94)	31.25	11.348	-0.196 ^{NS}
Undisguised not mentioned	(34)	31.38	14.971	
Controlled mentioned	(70)	31.21	11.591	
Controlled not mentioned	(58)	31.36	13.147	-0.237 ^{NS}
Concerned mentioned	(64)	31.08	10.708	
Concerned not mentioned	(64)	31.48	13.809	-0.656 ^{NS}
Formal mentioned	(37)	30.78	11.341	
Formal not mentioned	(91)	31.48	12.541	-1.028 ^{NS}
Acquiescent mentioned	(37)	31.49	14.701	
Acquiescent not mentioned	(91)	31.20	11.316	0.422 ^{NS}

NS
p > 0.10

Welfare and the Family Court case records for the sample cases,¹ the mothers' statements in response to direct questions during the present study interviews, and the study interviewers' judgments made after a two to three hour discussion with the mothers of the factors surrounding the placement.

After a review of these sources two judges from the research staff made separate designations of the main reason for placement on each case. If the two judges disagreed, the opinion of a third was obtained and a final decision was made by mutual agreement after discussion by all three judges. Although multi-problem situations led to placement in almost all families, the main reason for placement delineated for each case was the factor which appeared to the study staff to be most critical to the actual placement.

Five categories of reasons were isolated for the present thesis: (1) mental illness of the child-caring person, (2) the placed child's own behavioral or emotional problems, (3) inadequacy of child care, (4) abdication of the caring role, and (5) physical illness of the child-caring person. A description of each of the five reasons is presented below.²

¹As was noted in Chapter Two the Bureau of Child Welfare and the Family Court shoulder intake and allocation responsibilities. Their case records usually report in some detail the reason each child enters care.

²Somewhat different reason for placement categorization schemes can be found in: Shirley Jenkins and Mignon Sauber, Paths to Child Placement, Family Situations Prior to Foster Care (New York: Community Council of Greater New York, 1966), and in Shirley Jenkins and Elaine Norman, "Families of Children in Foster Care," Children, XVI (July-August, 1969), pp. 155-159.

Mental illness. Those cases for which mental illness was judged to be the main reason for placement included several situations. The most frequent involved an occurrence in which the mother was hospitalized for mental illness, often as a result of a precipitant incident which indicated that she was a danger to herself or to someone else. As an example, in one case the mother indicated the child was placed because of:¹

My emotional illness. I started going to the clinic because I had headaches, I was depressed. I wanted to be alone. I couldn't do anything. I would go out. Then the welfare strike happened. I was desperate for help but everyone was out. I cut my veins because I didn't know what to do.

The main reason for placement was judged to be mental illness in some cases where hospitalization did not occur. In such cases, there was a clear indication that the mother's emotional and mental faculties had deteriorated to the point that she could not cope with child care any longer. A mother, for example, noted that placement had occurred because of:

Myself being sick. During the last five years I started to go down and down mentally. I lost all interest. I didn't care about anything anymore.

Child behavior. When the main reason for placement was judged to be child behavior, situations existed which indicated personality disturbances, acting out and antisocial behavior on the part of the placed child himself. Cases of stealing, truancy, deviant sexual behavior, and personality disturbances on the part of the

¹This and all following reason for placement quotations were included in responses to the question, "Would you tell me in your own words what brought about the placement of (child's name) away from home in foster care?" In all quoted cases the research judges agreed with the mother's assessment of the main placement reason.

children were included. Professional diagnosis of the child's mental health had been obtained prior to placement in most cases. In some, no professional diagnosis had been obtained, but the child's unusual behavior had induced his parents to seek help through foster care placement.

One mother described the conditions leading to placement in the following manner:

She (the child) gave me a lot of problems. It's so embarrassing even to talk about it. She's only ten, but she got involved with older boys and was having homosexual relations with girls. I decided to place her because she used to try sexual relations with her own brothers and sisters.

Another mother described the cause of her son's placement as:

He could not get along in society at all. It was as if he had no moral code at all. He had once said he never was going to trust anyone at all. That he was going to live as he pleased. He was so pathetically lost.

And a third mother related her child was placed because:

He was disturbed--that's all. He tore clothes up, tore his bed up, laughed to himself, talked to himself.

Inadequate performance of the caring role. This category included cases where the placed child was grossly neglected or abused and cases of marked incompetence on the part of the caring person. In almost all such cases neighborhood complainants, The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, the police or the courts were the initiators of the placement. Almost always, when gross neglect or physical abuse of the child was involved, the mother denied blame, attempting to shift the responsibility onto some other person or to rationalize the necessity of her actions. The following are illustrative examples:

(The child entered foster care because of) the bad treatment she was getting by the man I was living with. This man had been bothering my children for three months.

She (the child) was playing hookey from school, staying out at night. I whipped her and sent her to school. They (the authorities) felt I had punished her too severely and they decided that she should be away from me.

(The children were placed) because I left them alone. The investigator don't try to understand girls like me. It is very hard to be in the house all the time. I am only 22 years old. I want some fun.

Placement involving incompetence included instances of parental drug addiction, alcoholism and criminal activity. Several mothers admitted their children were placed because "I was a drug addict," or because "I drank too much." Other children entered foster care because their parent or parents were arrested. One mother stated her child was placed because "I was put in jail. I don't remember exactly why but a few years ago I became a prostitute." And another mother referring to both herself and the child's father noted that placement had occurred because, "We were arrested. We had made a bad check to pay for a TV, but we had no funds in the bank."

Abdication of the caring role. This category included three types of situations all of which involved a total abdication of the caring role on the part of the mother. One such situation included women who had borne out-of-wedlock children they could not, or would not, assume caring for at the time of the birth. However, these children entered long-term foster care rather than being surrendered for adoption either because the mothers hoped to eventually be able to care for them, or because the social agency involved dissuaded the mother from adoption because for various reasons they considered the child unadoptable.

A second type of situation in this abdication of care category included women whose children were placed because of abandonment or desertion--generally by the mother but in some cases by the father forcing the mother into the dual role of child carer and child supporter with which she could not cope. A third situation in this category referred to placement of the children of women who due to other circumstances found themselves unable to continue the caring role.

By way of illustration, mothers whose children had been born out-of-wedlock and who did not want to assume the responsibility for their care stated such things as, "From the moment he was conceived, I didn't want him." Cases of desertion mostly involved the abandonment of the home by the mother. Almost always the mother avoided admitting that her absence had precipitated the placement. When asked what the main reason for placement was, one such mother, for instance replied, "I really don't know. Maybe because I wasn't there and maybe they thought I wasn't coming back."

In other cases where the placement reason was judged to be abdication of role, mothers found themselves unable to continue caring for their children. Examples include a sixteen year old unwed mother who had cared for her child for six months after he was born but felt it necessary to put the child in foster care because, "I wanted to go back to school and there was no one to help care for him." Past experience had made another mother fearful of attempting to continue caring for a physically ill child:

(The child) was sick. She had some respiratory infection. I was afraid for her. I had a child in 1963 who had a similar illness and she died. It was too much for me to care for my other children and the sick baby.

And finally, another mother found herself overwhelmed by circumstances and placed her children because, "I was evicted. I didn't have a place to live and my husband was in jail."

Physical illness. When the main reason for placement was judged to be physical illness this related to the physical incapacity of the mother to care for the child. In most cases, she was hospitalized, in some she remained at home but could not physically handle child care. Illnesses ranged from debilitating verrucose veins to tuberculosis.

As the table below indicates, except for physical illness which accounted for only seven percent of the study cases, each reason for placement described the path into foster care followed by the children of between one-fifth to one-quarter of the mothers.¹

TABLE IV-2
MAIN REASON FOR PLACEMENT

	Percent Distribution (N=128)
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>100</u>
Mental illness	25
Child behavior	23
Inadequate care	23
Abdication of role	22
Physical illness	7

¹In a previous study of foster care placement in New York City completed in 1963 it was also found that only seven percent of cases remaining in care two years or more had originally been placed for the reason of physical illness of the child caring person. Shirley Jenkins, "Duration of Foster Care: Some Relevant Antecedent Variables," Child Welfare, 66 (October, 1967), pp. 450-455.

TABLE IV-3

EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY REASON FOR PLACEMENT OF CHILD

	Percent Distribution				
	<u>Reason for Placement</u>				
	Mental Illness (N=31)	Child Behavior (N=30)	Physical Illness (N=9)	Abdication of Role (N=28)	Inadequate Care (N=30)
UNDISGUISED					
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	71	83	67	69	73
Not mentioned	29	17	33	31	27
$X^2 =$			2.262		
df =			4		
P =			NS		
CONTROLLED					
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	45	40	78	57	70
Not mentioned	55	60	22	43	30
$X^2 =$			8.590		
df =			4		
P =			0.073		
CONCERNED					
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	48	43	56	50	57
Not mentioned	52	57	44	50	43
$X^2 =$			1.210		
df =			4		
P =			NS		
FORMAL					
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	42	13	22	36	27
Not mentioned	58	87	78	64	73
$X^2 =$			7.001		
df =			4		
P =			NS		
ACQUIESCENT					
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	26	27	22	39	27
Not mentioned	74	73	78	61	73
$X^2 =$			1.955		
df =			4		
P =			NS		

NS P > 0.10

The basic problem we have set for this thesis concerns the relationship between certain selected variables and perceived role expectations. Some relationship was found to exist between reason for placement and expectations mentioned by mothers as being relevant to themselves when with the placement agency caseworker. As Table IV-3 below shows, that association, however, was not very strong.

For each of the five role expectations the table indicates the percentage of mothers with children placed for each of the relevant placement reasons who did, and who did not, mention that expectation. Table IV-3 is, therefore, actually a compilation of five separate tables and includes the results of a chi-square significance test for each of its separate parts.¹

Women whose children entered foster care because of the children emotional or behavioral problems were more likely to perceive being undisguised as a role expectation than women whose children entered for any other reason.

Control was viewed as a role expectation considerably more frequently among women with children placed because of physical illness or inadequate care. This result is statistically significant ($P=0.07$), and for inadequate care at least, quite understandable. Such cases usually involved removal of the child from his home by an authority because of neglect, abuse or adult incompetence. The

¹All subsequent similar tables contain the same type of information. Some future tables of this type reduce to cross tabulations of two dichotomous variables. Whenever this occurred a continuity correction was included in the chi-square significance test so as to reduce the effect on each test of the small number of cells and the existence of only one degree of freedom in the table.

defensiveness implicit in the role expectation "control," seems a logical outgrowth of that kind of situation.

No one reason for placement was particularly associated with the mention of concern as an expectation. This was not the case, however, with the expectation formality. Women whose mental illness or abdication of role necessitated the placement of their children mentioned formality considerably more often than women with children entering foster care for any other reason.

It will subsequently be seen that formality was an expectation overwhelmingly mentioned by Puerto Rican women (Table IV-10) and that the children of Puerto Rican women entered placement due to the mental illness of their mother in unusually large numbers (Table V-8). These two facts make the association between mental illness as a reason for placement, and formality as a role expectation, clearer.

Finally, there was a noteworthy relationship between seeing acquiescence as an expected behavior with the agency caseworker and having one's child placed because of parental abdication of the child caring role.

The collected data seem to indicate that the two orientational variables we have just inspected have only a limited relationship to perceived role expectations. In the case of the first variable, duration of role occupancy, no association at all was found between it and the expectations incumbents saw attached to the focal role. This may have been due to the fact that all respondents had been role incumbents for at least two years, a time period of sufficient length to level initial differences that may have existed during the early role learning, or "role warm-up," period. In the case of the

second orientational variable, reason for placement of the child, some association with perceived role expectations was found. A relationship between the placement reason "inadequate care" and the role expectation "control" was explained in terms of a reaction of defensiveness on the part of the role incumbents at having an authority remove their child from the home for reasons of adult inadequacy. And the relationship between the placement reason "mental illness of the child caring person" and the role expectation "formality" was explained by reference to their mutual relationship to the ethnic group of the role incumbents.

Organizational Aspects of Placement Agencies

There are at least three aspects of the organizational arrangements institutionalized as part of the New York City foster care system which are particularly relevant when considering determinants of role expectations. These include the particular type of placement in which the placed child is being cared for, the size of that placement agency in terms of the number of children it serves, and the religious auspices of that placement agency. Each of these variables will be considered in turn. All three relate to relatively stable and patterned relationships of social units within the foster care system which in turn possibly influence our study subjects and their role expectations.

Type of placement of the child

Two types of foster care placement are popularly known, foster home care and institutional care. In the case of foster home

care the child is cared for directly in the home of an intact foster family under the general supervision of the administrative placement agency. Institutional care can be described as relatively impersonal, large or small group, dormitory style living of (usually older) children under the direction of counselors in a setting administered by a responsible placement agency. There are various arrangements of group living. One type is often thought of by the profession as a distinct kind of foster care in its own right, and that is the residential treatment center. In such a setting, in various arrangements of small group living, emotionally disturbed children receive psychiatrically oriented care and therapy.

When a child is placed in a foster home his everyday care is in the hands of an individual foster mother and foster father who relate as parents to the child. Psychologically, such a situation can prove immensely threatening to the natural mother who may see someone else, a particular individual, taking over, and performing well in, an essential role which she herself is unable, or unwilling to, play. In addition, the administrative agency caseworker who, among her role requirements, is responsible for planning for, and supervising the adequate care of the placed child, may need to impose restrictions on the natural mothers' visits to, and interaction when in, the foster family home. Restrictions imposed by the caseworker, and the threat of what could be termed "essential role loss" presented by the foster parents could influence perceived expectations for the focal role under study on the part of the natural mothers.

The circumstances are clearly different when the child is placed in some type of group care or institutional setting. Child

care workers in such cases are of several types: "nurses" (for hospital-type arrangements), "cottage parents" (for young teenagers in residential treatment centers), "counselors" (in large institutional settings), or "sisters" (for Catholic institutions in particular). In such settings the child care workers usually rotate shifts and generally no one individual is responsible for a child for the entire 24 hour day.

In institutional care settings the relatively impersonal, custodial type care given to the children does not present as much of a "role threat" to the natural mother as does foster family home care. Visiting times and rules are usually efficiently regimented and inflexible. And in order to effectively see to their responsibilities caseworkers usually do not need to carefully mediate the relationships between child care workers and natural mothers. Additionally, mothers with children in residential treatment center care settings typically see the child carers as professional persons playing a therapeutic role for the child, a role for which she (the mother) does not have adequate training and therefore need not be expected to perform.¹

Forty-seven percent of the children of the study mothers were in foster family home care, fourteen percent were in residential treatment centers, and the remaining thirty-nine percent were in other institutional settings. In all cases in which the sample mothers had more than one child in placement the siblings were in the same type of placement.

¹For a further discussion of the types of care see: Alfred Kadushin, Child Welfare Services (New York: Macmillan Company, 1967).

Table IV-4 below indicates for each of the five role expectations being considered in this study, the percentage of mothers with children in each of the three types of placement who did, and who did not, mention that expectation. The expectation to be undisguised with the agency caseworker was mentioned by all but one of the women with children in residential treatment centers. This result was statistically significant ($P=0.003$) and readily understandable. The psychiatric orientation of the residential treatment center stresses the value of candidness and openness in relationships. That stress very probably carries over into the caseworker-mother relationship.

Also statistically significant ($P=0.088$) was the finding that mothers with children in foster family homes were decidedly more likely to perceive control as expected of them with the caseworker than women with children in any other type of placement. This result too seems readily understandable. In the foregoing discussion it was noted that mothers with children in foster family care were often restricted in the frequency of visits to their children in the foster homes, were limited by the caseworkers as to the appropriate interaction with the foster parents, and were presented with the threat of "essential role loss" by the foster parents. Noting the expectation "control" very possibly reflected the attempt to hold back the anger, hostility and frustration generated by that situation.

Size of agency

Edwin J. Thomas in a study done almost fifteen years ago found that conceptions role incumbents had of their role in a social service organization and the degree of consensus among them as to

TABLE IV-4

EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY TYPE OF PLACEMENT OF CHILD

	Percent Distribution		
	<u>Type of Placement of Child</u>		
	Residential Treatment (N=18)	Other Institution (N=50)	Foster Home (N=60)
UNDISGUISED			
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	94	58	80
Not mentioned	6	42	20
$X^2 =$		11.505	
df =		2	
P =		0.003	
CONTROLLED			
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	44	46	65
Not mentioned	56	54	35
$X^2 =$		4.860	
df =		2	
P =		0.088	
CONCERNED			
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	39	48	55
Not mentioned	61	52	45
$X^2 =$		1.569	
df =		2	
P =		NS	
FORMAL			
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	11	30	33
Not mentioned	89	70	67
$X^2 =$		3.375	
df =		2	
P =		NS	
ACQUIESCENT			
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	28	30	28
Not mentioned	72	70	72
$X^2 =$		0.050	
df =		2	
P =		NS	

NS $P > 0.10$

behavioral expectations of that role was associated with the size of the organizational work unit. He found that in small organizations there was greater compatibility of role conceptions and greater role consensus than in larger organizations.¹ Following Thomas' lead an attempt was made in the present study to see if the size of the placement agency to which the mothers were attached had any demonstrable influence upon the behavior they saw as required of them in the focal role being considered.

The most relevant indicator available to measure the size of the administrative placement agency was the total number of children for which the placement agency was responsible, divided into three intervals (small, medium and large). Small-sized agencies were responsible for from one to 250 children, medium-sized agencies for between 251 and 500 children, and large-sized agencies for 501 children or more. Generally speaking one can assume that the large-sized agencies, since they were responsible for so many children, had the largest number of administrative, professional and child care personnel as well.² Twenty-seven percent of the children of the study

¹Edwin J. Thomas, "Role Conceptions and Organizational Size," American Sociological Review, 24 (February, 1959), pp. 30-37. Other researchers have found size an important variable in the study of organizations in areas other than that of role. Cf., T.R. Anderson and S. Warkov, "Organizational Size and Functional Complexity: A Study of Administration in Hospitals," American Sociological Review, 26 (February, 1961), pp. 23-28; and F.C. Terrien and D.C. Mills, "The Effects of Changing Size Upon the Internal Structure of an Organization," American Sociological Review, 20 (February, 1955), pp. 11-14. Both sets of researchers studied the effects of change in overall organizational size upon the relative size of their component units.

²The notable exception to this occurs in the case of residential treatment centers. They typically care for a small number of children, but in pursuit of their psychiatric orientation they tend to have a large staff to child ratio.

mothers were placed in small, twenty-five percent in medium, and forty-eight percent in large-sized agencies.

