

TRANSITION TO A REMARRIAGE FAMILY:
An Examination of Issues and Tasks Necessary
for Successful Integration
by
Cecile James Pirie

Thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
in
Family and Child Development

APPROVED:

Howard O. Protinsky, Chairperson

Joseph W. Maxwell

Robert S. Schulman

July, 1983
Blacksburg, Virginia

REMARRIED PARTNERS' PERCEPTIONS OF ISSUES AND TASKS
EXPERIENCED IN INTEGRATING THEIR REMARRIED FAMILIES

by

Cecile James Pirie

(ABSTRACT)

This study was an investigation of the perceptions of 65 remarried couples of the issues and tasks set forth in current literature on remarriage that are said to be experienced in common by the remarried family as it integrates into an on-going, stable, supportive unit. Analysis of the survey instrument results indicated that all of the items were perceived as having been experienced in the past by at least 17% of the sample, with often considerable spread between the number experiencing an item and the number experiencing disturbance because of the item. There was strong evidence that the partners perceived a lessening over time in the degree of disturbance experienced in their remarriage and that certain aspects of remarriage family integration processes were more or less troublesome according to the role the individual partner played in the remarriage. Implications for family education and counseling are offered.

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
Methodology	2
Tests on Clusters and Subsets of Items	5
Results and Discussion	6
Summary	21
Implications	23
Tables	27
References	34
Appendix A: Literature Review	38
References	74
Appendix B: Supplementary Information on the Present Study	79
Methodology	80
Appendix C: Supplementary Tables	88
Appendix D: Letters sent to partners in remarriage	97
Appendix E: Questionnaires sent to partners in remarriage	100
Appendix F: Vita	115

Historically remarriage has resulted in the formation of a "step" family unit, but only with the recent increase in divorce has the form commonly come to include a divorced biological parent outside the family unit. This stretching of the boundaries of the new family, the stressful past histories with separation and divorce, and the prior bonds of parents and children that precede the new couple union contribute to a family unit which is in many ways different from the first-marriage family unit (Visher and Visher, 1978; Walker and Messinger, 1979).

By 1979, many marriage and family scholars were indicating an increased awareness of the diverging issues and processes of the rapidly growing remarriage-after-divorce family form (Walker, Brown, Crohn, Rodstein, Zeizel, and Sager, 1979). John and Emily Visher focused widespread attention on the family of remarriage through their publication, Stepfamilies, A Guide to Working with Stepparents and Stepchildren (1979). In this publication the Vishers compiled a complete review of issues and tasks that the remarriage family faces in its efforts to become stable and supportive. Repeated efforts have been made since to continue to explicate the factors that impact on the stepfamily as it is formed (Furstenberg, 1979; Keshet, 1980; McGoldrick and Carter, 1980; Ransom, Schlesinger, and Derdeyn, 1979; Rosenberg, 1980; and Sager, Steer, Crohn, Rodstein and Walker, 1980).

As these factors are examined, they are generally viewed as a logical extension to the processes of the break-up of the first marriage family, the formation of the two single-parent families and the beginning of the serious relationship of the new couple. In addition to the

issues and tasks arising from previous stages to the remarriage, the literature delineates those that arise purely from the structural and relational aspects of the remarriage itself (Keshet, 1980; Kleinman, Rosenberg, and Whiteside, 1979; and Visher and Visher, 1979).

Weingarten (1980) observed that almost no efforts have been made to investigate what is involved in a well-functioning stepfamily, what interferes with its functioning and what impact expectations of the individual and society have on the remarried family. A review of the literature has revealed no research to date that investigated whether or not the issues and tasks compiled in the literature are being experienced in common by families of remarriage (REM). In light of the increasing interest in the organization of stepfamilies, this exploratory study was designed to ascertain whether or not the issues and tasks discussed in the current literature as common to these families were perceived as such by the partners in remarriage themselves. With the large number of issues indicated as being important, it appears to be critical for the counselor and the family life educator to know which, if any, of these issues are impacting on the well-being of these families and to what degree they are perceived as causing disturbances.

