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**An assessment of object-relations and self-concept in Black
father-absent male children as a consequence of the father's
control of his absence**

Brown-Cheatham, Michaelanthony, Ph.D.

City University of New York, 1990

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**AN ASSESSMENT OF OBJECT-RELATIONS AND SELF-CONCEPT
IN BLACK FATHER-ABSENT MALE CHILDREN
AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE FATHER'S CONTROL OF HIS ABSENCE**

by

MICHAELANTHONY BROWN-CHEATHAM

**A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Psychology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York**

1990

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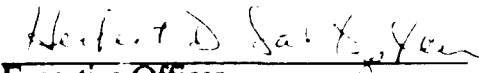
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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract

**AN ASSESSMENT OF OBJECT-RELATIONS AND SELF-CONCEPT
IN BLACK FATHER-ABSENT MALE CHILDREN
AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE FATHER'S CONTROL OF HIS ABSENCE**

by

Michaelanthony Brown-Cheatham

Adviser: Professor Vera S. Paster

This study was a clinical assessment of the relative influence father-absence has upon the developmental attainment of object-relations based upon Rorschach imagery and percepts and self-concept in Black father-absent male children.

The population under study were 40 Black, father-absent male children between the ages of 6 and 12 and their single-parent mothers. Two groups were formed distinguished by the nature of the participants' fathers' absence (non-willful versus elective).

T-tests of independent means were computed and analyzed to support the hypotheses that sons who have experienced non-willful father-absence as compared to sons who have experienced elective father-absence will have greater difficulties coping in novel interpersonal situations and engaging in empathic relationships. Descriptive findings reveal positive self-appraisals for both groups. Sons who have experienced elective father-absence, however, scored higher on the anxiety measure. There was a significant relationship

between the child's age at the time of the father's departure and the mother's self-esteem with the child's capacity for empathy, object-relations and experience of overall happiness and satisfaction.

Discussion of the findings reveal the importance of distinguishing father-absence by the nature of the absence. The findings also indicate the utility of object-relations assessment with ethnic minorities. There is a need for a larger study to be mounted which would compare Black father-absent children with a comparable father-present group.

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Finally my sincere thanks and gratitude to all the mothers and children who gave so freely of their time and energy to this study.

DEDICATION

This dissertation dedicated to the loving memory of my grandfather William Cheatham Sr., my former mentors and friends Joyce Trisler and Alvin Ailey and to my friend George Paris Shelton, whose untimely death came upon the completion of this project. I will miss their wisdom, inspirations, laughter and love.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statistical trends predict that nearly 90 per cent of Black children born today will spend at least part of their childhood in a single-parent family, usually with their mothers (Garfinkel & McLanahan, 1986). This increase in Black female-headed households is one of the most compelling trends facing social analysts. In 1960, the number of Black female-headed households was 889,000; by 1984 this number increased to a staggering 2,984,000. Likewise, in 1960, the number of Black children being reared in female-headed households was 1.8 million; in 1984, this number soared to 4.9 million. Yet while the prevalence of single-parenthood and father-absence in Black families is well chronicled (Dodson, 1985, Glick, 1985, Herzog & Sudia, 1968, and U.S. Census Bureau 1987), less is known about the implications and types of father-absence patterns found among Black families. What is known, however, about this familial pattern are the stereotypes and negative sequelae. For example, Black female single-parent mothers encounter sustained periods of poverty. For instance, the median income for Black single-parent families is \$ 7, 262, in comparison to \$14, 524 for white single-parenting families; this is a pattern which is likely to be replicated by their children. Black single-parenting mothers also are less likely to complete a high school education and often receive inadequate prenatal care

(U.S. Census Bureau, 1987). These factors have been identified as the major differences between Black and white single-parenting families (Herzog & Lewis, 1970). While these are psycho-social factors, there is evidence that father-absence has pervasive psychological and developmental consequences (Adams & Horowitz, 1980). Adams et.al (1984) also considered socio-economic status (SES) as a potential factor which might affect parenting styles, especially fathering. They conclude that socioeconomic factors significantly impede a father's ability to provide for his family. The question remains, however, whether or not there are any significant differences among Black families with regard to the father's absence. Furthermore, what are the implications of the father's absence on the male child's development.

Systematic research, however, that investigates the various implications of father-absence is relatively lacking (Biller, 1969, 1970, 1971; Crumley & Blumenthal, 1973; D'Andrade, 1973; Goldstein, 1982; Kitchara, 1976; Leichy, 1960; McCord et. al. 1962; Meiss, 1952; and Mischel, 1961).

Grossberg & Crandell (1978) proposed five salient clinical features in the assessment of father-absent children: 1) the developmental stage of the child at the time of the loss; 2) the reason(s) for the father's absence; 3) the child's relationship with the father before the loss; 4) the mother's reaction to the loss of her husband; and 5) the environment provided for the child after the loss. The authors also suggest that clinicians assess the child's autonomous functioning,

such as ego development, reality testing, and the developmental attainment and assessment of object-relations. Until recently the developmental attainment and assessment of object-relations capacity was not formally operationalized. Object-relations theory integrates developmental history, ego development and defenses and weaves these elements into its theoretical and clinical formulations.

According to Klein & Tribich (1981) Kernberg discussed three major advantages regarding the utility of psychoanalytic object-relations theory: 1) it emphasizes the uniqueness of the individual, 2) considers coping and adaptive patterns, and 3) it does not overlook maladaptive developmental or social patterns. Object-relations theory, therefore, represents a synthesis between an individual's psychology and psychopathology. Finally, Kernberg distinguishes object-relations theory as a link between the science of psychoanalysis and a humanistic philosophy of man. The development of the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale by Urist (1977) has provided researchers with a standardized means of exploring the complex assessment of object-relation status.

This study will assess the relative influence father-absence has upon the development of object-relations capacity based upon Rorschach imagery and percepts and self-concept in father-absent Black male children. This study will utilize object-relations concepts and will be designed to explore whether there is a difference in the key variables as a factor of the father's choice about his

absence. Do children react differently if the father was perceived as forced to leave through death or incarceration as opposed to participating in the decision to leave by separating from the child's mother? Similar to Grossberg & Crandell's (1978) work, this study will explore the relationship and influence of the following features on the developmental attainment of object-relations capacity and self-concept: 1) the reason for the father's absence; 2) the child's age at the time of departure; 3) the mother's self-esteem; 4) the mother's response to the separation; and 5) the perceived feelings and kind of communication between the parents prior to their separation.

A major problem in assessing variants of father-absence can be traced to the multitude of factors which may contribute to father-absence, such as divorce, separation, death, incarceration or hospitalization for physical or mental illness. Additionally, there has been inadequate attention paid to the father's role in child rearing and development (Croninwett, 1982). Although more noteworthy research on the father's role has recently emerged, social science research has traditionally depreciated the father's role in child development. Previous assumptions were that fathers seldom devoted any time to child rearing and made minimal contributions to child development. Benedek (1970), Bowlby (1969, 1973, 1980), A. Freud (1966), and Mahler (1968) maintain that the mother-infant attachment and bonding are the significant relationship during infancy. This viewpoint has narrowed the scope of child development research

and literature regarding the father's investments and contributions. More recently, however, many of these theoretical hypotheses have been challenged. Lamb (1972) is one who has contradicted these notions. He suggests that the mother-infant bond may be less exclusive than previously assumed.

Despite the neglect of the father's contribution to child development, his presence in a family system has traditionally been equated with a healthy and well functioning family, while his absence for whatever reasons has denoted familial dysfunction and pathology. A father's presence must therefore be considered in terms of his physical, psychological and economic presence. In a family system a father may be physically present yet psychologically absent or *vice versa*.

Most father-absence research has originated from clinical observations and experience. This research approach, however, has been criticized for lacking methodological rigor (Hetherington, 1966). Clinical observations, however, have proven instrumental in generating clinical research hypotheses relevant to clinical work with father-absent children and single-parent families. This father-absence study emanates from the author's clinical experience within school and community-based mental health agencies where he was called upon to intervene with high-risk children, adolescents, and families. This author has observed that father-absent children, especially those who were male and Black, presented somewhat consistent clinical patterns. These are the patterns which

will be explored. The author has also observed that Black, male, father-absent children are disproportionately considered to be "disturbed" and referred for psychological help. Referrals were in response to the boys' socially inappropriate and provocative behaviors. Father-absent boys tended to reveal problems with self-concept. These behavioral problems were often accompanied by deficient peer relationships. For example, in classroom settings father-absent boys tended to be characterized as either the class clown or bully; all these aspects indicate problems in developing and sustaining significant object-relationships. These problems were found to be most prominent in father-absent males who had the following attributes: 1) boys who have had little interaction with their biological fathers, 2) boys with no meaningful relationship with an available adult male or role model; and 3) boys who had experienced a sudden or traumatic loss of the father. In treatment, father-absent Black male children elicit an intensified transference reaction.

Through their projective drawings and dream content father-absent boys expressed desires to secure a special niche in the therapist's life. They identified with him and idealized him. These boys seemed to identify with any adult male figure with whom they consistently interacted. They incorporated aspects of the adult male's personality, employing them as internalized (Schafer, 1968) or transitional objects (Winnicott, 1953, 1969), which then assisted them in overcoming developmental obstacles.

The intensity of this kind of transference became more pronounced when both the youth and therapist were male and Black. The striking nature of these reactions has directed this researcher to generate the research questions of this study.

Literature related to this study is discussed in Chapter 2. This section will explore the literature on transference. Theoretical contributions by Hartmann (1939, 1964), Hartmann, Kris, and Lowenstein (1946), Kernberg (1966), Kohut (1966), Lampl-de Groot (1967), and Schafer (1968) provide a window to our clinical understanding of the processes involved in identification, internalization, and the underlying complexities of this situation. It is important to note that transference is not synonymous with internalization or identification. Schafer (1968) has modified Hartmann, Kris and Lowenstein's formulations regarding the processes involved in identification and internalization. They write:

Internalization refers to all those processes by which the subject transforms real or imagined regulatory interactions with his environment, into inner regulations and characteristics. . . (p.9).

Schafer views internalization and identification as a two-fold process: 1) in response to environmental pressures or 2) to environmental influences which may be even imagined by the subject. Schafer notes that practical skills or the posture of a parent may become internalized through identification. These skills he describes as internalizing a characteristic rather than as a regulatory interaction between parent and child.

Freud (1921) defined identification as one of the earliest expressions of an emotional tie with another individual. Freud discussed three subtypes of identifications: 1) one is an identification based on an original emotional tie with an object, 2) one is a regressed state which substitutes for a libidinal object-tie; and 3) one is a novel perception commonly shared with another individual who is not an object of sexual desire. Freud writes that the prerequisites for identifications can be found in the family constellation.

It is important for both male and female children to identify with the father, but more important for the male child to take him on and incorporate him as a model (Freud, 1921). The male child's identification with his father does not negate his original attachment bonds with his mother. He writes:

... the distinction between an identification with the father and the choice of the father as an object, . . . the father is what one would like to be . . . he is what one would like to have. The distinction . . . depends upon whether the tie attaches to the subject or to the object of the ego. . . We can only see that identification endeavors to mold a person's own ego after the fashion of the one that has been taken as a model . . . (p.47)

For the male child, identification with the father seems to have a distinct purpose which probably influences his psychological and social development. Freud states that identifications lead to the formation of emotional attachments and these characteristics lead to empathy [*Einführung*]. Freud considered empathy a significant precursor essential for all ensuing object-relationships. Freud noted that identification particularly with the father helps the child

cope with and resolve the Oedipal complex, and he writes:

A little boy will exhibit a special interest in his father; he would like to grow up like him and be like him, and take his place everywhere. We may say simply that he takes his father as his ideal. . .(p.51).

This author has found that the perceptions, fantasies, and idealizations are intermingled by father-absent male children so that even their perceptions of masculinity are distorted. Idealizations of masculine and father images were found in projective drawings. For instance, the Draw-A-Man illustrations were replete with demonstrative masculine embellishments. These features influenced the researcher to question the potential symbolic nature or archetypal expression of the father *vis-a-vis* this exaggerated expression of masculinity.

Jung (1969) discussed certain archetypes as symbolic expressions of the father image. Jung maintains that symbolically father archetypes manifest through dreams and can be motivating and empowering forces. Jung adds that archetypes can be idiosyncratic representations of different images and experiences:

As usual, I first came up against this problem when investigating the dreams of my patients. It struck me that a certain kind of father-complex has a "spiritual" character, so to speak, in the sense that the father-image gives rise to statements, actions, tendencies, impulses, and opinions (p.214).

Despite the father's multifaceted role in child development, this concept has not gained a sufficient theoretical or empirical foothold. Research on Black fathers, in particular, their participation, involvement and familial roles remain even more inadequately represented in the social science (Cazenave, 1985, Coles, 1978, J.McAdoo, 1979) and family therapy literature. The longstanding history of a matriarchal family structure in the Black family has been depicted as "out of line with the rest of American society;" indeed, Black family patterns and lifestyles have been perceived as dysfunctional and pathological (Moynihan, 1965). Moynihan's report depicted Black female-headed households as a "tangle of pathology." The report also alleged that Black men and their role or lack thereof in American society was at the root of this increasing rise in Black, female, single-parent households. Moynihan's report fueled intense debate and a remains controversial social and political document.

Moynihan's report was assailed by minority groups and social and political analysts. It was denounced because it ignores salient socio-economic and extrinsic aspects which promote, if not directly contribute, to the rise of Black female single-parent households. The interplay of such features such as high unemployment and social welfare policies cannot be ignored. Joe (1987) notes that 9.3 million Black men between the ages of 16 and 64 are unemployed or have inconsistent work histories. Moynihan's report failed to consider such potent social and political variables. Instead, he drew causal links between

being reared in a Black, female, single-parent household and juvenile delinquency, crime, academic failure, and even rejection from military service. Finally, Moynihan's report concludes that "Negro children without fathers flounder and fail."

Because of their social vulnerability, Black persons are the first to reflect pressures that will affect others who are more within the mainstream of American society. With postponement of marriage, high divorce rates, births out of wedlock and the number of female-headed households observed among Black persons generally on the rise, social and political analysts recognize that the traditional nuclear family model is no longer the prevalent model. According to Wattenberg & Reinhardt (1981) only 10 per cent of American families are comprised of the traditional notion of a gainfully employed father, a mother who remains at home and 2 children. Black family lifestyle have been negatively evaluated because they presaged this now well established trend.