Considering the three interval variable as a continuum (1=small, 2=medium, 3=large), the average size of the agencies caring for the children of the mothers who did, and who did not, mention each of the five expectations being studied was obtained. This information, as well as variances and t-test results, are presented in Table IV-5. The table clearly indicates that mothers with children in smaller agencies mentioned undisguised as a role expectation significantly ($P=0.05$) more frequently than did those with children in the larger agencies. The reverse was indicated in the case of women who mentioned the role expectation "to express concern about the placed child" when with the caseworker. It will subsequently be seen that there is an overwhelming relationship between residential treatment care and small size of agency, as well as between foster home care and large size of agency (Table V-1). When one remembers that women with children in residential treatment care were very likely to mention the role expectation undisguised, and those with children in foster home care to mention the expectation concern, it seems clear that the association found between size of agency and role expectations reflects that found between type of placement and role expectations.

Religious auspices of the placement agency

Statutory provisions included in the Domestic Relations Law of New York State and the Administrative Code of New York City specify

TABLE IV-5

EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY SIZE OF AGENCY RESPONSIBLE FOR CHILD

Size of Agency*				
	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>t-test</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>(128)</u>	<u>2.20</u>		
Undisguised mentioned	(94)	2.12	0.728	-1.963 ^a
Undisguised not mentioned	(34)	2.44	0.618	
Controlled mentioned	(70)	2.20	0.713	0.034 ^{NS}
Controlled not mentioned	(58)	2.21	0.728	
Concerned mentioned	(64)	2.31	0.694	1.570 ^{NS}
Concerned not mentioned	(64)	2.09	0.721	
Formal mentioned	(37)	2.19	0.769	-0.061 ^{NS}
Formal not mentioned	(91)	2.21	0.700	
Acquiescent mentioned	(37)	2.32	0.725	0.649 ^{NS}
Acquiescent not mentioned	(91)	2.15	0.709	

^a P = 0.05

^{NS} P > 0.10

*The smaller the score the smaller the agency.

that, whenever practicable, the authorized agency with which a child is placed must be under the control of persons of the same religious faith as that of the child. This requirement cannot always be met by voluntary (private) agencies and is waived entirely for publicly controlled or supported institutions. Nevertheless the greater majority of children in placement in New York City are being cared for under the auspices of agencies primarily directed by persons of their own religion.¹ This was also the case for our study sample. Forty-five percent of the children of the study mothers were being cared for by agencies under Catholic auspices, twenty-seven percent by agencies under Protestant auspices, nine percent by agencies under Jewish auspices and the remaining nineteen percent were with nonsectarian agencies unaffiliated with any religious group. As Table IV-6 below indicates three-quarters of the children of Catholic and Jewish women were in placement agencies of their own faith. One-half of the children of Protestant mothers were placed with Protestant foster care agencies. The lack of enough places in Protestant agencies to care for the number of Protestant children needing long-term placement is reflected in the fact that a full one-third of the children of Protestant study mothers were being cared for in nonsectarian (and therefore for our sample almost always public rather than private) agencies.

¹Frances Kroll, Perspectives on Foster Care in New York City (New York: Child Welfare Research Program, Columbia University School of Social Work, June, 1967), p. 9.

TABLE IV-6

RELIGIOUS AUSPICES OF PLACEMENT AGENCY BY RELIGION OF MOTHER

Percent Distribution				
Religious Auspices of Placement Agency	Religion of Mother			
	Total ^a (N=128)	Catholic (N=68)	Protestant (N=45)	Jewish (N=13)
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Catholic	45	75	13	--
Protestant	27	13	49	8
Jewish	9	--	5	77
Nonsectarian	19	12	33	15

^aThe religion of two study mothers was not ascertainable. The children of both these mothers were being cared for in agencies under Protestant auspices.

Table IV-7 indicates the percentage of mothers with children placed in agencies of each religious type who did, and who did not, mention each of the five role expectations included in this study. Women with offspring in Jewish agencies were significantly ($P=0.06$) more likely to mention being undisguised as appropriate to the focal role than women with children in care at agencies under any other religious auspices. Mothers of children in Protestant agencies mentioned control, and mothers of children in Catholic agencies mentioned formality, as expectations to a comparatively noteworthy, although not statistically significant, degree. And nonsectarian agencies cared for the children of mothers who mentioned the expectations express concern for the child and be acquiescent toward the worker to a very large extent, in comparison to other mothers.

The association between the variable religious auspices of the placement agency and perceived role expectations can be explained in large part through their mutual relationship to other variables. It will be subsequently noted that, although not exclusively pursuing that particular course, Jewish foster care agencies tend to specialize in residential treatment care and Protestant agencies in foster home care (Table V-2). We have already noted the statistically significant relationships between having a child in residential treatment and noting "undisguised" as a role expectation, as well as having a child in foster home care and noting "control" as an expectation. It does not seem surprising then to find the expectation "undisguised" related to Jewish agency auspices. In addition, the relationship between Puerto Rican background and mentioning the expectation "to be formal" was previously noted. Also previously mentioned was the fact that in New York City children are generally placed in agencies directed by persons of their own religion, i.e., Catholic children tend to be placed with Catholic agencies. Finally, it should be noted that all but one Puerto Rican mother in the sample was Catholic. The mutual relationship between these several variables helps to explain the finding that women with children in Catholic agencies mentioned the role expectation "to be formal" to a noteworthy extent.

The three organization variables we have just inspected--type of placement, size of agency, and religious auspices of agency--have all been shown to be associated to some degree with perceived role expectations. However, possibly the most interesting finding unfolding from the exploration of this area was that for the most

TABLE IV-7

EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY RELIGIOUS AUSPICES OF PLACEMENT AGENCY

	Percent Distribution			
	Religious Auspices of Placement Agency			
	Catholic (N=57)	Protestant (N=34)	Jewish (N=12)	Nonsectarian (N=25)
UNDISGUISED				
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	72	82	92	56
Not mentioned	28	18	8	44
$X^2 =$			7.393	
df =			3	
P =			0.061	
CONTROLLED				
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	51	65	50	52
Not mentioned	49	35	50	48
$X^2 =$			1.890	
df =			3	
P =			NS	
CONCERNED				
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	51	47	25	64
Not mentioned	49	53	75	36
$X^2 =$			5.095	
df =			3	
P =			NS	
FORMAL				
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	37	21	25	24
Not mentioned	63	79	75	76
$X^2 =$			3.273	
df =			3	
P =			NS	
ACQUIESCENT				
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	28	27	8	44
Not mentioned	72	73	92	56
$X^2 =$			5.360	
df =			3	
P =			NS	

NS $P > 0.10$

part the associations between the various organizational variables and the role expectations were explainable in terms of their mutual relationships to each other and to other variables as well.

Interactional Aspects of the Role Relationship

In the role relationship between the administrative placement agency caseworker and the natural mother of the placed child being cared for by that agency, power to direct the most relevant aspects of the relationship is in the hands of the caseworker. Interaction variables such as the number of face-to-face contacts between the two, or the usual topics of conversation between the two, are most usually directed or controlled by the caseworker rather than by the mother. These two interaction variables, which were included in this study, should therefore be viewed from that perspective.

Topics typically talked about

One of the main responsibilities of the agency caseworkers is to work with the natural families toward the eventual return of the child to his own home. This responsibility can be viewed by the worker as necessitating only simple fact gathering, or it may encompass casework intended to help with emotional and/or environmental problems. In addition, the worker is often the person responsible for arranging visits between the natural parent and the placed child and is usually the person from which the natural parents learn most about how their children are faring in placement. The size and type

of caseload they carry, the philosophy and economics of the agency they represent, and their own training, experience, personality and professional outlook influence the amount of time caseworkers spend with each case and the things they attempt to talk about with each natural parent they see.

In response to the question "In a face-to-face talk with the agency caseworker what would you talk about?" all of the interviewed mothers mentioned at least one of the following three mutually exclusive things:¹ (1) Discussion of the child's activities and progress in placement, (i.e., "We would talk about how my child was doing in foster care, how he was getting along.") or (2) Discussion of practical arrangements concerning visiting the child in placement or discharge of the child home, (i.e., "We would discuss visiting arrangements to see my child," or "things like what was standing in the way of his coming home.") or (3) Discussion of the mothers as individuals, their life situations and personal problems, (i.e., "We would talk about me, my problems, how things were for me.") Seventy-three percent of the mothers noted talking about how the child was doing in placement, twenty-four percent of the mothers mentioned talking about discharge or visiting of the child as a conversation topic with the caseworker, and thirty-six percent of the women stated that with the workers they talked about themselves.

Table IV-8 presents for each of the five expectations the percentage of ¹Mutually's who did, and did not, note each of those three

¹Mutually exclusive in the sense that each answer could fit into one, and only one, of the three categories. However, the multiple answers to the question of any one mother could result in her inclusion in more than one category.

TABLE IV-8

EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY TOPICS NOTED AS TALKED ABOUT WITH CASEWORKER

	Percent Distribution					
	Topics Talked About				Discharge/ Visiting	
	How Child Doing		Mother		Noted	Not
	Noted (N=94)	Not Noted (N=34)	Noted (N=46)	Not Noted (N=82)	Noted (N=31)	Not Noted (N=97)
UNDISGUISED						
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	71	79	94	62	74	73
Not mentioned	29	21	6	38	26	27
$\chi^2 =$	0.481		13.224		0.000	
df* =	1		1		1	
P =	NS		0.000		NS	
CONTROLLED						
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	49	71	59	52	68	52
Not mentioned	51	29	41	48	32	48
$\chi^2 =$	3.890		0.247		2.161	
df* =	1		1		1	
P =	0.049		NS		NS	
CONCERNED						
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	56	32	41	55	45	51
Not mentioned	44	68	59	45	55	49
$\chi^2 =$	4.846		1.663		0.170	
df* =	1		1		1	
P =	0.028		NS		NS	
FORMAL						
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	26	38	26	31	26	30
Not mentioned	74	62	74	69	74	70
$\chi^2 =$	1.391		0.105		0.044	
df* =	1		1		1	
P =	NS		NS		NS	
ACQUIESCENT						
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	27	35	28	29	42	25
Not mentioned	73	65	72	71	58	75
$\chi^2 =$	0.545		0.000		2.594	
df* =	1		1		1	
P =	NS		NS		0.107	

*Continuity correction included in the calculation of all Chi-squares for fourfold tables.
NS_P > 0.10

topics of conversation when with the caseworker. Women who mentioned talking about themselves when with the caseworker also mentioned the role expectation "to be undisguised" to a significantly greater degree ($P=0.000$) than women who did not note that topic of discourse. Mothers who noted talking with the worker about how the child was doing in placement also noted that they perceived that they should express concern for the child when with the caseworker to a significantly greater degree ($P=0.028$) than women not doing so. And finally, discharge and/or visiting of the child were likely to be topics of conversation among women noting control or acquiescence as role expectations.

The association between discussing how the child is doing in placement and the role expectation "to display concern for the child" seems to be self evident. Both relate to the expression of involvement and concern of mother with child. It appears possible that the relationship between mentioning discussing themselves when with the workers and noting "undisguised" as a role expectation reflects the acceptance on the part of these mothers of the psychiatric casework orientation with its emphasis on openness and candidness of communication. Focusing on making practical arrangements needed for visiting and/or discharge of the child when with the worker, and noting the role requirement in the situation as "acquiescence," could mirror a desire to expedite the procedures by acceptance of

caseworker actions. It is also interesting to note that mothers mentioning "to display concern for the child" as a role expectation were more likely not to note discharge and visiting of the child as a topic of conversation than to note it. In explanation, it is perhaps the emphasis on practical arrangements which dominates any discussion of visiting of a child in placement, or his discharge home, that mitigates against the perception of a role expectation with the emotional components of "to display concern for the child." Admittedly we are reading between the lines in this and many of our other data interpretations. However, they are all plausible suppositions.

Number of contacts with caseworker

As has been previously stated, during any specified period of time the number of in-person contacts the mothers of the placed children have with the caseworkers assigned to their cases is mainly determined by the caseworker rather than by the mother. Although a mother can sometimes initiate appointments, and although she certainly can refuse to make, or show up at an appointment already made, the most important factors determining the number of times the mother and caseworker have face-to-face talks with each

other during any particular time span are the workers' and the agencies' general social work philosophy, the casework goals set for any individual case, and the size of the agency workers' caseload (and therefore the time they have available to see the mothers).¹

Table IV-9 presents the mean number of in-person contacts those mentioning, and those not mentioning, each of the five relevant role expectations, had with their caseworkers during the six months preceding the study interview. The mean number of such visits for all the study mothers was 3.49, or somewhat more than once every two months. Twenty-five percent of the women had not seen a worker at all during that time, and seven percent had seen a worker twelve times or more (at least twice a month). As the table indicates, women who mentioned the expectations "express concern for the child" and "be controlled" saw their caseworkers less often those not mentioning them. These results were not statistically significant and should be viewed with caution.

¹In a study of professionals in the New York City Bureaus of Child Welfare and Public Assistance Miller and Podell found that as many as 52 percent of the child welfare caseworkers admitted restricting seeing some of their clients in order to concentrate on seeing others. Ronald Miller and Lawrence Podell, Role Conflict in Public Services (New York: Division of Research and Innovation, New York State Office of Community Affairs, 1970), p. 53.

Of special interest is the expectation acquiescent. Table IV-9 indicates that those mentioning that role obligation saw their workers more often, on the average, than those who didn't mention it. However, the variances of the two distributions differed significantly. Part of the explanation for this can be found in the following table showing the proportion of mothers who did, and did not mention acquiescent as a role expectation, and who did or did not see their caseworkers at all in the six months prior to the study interview:

		<u>Percent Distribution</u>	
		<u>Number In-Person Contacts with Caseworker in Past Six Months</u>	
		<u>None</u> <u>(N=32)</u>	<u>Some</u> <u>(N=96)</u>
<u>Total</u>		<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Acquiescent mentioned		66	44
Acquiescent not mentioned		<u>34</u>	<u>56</u>
	$\chi^2 =$	3.576	
	df* =	1	
	P =	0.059	

*Continuity correction included in calculation

Although those mentioning acquiescent had a larger average number of visits with the caseworker as compared with those not mentioning it, the table above additionally shows that mentioners also were significantly more likely to have no contacts with the workers at all in the six months under consideration.

TABLE IV-9

EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY NUMBER OF IN-PERSON CONTACTS
WITH CASEWORKER IN PAST SIX MONTHS

Number In-Person Contacts with Caseworker Past Six Months				
	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>t-test</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	(128)	3.49		
Undisguised mentioned	(94)	3.43	13.422	-0.289 ^{NS}
Undisguised not mentioned	(34)	3.65	15.811	
Controlled mentioned	(70)	3.14	12.791	-1.156 ^{NS}
Controlled not mentioned	(58)	3.91	15.296	
Concerned mentioned	(64)	2.97	13.386	-1.565 ^{NS}
Concerned not mentioned	(64)	4.00	14.109	
Formal mentioned	(37)	3.60	15.303	0.205 ^{NS}
Formal not mentioned	(91)	3.44	13.553	
Acquiescent mentioned	(37)	3.76	19.578	0.518 ^{NS}
Acquiescent not mentioned	(91)	3.38	11.788 ^a	

^aF Ratio = 1.660, 0.10 > P > 0.05

NS
P > 0.10

Positions Occupied in Other Systems

To every role an individual assumes he brings his entire social and psychological history. His perception and reception of the requirements of each role that he assumes is influenced, among other things, by, for example, the positions he occupies in other social systems. The positions role incumbents occupy in social systems other than the one under consideration can be among the most relevant indicators of how they will approach the focal role. For to the extent that role incumbents are diversely located in the larger societal structure they are apt to have interests and sentiments, values and moral expectations differing from those of their fellow role incumbents. "This, after all," Merton has stated, "is one of the principal assumptions of...sociological theory: social differentiation generates distinct interests among those variously located in the structure of the society."¹

Two such "other status" variables were included in the present study: ethnic group membership and socioeconomic level.

Ethnic group membership

The mothers in the study were members of one of three ethnic groups: white (Caucasian), black (Negro), or Puerto Rican. In order to be classified as Puerto Rican a mother could be either white or black but she, or one of her parents, had of necessity to be born in Puerto Rico. Women classified as black had one, or both parents, who

¹Robert Merton, "The Role-Set: Problems in Sociological Theory," British Journal of Sociology, 8 (1957), p. 112.

were Negro. And women classified as white had both parents who were white. Twenty-seven percent of the study women were white, forty-three percent were black, and thirty percent were Puerto Rican.

Table IV-10 indicates the proportion of women mentioning, and not mentioning, each of the five role expectations being studied, who were members of each of the three ethnic groups. Significantly ($P=0.008$) more white women than women in any other ethnic group mentioned undisguised as an expectation. Puerto Rican women mentioned formality as a role expectation significantly ($P=0.000$) more frequently than their counterparts from other ethnic groups. Blacks more usually than the others mentioned control and acquiescence as expectations and non-whites (i.e. blacks and Puerto Ricans) tended to mention being concerned about the child more frequently than did whites. Explanations of these findings follow the discussion of socioeconomic level below.

Socioeconomic level

Most of the mothers in this study lived in impoverished conditions in some of the worst neighborhoods in the city. Public assistance was the main means of support for a very large number and those who lived primarily on their own, or other family members' earnings averaged incomes of approximately \$80 a week. Despite the fact that a large proportion of the study women lived in deprived circumstances an attempt was made to differentiate socioeconomic levels within the sample. A socioeconomic index was constructed with the primary intention of comparing the study women with each other. The following five variables were included in the index: (1) the primary

TABLE IV-10

EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY ETHNIC GROUP

	Percent Distribution		
	White (N=33)	Black (N=56)	Puerto Rican (N=39)
UNDISGUISED			
<u>Total</u>	100	100	100
Mentioned	88	77	56
Not mentioned	12	23	44
$X^2 =$		9.646	
df =		2	
P =		0.008	
CONTROLLED			
<u>Total</u>	100	100	100
Mentioned	52	64	44
Not mentioned	48	36	56
$X^2 =$		4.154	
df =		2	
P =		NS	
CONCERNED			
<u>Total</u>	100	100	100
Mentioned	36	54	56
Not mentioned	64	46	44
$X^2 =$		3.381	
df =		2	
P =		NS	
FORMAL			
<u>Total</u>	100	100	100
Mentioned	30	13	51
Not mentioned	70	87	49
$X^2 =$		16.868	
df =		2	
P =		0.000	
ACQUIESCENT			
<u>Total</u>	100	100	100
Mentioned	21	34	28
Not mentioned	79	66	72
$X^2 =$		1.647	
df =		2	
P =		NS	

NS $P > 0.10$

means of support in the mother's household (ranked by amount of income in the case of salaries and by length of dependency in the case of public assistance), (2) the highest grade completed by the mother, (3) the income rank of the neighborhood in which the mother lived relative to all 74 New York City neighborhoods, and (5) the number of negative housing conditions existing in the mother's dwelling unit from a list of 21 constructed to reflect a range of conditions dangerous to health and safety. Different weights were given to each of the variables in the respective order 3:2:1:1:1. These weights reflected the researchers' judgments as to the comparative ability of each variable to reflect the socioeconomic level of this group of women. In order to minimize the influence of the diverse ranges of the component variables each was divided by its own standard deviation. The scores on each variable divided by that variable's standard deviation and weighted by that variable's assigned weight were added together and a score for each mother was accordingly derived. The one-third of mothers receiving the highest scores were assigned high status. The one-third scoring lowest were assigned low status. The remaining third were assigned middle status.¹ Since neither economic nor housing information was collected from mothers if they were hospitalized or institutionalized at the time of the interview those women were not given scores on this scale.