Methodology

Sample

The sample was obtained through the snowball technique. Members of the original group were lay couples from all over the southeastern U.S. who had attended a seminar on remarriage at a conference in 1981. They were contacted later and asked for names of persons who might fit the criteria and be willing to participate in this research. As each new

couple was contacted, they were asked to make referrals. These were couples who had been married no less than six months and no more than five years. At least one of each couple had been divorced from a former marriage and at least one had brought at least one child into the remarriage from a former relationship. One hundred couples agreed to participate. A questionnaire was sent to each spouse to be filled out separately. Sixty-five fully completed sets were returned.

The age of the respondents ranged from 24-65 with a mean age of 40.4. The mean length of marriage was 32 months. Twenty of the 130 respondents were in their first marriage; all others had been divorced. Thirty-seven had no children when they entered the remarriage. In 28 of the couples both spouses had children from a previous marriage. In 21 couples only the wife had children from a previous marriage, and in 16 only the husband had children from a previous marriage. There were nine children born to the new marriages. Two of the couples were expecting and two had jointly adopted a child. Ages of the children varied from a few months to over 30.

Ninety-seven of the respondents had engaged professional help for emotional problems at some time between the threatened break-up of the former marriage up to the present. Educational level tended to be very high. Thirty-five of the sample had finished high school or attended technical school, community college or one year at a four year college. Thirty had graduated with a B.A. degree, 37 with an M.A., and 27 with Ph.D.'s.

Of the 130 respondents, on a scale for marital happiness 12 reported their marriages "less happy than others", 31 reported their marriages

"as happy as others", and 87 reported their marriages "happier than others".

Instrumentation

The issues and tasks were abstracted from the current literature, and a questionnaire of 58 items was designed to investigate various aspects of each as the partners in REM might perceive them. Because the issue of pseudo-mutuality (Goldstein, 1974) was considered a potential obstruction to self-report in these marriages, the questionnaire was designed to allow respondents to indicate having experienced an item as a separate process from indicating disturbance on the item.

Each respondent was asked to indicate whether or not he/she had experienced the item either earlier in his/her marriage and/or in the present. The choices were no problem, mild disturbance, moderate disturbance and severe disturbance.

A disturbance score was calculated for each partner by averaging the responses for each item the subject completed (not experienced was scored zero; experienced but no disturbance - one; mild disturbance - two; moderate disturbance - three; and severe disturbance - four). Percentages were tabulated for the total responses on each item at each level of response. Since all items are not applicable to all of the subjects, percentages were figured as a percent of those for whom the item was applicable. This tabulation was completed for four categories of data. Couple data (CD) is the percent of couples in which at least one of the partners experienced the item in the past and/or in the present. Individual data (ID) is the percent of the individuals who

reported experiencing the item in the past and/or in the present; disturbance data (DD) is the percent of all individuals who reported experiencing any level of disturbance; and moderate-severe disturbance data (MSDD) is the percent of all individuals who reported experiencing moderate-severe disturbance.

Tests on Clusters and Subsets of Items

One of the goals of this study was to test out the varying hypotheses in the literature that certain roles played by the partners in remarriage were more stressful than other roles. These roles are: women who are both stepmother and mother; men who are both stepfather and father; women who are mothers, but have no stepchildren; men who are fathers but have no stepchildren; women who are stepmothers but have no children from a previous marriage; and men who are stepfathers but have no children from a previous marriage.

Another important goal of the research was to test the proposals in literature that some sets of issues and tasks are more stressful than others to those in a Rem family (Glen and Weaver, 1977). These were tested in two ways. First, tests were run on 17 small clusters of items containing one - five items each all organized around a specific sub-topic of issues. Next the clusters were regrouped into seven major subsets around the major topics in the literature. The seven major topics were: Resolution of past issues/couple issues over prior bonds; Emotional issues; Establishment of the Rem couple relationship; Parenting/stepparenting issues; Boundary issues/co-parenting with the ex-spouse; Family decision and rule-making; and In-law/ex-kin issues.

Since this was an exploratory study, the current literature was used as a guide for the content of each subset.

Results and Discussion

Perceived Change in Disturbance Over Time

In the current literature there is a consensus expressed that over time Rem families become more comfortable with their situations. The Vishers (1979) suggested that a Rem family will have reorganized to a more tolerable, but not necessarily satisfactory, structure within three to four years, or will have dissolved if such reorganization has not taken place. McGoldrick and Carter reported that it takes at least two years to stabilize a step-family. Pendergast (1980) proposed that five years were necessary for the processes of integration.

