

ATTITUDES TOWARD AND PERCEPTIONS OF DIVORCE

by

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The divorce rate in the United States has risen in recent years. Glick indicated that "There were about 400,000 divorces per year during the 15 years from 1940 to 1954, as compared with about 200,000 per year between 1920 and 1939." (10, p. 187) Even when one accounts for the increase in the number of people and number of marriages, there is a definite increase in the rate of divorce. In the United States the divorce rate per thousand marriages moved from 75.3 in 1900 to 259.0 in 1960. (11, p. 82)

The Monthly Vital Statistics Report stated that

In 1965, 479,000 divorce and annulment decrees were granted in the United States, an increase of 6.4 percent over the total for 1964 and of 21.9 percent over that for 1960. The 1965 divorce total is one of the highest in history. . . . For the United States the divorce rate per 1,000 population was 2.5, and the rate per 1,000 married women 15 years of age and over was 10.6. Both these rates are higher than similar rates for any year shown in Table 2. (Table 2 covers the years from 1954 to 1965.) (23, p. 1)

What is the reason for this? Some general textbooks in marriage and the family suggest that a major reason is a widespread acceptance of divorce--the outlook that people of today regard divorce as a relatively easy way to escape an unhappy or unsuccessful marriage. This assumption pro-

posed by the general textbooks is not based on research.

What is the attitude of people today toward divorce?

Goode suggested that divorce is not "fully institutionalized in our own cultural structure," and that it is "likely that few couples divorce in our culture without a guilt component on both sides with specific reference to divorce."

(13, p. 10) Rheinstein observed that ". . . marriage and the family are social institutions based upon cultural values, experiences, and norms which reflect the desire to maintain a stable and continuing society. The bases for marriage and divorce laws are to be found in culture."

(32, p. 543) One of the best known sociologists, Talcott Parsons, stated

. . . I have long felt that what underlay the high divorce rates of our society was not . . . the decline in the importance of marriage Divorce is an index of the severity of the burden placed on the marriage relationship in modern society and . . . of the importance of its function. It is not correct to treat it in any simple sense as a symptom of 'decline,' except the decline of older patterns of social organization. (29, p. 44)

It appears, therefore, that society and culture have much to do with one's attitudes toward divorce! Goode meant, when he said divorce is not fully "institutionalized," that life in relation to the divorced is ambiguous for friends and relatives--there are "no ethical imperatives for relatives or friends that would make them feel constrained to furnish material support during the crisis and

afterwards to the divorcees as divorcees" or

to furnish emotional support during this period. There is a general ethical imperative to furnish support to close friends during any kind of crisis, and to some extent this is applicable to the divorce situation . . . a further point of ambiguity centers around the readmission of participants into their former kinship structure or into a new one. (13, p. 12)

Without "institutionalization" there is the question for each individual--how do I feel about divorce?

Most popular magazines view divorce in one of two ways--divorce is fairly easy sailing and people should not take it too seriously, or divorce causes so many more problems one should divorce only if there is absolutely no hope for the marriage. The first way of looking at divorce is seen in Christopher Leach's "Divorce and the Family In America." "Most Americans apparently believe that an unhappy marriage is worse than no marriage at all and that the best way of ending an unhappy marriage is divorce by mutual consent." (20, p. 58)

The idea that divorce is completely wrong is held on to by many whose "rationalization for avoiding a divorce is, on the part of one or both, 'sacrifice for the children,' 'neighborhood respectability,' and a religious conviction that divorce is morally wrong." (12, p. 441) So after the two different outlooks that magazines give divorce, what does the individual come to believe?

Our society holds as the ideal the family of mother, father, and offspring living together. People believe

that this structured situation gives happiness to every member of the family and best develops each individual's character and personality. "The basis for this notion stems from the Judeo-Christian Era, when monogomy was proclaimed and the continuity of the nuclear family became a goal, established in religious belief and eventually incorporated into our culture and supported by our legal system." (25, p. 434) But, is every family member really better off in an unhappy marriage? One psychiatrist observed from the files of a county juvenile court clinic that the damage done to children of divorced parents was done long before the divorce. (30, p. 813-814) Have attitudes changed with research findings or do most people still support the Judeo-Christian belief?

Purpose

The purpose of this research is to investigate attitudes toward and perceptions of divorce. More specifically, the researcher will study:

1. The general attitudes toward divorce as an institution.
2. Attitudes toward people who are divorced.
3. Perceptions of the effects of divorce on children.
4. Perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation.
5. Social distances people feel between themselves and divorcees.

The entire study will be searching to find the extent that divorce has become "institutionalized."

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses will be tested:

1. There is no significant relationship between sex and attitudes toward divorce.
2. There is no significant relationship between socioeconomic status and attitudes toward divorce.
3. There is no significant relationship between place of residence and attitudes toward divorce.
4. There is no significant relationship between exposure to divorce and attitudes toward divorce.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature on divorce will be reviewed in sections. The studies and articles pertain to the following:

1. Society and divorce
2. Maintenance of the family
3. Divorce laws and court proceedings
4. Divorce in relation to an individual and his social life
5. Children of divorce
6. Remarriage of the divorcee

Society and Divorce

Parsons saw the marriage relationship as being heavily burdened by the expectations our society places on it. For the average married American "his marriage and his role as parent constitute the primary going reinforcement of his psychological security. The family can thus be seen to have two primary functions." (29, p. 39) Parsons believed these two functions are "the primary agent of socialization of the child" and "the primary basis of security for the normal adult. . . . The point may be put by saying that their common responsibility as parents is the most important focus of the solidarity of marriage partners, and that the desire for children is the natural outcome of a solid 'romantic' attraction between two persons of opposite sex." (29, p. 39-40) Parsons believed that the typical individual is socialized to need to marry and have children. As the strains continue to build up, one would expect family breakdowns to be conspicuous. (29, p. 44)

Goode stated that he believed that

. . . divorce must be viewed as an important element in Western family systems, an escape valve for the tension which inevitably arises from the fact that two people must live together. . . . The most striking change in this area (divorce) of family relations is, of course, the lessened social stigma attached to divorce. It is safe to say, even without quantitative data, that at the turn of the century almost everyone who divorced was viewed as having lost respectability to some extent, and from many circles the divorcee was excluded. The change may be seen through another index which is very likely paralleled in Western countries other than the United States: alterations in laws during the past half-century in the United States have made divorce only slightly easier; it is rather the attitude and definitions of both judges and the society which have allowed easier divorce by interpretation of old provisions in a new way. (7, p. 81)

In his book in 1963, Goode stated:

. . . divorces are most common among childless couples, although American analysts have generally agreed that this association occurs because couples who are likely to divorce are also likely not to have children, rather than because children 'prevent' divorce. However, when calculations of the trend over the past half-century are made, they will probably show that the difference in divorce rate between childless and couples with children is not so great as it once was. (7, p. 85)

At the present time, the divorce rate in countries with liberal divorce provisions is higher in the lower social strata, and lower among the upper strata, whether the index of rank is education, occupation, or income. For all Western countries, then, a gradual shift in the class distribution of divorce should occur, from a positive correlation between class position and divorce rate, to a negative one. (7, p. 86)

Burgess, Locke, and Thomas stated that the family's relationships may be disintegrated even though a couple is still living together as husband and wife; they may not have engaged in activities together for some time. This realization about disintegration, shows the problem with using divorce as an index of disintegration. (40, p. 445) From census data, Burgess, Locke, and Thomas concluded that "divorced persons are more likely to live in urban areas than in rural areas." (40, p. 446-447)

Levinger affirms that "the strength of the marital relationship" is a "direct function of the attractions within and barriers around the marriage." (21, p. 19) His published findings from studies are related to attraction, sources of restraint, and sources of alternate attraction. His findings are listed below:

1. Attraction

- a. Esteem for spouse--Mutual esteem and affection are higher for the nondivorced.
- b. Desire for companionship--This is strongly related to marital adjustment.
- c. Sexual enjoyment--Divorce is lower if there is a higher ratio of the 'couple's enjoyment of actual intercourse" and "their desire for it." (21, p. 21)
- d. Husband's income--Divorce is lower for higher income groups.
- e. Home ownership--Divorce is lower for home owners.
- f. Husband's education--Divorce is lower with the more educated husband. The higher the ranking of the husband's occupation, the lower is the divorce proneness.
- g. Similarity of social status--There are fewer divorces when the partners come from similar social status families.

2. Sources of Barrier Strength (the restraints against the marital dissolution both inside and outside the marriage)
 - a. Obligation to dependent children--"It is widely held that as long as there are no children involved divorce is the couple's own affair." The studies (Jacobson and Monahan) that have adjusted divorce rate to duration of marriage, have shown that the difference in separation rate between childless and childrearing couples is small, but noticeable. (21, p. 24)
 - b. Obligation to the marital bond--In many marriages the husband and wife are committed to the marriage and divorce is not considered.
 - c. Proscriptive religion--There was less divorce if both were of the same religion, including those who were strong Protestants.
 - d. Joint church attendance--Conventional values prevent disruption of the marital bond.
 - e. Primary group affiliation--Affiliation with a group lessens the tendency toward divorce.
 - f. Community stigma--Community disapproval has more influence in rural than urban areas.
 - g. Legal and economic barriers--Legal and financial considerations do offer some restraints.