¹This index was constructed for the larger Family Welfare Research Project. For more details concerning its construction, see: Shirley Jenkins and Elaine Norman, Filial Deprivation and Foster Care (New York: Columbia University Press, to be published 1972), Appendix.

Table IV-11 reports the proportion of women mentioning, and not mentioning, each of the five studied role expectations according to the socioeconomic level to which they belong. Seven women who were hospitalized or institutionalized at the time of the study interview are not included in the table.

In their famous monograph Beyond the Melting Pot, Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan made the comment that in New York City to name "a class is very much the same thing as naming an ethnic group."¹ For our study at least that statement seems to be true. It will subsequently be shown (in Table V-6) that although each ethnic group had some representatives in every socioeconomic level, the white women were predominantly of high socioeconomic level and the black and Puerto Rican mothers were usually of low or middle socioeconomic level. This relationship can be seen reflected in the study findings concerning role expectations. Both white women and women of high status were the ones most likely to mention the role expectation "undisguised." Black women, and low status women were most likely to mention the expectation "control." Non-white mothers (that is blacks and Puerto Ricans), and non-high status mothers (that is low and middle level) were most likely to note "concern" as a role expectation. Finally Puerto Rican mothers and mothers of non-high socioeconomic level most often mentioned the expectation "formality."

A possible explanation of this can be found by referencing a study of social welfare clients recently done in Great Britain by Mayer and Timms. They suggest that the lack of communication they

¹Nathan Glazer and Daniel Moynihan, Beyond the Melting Pot (2nd ed.; Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970), p. lvii.

TABLE IV-11

EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS OF MOTHERS

	Percent Distribution		
	<u>Socioeconomic Status</u>		
	High (N=40)	Middle (N=41)	Low (N=40)
UNDISGUISED			
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	86	77	63
Not mentioned	14	23	37
$\chi^2 =$		6.012	
df =		2	
P =		0.050	
CONTROLLED			
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	43	59	65
Not mentioned	57	41	35
$\chi^2 =$		4.367	
df =		2	
P =		NS	
CONCERNED			
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	29	59	55
Not mentioned	71	41	45
$\chi^2 =$		8.996	
df =		2	
P =		0.011	
FORMAL			
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	21	33	33
Not mentioned	79	67	67
$\chi^2 =$		1.765	
df =		2	
P =		NS	
ACQUIESCENT			
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mentioned	21	33	38
Not mentioned	79	67	62
$\chi^2 =$		2.699	
df =		2	
P =		NS	

NS $P > 0.10$

found in the casework process between caseworkers and clients was at least partially due to the fact that "the clients assumed that only persons who had a similar experience could possibly comprehend [them] . . . They typically preferred workers of the same age, marital status, and sex as themselves. Being similar [such workers] would understand what they, the clients had been through."¹ The caseworkers in the New York City foster care system differ considerably in ethnic group and socioeconomic level from the mothers they serve. We have already noted that in our study sample twenty-seven percent of the women were white, forty-three percent black and thirty percent Puerto Rican. But among the caseworkers seventy-seven percent are white, only fifteen percent black, two percent oriental, and four percent of Spanish origin.² All of the workers have at least a bachelor's degree from college and by virtue of the fact that they are employed in a profession have an income decidedly higher than practically every sample mother.

The propensity of white women, and women of high socioeconomic level in our sample to mention the role expectation "undisguised," and that of non-white, non-high socioeconomic level mothers to note the more constrained role expectations "control" and "formality," could plausibly reflect a dimension of trust and distrust engendered by similarity, or lack thereof, in ethnic group and socioeconomic status between mother and worker.³

¹John E. Mayer and Noel Timms, The Client Speaks, Working Class Impressions of Casework (New York: Atherton Press, 1970), p. 73.

²Deborah Shapiro, "Agency Investment and Consequences for Clients: The First Year of Placement" (New York: Child Welfare Research Program, Columbia University School of Social Work, Sept., 1970). (Mimeographed.)

³The mutual relationships between mentioning the expectation "to be undisguised" and being white, being of high socioeconomic status and having a child in residential treatment care will be subsequently discussed.

Mothers' Commitment to the Focal Role

Up to this point we have been considering factors related to perceived role expectations which relate primarily to social structure. We have inspected orientational (background) aspects of the focal role, organizational aspects of the system of which the focal role was a part, interactional aspects of the mother-caseworker relationship and positions occupied in other systems by the incumbents of the focal role. Levinson, however, has cautioned that "traditional sociological theory can be criticized for assuming that individual role-definition is determined almost entirely by social structure." He believes that, "Our understanding of personal role-definition will remain seriously impaired as long as we fail to place it, analytically, in both intra-personal and structural-environmental contexts."¹ In an attempt to explore the relation of some intra-personal factors on perceived role expectations the following three variables were included in the study: (1) the commitment of the role incumbent to the focal role; (2) her motivation to assume it; and (3) her evaluation of the rights and performances of the institution to which the role is attached. Each of those intra-personal, attitudinal variables will be looked at in turn beginning with the mother's commitment to the focal role.

The extent to which an individual is committed to an assumed role, or one may say the extent to which he or she identifies with the role, can influence perceptions of the behavioral expectations attached to it. Goffman has noted that rather than with attachment

¹Daniel J. Levinson, "Role, Personality, and Social Structure in the Organizational Setting," Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 58 (March, 1959), p. 178. (Italics ours.)

and commitment many roles can be played with detachment, shame and resentment. He has coined the term "role distance" to label the effectively expressed detachment of the performer from the role he is performing. In order to punctuate his idea Goffman discusses the distinction between the concepts attachment and commitment, noting that a mother is "attached" to that role simply by virtue of the fact that she bears a child. However, that fact does not necessarily make her "committed" to the role of mother. Potential adoptive parents, for example, may be "committed" to the parental role while not yet "attached" to it. The woman who has borne the child which these adoptive parents will take is "attached" to the role of mother but quite apparently not "committed" to it.¹

In order to obtain some measure of the maternal commitment of the study sample an index was constructed utilizing a combination of four variables determined from questions asked during the study interview. These included the following: (1) the frequency of visits by the mother to the placed child, (2) whether or not the mother conceived of taking care of a child as a positive or negative task, (3) whether or not the mother worries about the child while he is in placement, and (4) whether or not the mother includes the child in her next year's plans. Each of those variables will be described in turn, followed by a description of the construction of a role commitment index.

¹Erving Goffman, Encounters, Two Studies in the Sociology of Interaction (Indianapolis, Indiana: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1961), pp. 85-115.

Frequency of visits to child. Each mother was asked how often she had seen her child since he went into placement. Because of the inaccuracies to which recall data are susceptible, the answers to that question were put into three gross categories, and the responses of the study group were interpreted on that basis. The categories included visiting less than once a month (noted by 30 percent of the study women); visiting once a month but less than twice (noted by 20 percent of the women); and visiting twice a month or more (noted by 43 percent of the women). No answer was obtained for this question from the remaining seven percent. Although frequency of visiting can be seen as primarily influenced by the mothers' feeling for, and commitment to their children and the mother's role with respect to those offspring it must be kept in mind that this is not the full story in their particular circumstances. Some mothers may have wanted to visit their children more often but could not because of a variety of reasons, such as the fact that they were physically or mentally ill and could not accomplish any, or additional, visits. The expenses of the trip might have been prohibitive for some, and the fact that mothers' visits were at times restricted by placement agency rules concerning visiting hours, or by caseworkers' decisions to minimize contact between mother and child for therapeutic reasons could have restricted visits for others. This variable could not therefore stand alone as a measure of maternal role commitment.

Attitude toward child care. During the research interviews each of the mothers was asked to complete the open ended sentence, "Taking care of a child is . . ." Their answers were easily codable into negative responses (i.e., "a burden," "a big responsibility),

positive responses (i.e., "a joy," "happiness," "God's work"), or a combination of both (i.e., "enjoyable and difficult"). Fifty-six percent of the women responded negatively, 30 percent positively, 9 percent both positively and negatively, and no answer was obtained from the remaining five percent. The attitude toward child care reflected by these answers were included as a measure of the mother's role commitment.

Worry about child. Each mother was asked if she worried about how her child was getting along in foster care placement. Fifty-three percent of the women indicated they did worry, 44 percent indicated they did not worry, and three percent did not answer the question. Worry about how her child was faring in a strange setting away from her was considered a relevant indicator to be included in a measure of maternal role commitment.

Inclusion of child in mother's future plans. Near the end of the research interview each woman was asked the question, "What are your plans for the next year or so?" Inclusion of the child in the answer to such a non-directive question can be considered an indication of the intensity of role commitment on the part of the respondent. Thirty-nine percent of the mothers included the placed children in their plans for the coming year, 19 percent said they had no plans at all, 38 percent mentioned plans but did not include their child in them, and four percent of the women did not answer the question.

In the construction of the maternal commitment index three ranked categories were utilized for each of the four included variables. The most negative category for each variable was coded rank 1; the most positive was coded rank 3; and the middle category which was

coded rank 2 was reserved for mixed, indecisive, ambivalent or non-existent answers. An individual's commitment index score was calculated simply by adding together her scores on all four included variables. Potential scores therefore ranged from four to twelve, with four representing very low commitment and twelve representing very high commitment. The average study mother scored 7.97 on the index.

There was no evidence that any of the four included variables was more important than any of the others as indicators of maternal commitment and therefore no weighting procedure was utilized in the construction of the index. In order to get some indication of the effect each of the four included variables had upon the combined index, correlations were obtained between each of them and the combined index. The results are presented below. The very similar correlation coefficients support the judgment not to weight any one variable differently from the others.

<u>Component Variable</u>	<u>Correlation with Combined Maternal Commitment Index</u>
Frequency of visits to child	.507
Attitude toward child care	.503
Worry about child	.551
Inclusion of child in future plans	.524

Table IV-12 below presents the mean average maternal commitment score of women mentioning, and not mentioning, each of the role expectations under consideration in this study. At the table indicates mothers seeing undisguised as an expectation and mothers seeing concern as an expectation had decidedly higher maternal commitment

TABLE IV-12

EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY MATERNAL COMMITMENT OF MOTHER

Maternal Commitment Score				
	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>t-test</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	(128)	7.97		
Undisguised mentioned	(94)	8.06	3.716	0.952 ^{NS}
Undisguised not mentioned	(34)	7.71	3.002	
Controlled mentioned	(70)	7.76	3.317	-1.406 ^{NS}
Controlled not mentioned	(58)	8.82	3.721	
Concerned mentioned	(64)	8.22	3.221	1.514 ^{NS}
Concerned not mentioned	(64)	7.72	3.761	
Formal mentioned	(37)	7.68	2.614	-1.127 ^{NS}
Formal not mentioned	(91)	8.09	3.881	
Acquiescent mentioned	(37)	7.89	3.766	-0.294 ^{NS}
Acquiescent not mentioned	(91)	8.00	3.467	

^{NS} P > 0.10

*The higher the score the greater the maternal commitment.

scores than did their counterparts not mentioning those expectations. Mothers who saw control and formality as expectations had much lower maternal commitment scores than did their counterparts who did not mention those expectations. None of these results, however, were statistically significant.

Motivation for Role Incumbency

Certainly a rather important dimension to inspect as an influence upon perceived role expectations would be how motivated the study mothers were to play the focal role in the first place, or in other words, how desirous they had been to attach themselves to the foster care system, to become incumbents of the role under consideration. The indicator utilized in the present study to measure that dimension involved the mothers' responses to the following question, "Looking back at everything that has happened would you say that the placement of your child was absolutely necessary, very necessary, somewhat necessary, or not necessary at all?" Each mother indicated one choice. Forty-seven percent considered the placement absolutely necessary, 17 percent considered it very necessary, 13 percent felt it was only somewhat necessary, and 23 percent did not see it as necessary at all.

Those four possible replies were scaled from one to four with one representing the most negative answer of "not at all necessary" (considered to be low motivation) and four representing the most positive answer of "absolutely necessary" (considered to be high motivation). Table IV-13 below presents the results of this motivation

scale indicating the mean average role incumbency motivation scores for women mentioning, and not mentioning, the five expectations.

Women noting acquiescent as a role expectation were significantly less ($P=0.09$) motivated for role incumbency than those that did not. Noteworthy also is the finding that mothers mentioning undisguised as a role expectation were somewhat more motivated for role incumbency than those that did not.

Evaluation of the System's Performance

As with all the other variables already discussed an incumbent's perception of the expectations attached to a role can be very much influenced by his evaluation of the rights and performances of the institution to which the role is attached. In a sense such an evaluation could be viewed as a measure of the role incumbents' commitment to the system of which their role is a part. This would then be a complementary, companion idea to that of the variable already discussed "maternal commitment to the focal role." A four variable index was constructed in an attempt to measure that attitude. Included were respondents' replies concerning perceptions of the effects of placement upon the child, their general feelings about foster care, and their attitudes toward placement agencies on two specific dimensions: agencies as facilitators of child care and as usurpers of parental rights.

Effect of placement upon the child. The question, "In your opinion has foster care had any effect on (child)?" and an accompanying question for affirmative answers asking what kind of effect

TABLE IV-13

EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY MOTHERS' MOTIVATION FOR ROLE INCUMBENCY

Motivation for Role Incumbency Score*				
	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>t-test</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	(128)	2.88		
Undisguised mentioned	(94)	2.97	1.472	-1.311 ^{NS}
Undisguised not mentioned	(34)	2.65	1.569	
Controlled mentioned	(70)	2.87	1.505	0.115 ^{NS}
Controlled not mentioned	(58)	2.90	1.533	
Concerned mentioned	(64)	2.80	1.498	0.791 ^{NS}
Concerned not mentioned	(64)	2.97	1.523	
Formal mentioned	(37)	2.95	1.497	-0.370 ^{NS}
Formal not mentioned	(91)	2.86	1.524	
Acquiescent mentioned	(37)	2.59	1.470	1.707 ^a
Acquiescent not mentioned	(91)	3.00	1.489	

^aP=0.090

NS P > 0.10

*The higher the score the higher the role incumbency motivation.

that was, appeared in the study interview. Thirty-five percent of the mothers felt that placement had had no effect on their child. Twenty-four percent felt there was a positive effect, giving such replies as, "He seems fat and happy." Thirty-four percent saw a negative effect, noting such things as, "He's very nervous now," or "He has become so withdrawn." The remaining seven percent of the women did not answer the question.

Feelings about placement. In reply to the question, "Thinking back over the entire period of time that (child) has been in placement, would you share with us your feelings about foster care placement?" thirty-nine percent of the mothers gave positive responses, saying such things as, "wonderful," "good," "best thing for the child." An almost equal proportion, thirty-seven percent, responded negatively, noting that they had "rotten" feelings about the placement, were "very upset" about it, or "didn't like it at all." A smaller proportion, twenty-two percent indicated having both good and bad feelings concerning foster care, making such statements as "the children miss me but they seem happy," or "I feel unhappy about it but I know it's good for the children." The few remaining mothers, two percent, gave no answer to the question.

Facilitator attitude toward agencies. In pursuit of the goals of the larger Family Welfare Research Program three items were included in the study questionnaire which were intended to tap the mothers' attitude toward the placement agencies as facilitators of child care in time of need.¹ Mothers were asked whether they agreed or disagreed

¹Jenkins and Norman, op. cit., Chapter Five.

with each item. The three included items were:

1. If not for the agencies helping with the children many mothers would go to pieces in time of trouble.
2. It's a good thing that there are institutions and foster mothers to do the job when a real mother is not able to take care of her child.
3. When a family can't manage a child, an agency can take over until he behaves better and is ready to come home.

Sixty-eight percent of the mothers agreed with all three of the facilitator items, twenty-three percent agreed with two items and the remaining nine percent agreed with less than two. The larger the number of these items the mother agreed to, the more positive was their agency attitude considered.

Usurper attitude toward agencies. Three additional items were included in the study questionnaire which were assumed to reflect an attitude toward agencies as usurpers of parental rights. They were:¹

1. Agencies act like parents have no rights at all--they think they own the children.
2. There must be something in it for agencies, the way they break up families.
3. If agencies would leave parents alone, they could manage their own children.

Fifty-four percent of the mothers did not agree with any of the usurper items, twenty-three percent agreed with one item, and the remaining twenty-three percent with more than one. The fewer items agreed to the more positive their agency attitude was considered to be.

A combined evaluation of placement index was constructed utilizing categories ranked from positive to negative (with ambivalent and no answers in the middle) for each of the four included variables. As

¹Ibid.

was the case with the role commitment index each of the four included variables contained three categories. Potential scores, therefore, ranged from four to twelve. Low scores reflected a negative placement evaluation and high scores reflected a positive one. The average mother scored 8.82 on the index.

Each of the four component variables correlated with the combined index as is indicated below.

<u>Component Variable</u>	<u>Correlation with Combined Evaluation of Placement Index</u>
Effect of placement on child	.646
Feelings about placement	.679
Facilitator agency attitude	.693
Usurper agency attitude	.547

Data relating the relationship between the evaluation of placement index scores and the role expectations mentioned, and not mentioned, by the study mothers is presented in Table IV-14 below.