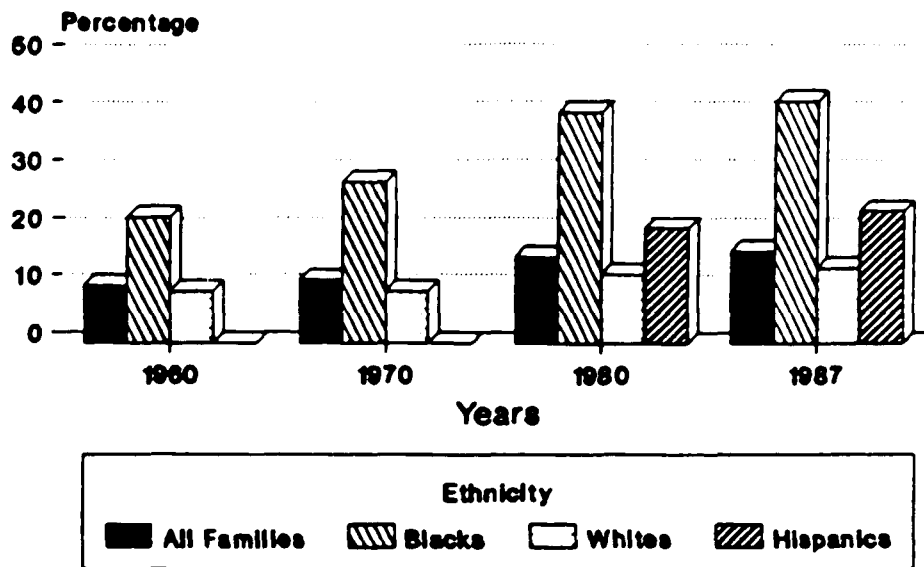
Billingsley (1974), Eldeman, (1980), Gary, (1981); Hill (1971), Nobles (1974, 1976), Obudo, (1983), Staples (1982), and Spurlock (1985) have noted that when comparisons are made between Black and Anglo families, Black families are often perceived as illegitimate. Nobles (1974) states that Black families are seen as "dark-skinned" white families. Nobles states that in contrast to the European maxim of "I think, therefore, I am," the African ideology is "We are, therefore, I am." Nobles asserts that there is a growing need to regard Black

family culture and lifestyle as an alternative and functional system which has evolved to adapt to on-going demands and challenges.

Hill's (1971) work describes four indigenous strengths in Black families: 1) strong kinship bonds, 2) strong work and achievement orientation, 3) strong religious beliefs, and 4) flexibility of family roles. These viewpoints consider the psycho-social and cultural variables that are often misconceived or overlooked in the general family literature and research. The problems facing Black female-headed households, however, continue to be well amplified and chronicled. As can be gleaned from Figure 1, today, forty-two percent of Black families are headed by single-parenting females, more than triple that of white families, (U.S. Census Bureau, 1988).

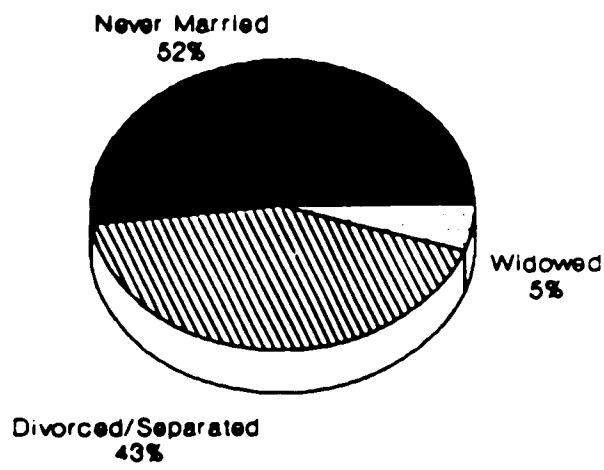
Although this trend has been changing, (see Figure 2) Omolade (1987) states that Black single motherhood has become synonymous with all that has gone awry with Black people, women and their movements. According to Omolade single-parenting mothers characteristically have been in a

**Figure 1:
Female-Headed Households
1960-1987**



U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of
Census

Figure 2: Black Children In Single-Parent Household by Mother's Marital Status (Total 4.8 Million Children)



Source: U.S. Department of Commerce
Bureau of the Census, 1987

marital or stable or common-law relationship with a spouse or mate. Thus, the "never married" category includes a significant percentage of women who were part of a continued committed couple. Omolade states that Black single-parenting women often interrupt their legal or common-law marriages because of physical abuse, mental cruelty, financial hardships, drug-addiction, extra-marital relationships, reflections of the social stress to which they and their mates are subjected to as well as the interpersonal discord that leads to dissolution of the marriages of others. Omolade makes a distinction between women who have or have had an emotional connection to their child's father, whether they were married or lived together without marriage, and those women who have had little or no contact or emotional attachment to the child's father. Children whose parents had been emotionally involved with one another tend to have had better communication and relationships with their fathers, regardless of the parent's marital status. Under such conditions it may be that forced departure of the related fathers is less influential on the son's object-relations capacity than the choice departure of poorly related fathers.

It is evident that female-headed households will remain a major focus of the Black family system. It is also evident that father-absence itself and its effect on the son's development, especially among Black families are both complex. Empirical investigations that take into account these variables is more likely to lead to a better understanding and more effective interventions in a social

condition which is increasingly commanding attention.

This study seeks to provide such data on one set of variables: the relative influence father-absence has upon Black male children's self-concept and development of object-relations capacity as a result of the degree of choice by the father concerning his absence.

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

*The whiskey on your breath
Could make a small boy dizzy;
But I hung on like death:
Such waltzing was not easy.*

*We romped until the pans
slid from the kitchen shelf;
My mother's countenance
Could not unfrown itself.*

*The hand that held my wrist
Was battered on one knuckle;
At every step you missed
My right ear scraped a buckle*

*You beat time on my head
With a palm caked hard by dirt,
Then waltzed me off to bed
Still clinging to your shirt.*

*"My Papa's Waltz" (1948)
-Theodore Roethke*

While Roethke's poem offers a glimpse of the *pas de deux* between a father and son, it also cues us to the complexities of the father's role in child development. Although there are shortcomings within the existing body of literature. This review will address the following: the father's role in child development, father-absence, Black fathers; sex-role development; cognitive and intellectual development; locus of control; self-esteem and self-concept;

psychodynamic perspectives on the father's role; object-relations, attachment, and social learning theories. Before one embarks upon a comprehensive review of the existing literature, a distinction is necessary: father-absence is not synonymous with male absence. In contemporary American society virtually every child experiences some degree of father-absence, but not necessarily male absence.

Types of Father-Absence

Variants of father-absence can not be fully understood without an appreciation for the father's role within the family structure as well as the implications of his absence, particularly with regard to the child's development. Adams et. al. (1984) cite six types of father-absence, citing divorce or separation, desertion, illegitimacy, work demands, including state interventions, for example, military service.

Divorce and Separation

Divorce and separation are most commonly associated with father-absence. The National Institute of Mental Health, (NIMH) (1978) conducted research on divorce and separation which suggests that pre-marital pregnancy leads to early marriages. The earlier the couple married, especially if under duress, such as a pregnancy condition, the more likely the marriage would resolve. This was also the case with reference to socio-economic factors, particularly if the husband's wages fell significantly below that of the wife's

father. The Institute report also noted that a larger percentage of Black subjects than white subjects are separated or divorced in their first marriages, most often reflecting the social-economic conditions described (Bumpass, 1978). According to Navane & Glaser (1974) divorce has significant sociological implications, including diminished power for women and the fusion of authority lines.

Wallerstein & Kelly (1980) assert that initially divorce was perceived as a social panacea. Wallerstein contends, however, that divorce has grave economic repercussions and has a stressful impact upon the children. Westman (1970) associated divorce with an increased incidence and risk of psychopathology. Under such conditions Wylie & Delgado (1959) suggested that the mother would project her hatred for the father onto the son. Gardner (1959) posits, however, that pathological patterns will most likely emerge subsequent to the parent's separation. Landis (1962) suggests that sustaining an unhappy marriage posed more of a psychological stress to children than divorce. Both Landis (1960) and Gardner (1959) maintain that the older the child, the more traumatic he/she will experience the effects of the divorce.

Westman (1970) states that the loss of a parent during the Oedipal period was most traumatic, noting that both male and female children are riddled and besieged with guilt. He posits that boys, however, fear that their Oedipal wish has been fulfilled. He also contends that while school-age children are capable of understanding the loss, they suffer in a comparatively different

manner. They become depressed.

In a longitudinal study, Kelly & Wallerstein (1976) submit that the reaction to parental loss, usually the father, in preschoolers led to regressive behaviors. For early latency-age children, however, there was a conscious awareness of their sadness and suffering. On the other hand, post-latency aged children can usually verbalize their feelings of sadness and rage.

McDermott (1968) acknowledges the child's gender, parents personality and their relationship, the emotional availability of others during the divorce phase and most importantly the child's own personality strengths and capabilities as factors in the child's adjustment to parental loss.

Death

Widowhood is accompanied by a sustained period of bereavement and socially sanctioned rituals. Adams (1972) asserts that the death of a parent affects the surviving parent more than it does the surviving children. Under such conditions, children often respond to the mother's withdrawal into her own experience of loss and mourning. Langer (1963) notes that bereavement is often accompanied by feelings of anger associated with the death and loss of a mate. The transition from married status to widowhood is complicated by the change in the mother's image of herself and her role.

When a parent is lost, there is an increased attachment and dependency upon the surviving parent (Furman, 1974). The dead parent is perceived as impervious, often fantasized about, while the remaining parent is the brunt of resentment and is negatively perceived as being deficient. Jacobson (1966) adds that the deceased parent is held in reverence insofar as the child's fantasies, memories and recollections of him are concerned. This stance does not allow the child the opportunity to fully mourn the loss of the deceased parent. Instead, the loss of the parent under these circumstances is experienced as a form of narcissistic injury. Although a child's reaction can vary, Grossberg & Crandell (1978) state that the loss of the father during the Oedipal phase can result in oral fixations and an interference with sex-role development and/or preference. Peterson et. al. (1979) note that the mother's reaction to the father's death will most frequently govern the child's reaction.

Death and Divorce

Are there any significant differences between father-absence due to death versus father-absence due to divorce? Herzog & Sudia (1974) assert that while father-absence by death is perceived as a regrettable circumstance and considered a "honorable discharge," so to speak, from the family service, this type of absence is not associated with parental discord. On the other hand, divorce and desertion are stigmatized and connote familial discord even prior to the separation. In cases in which father-absence is the result of imprisonment

or hospitalization for mental illness, the family's adjustment to these circumstances remains questionable.

Unwed Fathers

According to Harre-Mustin (1986) 25 per cent of all births in 1986 were to unwed mothers. The number continues to climb. Earlier Pope (1969) compared the differences between Black and white mothers with regard to out of wedlock births. Pope found that fewer Black women than white women marry to legitimize their children's birth and that more Black women kept their children after birth. Pope also noted that Black women often sustained some type of relationship with the child's father. It seems that regardless of race, the outlook for children born out of wedlock remains bleak. Even fathers who are willing to do so are often unable to provide child support because the typical unwed father is likely to be very young, undereducated and without means. Adams et. al. (1984) unmarried fathers do not necessarily desert the mother and child. When such fathers are not available, however, there are serious economic and social consequences. Nevertheless, Lerner (1974) maintains that the mothers' reaction to such loss remains the most salient factor in the child's adjustment.

Temporary Father-Absence

Temporary father-absence, the understated form of father-absence, occurs when occupational demands, military service or incarceration removes

him from his family. Herzog & Sudia (1968) reviewed several studies which found that temporary father-absence when compared to continuous father-absence that temporary father-absence had a more deleterious effect on the children.

In the Name of the Father and Son: The Father's Role and Influence

It has been customary for clinicians and paraprofessionals working with children and families to consult solely with mothers when obtaining developmental antecedents and family histories and when treating pathological situations. This trend has thus excluded fathers and has biased the scope of child development literature and research.

Although literature on father-child dynamics is still emerging, it emerged predominately about a decade ago. Earlier literature seemed to confirm the traditional social roles ascribed to fathers as providers and breadwinners while devaluing the father's role and participation in child raising. The father's primary purpose traditionally was to economically sustain the home environment. Although the father was considered a potent force in the home environment, a senior partner to his spouse, there remained a distinct demarcation of parenting roles in relation to child rearing. However, the traditional versions of the nuclear family has disintegrated. For example the divorce ratio for Blacks has quadrupled during the 1960-1987 period. Likewise there has been a dramatic increase of divorce among whites. Glick & Lin (1986) note that annual divorce

rates are highest for those under 30; the divorce rate for this age group was 53 per 1,000 married couples. Furthermore, the likelihood of remarriage has changed. According to social analysts Levitan, Belous, & Gallo (1988), in 1960 only one out of four men, or 25 per cent, and one of ten, or 10 per cent of women, had never been married by age 26. By 1987, the comparable rates had decreased to fifty per cent of the men and forty per cent of the women had never been married by age 26. And for all groups the rise of births to unmarried women rose from 21 per cent in 1977 to 31 per cent in 1987 (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1987).

Students of the family, academics, and laypersons have recently begun to respond to the rise of single-parent and father-absent households with an increasing concern about the father's role in child development (Abelin, 1971, Anderson, 1968, Benson, 1968; Billingsley, 1968; Biller, 1969, 1970, 1971; Cronenwett, 1982; D'Andrade, 1973; Hamilton, 1977; Lamb 1975, 1976a, 1976b, 1977, Levine, 1976 and more recently Parke 1978, 1981). Theoretical and empirical evidence is being compiled which re-appraises the role fathers play with regard to the child's social competence and personality functioning (Abelin, 1971, Adams et. al. 1984, Badaines, 1976, Blos, 1985, Blechman, 1982, Croninwett, 1982, and Pruett, 1985).

Once it was thought that children were merely the by-products of their maternal experiences and interactions. More recently, however, there is evidence that several concomitant factors impact upon the child's psycho-social development, despite, and in addition, to the quality of the mother-child relationship. Lamb (1976a, 1976b, and 1977) analyzed the relative influence of paternal factors associated with attachment, separation, and affiliation, noting the significance of fathers' contributions. Likewise, Parke (1981) and Biller (1969, 1970) confirm Lamb's findings about the father's role and contribution to the child's personality, moral, and social development. The researchers also argue that when children are appropriately exposed to their fathers, boys develop more appropriate masculine characteristics and girls are more feminine. Lamb (1976b) indicated that fathers and mothers represent two distinctively different interactional experiences for infants. Lamb (1975a, 1975b) found that infants have pleasurable experiences and interactions with their fathers and these experiences and interactions were mutually gratifying. Lamb (1976) suggested that during the first year of life fathers interact with male and female babies in significantly different ways. He later observed that fathers were most likely to be more active with their male babies than with their female babies; mothers, however, showed no differences in their handling of male and female babies. Lamb (1976) suggested that this occurs because mothers tend to engage in more conventional play activities with infants which as an extension of their

caretaking responsibilities, whereas fathers engage in more physically-stimulating play activities. Lamb also indicates that the quality and intensity of the parental interactions are important determinants of the child's capacity to develop positive attachments with both parents.

Stevens (1986) elucidated upon Parson's (1955) concepts of the father's "instrumental" role, that is, a controlling manner and the mother's "expressive" role, that is, an emotional manner. Stevens maintains that there exists a universality of the fathers' instrumental role and that this role orientation enhances the child's developmental experiences. For mothers, the expressive role is characteristically culturally-bound, confining her family and home (sic). Unlike fathers, who foster the child's active exploration of the external world, mothers promote the cultivation of the child's internal world of emotions. Although Stevens implies that the father's role has symbolic qualities, he asserts that fathers and mothers provide separate functions for infants. While both parents may be geared towards their respective expressive and instrumental roles, this does not, of course, deny the existence of instrumental capabilities in the mother or expressive capabilities in the father.

Lederer (1974) theorized that fathers and mothers represent two different "modes" of loving to their children. He indicates that it is sufficient for a mother that her child exists for her to unconditionally bestow her love upon. A father's love, however, is more demanding and contingency-based, commonly

upon the child's performance in the outside world.

