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Latency-age daughters of divorced parents: A Rorschach analysis

Woods, Alexandra Hamilton, Ph.D.

City University of New York, 1991

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LATENCY-AGE DAUGHTERS OF DIVORCED PARENTS: A RORSCHACH ANALYSIS

by

ALEXANDRA HAMILTON WOODS

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.

1991

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Abstract

LATENCY AGE DAUGHTERS OF DIVORCED PARENTS: A RORSCHACH ANALYSIS

by

Alexandra H. Woods

Advisor: Professor Steven Tuber

Despite considerable research on the long term effects of divorce on children, empirical examination of the intrapsychic functioning of daughters of divorced parents is limited. Specifically, the apparent shift in functioning between latency and adolescence in daughters of divorced parents (Wallerstein's "sleeper effect" [1989]) has not been explained.

In this study, it was hypothesized that latency age girls from divorced families would show underlying vulnerabilities, in the form of impaired object representations, when compared to same age girls from intact families. Rorschach responses of the two groups were evaluated by Urist's Mutuality of Autonomy Scale and Blatt's Concept of the Object Scale. Girls' behavior, predicted not to differ between the two groups, was measured by the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist.

Divorced mothers were predicted to show heightened symptomatology, as measured by Derogatis' Brief Symptom Inventory, and heightened stress levels, using Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend's PERI Life Events Scale, as compared to married mothers. Additionally, maternal symptomatology and stress were predicted to correlate inversely with girls' object representational levels.

D group girls did not differ significantly from M group girls on the behavior checklist or the object relations scales, with one exception: they produced more mature COB Nature of Activity scores. However, D group girls produced significantly more Rorschach responses. The author concluded that there is not a

direct relationship between parental divorce and impaired object representations in latency age girls. However, heightened Rorschach rate, which also correlated with maternal symptomatology, could be an indicator of potential underlying vulnerability in these latency age girls.

Divorced mothers were significantly more symptomatic than married mothers. Maternal symptomatology correlated strongly with girls' Rorschach productivity, and moderately with girls' COB OR- scores, but not their MOA scores.

In a clinical discussion, differences were described among four groups of divorced mothers, clustered by level of post divorce adjustment and attunement to daughters's needs. Additionally, particular divorce related themes on girls' Rorschach protocols were described.

In this study COB F+ and F- scores clustered around two factors as demonstrated by Blatt and Lerner (1984). Rorschach object representation scores correlated with each other and with form level scores.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I want to thank the many members of my family who helped: my grandmother, Elizabeth Paepcke helped with my graduate education and gave words of encouragement. My grandmother Becca Hamilton cast healthy doubt as to "what this was all about", and has been a loving presence in my life. I appreciate that my parents and stepparents cheered me along, and my father introduced me to the town of Rorschach itself. To my Aunt Toni and Uncle Steve, a special thanks.

I feel lucky in my sisters. Fiona and her family frequently provided a safe haven at short notice, no questions asked. Cristina provided challenge, inspiration and fun; Amanda, most of all, got to live through the experience, and hung in there anyway with love, humor and wonderful drawings.

I want to give thanks to my extended family of friends near and far who have showed great object constancy in the face of my disappearances and moods, and who have helped celebrate the mini milestones on the way. My many friends and colleagues at Elizabeth General Hospital have provided a wonderful forum in which to think and work and play.

And, finally, thanks to Dr. Norbert Freedman.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

> Many studies have stood on the threshold of concluding that girls are minimally or only temporarily affected by parental divorce (Kalter, et al, 1985).
>
> (I)ndividual functioning is coherent across periods of discontinuous growth and despite fundamental transformations in manifest behavior. Disordered behavior generally does not simply spring forth without connection to previous quality of adaptation...(Sroufe and Rutter, 1984).
>
> (T)he focus of classification should not be limited to isolated behaviors and traits, but rather should emphasize patterns of adaptation (Garber, 1984).
>
> We can no longer say - as most experts have held in recent years - that girls are generally less troubled by the divorce experience than boys (Wallerstein, 1989).

The purpose of this study will be to challenge experimentally the conclusion that "girls are minimally or only temporarily affected by parental divorce." I shall examine a group of girls which, according to many researchers, recuperates fully from the crisis of divorce. These are latency or preadolescent girls (Guidubaldi and Perry, 1985; Hetherington et al., 1985). I shall compare them with a matched sample of latency age girls from intact, never divorced families. Comparison will be made of their internalized object relationships.

In 1985 Neal Kalter pointed out that those studies which concluded that girls are minimally or only temporarily affected by parental divorce were limited in several ways: they employed behavioral measures or measures of cognitive achievement rather than measures of underlying personality functioning, they did not examine girls' subjective assessment of their own experience, and they focused only on latency

and preadolescent girls. Review of the literature supports his conclusion. (Emery, 1982; Goodstein, 1988; Hauser, 1985; Hess and Camara, 1979; Kalter, 1987; Kalter et al., 1985; Wallerstein, 1985b; Wallerstein, 1989; Wallerstein and Kelly, 1975, 1976, 1980). Review also indicates that those studies which examine girls beyond preadolescence are less optimistic about the recovery of daughters of divorce. To illustrate, Hetherington (1972) has used the term "time-bomb" to refer to a sudden deterioration in functioning which she and other researchers have observed among the adolescent daughters of divorce. Wallerstein (1985a, 1989) has seen a marked decline, which she terms "the sleeper effect", among young adult women ten years after their parents had divorced. During the previous years, these were the children who often appeared to be coping the best, and certainly better than their male counterparts. Other researchers have drawn similar conclusions about adult women whose parents have divorced (Chess et al., 1983; Kulka and Weingarten, 1979; Pearlin and Johnson, 1977; Pope and Mueller, 1976; Southworth and Schwartz, 1987).

Researchers have explained girls' presumed successful adjustment in various ways. First, girls are viewed as less vulnerable to stress, including the stressors typical in parental divorce, than are boys (Block et al., 1981, 1986; Eme, 1979; Feshbach, 1970; Garai, 1970; Rutter, 1970, 1971, 1981). Second, the shifts in post-divorce family structure are considered to be severely damaging to boys, but minimally harmful to girls. It is often held that boys are more negatively affected by the loss of the father than are girls whose primary identificatory object, the mother, remains within the family (Hess and Camara, 1979; Hetherington, 1979; Kalter et al,

1985; McDermott, 1968, 1970; Santrock, 1972). Further, a close parental relationship with mother is considered to be dangerous for the development of boys' masculinity and capacity to separate, whereas this closeness is often considered normative for girls (Hetherington, 1979; McDermott, 1968, 1970; Tooley, 1976; Weiss, 1976). Third, there is a tendency to emphasize threats to normal ego-development and to the management of aggressive and libidinal impulses among boys (McDermott, 1968, Morrison, 1974), but to refer less frequently to such research in regard to girls. Finally, there is a tendency to equate the "good behavior" of latency age girls with "good functioning". The deterioration observable among adolescent girls is not viewed as integrally related to some aspect of underlying functioning during latency and preadolescence, but, instead, the difficulties of adolescent daughters of divorce are examined solely in terms of the phasic demands of adolescence itself (Hetherington, 1972; Kalter et al, 1985).

I shall argue that parental divorce can be highly stressful for girls over long periods of time, and that while girls <u>may</u> be less vulnerable or subject to the stressors inherent in parental divorce, they are by no means invulnerable (Brandwein et al, 1974; Eme, 1979; Emery, 1982; Emery and O'Leary, 1982; Lamb, 1977; Rutter, 1970; Shaw and Emery, 1987). Discussion of the impact that loss of, or severely attenuated relationship with, father, has on girls will be presented (Abelin, 1985; Briscoe and Smith, 1974; Chassaguet-Smirgel, 1976; Galenson and Roiphe, 1976, 1982; Herzog, 1982; Lamb, 1977, 1987; Ross, 1984; Spieler, 1984; Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980). Similarly, research concerning mothers' reduced parenting capacities long after divorce has occurred, and the demands that a single-parent relationship

poses for girls will be discussed (Ambert, 1982; Bane, 1976; Blechman, 1982; Kurdek, 1981; Levitin, 1978; Menaghen and Lieberman, 1986; Pearlin and Johnson, 1977; Thomson and Vaux, 1986; Wallerstein, 1986). I shall review literature which documents the challenges which divorce poses for girls' intrapsychic development (Goodstein, 1988; Kalter, 1987; Kalter et al., 1985; Schwartzberg, 1981; Wallerstein, 1983).

Finally, I shall propose that the decline in functioning which has been documented for adolescent girls and adult women whose parents have divorced cannot be viewed as unrelated to their post-divorce functioning in latency. Developmental psychopathologists (Garber, 1984; Gersten et al., 1976; MacFarlane et al., 1954; Sroufe and Rutter, 1984) have long argued that assessment of functioning must be based on overall "patterns of adaptation" rather than "isolated behaviors" (Garber, 1984). Further, they state that individual functioning must be viewed as "coherent across periods of discontinuous growth...despite fundamental transformations in manifest behavior. Disordered behavior generally does not simply spring forth without connection to previous quality of adaptation" (Sroufe and Rutter, 1984). I shall attempt to "reframe" the way in which the discontinuity in the functioning of daughters of divorce over time is viewed. I shall propose that latency age daughters of divorce have underlying vulnerabilities in adaptation, specifically in their object relations, as a function of the long-term impact of parental divorce, which are integrally related to later manifest deterioration in adolescence and young adulthood.

I shall propose that in order to make an accurate statement about the adjustment of latency age daughters whose parents have divorced, as with any

children, it is necessary to use measures which assess underlying "patterns of adaptation", rather than merely measures which assess behavior and cognitive achievement. I have chosen the Rorschach as the primary assessment measure in this study, because its usefulness in assessment of underlying patterns of adaptation in children and adults has been widely demonstrated (Ames et al., 1974; Klopfer and Kelly, 1944), as has its usefulness in experimental conditions (Blatt and Berman, 1984; Blatt and Ritzler, 1979; Hemmendinger and Schultz, 1977; Rickers-Ovsiankina, 1977; Ryan et al., 1985; Tuber, 1983; Weiner, 1977).

Over the past twenty years there has been a growing effort to integrate object relations theory with Rorschach assessment procedures. A number of studies have demonstrated that scales derived from object relations theory can differentiate between various diagnostic groupings of children, adolescents and adults (Blatt et al., 1976 ; Tuber and Coates, 1985; Ryan et al., 1984; Spear, 1980; Sugarman, 1980; Tuber, 1981, 1983) at the lower and at the higher end of the adaptive continuum. These scales have been found to have as great or greater predictive utility than diagnostic categories (Harder et al., 1984; Tuber, 1981, 1983) Finally, they have been found to correspond closely to independent raters' assessment of subjects' object relational capacities (Kavanagh, 1985; Urist and Shill, 1982).

CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

History of Research on Divorce

After an introduction to the demographics of divorce, I shall provide a brief overview of research on children of divorce in order to place this discussion in context.

Between the early 1960's and the early 1970's the divorce rate in the United States doubled (Glick, 1979).

> In 1976, 1977, and 1978 there were approximately, on an annual basis, 1.1 million divorces in the United States and 2.2 million marriages. For every two marriage licenses issued during the year, one divorce was granted (U.S Department of Commerce, 1979). Three times as many children experienced divorce of their parents in 1976 as was the case twenty years earlier. (Shwartzberg, 1981).

Close to one in three children will go through divorce before becoming 18 (Furstenburg, 1983). While the rate of divorce seems to have leveled since the 1970's, the number of affected children still has not stabilized, and it is estimated that by the 1990's one of every two children will spend some time in a post divorce household (Glick, 1979).

Given these alarming data, it is not surprising that research on divorce and its effects on children has mushroomed over the past twenty years. However, information concerning the long term impact of divorce on children, and specifically on girls, has been sparse.

Early Divorce Research

Early studies on divorce beginning in the 1950's and 1960's emerged from research on the effects of "father absence" on boys. During this period, divorce was viewed as a single event, and the tendency was to assume a "direct causal link" (Levitin, 1979) between father absence and delinquency, school failure, the development of inappropriate sex roles and other forms of pathology (Bowlby, 1969; McDermott, 1970; Wylie and Delgado, 1959). Most studies examined boys only, and most drew their samples from already troubled populations (reform schools, court records) (Shinn, 1979). Few distinguished between father absence due to death, divorce or other causes (Block et al., 1981; Glick, 1979). From this period emerged bleak, but often poorly defined generalizations about the long lasting dangers of divorce for boys.

By the mid 1960's, and through the '70's, the pendulum of opinion swung in the opposite direction. As the community mental health movement grew with its emphasis on crisis intervention (Kalter, 1988), and as divorce became an increasingly common phenomenon, divorce was thought to be a brief crisis that

> soon resolved itself. Young children might have difficulty falling asleep and older children might have trouble at school. Men and women might become depressed or frenetic, throwing themselves into sexual affairs or immersing themselves in work.
>
> But after a year or two, it was expected most would get their lives back on track, at least outwardly. Parents and children would get on with new routines, new friends and new schools, taking full opportunity of the second chances that divorce brings in its wake (Wallerstein, 1989).

There were other more cautious viewpoints: as early as 1962, Despert spoke about the "emotional divorce" which often precedes the legal divorce by many years;

she stated that children whose parents' relationship was disturbed, would themselves be disturbed.

Notwithstanding the tendency to minimize the impact of divorce on children in the 1970's, divorce research did become more sophisticated during this period. Divorce began to be viewed not as a unitary crisis, but as a series of events with precursors and sequelae which could unfold over many years. The process of divorce was now understood to include a range of potential stressors (Anthony, 1974; Bloom et al., 1978) which varied from family to family in timing and severity. These included not only the loss of the father, but also varying levels of interparental hostility, (Despert, 1962; Hess and Camara, 1979), loss of economic status for the custodial family group, (Bane, 1976; Blechman, 1982; Desimone-Luis et al., 1979) increased residential mobility, (Blechman, 1982; Furstenburg et al., 1983, Pearlin and Johnson, 1977) and reduced involvement of the custodial parent (almost always the mother) due to increased job demands or to emotional factors (Blechman, 1982; Glick, 1979; Hetherington et al., 1979; Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980; Weiss, 1976). As an outcome of this new focus on stressors, in 1980, parental divorce was designated a "severe" psychological stressor for children in the DSM III.

This period also saw the rise of research on family systems, and focus began to shift away from family structure (intact vs. divorced, for example) to family process (enmeshed, disengaged, conflicted, harmonious etc.), (Hess and Camara, 1979; Kalter, 1988; Peterson et al., 1984). It began to be recognized that the quality of family functioning could be as significant a factor in children's lives as its structure

(Block et al., 1981; Emery, 1982). Further, type of pre-divorce family began to be examined (Anthony, 1974).

However, none of the major divorce studies of this period (1960's through early 1970's) (McDermott, 1970; Morrison, 1974; Sugar, 1970; Tuckman and Regan, 1966; Westman, 1970) examined sex and age of child as factors which could mediate the impact of divorce (Schwartzberg, 1981). The one exception to this was Hetherington (1972), who opened the door on this subject by studying adolescent daughters of divorce. (Her work will be examined later).

Long Term Effects of Divorce on Girls

In 1985, Kalter wrote, "(m)any studies have stood on the threshold of concluding that girls are minimally or only temporarily affected by parental divorce". His point is well taken. Numerous research studies and reviews comment on girls' post-divorce recovery (Copeland, 1985; Guidubaldi, 1985; Hetherington, 1985; Rutter, 1983; Wyman et al., 1985). Kalter pointed out that those studies which concluded that girls are minimally or only temporarily affected by parental divorce have employed behavioral measures or measures of cognitive achievement, have not examined girls' subjective assessment of their own experience, and have focused only on latency and preadolescent girls.

In the following section of this study, I shall discuss the research over the past ten years which has fostered the conclusion that girls are "minimally" affected by parental divorce in the long term, and I shall also refer to research to date which differs with this conclusion. Research will be reviewed by age of child, and review

will focus primarily on studies which examine children two or more years post divorce.

The three researchers whose work will be discussed most frequently in this review have addressed the question of long-term effects of divorce on children very differently.

In the mid 1970's E. Mavis Hetherington and her colleagues initiated a longitudinal comparison of 96 white middle class preschool children from divorced and from intact families. The groups were evenly divided by gender. These children, who were first evaluated two months after their parents divorced at the age of plus or minus the age of four, were reexamined one, two and six years post divorce. Hetherington et al. (1979, 1982) used a range of measures which included coded observations of many dimensions of free play at school and at home, teacher and parent ratings of behavior, and peer nominations. As mentioned earlier, Hetherington has also conducted a comparison of adolescent girls from intact, widowed, and divorced families (1972).

Wallerstein and Kelly are perhaps the most well known researchers on divorce in this country (Wallerstein, 1983, 1984, 1985a, 1985b, 1987, 1989; Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980). At the same time that Hetherington was beginning her work in this field, Wallerstein and Kelly initiated the Divorce Project, which included short term counseling for and assessment of 60 white, largely middle class divorcing families in Marin County, California. Lengthy, in depth, semi-structured clinical interviews were conducted with all available family members at the time of divorce, at twelve to eighteen months, at five and at ten years post divorce. This was a clinical,

non-experimental piece of research in which no comparative controls were used; however, these researchers, more than any others, captured children's and parents' descriptions of their own experience as it evolved over the years following the divorce, and as a result, their work has been seminal.

Kalter's research has been the most diverse. He began in 1979 by conducting a comparison of boys and girls from an outpatient clinic sample on the basis of age at time of divorce (Kalter et al., 1981). Later, he focussed particularly on girls whose parents had divorced, and compared both outpatient and normal samples with girls from non-divorced families at various ages (Kalter, et al., 1985). Most recently, he has written extensively about models of intervention with children of divorce (1988).

1) Preschool Children

There is no research available on the long term effects, measured at the preschool level, of parental divorce occurring before the third year of life. However, Hetherington (1979) and Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) have examined preschoolers at the time of their parents' divorce, and then again a year or two later. Their findings regarding girls' initial recuperative capacities are similar.