3. Sources of alternate attraction (cases where the alternative environment is more attractive than the marital relationship.)
 - a. Preferred other sex partner--Researchers (Goode, Harmsworth and Minnis, Kephart, and Locke) have found that preference for an outside sexual partner plays a part in from 15 to 35 percent of all divorce cases.
 - b. Disjunctive kin affiliation--One's kin or friends may cause a strain on the marriage.
 - c. Opposing religious affiliations--Landis showed that mixed faith marriages were less durable than same faith marriages.
 - d. Wife's opportunity for independent income--The easier it is for a wife to support herself, the more ready she will probably be to divorce. (21, p.19-28)

Goode studied "divorced urban mothers, aged 20 to 38 years at the time of divorce." (9, p. 21) These 425 respondents in Metropolitan Detroit were interviewed in the winter of 1948. Their cases had been drawn randomly from the complete county records of Wayne County, Michigan within a certain time limit. From this study Goode found

There is a slight decrease in the frequency of favorable attitudes on the part of the wife's family, with increasing duration of marriage (68% for 0-4 years, to 57% for 15 years and over); and an increase in the frequency of unfavorable responses (13% for 0-4 years, to 21% for marriages lasting 15 years or more) It is mainly her family circle who will bear the responsibility for her and the children, and who will have to help her adjust. These problems are greater, the longer the marriage, at least within our age limits. Kin and friends are therefore more likely to express disapproval of the divorce generally, the longer the marriage. (9, p. 169-170)

The so-called 'divorce trauma' is not universally to be found in our cases, even though we would expect our group to have more intense problems of adjustment than divorcees without children. . . . there appears to be no one time period in which there is great personal dis-organization for all divorcees. . . . it is evident that at some time or another a considerable proportion of these cases did show evidence of personal difficulty. . . . The period immediately following the final decree--the 'post-divorce' period--is not the point of maximum 'trauma' The point of greatest disturbance appears to be the time of final separation the physical separation, symbolic of the social one, has further consequences, in that the changes legally expected after the decree must actually begin to be made at this point. (9, p. 186-187)

The kinship institutions do not . . . make provision for the consequences of divorce, with- in its structure. But, by the very fact

that there are no such provisions, no set status privileges and stigmata, which would allow the divorcee to play easily the mother role outside marriage, the institutional patterns create pressures toward new marriages, while offering some positive inducements in the same direction. There is thus as yet little direct institutionalization of post-divorce adjustment. But the larger kinship patterns nevertheless force very similar behavior on divorcees, by making difficult or inconvenient any other than that of married mother. (9, p. 216)

Goode stated that it has frequently been hypothesized that one's circle of friends is changed after a divorce--the divorcee has friends "who are 'lower' in their moral standards." (9, p. 246) Goode asked the Detroit women if the circle of friends was better, about the same or worse than their friends during their marriage. "90% of those with different friends believed them to be either better (42%) or the same (48%). Only 10% thought that their new friends were worse than those they had during the marriage." (9, p. 246-247)

The role of age and race differences was studied by Schmitt. He

compares final divorces granted in Hawaii during the years 1964, 1965, and 1966 with marriages performed in the state in 1961, 1962, and 1963. . . . The three year lag between marriage and divorce data was intended to compensate at least in part, for the fact that most divorces take place only after several years of marriage. (34, p. 48)

The data should be interpreted with care--some of the couples married between 1961 and 1963 were divorced before 1964 or after 1966 and some of the couples divorced between

1964 and 1966 were married before 1961 or after 1963.

(34, p. 49)

Interracial marriages and divorces were defined to include all those in which the partners were members of any two different ethnic groups among the following ten: Caucasian, Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, part Hawaiian, Japanese, Korean, Negro, Puerto Rican, and 'other'. The residual category consisted mostly of Samoans. . . .only 32 percent of couples with the man older by 1 to 4 years were of different races, compared with 55% of those with the wife senior by 15 years or more. Expressed in another way, these data indicate that the relative frequency of wide age differences was much greater for interracial marriages and divorces in Hawaii than for those involving partners of the same race. (34, p. 48)

Divorce ratios by age difference were quite dissimilar for mixed and unmixed couples. . . . These divorce ratios suggest that a wide age difference favoring the husband may be an important factor in marital failure among unmixed couples but not among partners from different ethnic groups. An older wife, in contrast, seems to increase the likelihood of divorce in both mixed and unmixed unions. (34, p. 49)

"In our society, marriages are assessed according to norms: happiness and stability." Landis indicated that "When happiness is not achieved, strain results. Part of the strain is conflict over whether to go against the societal norm of stability of marriage and the family."

(19, p. 178) Some of Landis' findings (when college students rated their parents' happiness in marriage up to the time the respondent was fifteen years old) are as follows:

1. Men who had married at age 21 and under and women who had married at 19 and under tended to end an unhappy marriage through

- divorce more often than people who married at later ages. Men who married at 30 and over tended to remain in the nondivorced group even though unhappy.
2. In comparing the happy marriages with the two groups of unhappy marriages it will be noticed that the happy marriages tended to be for men in the age-group at marriage of 22 to 29 and for women 20 to 23.
 3. The occupation of the husband did not seem to be closely associated with whether an unhappy marriage ended in divorce or continued as an unhappy marriage.
 4. Unhappy married men and women with a grammar school education tended to remain married, while men and women with college and graduate school educations tended to divorce if their marriage was unhappy.
 5. . . . more happy marriages were reported for those couples with a college or graduate education than among those with a grade or high school education.
 6. . . . people who are indifferent to religion tended to end unhappy marriages through divorce while more of those who are devout continued in unhappy marriages.
 7. The patterns of parental dominance in the home did not differ significantly between the unhappy nondivorced and the divorced, although the percentage direction was in the direction one might predict. The unhappy, father-dominated marriage was slightly more likely to have remained intact.
 8. There is no support that Catholics will be more likely to remain married than is true of other faiths. 'Jews were most likely to be found among those who remained in unhappy marriages, and people of no religious faith were least likely to be found among those who remained in unhappy marriages. Catholics and Protestants fell between the extremes.' (19, p. 178-180)

When occupation and education levels are regarded as variables people in the higher educational-occupations levels are more prone to end an unhappy marriage through divorce. Possibly professional people and more highly education people recognize the damage that may be done to children in an unhappy marriage, or they may have a wider choice of alternatives

available when they consider their future if they divorce. Women with a college or graduate education may have more confidence that they can find work and earn a living if they do divorce. (13, p. 180)

Not everyone agrees with Landis' findings that the upper class is more likely to end an unhappy marriage with a divorce. Monahan (1955), Scanzoni (1965), and Park and Glick (1967) found that divorce is much more characteristic of the lower class today. (22, p. 322-324; 33, p. 483-491; and 27, p. 249-256) Monahan studied Iowa's divorce statistics and concluded that "divorce is much more characteristic today of the lower social-economic groups in our society, and much less prevalent than the average in the upper occupational levels." (22, p. 324) Iowa is a fairly representative state since its divorce rate is near the national average and it has a broad distribution of occupations; the major drawbacks are that its population is not representative for urban or non-white areas.

Scanzoni discussed marital disorganization and organization "from the standpoint of integration with external networks." (33, p. 490) Because the lower-class family member does not participate in activities with those other than his kin, he experiences more marital conflict and dissatisfaction. In addition "there is an absence of integration of both partners into the same blood kin and a tendency to identify with one's own kin, with the result that mates tend to become polarized." (33, p. 488) This polarization leads to disorganization.

Park and Glick looked for changes they saw coming in marriage. They believed that more marriages will remain intact in the future--the reason being the upgrading of the population with regard to income. Since the lower income families have a higher divorce rate and their income will be increased, the divorce rate will decrease.

Komarovsky studied blue collar marriages sampled from two interwoven townships forming a community with a population of about fifty thousand. The sample was "white, native born of native parents, Protestant, not over 40 years of age, and parents of at least one child. . . . The highest level of education was set at four years of high school."

(16, p. 9) A minimum of six hours was spent with each of the 58 families--there were two - two hours interviews with the wife and one - two hour interview with the husband.

(16, p. 11) For her study, Komarovsky concluded that

the prevalence of in-law problems among the less educated workers is caused not only by an excess of conflict-producing situations but also by the inability to escape from them once they arise. The mode of life and the social norms of these workers create close dependence upon relatives. (16, p. 279)

The data also showed that the most strain is created by an intermarriage when the woman has the superior class background. "The wife who marries 'up' has no difficulty in accepting this improvement in her position. . . . But when the high blue-collar woman marries 'down' the consequences may be more stressful." (16, p. 333) An example

used in the book stated that the wife would like to get a baby sitter and go out with her husband; the husband doesn't want to leave his children with a stranger--he enjoys doing things with the entire family and staying home and watching T.V. (16, p. 333-334)

When comparing premarital pregnancy-divorced, premarital pregnancy-married, postmarital pregnancy-divorced, and postmarital pregnancy-married, Christensen and Rubinstein found the divorce rate higher with premarital pregnancy. (7, p. 114-123)

Maintenance of the Family

The introduction to Nye's "Child Adjustment in Broken and in Unhappy Unbroken Homes" in Sussman's Sourcebook in Marriage and the Family states:

In our society it is believed important to maintain the nuclear family of procreation intact. The family of mother and father living together with their offspring is construed to be ideal for the happiness of every member and to increase the probability of developing character and appropriate personality characteristics in children. The basis for this notion stems from the Judeo-Christian Era, when monogamy was proclaimed and the continuity of the nuclear family became a goal, established in religious belief and eventually incorporated into our culture and supported by our legal system. (25, p. 434)

Bossard and Boll asked 440 brothers and sisters in large families to rate their siblings on marital happiness. The three-fold scale rated a marriage as happy, medium happy, and unhappy. "71.4 percent were rated as happy,

15.0 percent as medium happy, and 13.6 percent as unhappy." (3, p. 10) Burgess-Cottrell, Lang, Terman, and Davis obtained about the same percentage ratings. Bossard and Boll's study "reinforces the fact that there is considerable amount of unhappiness in marriage which does not reach the critical stage of separation, desertion, or divorce." (3, p. 10)

Goode described the "empty shell" marriage as being one without laughter, fun, discussion of problems, mutual experiences or free communication. Their rationalization, as stated in the introduction, for avoiding divorce is "sacrifice for the children," "neighborhood respectability," and a religious conviction.