Bronfenbrenner (1961) suggested that fathers believe that it is ultimately the mother's responsibility for socializing the female child. This may explain why fathers exhibit an overt preference for interacting with their male children rather than with their female children.

It is conceivable that fathers experience themselves as more adept at physically-oriented activities with children of both genders. The fathers' interaction with their daughters transforms when the girls' physical development results in social sanctions unless the father curtails, even playful physical contact and transfers the play activities and socialization responsibilities back to the mother. The play activities and socialization of boys, however, transfers from mother to fathers. Fathers can continue to "roughhouse" with their male children. Unfortunately, few longitudinal studies have investigated the differences in maternal and paternal interactions with older children. Additionally, the long term effects of the father's "roughhousing" with the male child have not been fully investigated. Preliminary research suggests, however, that the father's physical presence coupled with his physical involvement with boys has a favorable impact (Clarke-Steward, 1973, 1978, 1980, Mackey, 1985, and Marton, 1981).

Peters & Stewart (1981) observed in a community shopping mall the father-role behavior of 253 mother-father-child triads. They found that 91 per cent of the time fathers actively responded to the child's demands in a stereotypic way, that is, "instrumentally," or controlling, but were also capable of responding in an affectual or "expressive" manner as well. The degree of facilitation between father and child increased in the mother's absence.

Biller (1974) observed major differences in the ways fathers and mothers interact with infants. Biller found that fathers tend to encourage their children to overcome environmental hurdles and develop cognitive strategies through exploration, whereas mothers were prone to direct or impose limitations on the infant's exploration. The implication is that the mother's pattern may adversely impact upon the infant's level of curiosity and cognitive strategies.

Lamb (1976) observed that infants displayed a preference for play activities with their fathers, especially when fathers initiated the play activity. A major determinant here may be the different ways infants experience their fathers and mothers. There is an overt preference by infants to be held by their fathers. Fathers are not only able to engage and stimulate the infant, (Stern, 1985) they also are capable of imposing limitations and distinctions in play activities. Lynn & Cross (1974) found that when boys two years of age and older are given the choice between playing with their mothers or their fathers, they chose their fathers. Parke (1981) suggested that fathers

proportionately spend more, if not most of their time, with infants in play activities. Mothers, on the other hand, interact in a more diversified manner with their infants.

Yet both parents are active members of the infant's world. Kotelchuck's (1977) study reported that fathers devoted close to 40 per cent of their time with their infants in play; in contrast, mothers spent approximately 25 per cent of their time in play. Although fathers probably make their greatest contributions primarily through play activity, mothers actually spend more time than fathers do in play activities due to the interplay and interchanges during caretaking and the greater total length of time during which mothers directly interact with their babies.

Nursery studies by Brazelton & Yogman (1977) have established qualitative differences between parental play styles with infants between two and twenty-four weeks of age. The researchers have found that mothers were oriented around verbal exchanges and employed repetition as a means of cuing and interacting with their infants, whereas fathers were essentially less verbal but more physical and tactile.

Conclusions derived from the foregoing nursery studies substantiate the notion that during infancy and childhood fathers provide a unique form of physical stimulation which is comparatively different from the stimulation provided by mothers. The stimulation provided by fathers seems specifically

patterned for preparing the child to cope with the outside world.

Father-Absence: Past Terms and the Future

As a term, father-absence has undergone numerous literal interpretations. Children with fathers who were not physically present in the home were said to come from "fatherless" homes, with emphasis on the last syllable. Other descriptions began to crop up, such as "paternally deprived" (Biller, 1969), "father thirst" (Abelin, 1977) and "father hungry" (Herzog, 1980). Children from father-absent households were negatively characterized as coming from "disintegrated homes," "broken families," or "disrupted families." The prevailing opinion was that the father's absence from the home environment was a critical factor influencing the child's psychological makeup, one that cast a bleak outlook on the future of father-absent children. "Father-absent" families is the term currently in use. This term is more objective and is less value laden.

Most father-absence studies previously compared children from father-absent families with children from families where fathers were present and usually gainfully employed. They ignored the reasons for the fathers' absence in the comparative group of children. It is important to note that since fathers are becoming increasingly absent from middle class households, the domestic condition has been re-labelled to a less pejorative term. The most recent description, "single-parent" families or "father-absent" households reflects the consonant viewpoint that father-absence is not always to be equated with

disrupted or pathological families.

Black Fathers

The majority of research on Black fathers is directed to their absence, neglecting their roles within the family or their contributions to their children's development, particularly their male children.

According to Coles (1978), most absence of Black fathers from their homes is due in large measure to social policies. The high unemployment rate of Black men is one factor contributing to their inability to support a family. Thus, public welfare contributions become a necessary means of survival. Public welfare payments, however, are disallowed in cases where the father, the theoretical provider, is present; therefore, he absents himself. Coles adds that this policy leads to what is known as a "welfare culture." He notes that even though a father may not always be physically present for his family, he nonetheless may exercise control and contribute in a unique manner.

Unfortunately, more often negative characteristics have been bestowed upon Black fathers. Earl & Lohmann (1978) cite Hopkins' (1973) work and note the following:

It is generally taken for granted that a white man loves his family, but this is rarely the case in relation to a Black man...When a Black father is absent, for whatever reasons, all kinds of negative things are assumed about him. (p. 53)

Lohmann & Earl (1978) found that Black male children had substantially greater contact with their officially absent fathers than researchers had been able to ascertain. They cautioned investigators not to equate father-absence with the father's level of interest in his children, especially their sons. In addition, Earl & Lohmann found that when father-absent boys required assistance, generally with social or emotional problems, they could establish some degree of contact with their biological fathers, or with uncles, older brothers, grandfathers, church ministers, and even the mother's boyfriend. This researcher's experience with Black father-absent male children has been that even though the child's father may have been absent or uninvolved with the child's mother, if and when the father became aware that another male, this is, a therapist or surrogate father figure was significantly involved with his son, he often became more visible and interested in the nature and extent of their relationship.

Sex-Role Development

Most investigators have concerned themselves with the father's influence on the boys' sex-role development (Hetherington, 1966, Biller, 1969, 1974 Bandura & Walters, 1963, Burton & Whiting, 1961). It has been theorized that boys from father absent households are less masculine (Biller, 1969, 1974, Biller & Bahm, 1971). Lynn & Sawrey (1959), however, have suggested that boys from father absent homes tend to develop compensatory masculine characteristics.

There are few sex-role development studies which focus on minority group populations. However, Badaines' (1975) two-part study investigated identification and imitation in 52 seven year-old Black and Chicano boys. The first part of his study investigated the effect of race on imitation of behavior. The second part of the study examined the effect of paternal status on choice of a male or female model and masculine sex-role preference. All subjects were exposed to Black, white, and Chicano examples presented on film. Badaines reported that Black subjects expressed a significant preference for the Black model, whereas Chicano children displayed no significant preferences. Badaines also found that both Black and Chicano father-present boys had a significantly higher male sex-role preference score as compared to father-absent boys. Both groups, however, imitated the male model significantly more often than the female model, but this tendency failed to correlate significantly with sex-role preference scores. Badaines concluded that by age seven masculine sex-role preferences appeared well established but was more marked for father-present boys and less so for father-absent boys. Most sex-role development studies maintain that the father-son relationship, or lack thereof (Burton & Whiting, 1961, Biller, 1969, Mussen & Distler, 1959), is an influential factor in appropriate sex- role development.

Hetherington's (1966) research with paternally-absent preadolescent Black and white males found that father-absence prior to age five led to more feminine sex-role preferences. Summers & Felker (1970) reported that there were no significant differences in the mean scores of sex-role preference between preschool father absent and father-present Black boys. McCord, McCord, and Thruber (1962) suggested that the "critical period" for establishing sex-role preferences is between ages six and twelve.

Burton & Whiting (1961) reviewed cross-cultural data of father-absent males in cultures where no male figures were available even as role models. The authors' findings were consonant with previous notions that father-absent boys experience conflicts regarding sex-role identity.

These studies indicate the many psychological and social implications of father-absence. The incongruity in research findings are in part due to different methodological procedures. In addition, most father-absence studies fail to consider salient factors, such as the child's age at the time of the loss, the nature of the loss, and how the family responded and adapted to the father's absence.

Cognitive and Intellectual Development

Research correlating father-absence with cognitive styles, cognitive development and intellectual capacity during the preschool period (Shinn, 1978) and middle childhood (Svanum, Bringle & McLaughlin, 1979; Goldstein, 1982) is extensive. Lederer (1974) stated that the father asserts a powerful influence

over his son's intellectual development. Biller's (1974) study implies that fathers may be facilitating cognitive mastery from infancy.

Intellectual and cognitive development studies have been controversial because the findings focus on deficits rather than assets or coping styles. The scope of most cognitive and intellectual studies involving father-present children impart that children from two-parent homes perform better across several assessment measures. Pejorative terminologies were applied again to characterize the difference and lowered performance of children from single-parent homes. Intellectual and cognitive development studies identified children from father-absent homes as children from "illegitimate," "broken," or "unstable" homes. Many of these findings have been discredited because they failed to consider the complexities and realities of single-parent families. Also, cognitive development and intellectual studies fail to consider that father-present households tend to be economically more stable and that this stability rather than the father's presence affords greater opportunity for provision of the resources and materials which contribute to the child's development of cognitive and intellectual skills.

Blanchard & Biller (1974) studied forty-four working and lower class third grade males by examining their Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) scores and grade point averages (GPA's). The participants were eleven boys with fathers who were absent prior to age five, eleven others with fathers absent after

age five and twenty-two boys with "low" father involvement (less than two hours weekly) or "high" father involvement (greater than six hours daily). The results indicated that the high-father involved group outscored the early father-absent group across all ten achievement scales.

Collins (1969) examined Primary Mental Abilities Test (PMAT) scores, teacher ratings, and standardized achievement tests of 300 Black male and female parochial school children in grades 4, 6, and 8. The groups were equally distributed: 150 were from intact homes and 150 from father-absent homes. The children from intact homes scored higher in the 4th grade only on teacher-rated achievement and arithmetic but not with reading. The 6th grade group's standardized achievement scales demonstrated no significant difference. Mueller (1975) found that for 314 Black and white children enrolled in a Head Start Program that father-absence had a negative effect on Metropolitan Achievement Test (MAT) Word Analysis scores for the disadvantaged group only.

Deutsch (1960) studied 170 Black 4th and 6th grade children from an economically marginal area. He considered crowding as a socio-economic status measure, as "broken" homes were less crowded than intact homes. Deutsch contrasted and compared the scores from the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) and the Digit Span subtest of the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children.

Deutsch compared children with both parents present versus those living with one parent, a relative, or a guardian. Results indicated that children of the two parent group scored higher on the SAT in areas of arithmetic, reading, and overall total score. Deutsch & Brown (1964) examined intellectual performance of an urban population of 440 Black and white children in grades 1 through 5. 123 children were from father absent households and 317 were from father present households. The authors found that father-presence was associated with higher IQ scores for both races and sexes.

During the late 1960's and early 70's, however, a proliferation of such intellectual and cognitive studies focused on minority children. These coincided with the civil rights activities of the 1960's and the push toward compensatory educational preparation of those who were called "deprived."

In a sample population of 450, Ilardi (1966) also found that children from intact Black lower-class families scored higher than those from houses separated by divorce, death, or non-marriage of parents. Jaffe (1963) examined Black eighth grade students' failures and IQ performance of two groups: those who had present and employed fathers in contrast to those with absent fathers and dependent upon public assistance. As expected, the father-present group was superior across all measures. Similar results were found by Santrock (1970, 1972, 1977), Mueller (1975), Radin (1972) and Pedersen, Rubenstein & Yarrow (1973).

Santrock (1972) examined the potential influence of father-absence on the child's cognitive experiences. He found that the effects of father-absence are abrogated during adolescence due to peer influence. Loss of the father, however, during the formative years, particularly between 0 and 5 years of age appeared to have more of a deleterious effect on the child's cognitive development and performance on achievement measures. Santrock notes that when death has occurred between 0 and 2 years of age the child may compensate by forming an intense attachment to the mother, who reciprocate by investing in her son's welfare. This pattern, however, is not replicated for children who experience father-absence after 5 years of age. Santrock suggests that the mother may react differently if she is divorced, separated, widowed or deserted by the child's father. Depending on the circumstance the mother may devalue the child's abilities. There is, however, a difference for widowed mothers who seem to be more capable of economically providing for their children and as such convey a more positive view of maleness, especially if the deceased parent was held in high regard by the mother.

Locus of Control

Another area in which the influence of father-absence has been studied is the attribution of life events or perceptions concerning locus of control (Rotter, 1966). Locus of control is a psychological construct which refers to whether an individual attributes responsibilities for outcomes in life to his or her

own qualities and activities (internalized locus of control), or to the outside conditions over which the individual has no control (externalized locus of control). In a study of 30 father-absent male children from low socio-economic backgrounds Duke & Lancaster (1976) found that father-absent children attributed the father's loss to a massive dose of fate, thereby reflecting an external locus of control.

Parish & Copeland (1980), however, found that only children who had experienced loss through death rather than through divorce evidenced higher degrees of external locus of control. In another study of forty undergraduate students Parish (1981) found the only significant relationship to be between the number of years of father loss and the respondents level of externality. Ferguson & Kennely's (1974) and Parish's (1979a, 1979b) studies found that father loss had enduring and pervasive effects. These effects were found to be consonant well into adulthood.

Self-Esteem and Self-Concept

Self-concept and self-esteem are interchangeable psychological constructs which describe the phenomenon of self-perception or personal self-evaluations and attitudes that an individual has about himself or herself (Dill, 1978). Dill extends the notion of self-concept from the internal psychological process to social and interpersonal dimensions. Dill proposes that the individual also "communicates" these personal evaluations. Sims (1986)

states that self-concept and self-esteem are psychological constructs wherein behavior is either dependent on or influenced by the self-concept. Self-concept and self-esteem are developmental processes attained in early childhood. Cotton (1983) constructed a developmental line for self-esteem from infancy to adolescence. Cotton corroborated Anna Freud's (1965) position that there are normal consecutive phases which characterize points along a progressive path beginning at a stage of immaturity to a greater state of independence and maturity. Anna Freud emphasized the child's "historical reality" which acknowledges the child's cumulative expertise and downfalls in particular developmental spheres. Cotton indicates that the literature on self-esteem takes three distinct paths: 1) the esteem of others; 2) competence; and 3) the "self" as a selective filter of the first two functions. Cotton indicates that each path may change during the life cycle.

The development of self-concept in Afro-American children has held the interest of investigators for decades (Spurlock, 1986). According to Spurlock it was not until the 1960's that the deficit models of assessment were challenged.

Pioneer studies of racial differences and self-esteem were made by Clark & Clark (1939, 1940, 1947). The Clarks' self-concept research asked Black and white children, aged three to seven years of age, to select from a set of Black and white dolls, a nice doll, a pretty one, the doll that looked bad, a desirable doll, and a doll that looked most like the child subject. The Clarks found that

Black children displayed a preference for the white doll. The Clarks' interpretations of their findings led to the conclusion that Black children's preference for white dolls reflected negative self-perceptions as well as negative perceptions of their own racial group. This study has been replicated recently with similar findings.