Immediately following their parents' divorce, the children in Hetherington's study were almost four years old. At this time, the boys and girls exhibited a wide range of difficulties; their play was less task oriented, structured, imaginative or social than the play of children from intact families. The children showed a range of aggressive and dependent behaviors with peers and with adults, seemed to be less able to evaluate or to behave appropriately in social situations, and were less well-liked by peers and teachers. At two years post-divorce, when the children were almost six,

the girls' behavior was on a par with their peers from intact families, and they were treated similarly to them by peers and adults; while the boys' behavior had improved, they still exhibited a range of difficulties, and were no better liked by peers than before.

Wallerstein and Kelly report that their preschool group (age three to five) showed similar, intense signs of distress at the time of divorce: fearfulness, nightmares, clinginess, increased aggression, and disorganized play. These children also exhibited a high degree of denial, repeatedly playing out stories of a "happy home", insisting that their parents were not separated; in this way they were able to distance themselves from the pain of the divorce. At eighteen months after the divorce, a period which Wallerstein and Kelly call "transitional", both the young boys and the girls had made gains; however, while sex differences were not marked, more young girls were coping well than were boys.

Kalter's investigation begins with seven year olds whose parents divorced when they were preschoolers, and will be discussed below.

2) Latency Age Children

In his 1981 study of outpatient clinic children, Kalter focussed on child's age at time of divorce; comparisons were made on the basis of recorded behaviors. He concluded that children's vulnerability to parental divorce did not vary by age at time of divorce. However, kind of difficulties children exhibited did vary. He found no sex differences among those latency age children whose parents had divorced before they were two and a half. These boys and girls showed a significantly higher incidence of "nonaggressive disturbances in the parent-child relationship" than did

other groups of children. He hypothesized a particular vulnerability to separation-related difficulties among this group. Gender differences did emerge among the latency age children whose parents divorced when their children were preschoolers: three and a half to five years old. While boys exhibited school problems and expressed subjective distress, girls exhibited none of these difficulties to any significant degree. Thus Kalter's findings about this group are consistent with those of Hetherington and Wallerstein and Kelly mentioned earlier. (It should be noted, however, that adolescent girls whose parents had divorced during the 3.5 to five year old period exhibited a range of externalizing problems and academic difficulties.)

In 1985, Kalter compared a non-clinic sample of mid- and late- latency girls whose parents had divorced about four years previously with girls of the same age from intact families; with one exception, he found that the girls whose parents had divorced were functioning as well as the girls from intact families. The younger daughters of divorce perceived themselves as less physically and socially competent than their counterparts from intact homes. He tentatively concluded that earlier parental divorce has a more negative effect on girls' self concept than does divorce occurring when girls have entered the school age.

Hetherington, et al. (1985) followed their original sample of preschoolers at the six year point post divorce, when the children were, on average, ten years old. A wide range of largely behavioral measures was used including the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist, peer nomination, self rating, and observational reports. The authors state,

> in agreement with the findings of earlier studies, divorce has more adverse, long-term effects on boys;...daughters in families with a divorced, nonremarried mother are very similar in adjustment to those in nondivorced families. In contrast, even six years after divorce, sons in divorced families are showing more externalizing behavior,..sometimes...more internalizing behavior and less social competence than sons in nondivorced families.

The only early behavior which appeared to be pathognomic for girls was early externalizing behavior; "perhaps because it is less frequent and viewed as less sex appropriate, it is the best predictor of later socially inept behavior."

In 1985, Guidubaldi and Perry conducted a two part study of nearly 700 six through ten year olds drawn from the national school system; half came from intact families and half from divorced families; they then reevaluated over 100 of the original group four years later. At Time 1, the average length of time since parental divorce was about four years. Measures used included the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist and measures of academic achievement. The profiles of the two groups of girls were far more similar than different in contrast to the pattern for boys, though the girls whose parents divorced did show somewhat more "intellectual dependency" and a few more behavior problems than did their counterparts from intact families. They conclude that "(c)onsistent with Time-1 analysis, one of the most salient findings...is that divorced-family status is more powerfully related to maladjustment for boys than for girls."

Wallerstein et al. divided their sample into early (six to eight) and late (nine to eleven) latency children. Theirs is the only long-term study which includes assessment of this age-group at the time of divorce. They stated that, of all the

children they examined, the young latency age children showed the most intense sadness and grieving immediately post divorce.

> Unlike the preschool children...who make extensive use of denial through fantasy, these children...were aware of their suffering, and had great difficulty in obtaining relief....(They experienced) intense pain and immobilization. Further, unlike adolescents or adults in mourning, the ego-structure of the child in early latency is such that he is less able to utilize denial alternately with the experience of suffering in order to titrate the painful experience over time (1976).

Wallerstein and Kelly found only a few sex related differences among the children (1980).

The older latency age children did not exhibit marked sex differences in coping at the time of divorce, but they did differ from the young latency age children. Instead of exhibiting grief and helplessness, they appeared to try to 'turn passive into active', and became intensely angry

> at one or both parents for precipitating the divorce. They were more inclined at this age to align with one parent,...and to join one parent in a bitter, even mischievous harassment of the other parent. About half of the boys and girls in this group suffered a severe drop in their school work that lasted during the year following the marital rupture (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1976; Wallerstein, 1985).

One year later, or approximately 12 to 18 months post divorce, coping was very uneven among groups of latency age children. About 50% of the children had improved or maintained their previous developmental strides. However, another 38% had consolidated initial difficulties, or were in considerably worsened psychological condition. At this follow-up, Wallerstein and Kelly note <u>considerable</u> differences among the boys and girls from both groups of latency age children:

> Girls predominated among the children who looked well. Nearly twice as many girls as boys improved in their overall adjustment and functioning at this

> time from the way they had looked at the initial assessment....Boys...felt significantly more stressed within the post divorce family and more of them had remained intensely preoccupied with the divorce....More boys were depressed.
>
> The girls, by contrast, were happier; they were more likely to see the divorce as an improvement over the earlier, predivorce family. More girls had friends, and more used their friends as a support system. On a wide variety of measures they appeared to be coping more successfully than their brothers.

At the five year mark, Wallerstein and Kelly do not differentiate clearly between the experiences of the latency age children and that of the adolescents. However, some pertinent information does emerge from their review of this period. First, the general trend toward improved functioning which they saw at the 12 to 18 month evaluation, no longer held true. Only 34% of the children and adolescents at the five year point were doing well, and one third of the group was "consciously and intensely unhappy." Second, girls no longer appeared to be functioning significantly better than boys.

Third, there was a high degree of change in functioning for individual children over time. Thus early successful coping was often not predictive of later success. Finally, among those children who were depressed,

> At least half of the depressed children were able to move ahead age-appropriately in several important parts of their lives. These islands of relatively unburdened development in unhappy, troubled children may be characteristic of these youngers, particularly among those who had functioned well or reasonably well during some period of earlier development.

It is logical to assume that since the girls had tended to predominate among those who functioned "reasonably well" at the eighteen month mark post- divorce, they would also constitute the majority of this group who were depressed but coping adequately.

Wallerstein and Kelly offer some explanations for the downward shift in functioning five years post divorce among these children. For the younger latency age boys and girls, who were now between 11 and 13 years old five years post divorce, "the child's relationship with the good or good enough mother was the touchstone of their ego functioning". However, the authors have indicated that a significant number of fathers and mothers had not achieved psychological, and in the case of women, financial, stability at this five year mark (Wallerstein, 1986; 1987; Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980). In 1981, Schwartzberg spoke of the vulnerability of these latency age children "many of whom were unable to detach themselves from this destructive process due to their age and dependence on their parents for continued support."

It is interesting to note that in 1989 when Wallerstein reviewed her research concerning the children five years after divorce, her conclusions are even more stark than in her earlier summaries: "(i)t would be hard to find any other group of children - except, perhaps, the victims of a natural disaster - who suffered such a rate of sudden serious psychological problems."

At the ten year mark, all of the original children had passed middle childhood. Their status as adolescents and adults will be discussed below.

To summarize, behavioral studies conclude that, two or more years following parental divorce, latency age girls consistently function better than latency age sons of divorce, and that their coping is considered comparable to that of girls of the same age from intact families. Wallerstein and Kelly's clinical research finds a less unitary pattern for girls. They find that girls pull ahead most distinctly at the 18 month mark

post-divorce in all realms of functioning, but that at five years, the picture for boys and for girls is much less bright. Initial good or moderately good functioning is not a predictor for later good progress. Further, there is a strong tendency, particularly among the girls, to exhibit "moderate depression" at the same time that they cope adequately in various areas.

3) Adolescent Daughters of Divorce

In general the picture painted by researchers studying adolescent daughters of divorced parents is more consistently pessimistic. In 1972, Hetherington used the term "time-bomb" to describe what she sees as a delayed reaction to divorce among adolescent girls. She examined a sample of 13 to 17 year old girls and found that they were more attention seeking of males, had lower self esteem, and were more sexually active than either daughters of intact families or girls whose fathers had died. Similarly, Kalter found that, with one exception, the adolescent daughters of divorce in his outpatient setting were more sexually active, ran away more frequently, and more often engaged in substance abuse than female peers from intact families. In his sample, adolescent girls whose parents had divorced before they were two and a half exhibited no significant difficulties (Kalter, 1977.) Wallerstein and Kelly reported that at eighteen months and five years following the divorce the adolescent girls did not pull ahead of their male peers in the way that had been so striking among the younger children (Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980).

Ten years after the divorce (Wallerstein, 1984), the children whose parents had divorced during their preschool years were now between 13 and 15 years old. These children had shown the greatest overt disorganization at the time of divorce.

At the ten year mark this group as a whole seemed less "consciously burdened" by the experience of the divorce than were the older groups at the ten year mark. Even those who had been five years old prior to the divorce had repressed the memories of conflict and violence at the time of the breakup. Overall these young people were performing adequately in school, were fairly optimistic about the future and about the possibility of marriage for themselves. Nonetheless,

> a significant number spoke sorrowfully of their emotional and economic deprivation and wistfully of the more nurturant and more protected life that they envisioned within the intact family. Reconciliation fantasies were still discernable in half of the sample.

Further, their relationships with their parents were often stressed, though often not openly troubled or discordant. Adolescent girls in particular seemed to have a particularly heightened need to establish relationships with absent fathers. They maintained a "storehouse of detailed information (about their fathers) that included virtues and shortcomings, promises kept and promises broken."

> Their recall was extraordinary. Yet, they did not draw the harsh conclusions inherent in their evidence. Rather their need to maintain a benign image of their fathers...(which they kept) side by side with a history of repeated rejections and failure...was striking....
>
> Youngsters were aware of the fragility of their relationships with the visiting parent, and often undertook to shape their behavior so as to avoid distressing or offending the parent whose continued interest they sought to maintain.

Over half of the boys and girls had close, trusting relationships with their mothers. However,

> (m)any youngsters spoke openly of their wish to rescue their mother....The concern about growing up and leaving mother alone, husbandless and childless, was a repeated theme.

The older adolescents (16 to 18 years old) at the ten year mark, had been in early latency at the time of divorce. At the time of divorce, these had been the sad, grief stricken children, least able to distance from the pain of the divorce experience. At the ten year mark (Wallerstein, 1987), they were, in general, significantly less well adjusted than the younger group of adolescents. This group of adolescents was characterized by "conformity to social situations" which masked "profound unhappiness about current relationships and haunted concerns regarding future ones." There were more suicide attempts among this group than others. This group exhibited considerable separation difficulties, many had great difficulty in developing goals for themselves, and in preparing to leave home. Those who were attending college, often did so without signs of enjoyment. Approximately 40% were performing below their academic potential.

> (A)lthough most of them were employed at least part-time and (were) taking responsibility for themselves to a high degree, few spoke of wanting to establish themselves independently ....Several of the youngsters who spoke bravely of their independence had suffered intensely during their freshman year at college and sought to return home....
>
> It appears that independent behavior, and the pride young people feel in it, can mask an intense hunger for further nurturance and powerful feelings of not being sufficiently nurtured to make it on one's own....

In this group, there were notable sex differences. Only one quarter of the girls were doing poorly with respect to psychological intactness and functioning in their environment as opposed to one half of the boys.

> Girls were more likely to reach out to peers, to develop and rely on their friendships, to engage in extracurricular activities,...to become more quickly involved in dating and sexual relationships. Girls were significantly more likely, as well, to draw psychological support from their mothers.

Nonetheless, only one third of the girls in this group were assessed to be functioning well. Further, even the girls who appeared to coping well exhibited "episodic recklessness", and "the incidence of abortion during early adolescent years was highest in this age group." Girls were especially apprehensive that their marriages would not endure, and particularly anticipated betrayal.

4) Adult Daughters of Divorce

The pattern of ongoing disturbed functioning continues for adult daughters of divorce (Pope and Mueller, 1976). Chess et al. (1983) reported a correlation between adult disturbance and the experience of parental conflict prior to age three. Kinnard and Gerard (1986) found that college women whose parents had divorced engaged in sexual activity earlier than did their counterparts from intact marriages. They also were "less individuated" and had a "more passive response style." They reported feeling positive about marriage, but wanted to wait longer than did the other young women. A number of researchers have spoken of the independence and realism of these young women who choose to become financially self-sufficient before marriage (Bane, 1976; Blechman, 1982; Weiss, 1976). However, as Southworth and Schwartz (1987) indicated, such decisions can have their basis in a somewhat less articulated fearfulness. They examined college age daughters whose parents had divorced, and found that those women who had less contact with their fathers tended to perceive their father's love as inconsistent, and tended also to exhibit less heterosexual trust. This, in turn, correlated with a desire to postpone marriage and to work longer before marriage. In a large scale, nationally based study of adults, Kulka and Weingarten (1979) found that these women were more likely to have experienced marital

problems of their own, and were more likely to have divorced than were women from intact families. More adult daughters of divorce married at an early age, were pregnant at the time of marriage, and they chose less adequate husbands (Hetherington and Parke, 1979.)

The young adults in Wallerstein's ten year evaluation (Wallerstein, 1985) were all people whose parents had divorced in their late latency or early adolescent years. Consequently, there is no information available from this project on the adult experience of preschoolers and young latency age children at divorce. However, in her review in 1989, Wallerstein stated that while 45% of the young men and women "had emerged as competent, compassionate and courageous people," 45% were doing poorly.

> a significant number of men and women, especially women (underlining added) appear troubled and drifting...one third of the women appear especially wary of commitment,...seem caught up in a web of short-lived sexual relationships.

In 1989, Wallerstein applied the term "sleeper effect", particularly to the daughters of divorce when they reached adulthood. Nearly two thirds of these young women, many of whom had been functioning fairly competently at earlier points, suddenly demonstrated acute fears of commitment betrayal which significantly interfered with their ability to enter into loving relationships with men. A third had become pregnant out of wedlock. These were women who, as children and adolescents, had tended, to cope better than their male peers, to do well in school, and to maintain social relationships effectively. Wallerstein's observation of such a delayed reaction parallels Hetherington's observations of adolescent girls.

Examination of the Findings

Despite many discrepancies in the literature, the majority of divorce researchers tend to hold that "girls are minimally affected by parental divorce". Various explanations have been sought for girls' presumed successful adjustment. First, girls are viewed as less vulnerable to stress than are boys. Second, the shifts in post-divorce family structure are considered to be more damaging to boys than to girls. For example, it is often held that boys are more negatively affected by the loss of the father (in 99% of divorces, the father does move out) than are girls whose primary identificatory object, the mother, remains within the family (Santrock, 1972). Further, a close relationship with mother is considered to be dangerous for the development of boys' masculinity and capacity to separate, whereas this closeness is often considered normative for girls (Kalter et al., 1985). Third, there is a tendency to emphasis the threats to normal ego development, and to the management of aggressive and libidinal impulses among boys (McDermott, 1968; 1970; Tooley, 1986), but to refer less frequently to research available on these problems for girls. Finally, there is a tendency to equate "good behavior" with "good functioning".

Girls' Response to Stress

When divorce researchers attempt to explain latency age girls' presumed good functioning once the initial crisis of divorce has passed, reference is often made to literature on stress, and to the finding that girls are less vulnerable to stress in general than are boys. Michael Rutter, a leader in this field, states that "with prepubertal children, sex differences in response to most kinds of stress events seem to operate in the same direction. That is to say, boys appear to be more vulnerable" (1981). This

includes both a heightened biological and a heightened psychological vulnerability to stress (Eme, 1979).

More specifically, researchers refer to evidence suggesting that the stress of marital turmoil has a greater effect on boys than on girls from both intact (Block, et al., 1981, 1986; Emery and O'Leary, 1982; Porter and O'Leary, 1980; Rutter, 1970, 1971, 1984) and from divorced families (Hess and Camara, 1979; Hetherington et al., 1979; Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980). Rutter found that in families where there was one psychiatrically ill parent, parental discord and family disruption was consistently associated with antisocial disorder in boys but not in girls (1981). Block et al. (1981, 1986) found that parental agreement/disagreement had more impact on the psychological functioning of boys than on girls, and that boys' and girls' reactions were in opposite directions. Thus, boys whose parents demonstrated less agreement were found to be less controlled, while girls showed less control when their parents were more able to agree! Hess and Camara (1979) found that relationships among family members, including degree of parental conflict, were more potent influences on child behavior than was marital status, and that these influences were greater for boys than for girls.

However, data concerning girls' reduced reactivity to stress in general, or to the particular kinds of stress which frequently accompany divorce, must be examined with caution. For example, Emery (1982) suggests that, "it may be that there is a sex difference in response to marital discord, but the difference is in how and how much the sexes respond, not whether they do." He suggests (as do Garai, 1970; Feshbach, 1970; Eme, 1979; Kalter, 1985), that girls tend to respond to parental conflict with

overcontrol, while boys tend to respond with undercontrol; problems of overcontrol do not usually lead to clinic referrals, while problems of undercontrol often do.

Further, we know that divorces involve a group of stressors over time, and that the cumulative impact of multiple stressors is more deleterious than the impact of each occurring singly (Peterson, 1984; Rutter, 1978):

> (Rutter) has found that familial stressors that occur in isolation are not associated with a significantly increased risk of a child having a behavior disorder; however, when two or more stressors are present, the likelihood of emotional problems increases two-to fourfold" Shaw and Emery, 1987.)