In this study, the partners had been remarried between six months and five years with a mean of 32 months. When they were asked to differentiate between their perceptions of the impact of the items in the questionnaire on their lives earlier in their remarriages and in the present, there was a strong indication that they perceived the disturbance to be much less in the present ($\underline{t} = 8.56$ (178) $\underline{p} < .001$). In looking at the results item by item to see if a lessening of perceived disturbance was reported using a paired t test, the data indicated that disturbance was perceived to have dropped significantly (for any level of disturbance, $\underline{t} = 3.8375$ (114) $\underline{p} = .005$; for moderate-severe disturbance, $\underline{t} = 6.03$ (114) $\underline{p} = (.0005)$ from the past to the present).

Demographic Data Related to Total Disturbance Score

Secondary to the major goals of this investigation, procedures were carried out to test relationships between demographic data and the respondents' total disturbance scores. Sample size and design of the survey were hindrances to significant results on the tests, but some trends were shown. Using the Pearson product moment test, results showed that age of the respondent tended to be inversely correlated to disturbance scores ($\underline{r} = -.18$, $\underline{p} = .0390$). A longer time between divorce and remarriage showed a trend, though not significant, to being associated with a lower disturbance score ($F = 1.87$; $\underline{p} = .1747$).

T-tests were used to test several aspects of remarriage relationships. Professional help at the time or just before the breakup of the former marriage was related to a lower disturbance score, again not significantly ($\underline{t} = 1.30$, (128) $\underline{p} = .1958$). All other forms of professional help following the divorce through the present did not show such a tendency (significance levels ranged from $\underline{p} = .49$ to $\underline{p} = .9447$). Whether or not the wife was in her first marriage showed a very slight tendency to affect the disturbance score when compared to second married women with no children from the former marriage (more disturbance; $\underline{t} = 1.0663$ (19) $\underline{p} = .3031$). However, when compared to all other women with children in the present home there was no such difference ($\underline{t} = .2334$ (45) $\underline{p} = .8165$). Whether or not the couple had moved into a new joint residence or lived in the former home of either showed a relationship (though nonsignificant), to a lower disturbance score ($\underline{t} = 1.57$ (df) $\underline{p} = .1186$) for the new residence. There was a very slight tendency for couples where one partner had children from a former marriage all

of whom were one-10 years in age and the other had children all 10-20 years in age to have a higher disturbance score than all other couples ($\underline{t} = 1.0337$) (62) $\underline{p} = .333$). This difference was not shown between couples whose children were all one-10 years old and couples whose children were all 10-20 ($t = .5420$ (34) $\underline{p} = .59$). No difference was shown whether or not children under 18 lived in the home of the couple or in the ex-spouse's homes ($\underline{t} = .0074$ (66) $\underline{p} = .994$).

A one-way anove test showed no difference among levels of education in disturbance scores ($\underline{f} = .50$ (97) $\underline{p} = .80$). However, when chi-square tests for differences in frequencies of mild, moderate and severe disturbance were calculated, the higher education levels had less severe disturbance than expected and those with lower education had more ($X^2 = 11.1692$ (4) $\underline{p} = .025$).

Multiple Comparisons Test for Differences Among Subsets and Roles

In looking to see if any particular types of issues were more stressful for these subjects than others, the data were tested for variation in reported moderate-severe disturbance. Moderate-severe disturbance data for each item in a subset were used to calculate the rank analogue to Fisher's protected LSD (least significant difference) procedure. This procedure involved two stages. First, the Kruskal-Wallis test was carried out among all groups. Where the Kruskal-Wallis indicated differences, Wilcoxon rank sum tests were completed on each pair of groups to identify which subsets actually differed (Table 1).

Insert Table 1 here.

Subset 5, Boundary Issues/co-parenting with ex-spouse, was found to be the highest in rank of all subsets for MSDD, but significantly

different only from the three lowest ranking subsets: Subset 1, Resolution of Past Issues; Subset 4, Parenting/stepparenting issues; and Subset 7, In-law/ex-kin issues. Subset 7 was the only subset that was statistically different from all other subsets.