Racial attitudes and preference studies have greatly contributed to our understanding of what has been termed "Black self-concept." Powell (1973) suggests that Black children learn to compensate for lowered self-concept. The lack of positive role models has also been linked to lowered self-esteem.

Psychoanalytic Perspectives on the Father

Freud has made noteworthy contributions furthering our understanding of the father-child relationship. Freud's (1909) famous case study of Little Hans, a five year-old phobic boy, paved the way for theoretical writings and discussions of the father-son relationship. Freud (1910) theorized that fathers played an important role in child development and in the family constellation.

Systematic research, however, was not forthcoming until subsequent decades. Grossberg & Crandell (1978) note that it was not until the 1940's wartime conditions when father-absence became widespread that mental health professionals realized they were faced with new and different family trends. Even before the war fathers were not granted full consideration as viable contributors to a child's social and psychological development. But during

wartime approximately 7.2 million families in the United States were fatherless, which constituted over 13 cent of the nation's families with children. Post wartime produced numerous separations and divorces, increasing an already inflated number of father-absent households.

Post wartime studies by Sears, Pintler & Sears (1946) and Bach (1946) employed projective doll play techniques to advance clinical insights and to explore the long-term effects and implications of father-absence. Researchers investigated the relationship between behavior and personality correlates of father-absent male children. The researchers reported less aggressive doll play among father-absent boys. This was in direct contrast with the doll play of father present boys. The authors noted overtly feminine projective doll play patterns among the father-absent group only. Stolz et. al. (1954) added that overt feminine doll play persisted long after the fathers' return. Stolz underscores his findings by noting that if the absence occurred during the first few years of the boys' lives, behavioral disorders and problems were the inevitable outcome. Father-absent boys supposedly experienced grave difficulties establishing and maintaining genuine interpersonal relationships with adults and peers. Bach (1946) found that the mother's attitudes and feelings towards the father influenced the child's attitudes towards the absent father.

Lynn & Sawrey (1959) studied the effects of father-absence on both genders of a Norwegian population. They established that there were several distinctive personality differences between genders. The most influential evidence reported was that mothers of father-absent boys tended to be more protective and authoritarian in their child-rearing practices than mothers of father present boys.

Although Freud considered the primary relationship to be between the mother and child, he considered identification with the father a necessity. Freud discussed two basic forms of identifications: anaclitic and defensive. Anaclitic identification refers to the child's attachment to the primary caretaker. Defensive identifications are formed during the Oedipal phase of development when the child has to "transfer" affections from the primary love object, that is, the mother, to the father.

For Freud, the Oedipal complex superimposes the father's image into the family portrait. Freud theorized that the Oedipal complex was the culmination and capstone of the child's psychosexual development. Freud (1919) wrote that the Oedipal complex unfolds as a parallel process that takes on similar characteristics in boys and girls. Freud later recognized that his work would require some revisions, particularly for girls. In brief, Freud's rendition of the constellation of features coalescing around the Oedipal complex surface as the male child is ushered into the phallic phase. Earlier Freud stated that during

particular developmental periods the child derives pleasurable sensations which are later associated with drive states which govern the child's actions. Developmentally during the phallic phase, the child derives pleasure from the phallus, and the mother is the primary love object. The child's libidinal, that is sexual, attachments and drives are centered around the receipt of her affection and attention. There is already a pre-established love and perhaps understated admiration of the father. Freud's rendition and resolutions of the Oedipal phase can be summarized as follows.

At approximately four or five years of age, perhaps even earlier, impulses of a sexual and irrational nature arise. The male child perceives the father as a rival, a competitor for the mother's affection and admiration. The male child is cognizant on some level that the father has a different relationship with his mother than he does: the father receives specialized attention and privileges, such as sleeping with the mother and she reciprocates the father's affection and attention. For the male child, however, this results in a heightened sense of resentment and hatred towards the father as a rival. By virtue of the father's size, physical prowess, and ability to wield authority, the father telegraphs a message to his son which is interpreted by the child in a unique manner. This message reminds the child of his own vulnerabilities. The male child becomes fearful of retaliation and possible castration by the father. His potent desire to solely possess the mother and to do battle with the father for her is repressed.

The male child copes with this conflict by forming an allegiance with the father. To ensure that his impulses remain suppressed, the male child protests against any of the mother's nurturing overtures. The affectionate overtures for which he once yearned must now be denied. Freud termed this defensive stance as identification with the aggressor. According to this perspective the father's role encompasses several aspects:

1. he is an early object of love, admiration and identification,
2. he gives basic bodily care to the child,
3. he is a powerful or omnipotent godlike being;
4. he serves as a comforter and protector;
5. he is a threatening castrator and inhibitor of autoerotic and Oedipal wishes and,
6. he is an authoritarian figure to be overcome before adulthood and independence can be reached (Burlingham, 1973).

In his theorizing Freud placed considerable importance on the father's role in child development (Machtlinger, 1981). Although the father serves a distinctly different function for boys, his contributions are important for children of both genders. Freud (1927) stressed three major aspects of the father-child relationship as a by-product of the Oedipal Complex:

1. The intense feeling of love and admiration for the father during pre-Oedipal years was considered

most critical as the origin and prototype for establishing positive identifications.

The father's physical presence and omnipotence provides the child with the blueprints he/she seeks in order to identify with the father. At the onset of the Oedipal complex, these positive feelings and identifications come into conflict.

2. The child is vulnerable to environmental demands and the father provides armor by which the child feels secure and protected. As the child's love for the father intensifies, so does the child's need to feel protected and re-assured of his/her place within the world.
3. Given the child's small size and limited mastery in certain developmental and social areas, the father becomes pivotal in regulating exploratory activities. He is often, at least in most familial structures, the authoritarian who doles out punishment and praise, to which the child aptly adheres and from which restrictions are placed on his/her behaviors.

Neubacher (1960) presented several psychoanalytic implications and complex outcomes of father-absence. According to Neubacher father-absence may increase the likelihood of sex role confusion and lead to retarded ego-development. This ego retardation is characterized by poor interpersonal relationships and an impaired capacity for intimacy and empathy, vital

ingredients for ensuing object-relationships. The psychoanalytic position has endorsed that father-absence, whether by death or other means, leads to sexual inversion in boys due to the lack of an identifiable male during early childhood.

McCord, Thruber & McCord (1962) tested several psychoanalytic assumptions investigating paternally-absent males from a low socio- economic and deprived Boston area. Their investigation yielded several interesting findings:

1. The authors suggest that feminine (non-aggressive) behavior was positively related to paternal absence, only if the boy was between six and twelve years of age when his father left, or if the mother was deviant or rejecting, especially if the father had died.
2. There was no evidence to support the hypothesis that paternal absence lead to abnormal fears.
3. Although sexual anxiety was found among this group, it seemed to be a reaction to the environment rather than exclusively an attribute of father-absence.
4. Oral regression was related to father-absence only among boys with deviant and rejecting mothers.
5. Gang affiliation was found not to be related to paternal absence. It occurred, however, with greater frequency in step families in which the father or mother had been replaced.

6. Finally, the relationship with juvenile delinquency (criminality) seemed to be much more a function of familial instability than a function of father- absence.

Anderson's (1968) juvenile delinquent study found that non-delinquent males between the ages of four and seven who had experienced father-absence suffered in a less traumatic way, especially when there was a surrogate father figure available. Anderson noted that for both delinquents and non-delinquent boys, the period of life in which substitutions for an absent father or when the presence of a father figure tends to be most "preventative" is between the ages of four and seven. Anderson suggests that this age range may be a critical period in which the presence of a male figure can ameliorate the trauma related to father-absence.

Smith & Walter (1978) reported that delinquent males lacked gratifying, loving, and supportive relationships with their fathers. Many juvenile delinquents experienced feelings of isolation and reportedly came from broken and conflicted homes. The domestic climate of many juvenile delinquents' homes provided limited supportive experiences and this pattern has been associated with difficulties in delaying gratification.

A cross-cultural study involving Trinidadians and Grenadians (Mischel, 1961) considered the potential relationship between father-absence and a child's ability to delay gratification. The findings indicated that for both cultures

within the age group of eight to nine year-olds a significant relationship was established between father-absence from the home and the greater propensity to seek immediate reinforcement rather than the ability to delay reinforcement. No relationship was established, however, for an older group, aged ten to fourteen.

Some psychoanalytic authors believe that the father's primary contribution to child development is to penetrate the intense biological and symbiotic bond existing between mother and child; thus the father promotes separation and individuation (Abelin 1971, 1975, 1977). Abelin espoused Mahler's concepts which emphasize that the father's presence is necessary and essential as early as three to four months of age in order to facilitate the separation-individuation process. Ross (1983) states that this notion is a bit extreme, given the basic family dynamics during the child's first year of life. Ross recognizes the importance of the father to bond himself with the child, partly through mirroring. In doing so, the father establishes for the child a tactile, visceral, and tenuous knowledge of "the other."

Forrest (1967) writes that the father is the child's first "*l'etranger*," an ambassador from the outside world. Fathers provide tactile and visceral stimulation which peaks the child's curiosity about the environs beyond the mother. The father's role implicitly seems designed to aid the child in forming attachments with the mother and later to assist the child's detachment from her.

The psychoanalytic position maintains that through their role and interactions with their children, fathers enhance the children's socialization, thereby significantly contributing to the children's psychological makeup.

Object-Relations and Attachment Theory

An infant's attachment to the primary caretaker has always been considered of utmost importance (Winnicott, 1958, Klein, 1957). Bowlby's (1969) work links psychoanalytic object-relations theory with attachment theory. Bowlby (1969) introduced the concept of monotropy, the infant's dependence on a particular adult figure within their proximity, not necessarily the mother. In tandem with the psychoanalytic position, attachment is described as a drive, a biological force specifically designated to foster important ties. Like Freud, Bowlby states that attachment is goal-oriented, and there is an innate tendency for infants to seek proximity to another being. Bowlby posits that innate reflexes such as sucking, clinging, grasping, crying, and smiling all contribute to the infant's attachment to others. Thus, there is a connection between innate reflexes and attachment formation. Ainsworth (1969, 1978) delineated three forms of attachment: securely attached, insecurely attached, and nonattached. Theoretically infants who have had early securely attached relationships, preferably with both parents, later will generalize their experiences to their socialization with others beyond the immediate family. Lamb (1985) has suggested that the security of both the mother-infant and father-infant

relationships affects the infant's social style.

Attachment theory critically evaluates parental attitudes, utilizes observational data, and assesses behavioral manifestations such as proximity, verbalizations, gazing, and touching which are then factored into theoretical formulations. An infant who fails to form significant early attachments to its primary caretaker has been found to be in jeopardy. One can therefore conclude that the lack of secure attachments can be directly associated with the child's impaired object-relations.

In psychoanalytic theory the analyses of relationships based on developmental and genetic approaches have led to the growth of object-relations theory. Kernberg (1980) states that object-relations theory examines metapsychological and clinical issues in terms of the vicissitudes of internalized object relations. He adds that object relations theory considers the psychic apparatus as originating in its earliest stage as a sequence of internalizations, patterns relating with significant others, beginning with one's mother and father.

More recently, psychoanalytic theory has paid closer attention to infant behaviors with regard to attachment formation of object-relations capacity. Object-relations theory refers to an individual's mental representations and interactions with others. Brody, Axelrad & Moroh (1981) conducted a longitudinal study assessing early phases in the development of object-relations

capacity. The researchers defined three classes of objects: 1) people, 2) things, and 3) ideas. The researchers attempted to provide empirical support for psychoanalytical constructs and in doing so used their research findings to develop appendices depicting favorable and unfavorable signs of object-relations development. For example, at six months favorable signs of object-relations development include adequate feeding patterns, such as appetite, intake, and digestion; no conspicuous tension; regular sleep patterns, such as falling and remaining in sound sleep; and no need for pacifier, thumbsucking, rocking or other special aids. Signs of unfavorable development include irregular sucking and poor appetite; refusal of liquids and solids; chronic vomiting; gagging or spitting, and a low frustration tolerance for hunger, being alone, or sitting in wet or soiled diapers.

The developmental stages of internalized object-relations can be traced to Mahler's earlier writings on infantile autism, symbiosis, and separation-individuation. Kernberg (1966) states that this process leads to the psychic structures known as ego, superego, and id.

Laplanche & Pontalis (1973) define object-relations as

... a designation for the subject's mode of relation to his world; this relation is the complex outcome of a particular organisation (*sic*) of the personality,... We may speak of the object-relationships of a specific subject, but also types of object-relationship by reference either to points in development (e.g. an oral object-relationship) or else to psychopathology (e.g. melancholic object-relationship). (p.277).

Recently the concept of object-relations has been extended to the individual's integration of novel and past experiences. Ogden (1983) writes that object-relations theory is often erroneously thought to be solely an interpersonal theory which averts attention from the unconscious processes. He states that internalized object-relations can be shaped by the nature of the object. Ogden proposes that internal objects can be thought of as unconscious suborganizations of the ego capable of generating meaning and experience, more importantly generating experiences that are capable of thought, feeling and perception. Ogden's stance broadens and challenges the present scope of object-relations theory.

The clinical assessment of object-relations attainment and capacity in father-absent children may provide insight into their unconscious thoughts, feelings and perceptions regarding the father (Litt, 1981).

Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory is another major influence concerning early father-infant relationships. Social learning theorists have challenged the propositions promulgated by the psychoanalytic perspective.

According to Bandura & Walters (1967) and Bandura (1971, 1977) social learning and personality development are fostered through observations and interactions with salient "models." These "models" are commonly found in the environment, usually one's parents, teachers and peers.

Social learning theory also maintains that behaviors which have observable and symbolic qualities become internalized as integral aspects of a child's psychological composition. Modeling is comprised of three elements: 1) imitation, mimicking the behaviors of a model, 2) disinhibition, the release of a previous response in the observer's repertoire; and 3) an eliciting effect, which releases an unassociated ideas in the observer and generates new behaviors.

Social learning theorists are concerned with "external representations," while "internal representations" are the focus of psychodynamic theorists. Social learning theorists do not maintain that internal representations are inconsequential or irrelevant, instead they offer that internal representations are complex and difficult to measure. Social learning theorist hold that psychoanalytic theorists underestimate the direct and/or indirect influence learning has upon an infant's cognitive apparatus (Bandura, 1977, Walters, 1963).

Biller (1971) believes that children's propensity to observe and imitate their fathers results in greater rewards for male children. This imitation through modeling is also critical for male sex-role development. Biller indicates, however, that social precursors necessary for girls, such as specific feminine behaviors, are also reinforced and rewarded by the father. The father, therefore, has an extensive role in shaping the behavioral patterns of children of

both genders. There is evidence to suggest that mothers mother as they were mothered and that fathers also follow their own fathers' parenting style as a model. Social learning theorists attest that these are learned behaviors cultivated by indirect or direct observation, imitation, or exposure.

Lamb (1985) indicates that social-learning and psychoanalytic theoretical approaches overlap and compliment one another. Some of the differences are more semantic than otherwise. In any event, this study will draw upon several of these perspectives to investigate the relative influence father-absence has upon the development of object-relations capacity based upon Rorschach imagery and percepts and self-concept in Black children as a factor of intentionality of the absence.