The hostility in such a home is great, but arguments focus on the small issues, not the large ones. Facing the latter would, of course, lead directly to separation or divorce, but the couple has decided that staying together overrides other values, including each other's happiness and the psychological health of their children. (12, p. 441)

Divorce Laws and Court Proceedings

Rheinstein traced the development of marriage and divorce laws from early history, where there were no state laws--only religious taboos, through the origin of state laws by the Jews, and to the present. Throughout history marriage has been an institution; it has been affected by social and legal phenomena. "In the majority of countries, the institution of divorce has come to be admitted. . .;" it has not been completely accepted. (32, p. 544) For a long time divorce has been accepted where

one of the partners was incurably insane; "but divorce by mutual agreement or because of one party's 'insurmountable aversion' against the other can still be found only in few laws (the Scandinavian countries, Switzerland, Belgium, and in a steadily growing number of jurisdictions in this country), although it was provided for in the earliest of all modern divorce laws, the Prussian Decree of 1752. . . . In this country a divorce can be obtained in 16 jurisdictions (Arizona, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Nevada, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming) if the parties have lived factually separated from each other for a stated period of time, and in four states (Minnesota, North Dakota, Virginia and West Virginia) if a judicial separation is not followed by a reconciliation." (32, p. 544-545)

Weinman discussed the problems of the trial judge when he had to decide which party in a divorce to award custody of a child (ren). He stated that there was no uniform approach; he "follows the dictates of his own conscience. . . his decision will be affected by his own experience, his education, his family life, his character, his temperament, and his philosophical and religious background." (36, p. 721) The judge does not have any definite rules he can follow to achieve the best for the child (ren). The "tendency of our courts today (1944) is to consider more and more the rights of the children when they are in

opposition to the legal rights of the parents." (36, p. 723)

In a small percentage of divorce cases the custody of the children is contested; most cases are filed uncontested.

"It is usually the aggravated case involving the moral character of the wife, which results in a contest concerning the custody of the children." (46, p. 724) The court can make a decree that gives it a review in a certain time period. The general and special factors that judges consider in awarding custody of children include:

welfare of child; fitness of parents; preference of child; his age, health, and sex; residence, surroundings and opportunities; desires of parents and agreements between them; character and reputation of parties as well as their financial condition, sincerity or fault; opportunity for visitations; results of private conferences with the judge; credibility of the witnesses; natural right of parents and any trial custody; possible use of adoption proceedings and potentiality of maintaining natural family relations; age of discretion and opportunities affecting the future life of said child.
(36, p. 734-735)

Lasch stated that "most Americans apparently believe that an unhappy marriage is worse than no marriage at all and that the best way of ending an unhappy marriage is divorce by mutual consent." (20, p. 58) There is reason to question this assumption. The present study will attempt to determine the attitudes toward divorce. In relation to the laws Lasch stated--

yet the laws compel them to undergo the distress and humiliation of an adversary proceeding in

which one party has to file charges against the other, even to fabricate them with disastrous moral and emotional consequences for everyone concerned (20, p. 58)

The investigator found no reason to question this statement; all the studies read agreed that the laws should be changed to make them more humane.

Cadwallader saw contemporary marriage as "a wretched institution." His reason was that

marriage was not designed to bear the burdens now being asked of it by the urban American middle class. . . .the confused and searching young American can do little but place all of his bets on creating a community in microcosm, his own marriage. . . .the ideal we struggle to reach in our love relationship is complete candor, total honesty. Out there all is phony, but within the romantic family there are to be no dishonest games, no hypocrisy, no misunderstanding. Here we have a painful paradox, for I submit that total exposure is probably always mutually destructive in the long run. (6, p. 62-63)

Cadwallader suggested that we

permit a flexible contract perhaps for one to two or more years, with periodic options to renew. If a couple grew disenchanted with their life together, they would not feel trapped for life. They would not have to anticipate and then go through the destructive agonies of divorce. (6, p. 65)

The Report of the Task Force on Family Law and Policy reviewed the practices concerning divorce in other countries in the world--

A 1965 report of the United Nations on the dissolution of marriage . . . illustrates the wide variation among the nations of the world on the availability of divorce. There is no divorce in the usual sense in Argentina, Chile, Italy, San Marino, St Lucia (U.K.)

and Spain. On the other hand, divorce may be obtained by mutual consent of the spouses in Belgium, Burma, Ceylon, Denmark, India, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, Pakistan, Thailand, and Yugoslavia. . . . The USSR reported that grounds for divorce are not enumerated in Soviet law. A marriage may be dissolved 'when the court, having examined all the relevant circumstances, concludes that the application for dissolution of the marriage has been made for carefully considered reasons and that family relations cannot be restored. . . .' The UN report also shows that in Ceylon (Kandyan Law), India (Muslims), Iran, Iraq, Pakistan (Muslims), Aden (UK), and the British Solomon Island Protectorate, a husband may divorce his wife by pronouncing 'talak.' Desertion by the wife of the conjugal home for one night without a legitimate reason is grounds for divorce in Cambodia, as is infliction of blows or wounds, cruelty, or gross insults by the second wife toward the first wife. In Burma a husband may obtain a divorce if the wife is 'like a master or an enemy.' (31, p. 34-35)

In the United States the most common grounds for divorce, based on the 1967 tabulation by the Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, were

adultery - 50 states and D.C.
desertion - 47 states and D.C.
cruelty - 45 states
felony conviction or
imprisonment - 45 states and D.C.
alcoholism - 41 states
impotency - 32 states
nonsupport - 30 states
insanity - 29 states
separation or absence - 25 states and D.C.

Other grounds include pregnancy at marriage (13 states), drug addiction (12 states), and incompatibility (4 states). (31, p. 35)

The report stated that the following principles should be used to revise state divorce laws:

1. Where it is contemplated that a marriage to be broken, there should be sufficient time

- lapse before a divorce is granted, regardless of the cause of the break-up, to permit the respective parties to reconsider, seek counseling if they wish and perhaps change their minds.
2. Marriage is basically a private relationship which should not be manipulated by government, absent an overriding public interest.
 3. The concept that there must be a guilty party to any divorce is unrealistic and unnecessarily creates hostility between the parties, which is often detrimental to their children. (31, p. 36)

The Task Force suggests that the bases for divorce should include the following:

1. voluntarily living apart for one year;
2. where one party deserts, but the other party wishes to continue the marriage, the deserted party may obtain a divorce after a period of six months; the deserting party after 18 months. (Recognition in the law of a right of the deserting, as well as the deserted, party to obtain a divorce would make desertion a non-fault basis for divorce.) (31, p. 36)

Under these conditions there would be time for the couple to make certain their earlier decision; the couple would just need to establish the period of time of their separation--no one would have to be the guilty party; personal difficulties would not have to be laid before the court.

(31, p 37)

Divorce in Relation to an Individual and His Social Life

Lackey studied the adjustment problems of the one-parent family as reported by the solo parent who lived in Blacksburg, Virginia, and Bluefield, West Virginia. The

questionnaire was "mailed to 65 widowed, divorced, or separated men and women who had custody of at least one minor child." (17, p. 31) Many divorced and separated subjects had not kept the same close friends. Only seven (divorced, female) respondents sought friends whose marital status was identical to their own.

Seventeen subjects, thirteen of whom were divorced or separated, felt that their situation had some effect upon their social acceptability with their friends and associates. Seventeen subjects . . . ten in which the marriage had ended with divorce or separation, reported that they did not feel comfortable in the company of married couples. (17, p. 61-62)

The main problem for the solo parent was lack of time and energy after a day's work to care for their child the way they felt they should. (17, p. 69-70) The most difficult problems of female subjects were

1. Financial problems
2. Learning to do everything for one's self
3. Loneliness
4. Only one to make decisions
5. Adjusting to life without a husband
6. Helping children adjust to the situation
7. Adjusting to grandparents disciplining children and subject
8. Finding competent help to care for children
(17, p. 71)

The most difficult problems of the male subjects were:

1. Adjusting to housekeeping
2. Adjusting to wife's absence
3. Finding a housekeeper (17, p. 71)

The things missed most about their former married life were:

1. Companionship
2. Loving and being loved

3. Marital relations
4. Another adult in the home to talk with
5. Partner for social engagements
6. Someone to share joys and sorrows
7. Male influence
8. Own home
9. Being a full-time homemaker
10. Privacy (17, p. 71-72)

Many solo parents felt their greatest adjustment was learning to accept the full responsibility of the entire family. (17, p. 72)

In the Spring of 1958 the education division of the Guidance Center of New Rochelle in Westchester County, New York, offered a series of discussions for widowed and divorced women. The women who came had custody of children ranging in ages from 14 months to 19 years. Twelve of these women continued to meet with the professional parent educator. They found common interest in

1. Fear of aloneness
2. Concern for the loss of self esteem as a woman
3. Hostility toward men--even among the widows
4. Practical problems of living
5. Specific concerns for their children
6. Curiosity about the organization "Parents Without Partners" (15, p. 38)

Goode summarized the background characteristics that can be associated with a greater or lesser proneness toward divorce.

Greater Proneness

1. urban background
2. marriage at very young ages (15-19 years)
3. short acquaintanceship before marriage
4. short engagements or none
5. couples whose parents had unhappy marriages
6. nonattendance at church, or mixed faith

7. disapproval by kin and friends of the marriage
8. general dissimilarity in background
9. different definitions of husband and wife as to their mutual role obligations

Lesser Proneness

1. rural background
2. marriage at average age (males - 23, females - 20)
3. acquaintanceship of two years or more prior to marriage
4. engagement of six months or more
5. couples with happily married parents
6. regular church attendance, Catholics and adherence to the same church
7. approval of kin and friends
8. similarity ('homogamy') of background
9. agreement of wife and husband as to the role obligations (12, p. 425)

Children of Divorce

Davis stated that he believed

Marriages . . . are formed on the basis of romantic love and maintained on the strength of mutual likes and dislikes. The custom of having only one, two, or three children, plus the isolation of the parents from any other children than their own increases the uniqueness and hence the emotionality of the parent-child relation. Consequently any marital discord not only affects the mates acutely but also involves the children. Husband and wife, as a compensation for marital unhappiness, unconsciously seek consolation, revenge, release, prestige, security, or what not in the children. The offspring in turn are victims of divided loyalty, emotional insecurity, and parental interference. This is why many experts believe that chronic discord is worse for the child than divorce; but the emotional intensity of the immediate family in modern society complicates divorce itself. It not only makes divorce more probable (because if things go wrong they go very wrong), but it also makes much harder the emotional readjustments of parents and children after divorce. (8, p. 705)

He makes some suggestions for change in divorce and society's view of divorce.