To get another perspective, the ratio of moderate-severe data to individual data was calculated for each item in each subset (MSDD/ID) and again the rank analogue to the Fisher's protected LSD procedure was carried out on these data (Table 2). Subset 5, Boundary Issues, was

Insert Table 2 here.

again the highest in rank, and was the only subset that was statistically different from all other subsets. Subset 7, In-law/ex-kin issues, was again the lowest in rank but significantly different only from Subset 3, Couple Relationship, Subset 2, Emotional Issues, and Subset 5 (Table 2).

These two data sets showed a strong indication that Subset 5, Boundary issues/co-parenting with ex-spouse, was seen as the most problematic group of issues by these subjects, as they reported a consistently higher stress level for them than the other subsets. Subset 7, In-law/ex-kin issues, was indicated to be the least significant group of issues with a consistently lower stress level than the others. The other subsets were all within a moderate stress level.

In looking for variation in total disturbance scores related to the six roles played by the partners in Rem, individual disturbance scores for each subject in each role were used in calculating the Fisher's procedure. The first step, the Kruskal-Wallis test was significant to $p = .01$.

although there was variation from role to role, there were no roles where the medians were statistically different than those of all other roles (Table 3). The stepmother-mother role was highest in rank and

Insert Table 3 here.

significantly different from the lowest ranking role, father-only. The father-only role was statistically different from all other roles except stepfather-father. These data show a strong but nonsignificant trend towards the stepmother-mother role being reported at the most stressful level. There is an equally strong trend shown by the data that the father-only role is the least stressful of the six roles. The other four roles are reported with only slight variations in medians from subset to subset.

In looking more closely at the data, stepmother-mother is ranked first and its complement, stepfather-father, is ranked fifth. The medians of these two roles vary but not significantly (Wilcoxon rank sum test, $p = .19$). The stepmother-only role is ranked second and its complement, father-only, is ranked sixth. These two roles do differ statistically. The wide difference in viewpoints of the stress level for the Rem family within these two sets of partners may be a hindrance to the integration of these families. Reiss and Oliveri (1980), in their article on the family's adaptation to stress, speak of the necessity of shared constructs in a family for the development of on-going relationships. The two remaining roles, also complementary, mother-only and stepfather-only, have very similar medians. These are the two roles in Rem where, according to the literature, expectations

may be lower; the wife with children from the previous marriage and the husband who is not expected to take a central role with her children.

Discussion of Subsets and Clusters on All Experience and Disturbance

Data

Due to the large amount of data on the seven subsets and 17 clusters, the total data will be presented in tables. Only the most important aspects will be discussed in the text (refer to Tables 1, 2, 4 and 5).

Insert Tables 4 and 5 here.

Subset 1. Resolution of issues arising prior to the remarriage: impact on couple relationship.

Throughout the current literature authors have expressed agreement that because of the complexity of the losses and changes necessitated by the break-up of the former intact family, the issues and tasks arising during the time span will most likely not be resolved upon remarriage (Bitterman, 1968; McGoldrick and Carter, 1980; Messinger, 1976, Schulman, 1981; and Visher and Visher, 1979). Areas of special concern for these authors were: resolution of hostilities between former spouses, ex-spouses giving up the marital relationship while learning to cooperate as parents, completion of mourning the loss of the first family by all members, moving from the tight relationships of the first marriage and the single-parent family stages to the looser subsystem boundaries necessary in the remarriage family, guilt felt by the parents towards the children, and extended family involvement (Subset 1 includes 1-a, 1-b, and 1-c).

Cluster 1-a, Bitterness from former relationships, includes three items all pertaining to the hurt and anger from the breakup of the former marriage that the subject, his/her ex-spouse and their children still maintain which might affect their present day functioning. Mean responses for this cluster were average over all clusters (Table 4). Although all three of these items had been reported at a high level of disturbance in the past, these subjects do not reveal much concern about these items in the present.

Chi-square tests were used to determine differences in reported disturbance level among roles and between men and women on all clusters (Table 5). In order to calculate the χ^2 tests each subject's response scores were totalled for each cluster of items. Based on these totals the respondents' total scores for each cluster were divided approximately at the median, and each subject was placed in the low or high disturbance category for each cluster. There were no differences in reported disturbance level among roles or between men and women for cluster 1-a.