It seems logical to assume that the risk for girls will multiply if they encounter multiple stressors, as frequently occurs in parental divorce, even if that risk remains lower than for boys.

Altered Relationships with Parents: the Girl's Relationship with her Father

It has frequently been stated that boys are more negatively affected by parental divorce than are girls, because they are deprived of their primary identificatory object, the father, while girls are not (Hetherington, 1979; McDermott, 1970). However, fathers have particular and unique relationships with their daughters. Further, fathers fulfill generic functions in the family which are lost to children of both sexes when they leave. The importance of the father's role in the family has only been described recently (Herzog, 1982; Ross, 1984; Spieler, 1984; Tuttman, 1986).

Fathers have been recognized by adult analysts as "an alternative to mother,...an emerging figure for identification" whose presence contributes to the "unfolding of early object relations, the crystallization of the symbolic function,

language development,...and self-replenishing idealization" (Fairbairn, 1954; Chassaguet-Smirgel, 1976; Greenacre, 1966 and Lacan, 1966 in Ross, 1984). Observers of infant-parent interaction noted the early and particular responses that infants show toward their fathers,(Lamb, 1976; Mahler et al., 1975; Parke, 1972). Abelin, an observer and psychoanalytically oriented theorist, suggested (1975) that the father begins to figure importantly in the infant's life by four or five months, and by the time an infant has reached one year, the father provides an important "non-mother space" which helps the child begin the process of separation from mother. Infants and toddlers are seen to experience "father-thirst" (Herzog, 1979).

As Jacobson had outlined earlier, (1964) fathers help foster the toddler's first capacities to experience triangular relationships beginning at about 18 months, and they help mute the intensity of the separation-individuation conflicts of that phase. Ross (1984) elaborates that the toddler:

> can identify with him as an object related to mother but not fused with her--an identification which thereby helps buttress, demarcate, and stabilize the self-representation, consolidating the foundations of primary self-identity.

Abelin suggests that for girls, the process of identification, differentiation and consolidation of sexual identity is more directly related to mother during the second year; however, other researchers, notably Galenson and Roiphe (1982) demonstrate that father's presence during her second year is clearly related to her development of self esteem for her body.

When children reach the oedipal phase, and their understanding of the parents' relationship takes on new meaning, Ross and others (Kalter, 1987; Spieler, 1984)

refer to the father's role in helping children contain their instinctual impulses: "the child's representation of father as a nurturer and procreator...helps counteract sadomasochistic notions of intercourse and...thereby helps resolve residual conflicts and ambivalences in the sexual identity of both boys and girls." Further, he imbues his "sons and daughters with an 'ego-ideal' and a sense of 'purpose.'"

The girl's relationship to her father is seen to be particularly important during the oedipal years. It is often suggested that a young girl's self-representation "is less clearly defined and her self esteem more vulnerable" than is a boy's" (Bernstein, 1983; Ross, 1984;) During these years, "a loving interaction between father and daughter provides a girl with a masculine foil for her growing femininity" (Machtlinger, 1981 cited by Kalter et al., 1987). During latency, the father's:

> instruction and expressed appreciation can enable girls to reconcile autonomy and competence with femininity. Thus, Laura Tessman (1982) speaks of melding sexual excitement and endeavor excitement (Ross, 1984).

I have chosen to include in this section reference to girls' earliest relationships with their father. Certainly, if parental divorce occurs in the girl's early latency years, she will not have been deprived of the "preoedipal" or the "oedipal father." However, since each developmental stage is considered to allow for consolidation of earlier developmental achievements (Freud, A. 1965; Mahler, et al., 1976), one can presume that earlier aspects of her internalized relationship with her father will be less fully integrated than if her father remained a continuous presence in her life.

And, now to discuss the impact of <u>loss</u> of the father for children of divorce. Father absence is a reality for over half of all sons <u>and</u> daughters of divorce. A large

scale nationally based study conducted by Furstenberg et al. in 1983 determined that over a third of all children whose parents have divorced have not seen their fathers in the past five years. Another 20% see their fathers less than once a year. Only 16% of all children see their fathers weekly. Gender of the child does not appear to affect these patterns (Furstenberg et al., 1983,) though smaller scale studies indicate that fathers may visit their sons more often than they do their daughters. (Hess and Camara, 1979; Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980.)

A related issue concerns psychopathology among divorced fathers. Divorced men, even more than divorced women, are over-represented among psychiatric patients, and are more prone to physical illnesses, accidents, suicide and homicide. (Bloom et al., 1978; Briscoe and Smith, 1974). While disturbed men are more likely to divorce, divorce has also been shown to be an independent stressor (Bloom et al., 1978; Menaghen and Lieberman, 1986.) Thus boys and girls whose parents divorce are more likely to have a relationship with a disturbed father than are children from intact families.

Beyond these rather stark demographics, it is difficult to use empirical data to comment on the impact on children that this broken or severely attenuated connection with their fathers may have. The literature on effects of father absence is extensive and confusing. As Shinn (1978) and others (Levitin, 1979, Kalter 1981) point out, few studies on father absence define their terms clearly; for example, reason for absence, length of absence, SES, and sample delineation are not always accounted for. Further, few researchers have managed to isolate "father absence" as a variable independent of, for example, maternal depression, or maternal absence as a result of

her increased employment obligations, all of which are factors which may accompany the father's departure.

Marybeth Shinn (1978) reviewed 58 studies of father absence and children's cognitive development, and she found detrimental effects for females, as with males, in about half of the well controlled studies she reviewed. She concluded that "sex of child has...little moderating effect... on the relationship between father absence and children's intellectual growth".

Rickell and Langner (1985), in a well controlled large scale study of over 1000 urban families examined short and long term effects of father absence on children. After controlling for ethnicity and social class, they found a significant correlation between the absence of the natural father, regardless of the presence of a surrogate father, and noncompulsive and delinquent problems in children. They did not note sex differences in response to father absence.

Goodstein states that "loss of a parent through divorce can be more damaging to children than the death of a parent" (1988). Wallerstein and Kelly comment on the negative effect of loss of contact with father for both girls and for boys. They report that those children who did not see their fathers at all)of whom the majority in their sample happened to be girls) "suffered intensively,..with overt or underlying depression...and disabling symptomatic behaviors". There was a significant connection at the five year mark between depression in children and impoverished contact with the father. Most devastated of all were those children who had previously had a warm relationship with their fathers: "the blow seemed an impossible one for the child to absorb." Frequently these children maintained

powerful idealizations of their fathers, and their intense preoccupations served to diminish their capacity to form other meaningful relationships with peers or adults. As mentioned earlier, adolescent girls showed particularly intense longing for their fathers (1984). Further, Wallerstein and Kelly found that good functioning among late latency and preadolescent girls and boys always included the ingredient of a good relationship with father (which involved a "regular and frequent visiting schedule...and a visiting pattern that included continuity and pleasure in the visiting.") These findings are also supported by Hess and Camara (1979.)

Altered Relationships with Parents: Living with a Single Mother

It is often stated that boys of divorced parents suffer particularly, since in addition to being deprived of regular contact with their fathers, they are forced into excessive proximity with their mothers. (Block et al., 1981; 1986.) Girls, on the other hand, are often seen as being more protected because of their proximity to the same sex parent. It is often noted that boys are frequently drafted to be "man of the house" (Tooley, 1976), to be "caretaker and confidant," involved in making major decisions regarding family matters, and they may often sleep in mother's bed (Kalter, 1987). Further, because of their gender, they can serve as objects for their mothers' displaced aggression toward their ex-husbands and can enter "coercive reciprocal cycles of negative parent-child interactions" (Patterson, 1979). All of these interactions can severely tax their capacity to separate and to regulate their aggressive and sexual feelings (Goodstein, 1988; Kalter, 1987.)

However, it would seem that it is not proximity to mother which is dangerous for sons, but the mother's failure to maintain appropriate intergenerational boundaries

(Schwartzberg, 1981) and her inability to mobilize ego functions necessary for competent parenting which poses the danger. These are problems which are likely to affect both sons and daughters.

Mothers' reduced capacity to parent competently in the year following divorce is well documented (Kitson and Sussman, 1982; Wallerstein and Kelly, 1980; Wyman, 1985.) It seems likely that many women continue to have significant difficulties at least five year post divorce (Shaw and Emery, 1987; Wallerstein, 1986). Kurdek (1981) suggests that those mothers who are younger, have been married a shorter time, have more pre-divorce self-esteem, have initiated the divorce themselves, have much social support, and are economically independent from their husbands make a better and quicker recovery than do the women without these attributes. This constitutes a rather small group on economic grounds alone. Nationwide, close to 30% of white women and 40% of black women fall below the poverty line after divorce, and the rate of economic decline is substantial for most women, even if they do not reach poverty level (Glick, 1979). Five years after the divorce, 42% of Wallerstein and Kelly's women "had not yet achieved psychological or social stability;" one third "were enmeshed in a daily struggle for financial survival." They found that it took ten years before a majority of these women stabilized financially.

Divorced women have fewer supports than married women; they have fewer friends, belong to fewer organizations and participate in fewer recreational activities (Brandwein et al., 1974; Pearlin and Johnson, 1977). The links between loss of economic and social support and increased depression for women who divorce have

been documented (Ambert, 1982; Blechman, 1982); further, depression among divorced adults has been found to correlate with the fact of divorce rather than with prior affective state, and this depression has been found to take several years to abate (Menaghen and Lieberman, 1986.) Wallerstein (1986) found that after ten years two thirds of the women had made psychological gains, and felt that their post divorce lives were better than when they were married. However, 20% had continued to decline; further growth often included improvements in reality testing and judgement, but not in insight; there was frequently continuing anger at the former husband. Finally, independent of psychological stability, divorced mothers are often, themselves, absent mothers, since their economic struggles often oblige them to work, when previously they stayed home with their children.

On the other hand, girls face particular problems unique to their gender in their relationships with their mothers, often <u>because</u> of the closeness of the mother-daughter bond. Wallerstein and Kelly (1980) state that "for girls, the tie between their overall adjustment and the relationship with the mother was...strong at each checkpoint." They found that the girls up to the age of twelve enjoyed better mothering than did all but the younger children. However, these girls were also most reactive to a "troubled and lonely mother." They were unable, or did not dare, to make outside friendships, and instead remained at home to "keep their mother company and comfort her." While boys may be the objects of their mothers' intense displaced male-directed feelings, girls may, more than boys, be expected to view their fathers exactly as the mothers do (Kalter, 1987). Further, while sons struggle with

the problem of identification with an often "bad" rejecting/rejecting man, girls have an often angry, depressed and rejecting/rejected mother with whom to identify.

Threats to Intrapsychic Development

Thus far, the various stressors inherent in a divorce, sex differences in responsivity to stress, and alterations in parent-child relationships have been examined. I shall focus in this section directly on the threats which divorce can pose to girls' intrapsychic development.

Hess and Camara (1979) see the effects of divorce on children as,

> potentially interrupting the normal progress of development by threatening primary bonds, creating conflicts of loyalty that require developmentally inappropriate levels of sensitivity and thought and disrupting internalized concepts of social reality. These combine to absorb the mental concentration and emotional energy of the child.

Goodstein, in a discussion of his analytic work with children and their divorced parents, (1988) stated that divorce poses severe threats to superego development, to the ego, and to the management of libidinal and aggressive drives sometimes to the extent of "pervasive changes of mental apparatus" and changes in reality testing which is "only superficially in place". Kalter has written about "potential long term problems in key developmental areas: Handling anger and aggression, separation and individuation, and gender-identity" (1987). Wallerstein (1983) wrote that "divorce, bereavement, and the loss of community pose powerful continuing demands for major psychological...reorganization" in children which "stretch over the years of childhood and adolescence." Goodstein (1988) points out that children often experience loss as their parents "often adopt increasingly

narcissistic orientations." Kalter states, "we have been impressed...by the continuous nature of this injury to self-worth."

Using Kalter's "developmental vulnerability" model as a focus, I shall outline the threats to development facing children in general, and girls in particular.

1) Modulating Aggression

Children's aggressive impulses are stimulated, and their capacity to manage these impulses effectively is frequently interfered with when parents divorce. Feelings of abandonment and rejection can provoke considerable anger.

Children's aggressive impulses are also stimulated by their experiencing of parents' hostility toward each other. Frequent interparental conflict provokes internal conflict for children via their "appropriate identification with each parent" (Kalter, 1987). Children will experience themselves both as the victims and the aggressors. Goodstein states that among these children "anal sadism is often openly expressed," and that "ego resources are sapped...in the face of cumulative excitation."

In addition to having their aggressive feelings stimulated, these children are often not provided with "clearly defined and consistent limits on expressing aggression" in their post divorce families. Fathers, who are "traditionally responsible for setting these boundaries" are not longer available, and mothers are often too overburdened to take on this role effectively.

Disturbances in modulating aggression can manifest themselves either in the form of aggressive externalizing behaviors or in the form of "the more silent manifestations of maladaptive defenses against anxiety and guilt often associated with aggression, e.g., depression, inhibitions, and passivity (or lack of appropriate

assertiveness)." It seems likely that latency age daughters of divorce will be most prone to these "more silent manifestations" (Emery, 1982.)

2) Problems with Achieving Emotional Separation

While "the malignant outcomes associated with profound, early problems in separation" are not generally associated with parental divorce, (Kalter, 1987) children of divorce tend to exhibit a variety of higher level separation-related problems.

For preschool children whose parents divorce, the secure attachments to mother and to father which facilitate the normal process of separation are severely threatened, and as has been discussed earlier, the father is no longer available to help the child become more independent of mother. Further, other sources of continuity which foster security and encourage exploration, like home and school, are often interrupted. Kalter states that "children who were preschoolers at the time of their parents' marital rupture may come to)the developmental period of latency) with the achievement of separation from mother only tenuously held. These youngsters are especially vulnerable to new pressures to remain emotionally tied to mother."

The increased cognitive and emotional maturity of latency age children protects them from the disorientation and extreme regression of younger children; but this maturity can allow them also to assume "superficially positive" stances. These children often are able to rationalize their experience of the divorce, to repress conflicts which were expressed overtly previously, and they are often able to become competent caretakers of their parents and siblings. Nonetheless, as Kalter states,

> the confluence of the realistic abilities of the child, the child's own wishes [to remain tied to mother], and the parent's intense difficulties in adjusting to divorce can result in clear violations of traditionally

> maintained generational boundaries...the child gives up, to some degree, appropriate emotional investment in establishing peer relationships and withdraws from them in favor of being centrally and powerfully involved with the mother specifically, or with the family system more broadly.

3) Problems in Feminine Development

The girl's ability to develop a valued sense of her femininity is frequently interfered with when parents divorce. Girls often attach the egocentric assumption that their fathers rejected them to a belief that they are in some way inadequate as females: "not pretty enough, affectionate enough, athletic enough, or smart enough to pleas father" (Kalter, 1987). Further, in identifying with their mothers, they often also internalize "the sense that their mother was rejected by father in the specifically feminine role of wife and lover....This dynamic is most salient when a mother herself experiences the divorce as a rejection and abandonment."

> Finally, girls whose parents divorce may grow up without the day-to-day experience of interacting with a man who is attentive, caring, and loving. The continuous sense of being valued and loved as a female seems an especially key element in the development of the conviction that one is indeed femininely lovable. Without this regular source of nourishment, a girl's sense of being valued as a female does not seem to thrive. As Machtlinger put it when describing a father's contribution to his daughter's development, "a loving interaction between father and daughter provides a girl with a masculine foil for her growing femininity (Kalter et al., 1985).

To summarize, there is ample reason to consider girls of divorced parents already <u>at risk</u> during latency. These challenges include challenges to emerging ego capacities, disruptions to self esteem, interference with the capacity to regulate emotions, and to the capacity for relatedness with others. While internal and external

pressures increase in adolescence, these pressures have been shown to be high throughout the earlier years.

Behavioral Discontinuity Reassessed

Those researchers who do address the issue of discontinuity in behavior between latency age and adolescent daughters of divorce tend to explain this shift in terms of the phasic conflicts inherent in adolescence rather than referring to long term adaptational difficulties, or, more specifically, to any underlying vulnerabilities in latency. They see the development of these girls during latency as adaptive. Other researchers, who appear to take a broader view of development, are more cautious, and suggest that girls' difficulties only become apparent when they reach adolescence. Kalter articulates both perspectives: First, he writes:

> it would be unlikely to observe interpersonal or intrapsychic conflict in the (girl's) latency years. Mothers and daughters are expected to be very close in this period....One would not anticipate problems until adolescence (Kalter et al, 1985.)

At another point, Kalter provides a somewhat different viewpoint, focusing instead on themes of preadolescent vulnerability which are not easily discernable: (Kalter, 1985)

> The vulnerability problems in feminine self esteem and heterosexual adjustment may not emerge until these issues become centrally important developmentally. An additional implication is that such difficulties are not easily assessed through the use of readily available, established psychometric instruments (underlining added).

With the exception of this latter perspective taken by Kalter, there appears to be a consistent equation of "good behavior" with "good adaptation" (Guidubaldi and Perry, 1985; Hetherington, 1985). This equation tends to limit the way that one views these girls' experiences. For example, if one assumes that these girls are behaving/adapting

well, then it is logical to assume that the stressors accompanying parental divorce have not significantly impinged on them, and to assume that later behavioral deterioration can be attributed solely to the pressures of adolescence.

However, the equation of "good behavior" with "good functioning" is not a given in the study of child development, as evidenced by the work of developmental psychopathologists.

Developmental Psychopathology has been defined by Sroufe and Rutter (1984) as:

> the study of the origins and course of individual patterns of behavioral maladaptation, whatever the age of onset, whatever the causes, whatever the transformations in behavioral manifestation, and however complex the course of the developmental pattern may be.