Women who felt that they should exercise control when with the caseworker evaluated placement significantly ($P=0.058$) more negatively than did women who did not mention that behavior as expected. This was the case also for women noting acquiescent as an expectation (although in the case of acquiescent the result was not statistically significant). Noteworthy also, but not statistically significant, is the tendency on the part of mothers who saw concern for the child as a role obligation to evaluate placement more positively than did those who did not mention it.

We have just looked at the relation of three intra-personal variables to perceived role expectations. The relationships proved

TABLE IV-14

EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY MOTHERS' EVALUATION OF PLACEMENT

Evaluation of Placement Score*				
	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>Variance</u>	<u>t-test</u>
<u>TOTAL</u>	(128)	8.82		
Undisguised mentioned	(94)	8.82	4.193	0.011 ^{NS}
Undisguised not mentioned	(34)	8.82	3.847	
Controlled mentioned	(70)	8.51	3.877	1.905 ^a
Controlled not mentioned	(58)	9.19	4.121	
Concerned mentioned	(64)	8.97	4.126	-0.831 ^{NS}
Concerned not mentioned	(64)	8.67	4.033	
Formal mentioned	(37)	8.73	3.869	0.395 ^{NS}
Formal not mentioned	(91)	8.86	4.190	
Acquiescent mentioned	(37)	8.57	4.974	0.903 ^{NS}
Acquiescent not mentioned	(91)	8.92	3.716	

^aP = 0.058
NS P > 0.10

*The higher the score the more positive evaluation of placement.

to be quite limited, with significant associations found only in two instances: low motivation for role incumbency with the role expectation "acquiescent," and low evaluation of placement with the expectation "control." Explanations for this were not readily apparent.

Summary

We have seen that although mentioned by women in all categories "undisguised" as a role expectation was most likely to be mentioned by white mothers, high socioeconomic level women, women with children placed because of their own emotional or behavioral problems, women with children in agencies administered under Jewish auspices, with children in residential treatment centers, with children in small sized agencies, women who talked about themselves when with the agency caseworkers, and who were highly motivated for role incumbency.

We also have seen that women in all categories mentioned "controlled" as a role expectation. However, those who were most likely to mention it were black women, low socioeconomic status women, women with children in foster home care, with children who had been placed because of the physical illness or inadequate performance of the caring role on the part of the mother, women who talked about discharge and visiting of the child when with the caseworker, who had relatively few contacts with the agency caseworkers, and who had a relatively low motivation for role incumbency, a low commitment to their mothering role, and a negative evaluation of placement.

Additionally, it was shown that although women in all categories mentioned the role expectation "to display concern for the

child," those most frequently mentioning it were non-white women (either black or Puerto Rican), women of middle or low (but rarely high) socioeconomic level, women with children in large sized agencies, in nonsectarian agencies, women who talked with the agency caseworkers about how their children were getting along in placement, who had infrequent contacts with those workers, and who had a high degree of commitment to the mother role and a relatively positive evaluation of placement.

Once again, although study mothers of all kinds mentioned the role expectation "to be formal," those most frequently mentioning it were Puerto Rican women, low or middle (but rarely high) socioeconomic level women, women whose children were placed for reasons of mental illness of the mother or abdication of the child caring role on the part of the mother, whose children were placed in agencies under Catholic auspices, and who had a relatively low commitment to the mother role.

Finally, very few things were shown to be strongly related to mentioning "acquiescent" as a role expectation. Only low motivation for role incumbency correlated with the expectation to a statistically significant degree. However, the accumulated data suggested that several other variables were in some measure related: having a child in an agency administered under nonsectarian auspices, talking about discharge or visiting of the child when with the agency caseworker, being black, being of middle or low (rarely high) socioeconomic level, and having a negative evaluation of placement.

We have just seen that each of the five role expectations mentioned by the study mothers has a number of variables associated with

it, and that the complement of associated variables differed for each expectation. We have attempted to explain some of the relationships we found. Further explanation will be attempted in the next chapter. More importantly however, we shall mainly present in the next chapter some of the complicated underlying relationships which exist between the associated variables themselves, and through the use of multiple regression we shall try to illuminate the unique contribution to the perception of each role expectation of each of the variables shown to be associated with it. In other words, we shall try to indicate the unique weight one might give to each of the related variables as crucial elements in the perception of each particular role requirement.

CHAPTER FIVE

RELATIONSHIP AND RANKING OF CORRELATES

In the previous chapter a number of variables representing areas of potential influence upon the perception of role expectations were inspected. These variables were never conceived of as isolated factors, acting upon the social world each as an exclusive dimension. Rather, mutual relationships between them were expected to be widespread. We have seen some of those relationships in the previous chapter. The first task of this chapter will be to document, and explain wherever possible, the many associations between these variables.¹ The second task will be to attempt to rank them in some order of importance.

To begin, the three structural variables: type of placement, size of placement agency and religious auspices of placement agency, are highly related to each other. As Table V-1 indicates residential treatment centers tend to be small in size, while agencies specializing in foster home care tend to accept responsibility for a large number of children.² While only 27 percent of the children of the study mothers were in small sized agencies, 89 percent with residential treatment care placements were in such agencies. While only

¹Tables indicating the correlations of all twelve of the correlate variables with each other appear in the Appendix.

²A description of every variable that will be included in this chapter has been presented in Chapter Four.

48 percent of the children of the study mothers were in large sized agencies, 72 percent with foster home care placements were attached to large agencies. The explanation for this seems apparent. As was previously noted in Chapter Four, in pursuit of their therapeutic goal residential treatment centers tend to care for a small number of children so as to have a maximally beneficial staff-to-child ratio. On the other hand, agencies specializing in foster home care can efficiently carry responsibility for a large number of children. The nature of that type of care does not necessitate a large child care facility (as does residential treatment and other types of institutional care). In this type of specialization a small number of caseworkers, housed in an administration unit, can and almost always do, supervise the care of a great many children living in separate, private homes.

Agencies administered under the various religious groupings tend to specialize in different types of placement. As Table V-2 shows 67 percent of the Jewish agency placements were in residential treatment care, 62 percent of the Protestant agency and 52 percent of the nonsectarian agency placements were in foster home care, and 61 percent of the Catholic agency placements were in institutions other than residential treatment centers. It seems likely that to a limited extent this situation may have developed as a deliberate response to specific cultural group requirements matched by available group resources. For example, the most usual requirement of placed Jewish children appears to be psychiatric care. Of all the Jewish mothers in the study over two-thirds, or 69 percent, had children who were placed because of their own emotional or behavioral problems.

TABLE V-1
TYPE OF PLACEMENT OF CHILD BY SIZE OF PLACEMENT AGENCY

Percent Distribution				
Size of Agency	Total (N=128)	Type of Placement		
		Residential Treatment (N=18)	Other Institution (N=50)	Foster Home (N=60)
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Small	27	89	30	6
Medium	25	11	34	22
Large	48	--	36	72

TABLE V-2
RELIGIOUS AUSPICES OF PLACEMENT AGENCY BY TYPE OF PLACEMENT OF CHILD

Percent Distribution					
Type of Placement	Total (N=128)	Religious Auspices of Placement Agency			
		Catholic (N=57)	Protestant (N=34)	Jewish (N=12)	Nonsectarian (N=25)
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Residential treatment	14	--	23	67	8
Other institution	39	61	15	--	40
Foster home	47	39	62	33	52

TABLE V-3

RELIGIOUS AUSPICES OF PLACEMENT AGENCY BY SIZE OF PLACEMENT AGENCY

Percent Distribution					
Size of Agency	Religious Auspices of Placement Agency				
	Total (N=128)	Catholic (N=57)	Protestant (N=34)	Jewish (N=12)	Nonsectarian (N=25)
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Small	27	19	38	67	12
Medium	25	26	35	--	20
Large	48	55	27	33	68

Possibly in response to such circumstances Jewish agencies came to specialize in residential treatment care.

With size of agency and type of placement related to each other, and religious auspices of agency and type of placement also related, one would logically expect religious auspices and size of agency to be related. This, of course, as Table V-3 indicates, is the case. For example, with residential treatment centers tending toward small size and Jewish agencies specializing in residential treatment we can expect Jewish agencies to be predominantly small sized. This is the case. Two-thirds of the Jewish agencies were small. Foster home care agencies tend to be large in size, more than half of the nonsectarian agencies specialized in foster home care. We would expect nonsectarian agencies therefore to tend to be large. This is the case. Two-thirds are just that. (This relationship adds a further dimension to the finding noted in Chapter Four that women with

children in large sized agencies, and in agencies under nonsectarian auspices were both very likely to mention "concern" as a role expectation.)

The three structural variables are in turn related to the two interactional variables: topics talked about with caseworkers, and frequency of visits with caseworkers. Tables V-4 and V-5 show this. Explanation of much of the association seems fairly clear.

Tables V-4 and V-5 indicate that women with children in small sized agencies, in residential treatment centers and in agencies under Jewish auspices are considerably more likely to talk about themselves when with the workers and to have had at least some contacts with them in the six months preceding the study interview than women with children in the other placement situations. The two tables also show that the likelihood of not seeing a caseworker at all in the six months prior to the study interview was most probable for women with children in nonsectarian agencies, in large sized agencies, and in agencies specializing in foster home care. Women with offspring in the latter two types of situations were also more likely to talk about discharge and visiting of the child than all other mothers. Finally, the tables indicate that talk about how the child was doing in placement appeared as a conversation topic most frequently for women with children in institutional care and in medium sized agencies.

Having a smaller caseload and therefore more time to devote to casework with families, caseworkers in small sized agencies would be more likely than those in larger agencies to encourage mothers to talk about themselves. Additionally, since residential treatment centers have a psychiatric orientation one could expect that mothers

with children in a placement of that type would be encouraged by the agency caseworkers to participate in the therapeutic orientation by dealing with their own personal problems during casework interviews. Jewish agencies too, since they tend to be small and to specialize in residential treatment, could be expected to follow that pattern. For the same reasons one would expect that mothers with children in treatment centers and in Jewish agencies would see their caseworkers more frequently than mothers with children in other types of placement. (The previous findings noted in Chapter Four, that women with children in residential treatment care, in small sized agencies, and women who talked about themselves when with their caseworkers were all highly likely to mention the role expectation "undisguised," probably reflects the multiple relationship between those variables.)

By the same token workers in larger agencies tend to have larger caseloads and therefore less time to devote to individual families. Since nonsectarian agencies and agencies specializing in foster home care generally are of large size one would expect that caseworkers in such agencies would also have little time to devote to individual families. (The fact that the women most likely to mention the role expectation "concern" were also likely to have their children in large size agencies, in nonsectarian agencies, and to see their caseworkers infrequently, as noted in Chapter Four, probably reflects this relationship.) Additionally, in such cases since child care is being undertaken outside of the administrative headquarters in private homes, and visits under such circumstances are difficult to arrange, one might also conclude that much of the time that caseworker

TABLE V-4

SIZE OF PLACEMENT AGENCY, TYPE OF PLACEMENT OF CHILD,
AND RELIGIOUS AUSPICES OF PLACEMENT AGENCY
BY TOPICS TALKED ABOUT WHEN WITH CASEWORKER

Percent of Mothers with Children in Each Situation Mentioning Talking with Agency Caseworkers About:			
	How Child Doing	Mother	Discharge/Visiting
<u>Size of Agency:</u>			
<u>Total</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>24</u>
Small	71	46	14
Medium	81	22	22
Large	71	38	38
<u>Type of Placement:</u>			
<u>Total</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>24</u>
Residential treatment	61	50	17
Other institution	82	30	18
Foster home	70	37	32
<u>Religious Auspices of Agency:</u>			
<u>Total</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>24</u>
Catholic	75	33	26
Protestant	68	38	24
Jewish	67	50	17
Nonsectarian	80	32	24

TABLE V-5

MOTHERS' CONTACTS WITH AGENCY CASEWORKERS IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS
 BY SIZE OF PLACEMENT AGENCY, BY TYPE OF PLACEMENT,
 AND BY RELIGIOUS AUSPICES OF PLACEMENT AGENCY

Percent Distribution					
<u>Contacts with Caseworkers</u>	<u>Size of Agency</u>				
	<u>Total (N=128)</u>	<u>Small (N=35)</u>	<u>Medium (N=32)</u>	<u>Large (N=61)</u>	
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	
Some	74	83	88	62	
None	26	17	13	38	
<u>Type of Placement</u>					
<u>Contacts with Caseworkers</u>	<u>Total (N=128)</u>	<u>Residential Treatment (N=18)</u>	<u>Other Institution (N=50)</u>	<u>Foster Home (N=60)</u>	
	<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Some	74	89	84	62	
None	26	11	16	38	
<u>Religious Auspices of Agency</u>					
<u>Contacts with Caseworkers</u>	<u>Total (N=128)</u>	<u>Catholic (N=57)</u>	<u>Protestant (N=34)</u>	<u>Jewish (N=12)</u>	<u>Nonsectarian (N=25)</u>
	<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Some	74	77	71	100	60
None	26	23	28	--	40

and mother are together would be spent arranging those visits between mother and child.

The relationships between the variables associated with noting the role expectations under study continue. Ethnic group and socioeconomic level, the "other status" variables, are closely related to the structural variables. It should be noted first, however, that ethnic group and socioeconomic level are themselves related to each other. (The combined effects of that relationship upon perceived role expectations was discussed in Chapter Four.) In Table V-6 one can see that the white women in the study were predominantly of high socioeconomic level while the black and Puerto Rican study mothers were most usually of low or middle socioeconomic level.

TABLE V-6
ETHNIC GROUP AND SOCIOECONOMIC LEVEL OF MOTHERS

Percent Distribution				
Socioeconomic Level	Ethnic Group*			
	Total (N=121)	White (N=31)	Black (N=52)	Puerto Rican (N=38)
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
High	33	71	23	21
Middle	34	26	35	34
Low	33	3	42	45

*Does not include two white women, four black women and one Puerto Rican women who were hospitalized or institutionalized at the time of the interview.

By inspecting Table V-7 one finds that the children of white women and high socioeconomic level women took up many more than their proportionate share of places in small sized agencies, in Jewish agencies and in residential treatment centers. The children of black women predominated in large sized agencies and in foster home care. Study Puerto Rican mothers' children mainly filled places in institutions and in Catholic agencies. Furthermore, the lower the socioeconomic level of a mother, the greater the likelihood that she would have her child in a large sized agency, or in a nonsectarian agency.

Very much like a mass of interlocking circles the complicated relationships among the variables being considered continue to emerge. The "other status" variables are also related to the orientational ones, which in turn are associated with the organizational ones, and of course variables from every area are correlated with the maternal commitment, the motivation for role incumbency, and the evaluation of placement indexes. (Only a few of the most relevant of these relationships will be presented. Relevant in the sense that they appeared in tandem as significantly associated with one of the role expectations, as presented in the previous chapter.)

Table V-8 clearly indicates the relationship between ethnic group and reason for placement. White mothers had more than their proportional share of placements due to child behavior. While only 23 percent of all mothers had children placed for that reason, 40 percent of white women did. (Both types of women were highly likely to mention the role expectation "undisguised.") More black mothers had children placed for reason of inadequate adult role performance than was proportionately expected. While 23 percent of all mothers had

TABLE V-7

ETHNIC GROUP AND SOCIOECONOMIC LEVEL OF MOTHERS BY SIZE OF AGENCY,
BY TYPE OF PLACEMENT, AND BY RELIGIOUS AUSPICES OF PLACEMENT AGENCY

Percent Distribution							
Size of Agency:	Ethnic Group				Socioeconomic Level		
	Total (N=128)	White (N=33)	Black (N=56)	Puerto Rican (N=39)	High (N=40)	Middle (N=41)	Low (N=40)
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Small	27	43	25	18	38	18	30
Medium	25	18	21	36	31	31	17
Large	48	39	54	46	31	51	53
Type of Placement:	Total	White	Black	Puerto Rican	High	Middle	Low
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Residential treatment	14	30	11	5	28	2	12
Other institution	39	27	28	64	36	44	40
Foster home	47	43	61	31	36	54	48
Religious Auspices of Agency:	Total	White	Black	Puerto Rican	High	Middle	Low
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Catholic	44	43	21	80	41	49	42
Protestant	27	15	46	7	24	28	28
Jewish	9	30	4	--	21	5	2
Nonsectarian	20	12	29	13	14	18	28

children placed for that reason, 34 percent of black women did. (Both types of women were highly likely to mention the role expectation "control.") Finally, a much greater proportion of Puerto Rican mothers had their offspring enter foster care as a result of the mothers' mental illness than the sample at large (29 percent of all mothers compared to 39 percent of Puerto Rican mothers). (And again, both types of women were highly likely to mention the role expectation "formality.")

TABLE V-8

ETHNIC GROUP OF MOTHER BY REASON FOR PLACEMENT

Reason for Placement	Percent Distribution			
	Total (N=128)	White (N=33)	Black (N=56)	Puerto Rican (N=39)
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mental illness	25	21	17	39
Child behavior	23	40	21	13
Physical illness	7	6	7	7
Abdication of role	22	21	21	23
Inadequate role	23	12	34	19

The association between reason for placement and type of placement is presented in Table V-9. Unlike children placed for any other reason those who entered foster care because of their own emotional or behavioral problems were almost always placed in institutional

settings, primarily residential treatment centers. This was probably a result of caseworker attempts to place the children in the most suitable available environment to meet their emotional needs. Focus on the children's needs seems to have been the caseworker motivation for the placements of most of the children who entered care because of the inadequate role performance, or the abdication of the caring role, on the part of their mothers. Possibly as an attempt to give these children a more satisfying home life than the one from which they came, foster home care placement was particularly likely for children placed for either of those two reasons.

TABLE V-9
REASON FOR PLACEMENT BY TYPE OF PLACEMENT OF CHILD

Percent Distribution						
Type of Placement	Total (N=128)	Reason for Placement				
		Mental Illness (N=31)	Child Behavior (N=30)	Physical Illness (N=9)	Abdica- tion of Role (N=28)	Inade- quate Role (N=30)
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Residential treatment	14	3	57	--	--	--
Other institution	39	45	40	44	29	40
Foster home	47	52	3	56	71	60

By viewing Table V-10 one can see that the variable motivation for role incumbency¹ was greatest among white women, high socioeconomic level women, women with children who had been placed because of the mental or physical illness of their parent, or because of their own behavior problems, women with children in agencies run under Jewish auspices, and with children in residential treatment centers. (Most of these variables were also found to be associated with mentioning "undisguised" as a role expectation.) Motivation for role incumbency was lowest among black women, low socioeconomic level women, women with children who had been placed because of the adults' inadequate role performance, with children in foster home care, and with children in Protestant agencies. (All of the variables mentioned in the previous sentence were found to be associated with mentioning "control" as a role expectation.)