If spouses would divorce amicably, without blame or recrimination; if the law would cease to search for the guilty party; if the public would accept divorce as a natural occurrence--if in short, all the attitudes and sentiments which control the institution of the family were abandoned, then the position of the child after the divorce would not be anomalous, and writers of fiction would not feel obligated to paint his lot in somber colors. (8, p. 709)

In discussing children and their problems, Despert used the term "emotional divorce" to mean the emotional situation in the home with or without the legal divorce. The emotional divorce is the factor in a child's adjustment. (9, p. vii)

Not legal divorce but emotional divorce is the destroyer of children. Countless more couples live out their lives and rear their children in the destructive climate of emotional divorce. Among the hundreds of unhappy children who come to the attention of a child psychiatrist, I have seen many whose parents had no thought of divorce. But I have never found one seriously disturbed child whose parents were happy, well integrated partners in a harmonious marriage. (9, p. 256-257)

One psychiatrist, James Plant, studied the files of the last 100 cases at the Essex County Juvenile Clinic--45 were living with both parents; 25 were living, in most cases, with one parent (the other had died--some were in foster homes); 8 were living with a stepparent (one of the parents had died and the other remarried); 20 were from separated homes (some lived with their mothers, some were in foster homes); and 2 were from divorced homes. There

were ten times as many children from separated homes than there were from divorced homes. (30, p. 808) "In our culture security comes to the child from his family and from his church." (30, p. 813) Perhaps for those children whose parents have divorced "a chapter of turmoil for the whole family group has been closed." (24, p. 808) Maybe this can explain why there are so many more children from separated homes in juvenile court than from divorced homes.

. . . for the psychiatrist divorce is a mere incident in a rejection (insecurity) situation that has long since done its damage. Indeed, frequently the divorce represents a tremendous relief for the child. . . . the insecurity arising from the fact that the paramount interests of the parents are elsewhere is present, but the certainty and the finality of the divorce at least stops the daily quarrels, the daily scanning of the omens for the future, the daily rubbing of salt in the wounds. . . . I've had to guess the figure but it is somewhere around one in fifteen or twenty (of our own cases) where all of the real damage has not been done to the child long before the divorce. (30, p. 813-814)

Landis studied 295 university students of divorced homes; over one-third of them were too young to remember their homes before and during the divorce. Each student evaluated his home before he learned of the prospect of his parents' divorce, and his adjustment to the parents' divorce and, in some cases, remarriage. One half of the respondents were from a family sociology course; the educational and economic level of the parents was high--53% of the fathers were professionals or businessmen, 52% had some education

beyond high school (one third had a college or graduate degree), and one third of the mothers had some education beyond high school (23% had a college or graduate degree). Each student rated his parents' home

in terms of his sense of family unity, his feeling of security or insecurity, and his evaluation of the general happiness or unhappiness in the home. The three variables probably all measured one thing--the general happiness of the home from the child's point of view before he sensed there would be separation or divorce. (18, p. 8)

Comparisons were made between those who felt the family was happy, united, and secure and those who felt the family was unhappy, not united, and insecure. A large percentage of children who thought their homes were unhappy felt that the divorce was the best possible alternative for all concerned. The "greatest trauma occurred among children who thought their homes were happy before they learned of the divorce." (18, p. 9) If the parent (s) did not remarry the children felt they were "used" more often to hurt the other parent. The sibling order did not affect the amount of trauma described in "the homes before divorce and the divorce experience as it affected them." (18, p. 12) The children were divided into three groups:

by age at the time of divorce: 5-8 (81), 9-12 (63), and 13-16 (59). . . . The 5-8 age group tended to feel more secure, to rate themselves happier, and to have been less aware of the conflict between their mothers and fathers before they knew of the divorce. Fewer indicated they were unhappy and upset by the divorce and more indicated

they did not understand what was going on. Most of the 5-8 age group indicated there was no change in their feelings of security, and fewer indicated that their parents tried to 'use' them in the divorce and post-divorce years. (18, p. 12)

Burchinal studied the students in the seventh and eleventh grades and their parents in Cedar Rapid, Iowa. The students completed questionnaires in classes and questionnaires were mailed to the parents of the adolescents. The study was limited to white families. Five family types were developed--

the unbroken family consists of both biological parents; families headed only by the mother represent the broken family type; and three family types are included as reconstituted families--those consisting of mothers and stepfathers; those in which both parents had divorced and were remarried, and those headed by fathers and stepmothers. (4, p. 45)

Comparisons of personality and social relationship scores for five groups of adolescents from unbroken families, those living with mothers only, and adolescents from three types of reconstituted families support the following conclusions:

1. There were no significant differences at the .01 level among boys and girls in the five family types on personality characteristics.
2. There were no significant differences for boys and girls in school or community activities, mean school-grade points, or number of friends.
3. There were no significant differences in the five family types of boys in relation to their attitudes toward school.
4. There were no significant differences for girls on how many of their school-mates they liked.
5. Adolescents from unbroken homes were absent from school the fewest number of days. (4, p. 50)

Higgs studied the effects of divorce and interparental conflict on children. She recommended that researchers study the young adult as he anticipates marriage. "How does divorce of his parents affect the young adult in early marriage anticipation and in early marriage adjustment?" (14, p. 46) The investigator is attempting to determine if there is a relationship between exposure to divorce and attitudes toward divorce.

Parent-child adjustment was studied by Nye. High school students (grades 9-12) responded to an anonymous questionnaire. The home was classified as unbroken and unhappy if it "fell in the worst adjusted tercile based on a parental interaction score computed from the amount of parental quarreling, arguing, attempted domination by each parent, lack of mutual activities and interest, and an overall evaluation of happiness made by the student." (24, p. 357) The children rated about one-sixth of the sample families in the "unhappy unbroken" category. No significant difference was found with the socio-economic level, aspiration level, urban-rural residence, home ownership or type of house, unemployment of the father, foreign birth of parents, birth in another state, educational level of each parent, church attendance of adolescents, and parents, shift the father works, employment of both parents, and expectation of remaining in the community. (24, p. 356-358) Nye stated that

as a group adolescents in broken homes show less

psychosomatic illness, less delinquent behavior, and better adjustment to parents than do children in unhappy unbroken homes. They do not differ significantly with respect to adjustment in school, church, or delinquent companions. (24, p. 358)

In another study Nye compared working and non-working mothers of 272 children in broken homes where the parent had remarried. The respondents were male and female students in the 9th through the 12th grades in three small Washington cities. There were no significant differences in four criteria--grades, psychosomatic symptoms, delinquent behavior, and affectional relationship to the mother (26, p. 241)

Perry and Pfuhl gathered information from a sample of 2350 high school students in three Washington State communities ranging in population from 10,000 to 40,000. A subsample of 403 was taken of which "136 or 34% lived in 'solo' homes and 267 or 66% lived in a 'remarriage' home." (28, p. 222). There was no significant difference at the .05 level in "solo" parent homes and "remarriage" homes in the three measures of adjustment--"1) reported delinquent involvement of the subjects; 2) psychoneurotic tendencies of the subjects; and 3) school grade of the subjects." (28, p. 223)

Blaine talked of the effects of divorce on children at different periods in their lives.

In general, divorce or separation does not register with much impact from infancy through the age of three. . . . From three to six, the child, however, needs both parents more than at any other period. Intimate feelings toward the parent of the opposite sex occur at this stage of development. . . . It is very difficult for a child to develop normal attitudes toward others later in life if during this three-to-six

interval in his growth he doesn't have both a mother and a father with whom to interact. . . . During the next phase, from six to twelve, there is less need for the presence of both parents than earlier, and a shift of the adult figures in the child's life is tolerated better at this period. A process of reconciliation with and imitation of the parent of the same sex is beginning at this time, and if a choice must be made about placement with one parent, the presence of the parent of the same sex is preferable by far. . . . Adolescents from twelve to eighteen can usually understand the necessity of divorce or separation, and therefore they may not suffer as much as younger children, except where the result is the loss of the parent of the same sex. (2, p. 99)

Blaine also discusses the custody of children. In deciding custody

a good deal depends on whether or not one parent is going to remarry immediately. Longrange psychological studies of individuals followed from infancy to middle age have shown that the two factors most crucial to normal development are: first, the presence of an adult man and woman in the home for relatively lengthy periods (it is not necessary that they be the actual parents, nor is it essential that they be the same two adults during the entire childhood and adolescent period); second, a place which can be felt as home. . . . Providing for each child what comes closest to fulfilling these two requirements should be the primary goal. Boarding school often seems to be the easiest and most appropriate solution, but for children under twelve it rarely turns out to be successful. More individual adult attention is needed at this age than can be provided by the average boarding school. (2, p.99-100)

When deciding on the custody of the child, Blaine said the "six-and-six split" (6 months with each parent) is considered, on the surface, to be the fairest; however, it has many pitfalls. There is a lack of security; the child does not have a single place to call home; he is often "used" by one or both parents to hurt the ex-mate.