Developmental psychopathologists have made it clear that manifest behavior in childhood often is not reflective of underlying functioning at the time, nor is it predictive of future adaptation (Garber, 1984; Gersten et al., 1976; Sobin, 1987). Large scale longitudinal studies have demonstrated that in the course of a child's development, disturbed behaviors will frequently appear, then disappear, and then reemerge in similar or altered form at a later point in time (MacFarlane et al., 1954; Gersten et al., 1976). In childhood, behavioral change over the course of development is the norm rather than the exception. At the same time, patterns of adaptation are viewed as "coherent over time" and "lawful". So, while a newly emerging disordered behavior may appear to contrast sharply with a previous period of behavioral conformity, such behavior is considered directly related to previous quality of adaptation" (Sroufe and Rutter, 1984), and is considered "not to simply

spring forth without connection to previous quality of adaptation." Consequently, developmental psychopathologists advocate a perspective which focuses on patterns of adaptation over the course of development, rather than on isolated behaviors or traits (Garber, 1984). In 1987, Wallerstein used these concepts in her clinical research on children of divorce:

> demonstrated by recent research on the enduring effects of psychic trauma, findings that showed that effects which may not be visible immediately, or even in later specific behavior or symptoms, may, in fact profoundly influence and individual's subsequent guiding conceptions and personal expectations of the world.

Within this framework, it is appropriate to revise our understanding of girls' long term adjustment to parental divorce. The "good behavior" of latency age daughters of divorce should not necessarily be considered reflective of underlying functioning, or predictive of future adaptation. Further, the downward shift in behavioral competency which adolescent or adult daughters of divorce demonstrate should be viewed as related to this earlier phase of development, instead of as "springing forth without connection to previous quality of adaptation." It should no longer be assumed that the change among daughters of divorce is solely related to phasic pressures of adolescence. Finally, in evaluating these girls' adjustment to parental divorce, measures should be used which evaluate "patterns of adaptation", rather than "isolated behaviors or traits."

In the experimental portion of this study I shall attempt to demonstrate the presence of disturbance in underlying patterns of adaptation, particularly in object relations development among latency age daughters of divorced parents. I have chosen the Rorschach as the primary assessment measure in this study because its

usefulness in assessment of underlying patterns of adaptation in children and adults has been widely demonstrated (Ames, et al., 1974; Klopfer and Kelly, 1944), as has its usefulness in experimental conditions (Blatt and Berman, 1984; Blatt and Ritzler, 1979; Hemmendinger and Schultz, 1977; Rickers-Ovsiankina, 1977; Ryan et al., 1985; Tuber, 1983; Weiner, 1977).

Object Relations Theory and Rorschach Assessment Procedures

Over the past twenty years, there has been a growing effort to integrate object relations theory with Rorschach assessment procedures (Stricker and Healey, 1990). A number of researchers sees the Rorschach as highly useful in elucidating "external reflections of the inner 'object concepts' around which people organize their daily relationships" (Mayman, 1967).

Mayman (1967) comments on the evocative potential of the Rorschach in this regard:

> When a person is asked to spend an hour immersing himself in a field of impressions where amorphousness prevails, and where strange or even alien forms may appear, he will set in motion a reparative process the aim of which is to replace formlessness with reminders of the palpably real world. He primes himself to recall, recapture, reconstitute his world as he knows it, with people, animals and things which fit most naturally into the ingrained expectancies around which he has learned to structure his phenomenal world.

The first investigation of the relationship between human percepts on the Rorschach and basic "object concepts" was conducted by Hertzman and Pearce in 1947. They administered Rorschachs to subjects who then began psychotherapy. After six months of treatment, it was found that 75% of the personal images which

appeared on these Rorschachs had also emerged in psychotherapy. Mayman (1977) believes that this finding is suggestive. He proposes the idea that, just like the baby who needs to evoke the image of the absent mother in order not to panic,

> the sense of well being, one's sense of secure belonging, is contingent upon the availability and the quality of such personal images which people one's fantasy life, particularly the unconscious fantasy life. Where one fails to preserve one's significant others by some mental representation, one may lose his existence even in the unconscious fantasy system, and one is then left to his own bewildered, panic stricken state of aloneness (1977).

Mayman and other authors (Piotrowski, 1977; Schactel, 1950) see both the movement response and the human percept as particularly useful in evoking an individual's capacity for object relatedness.

There have been two primary ways that researchers have found to measure such percepts along a diagnostic/developmental continuum. One has been by means of thematic analysis, as exemplified by the work of Mayman, and his colleagues and students at the University of Michigan; the other has been by means of structural analysis, as demonstrated in the work of Blatt and his colleagues at Yale University (Spear, 1980; Tuber, 1981).

Thematic Analysis of Object Representations on the Rorschach

Urist's Mutuality of Autonomy Scale (1977), a Rorschach scale designed to measure thematic aspects of object relations will be employed in this study. Before describing the scale itself, I shall discuss its development.

In 1974 Krohn and Mayman developed a precursor to the MOA Scale. They based their work primarily on the developmental theories of Kernberg (1966) and

Mahler et al. (1968). These theorists examine the individual's growing capacity for interpersonal relatedness in the context of separation and individuation.

Krohn and Mayman summarize Kernberg's perspective on the development of mature relational capacities in this way:

> Kernberg perceives of personality structure basically as a configuration of differentially "metabolized" internalizations. The degree of differentiation and elaboration of these mental representations depends upon the nature of the internalization process under which they were integrated.

Specifically, this is a process of internalizing aspects of "the other". At the earlier developmental levels, the other is often experienced in "parts" which are not integrated with each other; at these levels the self and the other are often experienced as "all good" or highly idealized, or conversely, as "all bad" or empty and persecutory. As the child

> becomes more mature cognitively and perceptually, developing ego capacities permit the child to understand the functions of interpersonal events and to perceive in others and experience in himself more modulated, differentiated, less overwhelming affects. These developing ego capacities also allow for the evolution of a self-image that is more reliably and stably differentiated from the object, leading to a greater sense of the meaning and purpose of human actions. The final, most advanced form of internalization, which Kernberg labels "ego identity," refers to a consolidation and unification of earlier identifications and introjections. Object and self-images become richer, more varied, more consistent, and more congruent with what objects are really like.

Kernberg stated that an individual's self and object relations reflected not only his developmental level, but also the relational capacities of his primary caretakers and the environmental conditions of his growing years.

Mahler et al. (1968, 1975) elaborated on these concepts via her treatment of psychotic adults and her observations of infants, toddlers and their mothers over a two

year period. She and her colleagues hypothesized various developmental stages in the process toward achievement of "object constancy", a stage in which internal object images can be maintained consistently, and others are perceived in a stable, realistic manner. They posited that the development of the experience of oneself as an individual and as separate, i.e., not merged with the other, is key to, and interrelated with, the development of mature object constancy. Further, like Kerberg, they believed that the development of the capacity to regulate affect aroused both by closeness to and separation from the mother is a central component in the establishment of object constancy.

Using these constructs, Krohn and Mayman (1974) developed a projective scale for the evaluation of dream content along this continuum. Theirs is an eight point scale, in which, at the lowest end of the continuum, the world is represented by the individual in dream form as "lifeless, vacant, alien, strange; it is a world essentially without people;... stark and static, or fluid and formless;...unpredictable". Such dreams are considered to reflect a minimal level of self and object differentiation, extreme impoverishment of inner resources, and most likely psychotic process. At the highest end of the continuum, dreams are filled with a lively world full of human objects; feelings of rapport exist and others are experienced in subtle and complex ways. There is a well developed understanding others' thoughts, feelings, and conflicts, and often new awarenesses of others are expressed in the dream content. This scale has been used successfully to predict later adjustment following hospitalization (Frieswyk and Colson, 1980), and was used by Spear (1980) to distinguish both schizophrenics from borderline patients and also

hysterical/impulsive from obsessive/paranoid subgroups of borderline patients. These researchers have concluded that it corresponds closely with the theoretically and observationally derived developmental levels of Mahler.

In 1977, Jeffrey Urist, a student of Mayman's developed the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale, a procedure for systematically evaluating Rorschach responses that describe interactions between people, animals and/or objects. This inclusion of non-human percepts made the scale particularly valuable for use with children who are less prone to perception of human movement on the Rorschach than are adults.

Urist's aim was to "demonstrate the structural argument that individuals tend to experience self-other relationships in consistent, enduring, characteristic ways that can be defined along a developmental continuum. This continuum corresponds to the various stages in the development of object relations, ranging from primitive narcissism to empathic object relatedness." He emphasized particularly " the issue of the autonomy of others vis-a-vis the self and, conversely, the autonomy of the self, vis-s-vis others" (Urist, 1977). At the lower end of the continuum, there is an increasing malevolence and loss of control over one's separateness, to the point where, finally, representations of the self and of others are avoided or depicted as experiences of depletion and disintegration. At the highest end of the continuum, relationships are perceived as separate, autonomous and interactive. They contain a quality of empathic relatedness. Tuber and Coates (1985; Tuber, 1981) have suggested that the scale is indicative of individuals' levels of psychopathology as observable in his object relations percepts. For example, scores of 1-2 are considered indicative of normal or neurotic personality organization, scores of 3 indicate

narcissistic personality organization, scores of 4 indicate dependent personality organization, scores of 5-6 borderline psychopathology and scores of 7 are considered to reflect psychotic process.

The Mutuality of Autonomy Scale has been employed successfully for research purposes both with low functioning and higher functioning adults and children in a number of settings.

The Mutuality of Autonomy Scale has been used with pre- and post-treatment Rorschach assessments of adults to demonstrate "greater psychological maturity in patients' object representations" following psychotherapy or psychoanalysis (Kavanagh, 1985). The scale has also been used to differentiate between different diagnostic groupings of severely disturbed adults (Spear, 1980; Sugarman, 1980) and to demonstrate severity of psychopathology (Blatt et al., in press; Harder et al., 1984). Urist and Shill in 1982 addressed the question of whether the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale really rated an individual's enduring and characteristic modes of experiencing relationships "and not some other dimension conveyed through the Rorschach data", a question which has also been raised subsequently by some researchers (Harder et al., 1984). They found a correlation between all Rorschach MOA scores and independent clinical ratings of "mutuality of autonomy" to the .001 level of significance among a group of 60 hospitalized adolescents. They concluded that their findings support " the idea that the scale does indeed tap the subject's capacity for object relations."

Urist's scale has been used quite extensively in assessments of children and adolescents, and as indicated earlier, is particularly conducive to work with children.

In 1981, Tuber used Urist's scale retrospectively to predict later adjustment of 60 boys who had been patients at a residential treatment center. He found that use of the MOA scores had more predictive utility than did initial diagnosis.

In 1986, Goddard successfully used the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale to demonstrate different levels of object relations development among boys with the diagnosis of separation anxiety disorder, separation anxiety disorder with gender identity disorder, and normals.

The MOA Scale has also been employed in the examination of depression in children. Goldberg (1989) used the Mutuality of Autonomy scale in conjunction with independent measures of self-reported depression in a study of 100 inner city mostly black and hispanic girls from the ages of 8 to 16. She showed that the "girls reporting more depression had significantly earlier developmental levels of object relations and cognition than girls reporting less depression, regardless of chronological ages".

There has been some recent investigation of the usefulness of the MOA Scale in elucidating information about the object representations of non-clinic children. In 1984, Ryan et al. conducted a study of fourth through sixth grade girls and boys. They were able to use the MOA Scale to support the hypothesis that grades are not determined solely by intelligence, but also by social and motivational factors, since the MOA Scale correlated with teacher ratings and academic grades, but not to standard measures of intelligence. They also found that those children who experienced locus of control outside of themselves on independent measures scored lower on the MOA Scale than did children who expressed a greater sense of personal

control over events. The authors concluded that "this finding is congruent with object relations theories, which hold that either excessively controlling or inconsistent objects result in more primitive internalized object relations".

Recently, Tuber (1989a) has used the MOA Scale to examine the Rorschachs of 40 boys and girls ranging in age from 6 to 13 from a non-clinic sample. He found that these normal children exhibited a "broad range of object relations experiences", but that "high level responses constituted over 50% of the responses, and more distorted scores were counterbalanced by more adaptive scores in 90% of the sample". He also found that boys and girls produced significantly different Rorschachs. Girls produced a larger number of adaptive MOA scores and fewer maladaptive responses than did boys.

This work provides an important demonstration of the power of Urist's scale at the upper end of the continuum of healthy adaptation, a finding which is particularly relevant to the current study, which also focuses specifically on a non-clinic population. It is being assumed in this study, on the basis of most empirical divorce research to date, that latency age girls of divorced parents selected from non-clinic sources are likely to demonstrate generally age-appropriate behaviors. It will be proposed that these girls, despite outward appearances, will produce lower levels of object relations scores on the MOA than will their peers from intact families.

The MOA has been used, additionally, to demonstrate object representational shifts among individual children facing major surgery (Tuber et al., 1989b).

Structural Analysis of Object Representations on the Rorschach

The other predominant way of examining an individual's object relational world involves a developmental/structural assessment of the human object as it is presented on the Rorschach. Blatt and his colleagues at Yale University are the leaders in this work. They have developed a "detailed structural scoring system for evaluating the more formal/cognitive aspects of an individual's inner object relations" (Spear, 1980). This is based on Werver's theories, and also on those of Piaget, concerning the process of developments which they see as a process of "increasing differentiation and centralization - or hierarchic integration". At the lower end of the continuum, the undifferentiated structural process is said to by 'syncretic', diffuse', 'labile', 'indefinite' and 'rigid'. When differentiated and organized, the terms 'discrete', articulated', stable', definite', and 'flexible' are applicable" (Hemmendinger, 1977). A number of researchers who preceded Blatt have taken these concepts to devise measures for assessment of perceptual development and of thought organization. Friedman (1952) devised, and Becker (1956) adapted, a Developmental Level score which measures Whole and Detail percepts on the Rorschach. Numerous studies using these measures have distinguished between groups of schizophrenics, between schizophrenics and normal adults (Friedman, 1953; Becker, 1956), and between groups of children at two and three year intervals (Hemmendinger, 1953; Wulach, 1977), and have distinguished between children of parents with psychotic and non-psychotic disorders (Beck and Worland, 1983).

Blatt and his colleagues have translated these concepts which Friedman and Becker used into a Concept of the Object Scale (Blatt, et al., 1976a and b; Blatt et al., 1980; Blatt and Lerner, 1983). In this scale human percepts are evaluated

according to their degree of differentiation, which can range from quasi-human details to fully human percepts, their degree of articulation, or the extent to which a human percept is elaborated, and their degree of integration, or the extent to which the concept of the object is integrated into a context of action and interaction with other objects.

A number of studies of disturbed adults have used the Blatt Concept of the Object Scale with some success. Kavanagh (1985) used the scale to demonstrate shifts in internal object relations made by patients in psychoanalysis in contrast to patients in psychotherapy. (interestingly, both groups showed shifts in their MAS scores after treatment. Perhaps, Blatt's scale reflects less easily mutable aspects of object representation than does the MOA.) Spear and Sugarman (1980) used the Blatt scale to differentiate between individuals in different diagnostic groups: infantile borderline, obsessive/paranoid borderline and schizophrenic. They found that conjoint use of the MAS and of the Blatt scale was particularly useful in making these distinctions. Blatt and Lerner (1983) used the Concept of the Object Scale in a clinical study of five individuals to illustrate the scale's usefulness in revealing object representations which corresponded to independently derived diagnostic formulations.

Less research has been conducted with children and adolescents using Blatt's Concept of the Object Scale. In 1976, Blatt et al. used the scale to analyze human responses on the Rorschach according to developmental level. On four different occasions they tested a group of individuals from young adolescence (11, 12) to the age of thirty, and they charted "a steady progression in well differentiated, highly articulated and integrated human figures in constructive and reciprocal interactions".

In a companion study, they evaluated the Rorschachs of adolescent and young adult inpatients using this scale, and found that their protocols could be easily distinguished from those of the normal subjects on most of the dimensions of the scale.

Tuber and Coates (1985) employed modified aspects of the benevolent/malevolent continuum of Blatt's scale in their examination of gender disturbed boys, and demonstrated that they showed a high proportion of malevolent responses.

In this study, it is hoped that Blatt's Concept of the Object Scale will provide information concerning the structural aspects of the object representations of daughters of divorced parents, which will provide a useful counterpart to the thematic focus of Urist's Mutuality of Autonomy Scale.

Behavioral Assessment Procedure

Achenbach's Child Behavior Checklist will be used to assess girls' behavioral competency, following much divorce research described earlier. The Achenbach CBCL is a widely used instrument which reports the parents views of the child's social competence and symptom array: social withdrawal, uncommunicativeness, depression, immaturity, somatic complaints, anxiety, obsessions/compulsions, schizoid tendencies and delinquent, hyperactive and aggressive tendencies. The scale has been used in a number of divorce-related studies, notably Guidubaldi et al. (1985) and Hetherington et al. (1985).

Assessment of Maternal Functioning

As will be discussed further, along with presentation of the hypotheses of this study, functioning among two groups of mothers will be assessed. In particular, degree of symptomatology and stress levels will be examined, and the instruments to be used will be Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend's Psychiatric Research Interview (PERI) (1978) and Derogatis' Brief Symptom Inventory (1982).

The PERI scale is the product of considerable research on the part of its authors and many other researchers who have grappled with the problem of defining and giving comparative weight to stressful life events or those "objective occurrences of sufficient magnitude to bring about change in the usual activities of most individuals who experience them" (Dohrenwend et al., 1978).

Perhaps the best known of the life events scales is Holmes and Rahe's Social Readjustment Rating Scale (SRRS) (1966) which consists of 43 such items. The SRRS has been used in over 1000 studies (Perkins, 1982) to assess the relationship between stressful life events and physical illness, psychosomatic symptoms, and emotional disorders with no outstanding physical symptomatology. While there has been considerable controversy in the literature over the measurement of stress, Perkins, in his review of stress literature has concluded that:

> examination of this massive literature leaves little doubt that a significant relationship exists between the experience of stress, as assessed by life events scales, and a host of adverse physical and psychological conditions, including, but not limited to tuberculosis, diabetes, arthritis, cancer (for reviews see Holmes and Massuda, 1974; Rahe and Arthur, 1978); heart disease (Rahe and Lind, 1971); depression (Paykel,1979); schizophrenia (Brown, Sklair, Harris and Birlens, 1973); neurosis (Tennant and Andrews, 1978); accidents (Selzer and Vinokur, 1974); athletic injuries (Bramwell, Masuda,

Wagner, and Holmes, 1975); and poor academic performance (Lloyd, Alexander, Rice and Greenfield, 1980).