Cluster 1-b, Parent/child subsystem from prior marriage, contains five items pertaining to the subject and his/her relationship to his/her children from the former marriage which are stated in the literature to impact on the Rem family adjustment. The data on this cluster were also average in comparison to all other clusters (Table 4). Again disturbance data had dropped considerably from the past, and although 20% of those for whom the item was applicable reported MSDD in the present on the item pertaining to the subject having guilt feelings about effect

of past divorce on his/her children, the remaining items were causing less than average disturbance.

Differences on reported level of disturbance in the present among roles played by the partners in Rem were found (Table 5). Roles step-father-father and father-only had less problem than expected and roles stepmother-mother and mother-only had more problem ($X^2 = 7.687$ (1) $p = .0056$).

Cluster 1-c, Couple issues: prior bonds, contains three items pertaining to the subject and his/her spouse working together on issues relating to the subject's spouse and children from the former marriage. This cluster of items was reported by these subjects to be one of the less important for them with means for all data well below the average for all items (Table 4). The role, stepmother-mother, had more problem than expected in the past and roles, mother-only and father-only, had less ($X^2 = 12.768$ (3) $p = .0052$).

Combining all clusters in Subset 1, mean scores indicated that in the perceptions of the respondents this group of items is of moderate concern in relation to the other subsets of the questionnaire.

Subset 2. Emotional Issues.

In discussing the differences of an Rem family from a first marriage family, Goldstein (1974), Visher and Visher (1979), Sager, et al. (1980) and McGoldrick and Carter (1980) concluded that the blending of separate histories, memories, self-concepts, role definitions, expectations, emotions and ideas of solidarity of the two family subsystems has to be achieved deliberately in the family of Rem. This process will

naturally produce a heavy emotional and cognitive load and test the family members' abilities for adaptation. Instant relationships were indicated as one area of overload. Another was that of myths and expectations of both the family members and the culture in which they live. Johnson (1980), Keshet (1980), and McGoldrick and Carter (1980) observed that the survival of the Rem family depends on the ability of the couple to recognize and accept the differences between the first-marriage family and the Rem family in order for the family to settle its conflicts and tolerate the indefiniteness and ambiguity. (Subset 2 includes clusters 2-a, 2-b, 2-c and 2-d.)

Cluster 2a, Respondents' internal conflicts, consists of two items concerning the subject's personal feelings about how he/she has to adapt to meet the needs of the Rem family. The respondents in this study indicated these issues were of more than average concern for them with all data well above the means for all clusters (Table 4). An unusual aspect of these data was the small amount of change from past to present, with most present data the same or only slightly less than that of the past.

Cluster 2-b, Children's emotional issues, contains three items relating to loyalty issues and adaptation to a new family form. Despite the fact that most Rem parents are reported in the literature to be very sensitive to their children's difficulties with the new family, this sample has not indicated a great deal of concern about these items. All the data are somewhat below the averages of all clusters (Table 4).

Cluster 2-c, Emotional issues for the Rem family, consists of six items pertaining to the family as a group and their issues of jealousy, rejection, pseudomutuality, sexuality and use of stepfamily terms. All

data were near or below the means for all clusters. However, two of the items stand out because of the spread from the averages. The item, "Members of the subject's family showing signs of not feeling accepted," shows over 50% of the sample still reporting disturbance in the present and one-fifth reporting MSDD. The item on sexual attraction within the family among non-biologically related members showed data all at a negligible level. This item was reported as the least experienced of all the items on the questionnaire.

For cluster 2-c, both stepmother-mother and stepfather-father, those persons with children of their own from prior marriages who also have step-children in the remarriage, reported more disturbance than expected in the present. The roles, father-only and stepmother-only, reported less ($X^2 = 11.249$ (5) $p = .0467$) (Table 5).

Cluster 2-d, Accepting differences of Rem family from the first-marriage family, contains two items. The item, Recognizing that nothing stays the same, seems particularly pertinent, with over half of the subjects reporting some level of disturbance and one-fifth reporting MSDD. All data for this cluster are well above the means for all items (Table 4). Women reported more disturbance than expected in the past; men reported less ($X^2 = 3.267$ (1) $p = .052$) (Table 5).

Although the data on the four clusters in Subset 2 prove to be uneven, the average over the whole subset were near the means of all items on all data.