Year-round custody of one parent with flexible visiting privileges with the other "would seem to have many advantages over the six-and-six split, but here, too, there are snags which can cause trouble. Principle among these is the danger of forcing too much responsibility on a child too young--depriving him of the carefree pleasures which should make up such a large part of the years from three to twelve." (2, p.100) Care should be taken so that a girl living with her father does not assume the wife role and that a boy living with his mother does not assume the husband role. The following example will illustrate this point:

a girl living with her father can quickly adopt a wife-like attitude--preparing meals, cleaning the house, and perhaps playing hostess when friends come in. This can age her before her time and cause her to be permanently uninterested in the activities and dating customs of her contemporaries. (2, p. 100)

Remarriage of the Divorcee

Glick analyzed the census data on American families at the midcentury. "Most of the information was obtained from the 1950 census of population or from the annual sample surveys of families conducted by the Bureau of the Census since 1944." (10, p. ix) In the 1950 census all married women under 60 years of age were asked to give the number of years in their current marital status. Those who were

in their first marriages had been married an average of 13.4 years; those in second or

subsequent marriages had been in their last marriage an average of 8.2 years. Widows reported an average of 7.8 years of widowhood, divorced women reported an average of 4.6 years since they got their divorces, and separated women reported that they had been living apart from their husbands for an average of 4.1 years. (10, p. 150)

The younger divorced women are more likely to remarry than the older divorcee. "Age for age, the proportion widowed has declined through the decades and the proportion divorced has risen. Moreover, there has been a long-time increase in the amount of remarriage." (10, p. 197)

The divorcee who remarried in the early 1950's waited an average of two and one-half years. During this same time period widowed persons waited three and one-half years. (10, p. 198)

Monahan assembled the available statistics on duration of marriage to divorce. He found that the duration of marriage decreases with each successive remarriage. (22, p. 138)

Not only do second marriages ending in divorce show a shorter duration than 'first' marriages, the duration also diminishes with each successive remarriage. . . . although much more information is needed on the subject, on the basis of the evidence thus far assembled, it may be proposed that with each successive divorce experience the probability of divorce increases, and the speed of the dissolution also rises. (22, p. 138)

Jessie Bernard's data came from

2,009 cases of remarriage gathered by means of a questionnaire, which was filled out by informants who were intimately acquainted with the remarried families. The informants were students, colleagues, and friends of the author.

As they were collected, the 2,009 cases did not constitute a random sample of any known universe. Therefore, in order to give them theoretical meaning, they were conceived as the total remarried population of an imaginary community, or statistical model, named Utopolis. (1, p. 20)

Some of the characteristics of the sample would include: 1) many professional workers, 2) few laborers, 3) white, 4) located in Northeastern states, and 5) their remarriage by occupational grouping is about the same as that of the country as a whole. (1, p. 20)

First marriage itself involves many kinds and types of relationships, among many kinds and types of people, with many kinds and types of problems; to these variations in relationships and people and problems; the institution of remarriage adds still others which are peculiar to it and which differ from those of first marriage in both degree and kind. Three major sources of differences among remarriages are: 1) the previous marital status of the spouses; 2) the presence or absence of children by previous marriages; and 3) the relative significance of the first and subsequent marriages. (1, p. 4)

A remarriage when one or both partners are bereaved is quite different from a remarriage when one or both are divorced. There is a difference in incidence of almost every variable we scrutinize between the remarried divorced, as a group, and the remarried widowed

The two types of remarriage differ especially in four respects: 1) in the kinds of people involved; 2) in the impact of the previous spouse; 3) in the community evaluation of the manner in which the first marriage was terminated; and 4) in the amount of guilt feeling which may be present. Two additional factors must be considered: 5) the complexity introduced by the mating of a man and a woman with different marital histories; and 6) the heterogeneity of the divorced population itself. (1, p. 4-5)

There are eight possible kinds of mating in remarriage; the classification and percentage in Bernard's study are

listed below:

1. a widowed man and a widowed woman - 9.3%
 2. a widowed man and a divorced woman - 5.6%
 3. a widowed man and a single woman - 12.9%
 4. a divorced man and a widowed woman - 4.5%
 5. a divorced man and a divorced woman - 16.4%
 6. a divorced man and a single woman - 20.7%
 7. a single man and a widowed woman - 9.0%
 8. a single man and a divorced woman - 21.5%
- (1, p. 9)

Remarriage with children by previous marriage "are qualitatively different from those that do not involve children."

(1, p. 14)

What has been the history of remarriage? Bernard stated

The relative mildness of the restrictions against the remarriage of the divorced among preliterate and semiliterate peoples, who view children as economic assets, probably derives from their feeling that women are too valuable as potential breeders to be forced to remain unexposed to conception during their fertile years. Remarriage may therefore be looked upon as desirable and to be encouraged, especially when no mystery such as death is involved. (1, p. 48)

In our culture regulations for the divorced are more restrictive than for the widowed. They

are often of a punitive or repressive nature, their fundamental objectives being to discourage divorce by making it difficult for the divorcee to remarry. Many religious groups do not permit their ministers to perform the marriage ceremony for divorced persons especially for the 'guilt' parties. . . . The legal restrictions against remarriage after divorce in our culture are perhaps less drastic than these religious ones, but they have essentially the same purpose: to discourage divorce. . . . Among the impediments to the remarriage of divorced persons are social conventions--perhaps less binding now than formerly--whose

effect is similar to that of religious and legal restrictions. Thus, according to Emily Post, a divorcee may send out invitations to or announcements of her remarriage, only when she is so clearly 'innocent' that public opinion will sanction her right to remarry. Interestingly enough, however, the bride of a divorced man may send out announcements of the marriage regardless of the groom's 'guilt' or 'innocence.'

Bernard agrees with the Bureau of the Census that the largest part of the remarrying population today seems to be men and women in their middle years, "the growing incidence of remarriage calls for some consideration of love in middle and later maturity." (1, p. 50)

Bernard stated that there seemed to be five selective factors in remarriage--"desire to remarry," "an absence of inhibiting influence," "the opportunity for meeting and courting prospective mates," "community and family pressures," and "all the personal qualities and nonpersonal factors that make one attractive to prospective mates." (1, p. 116)

The reasons one might have for not wishing to remarry could include if the first marriage was unhappy, the individual might fear repetition; if sexual relations were unsatisfactory, the individual might not want to remarry; and the individual might be predisposed against remarriage by attitudes or personality characteristics. (1, p. 118-119)

The general reasons for remarrying are "1) love; 2) reasons associated with role, i.e. loneliness, need for companionship, habit, desire for stability; 3) need for support or care; 4) pressure from family or friends; 5) status needs; and 6) neurotic compulsions of one kind or another." (1, p. 119)

What special problems or advantages does the remarried person face? Bernard stated that the courtship was less romantic--there may be children of the former marriage, the individuals are not struggling to get away from parental ties, the occupation is usually set, the individual is usually more secure. There may be opposition from children, family, friends, or the community. (1, p. 150-151) The remarried couple must adjust--there needs to be a psychological union; the values need to be compatible; and there needs to be adjustment relating to spending of family income, sex relations, social activities, relations with in-laws, religious activities, and mutual friends. (1, p. 172)

The number of variables associated with successful assimilation of two families is very large indeed. The previous marital status of the parents; whether the first parent is living or deceased, custody provisions; the number of children involved; the attitudes of the community; class background; religion; tempo; the age, sex, and attitudes of the children; symbolic associations--these and scores of other factors affect the achievement of solidarity in families of remarriage. (1, p. 215)

What is the impact of remarriage? Bernard found the results of remarriage is usually favorable for the adults. In relation to children's adjustment to a second marriage, there is

little justification for assuming that the experiences of these subjects have damaged them to any marked degree. Suffering there has been--even no doubt, serious trauma. But the over-all picture is not one of disorganized young men and women. They do not stand out as unusual, seriously maladjusted, or emotionally crippled. (1, p. 318)

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Description of Subjects

A four page anonymous questionnaire was administered to 225 students attending the Virginia Polytechnic Institute during the Spring quarter, 1969. The criteria for the selection of the subjects were:

1. The subject must be an undergraduate student at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute at the time of completion of the questionnaire.
2. The student must be single at the time of completion of the questionnaire

All socio-economic levels were included in the sample. Males and females were included in the sample. Eleven of the 225 respondents were eliminated from the study--10 of these were married and one was a graduate student.

The sample consisted of 187 males and 27 females. Of the 214 respondents, 86 were freshman, 46 were sophomores, 56 were juniors, and 26 were seniors. Eighty-six of the respondents were majoring in liberal arts; 126, in technical fields; and 2, in Home Economics. The socio-economic status was distributed as follows:

Upper Socio-economic Status	-	3
Upper-Middle Socio-economic Status	-	102
Lower-Middle Socio-economic Status	-	66
Upper-Lower Socio-economic Status	-	39
Lower-Lower Socio-economic Status	-	4

The distribution of the respondents by residence was as follows:

Rural	-	42
Small town with population 500 to 1,000	-	17
Small city with population up to 25,000	-	51
City with population over 25,000	-	104

The distribution of the parents' marital status is presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1
MARITAL STATUS OF PARENTS

	<u>Number</u>	<u>%</u>
Married, Living Together	198	92.53
Separated	1	.46
Divorced	6	2.81
Mother, Not Living	2	.93
Father, Not Living	6	2.81
No answer	1	.46
Total	214	100.00

Instrument

A Likert-type scale with four degrees of response was developed to measure attitudes toward divorce with four subscales measuring attitudes toward divorce as an institution, attitudes toward people who are divorced, perceptions of the effects of divorce on children, and perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation. The scale was pre-tested by administration to students in a family development class. Twenty-three questionnaires were then scored and an item analysis was performed. Items that did not discriminate were eliminated from the questionnaire.

An item analysis was performed on the sample of 214 usable questionnaires. Every item except one discriminated between upper and lower quartile groups at the .05 level of confidence. The non-discriminating item was deleted from the questionnaire for purposes of total score computation. Total possible scores ranged from 22 to 88 and actual scores ranged from 43 to 85 with the mean score 66.48.

The reliability of the attitude toward divorce scale, determined by means of the split-half correlation technique, was found to be $r = .73$.

Collection of Data

The investigator randomly selected eleven classes from The Virginia Polytechnic Institute's Spring quarter, 1969 Timetable of classes. The professor of each of these classes was asked to allow the investigator time to present the questionnaire in his class. The students could complete the questionnaires in class, or take them home and return them at the next class meeting. Three professors asked that the questionnaires be completed outside the classroom; the remaining eight professors allowed the respondents to complete the questionnaires during the class period.

The following standardized statement of instruction was made before each distribution of questionnaires:

I am Hazel Patterson, a graduate student in Family Development. As a part of my graduate program of work, I am studying "Attitudes Toward Divorce." I need your cooperation and assistance in completing this questionnaire. Please answer

all questions. A few of the questions are forced choice. You may have some difficulty choosing the answer that best represents your attitude, but choose the best alternative. This study is attempting procurement of a random sample of V.P.I. students. If you have already completed the questionnaire in another class, please do not complete a second one.