Table V-11 indicates the mean average maternal role commitment scores (see n. 1) of the mothers as they relate to two variables, reason for placement and ethnic group. The table shows that black mothers and mothers with children placed because of their parents' physical illness or inadequate role performance were the least committed to the mothering role as defined by the maternal commitment index created for this study (see Chapter Four). White women were the most committed, as were women whose children had been placed because of the parents' or the child's mental or emotional problems.

Finally, the association of one variable, socioeconomic level, with the mothers' evaluation of placement should, at least, be noted.

¹See Chapter Four for a detailed description of this variable.

TABLE V-10

MOTHERS' MOTIVATION FOR ROLE INCUMBENCY BY REASON FOR PLACEMENT,
 BY TYPE OF PLACEMENT, BY RELIGIOUS AUSPICES OF AGENCY,
 BY ETHNIC GROUP OF MOTHER, AND BY SOCIOECONOMIC LEVEL OF MOTHER

<u>Reason for Placement:</u>	<u>Mean Motivation for Role Incumbency Score*</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>2.88</u>
Mental illness	3.48
Child behavior	3.30
Physical illness	3.44
Abdication of role	2.50
Inadequate role	2.03
 <u>Type of Placement:</u>	
<u>Total</u>	<u>2.88</u>
Residential treatment	3.22
Other institution	3.08
Foster home	2.62
 <u>Religious Auspices of Agency:</u>	
<u>Total</u>	<u>2.88</u>
Catholic	2.91
Protestant	2.68
Jewish	3.42
Nonsectarian	2.84
 <u>Ethnic Group:</u>	
<u>Total</u>	<u>2.88</u>
White	3.24
Black	2.57
Puerto Rican	3.03
 <u>Socioeconomic Level:</u>	
<u>Total</u>	<u>2.88</u>
High	3.19
Middle	3.03
Low	2.45

*The higher the score the higher the motivation for
 role incumbency.

TABLE V-11

MATERNAL COMMITMENT SCORES BY REASON FOR PLACEMENT AND BY ETHNIC GROUP

<u>Reason for Placement:</u>	<u>Mean Maternal Commitment Score*</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>7.97</u>
Mental illness	8.45
Child behavior	8.53
Physical illness	6.89
Abdication of role	7.71
Inadequate role	7.47
 <u>Ethnic Group:</u>	
<u>Total</u>	<u>7.97</u>
White	8.21
Black	7.73
Puerto Rican	8.10

*The higher the score the higher the maternal commitment.

A clear cut continuum was apparent. The lower a mother's socio-economic level was, the greater likelihood there was for her to have a negative evaluation of placement. High socioeconomic level women had a mean evaluation of placement score of 9.36, middle level women had a mean score of 8.64, and low socioeconomic level women had a mean score of 8.38.

At this point it is quite evident that it is particularly difficult, in view of the myriad interrelationships among the variables associated with mentioning the five role expectations, to isolate with any degree of assurance those few variables which might be more important

than the others as correlates. Multiple regression analysis will be used as the method for attempting to do this.

Multiple regression analysis

The essential task of multiple regression analysis is to develop an equation which mathematically relates a set of independent variables to a dependent variable. Multiple regression is primarily used in behavioral science research as a method for the development of a model for the prediction of a dependent variable from a series of independent variables. The "yield" of a multiple regression can be appropriately utilized to indicate the amount of variance in the dependent variable that can be accounted for by any, or all of, the independent variables. It can also be appropriately utilized to get some indication of the importance of each of the independent variables as correlates of the dependent variable.¹ It is in these two areas, which we shall call variance accounting and variable weighting, rather than in prediction per se, that the following analysis will be primarily focused.

As multiple regression is most often used the independent variables are ordered quantitative variables treated as equal interval scales. What does one do if it is desirable to include purely nominal or qualitative variables (such as ethnic group or topics talked about) as independent variables in multiple regression? The expression of

¹Jacob Cohen, "Multiple Regression as a General Data-Analytic System," Psychological Bulletin, 70 (1968), pp. 426-443; Hubert Blalock, Social Statistics (New York: McGraw Hill Co., 1960), pp. 326-358; Norman Draper and Harry Smith, Applied Regression Analysis (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1966).

such independent variables in multiple regression can be accomplished in various ways, the simplest of which is called "dummy" variable coding.¹

Dummy variable coding involves successively dichotomizing a non-continuous variable so that all but one of its constituent categories is distinguished from the remainder. For each dichotomization all subjects with the attribute are scored 1, and all others, without differentiation, are scored 0. For example, the variable "agency auspices" as used in this study is composed of four categories: Catholic, Protestant, Jewish and Nonsectarian. In dummy variable coding the variable "agency auspices" would become three independent variables (i.e., Catholic/not Catholic; Protestant/not Protestant; Jewish/not Jewish). One might think that a fourth variable for nonsectarian agencies would be necessary, but as Cohen notes such a variable would be redundant. It is only necessary to represent all but one of the constituent categories of the original nominal variable in dummy variable coding. The last category (nonsectarian in the example being utilized) will serve as a reference group for the others. "A fourth (dichotomization) here is not only unnecessary, its inclusion would result in indeterminacy in the computation of the MR constants. This is an instance of a more general demand on the set of independent variables in any MR system; no independent variable in the set may yield a multiple R with the remaining independent variables of 1.00 . . . if we introduced a fourth variable . . . any of the four would yield $R = 1.00$ when treated as a dependent variable

¹Cohen, op. cit., pp. 428-429.

regressed on the other three."¹ Any category in the original nominal variable may be picked to play the role of the missing reference group.

The intent of dummy variable coding is to understand the operation of the various parts of the nominal variable as a set. The procedure provides us with the opportunity to include nominal or qualitative independent variables in multiple regression analysis.

The model equation for multiple regression takes the form:

$$Y = a + b_1 X_1 + b_2 X_2 + \dots b_i X_i$$

Y indicates the dependent variable. The X's indicate the various independent variables, "a" indicates the regression constant, and the b's indicate the regression coefficients utilized to weigh each component variable in the formula for best predictive accuracy.² Rather than prediction, one of our primary intents in this analysis is to compare the various independent variables as to their unique abilities to influence the dependent variable.

In the conventional multiple regression analysis the standardized regression coefficients (beta weights) are utilized to judge the relative importance of independent variables.³ However, complications arising out of the use of "dummy" variable coding makes our use of beta weights for that purpose difficult and misleading. Each

¹Ibid., p. 428.

²In dummy variable coding the included groups' regression coefficients are derived, but the "missing" reference group's regression coefficient is always zero. The actual values will vary according to which group is used as the referent, but the differences among the coefficients will always be the same. Ibid., p. 431.

³Blalock, op. cit., pp. 344-345.

of the component parts of the set created through "dummy" variable coding has its own beta weight, often differing from each other by large amounts. Determining one such value for the entire set, or in other words, arriving at a beta weight for the entire dummy coded non-continuous variable requires a procedure which is too complicated for our present needs. In its place the increments to the squared multiple correlation coefficient (R^2) contributed by each independent variable will be utilized to judge that variable's unique influence upon the dependent variable in question. This was done with the following rationale. At any stage in the multiple regression procedure the cumulative R^2 obtained represents the proportion of variation in the data explained by the variables entered into the equation up to that point.¹ The increment to R^2 contributed by any one variable after it has been entered into the procedure can be seen to be the proportion of variation in the data explained by that one variable after the effects of the other variables already entered had been taken into account. Since, as will be noted below, variables were entered into the equations obtained in the order of the magnitude of their association with the dependent variable, the incremental explanatory power contributed by any one variable was therefore considered a measure of that variable's unique influence upon the dependent variable in question.

A multiple regression analysis was done for each of the five role expectations (as dependent variables) with the twelve "determinant" variables (as independent variables) that were included in the

¹Draper and Smith, op. cit., pp. 26, 117-118.

study. Dummy variable coding was utilized for each independent variable that was nominal or qualitative in nature. In each instance the strategy utilized was the following. The variable that was most highly correlated with the dependent variable was the one that was first entered into the equation. Subsequent variables were entered according to the highest partial correlation between the dependent variable and the independent variables, controlling for independent variables already entered into the equation.

Tables V-12 through V-16 present the results of the five multiple regressions. Each of the tables present the following:

1. The independent variables ordered in the way in which they were entered into the equation.

2. The individual multiple correlation squared (R^2) for each independent variable. (This figure indicates the increment to R^2 contributed by that independent variable after the effects of previously entered variables have been taken into account.)

3. The cumulative multiple correlation squared for each independent variable. (This figure indicates the cumulative amount of variance in the dependent variable accounted for by that independent variable and all of the other independent variables previously entered into the equation.)

4. Significance test results for the entire multiple correlation procedure testing the hypothesis that the variance accounted for by all of the variables included is actually zero.

To be undisguised. In a previous chapter we saw that the expectation "to be undisguised" was most frequently held by white mothers, high socioeconomic level mothers, mothers with children in

residential treatment centers, in small sized agencies, in agencies under Jewish auspices, and mothers who talked about themselves when with the caseworkers. At the beginning of this chapter, however, we also saw that most of the variables closely associated with mentioning undisguised as an expectation were very much related to each other. For example, agencies under Jewish auspices tended to specialize in residential treatment, and residential treatment centers tended to be small in size. High socioeconomic level women were most frequently white. Residential treatment centers tended to most often serve children of white and high socioeconomic level mothers. In addition, women who noted that they talked about themselves when with the caseworkers most frequently had children in agencies under Jewish auspices, and in residential treatment.

The myriad interrelationships make it difficult to tell which of the variables were most important in determining the perception by mothers of "undisguised" as a role expectation. The multiple regression results presented in Table V-12 help us to unravel the unique importance of the twelve interrelated independent variables. The table shows the results of the multiple regression analysis done with the role expectation "to be undisguised" as the dependent variable. The cumulative R^2 obtained after all twelve of the independent variables had been entered was 0.3275. In other words, close to thirty-three percent of the variation about the dependent variable was accounted for by those twelve independent variables. The independent variable contributing decidedly the largest increment to R^2 (variance increment) was "topics talked about" (12.39 percent). The next four

most influential variables were "ethnic group" (5.05 percent),¹ "type of placement" (3.68 percent), "agency auspices" (3.58 percent), and "size of agency" (2.78 percent).² In effect, close to seven-eighths of the variance accounted for by all of the twelve variables was determined by those five. Two-thirds of it was determined by the first three variables, "topics talked about," "ethnic group," and "type of placement."

To be controlled. The data presented in Chapter Four indicated that the expectation "to be controlled" was most frequently held by black women, low socioeconomic level women, women with children in foster home care, with children placed because of inadequate performance of the caring role on the part of the mother, women who talked about discharge and/or visiting of the child when with the case-worker, who had a relatively low motivation for role incumbency and a low commitment to their mothering role. Data presented at the beginning of this chapter indicated the complicated interrelationships between all of those variables. For example, black women tended most often to have children placed in foster homes. Children entering placement because they were inadequately cared for by their parents were most often placed in foster homes. The children of black mothers

¹This and all following notations of its kind indicate the increment to R^2 determined by a variable taking into account the contribution of previously entered variables.

²Consider those first five variables as an example for the following comment. Note that although "size of agency" was entered into the regression before "agency auspices" (due to its higher partial correlation with the dependent variable), the increment to R^2 of "agency auspices" is greater than that of "size of agency, and therefore "agency auspices" can be considered to be of relatively greater importance in determining the independent variable than "size of agency."

TABLE V-12

MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS WITH ROLE EXPECTATION
 "TO BE UNDISGUISED" AS DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Independent Variable	R ²	Cumulative R ²
Topics talked about	0.1239	0.1239
Ethnic group	0.0505	0.1744
Type care	0.0368	0.2112
Size agency	0.0278	0.2390
Agency auspices	0.0358	0.2748
Incumbency motive	0.0151	0.2899
Maternal commitment	0.0138	0.3037
Socioeconomic level	0.0066	0.3103
Reason for placement	0.0121	0.3224
Months since placement	0.0044	0.3268
Contacts with caseworker	0.0007	0.3275
Evaluation of placement	0.0000	0.3275

F = 2.6056

P = 0.001

entered placement most frequently because of inadequate parental care, and were most often put into foster homes. Women whose children were in foster homes most frequently talked about discharge and/or visiting of their children when with the caseworkers. In addition, the lowest motivation for role incumbency scores and the lowest maternal commitment scores were achieved by black women, women with children in foster homes, and women whose children entered placement originally because of inadequate parental care.

So interrelated are the variables associated with the perception of "to be controlled" as a role expectation that it is difficult to determine their relative importance. The results of the multiple regression done with that role expectation as the dependent variable help us somewhat in that respect (Table V-13). The table indicates that over twenty-one percent of the variance about the dependent variable was determined by the twelve independent variables entered into the analysis. That is to say that the final cumulative R^2 obtained was 0.2137. Reason for placement was the variable which accounted for the largest individual variance increment, 3.87 percent. The four variables accounting for the next largest increments were, "type of placement" (3.80 percent), "topics talked about" (3.55 percent), "size of agency" (2.89 percent), and "motivation for role incumbency" (2.60 percent). The first five variables themselves determined over three-quarters of the entire amount of variance resulting from the multiple regression. The first three variables, "reason for placement," "type of placement," and "topics talked about" determined over one-half of that total variance.

TABLE V-13
 MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS WITH ROLE EXPECTATION
 "TO BE CONTROLLED" AS DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Independent Variable	R ²	Cumulative R ²
Type care	0.0380	0.0380
Topics talked about	0.0355	0.0735
Socioeconomic level	0.0159	0.0894
Reason for placement	0.0387	0.1281
Incumbency motive	0.0260	0.1541
Size agency	0.0289	0.1830
Evaluation of placement	0.0150	0.1980
Months since placement	0.0058	0.2038
Agency auspices	0.0055	0.2093
Ethnic group	0.0040	0.2133
Maternal commitment	0.0030	0.2136
Contacts with caseworker	0.0010	0.2137

F = 1.4540*

P = 0.114

*The significance test results for the multiple regression procedure before the variables "ethnic group," "maternal commitment," and "contacts with caseworker" were entered were as follows:
 F = 1.7246, P = 0.049.

To display concern for the child. Chapter Four uncovered the following to be associated with the role expectation "to display concern for the child": non-high socioeconomic level, having a child in a nonsectarian agency, talking about how the child was getting along in placement when with the caseworker, and having infrequent contacts with the caseworker. In the present chapter most of these variables were shown to be related to each other. It was indicated that non-high socioeconomic level women were most likely to have children in large sized agencies; that most nonsectarian agencies were large in size; that women with children in nonsectarian agencies were most likely to talk about how their children were doing in placement when they were together with the caseworker; that women with children in large sized agencies were likely not to have seen a caseworker at all in the six months prior to the study interview; and that the same was true for women with children in nonsectarian agencies.

An attempt to unravel these overlapping relationships and rank the variables in order of their importance as correlates of the role expectation "to display concern for the child" is presented in Table V-14 which shows the results of the multiple regression with that role expectation as the dependent variable. For this multiple regression the final cumulative R^2 obtained after all twelve independent variables were entered into the analysis was 0.2376. Re-phrased one can therefore say that almost twenty-four percent of the variance was accounted for by those variables. "Topics talked about" contributed the largest single increment to that variance, 6.67 percent. The next two most influential variables were "socioeconomic level" (4.61 percent), and "contacts with caseworker" (3.41 percent).

TABLE V-14
 MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS WITH ROLE EXPECTATION "TO DISPLAY
 CONCERN FOR CHILD" AS DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Independent Variable	R^2	Cumulative R^2
Socioeconomic level	0.0461	0.0461
Topics talked about	0.0667	0.1128
Contacts with caseworker	0.0341	0.1469
Maternal commitment	0.0134	0.1603
Evaluation of placement	0.0160	0.1763
Months since placement	0.0090	0.1853
Size agency	0.0108	0.1961
Ethnic group	0.0124	0.2085
Incumbency motive	0.0045	0.2130
Type care	0.0037	0.2167
Agency auspices	0.0103	0.2270
Reason for placement	0.0106	0.2376

F = 1.6670

P = 0.05

These three variables alone determined three-fifths of the variance accounted for in this multiple regression.

To be formal. Women who noted formality as a role obligation when with their placement agency caseworkers were, as was indicated in the previous chapter, most frequently Puerto Rican. Their children were most usually placed in Catholic agencies, in institutions or foster homes (but not residential treatment centers), and had entered foster care as a result of the mental illness of the mother or her abdication of the child caring role. As indicated in the early part of the present chapter children of Puerto Rican mothers most usually were placed in Catholic agencies and either in institutional or foster home care, (rarely in residential treatment centers). In addition, it was shown that the children of Puerto Rican women most frequently entered foster care because of their mothers' mental illness or abdication of the caring role. Puerto Rican ethnic group seems to be related to almost all the other variables associated with noting formality as a role expectation. The results of the multiple regression with the role expectation "to be formal" as the dependent variable are, therefore, not at all surprising (Table V-15). The results indicate that thirty percent of the variance about the dependent variable is accounted for by the twelve study independent variables (cumulative R^2 equalled 0.2972). "Ethnic group" was the variable which individually, by far, contributed the largest increment to R^2 , 13.18 percent. The two variables that followed in influence were "type of placement" (5.07 percent), and "topics talked about" (3.82 percent). These three variables alone contributed three-quarters of the total variance accounted for.

TABLE V-15
 MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS WITH ROLE EXPECTATION
 "TO BE FORMAL" AS DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Independent Variable	R^2	Cumulative R^2
Ethnic group	0.1318	0.1318
Topics talked about	0.0382	0.1700
Type care	0.0507	0.2207
Months since placement	0.0139	0.2346
Size agency	0.0183	0.2529
Maternal commitment	0.0080	0.2609
Contacts with caseworker	0.0086	0.2695
Socioeconomic level	0.0063	0.2758
Evaluation of placement	0.0054	0.2812
Agency auspices	0.0064	0.2876
Reason for placement	0.0085	0.2961
Incumbency motive	0.0011	0.2972

F = 2.2626

P = 0.004

To be acquiescent. In Chapter Four it was shown that very few variables were related to the perception of "to be acquiescent" as a role expectation when with the placement agency caseworker. Talking about discharge and/or visiting of the child when with the caseworker, having a child in an agency administered under nonsectarian auspices, and having a low motivation for role incumbency, were among the few. No notable relationships between those variables was indicated in the material previously presented in this chapter. The results of the multiple regression analysis done with the expectation "to be acquiescent" as the dependent variable (presented in Table V-16) indicates that the twelve independent variables studied accounted for only twelve percent of the variance about that dependent variable (cumulative R^2 equalled 0.1172). But the significance test results indicate that that outcome was very probably due to chance alone.