Subset 3. Establishment of the Rem couple relationship

The couple subsystem of the remarriage is considered the least stable of all the relationships in the remarriage by many of the writers

since it began in the midst of all the changes initiated by the remarriage, along with the prior presence of children and the legal, financial and emotional obligations outside the new family system. Keshet (1980), Kleinman, et al. (1979), and Visher and Visher (1979) commented on the importance of the couple developing methods of negotiating conflict that does not include drawing the children between the parents. Visher and Visher, Keshet and McGoldrick and Carter (1980) considered the lack of common history and the lessening of private time and space to reduce the sense of closeness and romance for the new couple. (Subset 3 includes Clusters 3-a and 3-b.)

Cluster 3-a, Couple bonding, consists of four items relating to the couple taking time to develop a common grounding for their relationship. The data suggest that this cluster of items is particularly pertinent to these couples, with average CD and ID in the present well above the means of all clusters, although average disturbance data are close to the means (Table 4). For the item, "Couple finding time for themselves," one-half of those eligible still report disturbance in the present, and slightly less than 20% report MSDD.

Cluster 3-b, Couple executive function, consists of four items relating to the couple working together on parenting, financial and inheritance decisions. The partners reported a high level of awareness of these issues with average CD and ID data well above the means for all clusters, but disturbance data are again close to the means. Two of the items, "My new spouse and I making joint financial decisions," and, "My new spouse and I having different ideas on how to raise children," were reported as most problematic on the cluster with MSDD (15%) twice as high

as on the other two items (Table 4). The role, stepmother-mother, reported more disturbance than expected in the past on cluster 3-b; the role, father-only, reported less ($X^2 = 13.535$ (5) $p = .0018$). Women reported more disturbance than expected in the past while men reported less (likelihood ratio $X^2 = 3.756$ (1) $p = .052$) (Table 5).

Subset 4. Parent/stepparent issues.

Weingarten (1980), in her study on the well-being of remarried persons, concluded that remarried couples are much more likely than the first married couples to feel that children separate them rather than bring them together. Messinger (1976) and Bohannon and Erickson (1978) affirmed that the discipline of stepchildren was undoubtedly the most important subject for remarried partners.

In general, authors on Rem families indicated that parenting in the Rem family is much more difficult than in a first-marriage family. Issues such as divided loyalties, guilt, jealousy, lack of models for parenting in step-families complicate parent/child/stepchild relationships. (Subset 4 included clusters 4-a, 4-b, and 4-c.)

Cluster 4-a, Adaptation to Rem parenting, consists of five issues relating to the subject's adjustment to personalities, habits, behaviors and other aspects of being a parent in Rem. Means on this cluster were average for the questionnaire. However, reports for the item, Subject getting used to personalities, habits and behavior of new family members, affirmed the stress placed on this topic in the literature. Reported MSDD was twice as high as any other item on the cluster.

Cluster 4-b, Stepparent role strain, consists of one item, Subject having mixed feelings and confusion about how he/she acts and reacts

toward the stepchildren. This sample reported this item as one of the most problematic on the questionnaire. The data show the highest ID level in the past, and the highest DD level, past and present, for all items (Table 4).

Cluster 4-c, Stepsiblings, again consists of one item, "Spouses working with the children as step-siblings to help them enjoy and respect each other as allies and friends." This item pertained only to the roles, stepmother-mother and stepfather-father. It was the only item on which CD and ID rose considerably from past to present. The data also showed the highest reported ID level in the present. Despite the high ID reported, MSDD was very low. This may indicate that it is an issue that becomes more apparent after other more pressing issues and tasks are dealt with and more of the family resources are available for on-going issues.

Despite the fact that CD, ID, and DD are all high on Subset 4, all the moderate-severe data are near the means indicating a high level of awareness of the issues but no unusual problems.

Subset 5. Boundary issues/co-parenting with ex-spouse.

Boundaries in a stepfamily are usually quite permeable, possibly ill-defined, to allow the children to move from one household to another. Visher and Visher (1979), Keshet (1980), and McGoldrick and Carter (1980) predicted difficulty for a family of Rem when attempts are made to draw firm boundaries around the new household membership by demanding primary loyalty and cohesiveness within the new family. They suggested that the more open the lines to all members across the boundaries, the more

functional the family will be. Ransom, et al. (1979) stressed the important task of delineating a relationship with the divorced biological parent outside the Rem family as a task unique to the stepfamily. (Subset 5 includes clusters 5-a and 5-b.)