Hypotheses

Given the findings and issues raised in the literature, the following major hypotheses will be tested:

1. Sons who have experienced non-willful father-absence as compared to sons who have experienced elective father-absence will have greater difficulties engaging in empathic relationships.
2. Sons who have experienced non-willful father-absence as compared to sons who have experienced elective father-absence will have greater difficulties coping in novel interpersonal situations.

3. **Sons who have experienced non-willful father-absence as compared to sons who have experienced elective father-absence will have a more negative self-appraisal.**

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

As stated in Chapter II, this study sought to clinically assess whether there are significant differences in the developmental attainment of object-relations capacity based upon Rorschach imagery and percepts and self-concept for Black father-absent male children, particularly when the child's father was absent as a factor of being forced to leave through death or incarceration as opposed to participating in the decision to leave by separating from the child's mother.

The population under study consisted of forty Black male children between the ages of 6 and 12 in regular grades. The participants were drawn from the New York City regional area. Their single-parent mothers were drawn from those parents who attended parent orientation meetings at the Big Brother's of New York Regional Office in order to participate in the Big Brothers of New York program. There were some participants who elected not to participate in the Big Brothers program or those who did not meet the Big Brothers requirements. It was assumed that the sample population differed from other populations of father-absent children in the following respects: 1) these single-parent mothers have on some level recognized the need for a male role model in their son's life, or 2) the parent has also come to recognize that the father's absence has had an effect on the child in some manner, and 3) this

sample represents a non-clinical population. As suggested by McCord, McCord and Thruber (1962), it was anticipated that father-absence might have different effects under various conditions. The authors also indicated that the fathers' absence was likely to be preceded by numerous conflicts. Therefore, in this study, the boys were divided equally into two study groups: Father-Forced (FF) characterized those boys whose fathers were forcibly absent due to incarceration, death or hospitalization for mental or physical illnesses; Father-Choice (FC) characterized boys whose fathers who were absent as a result of some degree of choice, considering such factors as desertion, work, or agreed upon separation of the spouses. Mothers of the potential participants were verbally informed of the premise and instrumentation involved in this study during Parent Orientation Meetings held at the Big Brothers of New York Regional Office. Parents were also informed that data collected would be for dissertation research purposes and that only group scores will be reported. Volunteers for this study then provided their names, child's name, age and contact numbers. They were informed that no compensation could be paid for their participation and that they could withdraw from this study at any time without penalty. At the initial interview and assessment meeting with each participating parent and child, a consent form was presented which included these terms in writing. Ample time was allotted for questions or concerns related to the study. These procedures were similarly described to the boys. If any boy

declined to participate despite his mother's consent, his wishes were honored. All procedures for the protection of human subjects stipulated by the American Psychological Association were followed (see Appendix for statements).

Instrumentation

A. Father-Absence Clinical Interview Scale (Appendix A)

The Father-Absence Clinical Interview (FACI) is a fifty-one question interview developed by this researcher which combined several clinical measures (Marital Satisfaction Inventory [AFC] subscale, Synder [1985] and questions extrapolated from Rosenberg & Simmons [1966] self-esteem study) for the purposes of collecting demographic data and for distinguishing participants by the major research variables: 1) type of father-absence; 2) mother's marital status; 3) mother's self-esteem; 4) time of father's departure; 5) the degree of affective communication between parents; and 6) parent-child dynamics.

The FACI is a semi-structured interview designed on a five point Likert-type scale with ample time allotted for elucidation and inquiry. The interview was verbally administered to the participants' mothers. Analyses of FACI questions provided pertinent clinical information concerning the dynamic impact and influence of father-absence has upon object-relations attainment and self-concept in Black male children.

B: Marital Satisfaction Inventory

The Marital Satisfaction Inventory, (MSI, Snyder, 1985) was designed as an objective multidimensional self-report measure comprised of behavioral and attitudinal statements to identify separately for each spouse the nature and extent of marital discord. The MSI is comprised of 11 subscales. All scales are scored in the direction of discontent so that high scores on a scale reflect dissatisfaction in a specific area. The MSI scales were also designed to be administered and interpreted individually. Snyder (1985) implies that this assessment approach provides the clinician and researcher with the option to evaluate and assess one dimension of marital discord or to compare with other MSI scales. For this study only the Affective Communication (AFC) subscale was used. The AFC subscale consists of twenty-six items structured on a two-point forced choice, true or false format. In this study the AFC subscale was used to assess the degree of satisfaction with regard to the affective communication and relationship with the spouse. Three factors were assessed by the AFC subscale: (1) complaints of inadequate fondness from spouse, (2) experiences and perceptions that the spouse lacked empathy and understanding, and (3) ability or inability to self-disclose or share feelings. Low AFC scores characterize a positive relationship with ample interest in the interpersonal relationship between partners. Elevating scores reflect a mutual lack of affectual expression and communication as well as indicating marital distress. Moderate

AFC scores reflect a degree of distress. The highest AFC scores indicate a relationship fraught with extensive isolation and negative affect. As a clinical research tool the AFC scale had particular clinical application to this study. The AFC aided the investigation of the family life cycle, and the relationship of marital dysfunction with personality correlates. The AFC subscale also provided an index of the quality of the parental relationship and marital bond, all influencing the child's self-concept and object- relations development. Scores obtained on the AFC subscale were utilized as indicators of the domestic climate and degree of communication between the child's parents prior to the father's separation. Snyder (1985) reported test-retest reliability of the AFC subscale to range from .88 to .94. There is supportive evidence that the AFC load positively with other MSI subscales.

C: Assessment of Self-Esteem

Rosenberg & Simmons (1966) conducted an extensive self-esteem study of urban Black women. Seven questions which factored significantly for detecting and assessing self-esteem correlates were extrapolated by the researcher for this study.

D: Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (PHCSCS) (Appendix B)

Description

Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (PHCSCS), a scale developed by Harris & Piers (1969) and revised later by Piers (1984) is also subtitled, "The

Way I Feel About Myself." The PHCSCS is a brief, self-report measure designed to aid in the assessment of self-concept in children and adolescents. Self-concept is assessed by this instrument as a relatively stable set of self-attitudes reflecting both a description and an evaluation of one's own behavior and attributes. For interpretative purposes the terms self-esteem, self-concept, and self-regard are used interchangeably. Scale items are scored in either positive or negative direction to reflect this self-evaluative dimension. A high score suggests a positive self-evaluation while a low score reflects a negative self-evaluation. The PHCSCS focuses on children's conscious self-perceptions rather than attempting to infer unconscious forces.

The PHCSCS was administered individually to all child participants. Child participants were requested to respond to statements by using the dichotomous "yes" or "no" format. For those children who could not yet read, or had reading limitations, the scale questions were read aloud and responses recorded by the interviewer.

The responses were hand scored and computer-analyzed to evaluate both general and specific dimensions of self-concept. An overall group score yielded a total raw score, a percentile score, and an overall mean score. To establish a more detailed and descriptive clinical portrayal and to serve clinical interpretative purposes, the PHCSCS' six "cluster scales," or subscales Behavior, Intellectual and School Status, Physical Appearance and Attributes, Anxiety,

Popularity, and Happiness and Satisfaction were also computed and analyzed.

The PHCSCS has established acceptable test-retest reliability coefficients for its target population as well as with specialized populations and across several socio-economic class groups. Piers & Harris (1964) investigated the stability of the scale utilizing a 95 item version of the scale with a 4 month re-test interval. The resulting coefficients of .72, .71, and .72 were obtained from the original sample of third, sixth, and tenth graders. The results proved to be satisfactory for a personality instrument in an experimental phase. The revised scale has demonstrated improved test-retest reliability. Wing (1966) studied 244 fifth graders using 2 and 4 month intervals and obtained reliability coefficients of .77 and .79 respectively. Platten and Williams (1979, 1981) reported reliability coefficients of .65 and .75 for a sample group of Black, White, and Mexican-American students in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades. The PHCSCS has proven to be a reliable instrument for assessing self-concept in children.

Validity.

Validity refers to whether or not an instrument actually measures what it is designed to measure. There are estimates provided for the PHCSCS with regard to its construct, criterion-related, and content validity. Relationships with other self-esteem/concept measures support the PHCSCS as a valid instrument for assessing self-concept (Piers, 1984). For example, the PHCSCS was found to be supported by parental correlates of self-concept (Piers, 1972), body image

(Brunn, 1975), children's drawings and paintings (Bradlow, 1976 and Prtyula, Phelps, Morrissey, & Davis, 1978), and human figure drawings (Draw-A-Person Test, Urbana, 1963).

Assessment of Object-Relations and the Rorschach Psychodiagnostic Inkblot Test (Appendix C).

Rorschach (1921) developed a series of ten inkblots resulting in a projective technique employed to investigate the dynamic intricacies of personality and human behavior. Rorschach's contention was that every action reveals personality characteristics. The interpretations of ambiguous and novel situations reveal the individual's cognitive style, feelings, conflicts, and defenses.

Content and Administration

The Rorschach Inkblot Test is a set of ten inkblots, five achromatic and five chromatic. Subjects were requested to examine each blot, one at a time, in sequence, and interpret what the blot might be. There are many interpretations for each blot. The responses were then subjected to a questioning phase or inquiry. Each response was scored according to its content, i.e. what was perceived; the determinant; what characteristics of the blots suggest the content, such factors as shading, color, texture, and the location of the content, or where on the blot the content was seen. Rorschach (1923) was interested in examining patients' capacity for object relations as well as uncovering narcissistic features. In this study the Rorschach Inkblot Test was used to focus on the subjects'

object relations capacity *vis-a vis* imagery and percepts as established by the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale (MAS) (1977) and Klopfer's scoring criteria, particularly the movement (M) factor.

Assessment of Object-Relations

The Mutuality of Autonomy Scale (MAS), developed by Urist (1977) and further validated by Urist & Shill (1982), was normed on adult populations. Tuber (1983, 1985) extended Urist's scale to meet the needs of younger populations. The MAS was devised to assess the developmental level of object relations based upon Rorschach imagery and percepts, within a non-clinical child population. The MAS is a seven point scale which assesses relationships expressed through Rorschach imagery. The scoring protocol is as follows:

- a) A score of 1 was awarded if figures were engaged in some relationship or activity where they were together and involved with each other in such a way that conveyed a reciprocal acknowledgment of their respective individuality. The image contained explicit or implicit reference to the fact that the figures are separate and autonomous and involved with each other in a way that recognized or expressed a sense of mutuality in the relationship. e.g. CARD II: "Two bears toasting each other, clinking glasses."
- b) A score of 2 was given if figures were engaged together in some parallel activity where there was no stated emphasis or highlighting of mutuality, nor on the other hand any sense that this

activity was compromised in any way within the relationship. e.g.

CARD III: "Two women doing their laundry."

- c) A score of 3 was given if figures were seen as leaning on each other, or one figure is seen as leaning or hanging on another. The sense here is that objects do not "stand on their own two feet," or that in some way they require some external source of support or direction.
- d) A score of 4 was given if one figure was seen as the reflection or imprint of another. The relationship between objects here conveys a sense that the definition or stability of an object exists only insofar as it is an extension or reflection of another. Shadows and foot-prints would be included here.
- e) A score of 5 was given when the nature of the relationship between figures was characterized by a theme of malevolent control of one figure by another. Themes of influencing, controlling, and casting spells were present, or one figure was literally or figuratively in the clutches of another. Such themes portrayed a severe imbalance in the mutuality of relations between figures. Figures may be seen as either powerful or helpless, while at the same time others seen as omnipotent and controlling, were scored.

- f) A score of 6 was given when not only was there a severe imbalance in the mutuality of relations between the figures, but when the imbalance was cast in decidedly destructive terms. Two figures simply fighting were not "destructive" in terms of the individuality of the figures, whereas a figure being tortured by another, or an object being strangled by another, was considered to reflect a serious attack on the autonomy of the object. Similarly, included here were relationships that were portrayed as parasitic, where a gain by one figure resulted by definition in the diminution or destruction of another.
- g) A score of 7 was given to relationships that were characterized by an overpowering and enveloping force. Figures are seen as swallowed up, devoured, or generally overwhelmed by forces completely beyond their control. Although the MAS scale is clinically useful in assessing object-relations capacity through the mutuality and autonomy of figures *vis-a-vis* Rorschach imagery and percepts, its scoring criteria is well-specified. To obtain additional indices of object-relations capacity and empathy, the movement scoring system, M, FM, m, and mf devised by Klopfer, et. al (1954), were also utilized as a clinical assessment of object-relations capacity. Movement responses refer to the

subjects' projection of movement onto the static image of the inkblot. These can include a variety of actions: human movement (M), e.g. CARD I: Two witches doing an devil's dance; animal movement (FM), e.g. VIII: A bullfrog croaking; a mechanical force (m, mf, Fm) with some fusion of a determinant with definite, semi-definite, or indefinite form, e.g. CARD VII: All I get is a feeling of disintegration, of things falling apart, or CARD IX: There is a billowing of red clouds at the top and the darker clouds underneath (Klopfer & Davidson, 1962) Although Rorschach (1942) viewed M as a multidimensional concept, he held that there was an interpersonal meaning to M responses, including establishing and sustaining rapport and empathy with others. Others suggest (Dana, 1968, King, 1958) that M responses reveal the capacity for empathy, the ability to project fantasy and aspects of the self into interpersonal situations, and the capacity to utilize the environment in different ways. Mayman (1962, 1967) proposed that unconscious images of others exist and form "object representations," a crucial element in the formation of object-relationships. These positions support the notion that the capacity for empathy is a significant feature of object-relations attainment.

Training of Judges for Rorschach Scoring Systems.

All protocols were tape recorded, transcribed anonymously and scored blindly by Ph.D level clinicians. Judges were trained on the appropriate scoring criteria for both the Urist's Mutuality of Autonomy Scale and Klopfer's Rorschach scoring system. To ensure clarity of scoring, the judges were provided sample protocols and any scoring discrepancies were addressed.

Human Figure Drawings (Draw-A-Man)

Machover (1949) and Goodenough (1961) provided theoretical and empirical support for the clinical and developmental utility of projective drawings. Naglieri (1987) developed a comprehensive scoring system for the Draw-A-Person test which expands upon the earlier work of Machover and Goodenough. Naglieri's (1987) "Draw-A-Person: A Qualitative Drawing System" is a newly devised and standardized test as a nonverbal measure of ability derived from the subject's drawings of a Man, Woman, and Self-Portrait. All drawings can be scored independently. For this study, only the Draw-A-Man drawing was used. Drawings obtained from this study were excluded from analysis because most participants had difficulty rendering complete and scoreable drawings.

Description

The Draw-A-Person: A Qualitative Scoring System provides an easy to use and efficient procedure to rate a child's drawing of a man, woman, and the self to obtain an estimate of non-verbal ability. The DAP may prove useful for those children with limited language skills, those who are unwilling to interact, and for those whose non-verbal ability is difficult to assess because of some motor problem. The test is only minimally influenced by motor skills because credit is earned for the inclusion of body parts but not on the basis of how artistically or realistically they are drawn.