At the beginning of this chapter we noted the manifold interrelationships between the twelve independent variables included in the study. The outcome of the multiple regressions just presented can help us to unfold those interrelationships somewhat and give us insight into the unique influence upon perceived role expectations of each of the twelve included independent variables.

Excluding the results of the regression done with "acquiescent" as the dependent variable (because its significance tests results indicate the outcome is very likely to have been due to chance alone), it appears that, as a generalization, the interaction variable "topics talked about" could be ranked as the most important correlate of the perceived role expectations. It accounted for the largest increment to R^2 in two of the four included multiple regressions, and the third

TABLE V-16
 MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS WITH ROLE EXPECTATION
 "TO BE ACQUIESCENT" AS DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Independent Variable	R^2	Cumulative R^2
Agency auspices	0.0269	0.0269
Topics talked about	0.0393	0.0662
Incumbency motive	0.0123	0.0785
Contacts with caseworker	0.0101	0.0886
Reason for placement	0.0109	0.0995
Type care	0.0063	0.1058
Maternal commitment	0.0045	0.1103
Socioeconomic level	0.0024	0.1127
Ethnic group	0.0022	0.1149
Size agency	0.0012	0.1161
Months since placement	0.0011	0.1172
Evaluation of placement	0.0000	0.1172

F = 0.7101

P = 0.808

largest increment for the remaining two regressions. (Another interaction variable, "contacts with caseworker," placed third in one of the regressions.) Second in importance seems to be the structural variable "type of placement." It contributed the second largest increment to R^2 in two of the regressions, and the third largest in a third. "Other status" variables seem to have achieved third place in importance among the "determinant" variables. "Ethnic group" accounted for the largest increment to R^2 in one multiple regression, and for the second largest increment in another, while "socioeconomic level" accounted for the second largest increment in still a third regression. In contrast the variable "evaluation of placement" might be rated last in importance among the twelve variables. It placed twelfth in one regression, eleventh in one, seventh and fourth in the remaining two. Another of the intra-personal variables, "incumbency motivation," also rated quite low, placing twelfth in one regression, eleventh in another, sixth in another, and fifth in the remaining one. As a suggestive summary exercise, the average rank for each of the twelve included independent variables is presented below. (The average rank takes into account each variable's unique increment to R^2 for four multiple regressions.)

<u>Independent Variable</u>	<u>Average Rank</u>
Topics talked about	2.0
Type of placement	4.8
Ethnic group	4.8
Size of agency	5.0
Reason for placement	6.0
Socioeconomic level	6.8
Agency auspices	7.3
Contacts with caseworker	8.0
Maternal commitment	8.0
Months since placement	8.3
Evaluation of placement	8.5
Incumbency motivation	8.5

In summary, it can be seen that all of the twelve included variables made at least some contribution to the mothers' perceptions of their role expectations when with their caseworkers. Among the twelve included variables, however, those of a sociological nature proved to be the most influential (i.e., interactional aspects of the role relationships, represented highest in the rankings by "topics talked about"; structural components of the system of which the focal role is a part, represented second in the rankings by "type of placement"; and positions occupied in other systems, represented third in the rankings by "ethnic group"). Variables with orientational and intra-personal content ranked lower in influence than those of the social nature just noted. Orientational aspects of the focal role, most importantly represented by "reason for placement," ranked intermediate in influence. And intra-personal variables like "maternal commitment," "incumbency motivation," and "evaluation of placement" turned out to be the least influential correlates of the role expectations studied.

CHAPTER SIX

EGO/ALTER COMPARISONS

In previous chapters the manner in which the role expectations were ascertained from the mothers was presented. It was emphasized that two types of questions were asked. One inquired about the ways of behaving the women felt were expected of them (by their role partners) when they were together with the agency caseworkers ("alter" expectations). The other inquired about the behavior the mothers expected of themselves in such circumstances ("ego" expectations). In the analysis up to this point the data that have been presented combined the answers to those two types of questions. That is, expectations were noted as perceived to be present in the situation when the mother and the caseworker were together. This was done with the following rationale. The mothers themselves related both the alter and ego expectations. The main focus of the study was the relationship between perceived role expectations and selected independent variables. Any expectation perceived in the situation by the mothers was considered important in that respect.

In the original thinking about this study it had been our intention to compare and contrast alter and ego expectations rather than combine them. That analytic line as a major endeavor was curtailed because of the small number of mothers who noted the five expectations separately for ego only or for alter only. As a

consequence, in previous chapters alter and ego expectations were combined and analyzed as the expectational field existing in the situation from the mothers' point of view. In the present chapter, however, despite the small number of cases involved, we will deal separately with alter and ego expectations. We will particularly look at comparisons between the two and emphasize the concepts of role strain and role strain resolution. It should be kept in mind that, as was the case with the situational expectations discussed in previous chapters, what are to be called alter or ego expectations reflect the mothers reported perceptions (and the mothers' perceptions only).

Since the women reported behaviors they saw as expected of them by their caseworkers, and separately reported those they expected of themselves, we can present for each expectation some indication of the agreement, or commonality, of ego and alter expectations, (as well as the lack of agreement between them). We can answer the question "how often did the mothers in their own minds, concur with the caseworkers as to appropriate role obligations?" That question can also be explored with pairs of expectations mentioned by the mothers. We noted in Chapter Three that each woman reported an average of 2.3 expectations. The role obligations then, were most often reported in pairs. The circumstance of reported agreement, or non-agreement, between role partners, will be looked at for pairs of expectations as well. The concept of role strain will be explored in this context.

During the study interviews questions were asked of the mothers which inquired about the likelihood of, and the ease of, performing each expectation they mentioned. Alter/ego comparisons for

these data will also be discussed in this chapter. Ideas presented by the data concerning the resolution of role strain will likewise be included.

Alter/ego commonality

Table VI-1 below indicates the proportion of women reporting each expectation who mentioned it for both themselves and the caseworker (commonality), for themselves (ego) only, or for the caseworker (alter) only. The extent of commonality was high but it differed for each of the role obligations. It was most frequently expressed for the role requirement "to be undisguised." More than half of the women who mentioned that expectation at all, noted it for both the caseworker and for themselves. Alter/ego commonality was intermediate in frequency for the expectations "control," "concern for the child," and "formality." It was least frequently noted for the role requirement "to be acquiescent." Only one quarter of the mothers who reported the latter expectation did so for both themselves and the caseworker.

Differences by expectation can be seen when commonality did not exist, that is when the expectation was mentioned for the mother only, or for the caseworker only. In such cases the respondents were considerably more likely to view "control" and "formality" as ego, rather than alter expectations. The reverse was true for the other three expectations studied. Caseworkers were reported as more likely to hold the expectations "to be undisguised," "to be concerned," and "to be acquiescent" than the mothers themselves.

We might conclude from these data that when mothers do not assign themselves the same role expectations that they perceive are assigned to them by the workers, they, very generally, tend to report expecting restraint and reserve of themselves, while perceiving their role partners as expecting candidness, warmth and agreeableness. One might even conceptualize the difference as ego-expected "distance" versus alter-expected "intimacy."¹

TABLE VI-1

EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY COMMONALITY BETWEEN ROLE PARTNERS

<u>Commonality</u>	<u>Undis-</u>		<u>Con-</u>		<u>Expectations</u>				<u>Acqui-</u>	
	<u>guised</u>		<u>trolled</u>		<u>Con-</u>		<u>Formal</u>		<u>escent</u>	
	<u>N</u>	<u>Per-</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Per-</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Per-</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Per-</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Per-</u>
<u>cent</u>	<u>cent</u>	<u>cent</u>	<u>cent</u>	<u>cent</u>	<u>cent</u>	<u>cent</u>	<u>cent</u>	<u>cent</u>	<u>cent</u>	<u>cent</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>100</u>
Commonality expressed*	52	55	30	43	27	43	13	35	9	24
<u>Not expressed</u>										
<u>Mentioned</u>										
for case-										
worker only	24	26	12	17	22	34	4	11	18	49
Mentioned for										
mother only	18	19	28	40	15	23	20	54	10	27

*Mentioned for both caseworker and mother.

¹This conclusion, and for that matter all alter/ego comparisons made in this study should be viewed with the awareness that the numbers upon which they are based are relatively small. As Table VI-1 indicates the mothers mentioning the expectation "to be undisguised" for the caseworker was only 24 while the number mentioning it for themselves only was 18. In the case of the expectation "to be controlled" mention for caseworker was only 12 and for self was only 28. For "to be concerned about the child" the respective numbers were 22 and 15, for "to be formal" the respective numbers were 4 and 20, and for "to be acquiescent," 18 and 10.

There are a number of reasons to suspect that the perceptions by the mothers of the caseworker expectations along the lines of openness, warmth and agreeableness are substantially accurate representations of those actually held by the caseworkers. It was noted in Chapter Two that the major role obligation of foster care agency caseworkers with reference to the natural mothers is to give them continuing help so that they could maintain their relationship with their child and prepare for his return to the family home. In pursuit of those objectives the caseworkers' job is made easier if they can obtain from each mother candid and comprehensive reports of her life circumstances and her conscious emotional feelings (i.e., "to be undisguised"). Their job is facilitated if the mother displays obvious care and concern for her child (i.e., "to display concern for the child,") and if the mother agrees with and attempts to help effectuate the caseworkers plans and objectives with regard to both the mother and the child (i.e., "to be acquiescent").

The mothers on the other hand are clients in the casework situation. As such they lack power to initiate decisive action with regard to their children's activities in placement, or their return home. Additionally, as incumbents of a deviant role with some stigma attached by the larger society they also have little latitude for appeal to other social authorities. One can understand, therefore, the mothers' preference for "formality" and self-control in the casework situation.

Pairs of expectations

When expectations mentioned as pairs by the mothers are examined it becomes clear that the paired role requirements were not always reported as held both by caseworker and mother. Rather, very often one of them was noted only as an alter expectation, and/or one only as an ego expectation. In effect, four separate types of situations are possible, and each has its own set of consequences especially with regard to the concept of role strain. We will present the four types of situations first, and then the sources of role strain suggested by each.

Types of situations:

(1) Both alter and ego are seen by the mothers to hold both expectations of the pair. The circumstance we shall call "ego/alter consensus." (A mother who mentioned both "undisguised" and "controlled" for herself, and both "undisguised" and "controlled" for the caseworker would fit into this group.)

(2) Ego is seen to hold only one and alter to hold only the other expectation of the pair. This circumstance we shall call "ego/alter individuality." (A mother who mentioned the expectation "undisguised" only for the caseworker, and "controlled" only for herself would fit into this group.)

(3) Both ego and alter are seen to hold one of the two expectations of the pair, while only ego or alter is seen to hold the second. This circumstance we shall call "partial consensus." (A mother who mentioned both "undisguised" and "controlled" for the caseworker, but only "controlled" for herself would fit into this group.)

(4) Either ego or alter is seen to hold both expectations of the pair, while the role partner is seen to hold neither. This circumstance we shall call "ego/alter dominance." (A mother who mentioned both "undisguised" and "controlled" for the caseworker but neither of those expectations for herself would fit into this group.)

Sources of role strain. Each of the four types of situations described above present the opportunity for at least one of two categories of role strain. William J. Goode described role strain as "the felt difficulty in fulfilling role obligations," and suggested that every role relationship contains at least some such strain.¹ For our study mothers' difficulty in fulfilling role obligations could arise due to the fact that the pairs of expectations themselves, whether or not they are held in common by ego and alter, seem at times to be logically or emotionally incompatible. Of the ten pairs of expectations included in this study three could be considered incompatible to a greater or lesser degree. They are: (1) "undisguised" and "controlled," (to be both candid and reined at the same time seems particularly difficult;); (2) "undisguised" and "formal," (to be both candid and politely reticent at the same time also seems difficult;); and (3) "controlled" and "concerned," (to be, at the same time, both reined and loving might be hard to achieve.)

¹William J. Goode, "A Theory of Role Strain," American Sociological Review, 25 (August 1960), pp. 483-496. It should be noted that the concept of role conflict indicates another situation than felt difficulty in fulfilling role obligations. As Bates notes, ". . . in order for normative conflict to be classified as 'role conflict' the norms must be part of two roles played by the same actor." F.L. Bates, "Some Observations Concerning the Structural Aspect of Role Conflict," Pacific Sociological Review, 5 (Fall, 1962), p. 79.

Role strain could also arise for our study mothers when the role partners themselves are seen to hold different behavioral expectations for the focal role, whether or not the expectations themselves are seemingly compatible. In other words, for our study mothers felt difficulty in fulfilling role obligations could arise from either (1) expectational incompatibility, or (2) role partner difference, or both.

The extent of role strain suggested by each of the four types of ego/alter situations would seem to vary along a continuum of seriousness, with ego/alter consensus providing the least difficulty for the role incumbent, followed in extent of difficulty by partial consensus, ego/alter individuality, and ego/alter dominance.

In the situation of ego/alter consensus, where both role partners are seen to hold both expectations of the pair, role partner difference is, of course, not a potential source of role strain, but expectational incompatibility is. The situation of partial consensus indicates the circumstances in which one expectation of a pair is seen as held in common by both alter and ego while the other is not. The possibility of strain due to expectational incompatibility exists to some degree here, as does that of strain due to role partner difference. However, there is the possibility that that strain would be mitigated by the fact that consensus is seen for one expectation at least. The situation of ego/alter individuality, where ego is seen to hold one and alter to hold the other expectation of a pair, is open to the possibility of both sources of role strain. However, if the two expectations under consideration are compatible the felt difficulty in fulfilling both may not be very great for the study

mothers. Finally, in the case of ego/alter dominance, where either ego or alter is seen to hold both expectations of the pair while the role partner is seen to hold neither, both sources of role strain are possible, and both are potentially great. In this situation if expectational incompatibility exists, (whether it is ego or alter who is seen to hold the incompatible pair of expectations), the problem appears to be one of intrapersonal conflict where the incumbent potentially is faced with a "damned if she does, and damned if she doesn't," circumstance. In addition, in the case of ego/alter dominance role partner difference is at its most extreme, with one partner being seen as dominating the expectational field entirely.

Table VI-2 indicates the number and percent of study mothers who mentioned each of the ten pairs of expectations for each of the four types of situations of compatibility between ego and alter.¹ Very few cases fell into the categories of ego/alter consensus or ego/alter dominance. Partial consensus was the most usual category noted. Ego/alter individuality occurred next most frequently. It would seem therefore, that the two situations with the potential for a moderate degree of role strain were mentioned by the mothers with the greatest frequency. The two situations with the potential for the least, and the most, role strain were mentioned quite infrequently. If we were to expand on these results to say something about role relationships in general, we might conclude, as Goode did,² that role strain exists to some degree in every role relationship. However,

¹Table III-2 in Chapter Three indicates the number and percent of mothers mentioning each of the ten pairs of expectations.

²Goode, op. cit.

Table VI-2

Pairs of expectations mentioned by mothers by extent of commonality
between role partners

<u>Pairs of expectations:</u>	<u>Number and percent of mothers mentioning pair:</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>Formal and concerned</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>100</u>
Ego/alter consensus	-	-
Ego/alter individuality	6	43
Partial consensus	7	50
Ego/alter dominance	1	7
<u>Formal and acquiescent</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>100</u>
Ego/alter consensus	1	11
Ego/alter individuality	3	34
Partial consensus	5	55
Ego/alter dominance	-	-
<u>Formal and undisguised</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>100</u>
Ego/alter consensus	2	9
Ego/alter individuality	11	48
Partial consensus	9	39
Ego/alter dominance	1	4
<u>Undisguised and acquiescent</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>100</u>
Ego/alter consensus	2	8
Ego/alter individuality	8	33
Partial consensus	13	55
Ego/alter dominance	1	4
<u>Controlled and acquiescent</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>100</u>
Ego/alter consensus	-	-
Ego/alter individuality	6	38
Partial consensus	7	43
Ego/alter dominance	3	19

(Table continued on following page.)

Table VI-2 continued

Pairs of expectations mentioned by mothers by extent of commonality
between role partners

<u>Pairs of expectations:</u>	<u>Number and percent of mothers mentioning pair:</u>	
	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
<u>Undisguised and controlled</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>100</u>
Ego/alter consensus	10	18
Ego/alter individuality	11	20
Partial consensus	29	53
Ego/alter dominance	5	9
<u>Controlled and formal</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>100</u>
Ego/alter consensus	2	9
Ego/alter individuality	2	9
Partial consensus	14	64
Ego/alter dominance	4	18
<u>Undisguised and concerned</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>100</u>
Ego/alter consensus	8	19
Ego/alter individuality	9	21
Partial consensus	21	49
Ego/alter dominance	5	11
<u>Acquiescent and concerned</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>100</u>
Ego/alter consensus	2	13
Ego/alter individuality	3	19
Partial consensus	8	49
Ego/alter dominance	3	19
<u>Controlled and concerned</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>100</u>
Ego/alter consensus	6	18
Ego/alter individuality	10	30
Partial consensus	12	37
Ego/alter dominance	5	15

our study findings seem to indicate that extremes of role strain seem not to be the general rule. Rather, for the average role relationship one might expect to find only a moderate degree of role strain as the usual circumstance.

Role strain resolution

Various sociologists have attempted to enumerate specific modes by which role strain is resolved. Merton, for example, has suggested various social mechanisms which might function to prevent this type of strain from entirely disrupting role relationships. Among these are: (1) the variation in intensity of role involvement on the part of role incumbents and their role partners, (2) the variation in the ownership and use of power, ("By power [is meant the]. . . capacity for imposing one's own will in a social action, even against the resistance of others taking part in that action," (3) the insulation of many role-activities from observability, (4) the observability by role partners of conflicting role demands made upon role incumbents, (which may lead in general toward efforts to resolve contradictions), and (5) the social support by others in similar social statuses who are facing similar role strain.¹

Empirical studies have also suggested some ameliorative mechanisms. For example, Gross, Mason and McEachern investigated the manner in which school superintendents resolved incompatible role expectations. These investigators found their respondents reporting

¹Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (Revised edition; Glencoe: Free Press, 1957), pp. 369-379.

strategies of compromise and avoidance to cope with the strain of incompatible role expectations. However, the most usual strategy was an unequivocal choice between the incompatible alternatives. That choice was most often made on the basis of its being considered the legitimate "professional" expectation by the school superintendents.¹

Findings of our present study suggest still other resolution dimensions. During the course of the study interviews each time the respondent mentioned a role expectation they were directly asked two additional questions: "Would doing (expectation) be easy or hard for you?" and "In a talk with the agency caseworker would you be likely to actually do (expectation)?" Data were therefore gathered about the effort involved in performing each role obligation mentioned, as well as the probability of actually performing it.