Analysis of Data

A total of 214 usable questionnaires were completed by the respondents. The questionnaires were scored and tabulated by the investigator. Respondents were classified by sex, socio-economic status, residence, and exposure to divorce. One who has had exposure to divorce is defined for this research as being a person whose parents are divorced, or who has friends who are divorced, or who has relatives who are divorced. Socio-economic status was assessed by the McGuire-White Index of Social Status--Short Form (1955).

The Mann-Whitney U test was used to analyze the difference between the scores of the following groups:

1. Males and females
2. Males by socio-economic status
3. Males by residence
4. Females by residence
5. Males by exposure to divorce

The small number of female respondents prevented analysis of the relationship of female attitudes and two of the independent variables--socio-economic status and exposure to divorce. Values of U and z were determined

by calculations described in Siegel (1956). (35) The .05 level of significance was accepted as the criterion for rejecting the null hypothesis.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between sex and attitudes toward divorce.

To test this hypothesis the total scores of males and females were compared. The mean score for females was 68.7; the mean score for males was 66.2. This difference was not statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence; these data did indicate that females were more liberal in their attitudes toward divorce than males.

Males and females were compared on each of the four sub-scales -- attitudes toward divorce as an institution, attitudes toward people who are divorced, perceptions of the effects of divorce on children, and perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation. There was no significant difference between the sub-scores of males and females on the following three sub-scales: attitudes toward divorce as an institution, attitudes toward people who are divorced, and perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation. When the mean scores for each of these sub-scales were computed, these data showed that females were more liberal than males. Females were significantly more liberal than males in their perceptions of the effects of divorce on children. (Table 2). The level of confidence was .02. The mean score, as seen in Table 2, for males was 13.85 and for females was 15.37. These data indicate that

TABLE 2

Differences in Attitude Scores by Sex

(N = 214)

Effects On Children	N	Mean	z	p
Male	187	13.85	2.36	.02
Female	27	15.37		

(Mann - Whitney U, Sidney Siegel, Values of z, p. 247)

females are more liberal in their perceptions of the effects of divorce on children.

The statistically significant difference in the perceptions of the effects of divorce on children by sex lead the investigator to partially reject the null hypothesis that there was no significant relationship between sex and attitude toward divorce.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and attitudes toward divorce.

To test this hypothesis the scores of low socio-economic status respondents were compared to middle socio-economic status respondents. Only three of the respondents were from upper socio-economic status homes; therefore, no test was run comparing the upper class with the middle and lower class.

When the total scores of the 43 lower class respondents were compared to the 168 middle class respondents, there was no significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. The low and middle socio-economic status respondents were compared on each of the four sub-scales -- attitudes toward divorce as an institution, attitudes toward people who are divorced, perceptions of the effects of divorce on children, and perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of confidence in any of the four sub-scales. The means are listed below by socio-economic status.

MEAN

	Low Socio-economic Status	Middle Socio-economic Status
Total Score	64.49	66.88
Divorce as an Institution	23.26	21.44
People who are Divorced	11.88	12.57
Effects on Children	13.61	14.26
Friendship Role	18.98	18.60

Although these differences were not significant as seen in the above calculations, the middle class respondents were more liberal than the lower class respondents on overall attitudes toward divorce, attitudes toward people who are divorced, and perceptions of the effects of divorce on children. The lower-class respondents were more liberal than the middle-class respondents on their attitudes toward divorce as an institution, and their perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation.

The total scores and sub-scores of low and middle socio-economic status respondents were analyzed by sex. Only three of the females were from the lower socio-economic status; therefore, females were not analyzed by socio-economic status. There was no statistically significant difference in the males' total scores and sub-scores when they were analyzed by socio-economic status. The mean of the total scores for the middle socio-economic class males was 66.75; the mean of the total scores for the lower socio-economic class was

64.7; the mean scores indicated that the middle socio-economic status male respondents were more liberal than the lower socio-economic status male respondents in their attitudes toward divorce.

From these data the second null hypothesis was not rejected. There is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and attitudes toward divorce.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between place of residence and attitudes toward divorce.

To test this hypothesis the scores of urban and rural respondents were compared. Rural respondents were those who had lived most of their lives in an area with a population up to 25,000; urban respondents had lived most of their lives in an area with a population over 25,000. When the total score of the 110 rural residents were compared with the total scores of the 104 urban residents, there was no significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. The urban and rural respondents were compared on each of the four sub-scales -- attitudes toward divorce as an institution, attitudes toward people who are divorced, perceptions of the effects of divorce on children, and perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of confidence in any of the four sub-scales. The mean scores revealed that urban residents were more liberal on each sub-scale except the one measuring the perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation; the mean scores were identical for the

sub-scale measuring the perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation.

The total scores and the sub-scores of the urban and rural respondents were analyzed by sex. The differences between rural (N = 10) and urban (N = 17) female respondents were not statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence. The mean scores indicated that the urban female residents were more liberal than the rural female residents in their overall attitude toward divorce, their attitudes toward divorce as an institution, their perceptions of the effects of divorce on children, and their perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation; rural females were more liberal than urban females in their attitudes toward people who are divorced. The difference between rural (N = 100) and urban (N = 87) male respondents on their total scores and on the four sub-scales was not statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence.

On the basis of these data the third null hypothesis was not rejected. There is no significant relationship between place of residence and attitudes toward divorce.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant relationship between exposure to divorce and attitudes toward divorce.

One who has had exposure to divorce is defined for this research as being a person whose parents are divorced, or who has friends who are divorced, or who has relatives who are divorced. To test this hypothesis the total scores of persons with exposure and with no exposure to divorce were compared.

The mean score for respondents with exposure to divorce was 67.18; the mean score for respondents with no exposure to divorce was 65.31. This difference was not significant at the .05 level of confidence. The mean scores did indicate that respondents with exposure to divorce are more liberal in their attitudes toward divorce than respondents with no exposure to divorce. The respondents with exposure and with no exposure to divorce were compared on each of the four sub-scales. There was no significant difference at the .05 level of confidence on the following three sub-scales: attitudes toward people who are divorced, perceptions of the effects of divorce on children, and perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation. The respondents with exposure and with no exposure to divorce were statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence in their attitudes toward divorce as an institution. (Table 3). The mean score for respondents with exposure to divorce was 21.61; the mean score for respondents with no exposure to divorce was 20.60. These data indicate that the respondents with exposure to divorce were more liberal in their attitudes toward divorce as an institution than the respondents with no exposure to divorce.

The total scores and sub-scores of the respondents with exposure to divorce were analyzed by sex. Only three of the females had no exposure to divorce; therefore, females were not analyzed by exposure to divorce. The total scores and the four sub-scores for the male respondents were compared by their exposure (N = 110) and lack of exposure (N = 77)

TABLE 3

Differences in Attitude
Scores by Exposure to Divorce

(N = 214)

<u>Divorce as an Institution</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Mean</u>	<u>z</u>	<u>p</u>
Exposure to Divorce	134	21.61	1.98	.05
No Exposure to Divorce	80	20.60		

(Mann-Whitney U, Sidney Siegel, Values of z, p.247)

to divorce. There was no significant difference between the male respondents with and without exposure to divorce on their overall attitude toward divorce or any of the four sub-scales measuring attitudes toward divorce as an institution, attitudes toward people who are divorced, perceptions of the effects of divorce on children, and perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation.

The statistically significant difference in the attitudes toward divorce as an institution by exposure and lack of exposure to divorce lead the investigator to partially reject the null hypothesis. The hypothesis was not rejected on the basis of these data, when the data were analyzed by total scores, and the sub-scores measuring attitudes toward people who are divorced, perceptions of the effects of divorce on children, and perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation.

Although the researcher did not hypothesize any relationship between sex and the perceived causes of divorce, the perceived consequences of divorce on the male and on the female, and the situations in which one would feel comfortable with a divorcee, the questionnaire did contain this information. The information has been briefly discussed in the following paragraphs.

Respondents were asked to rank in order the three reasons they thought were the main cause of divorce. Table 5 summarizes the percentages of the five most frequent perceived causes of divorce by sex and year in school. As

seen in Table 4 the largest number of male and female respondents perceived the cause of divorce to be one of the following: sexual adjustment, money management, nagging husband or wife, philosophy of life, or unsuccessful in business or occupation. Freshman males felt the most frequent cause of divorce was philosophy of life; sophomore males felt the most frequent cause of divorce was money management; junior males felt the most frequent cause of divorce was nagging husband or wife; and senior males felt the most frequent cause was sexual adjustment. The following list gives the males perception of the total of the first, second, and third most frequent cause of divorce by year in school:

Freshman - Sexual Adjustment
Sophomore - Sexual Adjustment
Junior - Nagging Husband or Wife
Senior - Sexual Adjustment

Freshmen women felt the most frequent cause of divorce was philosophy of life; sophomore women felt the most frequent cause of divorce was nagging husband or wife; and junior women felt the most frequent cause of divorce was sexual adjustment, money management, and philosophy of life. There were only two senior women; therefore, they were not included in this analysis. The following list gives the female perception of the total of the first, second, and third most frequent cause of divorce by year in school:

Freshmen - Nagging Husband or Wife
Sophomores - Money Management
Juniors - Sexual Adjustment

TABLE 4

Perceived Cause of Divorce

(N = 214)