The PERI Scale represents considerable advance over the SRRS for various reasons. First, it consists of 102 items which are more encompassing and more precisely defined than those on the SRRS. Second, the items are more broadly based: drawn both from previous scales and from surveys of a large scale sample of adults in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan (Dohrenwend, 1970; Dohrenwend 1974). Finally, like the SRRS, the events on the PERI scale are given comparative generalized weights to reflect the relative magnitude of their impact on individuals' lives. However, these judgments of magnitude were derived via much more precise sampling methods than is true for the SRRS or for any other life events scale to date. The Dohrenwends employed three "sampling generations" to weight these events: 1) a group of over 2,600 adults living in all five boroughs of the city of New York; 2) 250 heads of households living in Manhattan, and 3) their spouses. These latter two groups were selected specifically to reflect ethnic and class diversity.

The events on the PERI scale are designed to include three classes of events: 1) events confounded with the psychological condition of the subject; 2) events that consist of or indicate physical illness or injury; and 3) events whose occurrences are independent of a subject's physical health or psychological condition.

It is long-recognized that divorce experiences differ widely in the number of stressors they entail over time (Levitin, 1979; Wallerstein, 1980). It is also recognized that it is not only families of divorce, but also intact families, which can experience high levels of stress. In this study the PERI Scale will be used both to

assess for between group differences, but also to differentiate between those mothers within each group who have experienced high versus low levels of stress.

Derogatis' Brief Symptom Inventory is a self report symptom checklist which was developed from the better known, but longer, SCL-90-R (Derogatis, 1975, 1977). It measures nine symptom dimensions (somatization, obsessive-compulsivity, interpersonal sensitivity, depression, anxiety, hostility, phobic anxiety, paranoid ideation, and psychoticism) and three global indices of distress. While the SCR-90-R has been much more widely used, a number of researchers (cited in Derogatis and Spencer, 1982) have found the BSI to have strong predictive validity among various psychiatric and non-psychiatric populations: Marshal and Bougsty (1980), Amenson and Lewinsohn (1981) and Kremer and Atkinson (1981) and Peterson et al. (1981).

CHAPTER III
METHODS

This chapter will present the methods and procedures of the study. The chapter will be divided into five sections: 1) statement of the hypotheses, 2) description of subjects, 3) description of the research instruments, 4) description of the procedures and 5) treatment of the data.

Statement of the Hypotheses

1) Latency age girls (age six through eleven) whose parents have divorced two or more years ago will show less mature levels of object relations, as measured by the median score (MOR), the highest object relations score (HOR) and the lowest object relations score (LOR) of Urist's Mutuality of Autonomy Scale (MOA) of the Rorschach, than will a matched sample of girls from never-divorced families.

2) These six through eleven year old daughters of divorced parents will also obtain lower scores on Blatt's Concept of the Object Scale of the Rorschach than will a matched sample of girls from never-divorced families.

3) The Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist ratings of daughters by their mothers will not significantly differentiate daughters of divorced parents from daughters from intact families.

4) Divorced mothers, as a group, will show higher levels of stress as measured by scores on Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend's PERI Life Events Scale than will the non-divorced mothers.

5) Divorced mothers, as a group, will show significantly more symptomatology as measured by Derogatis' Brief Symptom Inventory than will the non-divorced mothers.

6) Scores obtained by the girls on Urist's Mutuality of Autonomy Scale and Blatt's Concept of the Object Scale will correlate significantly with mothers' scores on the PERI Life Events Scale.

7) Scores obtained by the girls on Urist's Mutuality of Autonomy Scale and Blatt's Concept of the Object Scale will correlate significantly with mothers' scores on the Brief Symptom Inventory.

The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Scale-Revised was used to match the two groups of girls on the basis of verbal intelligence.

Description of the Subjects:

The experimental group in this study consisted of 31 six through eleven year old girls whose parents had divorced two or more years previously, and whose mothers had not remarried; they all lived in the custody of their mothers.

The control group in this study consisted of 30 six through eleven year old girls whose parents had never divorced. These girls were matched with the experimental group by age and intelligence, and by professional level of one of the parents, but not by socioeconomic status. It is common for divorced, single parent families to be living at a lower socioeconomic level than was true prior to the divorce (Kelly and Wallerstein, 1975; Glick, 1979). Thus matching by SES will tend to skew the samples (Blechman, 1982), and will mask one of the typical stressors facing post-divorce families.

The girls from the experimental and the control group were obtained from the following sources:

1) from advertisements in the United Federation of Teachers newspaper, which is sent to the homes of all teachers in the five boroughs of New York City;

2) from advertisements in local borough newspapers, like the Westside Spirit and the Pennysaver;

3) from referrals from other participating mothers.

Description of the Research Instruments:

Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test - Revised

The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test - Revised is designed primarily to measure a subject's receptive vocabulary, but it is often considered to be a measure of verbal intelligence (Dunn and Dunn, 1981). The PPVT-R has been standardized nationally on a sample of over 4,000 children, and has been demonstrated to have good reliability and construct validity (Dunn and Dunn, 1981). Median levels of immediate retest reliability for raw scores using the PPVT-R have been found to be .82 and, for standardized scores, .79. In the long term, (more than one year), reliability for the PPVT was found to be .62. The PPVT has been found to have a median correlation with the WISC verbal scale of .66, and with the full scale WISC of .64.

In this study the PPVT-R was used to develop a matched sample between the subjects from divorced families and the controls from intact families according to verbal intelligence.

Rorschach Mutuality of Autonomy Scale

Urist's Mutuality of Autonomy Scale "specifically focuses on the developmental progression toward separation-individuation, with particular emphasis given to the issue of autonomy of others vis-a-vis the self, and conversely, the autonomy of the self vis-a-vis others (Urist, 1977)'" (Tuber, 1985). This is a seven point scale which measures overt or implied action between humans, animals or inanimate objects along a continuum. This continuum corresponds to "the various stages in the development of object relations, ranging from primitive narcissism to empathic object relatedness" Urist, 1977). The highest level responses (1's and 2's) reflect "reciprocity and mutuality in interaction". Scores of 3 and 4 indicate an emerging loss of autonomy in interaction; here the "other" exists solely to be leaned upon to mirror oneself. Points 5,6 and 7 reflect an increasing malevolence and loss of control over one's separateness. At the lowest level, representations of the self and of others are avoided or are depicted as experiences of depletion and disintegration. Here, "larger than life forces...annihilate in an all-enveloping way" (Tuber, in press).

Interrater reliability of Urist's scale has been demonstrated to be high. Exact agreement between raters has been found to range from .71 to .90 (Goddard, 1986; Harder et al., 1984; Kavanagh, 1985; Ryan et al, 1984; Tuber, 1983). Agreement within one scale point has been found often to exceed .90 (Kavanagh, 1985; Ryan et al., 1984; Tuber, 1983).

Developmental Analysis of the Concept of the Object on the Rorschach

This measure for analyzing Rorschach responses assesses the developmental level of human percepts; Blatt et al. (1976) report that scores on this scale reflect an individual's developmental level of representation of the human object. Blatt's scale has several components.

1) First, Differentiation items identify the nature of responses with human content; they include Quasi-human Details (QHD), Human Details (HD), full Quasi-human figures (QH) and full Human figures (H).

2) Articulation items define the degree to which a response is articulated, and include such features as size, posture, clothing, and role.

3) Integration items concern the way that the concept of the object is integrated into a context of action and interaction with other objects. Integration includes three subcategories:

A. Motivation of Action items indicate the degree of intentionality or unintentionality inherent in an action. They include: Unmotivated Activity (UNM), Reactive Motivation (RM) and Intentional Motivation (IM).

B. Object-Action Integration items describe the degree to which an action is appropriately integrated with the agent of that action. This category is comprised of scores for Fusion of Object and Action (FU), Incongruent Integration of Object and Action (INC) (example: the baby is flying), Nonspecific Integration of Object and Action (NONSP) (example: the man is walking), and Congruent Integration of Object and Action (CONG) (example: the doctor is operating).

C. Integration of Interaction with another Object, is a score given when two objects are mentioned. "Nature" scores are comprised of scores for Active-Passive Interaction (AP), Active-Reactive Interaction (AR), and Active-Active Interaction (AA); "Content" scores are defined by Malevolence (MAL) or Benevolence (BEN).

Blatt ranked items within categories, assigning a developmentally more mature response a higher score than a less mature response. He obtained weighted scores for each category this way, and this will be the method of scoring employed in the present study.

In addition to ranking items according to developmental maturity, Blatt categorized all scoreable responses in terms of their perceptual accuracy or inaccuracy. He used Rappaport, Gill and Schaefer's method of form level scoring (1945), and called object relations responses which have form levels of F+ and F+/- "Object Relations Plus" or "OR+" scores. Items which obtained F-/+ or F- scores he assigned "Object Relations Minus" or "OR-" values. In this study Mayman's form level rating system will be used. For the purpose of this study, Mayman's system is preferable in that there are seven categories of form level, which allows for more distinctions in form level. Further, his scoring manual is quite precise, allowing for greater reliability between raters. The Mayman scale includes the scores of Plus, Ordinary, Weak Plus and Weak Minus, Vague, Spoiled and Minus. Because children's responses are less clearly differentiated than are those of adults, it was decided to collapse the Weak Plus and Weak Minus scores into one category of Weak scores in this study.

Returning to the Blatt scale, the OR+ scores were drawn from the object relations items which had a Mayman form level rating of Plus or Ordinary. OR- scores were derived from those items which had an accuracy level of Vague, Spoiled or Minus. It should be noted that in developing OR+ and OR- scores using Mayman's system, Weak scores were excluded. The reason for this is that the children's Weak scores were often not clearly definable in terms of being above or below the border of reality testing, so it was decided to use only those scores which clearly fell to one side or the other.

Another important factor in Blatt's scoring system is that weighted OR+ scores are weighted in the direction of developmental maturity in object representations and in the direction of good form level. However, OR- scores are also weighted in the direction of developmental maturity in object representations and differ from OR+ scores only in their poor form level.

Blatt et al. (1976) have obtained reliability at levels from 82% to 90% using the Concept of the Object Scale in their longitudinal study of normal individuals from adolescence to adulthood and in their companion study of adolescent and adult inpatients.

Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist

Mothers were asked to fill out the Achenbach CBCL, which is a standardized list of behaviors normed for children between the ages of four and 16 (Achenbach, 1980; Achenbach and Edelbrock, 1981; Achenbach et al., 1987). Achenbach's scale has been normed on a sample of 800 non-clinic children and 450 clinic children.

Test-retest reliability has been found to range from 82% to 90% for the non-clinic children, and specifically for 6-11 year old girls, it was 88%.

PERI Life Events Scale

The PERI Life Events Scale was used to measure stressors in the lives of the two groups of mothers. In addition to computing total positive, negative and ambiguous stressors for both groups, number of most stressful, next most stressful, less stressful, and least stressful items was computed.

The PERI Life Events Scale was filled out by mothers while their daughters are working on the PPVT- R and the Rorschach. Mothers were advised to consult with the examiner regarding any items which appeared ambiguous.

Derogatis Brief Symptom Inventory

The BSI was used to assess symptomatology in the two groups of mothers. It is a 53 item checklist of symptoms which cluster in the following categories; somatization, obsessive-compulsiveness, interpersonal insecurity, depression, anxiety, hostility, phobia, paranoia and psychotocism. There are three global scores: the General Severity Index (GSI), the Positive Symptom Inventory (PST), and the Positive Symptom Distress Index (PSDI). The GSI is computed by dividing the total symptom score by number of symptoms. According to Derogatis, the GSI is the most sensitive of the global scores. The PST represents the total number of symptom responses, regardless of severity. The PSDI is computed by dividing the Total Score by the PST, and is an index of average severity assigned to symptoms.

Description of the Procedures

Subjects were obtained through advertisement as indicated above. Parents who expressed interest in the study by calling in response to the ads were informed as to the nature of the study and the measures to be used. A meeting place and time of their choice was arranged if they were willing to participate. They were given $25.00 for their participation.

At the time of the meeting, mothers were asked to sign an "Informed Consent Form" before the work began (see Appendix). Mothers were asked to fill out the Achenbach CBCL, the BSI and the PERI Life Events Scale in a separate location from their daughters while the PPVT-R and the Rorschach was conducted with their daughters. No discussion of family circumstances or of personal experiences was required in this study. Entire time of test administration was approximately one and a half hours.

All material related to the test administration and to the identity of participants was coded to ensure confidentiality.

Mothers were asked whether they were interested in receiving general feedback concerning the findings from this study; this information will be made available to them in brief written form following completion of the dissertation. Mothers will have the option to call the author for further information, but specific information concerning their daughters' protocols will not be made available (mothers were notified of this in advance in the Parent Consent Form).

The mothers' CBCL profiles of their daughters, the PERI Life Events Scale, and the PPVT-R were scored by the author, as these are fully standardized scales

which leave no margin for error. Rorschach protocols were scored by PhD candidates in psychology who had been trained in the scoring of the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale, the Mayman form level scale and the Blatt Concept of the Object Scale of the Rorschach. Raters were not informed as to the nature of the study, and subjects' and controls' protocols were randomly mixed in order to blind scorers to the group identity of the individual's protocols.

Treatment of the Data

Urist Scores: Scoring of the Rorschachs using Urist's Mutuality of Autonomy Scale followed the recommendations made by Tuber (1988) in his Extension of the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale". Extended inquiry was used following his directives, and results were based on four scores: the highest object relations score (HOR), the lowest object relations score (LOR), the mean object relations score (MOR) and a weighted MOA score. Regression analysis was employed to analyze the MOA scores.

Girls' scores on Blatt's Concept of the Object Scale were analyzed by means of t-tests and regression analysis.

Achenbach CBCL Scores: Data from the Achenbach CBCL's of the two groups of girls were compared using a two tailed t Test.

T-Tests and regression analysis were employed to compare the two groups of mothers on the BSI and the PERI Life Events Scale.

CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of divorce on latency age girls' inner object world, as exemplified by their responses on the Rorschach inkblot test. Two scales were used: Urist's Mutuality of Autonomy Scale which is designed to assess thematic aspects of object representations and Blatt's Concept of the Object Scale which is designed to assess structural aspects of object representations. The behavior of the two groups of girls was compared by means of the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist. Divorced and married mothers were compared for symptomatology and stress level. Correlations between these ratings for the mothers and the girls were computed. The findings from these data are presented and summarized in this chapter. The results begin with a descriptive analysis of the study sample. Results will then be presented by hypothesis for the purpose of clarity. Finally, findings about the measures themselves will be presented.

Demographics

The sample consisted of thirty married mothers and daughters and thirty-one divorced mothers and their daughters, drawn from the five boroughs of New York. The two groups did not differ significantly on number of siblings (p.620), ethnicity (p.745), or birth order (p.281). 89% of the subjects were white, 8% were black, and 3% were hispanic. All girls were American born. Girls ranged in age from six years seven months to twelve years four months with 95% of the girls ranging between seven years exactly and eleven years eleven months. (See Table 1).

Table 1

Age of Girls by Group

Age in Years	Married	Divorced	Total %
6	0	1	2
7	8	3	18
8	5	9	23
9	3	6	15
10	6	3	15
11	7	8	24
12	1	1	3
Total:	30	31	100

As Table 2 indicates, the two groups differed substantially in income - the married women coming from households of significantly higher annual income.

Table 2

Income by Group

Income	Married	%	Divorced	%	Total %
<$20,000	1	3	6	19	11
$20,-40,000	7	23	15	48	36
>$40,000	22	73	10	32	52

Statistic	df	Value	p.
Chi Square	2	10.97	.004

The Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised was used to match the daughters of married parents with the daughters of divorced parents. No significant differences were found between these two groups using this test ($p=.2581$.)

Reliability

Table 3

Percentage of Interrater Agreement Obtained on Rorschach Scales

Scale	Percentage of Agreement
MOA	93
Mayman	80
Overall COB	82
COB:Differentiation	89
COB: Articulation	76
COB: Integration	82

Raters for the Rorschach measures were Ph.D. candidates in clinical psychology. Reliability was assessed after several working sessions devoted to each measure. Responses from six Rorschach protocols, or 10% of the total sample, were compared in order to measure reliability. Percentage of interrater agreement obtained is as presented in Table 3. These data reveal a solid level of interrater reliability.

Statistical Analysis

The statistical techniques used in the analyses included t-tests, chi-square tests, analysis of correlations and partial correlations, multiple regression analysis, and factor analysis. T-tests were used to compare continuous variables between the

married and divorced groups. Chi-square tests were used to compare the married and divorced groups on categorical variables. Correlations were used to estimate the strength of association between continuous variables.

The rate of response on the Rorschach, or response productivity, was a major determinant of the Concept of the Object and the Mutuality of Autonomy ratings of the children. Thus it was necessary to control for the rate of response in analyses which compared the study groups on these ratings as well as in the analyses which looked at the correlations between these ratings and the ratings done on the mothers. Correlations which partialled out the effect of rate of response were estimated between the set of child Mutuality of Autonomy and Concept of the Object ratings and the mothers' ratings. Multiple regression was used to covary out the effect of rate of response in the comparison of MOA and COB ratings between groups. The partial correlation and multiple regression analyses thus statistically removed the effects of rate of response from the Mutuality of Autonomy and Concept of the Object Scale ratings.

Hypotheses: The Girls

Before the Rorschach hypotheses concerning girls' object representations are presented, it should be emphasized that the two groups differed substantially on a more generic Rorschach variable, that of number of responses per Rorschach, or "rate". Girls whose parents were divorced produced significantly more responses per Rorschach (20.42) than did girls from married families (15.10) ($p < .004$).

Hypothesis 1

Hypothesis 1 stated that the girls whose parents were divorced (D Group) would obtain lower object relations scores on Urist's Mutuality of Autonomy Scale than would girls from married families (M Group). The highest object relations scores (HOR) the lowest object relations scores (LOR) and the median object relations scores (MOR) for the two groups were compared. In addition, a weighted object relations score was developed with most pathological items having the value of 1 and least pathological items having the value of 7. The pattern of increased rate among girls of divorced parents was borne out in the number of MOA responses they gave.