Whatever the behavior, as Table VI-3 below indicates, if it was reported to be expected by the mother herself (an ego expectation) it was more likely to be noted as easy to do than if it was reported as expected of the mother by the caseworker. The reverse was also true. Expectations mentioned as held by the caseworkers for the mothers (alter expectations) were more likely to be seen as hard to do than those reported held by the mothers for themselves.² In other words,

¹Neal Gross, Ward S. Mason and Alexander W. McEachern, Explorations in Role Analysis: Studies of the School Superintendency Role (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1958), pp. 244-327.

²Table VI-4 notes that the reported ease of performing the expectation "to be controlled" was not ascertained for a large number of cases. This was due to interviewer error. The expectation in these instances was phrased in a negative way (i.e., "not to talk about myself"). Initially some interviewers thought it illogical to pursue probes to a negative statement of that kind. By the time this situation was corrected probes for a considerable number of cases had not been asked.

TABLE VI-3

ALTER AND EGO EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY EASE OF DOING EXPECTATION

Percent Distribution										
Expectation Mentioned for:										
Ease of Doing	Undisguised		Controlled		Concerned		Formal		Acquiescent	
	Case- worker (N=76)	Mother (N=70)	Case- worker (N=42)	Mother (N=58)	Case- worker (N=49)	Mother (N=42)	Case- worker (N=17)	Mother (N=33)	Case- worker (N=27)	Mother (N=19)
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Easy	71	83	33	45	78	96	71	79	52	84
Hard	24	11	40	22	20	2	12	18	41	16
Not ascertained	5	6	26	33	2	2	18	3	7	--

the mothers felt it easier to perform self imposed role obligations, and harder to perform obligations they believed were required by their role partners.

Table VI-4 indicates a similar finding. Whatever the behavior, the women were more likely to report themselves as apt to actually perform it if they had mentioned it as an ego expectation rather than an alter expectation.¹ The women, it seems, reported that they were more likely to actually perform self imposed role obligations than obligations they believed were required by their role partners.

In sum, with respect to resolution of role strain, when confronted with differing, and sometimes incompatible, role demands, our respondents reported that they were most likely to perform those expectations they found easiest to do, and/or the ones they themselves saw as appropriate rather than the ones they saw as required of them by their role partners.

¹The same explanation noted in footnote 2 cited on the previous page is applicable to the large number of not ascertainables obtained for the expectation "to be controlled" in Table VI-4.

TABLE VI-4

ALTER AND EGO EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY LIKELIHOOD OF DOING EXPECTATION

Percent Distribution										
<u>Expectation Mentioned for:</u>										
<u>Likelihood</u>	<u>Undisguised</u>		<u>Controlled</u>		<u>Concerned</u>		<u>Formal</u>		<u>Acquiescent</u>	
	<u>Case- worker (N=76)</u>	<u>Mother (N=70)</u>	<u>Case- worker (N=42)</u>	<u>Mother (N=58)</u>	<u>Case- worker (N=49)</u>	<u>Mother (N=42)</u>	<u>Case- worker (N=17)</u>	<u>Mother (N=33)</u>	<u>Case- worker (N=27)</u>	<u>Mother (N=19)</u>
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Likely to do	76	81	40	50	86	93	71	79	59	89
Not likely to do	16	13	31	17	12	2	12	9	33	11
Not ascertained	8	6	29	33	2	5	17	12	8	--

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study had been interested in isolating and ranking in importance some of the correlates of perceived role expectations. Taking as its own the assumption basic to modern role theory that in any role relationship both ego and alter hold expectations as to how each should behave in the roles that the relationship activates, the study focused on the expectations existing in the role relationship consisting of the dyad: mothers of children placed in foster care and caseworkers from the administrative social agencies responsible for the care of those children. The perspective utilized for the study placed the mothers in the focal position as ego, and the agency caseworkers in the counter position as alter. The focus was exclusively upon the role expectations reported by the mothers as applicable to them in the specific situational context of a face-to-face talk with the caseworker.

A primary question addressed by the study was, "Do all incumbents of the same role hold the same, or even similar behavioral expectations?" It has been the habit of social scientists to assume that ideas of appropriate behavior applicable to definite social positions are uniform within any given social system. However, a number of writers have questioned that view (i.e., Gross, Mason and McEachern, Levinson, Gordon, and Preiss and Ehrlic), pointing out that although

some amount of consensus on role expectations is probably required for the operation of a social system, the amount of consensus is variable. In other words, the amount of agreement on the behavioral obligations of any position is open to empirical examination. Several empirical studies attesting to the variability of role expectations were noted in previous chapters. This study attempted to join their ranks.

Most importantly however, when the assumption of consensus concerning role expectations is questioned, the possibility that the variability in conceptions of appropriate behavior attached to social positions may be systematically related to social and psychological variables clearly presents itself. And one is led to ask, in what ways? What factors are related to variations in role expectations? Are some of those factors more important correlates of role expectations than others? That is the problem addressed in the present study.

The present study was an integral part of a five year longitudinal research program, called the Family Welfare Research Program, undertaken at the Columbia University School of Social Work. The concern of the Family Welfare Research Program centers upon the natural parents of children who had been placed in foster care in New York City. Its major focus is upon the effects of foster care placement upon the family of the placed child. A section developed specifically for the present dissertation and concerning the role relationship between the natural mothers of the placed children and their caseworkers from the foster care agencies was built into the second of three questionnaires developed as part of the larger research program. The special section included questions designed to tap the role expectations held by the study mothers in the specific situational context of a conversation

with the agency caseworkers. During the survey the mothers were directly asked about the picture they had of the caseworker's image of role appropriate behavior for them, and about their own image of role appropriate behavior for themselves. The answers to those questions formed the basic data on role expectations utilized by the present study.

Five concrete role expectations emerged from the mothers' responses: (1) "to be undisguised," this expectation conveyed a sense of obligation to be overt, expressive, unconcealed and comprehensive about events, experiences and conscious emotional feelings; (2) "to be controlled," here the mothers conveyed the impression that in their relationship with the workers they felt obliged to hold back the verbal and active expression of feelings, particularly angry and hostile feelings, and to exclude a wide range of topics from conversation; (3) "to be formal," this expectation conveys a requirement to behave in a reserved, distant and polite manner, with the idea of courteousness and good manners but limited involvement included; (4) "to display concern for the child," this expectation conveys the general obligation felt by the mothers to show the workers that they were concerned about their children, to indicate interest in their children in some way, whether by asking about how they are getting along, their health, schoolwork, friends, behavior, or by showing affection directly to the child; (5) "to be acquiescent," acceptance of the worker's ability and decisions with regard to themselves and their children and cooperating with the workers by giving all requested information, and by not pressing for discharge of the child

or more frequent visits with the child, conveys the concrete meaning of this expectation.

A large number of the interviewed mothers mentioned each of the five role expectations. However, not all mothers mentioned every one. The incompatible nature of some of the expectations (i.e., "undisguised" and "controlled") may explain why mothers differed in the role obligations they reported. It seems equally likely that, very simply, not all of the mothers perceived every one of the behavioral expectations as applicable to their role. Whatever the explanation it was evident that unanimous consensus did not exist. The study findings, therefore, added further empirical evidence that conceptions of appropriate role behavior are variable, even among occupants of the same role.

What influenced the differing perceptions of role expectations by the study mothers? Twelve variables were included in this study in an attempt to answer that question. These twelve variables were grouped into areas according to the social and psychological elements they seemed to most essentially contain, as follows:

- A. Orientational variables that form the backdrop for the role relationship under consideration
 1. The circumstances surrounding the assumption of the focal role,
 2. The length of time the role incumbent has been involved with the role;
- B. Organizational arrangements institutionalized as part of the system of which the role is a part
 3. The religious auspices of the placement agencies,
 4. The number of children served,
 5. The type of placement for the children;

- C. Interactional variables specifically related to the mother-caseworker dyad
 - 6. Topics talked about when together,
 - 7. Number of in-person contacts over a specified period of time;
- D. Positions occupied in other social systems by incumbents of the focal role
 - 8. Ethnic group,
 - 9. Socioeconomic status;
- E. Commitment of the role incumbent to the focal role
 - 10. Maternal commitment;
- F. Motivation of the incumbent of the focal role to participate in it
 - 11. Role incumbency motivation;
- G. Evaluation by the incumbent of the focal role of the rights and performances of the system to which the role is attached
 - 12. Evaluation of the system.

The last three variables were conceptualized as psychological in nature. Those remaining were seen as primarily sociological in content, although the two orientational variables were viewed as somewhat separate since their historical, time-related, aspect was viewed as setting them apart from the others to some degree.

The relationships found between each of the five role expectations and the twelve social and psychological variables make up the bulk of the data presented in this study. A great number of associations were found. There were however, a great many interrelationships between the variables found to be associated with each expectation. In order to help unfold those interrelationships to some extent and get some insight into the unique influence upon the perceived role expectations of each of the variables a series of multiple regression

analyses were performed. The results indicated that all of the twelve included variables had some influence upon the perception of role expectations by the study mothers. However, the variables of a sociological nature proved to be most influential, surpassing those of an orientational and intra-personal nature in importance. Notably, within the range of social system variables included, those of an interactional nature appeared to be most important, surpassing organizational, (structural) and status variables in influence.

Broadly speaking, sociologists concerned with the field of role have chosen one of two points of view from which to approach their subject. One group sees social interaction and the other sees social structure as the most appropriate focus of attention. The interactionists have accepted the view of role in a fluid context, emerging and unfolding within systems of interaction. This view can be seen in the work of Erving Goffman,¹ Ralph Turner,² and Weinstein and Deutchberger.³ The structuralists have accepted the view of role in a relatively static context essentially as a positional, status concept, very much a given within, rather than unfolding from, some system of

¹Erving Goffman, Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (New York: Doubleday, 1959); and Encounters, Two Studies in the Sociology of Interaction (Indianapolis, Indiana: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1961).

²Ralph H. Turner, "Role-Taking: Process Versus Conformity," Human Behavior and Social Process, ed. Arnold Rose (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1962), pp. 20-38.

³Eugene A. Weinstein and Paul Deutchberger, "Some Dimensions of Altercasting," Sociometry, 26 (1963), pp. 454-466.

interaction. Talcott Parsons¹ and Robert K. Merton² display this view in their work.

The former group conceives of role definition in terms of process and creative compromise within an ongoing interaction situation. The latter group conceives of role definition in terms of static conformity to pre-existing, and relatively inflexible, institutionalized norms.³

In view of the importance of the interaction variables in the present study (particularly "topics talked about with the caseworker"), our findings would seem to add support to the former rather than the latter point of view. However, one cannot overlook the fact that structural variables also played an important role. Mothers brought into the casework situation pre-existing norms which they derived as incumbents of positions they occupied in other social systems. Do not overlook the fact that being Puerto Rican was found to be highly associated with noting "to be formal" as a role expectation. In addition, mothers responded differently to the institutionalized arrangements of the foster care system itself to which they were exposed. Once again remember that we found having a child in a foster home as compared to

¹Talcott Parsons, The Social System (Glencoe: Free Press, 1951).

²Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure (Revised edition; Glencoe: Free Press, 1957); and "The Role-Set: Problems in Sociological Theory," British Journal of Sociology, 8 (1957), pp. 106-120.

³Turner points out that the interactionists' view of role derives from "Mead's treatment of role chiefly as the perspective or vantage point of the relevant other." While the structuralists' view of role derives from Linton's famous statement of status and role which emphasized a conception of role as a prescribed cultural given. Turner, op. cit., p. 23.

residential treatment or other types of institutional care to be highly associated with noting "to be controlled" as an expectation. Even the primarily important interaction variable "topics talked about with the caseworkers" was not perfectly fluid, emerging without major structural direction through a process of creative compromise between role partners. Rather, as was noted in Chapter Four, power to direct the most relevant aspects of the mother-caseworker relationship is in the hands of the caseworker. The size and type of caseload they carry, the philosophy and economics of the agency they represent, and their own training, experience, personality and professional outlook influence the things the caseworkers attempt to talk about with each mother they see. In other words, the interaction itself is influenced among other things by organizational and structural considerations. In view of this it is perhaps most valid to say that rather than argue for precedence of one over the other point of view, in order to achieve a complete picture of the components of role definition one must view the subject from both the interactionists' and the structuralists' perspective.

There were two additional study findings especially worthy of report. As noted in Chapter Six ("Alter/Ego Comparisons"), the study mothers stated that they felt it easier to perform self imposed role obligations, and harder to perform obligations communicated as required by their role partners. In addition, they noted that they were more likely to actually perform self imposed role obligations than obligations communicated as required by their role partners. These findings were based on a relatively small number of responses since in the majority of cases the mothers noted agreement with the caseworkers

on expectations. However, the data does suggest a heretofore unheralded method by which the strain of having a different role conception from one's role partner is resolved. When not in accord with the caseworkers the role expectations the mothers could be most likely to perform, the ones they found the easiest to do, were the expectations they themselves saw as fitting. The ones they required of themselves, rather than the ones they saw as required of them.

Implications for social work

Social work practitioners and authors seem to recognize the value of sociological findings and concepts for enriching their field. But generally because they are wedded to a psychoanalytic orientation they seem to fail consistently to utilize sociological material in their work. Briar and Miller in their recent book concerned with social casework theory and practice note with consternation the tendency of caseworkers to use "sociological concepts essentially as a set of new labels for certain psychological concepts,"¹ rather than as tools to expand their perspective.

Social casework had consistently been psychologically oriented, basing its therapeutic orientation upon psychiatric (primarily Freudian) theory. Although the profession has recognized the importance of social influences the tendency has been to postpone systematic incorporation of this understanding in practice in favor of the more traditional psychoanalytic approach. Meyer, Litwak, Thomas and Vinter, for

¹Scott Briar and Henry Miller, Problems and Issues in Social Casework (New York: Columbia University Press, 1971), p. 74.

example, come to this conclusion in their article published in the volume, The Uses of Sociology, stating:

(Social work) had depended primarily on the codification of practitioner experience and has generally explained personal problems by a psychodynamic theory of disease borrowed from psychiatry. It has been slow to adopt benefits from pertinent social-science developments.¹

The need for incorporation of social science material into casework theory and practice has been discussed for many years now. Many books and articles in the field have made the point.² Schools of social work have come to include sociology courses in their curricula and "concepts such as role and social system have become part of the daily vocabulary of social workers."³ However, as Briar and Miller note, "In general, social science materials have not had an integral effect on casework theory but have been treated as a set of additional 'factors' to be somehow taken into consideration within existing individual-centered, psychologically oriented social casework."⁴

The current study data help demonstrate the usefulness to casework of sociological concepts and perspective. In the foster care casework situation (as in most casework situations), the behavioral

¹Henry J. Meyer, Eugene Litwak, Edwin J. Thomas and Robert D. Vinter, "Social Work and Social Welfare," The Uses of Sociology, eds. Paul F. Lazarsfeld, William H. Sewell and Harold L. Wilensky (New York: Basic Books, 1967), p. 162.

²Cf., Helen Harris Perlman, "The Role Concept and Social Casework: Some Explorations," Social Service Review, 35 (December, 1961), pp. 370-381; and Beatrice Werble, "The Implications of Role Theory for Casework Research," Social Science Theory and Social Work Research, ed., Leonard S. Kogan (New York: National Association of Social Workers, 1960), pp. 28-31.

³Briar and Miller, op. cit., p. 72.

⁴Ibid., p. 74.

expectations a client attaches to his or her role are critically important for the worker to understand and attempt to utilize toward a successful outcome for the mother and child. If however, the caseworker is not aware of, or chooses to ignore, the mother's perception of what is expected of her, great misunderstandings which have the potential of leading to crises of client confidence in the worker can take place. In their study of clients and caseworkers in England Mayer and Timms found such misunderstandings. The clients they studied viewed their problems as stemming from other parties (i.e., their spouses), and thought their problems would be solved if coercion was used in regard to the "guilty" party. Their caseworkers, on the other hand, were dedicated to the concept of problem-solving through the therapeutic effects of self-awareness. Neither the clients nor their caseworkers realized the differences in their expectations, causing the casework process to be considerably less than effective for, or helpful to, the clients.¹

A similar confusion as to role expectations was uncovered in the present study. Lack of agreement between client and caseworker was reported as perceived by a good number of the study mothers. When this occurred the mothers usually reported expecting restraint and reserve of themselves while feeling that their role partners, the caseworkers, expected candidness, warmth and agreeableness from them. Misunderstandings and breakdowns in client-caseworker trust are almost guaranteed to occur under such circumstances. Once again the work of Briar and Miller illuminates this situation. They note:

¹John E. Mayer and Noel Timms, The Client Speaks: Working Class Impressions of Casework (New York: Atherton Press, 1970).

The caseworker, if he is to be perceived as helpful by the client, must minimize discrepancies between his own and his client's conception of what they are doing together. To do so requires that the caseworker make an effort to discover his client's conceptions and expectations and be prepared, accordingly, to modify his own behavior and his expectations of the client, or else educate the client to the worker's views.¹

Equally important for the caseworker to understand in the pursuit of more effective work with clients, is the fact that the role expectations their clients hold--whether they be compatible with, or contradictory to, their own--may be primarily determined by such social factors as their ethnic group membership or the organizational pressures to which they are subjected, rather than by their intra-personal make up as is usually assumed.

Limitations of the present study

The sample. The generalizability of the study findings to the larger population from which the sample was drawn, that is all women with children in foster care placement in New York City for at least two years, is limited by the fact that determining how representative the study sample is of that population is not really possible with available information. The longitudinal research program of which this study was a part was originally undertaken because of the need for information about the families of placed children. Comparative data are scarce. To our knowledge only one other research endeavor has recently been done with a study group similar to our own. Jenkins and Sauber studied a group of over 400 families whose children entered

¹Briar and Miller, op. cit., p. 109.

foster care as initial placements in 1963. Their study focused on the circumstances of the families that led to the placement.¹ Two years later Jenkins took another look at the study sample in an attempt to find family characteristics which were associated with the length of the children's stay in foster care.² Comparisons between Jenkins' follow-up study data and the present study data on two criterion variables, ethnic group and religion of family, indicate close accord on the former, but considerable discrepancy on the latter. In Jenkins' follow-up the families with children in care at least two years included 24 percent whites, 43 percent blacks, and 33 percent Puerto Rican; 43 percent were Catholic, 46 percent Protestant and 11 percent Jewish. In the present study 27 percent of our mothers were white, 43 percent were black, and 30 percent Puerto Rican; while 54 percent were Catholic, 36 percent Protestant and 10 percent Jewish. Our study contained a comparable ethnic group distribution, but considerably fewer Protestants and more Catholics than did the Jenkins' study. Although not definitive, these comparative data would certainly suggest caution when generalization of the present study data is considered.