Validity and Reliability of Draw-A-Person: A Qualitative Scoring System

The DAP was normed on a national sample of 2,622 individuals aged 5 through 17 years, stratified, and closely matched to the 1980 U.S. Census data according to age, sex, race, geographic region, and community size. The students' drawings of a Man, Woman, and Self were scored using the quantitative scoring system which is comprised of 14 scoring criteria that rate aspects of the drawing on the basis of Presence, Detail, Elaboration, and Bonus. The scoring system applies the same 14 criteria, for a maximum number of 64 points per drawing, to the drawings of the Man, Woman, and Self. It results in standard scores (mean score of 100 and standard deviation of 15) for each of these drawings.

The DAP has established good internal reliability (median Cronbach alpha = .87; the Man, Woman and Self score median reliability = .72); and inter-rater reliability ranged from .94 to .99 (median = .97) for a sample of 12 examiners using 14 drawings. Construct validity analysis revealed that the DAP raw scores are significantly related to age. Interpretation of the DAP Confidence levels, differences required for significance and values needed for such a difference to be unusual when comparing the Man, Woman, and Self standard scores are provided, and each individual's item's mean score by age is provided in the DAP Manual. The DAP was used to assess the Draw-A-Dad (DAD) drawings to ascertain whether there are comparative differences between the study groups.

Procedures

All meetings were conducted either at the Big Brother's of New York Regional Office or a meeting place arranged at the convenience of the parent and child. The parent and child were greeted by the interviewer. Both participants were re-informed of the nature and premise of the study. Ample time was allotted for any questions.

A Consent Form (see Appendix) was presented, which reiterated the nature of the study. The Consent Form was also read aloud by the interviewer and presented to the parent to read and sign. The parent was encouraged to raise any questions or concerns related to the study. It was made clear that the

adult or child could withdraw from the study at any time.

The Father-Absence Clinical Interview (FACI) and its instructions were read aloud and administered to the adult participants by the interviewer. The child was asked to wait outside the interviewing room. Upon completion of the FACI, parents were de-briefed in order to address any questions or issues raised during the interview process. The interviewer made every attempt to respond to all questions in the best manner possible. Upon completion of the FACI interview parents were asked to leave the interview room.

The child participant then was escorted into the interview room. Ample time was spent with the child participant establishing rapport and addressing any anxiety or concern relevant to the overall study. The child was informed that the interview session would be taped. Time was also spent, if necessary, allaying concerns about the presence of the tape recorder.

Once rapport had been established, the interviewer administered the Draw-A-Man (Draw-A-Dad) test, following the procedures provided in the DAP Manual. A brief open-ended projective inquiry followed. Each child participant was given the following instructions: "Take as much time as you need to tell me something about your picture, anything you like." If the child elected to produce a story, it was also tape recorded and transcribed.

The child was then introduced to the series of Rorschach Inkblot cards. Projective administrations varied depending on the child. While the child was providing responses, the interviewer also transcribed the responses onto paper. This facilitated identification of the protocols and added a measure of safety should any tape fail to record the child's responses. Upon completion of the Rorschach Inkblot Test the child was de-briefed, allowed to walk around the room or take a break, if necessary.

The Piers-Harris Children Self-Concept Scale (PHCSCS) was then administered to the child. The PHCSCS instructions were read aloud by the interviewer. If the child could read the questions without assistance, he was allowed to complete the instrument alone. For those children who could not read the questions, the instrument was read aloud and their responses recorded by the interviewer.

At the close of both interview sessions, the interviewer expressed his gratitude to both parent and child for their participation. If the parent had any questions or concerns regarding her child's performance, time was provided, to discuss them.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

As described in Chapter III, this study set out to clinically assess whether there were significant differences in the developmental attainment of object-relations capacity based upon Rorschach imagery and percepts and self-concept in Black father-absent male children, particularly when the child's father was absent as a factor of being forced to leave through death or incarceration as opposed to participating in the decision to leave by separating from the child's mother.

The population under study consisted of forty Black male children between the ages of 6 and 12 and their single-parent mothers. Two study groups were formed based upon information provided by the mothers about the reason and nature of the father's absence. The two groups were equally divided and characterized as follows: Father-Forced (FF), characterized those boys whose fathers were forcibly or non-willfully absent due to the fathers' death, incarceration, or hospitalization for mental or physical illness; Father-Choice (FC), characterized boys whose fathers were absent as a result of some choice made by the father, including such factors as desertion or agreed upon separation.

Analyses of Demographic Data

Analyses of demographic data revealed the following findings: The mean age of the Father-Choice (FC) participants was 9.1 years and 9.3 years for Father-Forced (FF) participants. As presented in Figure 3, 17.5 per cent of the mothers in this study were divorced; 20 per cent were separated. The largest proportion (62.5 per cent) were never married (chi-square = 34.25, df = 4, p = .0001).

The mean age of the participants at the time of the father's departure was 3.9 years for the Father-Choice (FC) group and 4.2 years for the Father-Forced (FF) group. Most of the absent fathers (70 per cent) lived with the mother and child prior to the separation or loss (chi-square = 6.60, df = 1, p = .01). Of this father-absent population, however, a significant number of these boys (35 per cent) had experienced father-absence by age 2, an additional 25 per cent had become father-absent by age 4, and by age 9, 97.5 per cent were father-absent (chi-square = 26.95 df = 12, p = .008). See Figure 4.

Figure 5 illustrates the reported frequencies for the reasons for father-absence. In this study mothers reported father-absence due to "not getting along" with the greatest frequency (52.5 per cent). This was followed by father-absence due to incarceration (30 per cent). Death or homicide (of the total 17.5 percent; natural death was 2.5 per cent, including deaths due to HIV-related fatal illness, homicide 15 per cent) (chi-square = 34.25, df = 4, p = .0001).

**Figure 3: Mother's Marital Status
by Percentage
(N=40)**

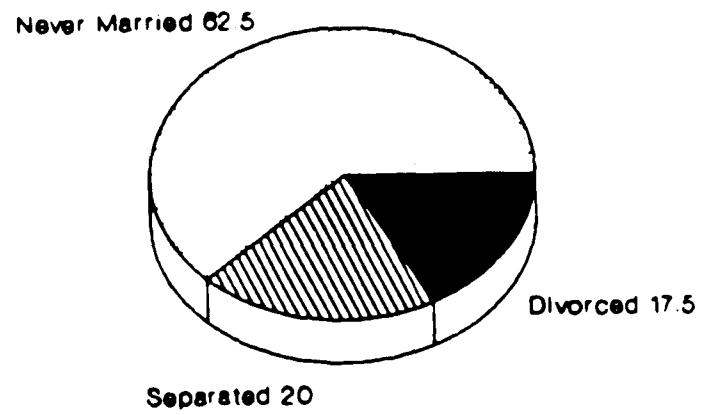
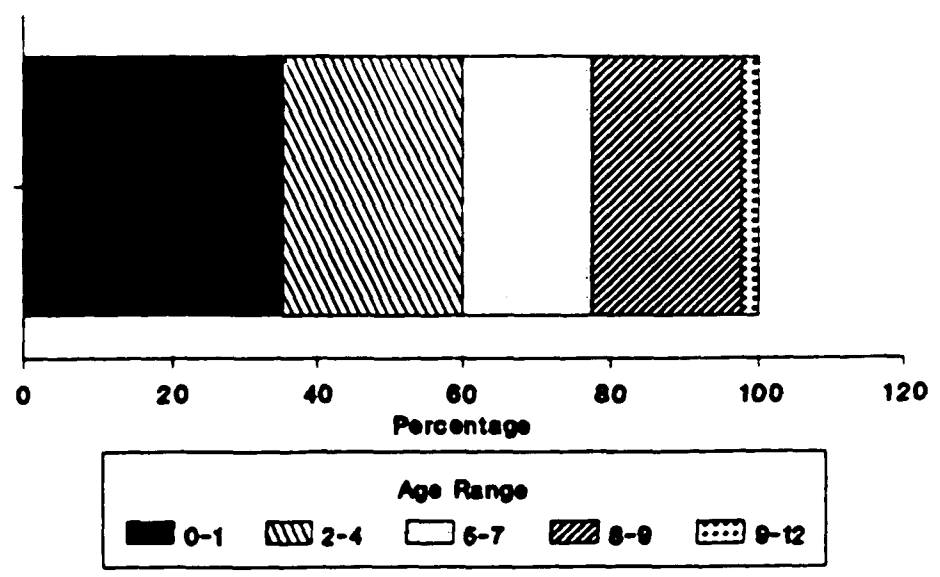
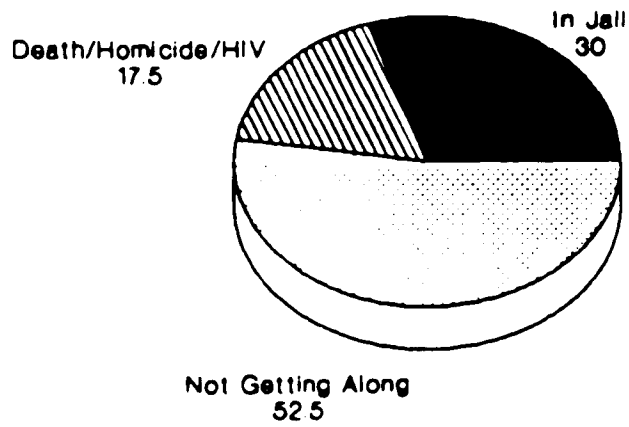


Figure 4: Child's Age at Time of Father's Departure by Percentage



**Figure 5: Reason for Father-Absence
by Percentage (N=40)**



Based on the Father-Absence Clinical Interview (FACI), 70 per cent of the children knew why their fathers were absent (chi-square = 6.40, df = 1, p = .011). A significant majority (67.5 per cent) reportedly either never or occasionally inquired about their fathers (chi-square = 13.40, df = 3, p = .004). No significant differences were established when comparisons were made between sons who "did things with their fathers" (57 per cent) and those sons who "did not do things with their fathers," (chi-square = .900, df = 1, p = .343). Most mothers (62.5 per cent) perceived their sons as being either always or often helpful or responsive to them (chi-square = 11.00, df = 3, p = .012).

When mothers were given choices between "always", "almost always", "sometimes", "often," and "never," the largest proportion (62.5 per cent) reported that their sons "always" or "often" sought their approval (chi-square = 13.40, df = 3, p = .004).

Mothers were also asked whether or not their sons discussed their feelings with them. 45 per cent reported that their sons either "never" or only "sometimes" discussed their feelings with them (chi-square = 14.20, df = 1, p = .003).

Mother's Self-Esteem

Also on the FACI, it was determined that mothers self-evaluated themselves on a Likert-type scale as having a number of good qualities (77.5 per cent; chi-square = 34.25, df = 4, p = .0001); and that they had much to be proud

of (97.5 per cent; chi-square = 32.75, df = 4, p = .0001). The majority (92.5) stated that they maintained a positive attitude about themselves (chi-square = 21.75, df = 4, p = .0001); and 85 per cent reported being satisfied with themselves (chi-square = 16.25, df = 4, p = .003).

Martial Satisfaction

When asked to evaluate their perceptions of their relationship with their mates, 80 per cent of the mothers reported that their mates did not take them seriously enough (chi-square = 25.60, df = 1, p = .0001). When asked if it was sometimes easier to confide in a friend than their mate, 85 per cent responded affirmatively (chi-square = 16.90, df = 1, p = .0001); 67.5 per cent reported that they were apt to conceal their feelings from their mates (chi-square = 4.90, df = 1, p = .027), and 85 per cent stated that their mates also concealed their feelings (chi-square = 19.60, df = 1, p = .0001). Eighty per cent, however, reported that they wished that their mates would have confided in them more (chi-square = 14.40, df = 1, p = .0001). When confronted with the statement: "Just when I needed it the most, my mate made me feel important," 75 per cent reported disagreement (chi-square = 10.0, df = 1, p = .002) and 72.5 per cent reported that they sometimes wondered just how much their mates really did love them (chi-square = 8.10, df = 1, p = .004). But when asked if their mates ever took pleasure in hurting them personally, 67.5 per cent of the mothers responded negatively (chi-square = 4.3, df = 1, p = .03).

Children's Self-Concept (Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale)

Table 1 illustrates the T-Tests of Independent Means of the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (PHCSCS) subtest scores for Father-Forced (FF) and Father-Choice (FC) children. These scores indicated positive self-esteem for both groups. On the PHCSCS subscales, the only significant difference between the groups was on the Anxiety subscale.

Descriptive statistics were also computed and analyzed for the PHCSCS subscales to further assess the similarities and differences of this father-absent population. The findings were as follows: The majority of children (85 per cent) reported happiness in their lives (chi-square = 19.60, df = 1, p. = .0001), and 82.5 per cent reported being cheerful (chi-square = 16.90, df = 1, p. = .0001). Many of the boys (72.5 per cent) stated that it was easy for them to make friends (chi-square = 8.10, df = 1, p. = .004), while 80 per cent reported that they had many friends (chi-square = 14.40, df = 1, p. = .0001); and 72.5 per cent reported being popular with their male peers (chi-square = 10.00, df = 1, p. = .002). A large percentage (87.5 per cent) stated that they were "good people" (chi-square = 22.50, df = 1, p. = .0001), 92.5 per cent reported having good ideas (chi-square = 28.90, df = 1, p. = .001); 85 per cent stated that they were trustworthy (chi-square = 19.60, df = 1, p. = .0001). Of these father-absent boys, 70 per cent reported feeling lucky (chi-square = 6.40, df = 1, p. = .011). When asked if they liked being the way they were, 82.5 per cent responded affirmatively chi-square =

TABLE 1
Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale
Mean Cluster Scores

	Father-Choice		Father-Force	
	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Behavior	25.0500	1.699	24.7500	2.579
Intellectual/ School Status	23.0500	2.102	22.2500	2.197
Physical Appearance	17.3500	2.059	17.2500	1.876
Anxiety	21.7000**	2.430	19.7500**	3.143
Popularity	16.5500	1.849	16.3000	1.838
Happiness/ Satisfaction	13.5000	1.276	13.2000	0.951
Totals:	117.200		114.5000	

** difference significant $\geq .01$

16.90, $df = 1$, $p = .0001$). The majority (90 per cent) also reported that they were important members of their families (chi-square = 25.60, $df = 1$, $p = .0001$), and reported that when they grew up they would be important people (chi-square = 25.60, $df = 1$, $p = .0001$); 80 per cent felt that they were different from other people (chi-square = 14.40, $df = 1$, $p = .0001$). Of this father-absent population, 65 per cent of the boys reported worrying a lot (chi-square = 3.60, $df = 1$, $p = .058$) while 22.5 per cent reported being sick a lot (chi-square = 12.10, $df = 1$, $p = .001$).