When the effect of rate was partialled out in a regression analysis, no significant differences between the groups emerged on any of the MOA scores. Thus there was no indication that girls in the divorced group exhibited more impaired object representations, as measured by the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale. Weighted MOA Score ratings can be seen on Table 4.

Table 4

Intergroup Comparisons: Weighted Mutuality of Autonomy Scale Scores, Rate Controlled

Variable	Regr. Coeff.*	t Statistic	p
MOA Score	4.50	0.96	.338

*Regression Coefficient represents score obtained by girls from Divorced Group, given a score of "1" for girls from Married group.

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 stated that the daughters of divorced parents (D Group) would obtain lower scores on Blatt's Concept of the Object (COB) Scale than would the daughters of married parents (M Group).

As with the MOA scale, Divorced Group girls obtained a greater total score on the COB Scale than did the Married Group girls ($p=.012$). However, when rate was controlled for, and the subcategories constituting Differentiation, Articulation and Integration were examined for productivity, the two groups were found to differ significantly only on one of the Integration scores: Nature of Activity. This refers to whether an activity is active-passive, active-reactive, or active-active. So, even when overall productivity was controlled for, girls from the Divorced Group were significantly more likely to describe the nature of an object's activity than were girls from the Married Group (see Table 5).

Girls' COB OR+ and OR- scores were computed. It should be recalled that OR+ scores represent responses with good form level which are also weighted in the direction of developmental maturity. OR- scores, on the other hand, represent responses with poor form level which are also weighted in the direction of developmental maturity. So a high OR- score does not represent a high number of developmentally immature responses, but a high number of developmentally mature responses which are of poor form quality.

Table 5

Intergroup Comparisons: Number of Concept of the Object (COB) Scale Responses, Rate Controlled

Variable	df	Regr. Coeff.*	t Stat.	p
Diff.	1	1.76	0.67	.505
Art.	1	0.40	0.23	.822
Integ.				
A) Mot.	1	1.78	1.20	.234
B) O-A	1	2.10	1.07	.287
C) Int.	1	3.90	2.47	.017**

When OR+ and OR- scores were computed, and rate was controlled for, the two groups were not found to differ significantly on any category with one exception. This was the OR+, or the accurately perceived version, of the Nature of Activity Score.

*Regression Coefficient represents number of D Group girls' responses, given a response level of 1 for M Group girls.

**$p < .05$

Table 6

Intergroup Comparisons: Weighted OR+ and OR- COB Scores, Rate Controlled

Variable	df	Regr. Coeff.*	t Stat.	p
Differentiation +	1	0.94	0.44	.660
Articulation +	1	0.33	0.22	.823
Integration+				
A) Motivation +	1	1.14	1.00	.323
B) Object/Act. +	1	2.38	1.53	.132
C) Interaction +	1	3.47	2.55	.013*
D) Content +	1	0.71	0.73	.466
Differentiation -	1	0.52	0.54	.590
Articulation -	1	-0.03	-0.05	.956
Integration -				
A) Motivation -	1	0.71	1.43	.159
B) Object/Act. -	1	0.19	0.29	.769
C) Interaction -	1	-0.44	-0.97	.334
D) Content -	1	0.34	0.91	.365
Total OR +	1	0.28	1.21	.229
Total OR -	1	0.94	0.43	.670

Girls from the Divorced group differed significantly from girls in the Married group in their greater tendency to describe developmentally mature and accurately perceived

*Regression Coefficient represents scores for D Group girls, given a score of "1" for Married Group girls.

interactions; they emphasized mutual activity more frequently than activity- reactivity, or activity-passivity, which are considered developmentally less mature responses (see Table 6).

Hypothesis 3

Hypothesis 3 states that the two groups would not differ significantly in social competence or behavior problems as measured by the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist. As can be seen in Table 7, the results generally support this hypothesis.

Table 7

Intergroup Comparisons: Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) Scores

Variable	Group	M	SD	df	p
Social	M	50.53	9.43	59	.075
Competence	D	45.81	10.89		
Internal.	M	11.60	9.81	59	.140
Behavior	D	16.06	13.19		
External.	M	15.63	10.50	59	.545
Behavior	D	17.58	14.17		
Total	M	56.13	11.84	59	.271
Behavior	D	59.55	12.13		

Non-standardized scores were obtained for Internalizing and Externalizing behaviors and a standardized Total Behavior Score was obtained. No significant differences were observed on these variables. A standardized Social Competence score was also obtained. This score includes such factors as social and athletic

activities, friendships and academic functioning. There was a trend in the direction of a lower Social Competence score for girls of divorced parents.

Hypotheses: The Mothers

Hypothesis 4

Hypothesis 4 stated that divorced mothers would show more symptomatology as measured by Derogatis' Brief symptom Inventory than would married mothers.

The results strongly support the hypothesis. As can be seen in Table 8, relationship between divorced status and symptomatology was found to be highly significant ($p < .001$) on almost all categories.

Because divorced and married mothers varied significantly on income, a regression analysis controlling for income was conducted on all the variables constituting the BSI. The results presented a mixed picture as can be seen in Table 9. While significant differences on a number of symptom variables disappeared when income was controlled for, significant differences remained for other symptoms. This might indicate that such symptoms as interpersonal sensitivity, paranoia, psychoticism are less related to income than are others.

Table 8

Intergroup Comparisons: Mothers' Behavior Symptom Inventory (BSI) Scores, Rate Controlled

Variable	Group	M	SD	df	p
Somatizing (SOM)	M	46.47	8.66	59	.062
	D	50.90	9.50		
Obsessive-Compulsive (OC)	M	52.17	10.33	59	.033*
	D	57.90	10.26		
Interpersonal Sensitivity (IS)	M	49.20	10.54	59	.007**
	D	56.16	9.01		
Depression (DEP)	M	52.57	9.33	59	.017*
	D	58.13	8.39		
Anxiety (ANX)	M	51.70	11.14	52.4	.061
	D	56.45	7.97		
Hostility (HOS)	M	53.40	10.44	59	.041*
	D	58.77	9.66		
Phobia (PHOB)	M	48.87	9.27	59	.048*
	D	53.55	8.81		
Paranoia (PAR)	M	52.87	9.92	59	.001**
	D	60.87	8.64		
Psychoticism (PSY)	M	51.43	9.65	59	.001**
	D	59.35	8.14		
General Symptom Index (GSI)	M	51.90	10.20	59	.016*
	D	57.84	8.36		
Positive Symptom Total (PST)	M	49.53	11.63	59	.001*
	D	58.71	8.58		

*p. $<.05$
**p. $<.01$

Table 9

Intergroup Comparisons: Mothers' BSI Scores, Income Controlled

Variable	Regr. Coeff.+	t Stat.	p
SOM	3.01	1.18	.241
O/C	3.67	1.29	.203
I/S	6.77	2.44	.018*
DEP	4.59	1.84	.071
ANX	4.26	1.55	.125
HOS	3.90	1.38	.171
PHOB	4.94	1.92	.594
PAR	6.52	2.51	.015*
PSY	7.19	2.85	.006**
GSI	4.37	1.68	.098
PST	8.69	3.01	.004**

+Regression Coefficient denotes Divorced mothers' scores, given a score of "1" for Married mothers.

*p. <05
**p. <01

Hypothesis 5

Table 10

Intergroup Comparisons: Mothers' PERI Life Events Scale Scores

Variable	Group	M	SD	df	p
PERI Positive	M	1908.6	1018.7	46.1	.943
	D	1923.9	589.3		
PERI Negative	M	1340.0	1372.6	59.0	.122
	D	1895.7	1394.1		
PERI Ambiguous	M	567.4	448.4	53.7	.278
	D	722.2	644.0		
PERI 4	M	1.7	1.7	53.1	.363
	D	1.3	1.2		
PERI 3	M	2.2	1.6	59.0	.518
	D	2.5	2.1		
PERI 2	M	2.8	3.0	59.0	.048*
	D	4.2	2.4		
PERI 1	M	4.7	2.8	59.0	.211
	D	5.6	2.4		

* $p < .05$

Hypothesis 5 stated that divorced women would exhibit greater stress level as measured by Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend's PERI Life Event Scale. The two groups did not differ significantly on any of the variables on the PERI Life Events Scale. (See Table 10).

Mothers and Daughters

Hypothesis 6 and 7

Hypothesis 6 stated that, regardless of Married or Divorced group, mothers with high levels of symptomatology, as measured by the Behavior Symptom Inventory, would have daughters who presented more impaired object relations scores on the Rorschach. Similarly, mothers with high stress levels, as measured by the PERI Life Events Scale, would have daughters with lower Rorschach object relations scores.

First of all, correlations of .20 or better were observed between eight of the eleven maternal symptom measures on the BSI and girls' Rorschach rate (overall productivity).

When the effect of rate was partialled out, no correlations of .20 or better were found between mothers' BSI scores and girls' weighted MOA scores. This is not surprising, since MOA scores were found to be highly correlated (.770) to rate. The pattern between maternal BSI scores and girls' Concept of the Object scores was somewhat different. When the effect of rate was partialled out, and maternal symptom level scores were compared with the OR+ COB scores, only one of 72 OR+ items was found to correlate to the level of .20 or better in the expected direction with mothers' BSI scores. By contrast, 13 of 72 correlations to the level of .20 or better were found between maternal symptomatology and girls' COB OR- scores; further, a total of 55 of the 72 correlations was in the same inverse direction. This would indicate that there may be a significant relationship between maternal

Table 11

Correlations between Mothers' BSI Scores and Girls' MOA and COB+ Scores, Rate Controlled

BSI Var	MOA Var	COB OR+ Variables					
		Diff	Art	Mot	O/A	Nat	Con
SOM	.024	-.093	-.063	.033	.054	.147	-.070
O/C	.096	-.007	-.064	.116	.147	.136	.001
I/S	.051	.044	.006	-.026	.071	.087	.025
DEP	.082	.039	-.021	.031	.149	.200	.025
ANX	.029	-.041	.001	-.035	.059	.073	-.093
HOS	.060	-.060	.004	.048	.063	.036	.026
PHOB	.018	-.138	-.105	-.038	-.039	-.017	-.255
PAR	.020	-.010	-.080	-.050	.124	.208	-.033
PSY	.041	-.044	-.063	.069	.105	.210	-.033
GSI	.042	-.065	-.126	-.019	.088	.121	-.088
PST	.097	.013	.007	.048	.138	.190	.005
BSI Var		COB OR- Variables					
		Diff	Art	Mot	O/A	Nat	Con
SOM		.068	.009	.095	-.225	-.239	.081
O/C		-.008	.115	-.238	-.274	-.184	-.192
I/S		-.087	-.049	-.142	-.226	-.265	-.187
DEP		-.062	.008	-.135	-.303	-.279	-.168
ANX		.099	.177	-.097	-.099	-.061	-.033
HOS		-.034	.009	-.138	-.128	-.106	-.156
PHOB		.186	.157	.028	-.045	.021	.088
PAR		.079	-.000	.044	-.180	-.201	-.032
PSY		.010	-.034	.027	-.213	-.209	-.109
GSI		.013	.079	-.140	-.252	-.194	-.132
PST		.024	.129	-.100	-.183	-.246	-.107

symptomatology and the production of developmentally immature object responses which are also poorly perceived.

Correlations between mothers' PERI scores and girls' MOA and COB scores produced mixed results. As can be seen in Table 12, correlations between maternal stressors deemed to be positive or negative and girls' object relations scores were low. However, correlations of .20 or better were observed between"ambiguous" stressor scores among mothers and more benign object relations scores among girls. No correlations were observed between mothers' PERI scores and children's productivity on the Rorschach, even though productivity was found to be such a salient factor in earlier analyses.

Table 12

Correlations between Mothers' PERI Scores and Girls' MOA and COB Scores, Rate Controlled

PERI Var	MOA Var	COB OR+ Variables					
		Diff	Art	Mot	O/A	Nat	Con
POS	.152	.023	.043	.062	.050	.046	-.041
NEG	.071	.089	.174	.085	.092	.160	.012
AMB	.295	.224	.360	.188	.296	.227	.210
4	-.038	-.130	-.087	-.109	-.116	-.137	-.106
3	.278	.049	.123	.105	.153	.190	.014
2	.217	.141	.200	.112	.142	.149	.032
1	.064	.164	.235	.157	.228	.171	.151

PERI Var	COB OR- Variables					
	Diff	Art	Mot	O/A	Nat	Con
POS	-.053	.124	.053	-.106	-.123	-.048
NEG	.082	.163	-.021	-.066	.109	-.063
AMB	-.009	.098	-.103	-.071	.103	-.040
4	-.031	.071	-.092	-.040	.248	-.070
3	-.046	.095	-.165	-.223	-.057	-.154
2	.067	.122	-.040	-.035	-.004	-.015
1	.041	.209	.014	-.037	.041	.029

The Measures: Additional Rorschach Findings

Factor analysis was used to test whether the different components of the Concept of the Object Scale followed the same pattern of intercorrelations as was shown by Blatt and Berman (1984). Blatt and Berman had shown that the six OR F+ components all clustered together into an OR+ factor while the six OR F- components clustered together into an OR- factor. The factor analysis was done using principal component analysis as the initial factor extraction method. The extracted factors were then rotated using orthogonal VARIMAX rotation in order to enhance the interpretability of the factors. The factor extraction and rotation methods employed were similar to those used by Blatt and Berman.

As with the Blatt and Berman analysis, only two factors had eigenvalues greater than one, indicating that the optimal number of factors was two. These two factors accounted for 74% of the variance in the 12 items included in the factor analysis. The results of the factor analysis are summarized in Table 13 which lists the factor loadings of the F+ and F- response ratings on the OR+ and OR- factors. Factor loadings can be interpreted as correlations between particular items and factors.

These results show that, in this study too, the F+ ratings had high loadings on the OR+ factor and low loadings on the OR- factor. The F- ratings had high loadings on the OR- factor and low loadings on the OR+ factor.

Table 13

Rotated Factor Loadings of COB F+ and F- Items on COB OR+ and OR- Factors

Items	OR+	OR-
Differentiation (F+)	0.95	-0.03
Articulation (F+)	0.76	-0.11
Integration (F+)		
A) Motivation (F+)	0.87	0.01
B) Object/Action (F+)	0.94	-0.01
C) Nature (F+)	0.90	0.00
D) Content (F+)	0.93	-0.04
Differentiation (F-)	-0.07	0.92
Articulation (F-)	0.09	0.72
Integration (F-)		
A) Motivation (F-)	0.00	0.85
B) Object/Action (F-)	0.00	0.86
C) Nature (F-)	-0.15	0.56
D) Content (F-)	-0.05	0.95

Scores from the MOA Scale and the COB Scale were found to correlate highly (.322 to .644) even when the effect of rate was partialled out. Since there appears to be indication of a strong OR+ factor, and a strong OR- factor on the COB Scale, which was replicated in this study, it was decided to develop a Plus and a Minus variable on the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale and to correlate it with Blatt's OR+ and OR- factors. The MOA Plus variable was devised by pooling respondents' least pathological scores (1's and 2's, using Urist's scoring system), and the Minus variable was devised by pooling respondents' most pathological scores (5's, 6's and 7's).

Correlations were computed for the study sample as a whole as well as for the two groups (see Table 14).

Table 14

Correlation of MOA Plus and Minus Factors with COB OR+ and OR- Factors

Group	MOA Plus/COB OR+		MOA Minus/COB OR-	
	Correlation	p	Correlation	p
Whole	.518	.000**	.009	.942
Married	.574	.001**	.294	.115
Divorced	.416	.020*	-.180	.331
Group	MOA Minus/COB OR+		MOA Minus/COB OR-	
	Correlation	p	Correlation	p
Whole	.434	.000**	.348	.006**
Married	.451	.012*	.260	.260
Divorced	.357	.049*	.381	.034*

Correlation of MOA Plus and Minus Factors with COB OR+ and OR- Factors, Rate Controlled

Group	MOA Plus/COB OR+		MOA Plus/COB OR-	
	Correlation		Correlation	
Whole	.402		-.152	
Married	.554		.294	
Divorced	.273		-.396	
Group	MOA Minus/COB OR+		MOA Minus/COB OR-	
	Correlation		Correlation	
Whole	.296		.259	
Married	.382		.137	
Divorced	.232		.314	

Results were somewhat unexpected. There were, as anticipated, consistently high correlations between girls' MOA Plus scores and their COB OR+ scores, and generally low or negative correlations between MOA Plus scores and COB OR- scores. High correlations were generally found between MOA Minus and COB OR- scores. However, surprisingly, correlations were also observed between MOA Minus scores and COB OR+ scores, whether or not rate was partialled out. This last finding was particularly true for the Married group. The Married group also exhibited an unexpectedly low relationship between MOA Minus and COB OR- scores. Correlations were most clearly in the expected direction for the Divorced Group.

These results seem to indicate that the tendency to describe an object and to describe its relationship to other objects are two highly related activities; however, it does not appear that descriptions of well perceived and developmentally well organized object concepts are necessarily related to developmentally mature descriptions of their relationships to other objects.

The two groups of girls were additionally compared on the Rorschach variable of form level, independent of object representations. Mayman's method of form level assessment was employed using all six of the categories developed for child assessment. A weighted score was developed from these categories. When the effect of rate was partialled out, no significant difference was found between the two groups on the weighted score (see Table 15).

Table 15

Intergroup Comparisons: Weighted Mayman Form Level Scores

Variable	df	Regr. Coeff.*	t Stat.	p
Mayman	1	-2.05	-0.99	.325

*Regression Coefficient represents score for Divorced group, given a score of 1 for Married group.

Girls' form level scores were correlated with their object relations scores on the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale. Since the COB OR+ and OR- scores were partially derived from the Mayman scores, Mayman and COB OR correlations are redundant. Mayman and MOA scores were found to correlate at the level of .289.