The dyad model. In the present study we have focused upon a dyad role model examining the relationship between two positions, mothers with children in foster care placement and administrative foster care agency caseworkers. The mother role was considered focal and

¹Shirley Jenkins and Mignon Sauber, Paths to Child Placement, Family Situations Prior to Foster Care (New York: Community Council of Greater New York, 1966).

²Shirley Jenkins, "Duration of Foster Care: Some Relevant Antecedent Variables," Child Welfare, 66 (October, 1967), pp. 450-455.

the analysis centered around role expectations as seen from her perspective. A fuller description of the expectational system surrounding the focal role should include an exploration of role expectations for that role held by other position incumbents who belong to that role-set. The expectations of the caseworkers for the mothers, for example; those of other members of the mothers' and/or the placed children's families (i.e., the children's fathers); and those of foster parents or other child care workers. The expectations of the agency caseworkers' supervisors should likewise not be overlooked.

In other words, in the dyad model we used, the focal position was looked at only in its relationship to one counter position and only from the perspective of one of its component parts. But, as Gross, et al. state, "A position can be completely described only by describing the total system of positions and relationships of which it is a part."¹ A more complete picture could have been drawn if the focal position we looked at was defined by reference to multiple relationships. To understand fully the relationship of mother and caseworker it really is necessary to know not only the mothers' perceptions of what was expected of them when they were with the workers, but also to have an indication of what the caseworkers themselves expected of the mothers, what the caseworkers' supervisors expected, and so on. Generally in any one research project, resources are limited and it is only possible to deal with a partial system. This was the

¹Neal Gross, Ward S. Mason and Alexander W. McEachern, Explorations in Role Analysis: Studies of the School Superintendency Role (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1957), p. 53.

case with the present study. Further exploration with other members of the role-set would help round out the picture more completely.

Actual behavior. Finally, this study made no effort to look at the relationship between verbalized role expectations and actual behavior. No attempt was made to observe the actions of the focal role incumbents when they were together with their role partners, the caseworkers. A basic assumption behind all role theory is that human behavior is influenced, at least to some degree, by expectations. Gross, et al. put it this way, "Regardless of their derivation, expectations are presumed by most role theorists to be an essential ingredient in any formula for predicting social behavior. Human conduct is in part a function of expectations."¹ A truly complete description of the mother-caseworker role relationship should include observational data concerning the mothers' actual role performances when with the workers. It might also contain an exploration of issues relating to behavioral conformity and deviance with respect to verbalized expectations. One is reminded of a conclusion George C. Homans came to in his book The Human Group, "the members of the group are often more nearly alike in the norms they hold than in their overt behavior . . . they are more alike in what they say they ought to do than in what they do in fact."² Testing of that conclusion for the mother-caseworker dyad would enhance the role analysis a great deal. Future studies might use the current study findings as a base to explore this further.

¹ Ibid., p. 18.

² George C. Homans, The Human Group (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1950), p. 123.

It seems time for more studies of that kind to be undertaken. It is very likely that the practice profession of social work would be advantaged by greater reference to the conceptual and theoretical framework of sociology, as well as to its empirical findings.

APPENDIX

TABLE A-I

NUMBER AND DIRECTION OF CHANGES IN CODING THE FIVE ROLE EXPECTATIONS

Judge I Coded Expectation as:	Total	Judge II Agreed with Judge I	Judge II Disagreed with Judge I; Decision of Judge III Was:					
			No Change	Change to:				
				Undisguised	Controlled	Concerned	Formal	Acquiescent
<u>Total</u>	<u>433</u>	<u>371</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>8</u>
Undisguised	146	116	20*	-	4*	2	-	4
Controlled	100	90	2	2*	-	2	-	4
Concerned	91	91	-	-	-	-	-	-
Formal	50	46	-	2	2	-	-	-
Acquiescent	46	28	8	2	2	5	1	-

*Mainly represented confusion of interpretation of double negatives.

TABLE A-II

ALTER AND EGO EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY SELECTED VARIABLES

	Mean Score Expectation Mentioned for:									
	Undisguised		Controlled		Concerned		Formal		Acquiescent	
	Case- worker (N=76)	Mother (N=70)	Case- worker (N=42)	Mother (N=58)	Case- worker (N=49)	Mother (N=42)	Case- worker (N=17)	Mother (N=33)	Case- worker (N=27)	Mother (N=19)
<u>Size of agency</u>	2.092	2.057	2.310	2.121	2.184	2.405	2.118	2.242	2.148	2.263
t-test* =	0.440		1.589		-1.900		-1.405		-0.909	
P =	NS		NS		0.066		NS		NS	
<u>Contacts with caseworker</u>	3.605	3.700	3.381	3.224	3.306	2.976	3.941	3.879	3.852	4.211
t-test* =	-0.000		0.320		1.037		1.245		-0.127	
P =	NS		NS		NS		NS		NS	
<u>Incumbency motive</u>	3.053	2.886	2.881	2.862	2.755	2.714	2.529	3.000	2.481	2.789
t-test* =	1.587		0.142		0.055		-1.268		-1.056	
P =	NS		NS		NS		NS		NS	
<u>Evaluation of placement</u>	7.605	7.400	7.286	7.414	7.857	7.738	7.353	7.667	7.333	8.000
t-test* =	1.349		-0.368		0.811		-0.957		-1.492	
P =	NS		NS		NS		NS		NS	
<u>Role identification</u>	8.066	8.186	7.690	7.724	8.327	8.095	7.765	7.576	8.333	7.737
t-test* =	-0.711		-0.160		1.008		1.139		1.726	
P =	NS		NS		NS		NS		0.097	
<u>Months since placement</u>	31.079	31.200	30.905	31.483	31.469	31.333	29.294	31.212	31.741	30.737
t-test* =	-0.536		-1.774		0.934		-2.494		1.005	
P =	NS		0.085		NS		0.021		NS	

NS P > 0.10

*Excluded from the calculations of the t-tests were those cases where the role expectation was mentioned for both the caseworker and the mother. In other words, the significance tests included only those cases where the expectation was mentioned for the caseworker only, or the mother only, but not for both.

TABLE A-III

ALTER AND EGO EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY REASON FOR PLACEMENT

Reason for placement:	Percent Distribution									
	Expectation Mentioned for:									
	Undisguised		Controlled		Concerned		Formal		Acquiescent	
	Case- worker (N=76)	Mother (N=70)	Case- worker (N=42)	Mother (N=58)	Case- worker (N=49)	Mother (N=42)	Case- worker (N=17)	Mother (N=33)	Case- worker (N=27)	Mother (N=19)
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Mental illness	24	21	24	21	16	26	35	33	22	16
Child behavior	28	29	17	17	25	17	6	9	26	21
Physical illness	5	6	12	10	6	7	--	6	4	5
Abdication of role	21	21	21	19	20	26	41	31	26	32
Inadequate role	22	23	26	33	33	24	18	21	22	26
χ^2* =	0.312		1.848		7.994		1.400		1.210	
df =	4		4		4		4		4	
P =	NS		NS		0.093		NS		NS	

NS P > 0.10

*Excluded from the calculations of the Chi square tests were those cases where the role expectation was mentioned for both the caseworker and the mother. In other words, the significance tests included only those cases where the expectation was mentioned for the caseworker only, or the mother only, but not for both.

TABLE A-IV
ALTER AND EGO EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY TOPICS TALKED ABOUT WITH CASEWORKER

Topics Talked About:		Percent Distribution									
		Expectation Mentioned for:									
		Undisguised Case- worker (N=76)		Controlled Case- worker (N=42)		Concerned Case- worker (N=49)		Formal Case- worker (N=17)		Acquiescent Case- worker (N=27)	
Mother (N=70)	Mother (N=58)	Mother (N=42)	Mother (N=42)	Mother (N=33)	Mother (N=19)						
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	
Talk about child	74	71	67	60	84	83	59	67	67	84	
Not so	26	29	33	40	16	17	41	33	33	16	
χ^2 =	0.437		3.159		0.019		0.600		1.050		
df =	1		1		1		1		1		
P =	NS		0.076		NS		NS		NS		
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	
Talk about mother	49	47	41	38	31	26	35	33	37	32	
Not so	51	53	59	62	69	74	65	67	63	68	
χ^2 =	0.303		0.127		0.383		0.040		0.221		
df =	1		1		1		1		1		
P =	NS		NS		NS		NS		NS		
<u>Total</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	
Talk about dis-charge/visiting	24	24	29	33	20	26	24	24	41	21	
Not so	76	76	71	67	80	74	76	76	59	79	
χ^2 =	0.041		1.009		0.987		0.960		2.426		
df =	1		1		1		1		1		
P =	NS		NS		NS		NS		NS		

NS $P > 0.10$

*Excluded from the calculations of the Chi square tests were those cases where the role expectation was mentioned for both the caseworker and the mother. In other words, the significance tests included only those cases where the expectation was mentioned for the caseworker only, or the mother only, but not for both.

TABLE A-V

ALTER AND EGO EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY AUSPICES OF AGENCY CARING FOR CHILD AND TYPE OF PLACEMENT OF CHILD

	Percent Distribution									
	Undisguised		Controlled		Expectation Mentioned for:				Acquiescent	
	Case- worker (N=76)	Mother (N=70)	Case- worker (N=42)	Mother (N=58)	Case- worker (N=49)	Mother (N=42)	Concerned	Formal	Case- worker (N=27)	Mother (N=19)
Agency auspices:										
<u>Total</u>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Catholic	42	44	36	41	49	42	65	55	37	48
Protestant	30	28	31	34	27	28	23	18	30	16
Jewish	13	14	12	9	6	2	--	9	3	--
Nonsectarian	15	14	21	16	18	28	12	18	30	37
χ^2 * =		0.491		2.759		4.687		1.985		2.728
df =		3		3		3		3		3
P =		NS		NS		NS		NS		NS
Type of placement:										
<u>Total</u>	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Residential treatment	21	20	10	14	14	7	--	6	19	11
Other institution	28	34	31	34	41	36	47	39	33	47
Foster home	51	46	59	52	45	57	53	55	48	42
χ^2 * =		2.853		2.924		4.977		0.615		2.872
df =		2		2		2		2		2
P =		NS		NS		0.084		NS		NS

NS $p > 0.10$

*Excluded from the calculations of the Chi square tests were those cases where the role expectation was mentioned for both the caseworker and the mother. In other words, the significance tests included only those cases where the expectation was mentioned for the caseworker only, or the mother only, but not for both.

TABLE A-VI

ALTER AND EGO EXPECTATIONS MENTIONED BY MOTHERS AS RELEVANT TO THEM IN TALK
WITH CASEWORKER BY ETHNIC GROUP AND SOCIOECONOMIC LEVEL OF MOTHERS

	Percent Distribution Expectation Mentioned for:									
	Undisguised		Controlled		Concerned		Formal		Acquiescent	
	Case- worker (N=76)	Mother (N=70)	Case- worker (N=42)	Mother (N=58)	Case- worker (N=49)	Mother (N=42)	Case- worker (N=17)	Mother (N=33)	Case- worker (N=27)	Mother (N=19)
<u>Ethnic group of mother</u>										
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
White	32	39	31	22	20	12	35	21	19	26
Black	46	44	50	52	39	59	12	21	59	37
Puerto Rican	22	17	19	26	41	29	53	58	22	37
X ² =*	2.956		2.276		9.372		5.057		3.512	
df=	2		2		2		2		2	
P	NS		NS		0.010		0.081		NS	
<u>Socioeconomic level of mother</u>										
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
High	42	49	26	26	18	12	24	22	26	21
Middle	36	30	41	35	41	50	41	42	37	37
Low	22	21	33	39	41	38	35	36	37	42
X ² =*	2.074		1.429		2.415		1.014		0.363	
df=	2		2		2		2		2	
P	NS		NS		NS		NS		NS	

NS P > 0.10

*Excluded from the calculations of The Chisquare tests were those cases where the role expectation was mentioned for both the caseworker and the mother. In other words, the significance tests included only those cases where the expectation was mentioned for the caseworker only, or the mother only, but not for both.

TABLE A-VII
CORRELATIONS OF "INTERACTION" VARIABLES WITH ALL OTHER
CORRELATE VARIABLES

	Topics Talked About:			
	Talk About Mother	Talk About Child	Talk About Discharge/ Visiting	Contacts with Caseworker
Contacts with caseworker	0.069	0.189	-0.031	--
Size of agency	-0.043	-0.036	0.181	-0.159
<u>Type of placement:</u>				
Residential treatment	0.119	-0.113	-0.071	0.186
Foster home	0.014	-0.073	0.163	-0.260
Other institution	-0.099	0.155	-0.116	0.133
<u>Agency auspices:</u>				
Catholic	-0.049	0.041	0.044	0.058
Protestant	0.029	-0.079	-0.010	-0.098
Jewish	0.094	-0.049	-0.057	0.176
Nonsectarian	-0.040	0.073	-0.003	-0.093
<u>Ethnic group:</u>				
White	0.005	-0.050	-0.041	-0.063
Black	0.193	-0.076	0.053	-0.050
Puerto Rican	-0.213	0.126	-0.018	0.114
Socioeconomic level	0.107	0.144	-0.216	0.016
Months since placement	-0.046	0.013	0.038	-0.078
<u>Reason for placement:</u>				
Mental illness	-0.119	0.010	0.106	0.003
Child behavior	0.124	0.040	-0.227	0.100
Physical illness	-0.079	0.027	-0.013	-0.083
Abdication of care	0.076	0.019	0.098	0.000
Inadequate care	-0.030	-0.085	0.032	-0.054
Motivation for role incumbency	0.045	0.174	-0.185	0.050
Maternal commitment	-0.075	0.179	0.117	0.129
Evaluation of placement	-0.022	0.249	-0.240	0.215

TABLE A-VIII
CORRELATIONS OF "ORGANIZATIONAL" VARIABLES WITH ALL OTHER
CORRELATE VARIABLES NOT SHOWN IN TABLE A-VII

	Agency Auspices:				Size of Agency
	<u>Cath- olic</u>	<u>Protes- tant</u>	<u>Jewish</u>	<u>Non- sectarian</u>	
<u>Type of placement:</u>					
Residential treatment	-0.362	0.164	0.487	-0.086	-0.513
Foster home	-0.149	0.179	-0.087	0.051	0.544
Other institution	0.410	-0.300	-0.258	0.009	-0.191
Size of agency	0.193	-0.200	-0.191	0.122	--
<u>Ethnic group:</u>					
White	-0.025	-0.152	0.423	-0.110	-0.155
Black	-0.410	0.397	-0.176	0.201	0.100
Puerto Rican	0.466	-0.283	-0.213	-0.112	0.039
Socioeconomic level	-0.017	-0.034	0.262	-0.133	-0.146
Months since placement	0.022	-0.003	-0.011	-0.017	0.145
<u>Reason for placement:</u>					
Mental illness	0.081	-0.134	0.006	0.043	0.048
Child behavior	-0.347	0.127	0.265	0.100	-0.553
Physical illness	-0.000	0.042	-0.088	0.019	0.133
Abdication of care	0.134	-0.062	-0.105	-0.022	0.244
Inadequate care	0.135	0.043	-0.115	-0.133	0.186
Motivation for role incumbency	0.022	-0.102	0.140	-0.017	-0.184
Maternal commitment	-0.052	-0.094	0.149	0.061	-0.139
Evaluation of placement	0.049	-0.131	0.175	-0.044	-0.172

TABLE A-IX

CORRELATIONS OF "OTHER STATUS" VARIABLES WITH ALL OTHER CORRELATE
VARIABLES NOT SHOWN IN TABLES A-VII OR A-VIII

	Ethnic Group:			Socioeconomic
	White	Black	Puerto Rican	Level
<u>Type of Placement:</u>				
Residential treatment	0.275	-0.085	-0.170	0.189
Foster home	-0.053	0.245	-0.214	-0.097
Other institution	-0.142	-0.190	0.340	-0.036
Socioeconomic level	0.457	-0.214	-0.204	-
Months since placement	-0.176	0.069	0.093	-0.091
<u>Reasons for placement:</u>				
Mental illness	-0.041	-0.168	0.220	0.011
Child behavior	0.222	-0.042	-0.166	0.151
Physical illness	-0.022	0.004	0.017	0.082
Abdication of care	0.009	-0.010	0.019	0.013
Inadequate care	-0.157	0.218	-0.086	-0.103
Motivation for role incumbency	0.173	-0.225	0.077	0.241
Maternal commitment	0.077	-0.112	0.047	-0.037
Evaluation of placement	0.177	-0.305	0.161	0.196

TABLE A-X

CORRELATIONS OF VARIABLES NOT SHOWN IN TABLES A-VII, A-VIII OR A-IX

	Reason for Placement					Months Since Placement
	Mental Illness	Child Behavior	Physi- cal Illness	Abdica- tion of Care	Inade- quate Care	
<u>Type of placement:</u>						
Residential treatment	-0.176	0.678	-0.111	-0.214	-0.224	-0.110
Foster home	0.054	-0.483	0.048	0.260	0.146	0.100
Other insti- tution	0.071	0.011	0.030	-0.178	0.006	-0.023
Months since Placement	-0.103	-0.177	0.197	0.131	0.035	-
Motivation for role incumbency	0.278	0.189	0.126	-0.166	-0.385	-0.016
Maternal commitment	0.146	0.167	-0.159	-0.072	-0.149	-0.198
Evaluation of placement	-0.058	0.251	-0.051	-0.075	-0.088	0.107
			Motivation for role incumbency	Maternal commitment	Evaluation of placement	
<u>Type of placement:</u>						
Residential treatment		0.112	0.139	0.182		
Foster home		-0.205	-0.076	-0.259		
Other institution		0.129	-0.019	0.100		
Motivation for role incumbency		-	0.159	0.449		
Maternal commitment		0.159	-	-0.128		

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