	Most Frequent		2nd Most Frequent		3rd Most Frequent		Totals	
	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %
Freshman (N = 86)								
Sexual Adjustment	17.34	18.18	21.33	9.09	17.34	18.18	18.66	15.15
Money Management	9.33	9.09	12.00	.00	9.33	36.37	10.22	15.15
Nagging Husband or Wife	18.67	9.09	14.67	27.27	12.00	18.18	15.11	18.19
Philosophy of life	20.00	27.28	6.67	.00	5.33	.00	10.67	9.09
Unsuccessful in business or occupation	4.00	18.18	9.33	27.28	8.00	.00	7.11	15.15
All other answers	30.66	18.18	46.00	36.36	48.00	27.27	38.23	27.31
Sophomores (N=46)								
Sexual Adjustment	19.51	.00	24.39	40.00	19.51	40.00	21.13	26.67
Money Management	24.39	20.00	7.32	60.00	14.63	20.00	15.45	33.35
Nagging husband or wife	14.63	40.00	24.39	.00	19.51	.00	19.51	13.34
Philosophy of life	9.76	20.00	9.76	.00	2.44	.00	7.32	6.66
Unsuccessful in business or occupation	2.44	20.00	7.32	.00	4.88	.00	4.88	6.66
All other answers	29.27	.00	26.82	.00	38.03	40.00	21.71	13.32
Juniors (N=56)								
Sexual Adjustment	17.02	22.23	.00	44.45	17.01	.00	11.35	22.23
Money Management	17.02	22.22	.00	11.11	10.64	11.11	9.22	14.89
Nagging husband or wife	19.15	.00	6.38	22.22	19.15	33.34	14.89	18.49
Philosophy of life	14.89	22.22	14.89	.00	10.64	33.33	12.06	3.70
Unsuccessful in business or occupation	.00	11.11	25.53	.00	10.64	.00	13.47	18.49
All other answers	31.92	22.22	53.20	22.22	31.92	22.22	29.01	22.23
Seniors (N=24)								
Sexual Adjustment	25.00		20.83		8.33		18.06	
Money Management	8.33		12.50		4.17		8.33	
Nagging husband or wife	8.33		.00		16.66		8.33	
Philosophy of life	8.33		8.33		4.17		6.94	
Unsuccessful in business or occupation	4.17		12.50		12.50		9.72	
All other answers	45.84		45.84		54.17		48.62	

It seems that when an evaluation is made on the three most frequent causes of divorce, sexual adjustment is the most frequently perceived cause, nagging husband or wife is the second most frequently perceived cause, and money matters, either unsuccessful in business or occupation or money management is the third most frequently perceived cause.

Respondents were asked to give their perception of the consequences of divorce on the male and on the female. Table 5 summarizes the percentages of the perceived consequences of divorce on the male and on the female by sex. A larger percentage of males felt the consequences on the male were relief and happiness (45.99%) and the consequences on the female were guilt and unhappiness (40.64%). Females felt the consequences on the males (51.86%) and on the female (55.55%) were guilt and unhappiness. A larger percentage of males felt the consequences of divorce on the female and male combined were relief and happiness (41.17%) than guilt and unhappiness (35.56%). A larger percentage of females felt the consequences of divorce on the female and male combined were guilt and unhappiness (53.70%) than relief and happiness (29.63%).

Respondents were asked to state the situations in which they would feel comfortable with a divorcee. Table 6 summarizes the situations in which one would feel comfortable and uncomfortable with a divorcee by sex. A total of 57.82% of the respondents would feel uncomfortable if they had a divorced brother or sister. The following list gives the order from most comfortable to least

comfortable relationship as stated by the respondents:

Fellow Employee
Close Friend
Colleague in My Occupation
Fellow Club Member
Personal Friend in My Club
Neighbor on My Street
Brother or Sister
Marry Divorcee Myself

Males felt comfortable with divorcees in the same order as the list above. More females, however, felt comfortable to have a divorced neighbor than a fellow club member or personal friend in their club who was divorced.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate attitudes toward and perceptions of divorce. Null hypotheses were that males and females would have similar attitudes toward divorce; lower and middle socio-economic status respondents would have similar attitudes toward divorce; urban and rural respondents would have similar attitudes toward divorce; and exposure or lack of exposure to divorce would not affect attitudes toward divorce.

Females were found to be more liberal in their perceptions of the effects of divorce on children. This was significant at the .02 level of confidence as shown in Table 2. One explanation for this difference might be that these women are a select group. It is still more common in our society for men than for women to attend college. Perhaps this selected group of women are the more liberal females in our society. They are among the more educated women. Another explanation for the difference might be that a

TABLE 6

Situations In Which One Would
Feel Comfortable With a Divorcee

(N = 211)

	Comfortable		Uncomfortable		Totals	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Com- for- table	Uncom- for- table
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Fellow Employee	84.24	92.59	15.76	7.41	85.31	14.69
Close Friend	81.52	88.89	18.48	11.11	82.46	17.54
Colleague in My Occupation	80.98	88.89	19.02	11.11	81.99	18.01
Fellow Club Member	80.43	81.48	19.37	18.52	80.57	19.43
Personal Friend in My Club	78.80	81.48	21.20	18.52	79.15	20.85
Neighbor On My Street	76.09	85.19	23.91	14.81	77.25	22.75
Brother or Sister	75.00	70.37	25.00	29.63	74.41	25.59
Marry Divorcee Myself	42.93	37.04	57.07	62.96	42.18	57.82

larger percentage of females were majoring in liberal arts. The distribution of males and females by curriculum may be seen in Table 7. The percentage of males majoring in liberal arts was 35.29 compared with 74.07 females. The percentage of males majoring in technical fields was 64.71 compared with 18.52 females. Two of the twenty-seven females (7.41%) were majoring in Home Economics. From these data it appears that liberal arts majors might have more liberal perceptions of the effects of divorce on children than those respondents majoring in technical fields. Perhaps these women or these liberal arts majors realize or have learned through their studying that the separation that comes with the divorce is not always the problem for children; they may visualize the child's problems in relationships or lack of relationships in his family before, during, and/or after the actual divorce.

The data for females on the perceptions of the effects of divorce on children at least partially conflicts with the data on situations in which one would feel comfortable with a divorcee. Only 37.04% of the females stated they would feel comfortable marrying a divorcee compared with 42.93% of the males. Perhaps an explanation for this conflict is that women are liberal in their perceptions of the effects of divorce on children but are still clinging to the idea that they themselves will marry a single person and not a divorcee.

The null hypothesis was not rejected on the basis of these data, when the data were analyzed by total scores, and the sub-scores measuring attitudes toward divorce as an

TABLE 7

Distribution of Males and Females by Curriculum

(N = 214)

	Males %	Females %	Total %
Liberal Arts	35.29	74.07	40.19
Technical	64.71	18.52	58.88
Home Economics	.00	7.41	.93
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00

institution, attitudes toward people who are divorced, and perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation.

The upper socio-economic status was not analyzed because only three respondents were from that group. When the lower and middle socio-economic status were compared by total scores and sub-scores, there was no significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. The lower-and middle-class males were compared by total scores and sub-scores; there was no significant difference of the .05 level of confidence. Females were not analyzed by socio-economic status; only three women were from the low socio-economic status.

There was no significant difference on the total attitude score or the four sub-scale scores when urban and rural respondents' scores were compared. The total scores and four sub-scale scores were analyzed by sex and residence. There was no significant difference in scores between either males or females when analyzed separately by residence.

There was no statistically significant difference at the .05 level of confidence between the total scores of the respondents with exposure and with no exposure to divorce. The respondents with exposure and with no exposure to divorce were statistically significant at the .05 level of confidence in their attitudes toward divorce as an institution. The mean scores indicated that these respondents with exposure to divorce were more liberal in their attitudes toward divorce as an institution than the respondents with no exposure to divorce. Perhaps an explanation might be that those persons who have been exposed to divorce (defined as one whose parents are divorced, or who has friends who are

divorced, or who has relatives who are divorced) have a more accepting concept of divorce and what it means to our society. They may have rejected what appears to be society's view -- that divorce is detrimental to the individuals involved and to the society. From their exposure they might have concluded that divorce is not detrimental to individuals or to society in all cases -- they may have experienced enough exceptions to the traditional view to have concluded that society had a false view of divorce. Perhaps they would agree with Goode in his statement that divorce should be viewed as "an escape valve for the tension which inevitably arises from the fact that two people must live together." (7, p. 81). Perhaps the respondents who have been exposed to divorce are more liberal in their attitudes toward divorce as an institution because their attitudes are based on the reality of exposure rather than the myth. From their experience with and exposure to divorce, these respondents may have become more accepting of (liberal toward) divorce as an institution.

The total scores and sub-scores of the respondents with exposure and with no exposure to divorce were analyzed by sex. Only three of the females had no exposure to divorce; therefore, females were not analyzed by exposure to divorce. There was no significant difference between the male respondents with and without exposure to divorce on their overall attitudes toward divorce or any of the four sub-scales.

Sexual adjustment, nagging husband or wife, and money matters, either success in an occupation or in managing the money were perceived (in that order) as being the most frequent cause of divorce. An explanation for why the respondents felt that sexual adjustment was the major cause of divorce might be the attention being given to sexual adjustment by the mass media. Many articles are published in magazines who claim to discuss adjustment problems in marriage -- they usually stress or discuss first sexual adjustment. The openness of today in discussing sex and the attention given sexual adjustment by the mass media may explain why it was perceived as the major cause of divorce.

A larger percentage of male respondents felt the consequences of divorce on the female and the male combined were relief and happiness; a larger percentage of the female respondents felt the consequences of divorce on the female and male combined were guilt and unhappiness. Perhaps these women feel that the divorcee feels he has been a failure. His marriage was not a success; he divorced; because he divorced he failed in his marriage, and, therefore, feels guilty and unhappy. The males may look at the divorce quite differently. They may see the divorce as the end of the marriage problems and a chance to start over again.

Respondents were asked to state the situation in which they would feel comfortable with a divorcee. The following

list gives the order from the most comfortable to the least comfortable relationship as stated by the respondent:

Fellow Employee
Close Friend
Colleague in My Occupation
Fellow Club Member
Personal Friend in My Club
Neighbor on My Street
Brother or Sister
Marry Divorcee Myself

A larger percentage of the respondents would feel least comfortable if they would marry a divorcee.

Strengths, Limitations, and Recommendations

The present study was limited to a relatively small sample of undergraduate college students. It is a fairly representative sample of undergraduate, middle class, white, Protestant, technical oriented, males. There was an extremely small number (3) of upper socio-economic status respondents. A larger sample of lower socio-economic status respondents would have been desirable. Most of the respondents (168) were from the middle class.