Summary

The Hypotheses

In contrast to the hypotheses, the daughters of divorced parents in this study sample did not demonstrate significantly more impaired object representations on the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale or the Concept of the Object Scale than did girls of married parents. They did differ significantly from girls from married families on one COB category: they produced a greater number of, and developmentally higher levels of, responses representing the nature of interaction between two objects.

The two groups differed significantly in their overall productivity on the Rorschach. Girls of divorced parents gave significantly more Rorschach responses

than did girls from married families. The role of rate was noted in other contexts too. Daughters of symptomatic mothers also exhibited higher Rorschach rate.

As hypothesized, the behaviors of the two groups of girls were not found to differ significantly as measured by Achenbach's Child Behavior Checklist.

As predicted, divorced mothers demonstrated higher degrees of symptomatology than did married mothers. However, contrary to prediction, they did not differ significantly on the PERI stress measure employed.

It was hypothesized that, regardless of married or divorced status, mothers who were highly symptomatic, or who exhibited more stress would have daughters who exhibited lowered object relations scores on the Rorschach. Correlations were not found between mothers' symptom scores and the girls' MOA scores, nor did maternal scores correlated with daughters' COB OR+ (developmentally high, good form level) scores. However, some inverse correlations were observed between girls' COB OR- scores and mothers' BSI scores. This indicates that mothers who are highly symptomatic may be likely to have daughters who exhibit a large number of developmentally immature and poorly perceived object representations.

Although high levels of positive or negative stressors in mothers did not correlate with girls' object representation scores, it did appear that high levels of ambiguous (not clearly good or bad) stressors, and high numbers of low stress items in mothers did correlate with improved object relations on the MOA and the COB.

The Measures

Rorschach Object Representation measures were found to be highly interrelated, and these interrelationships were usually, though not always in the

expected direction. The strong OR+ factor on the COB Scale which had been found in previous research (Blatt and Berman, 1984) was replicated in this study. Form level ratings were found to correlate with MOA ratings in this study.

CHAPTER V
DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to determine the long term effect of divorce on the inner object world of latency age girls. Results of this research were presented in the previous chapter by hypothesis. In this chapter they will be discussed by groups of hypotheses: those concerning the girls, those concerning the mothers, and those concerning the interrelationship between the two. Subsequently, the experience of working with these mothers and daughters will be discussed, and finally, areas for further research will be suggested.

The Girls: Findings from the Rorschach

The most striking difference between the two groups of girls was not in their object representations, but in the heightened responsivity on the Rorschach of the Divorced group. This difference was not anticipated, but was highly significant and consistent through various operations. This issue of responsivity will be addressed further, once the object responses of the girls are discussed.

Overall, few striking differences concerning internalized object representations emerged between the two groups of girls, whether their structural (COB Scale) or thematic (MOA Scale) aspects were examined. Once the effect of rate, or response productivity, was partialled out, the two groups exhibited similar proportions of high, median and low level responses on the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale, and their weighted MOA scores were similar too.

On the COB Scale, the girls did not differ significantly on any of its subcategories with the exception of one: the Nature of Activity component of the Integration subcategory. Daughters of divorced parents gave significantly more of these responses even when rate was controlled for, and their responses were developmentally more mature than were those of the daughters of married parents. Nature of Activity refers to whether an activity is mutual (Active- Active), involves one individual reacting to another (Active-Reactive), or involves one individual acting upon the other who remains passive (Active-Passive.) The latter two items are considered to be respectively less developmentally mature than the former.

Differentiation responses are rather like the subject of a sentence, and as such, Differentiation responses (Human, Quasi-human, Human detail, Quasi- human detail) define whether there will be a "sentence" or object relations response, or not. Articulation responses are adjectival or adverbial in nature; they describe specific defining characteristics like posture, role, age, and clothing, all of which are important but not crucial to the existence of the sentence. Integration responses are similar to a combined "verb/adverb", and as such we might consider them as significant as the subject of a sentence, in that the verb component also defines whether or not a sentence will be formed. However, in the COB scale, it is possible to have a COB response by defining the subject as "human" or "quasi human", for example, without creating a whole sentence, if the respondent does not include any Integration components. The "Nature of Interaction" responses are, in one way, an adverbial subcomponent of the Integration response in that they describe quality of action, and as such are not crucial to the existence of the sentence. However, the

"Nature of Interaction" responses are uniquely significant in that they introduce into the sentence the concept of involvement with another object. As such the addition or omission of this type of response has a particular significance.

In this sample, both groups were equally likely to give a generic "verbal" response as exemplified by their "Motivation" responses. However, girls from divorced homes were much more likely to give responses which described two objects and the nature of their activity vis a vis each other. Further, in well perceived percepts, they were more likely to describe developmentally mature (active-active) relationships than were girls from married homes.

The two groups did not differ in their tendency to describe these interactions as benevolent or malevolent (the Content component of the Integration subscale.)

It seems very possible that the greater tendency on the part of daughters of divorced parents to perceive activity between objects, and high level activity at that, has some relation to their own high activity level in responding to the Rorschach. This pattern may imply a heightened degree of psychic activity. For girls who appear to be prone to relational activity, taking a Rorschach can be quite compelling in that it stimulates the activation of internalized object representations, and it also constitutes an interpersonal event.

At this point in the analysis, it appears that daughters of divorced parents do not show impaired object relations when compared to daughters of married parents; further, on part of one measure they exhibit greater maturity. While their greater productivity is notable, it does not seem possible, yet, to ascertain whether this productivity is a sign of health or is potentially pathognomic. While defense scales

were not employed in this study, it does not yet appear that more primitive material was stimulated in these girls as compared with girls from intact families. This question will be addressed again when the relationship between mothers' functioning and that of daughters is discussed.

The Girls: Behavior

The two groups were not found to differ on measures of internalizing, externalizing or overall behavior problems on the Achenbach CBCL, and the two groups fell within the normal range according to Achenbach's norms. In general, the findings from the CBCL are consistent with those from other divorce- related studies, which do not note behavioral problems among latency age daughters of divorced parents (Hetherington, 1982; Guidubaldi and Perry, 1985).

The Mothers

The two groups of mothers were much more different from each other than were the two groups of girls. First, significant differences in income between divorced and married mothers emerged. This discrepancy in income between the divorced and married women is consonant with current divorce research (see Chapter II.)

Divorced mothers exhibited higher symptomatology on almost every factor on the Behavior Symptom Inventory than married mothers.

It is recognized that most divorced women have lower incomes than married women, and also that low income is a significant psychological stressor; however, the question remained for this sample as to how much of their symptomatology could be accounted for purely by income, and how much related to other factors. When

maternal symptomatology was assessed with income partialled out, the differences in extent of symptomatology between the two groups dropped substantially, indicating that income and symptom level are closely and inversely related in this study sample. However, on some of the factors: interpersonal sensitivity, paranoia and psychoticism, divorced women still exhibited significantly higher scores; this might indicate that in this group these particular symptoms represent more characterological traits, while others, like depression, anxiety, and hostility, fall more in the realm of adjustment responses.

While the figures reveal differences between the two groups, it should be remembered that these statistics do not provide information about etiology or direction of causality: does high symptomatology precede divorce, or does divorce precede increased symptomatology? Previous studies of divorced adults, Menaghen and Lieberman, 1976, for example, have indicated that symptomatology has increased following divorce, indicating that certain kind of symptomatology among divorced adults may not be causal.

In contrast to the BSI findings, married and divorced women were not found to differ markedly in stress level experienced over the previous two years, as measured by the PERI Life Events Scale. This finding was unexpected. Perhaps one can conclude that for the divorced women the highest period of stress occurred at the time of divorce, more than two years previous to our interview, and that during the most recent two years the level of stress in their lives had fallen to a level comparable with that of married women. However, this explanation does not take into account the impact of lowered income, an ongoing factor in these women's lives; nor does it

fit with the mothers' description of their own lives. It is recognized that reduced income alone results in increased stress. It appears more likely that the lack of difference observed between the two groups of women reflected limitations in the PERI Scale when used with this population. Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend based their scale on extensive study and interviews with a large sample of New Yorkers from the five boroughs of New York. They recognized the limitations of this scale if applied to a different population, and they recommended use of their exhaustive sampling and interviewing techniques with specific populations to be studied in order to develop group-appropriate stress scales. In the present study, many of the women, and particularly the divorced women, complained that the scale did not address their experiences. The financially related questions were often not appropriate to the experiences of either group of women. Further, there were no questions concerning frequency of court appearances, a common experience for women fighting custody, visitation or alimony battles. And divorced women had no way of categorizing such items as ongoing conflict between themselves and the former spouse, or financial changes which reflected their economic reliance on this former spouse.

Huntington et al (1985) recommended the use of the SRRS (a predecessor to the PERI Scale) in assessing parental stressors in divorce-related research. Neither of these scales is precise enough for research with this population. Further work is needed to develop an appropriate instrument.

Mothers and Daughters

Even though a high proportion of the divorced mothers in this study exhibited high symptomatology, and by and large, tended to be suffering much more than were

married mothers, their daughters did not exhibit signs of undue suffering when compared to their peers from married families, as measured by the Rorschach or the CBCL. This finding may point to resiliency in the girls which enables them to withstand the kind of pain their mothers are experiencing, and, possibly to be stimulated to added maturity, as indicated by the COB Nature of Activity score, as well as continued engagement in age- appropriate tasks. Certainly, it suggests that there is not a direct correspondence between maternal pathology and daughters' psychic functioning.

The last two hypotheses in this study focussed on the relationship between mothers' and daughters' functioning, regardless of marital status. It was hypothesized that mothers who exhibited high symptomatology and high stress levels would have daughters who exhibited more impaired object relations scores on the Rorschach. These hypotheses were introduced in order to differentiate those mother- daughter dyads in which maternal stress and symptomatology played a major role from those in which it played a minor role. Potentially, the high symptomatology levels among divorced mothers might mask relationships between low symptom divorced mothers and their daughters, and conversely, the low symptom levels among married women might mask relationships between high symptom married mothers and their daughters. Finally, it appeared useful to develop exploratory information concerning the relationship between maternal symptomatology/stress level and daughters' object representations, independent of marital status.

The relationship between maternal stress level and girls' functioning will be addressed first. When maternal high and low stress scores were compared to girls'

Rorschach scores independent of marital status, some relationships did emerge. Mothers who had experienced a high incidence of "ambiguous" stressors and a large number of mildly stressful events regardless of their positive, negative or ambiguous quality, tended to have daughters who exhibited more benign object representations on the MOA and on the COB. However, high incidence of "positive" or "negative" stressors and of stressful events which were either highly or moderately stressful did not correlate with girls' Rorschach scores. Perhaps one can relate these findings to research on the positive impact of moderately stressful events. However, the PERI scale posed so many problems with this study sample that it seems better to take a conservative position on this question.

Interestingly, none of the PERI scores correlated with girls' productivity levels on the Rorschach. This might suggest that maternal stress level does not impact girls' inner lives, whereas, as we shall see below, maternal symptomatology may.

Patterns between maternal symptomatology and girls' object representations varied. When rate was controlled for, no relationship emerged between maternal symptom level and girls' MOA scores. So, this raises questions as to whether thematic aspects of latency age girls' object representations, as measured by the Mutuality of Autonomy Scale, are impacted either by parental divorce or by maternal symptomatology.

By contrast, a somewhat stronger relationship between mothers' and daughters' functioning did emerge when mothers' BSI scores were correlated with girls' COB scores and the effect of rate was partialled out. High maternal symptomatology did not correlate directly or inversely with girls' OR+ scores. So, girls with

symptomatic mothers were no more or less likely to produce well perceived, developmentally mature object relations responses than were girls with mothers exhibiting low symptomatology. However, the group of girls with symptomatic mothers was more likely to exhibit poorly perceived object relations responses than was the group with low symptomatic mothers. (Inverse correlations of .20 or better were observed between 14 of 72 comparisons of BSI and COB OR- scores, and a total of 55 of the 72 correlations were in the same inverse direction.)

This finding might indicate that there is a stronger relationship between maternal symptomatology and impaired object relations in latency age girls than there is between divorced status and impaired object relations in these girls. However, to assess this question further, a larger N will be needed.

It is important to return to the question of latency age girls' responsivity on the Rorschach. Thus far high "rate" has been seen basically as a neutral indicator. However, it should be recalled that when mothers and daughters were compared independent of marital status, it was found that high maternal symptomatology correlated both with girls' Rorschach productivity, and with developmentally low, poor form level object representations as measured by the OR- aspect of the COB scale. So, with this group, impaired object representations and high rate are linked. Further, the strong relationship between maternal symptomatology and daughters' productivity on the Rorschach remained (p.029) when the smaller group (N=31) of divorced mother-daughter dyads was examined. So, to summarize, first of all, there is not a clearcut relationship between parental divorce and the underlying functioning, particularly the object representational functioning, of latency age girls. However,

girls whose mothers are highly symptomatic do show differences in their Rorschach protocols from those girls with low symptomatic mothers. These differences appear too among the smaller group of divorced mothers and daughters. The differences are, most obviously, in rate, and to a lesser extent, in lower level object relational responses, as measured by Blatt's Concept of the Object Scale, but not in thematic aspects of girls' object representations, as measured by Urist's Mutuality of Autonomy Scale. Finally, girls of divorced parents showed high rates of Rorschach productivity than did daughters of married parents, regardless of maternal symptomatology.

I would like to suggest the following paradigm, based on the data presented above: first of all, the current study is a reminder of what we already know from current research: that the divorce experience varies broadly and impacts on different children differently. But, more specific conclusions can be drawn: it appears that, two or more years after parental divorce, latency age girls demonstrate object representations which are on a par with, and, in one area, even more mature than those of girls from married families. At the same time, some aspect of the divorce experience propels these latency age girls into heightened levels of psychic activity. Perhaps the experience of having survived and reestablished themselves after the divorce is salutary. And, given our knowledge that many of these girls have mothers who are quite symptomatic, perhaps the experience of "filling in" for mothers who are having difficulty coping, may give these girls a more developed sense of their own capacity to interact on a mature level with others than do their peers from intact homes.

However, it is important to assess the long term implications of this heightened activity level among the girls of divorced parents, and conversely, it is important to note the developmental function of the more quiescent psychic state we see in the girls from married families.

Latency is often described as a stage which is characterized by expansion and consolidation rather than reorganization. Cognitive maturation and intrapsychic shifts foster the development of higher level defenses and permit considerable attention to the mastery of skills (Shapiro and Perry, 1976). Although this is a phase which is not devoid of conflict or of psychic growth (Sarnoff, 1976), it certainly does not compare with the early years or with adolescence in intensity or magnitude of change. As clinicians who work with this age group are well aware, there appears to be a great need for externally directed and ostensibly "non-psychic" activity at this stage of development.

In this context, I would like to suggest that there is a quality of prematurity to the psychic activity level among daughters of divorced parents, and that perhaps the relative quiescence of their peers serves a developmentally important protective function which the daughters of divorced parents may not have available to them.

These girls have become highly active psychically, and, by and large, they do not show ill effects in terms of object representations as a result of their parents' divorce. However, what will happen to these girls in adolescence when they experience substantial biological and cognitive shifts, and are faced, not with the tasks of mastery and of consolidation, but with the tasks of separation, individuation and the achievement of autonomous functioning and mature object love? This phase of

psycho-biologic reorganization precipitates levels of regression that are not characteristic of latency, and these tendencies toward regression may pose particular intrapsychic and environmental problems for girls of divorced parents.

First, the experience and expectation of heightened psychic activity and of mature interaction which these particular girls developed during latency may make it particularly difficult for them to tolerate even temporary episodes of intrapsychic regression in themselves without resorting either to the rigid use of repressive defenses, or to extremes of acting out as a means of avoiding the anxiety engendered by these episodes.

Secondly, the turmoil which most adolescents experience, to a greater or lesser extent, necessitates the presence of particularly effective caregivers who can "hold", tolerate, and encourage growth. For these daughters of divorced parents, maternal symptomatology will no longer be a stimulus to growth, but will constitute substantial interference. The minority of girls whose mothers have been able to recuperate from the divorce, or those girls who are able to find substitute caregivers of equal stature in their lives will be able to weather successfully the added vulnerability they bring into the adolescent phase. On the other hand, those girls, who appear to be in the majority, whose mothers continue to make excessive demands on them will begin to reveal substantial symptomatology.

This study serves to demonstrate that in latency, the precursors to such symptomatology do not appear in girls' behavior. They appear in aspects of their underlying, intrapsychic functioning, and in, among other areas, the symptomatology of their mothers.

The Experience of Working with the Mothers and Daughters

Mothers and daughters knew, when they entered the study, that this study was of girls from divorced families. The married mothers knew that they formed the control group, and divorced mothers knew they were part of the experimental group. Neither group was informed of the hypotheses underlying the study.

It is probable that the mothers' knowledge, in combination with my own interest, affected the mothers' and daughters' presentation, and our interaction with each other, and this bias should be taken into account. And, my observation was that the two groups, particularly of the mothers, were very different from each other.

Married mothers often entered the study saying that they wanted to give their daughters a chance to make some money. They were more likely to let the daughters take all of the money for themselves. Other reasons for participation included offering an experience to their daughters, having done research themselves, or responding to the request of a friend who had already participated. While almost everyone in the study, married and divorced alike, expressed interest in the results of the study, married mothers rarely expressed overt concern about how their daughters performed on the material, though, often, covert anxiety was discernable. The meeting times with the married mothers and their daughters rarely lasted longer than an hour and a quarter.

The reasons given for participating in the study were quite different for the divorced mothers. While they referred to having a chance to make some money, and were more likely to keep some of it for themselves, they were much more likely to express worry about their daughters' wellbeing, and to voice the need for information,

as a motivator. While it was made clear to them that the results of their daughters' work would not be available to them, a number of the divorced mothers pressed for this information. In general, they tended to be keen to talk about their own experiences of the divorce, of being single parents, and of their children. I came to find that it was necessary to allocate at least a half hour more for these meetings than I did for the married mother/daughter groups. Toward the end of my study, I received more calls from prospective subjects than I needed for the study. Several women asked if I could send them a summary of my work when it was completed, even though they couldn't participate. Overall, more than half of these women expressed feelings of intense anxiety and gulit about their daughters and feelings of social isolation.