Pearson Product-Moment Inter-correlations of Research Variables

All of the subscales were inter-correlated to determine the coincidence of relationships among the different measures for the total group. Table 2 presents the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients which were computed and analyzed for both groups on the major research variables. The significant correlations were as follows:

The child's total object relation score obtained on the MAS scale was positively correlated with the child's total empathy score ($r = .8176$, $p = .000$) and the mothers' self-esteem ($r = .3657$, $p = .01$). The mother's self-esteem was also positively correlated with the child's total Happiness and Satisfaction subtest scores on the PHCSCS ($r = .4329$, $p = .009$), thus suggesting significant relationships with the mother's self-esteem, her son's development of object-relations and empathy and his reported experience of happiness and

TABLE 2
Pearson Product-Moment Inter-correlation Coefficients
of Research Variables

	O-R	MOVE	MS	MSE	PHF1	PHF2	PHF3	PHF4	PHF5	PHF6	AGEDEP	CCAGE
O-R		.8176*	-.1846	.2269	-.1025	-.0695	.0567	-.0260	.2023	.1265	.1808	-.1929
MOVE			-.2060	.3657**	-.2264	-.1616	.1641	-.1491	.1239	.1460	.1214	-.2559**
MS				.1643	-.1400	-.0483	-.0579	-.2902**	-.3742	.0328	-.1603	-.0421
MSE					-.0102	-.1597	.2406	.0594	.0154	.4329**	.0539	-.0135
PHF1						.0367	-.1850	.4582	.3124**	-.1434	.1661	.5130
PHF2							.4468	-.1855	.2258	.1286	.1278	.1488
PHF3								-.1869	.1123	.3722	-.0461	-.1110
PHF4									.4139**	.1171	.1407	.1075
PHF5										-.2920**	.0795	.0687
PHF6											.2706**	.1465
AGEDEP												.5277*
CCAGE												

* p = $\geq .001$
** p = $\leq .01$

O-R = Object-Relations Score (MAS)
MOVE = Movement Score (Klopfer)
MS = Marital satisfaction (AFC)
MSE = Mother's Self-Esteem

PHF1 = Self-Concept/Behavior
PHF2 = Self-Concept/Intellectual/School Status
PHF3 = Self-Concept/Physical Appearance/Attributes
PHF4 = Self-Concept/Anxiety
PHF5 = Self-Concept/Popularity
PHF6 = Self-Concept/Happiness and Satisfaction

AGEDEP = Age at Time of Father's Departure
CCAGE = Child's Chronological Age

satisfaction.

A negative correlation was established between the mother's marital satisfaction, (AFC) score and the child's total Anxiety score on the PHCSCS ($r = -.2902$, $p = .03$). The mother's marital satisfaction score was also found to be negatively correlated with the child's total Popularity score on the PHCSCS ($r = -.3742$, $p = .009$). Thus, the more satisfied the mother reported she was with her marriage or union with the child's father, the more anxious the son tested on the PHCSCS and the less popular he also reported himself to be on the PHCSCS.

The child's age at the time of the father's departure was positively correlated with the child's total Happiness and Satisfaction score on the PHCSCS ($r = .2706$, $p = .04$) while the child's age was also positively correlated with the child's total Behavior score on the PHCSCS ($r = .5130$, $p = .000$). This finding suggests that the older the child was at the time of the father's departure, the more happiness and satisfaction he reported on the PHCSCS. This relationship also seems to be related to higher reporting on the Behavior subscale of the PHCSCS.

The child's total Behavior score was also positively correlated with the child's total Anxiety score on the PHCSCS ($r = .4582$, $p = .001$). The older the child, the more likely he scored higher on the PHCSCS measure of general behavior and the more anxious he reported himself to be on the PHCSCS. The

child's total Behavior score was also positively correlated with the child's total Popularity score on the PHCSCS ($r = .3124$, $p = .02$). This finding seems to suggest that the child's behavior is related to his experience of being popular with peers.

The child's total Intellectual and School Status scores were positively correlated with the child's total Physical Appearance score on the PHCSCS ($r = .4468$, $p = .002$). The child's total Physical Appearance score was also positively correlated with the child's total Happiness and Satisfaction score on the PHCSCS ($r = .3722$, $p = .009$), suggesting that the child's physical attributes are related to his experience of happiness and satisfaction and positive school status.

Hypotheses

Tables 3-4 summarize the findings concerning the hypotheses. Hypothesis 1 stated that sons who have experienced non-willful father-absence as compared to sons who have experienced elective father-absence will have greater difficulties engaging in empathic relationships. This hypothesis was sustained. The criterion for empathy was the quality and total number of M scores on the Rorschach Psychodiagnostic Inkblot Test based on Klopfer's scoring system. The total number of movement scores were significantly higher for sons who had experienced elective father-absence than were those of sons who had experienced non-willful father-absence.

TABLE 3
T-Test of Independent Means
Between Father-Choice and Father-Forced Boys
On Klopfer's M Factor Criteria
(Empathy)

	Number of Cases	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Father- Choice	20	**25.1500	5.019	1.122
Father- Force	20	**31.3500	6.302	1.409
	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	**1-Tail Probability	
	-2.37	38	.05	

TABLE 4
T-Test of Independent Means
Between Father-Choice and Father-Forced Boys
On The Mutuality of Autonomy Scale (MAS)
(Object-Relations)

	Number of Cases	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Father- Choice	20	**59.3500	13.743	3.073
Father- Force	20	**69.2500	12.636	2.826
	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	**1-Tail Probability	
	-2.37	38	.01	

Hypothesis 2 stated that sons who had experienced non-willful father-absence as compared to sons who have experienced elective father-absence will have greater difficulties coping in novel interpersonal situations. This hypothesis was also sustained using significant differences in the mean scores between the two study groups. Sons who had experienced non-willful father-absence scored significantly higher on the MAS, thus reflecting greater difficulties engaging in novel interpersonal relationships, suggesting impoverished development of object-relations capacity.

Hypothesis 3 stated that sons who have experienced non-willful father-absence as compared to sons who have experienced elective father-absence will have a more negative self-appraisal. This hypothesis was not sustained. As reflected on the full scale score on the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale, there was no evidence to indicate that sons who have experienced non-willful father-absence had more negative self-appraisals when compared to sons who had experienced elective father-absence. See Table 1.

Finally, sons whose fathers lived with them prior to the parents' separation reflected significantly less difficulty engaging in novel interpersonal relationships when compared with sons whose fathers never lived with them, suggesting that the father's physical or psychological presence influenced the child's capacity for object-relations. See Table 5.

TABLE 5
T-Test of Independent Means
Between The Mutuality of Autonomy Scale (MAS)
and Father Living With Mother and Son

	Number of Cases	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Yes	28	**68.0357	13.074	2.471
No	12	**55.5833	12.376	3.573
	T Value	Degrees of Freedom	1-Tail Probability	
	-2.37	38	.01	

On the whole, the findings reveal relationships between the mother's self-esteem, the child's developmental level of object-relations, and empathy. When mothers reported dissatisfaction in their relationships with their sons' fathers, the more anxious their sons tested on the PHCSCS and the less popular they reported themselves to be. These findings reveal the influence of the mother's self-esteem and her perceptions of positive relations with the child's father has on the child's development.

The child's age at the time of the father's departure and the father's departure was related to the child's general behavior and heightened reporting of anxiety. These findings revealed that the older the child was, the more likely he scored at the higher end of the PHCSCS on the general behavior and anxiety subtests. There was also a relationship between the child's scoring on the physical attributes, intellectual/school status, and the happiness and satisfaction subtests.

The father's physical presence also was positively correlated the child's development of object-relations ($t = 2.37$, $df = 38$, $p = .01$) suggesting that his physical presence results in influential involvement.

In summary, Hypotheses 1 and 2 were sustained, indicating that sons who have experienced non-willful father-absence have greater difficulties engaging in empathic relations and coping in novel and interpersonal relationships as compared to sons who have experienced elective father-absence. Sons who have

experienced non-willful father-absence generated fewer and lower quality M responses than did that sons who have experienced elective father-absence. No significant differences on self-appraisal were established between sons who have experienced non-willful father-absence as compared to sons who have experienced elective father-absence, except on the PHCSCS Anxiety subscale. Sons who have experienced elective father-absence scored at the more anxious level with greater frequency when compared to sons who have experienced non-willful father-absence.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study explored the influence of two types of father-absence, mothers' attitudes about themselves, and their relationships with their sons' fathers in relation to the developmental attainment of object-relations capacity and self-concept in Black male children.

The results of this study support hypotheses and clinical assumptions which suggest that father-absence has different effects under different conditions (McCord, McCord and Thruber, 1962). The results also substantiate Grossberg & Crandell's (1978) study of father-absent children which recommended clinical assessment of the children's developmental level of object-relations. The present study demonstrated that these boys level of object-relations was affected by whether or not the child's father was forced to leave through death or incarceration or the father's participation in the decision to leave by separating from the child's mother.

Results of this study provided additional support for clinically held assumptions regarding the powerful impact mothers exert in father-absent families (Atkins, 1981) and the importance of assessing the father-child-mother triad (Abelin, 1971, 1977).

Analyses of demographic data of this study population suggests that father-absence trends occurred at critical developmental periods. As noted, 35 percent of the children had experienced father-absence by age 2, a time of emerging sense of self and autonomy. By age 4 an additional 25 per cent had become father-absent. At four years of age children are leaving the primacy of the home to the world outside; they also have a grasp of the world at large. By age 9, 97.5 per cent of this population were father-absent. Thus, these boys entered preadolescence with a relatively long history of limited or no contact with their fathers. This earlier departure, however, may represent a significant feature of the Black families studied.

The reasons cited for the fathers' absence revealed that the majority of fathers were absent due to "not getting along" with the boys' mothers. The clinical underpinnings of this category will undoubtedly require further exploration to be fully appreciated. It is, however, important to note that if parents were "not getting along" prior to their separation, it is likely that the married years or time spent together included discord and probable child alienation because of the young child's attachment to his mother.

There was also a high percentage of father-absence due to incarceration. Incarceration forcibly removes a father from his family and usurps his parenting role, familial ties and responsibilities. Some of the imprisoned fathers were reported to have been convicted for crimes of honor. For example, one father

murdered the man who attacked his wife. Others were guilty of the variety of crimes endemic to the ghetto (i.e. drug dealings, robberies, etc.). The interviews with the mothers indicated that when either of these were the case, the remaining non-willfully (FF) absent fathers were victims of homicides or HIV-related fatal illness. There was evidence of mourning and sadness about their deceased husbands. Thus, the non-willfully father-absent men were regarded as "present" in *absentia*, or held psychological family membership although living elsewhere (prison) or mourned. Such fathers would seem to lack status and the ability to parent and provide that which would enhance their sons' identification with them; yet such identification with the father (male) is a necessary component in the formation of object-relationships.

Rather than sadness, there were expressions of bitterness and resentment towards husbands and fathers who were categorized as electively absent. This presumably accounts for the differences found among the key variables between boys who experienced non-willful father-absence and those who experienced elective father-absence.

The finding that most mothers reported that their sons only "sometimes" or "never" share their feelings with their mothers suggests that even though the boys could communicate about the father's absence, as 70 percent of them knew why their fathers were absent, these father-absent boys were perceived as reluctant to discuss affectual and personal experiences with their mothers. This

suggests various possibilities. For example, the mothers may be expecting more intimate involvement with their sons in the absence of their husbands which the boys self-protectively resist, or the boys' object-relations preclude their sharing.

In a pilot study, Brown-Cheatham (1988) found no significant differences in self-esteem between mothers whose sons had experienced non-willful father-absence as compared to mothers whose sons had experienced elective father-absence. This occurred in the present study. Positive self-esteem was determined for mothers in both study groups. Self-esteem was indicated simply by asking the mothers to confirm or deny these statements "On the whole I am satisfied with myself," "I feel useless at times." This direct questioning may well have encouraged a socially desirable response. Social desirability factors are associated with self-report measures.

To the degree that is rated, however, this finding suggests that despite the reasons for the father's absence most mothers maintain positive self-views. The mothers' positive views are further evidenced by the fact that all the boys also scored positively on the PHCSCS. Thus these single-parenting mothers have been able to foster positive self-images in their sons. Since the mother's self-esteem provides a mirroring experience for the child, her emotional posture inevitably influences the child's experience of his inner reality (Winnicott, 1971).

On the FACI, the Affective Communication (AFC) subscale consisted of 26 questions structured on a two point forced choice, true or false format. The AFC found that the mothers 1) complained of inadequate fondness from the child's father, 2) that their mate lacked empathy and understanding, and 3) were unable to self-disclose or share feelings. The overwhelming majority (80 per cent) reported not being taken seriously by the mates and 85 per cent reported problems in confiding in him. This indicates a communication breakdown within the parental dyad as well as feelings of resentment and mistrust.

The PHCSCS findings suggest that the two father-absent study groups were very similar in their self-perceptions across the various subscales, except on the Anxiety subscale. The significant finding on the Anxiety subscale will be discussed below in conjunction with the main hypotheses.

The inter-correlational analyses revealed positive correlations between the child's total object-relations score on the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale (MAS), the child's total empathy score derived from Klopfer's M factor, and the mother's self-esteem. This finding suggests that the mother's self-esteem is also important to the development of object-relations capacity as well as to the child's ability to engage in empathic relationships. This finding was also substantiated by the positive correlation between the mother's self-esteem and the child's perception of happiness and satisfaction as measured by the PHCSCS Happiness and Satisfaction subscale. These findings infer that if the mother perceives

herself in a positive manner, her positive self-esteem will have a positive influence on the child's experiences and perceptions.

The negative correlation established between the mothers' marital satisfaction and the child's Anxiety subscale score suggests that the more positive the mothers perceived their relationships with their sons' fathers, the more anxious he tested. This finding suggests that the breakup of apparently happy unions has a more negative impact on the affective status of their sons. The significant correlation between the child's age at the time of the breakup suggests that there are critical periods and specific age ranges during which the child is more vulnerable to father loss (Badaines, 1975, Biller, 1974, Gardner, 1959, Landis, 1960, McCord et.al., 1962, and Wallerstein & Kelly, 1976). For example, the child's age at the time of the father's departure may help in allowing the child to develop and utilize compensatory mechanisms to cope with the father's absence.

In this study, the positive correlation between the child's total Anxiety subscale score and total Behavior subscale score on the PHCSCS suggests that anxiety and concerns about behavior are linked for these children. Elevated anxiety scores were reported by the sons who experienced elective father-absence support this finding.

The significantly positive results supporting Hypothesis 1 which stated that sons who had experienced non-willful father-absence as compared to sons who had experienced elective father-absence would have greater difficulties engaging in empathic relationships, suggests that compensatory fantasy life is reflected in the M (movement) responses. While M scores reflect good adaptation skills by means of logical and consciously acquired thinking, M scores also reflect the capacity for close relationships (Piotrowski, 1979). M scores also reflect a richness of "inner life," to be creative, original, the ability to project fantasy, and aspects of the self into interpersonal situations. Elective father-absence may result in the child's resorting to a more active and therefore a more developed "inner life" to compensate for the deep disappointment in the child's eyes, of the father's abandonment.

Hypothesis 2 stated that sons who had experienced non-willful father-absence as compared to sons who had experienced elective father-absence would have greater difficulties engaging in novel interpersonal situations. This hypothesis was partially supported by the findings related to Hypothesis 1. Sons who had experienced non-willful father-absence generated fewer M responses as compared to sons who had experienced elective father-absence. This finding suggests that non-willful father-absence has an adverse influence on the child's interpersonal skills and developmental attainment of object-relations capacity as measured by the MAS. We suggest

that the increased sense of helplessness and deprivation may impede the developmental capacity of these boys (Wolfenstein, 1959) resulting in a less active and productive "inner life" than those demonstrated by the father-choice boys who had been better prepared for the loss by the parental discord.