Neither race nor religion was a variable in the present investigation. There were not enough persons available to sample different races or religious groups. Most of the respondents were white Protestants. Curriculum was not analyzed as an independent variable in the present investigation. Future research might profitably replicate this study using a random sample of various races, religious groups, and major fields of interest (curriculum).

Perhaps the age of a person would affect his attitude toward divorce. A comparison between alumni of different decades might reveal a difference in attitudes toward divorce. Another intriguing possibility would be to investigate, in a longitudinal study, the attitudes toward divorce to determine if, as people grow older, their attitudes toward divorce remain the same, become more liberal, or become more conservative. Future research might profitably replicate this study using a sample of divorced respondents. Another

possibility for further research is to study the possibility of changing one's attitudes through education.

Since no previous research has been conducted to determine an individual's attitude toward divorce, the possibilities are great. Social scientists need to know what background factors lead an individual to a particular attitude toward divorce; one's attitudes toward divorce would affect both the non-divorced individual and the divorced person with whom he interacts.

The present investigation deals with supposed cause-effect variables in an attempt to gain more meaningful knowledge of human behavior. The interrelationship of many variables must be explored. This study is an initial attempt to understand the factors that affect attitude formation.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this research was to investigate attitudes toward and perceptions of divorce. A scale with four degrees of response was developed to measure attitudes toward and perceptions of divorce. Four sub-scales measured attitudes toward divorce as an institution, attitudes toward people who are divorced, perceptions of the effects of divorce on children, and perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation.

The questionnaire was administered to 225 students in their classroom at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Eleven questionnaires were eliminated from the analysis because the respondent was married or a graduate student. Respondents were classified by sex, socio-economic status (McGuire-White Index of Social Status--Short Form), residence, exposure to divorce, year in school, and curriculum.

A comparison between total scores of males and females revealed no significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. There was no significant difference in the data when the following sub-scores were analyzed by sex: attitudes toward divorce as an institution, attitudes toward people who are divorced, and perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation. Females were found to be more liberal in their perceptions of the effects of divorce on children at the .02 level of confidence.

The scores of the respondents were analyzed in each of the following ways:

1. Total scores and sub-scale scores by socio-economic status.
2. Total scores and sub-scale scores of males by socio-economic status.
3. Total scores and sub-scale scores by residence.
4. Total scores and sub-scale scores of males by residence.
5. Total scores and sub-scale scores of females by residence.

The data revealed no significant difference in any of the above categories at the .05 level of confidence.

A comparison between total scores of respondents with and without exposure to divorce revealed no significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. There was no significant difference in the data when the following three sub-scales were analyzed by exposure to divorce; attitudes toward people who are divorced, perceptions of the effects of divorce on children, and perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation. Respondents with exposure to divorce were found to be significantly more liberal at the .05 level of confidence in their attitudes toward divorce as an institution. When the total scores and sub-scale scores were analyzed by sex and exposure to divorce, the data revealed no statistically significant difference.

The largest percentage of respondents perceived the major causes of divorce to be first - sexual adjustment, second - nagging husband or wife, and third - money matters in the form of managing the money or being

successful in an occupation.

More males perceived the consequences of divorce to be relief and happiness than guilt and unhappiness. More females perceived the consequences of divorce to be guilt and unhappiness than relief and happiness.

The respondents were asked to state the situations in which they would feel comfortable with a divorcee. A larger percentage of men than women said they would feel comfortable marrying a divorcee. The following list gives the order by percentage from the most comfortable to the least comfortable relationship as stated by the respondents.

Fellow Employee
Close Friend
Colleague in My Occupation
Fellow Club Member
Personal Friend in My Club
Neighbor on My Street
Brother or Sister
Marry Divorcee Myself

On the basis of this investigation, it appears that sex is related to perceptions of the effects of divorce on children and exposure to divorce is related to attitudes toward divorce as an institution. Residence and socio-economic status do not appear to be related to attitudes toward and perceptions of divorce. As social scientists learn more about attitudes of individuals and the interrelationship of these attitudes and the many possible variables, powers of prediction can be expanded. From the present investigation one can make the following predictions.

1. Women are more liberal in their perceptions of the effects of divorce on children.

2. Women may be more hesitant than men to marry a divorcee.
3. Men are more likely to perceive the consequences of divorce to be relief and happiness; women are more likely to perceive the consequences of divorce to be guilt and unhappiness.
4. Persons who have been exposed to divorce are more liberal in their attitudes toward divorce as an institution.

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APPENDIX

ATTITUDES TOWARD DIVORCE

1. Year in school:
 Freshman
 Sophomore
 Junior
 Senior
 Graduate student

2. Curriculum: Check one Please specify
 Liberal Arts _____ Major field _____
 Technical _____ Major field _____
 Home Economics _____ Major field _____

3. Sex: _____ Male _____ Female

4. Please describe the occupation of the parent who is the head of the household:

5. The main source of family income is:
 Wages, hourly wages, piece work, (weekly paychecks).
 Profits and fees from a business or profession.
 Salary paid on a monthly or bi-monthly basis.
 Social security or unemployment insurance.
 Other, explain _____

6. Check how far your mother went in school:
 Grammar School
 High School
 College
 Graduate School
 Other, specify _____

7. Check how far your father went in school:
 Grammar School
 High School
 College
 Graduate School
 Other, specify _____

8. Residence: Check where you have lived most of your life:
 Rural
 Small town with population 500 to 1000
 Small city with population up to 25,000
 City with population over 25,000

9. Your marital status:
 Single
 Married, living together
 Separated
 Divorced

10. Marital status of your parents:

- Married, living together
- Separated
- Divorced
- Mother not living
- Father not living

11. How many of your friends are divorced?

- None
- 1
- 2-5
- 6 or more

12. How many of your relatives (including your immediate family, grandparents, and aunts and uncles) are divorced?

- None
- 1
- 2-5
- 6 or more

For each of the following sentences check the extent you agree with the statement (For example, if you agree, check under the "agree" column; if you agree with reservation, check under the "agree with reservation" column; and so on).

	Agree	Agree with reservation	Disagree with reservation	Disagree
13. Divorce laws are too lenient.				
14. Keeping the marriage together is more important than any reason for breaking it up.				
15. Divorce should be left strictly to the individuals involved.				
16. Divorce causes more problems than it solves.				
17. Divorce is wrong.				
18. The law should demand a waiting period between divorce and remarriage.				

	Agree		
		Agree with reservation	
			Disagree with reservation
			Disagree
19. To most people friendships with divorcees are as desirable as those with non-divorcees.			
20. The divorced person is not a competent parent.			
21. The personality of the divorced person becomes less desirable.			
22. The life satisfaction of the individual decreases with a divorce.			
23. Divorce does not have a damaging effect on personality.			
24. Divorce is wrong when children are involved.			
25. The intact family helps each child develop to his fullest even when there is parental turmoil (discord).			
26. Unhappily married parents should stay together for the children's sake.			
27. Children are not harmed by having only one parent.			
28. Children are hurt more by living in an unhappy family than with a single divorced parent.			
29. I would help a friend in the divorce process find a date.			
30. I would not provide financial assistance to a friend going through divorce.			

Agree

Agree with reservation

Disagree with reservation

Disagree

31. The divorce of a friend would probably lessen my friendship toward him.

32. I would be reluctant to invite divorced friends to social gatherings.

33. I would dislike becoming involved in the divorce problems of a close friend.

34. Close friends should not be burdened with listening to the problems of divorce.

Choose the answer(s) you think explains or completes each of the following statements:

35. Divorce is caused by (Rate: 1 - most frequent cause, 2 - second most frequent cause, 3 - third most frequent cause):

- _____ Sexual adjustment
- _____ Money management
- _____ Nagging husband or wife
- _____ Training and discipline of children
- _____ Unsuccessful in business or occupation
- _____ Education
- _____ In-law relationships
- _____ Religion
- _____ Social activities or recreation
- _____ Children
- _____ Philosophy of life
- _____ Other, explain _____

36. What age at marriage are couples most likely to divorce?

- _____ Both under 20
- _____ Both 20 to 23
- _____ Both 24 to 26
- _____ Both over 26

37. The consequences of divorce on the male are:

- _____ relief and happiness
- _____ guilt and unhappiness

38. The consequences of divorce on the female are:

- relief and happiness
- guilt and unhappiness

39. Divorces occur most often among persons of:

- an elementary school education
- a high school education
- a college education
- a graduate education

40. Circle each of the following situations in which you would feel comfortable with a divorcee:

- | | | | | |
|------------|-----------------|-------------|----------|--------|
| fellow | brother | fellow | marry | close |
| club | or | employee | divorcee | friend |
| member | sister | | myself | |
| colleague | personal friend | neighbor on | | |
| in my | in my club | my street | | |
| occupation | | | | |

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ATTITUDES TOWARD AND PERCEPTIONS OF DIVORCE

Hazel Revell Patterson

Abstract

This research was designed to investigate attitudes toward and perceptions of divorce; more specifically, the investigator analyzed the data by total scores and four sub-scale scores measuring

1. General attitudes toward divorce as an institution.
2. Attitudes toward people who are divorced.
3. Perceptions of the effects of divorce on children.
4. Perceptions of one's friendship role in a divorce situation.

Two-hundred and eleven usable four page anonymous questionnaires, developed by the investigator, were completed by single undergraduate students attending the Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Blacksburg, Virginia, during the Spring quarter, 1969. The total scores and the four sub-scale scores were analyzed by sex, socio-economic status, residence, and exposure to divorce.

Females were found to be more liberal in their perceptions of the effects of divorce on children at the .02 level of confidence. Respondents with exposure to divorce were found to be significantly more liberal at the .05 level of confidence in their attitudes toward divorce as an institution.

The largest percentage of respondents perceived the

major causes of divorce to be first - sexual adjustment, second - nagging husband or wife, and third - money matters in the form of managing the money or being successful in an occupation. More males perceived the consequences of divorce to be relief and happiness; more females perceived the consequences of divorce to be guilt and unhappiness. Fifty-seven per cent of the respondents stated they would feel uncomfortable marrying a divorcee themselves.