Four Groups of Divorced Mothers

From my observation, the divorced women seemed to fall into four different groups. At one end of the continuum, there were a few mothers (about one tenth of the group) who exhibited signs of substantial pathology, and appeared to experience the divorce as painfully as if no time had passed. They were not attuned to their daughters and showed minimal capacity to see them as separate from themselves.

As an example, one mother who called me said that she understood that I was doing a study on "how divorce hurt girls". She added that her daughter's life had "been ruined". She wanted to find out if this study would "show that it's better to stay in a bad marriage than to leave." However, when she was told that, in fact, her daughter did exhibit considerable depression and suicidal ideation, and was in need of

treatment, she showed little interest and focussed instead on how her ex-husband should "see what he has done."

Another woman had moved repeatedly over the previous year with her children, was now living in a communal apartment, and had recently joined a fundamentalist church to which she invited me. She categorically denied any difficulties with her daughter, who exhibited psychotic ideation on the Rorschach.

A third woman held a series of jobs and was still unable to make ends meet. She spoke with great bitterness about her in-laws who had "stolen" her son, and spoke with pain about her daughter. While she recognized some of the girl's emotional difficulties, her capacity to empathize in any consistent way was minimal, and her solutions were poor. Since the girl exhibited considerable separation fears from her mother, she allowed her not to stay with the maternal grandmother, but instead to stay in their apartment unattended for several hours a day while she worked.

A somewhat higher functioning group (Group 2) consisted of perhaps a third of the women. These were women who were clearly struggling emotionally, and often, though not always, had financial problems; they showed some loss of distance in their relationships with their daughters. They differed from the first group described in that they had accepted the divorce as a fact in their and their daughters' lives, and had some capacity to observe themselves and to raise difficult topics, like problems with their ex- husbands, with some modulation of affect. However, they were still very angry and quite self-involved.

One woman declined the BSI form (which was presented as a voluntary task), because, she said, "you'd send me to the mental hospital if I filled it out." She talked, jokingly, but with a need that was apparent, about the fact that her daughter didn't tell her feelings about the divorce. When her daughter distanced from the conversation, the mother responded with, "I know, I nag you too much about this stuff."

In this group I would include the women who presented as coping quite well, but who tended, rather rigidly, to deny any problems. These women were working, had adequate homes for their families, had moved forward from the divorce and denied continued subjective distress. However, their interactions with their daughters were often quite inappropriate.

One woman had received promotions and was doing well financially since the first year following the divorce, and saw herself as coping well. Her interactions with her daughters were notable in that she confided intensively with the elder daughter "who went through it all with me", and was rather hostile toward the younger one, my subject, who "adores her father." The mother asked to go over the younger child's Rorschach with her elder daughter.

Then there were the women, (Group 3) who had reestablished their lives relatively well, and who offered mixed pictures about their experiences around the divorce. These women acknowledged having gone through considerable pain, tended to be mildly depressed, but some also talked about what they had gained from the divorce. These women expressed concerns about their daughters, but appeared relatively realistic, and had often sought some kind of guidance during the process. They appeared appropriately somewhat worried about what their daughters had gone

through during the separation, and tended to assess their children's current functioning carefully. This group consisted of about one third of the divorced mothers.

One mother reported to me that she "never thought about things" before her marriage broke up. "I just figured I would get married, and have kids and that was it. I never thought about what I wanted, or why I did things, or what if things didn't work out...and now look at me; my life has changed, my friends have changed, and I've changed."

Finally, (Group 4) there were four women who appeared not only to have moved on, but to be very happy in their new lives. They acknowledged the impact of the divorce on them and on their children, but they did not view their children as currently at risk. They were involved in activities on their children's behalf, and seemed to have full lives themselves.

One woman had a steady boyfriend, and appeared to be including him increasingly in her family. Another did not appear to have a current partner, but referred to her relationship with her husband very much as a "thing of the past." While her apartment was quite a mess, the rest of the family's life, including a couple of pets, seemed well organized. She ferried her son to karate, her daughter to music, and attended her own graduate classes, all with some gusto; she said to me; "I decided that I was going to have a real life, and do a lot with my kids, or I was going to have a clean apartment, but I wasn't going to be able to do both."

Another woman had recently returned with her daughter from a visit with their extended family. It was clear that they had enjoyed the visit separately and together,

and chatted pleasurably about their experiences. The mother spoke to me privately about the importance to her of teaching her daughter to value her whole family.

The Girls

In my immediate observations, the two groups of girls did not differ from each other so markedly as did the mothers. The girls of divorced parents rarely volunteered any information about their own experiences concerning the divorce, and by and large, they looked uncomfortable if their mothers started to address the subject in their presence. However, most of them seemed more involved in the work than were the girls from married families, and many seemed to relish the attention. While some of the girls appeared to be trying to develop some distance from their mothers, others clearly were protective of them. One child, after finishing the Rorschach work ran upstairs while I talked with her mother, a competent and loving, but anxious woman, and drew a picture of the "happiest puppy in the world - I love you Mom." Her Rorschach protocol had revealed no major disturbance but had contained depressive features.

Four Groups of Daughters of Divorced Parents

Given my grouping of the divorced women, I decided to informally examine the Rorschachs of the corresponding four groups of girls to see if they would reveal any comparable differences. Since these comparisons were made arithmetically, rather than statistically, the results only offer information about directionality and possible patterning suitable for further investigation.

I developed the following mean Rorschach scores for each group of girls: mean rate; the mean of the sum of weighted COB scores divided by number of

Differentiation responses (QHD + HD + QH + H); the mean of the sum of weighted MOA scores divided by number of MOA responses; mean MOA highest object relations score (HOR), mean MOA lowest object relations score (LOR) and mean MOA median object relations score (MOR); the mean of the sum of weighted form level scores divided by rate; the mean of lowest Mayman scores, and the mean of median Mayman scores. My purpose in developing the COB and MOA scores divided by, respectively, number of Differentiation scores, and number of MOA responses was to ask the question "Given X number of Object Representation responses in a Rorschach, what was their quality?"

Table 16

Informal Comparison of Rorschach Scores of Four Groups of Daughters of Divorced Parents

Group	Mean Rate	Mean COB/BR*	Mean MOA/MR#	Mean HOR	Mean LOR	Mean MOR
1 (Low)	26.3	10.22	5.04	1.00	5.67	2.30
2	22.4	10.23	4.98	1.21	5.14	3.00
3	17.7	9.99	4.69	1.67	5.40	3.00
4 (High)	16.5	10.86	5.28	1.75	4.25	2.50

	Mean MAY/R+	Mean MAYLOW	Mean MAYMED
1	5.63	5.67	2.30
2	4.44	5.28	2.43
3	4.32	5.10	2.89
4	5.09	6.00	2.25

*Weighted COB scores divided by number of Differentiation responses.
Weighted MOA scores divided by number of MOA responses.
+ Weighted Mayman scores divided by rate.

A few patterns emerged; most obvious, again, was the pattern around rate. Daughters of poorly adjusted mothers, selected by my informal clinical assessment, produced many more Rorschach responses than did daughters of high functioning, well adjusted divorced mothers. This pattern held even when the two low functioning groups of mothers were considered together in order to increase the N. This is one more indicator that Rate is a meaningful child index which has a relationship to maternal disturbance.

The only other potential pattern emerging in the expected direction was that of the MOA Lowest Object Relations scores. It appears that the girls of divorced parents who have the most well adjusted mothers may have in their repertoire fewer low level object representations images than do those girls of divorced parents whose mothers are more disturbed.

Unexpectedly, there was an inverse pattern for HOR scores. Girls whose mothers are less disturbed appear to have slightly lower high level object representations responses as measured by the MOA.

Given that the overall number of subjects in this informal analysis was small, and that the numbers varied so considerably between groups, the best conclusion is that the relationship between maternal adjustment and daughters' object representations among divorced mother-daughter dyads merits further empirical examination.

Themes in the Rorschachs of Girls of Divorced Parents

In administering the Rorschach, I had periodically been struck by the vividness with which the girls portrayed their experiences symbolically on the Rorschach. As an example, a girl whose married parents had recently adopted a little boy after being unable to conceive again had a Rorschach replete with small, but evil aliens! Similarly, I had noticed several examples of images, among girls of divorced parents, which could be seen as direct translations of divorce- related experiences.

Informally, I scanned the protocols of all the girls looking for imagery involving fights between two beings (whether animal or human) and for imagery involving three beings involved in some form of negative tension or interaction. The two groups did not differ much in number of such percepts: the girls from married and from divorced families both described a total of four fights involving two beings. (I did not include percepts of one being dominating another, as these had already been measured in the Urist scoring.) The married group described a total of six scenes in which three objects were involved, whereas the divorced group described nine.

However, with one exception, there was a difference between the two groups in the way these scenes were described. The following are descriptions typical of girls from the divorced group:

> Card X: Crabs fighting; that's one crab; that's another one. That's a lobster that's just watching. They are going to go around him and attack each other. [She asks if my hand is hurting from writing.]

N.B. the intent of the two crabs to go around the lobster. This response came from the daughter of one of the two highest functioning mothers in my estimation.

> Card X It looks like crabs above the spiders. they're having some kind of argument...They look like they are angry. It looks like the spiders are going to take sides on the bugs arguing, and the seals can't decide, so they're staying in the middle. They are arguing about who gets a wishbone and which side of the wishbone.

This response came from the daughter of one of the mothers described in Group 2.

> Card VI It looks like two bears putting their fists out and there's a little frog in between...(Inquiry) Two bears and there's their fists and they are sticking them out (as if) they are going to punch somebody. The little frog is here. See the little eyeballs. It's hard to see them because they are so light. (Frog as if) as if it was looking for other people.

This response came from a daughter of one of the mothers from Group 1.

> Card III A butterfly. Here are the wings and the body (Butterfly as if) its trying to fly away (Can you say more?) Two people are barricading or something, as if they won't let him out.

This response came from another daughter of a mother in Group 1.

In contrast, here are examples of tension-laden triadic responses from the girls from married families:

> Card IX Two animals tying to grab something - trying to get something back.

> Card VI Two beasts back to back with a fish bowl to the side; they are mad at each other.

> Card III Spirits going into people to get their bodies and blood.

This response came from a girl whose parents' marriage had survived many serious problems, and whose mother was still struggling with alcoholism.

The following two responses from one girl seemed somewhat more reminiscent of those from the girls from divorced families. I wondered about the state of her parents' marriage.

Card IX A Chinese parade float with dragons looking at each other. They would be a symbol of "Start Communicating."

Card X A girl who's very mad because all these bugs are surrounding her and eating up her hair because she started pestering them, and wrecking their homes because they built nests in her home.

Discussion of the Measures

The Rorschach Measures

In this study the subcategories in Blatt's Concept of the Object Scale were found to load heavily around two primary factors, similar to the findings of Blatt and Lerner in 1984. The findings in this study lend weight to existing research evidence that there is a measurable object relations factor which this scale captures.

Some questions have been raised as to whether Urist's Mutuality of Autonomy Scale similarly measures an Object Relations factor, or whether it simply serves to predict degrees of pathology not necessarily related to object representations (Blatt and Tuber, 1989).

Factor analysis in this study showed high levels of correlation between COB OR+ scores and the higher level (1's and 2's) MOA scores, and low levels of correlations between COB+ and low level (5' through 7's) MOA scores. This would indicate that the two scales are highly related.

However, although COB OR- scores correlated with MOA scores overall, COB OR- scores were found to correlate both with high and with low level MOA scores. The lack of a clear-cut pattern here may by explained by the confusing way in which Blatt and his colleagues set up the OR- factor. As mentioned previously, these scores are scores of poor form quality weighted in the direction of

developmental maturity. It would be more logical to derive an OR- score which would be weighted in the direction of developmental immaturity and poor form quality. With this alteration the relationship between the COB and the MOA Scales might be more clear cut.

For the purpose of this study, the COB Scale elucidated more than did the MOA Scale. It was more detailed and precise, and it appeared more geared to ranges of functioning within specific areas than was the more global MOA Scale. It has been suggested that the COB Scale could be used more effectively with children if it were designed to include animal responses. In my experience, the girls tended to produce enough scoreable Human or Quasi-Human responses (which include animal responses with human attributes) for use of this scale as is.

I question whether the MOA Scale is as appropriate for statistical analysis in non-clinical samples, especially of girls, as it might be with more disturbed samples. As Goldberg (1989) and as Tuber (1989) have shown, girls often tend to produce higher level responses than do boys. It is possible that in a non-clinical sample of girls, and, particularly a sample which is noted for high productivity, the tendency toward producing benign responses may mask more minor shifts in number of low level responses, which would not be captured in the Median (MOR), the Lowest Object Response (LOR), or the weighted MOA score.

Form level was found to correlate highly (.770) with MOA scores in this study. This indicates that ability to produce high level object responses is related psychically to the capacity for higher levels of perceptual accuracy and reality testing.

Since form level was incorporated into the OR+ and OR- scores, correlations between Blatt and Mayman scores would be redundant.

The most difficult of the Rorschach scales to employ with this study sample was the Mayman Scale. While it is the most well elaborated form level scoring system available, Mayman's distinctions, particularly at the upper end of the continuum (Plus, Ordinary, Weak Plus and Weak Minus) are not suitable for children; often a "Weak" response for an adult should be seen as a "good enough Plus" if given by an eight year old child.

The BSI and the PERI Scales

As indicated above, the PERI was the most problematic scale to use; it did not appear to be specific enough for either group, and certainly not for the divorced women. The method of scoring was cumbersome; translation to a standardized score would make the instrument more useful.

The BSI had many advantages; it was brief, easily scoreable, and was internally highly consistent. However, one loses in a short scale like this the means to control for "faking good" and "faking bad", which is a part of a more complex scale like the MMPI. It was my impression that some "faking good" occurred: some women, consciously or unconsciously, minimized difficulties which were notable in the informal part of our meeting. "Faking bad", per se, did not appear to occur, though there were instances of hysterical responses to the BSI, like the woman who refused to complete it, because I would put her in a "mental hospital."

Limitations of the Study

Obtaining subjects posed the greatest technical problem for the study. Because of this difficulty, advertising and payment was necessary, and it was not possible to keep subjects blind to the nature of the study. Because of these compromises, many variables which could not be accounted for, were added to the process. These include, mostly obviously, the question of self-selection. It is not clear, especially, among the divorced mother-daughter dyads, that this is a representative selection; for example, did mothers who were coping particularly well rule themselves out?

One unanticipated advantage brought about by the selection process used was that the majority of subjects (over 80%), both married and divorced, was obtained from advertisements in the United Federation of Teachers newspaper. This process served to match subjects demographically in a way that would have been difficult to achieve otherwise. So, although questions of self selection remain, one can say that this subject pool was in many ways representative of suburban, middle class, predominantly white married and divorced families from the Eastern states.

Obviously, this study only examined a small part of the lives of latency age girls from married and divorced families. The relationship of mothers' functioning to that of their daughters was seen as very important in the construction of this study. Relationship with father and with siblings was given little attention. This was not because these relationships are considered unimportant in girls' development, but because a more inclusive research design exceeded the scope of a dissertation study.

Directions for Future Study

It would be important, in a study like this, to include a scale for assessment of defenses, in order to broaden our understanding of the overall psychic functioning of these two groups of girls. All the Rorschach scales addressed the issue of defenses indirectly in that they all accounted for breakthroughs of primary process content and impairment of perception, and gave credit for more sublimated, well organized responses. However, in many cases the level of conflict that the majority of these girls expressed was less gross than was measured by these scales, and the defenses employed were often higher order defenses. It would be useful to examine questions of defensive style within this continuum, particularly concerning management of aggression. A brief example of this kind of issue can be seen in the responses of this girl from a divorced family:

> Card IX Two faces; the hair, the eye, the nose; they are screaming (as if) they are in an argument. I have another idea with the green part. The head, the eye and the snort (sic). It could be two pigs kissing.

Further studies of the long term effects of parental divorce on the intrapsychic functioning of latency-age and adolescent girls are warranted. However, at this point, it is more important to examine within-group differences among the mother- daughter dyads, and among the girls themselves. Measurement of other important factors in the lives of these girls can be considered. Such research would require funding in order to give it the legitimacy it requires in order to attract a larger subject pool.

APPENDIX

EXAMPLES OF ADVERTISEMENTS USED TO RECRUIT SUBJECTS

New York Teacher
Classifieds
260 Park Ave. South
NYC, NY 10010

MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS: EARN $25

in doctoral study for one hour's work at location of your choice. NEEDED: mothers legally separated/divorced for at least two years and their 6 through 11 y.o. daughters. Confidential, references available, happy to answer all questions. Call Alexandra Woods (212) 866-0517.

MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS: EARN $25

in doctoral study for one hour's work at location of your choice. NEEDED: married mothers and their 6 though 11 y.o. daughters. Confidential, references available, happy to answer all questions. Call Alexandra Woods (212) 866-0517.

PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM

I give permission for my daughter_____
to participate in Alexandra Woods' dissertation research, and I am also willing to participate in this work.

I understand that participation will involve my daughter taking the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test- Revised and the Rorschach Inkblot Test. My participation will involve filling out the Achenbach Child Behavior Checklist, the Brief Symptom Inventory, and the PERI Life Events Scale. My daughter and I have the choice to stop participating at any point. If my daughter and I complete the work, we will receive $25.00 for our time and effort.

I understand that ALL information about myself, my daughter and my family, whether given verbally or in writing, will be kept completely confidential. All written work will be coded to ensure such confidentiality.

I will _____, will not _____, be interested in receiving information about the results of this study when it is completed. I understand that Ms. Woods will not be able to provide specific evaluation of my daughter based on these test results, as they do not provide sufficient information for a responsible clinical assessment.

_____
Parent's Name

_____
Address

_____
Date

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

INCOME:
Below $20,000 ____
$20,000-40,000 ____
More than $40,000 ____

Were you born in this country?
Yes ____
No ____

Was your daughter born in this country?
Yes ____
No ____

Your daughter has____older brothers.
Your daughter has____older sisters.
Your daughter has____younger brothers.
Your daughter has____younger sisters.

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