Absence of M in children's Rorschach protocols may indicate emotional stagnation while elevated M responses may signal precocious and even problematic development in children (Ames, et. al., 1974, Bene, 1975, Dana, 1968, and Liaboe & James, 1985). The M responses of sons who have experienced elective father-absence were within established normative limits while the responses from sons who have experienced non-willful father-absence fell below established norms. The rorschach protocols for sons who had experienced non-willful father-absence also contained more rejections and perseverative responses as compared to sons who had experienced elective father-absence. Response patterns of rejections and perseverations in most cases indicate problems integrating inner experiences with outer reality and coping with anxiety, and are associated with emotional difficulties (Halperin, 1953). Sons who had experienced non-willful father-absence gave more responses of the problematic type.

The non-significant findings of Hypothesis 3 which stated that sons who had experienced non-willful father-absence as compared to sons who had experienced elective father-absence will have a more negative self-appraisal

indicates that the reason for the fathers absence is not a significant factor in the degree of self-esteem of these boys. They seem to manage a reasonably positive sense of themselves despite father-absence. This finding is consistent with the positive correlations between the mothers' self-esteem and the child's capacity to engage in empathic relationships and to report a sense of happiness and satisfaction. These findings indicate that the present mother is more of a determining influence on the child's coping than is the father's absence or reason for his absence.

The significant finding that boys whose fathers lived with their mothers prior to the separation had well developed object-relations scores suggests that the father's physical presence may play a greater role than previously assumed (Clark-Steward, 1973, 1978, 1980), particularly in the developmental attainment of object-relations capacity ($t = 2.37, df = 38, p = .01$). Regardless of the length of time the father lived with the mother, his presence, seems to exert a positive and enduring force in the development of object-relations, despite the reasons associated with his absence.

Summary and Conclusions

40 Black father-absent male children between the ages of 6 and 12 and their single-parent mothers were the population under study. The study sought to clinically assess the relative influence father-absence has upon the development of object-relations capacity and self-concept, particularly when the

child's father was absent as a factor of being forced to leave through death or incarceration as opposed to participating in the decision to leave by separating from the child's mother.

T-tests of independent means were computed and analyzed which supported the hypotheses that sons who have experienced non-willful father-absence as compared to sons who have experienced elective father-absence will have greater difficulties coping in novel interpersonal relationships and engaging in empathic relationships. Descriptive findings revealed positive self-appraisals for both groups. Sons who have experienced elective father-absence, however, scored higher on the Anxiety measure. There was a significant relationship established between the child's age at the time of the father's departure and the mother's self-esteem with the child's capacity for empathy, object-relations and the experience of overall happiness and satisfaction.

In summary, this study investigated whether there were significant differences in the developmental attainment of object-relations capacity, empathy, and self-concept in Black father-absent male children as a factor of the father's control of the absence.

The findings generated from this study lend support to the Black father's influence upon their male children's object-relations capacity. It also suggests that the mother's self-esteem is an influential factor in how the child copes with the father's absence. Furthermore, this study indicates that minimal father-

presence is better than none as far as the psychological development of the boys in this study insofar as their object-relations capacity or capacity to interact with others empathetically.

Limitations of Study

The limitations of this study can be summarized as follows: The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale has certain research limitations because of its self-report questionnaire format. A more comprehensive measure of the child's self-esteem may have been more sensitive to the differences among the child participants.

A more comprehensive marital satisfaction instrument which is culturally-sensitive to ethnic minorities may help clinicians and researchers understand the nature of marital dissolution, particularly the difficulty interpreting the underpinnings of the "not getting along" category. The data for the mothers' marital satisfaction, view of herself, and the child were elicited by an unstandardized questionnaire. This likewise limits the general reliability of its data because of the possible affect of social desirability and limited reliability.

Although the test used for a standardized assessment of object-relations status is relatively new, additional measures may be helpful in furthering our clinical understanding of object-relations capacity and ego development.

A larger study population would have allowed for better comparisons. In addition, the study would have been enhanced by the addition of a comparison group of Black father-present male children. This would have permitted the discovery of the differences due to father-absence itself which may be more significant than the reasons for the absence.

Finally, all the child participants were selected from mothers who elected to become involved with the Big Brothers/Big Sisters of New York program. This indicates that their mothers were concerned about the absence of male influence and sought to compensate for the absent father. Would boys who benefitted from no such awareness, effort or replacement reveal the same patterns?

Suggestions for Future Research

Given that a substantial proportion of marriages will result in divorce or separation future research may focus on investigating families while intact and then subsequent to any breakup. Another area of potential exploration is the potential relationship M (movement) responses have with regard to father-absent boys' ability to cope in real life and structured settings.

Social service agencies that come into contact with single-parenting families, i.e. Big Brothers/Big Sisters would benefit from participation in longitudinal follow-up studies, which would continue to clinically assess object-

relations status and self-concept in father-absent male children as a result of the factors associated with the father's absence, particularly at the pre, peri and post intervention stages.

**APPENDIX A: FATHER-ABSENCE CLINICAL INTERVIEW
(FACI)**

6. How close was _____ and his father?
your son

very
close
1

fairly
close
2

fairly
distant
3

very
distant
4

7. In the time that his father was living with you, did they ever do things together?

yes
(if yes go to #8)

no
(if no go to #9)

8. What kinds of things did they do together? Name three things they did together. For each how often, (everyday, once a week, once a month, now and then).

9. What stopped them from doing things together?

10. Has _____ been told why his father left?
your son

yes
1

no
2

11. In your opinion, how would you say _____ and his father get along?
your son

very well
1

sometimes well
2

not too well
3

not well
4

12. Does _____ ask questions about his father?
your son

always asks	often asks	sometimes asks	never asks
1	2	3	4

What does he ask? _____

13. Is _____ helpful to you?
your son

always helpful	often helpful	sometimes helpful	never helpful
1	2	3	4

How is he helpful? _____

14. Does _____ seek your approval?
your son

always seeks	often seeks	sometimes seeks	never seeks
1	2	3	4

How does he seek your approval? _____

15. Does _____ talk about his feelings?
your son

always talks	often talks	sometimes talks	never talks
1	2	3	4

16. Does _____ seek your help?
your son

always seeks	often seeks	sometimes seeks	never seeks
1	2	3	4

With what kinds of things? _____

17. Does _____ ask you about your feelings?
your son

he always asks	he often asks	he sometimes asks	he never asks
1	2	3	4

II

The next series of questions ask you to rate yourself in regards to certain statements. Answer always, if you always feel this way, almost always, if you almost always feel this way, sometimes, if you only sometimes feel this way, almost never if you almost never feel this way and never of you never feel this way. Remember there are no right or wrong answers.

18. "I feel I have a number of good qualities"

always	almost always	sometimes	almost never	never
1	2	3	4	5

19. "I feel I have much to be proud of"

always	almost always	sometimes	almost never	never
1	2	3	4	5

20. "I take a positive attitude towards myself"

always	almost always	sometimes	almost never	never
1	2	3	4	5

21. "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself"

always	almost always	sometimes	almost never	never
1	2	3	4	5

22. "I wish I could have more respect for myself"

always	almost always	sometimes	almost never	never
1	2	3	4	5

23. "I often think that I am no good at all"

always	almost always	sometimes	almost never	never
1	2	3	4	5

24. "I feel useless at times"

always	almost always	sometimes	almost never	never
1	2	3	4	5

III

This inventory consists of numbered statements. I will read each statement to you and you decided whether it is True as applied to you or False as applied to you. Answer each item to the best of your ability.

25. Sometimes my spouse just could not understand the way I felt.

True	False
1	2

26. My spouse did not take me seriously enough at times.

True	False
1	2

27. My spouse almost always responded with understanding to my mood at a given moment.

True	False
1	2

28. When I was upset, my spouse usually understood why even without my telling him.

True	False
1	2

29. My spouse could usually tell what kind of day I have had without even asking.

True	False
1	2

30. My spouse and I communicated very little simply through the exchange of glances.

True	False
1	2

31. Whenever I was feeling sad, my spouse made me feel loved and happy again.

True	False
1	2

32. Just when I needed it the most, my spouse made me feel important.

True	False
1	2

33. I felt free to express openly strong feelings of sadness to my spouse.

True	False
1	2

34. My spouse could always be trusted with everything I told him.

True	False
1	2

35. It was sometimes easier to confide in a friend than in my spouse.

True	False
1	2

36. Some things were too upsetting to discuss even with my spouse.

True	False
1	2

37. I was apt to hide my feelings in some things, to the extent that my spouse may have hurt me without his knowing it.

True	False
1	2

38. I sometimes avoided telling my spouse things which put me in a bad light.

True	False
1	2

39. My spouse kept most of his feelings inside.
- | | |
|------|-------|
| True | False |
| 1 | 2 |
40. My spouse felt free to express openly strong feelings of sadness.
- | | |
|------|-------|
| True | False |
| 1 | 2 |
41. Whenever he was feeling down, my spouse came to me for support.
- | | |
|------|-------|
| True | False |
| 1 | 2 |
42. Sometimes I felt as though my spouse didn't really need me.
- | | |
|------|-------|
| True | False |
| 1 | 2 |
43. I wished that my spouse would have confided in me more.
- | | |
|------|-------|
| True | False |
| 1 | 2 |
44. There was a great deal of love and affection expressed in our marriage.
- | | |
|------|-------|
| True | False |
| 1 | 2 |
45. My spouse and I frequently sat down and talked about pleasant things that had happened during the day.
- | | |
|------|-------|
| True | False |
| 1 | 2 |
46. My spouse did many different things to show me that he loved me.
- | | |
|------|-------|
| True | False |
| 1 | 2 |

47. It was unusual for my spouse to openly express strong feelings of tenderness.

True	False
1	2

48. Sometimes I wondered just how much my spouse really did love me.

True	False
1	2

49. I am not sure my spouse had ever really loved me.

True	False
1	2

50. My spouse had never taken pleasure in hurting me personally.

True	False
1	2

IV

51. Of the following males, how many hours a week does _____ spend with each them and how would you describe it? Answer positive, if you feel the relationship is a positive or good one, neutral, if you feel that it is a neutral relationship, and negative if you feel that it is a negative or bad relationship.

	NUMBER OF HOURS					RATING		
	0-1	2-5	6-8	8-10	10 and more	P O S I T I V E	N E U T R A L	N E G A T I V E
brother(s)	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
cousin(s)	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
uncle(s)	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
grandfather	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
teacher(s)	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
coaches	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
counselor/ therapists	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
stepfathers/ boyfriends	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___
other _____ specify	___	___	___	___	___	___	___	___

**APPENDIX B: PIERS-HARRIS CHILDREN'S SELF-CONCEPT SCALE
(PHCSCS)**

PLEASE NOTE:

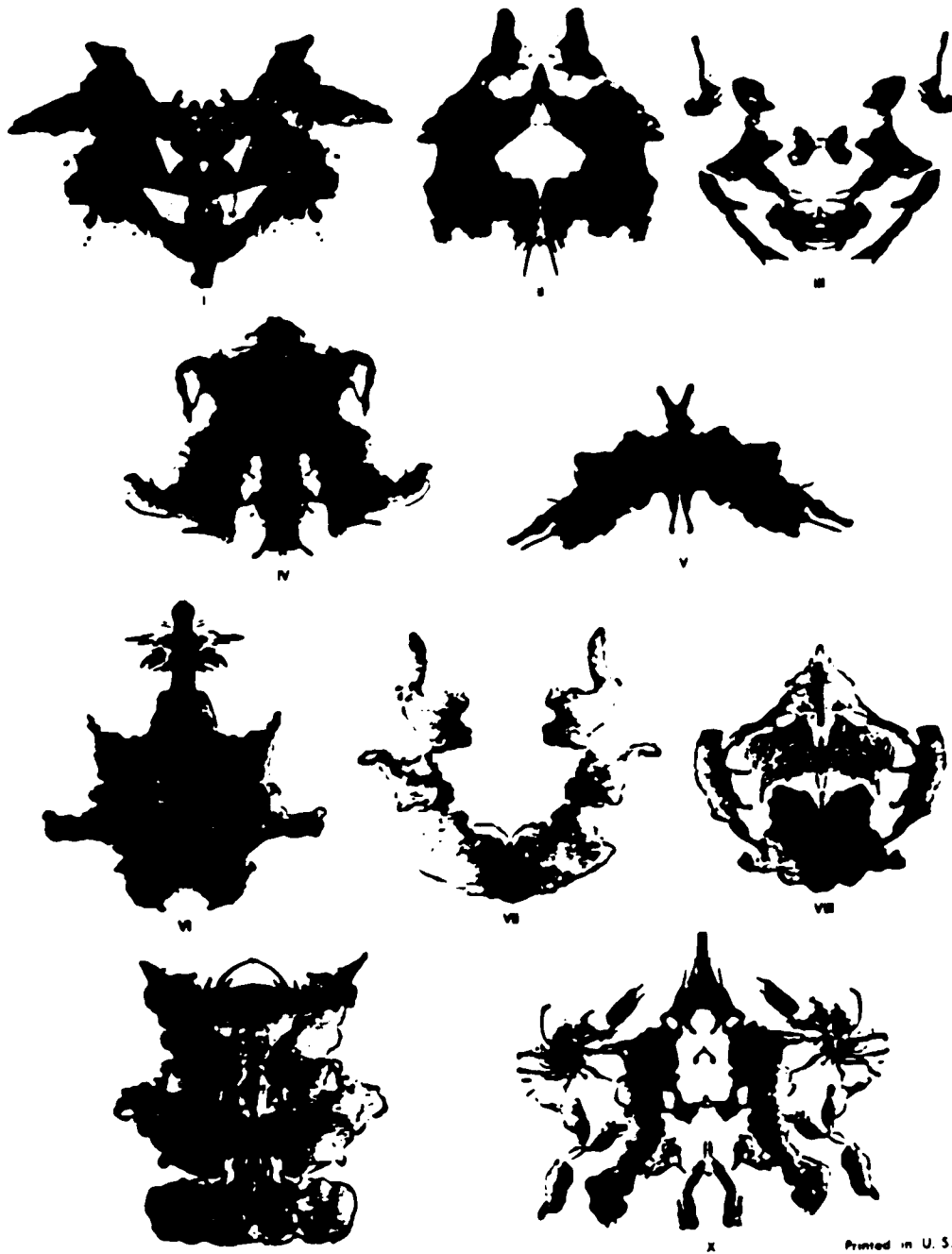
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117-119

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APPENDIX C: RORSCHACH PSYCHODIAGNOSTIC INKBLOT LOCATION SHEET



APPENDIX D: SCORING FORM FOR RORSCHACH PROTOCOLS

		Father-Absence Study Michaelanthony Cheatham	
Name:		DATE:	
	KLOPPER SCORE	URIST MUTUALITY OF AUTUNOMY SCORE	
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
	COMMENTS/ SUMMARY		

APPENDIX E: CONSENT FORM

THE CITY COLLEGE
of
The City University of New York
New York , N.Y. 10031

The Psychological Center
Department of Psychology

(212) 690-6602,3

CONSENT FORM

This study investigates the psychological effects of father-absence on Black male children. The study involves several tests which have been explained to me. I am aware that these tests will examine what my child thinks about himself and how he feels about others. I give my permission for my son to participate. I also agree to participate. I understand that whether or not I participate in this study my son's involvement in the Big Brothers of New York Program will not be affected.

I understand that the results will be kept in the strictest confidence. No person will know what answers I have given or that my son has given. I have the option to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Date

Parent's Signature

Date

Witness

An Equal Opportunity Employer

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