Cluster 5-a, Boundary issues, consists of four items relating to the impact of the existence of the ex-spouse and other ex-kin outside the new family. This cluster was shown to be the most problematic of all clusters (Table 4). Court negotiations appear to be especially disturbing for those who reported them. The item, "Getting used to decisions being made outside the family that affect the family," had the highest MSDD in the past and present of all items (43.6% and 31.5%). For cluster 5-a, the roles, stepmother-mother and father-only, experienced more disturbance than expected in the present while roles, mother-only and stepfather-father, reported less ($X^2 = 12.293$ (5) $p = .0310$) (Table 5).

Cluster 5-b, Co-parenting with ex-spouse, consists of five items relating to the subject and his/her parenting relationship with the ex-spouse. The data suggest that this area may persist as problematic for those who experience the items. Average MSDD is above the mean for all items despite the fact that CD and ID are reported at a low level (Table 4). The low level of data on two of the items, "Subject learning how to support ex-spouse emotionally," and "Negotiating a structure with ex-spouse so that all family members can enjoy public occasions," show that two issues reported commonly by Rem families in therapy are not considered important issues by this sample.

Both clusters in Subset 5 were reported at higher than average levels. The results of the Fisher's procedure showed Subset 5 as the highest in rank in both moderate-severe data sets and significantly higher than all other subsets for MSDD/ID (Tables 1 and 2).

Subset 6. Family decision and rule-making.

Cherlin (1978) stated that Rem families must solve problems unknown to the first-marriage family. Rallings (1976), Whiteside, et al. (1978), Walker, et al. (1979), Perkins, et al. (1979), Kompara (1980), Sager, et al. (1980), and McGoldrick and Carter (1980) all discussed the lack of institutionalized solutions to role definition for these families and concluded that the lack of specific norms, the inconsistent cultural expectations and the resultant role ambiguity and role strain add to the complications of the family, promoting conflict and division. (Subset 6 includes one cluster.)

Cluster 6-a, Family decision and rule-making, included four items all relating to the Rem family members developing ways of dividing up roles and responsibilities. The respondents indicated that decisions about names and terms used in their families (re: use of mother or first name for stepmother) had been of very little concern to them. This contradicts the stress placed on this issue in the literature. All other items in the subset showed average or above CD, ID and disturbance data.

Subset 7. In-law/ex-kin issues.

Anspach (1976), Spicer and Hampe (1977), and Furstenberg (1979) reported a long network of affective ties between ex-kin and kin after

divorce. Furstenberg proposed that reconstruction of kin relationships after remarriage was pertinent to the welfare of the family. Duberman (1976) and Bernard (1979) both established in their studies of Rem families the importance of the in-law relationship for the remarriage.

Cluster 7-a, In-law/ex-kin issues from the divorce/remarriage, consists of three issues concerning ex-kin, subject's parents, and new in-laws relating to the divorce/remarriage, and their attitudes impacting on the marriage. The data show this set of items to be of very low priority for this sample with all data among the lowest for all clusters (Table 4). The role, stepfather-father, reported more disturbance than expected in the present while the role, mother-only, reported less ($X^2 = 7.047$ (3) $p = .0438$) (Table 5).

Cluster 7-b, In-law issues-present marriage, consists of two issues relating to parents and in-laws involving themselves in the remarriage affairs. The data suggest that most of the subjects perceived little awareness of distress in this area. Although reported CD and ID were higher on this cluster than on 7-a, disturbance data continued to be negligible (Table 4).

The multiple comparisons tests showed Subset 7 to be the lowest in rank on both sets of moderate-severe disturbance data. For MSDD, Subset 7 was significantly lower than all other subsets, indicating that for the respondents this set of issues is of much less concern than any of the others (Table 1 and 2).

Summary

Fifty three of the 58 items were experienced by at least one partner in each couple in the past and/or in the present. This finding

supports the premise in the literature that there is a set of issues and tasks held in common by Rem families necessary for their successful integration. Moderate-severe disturbance data were reported at levels significantly lower than individual data for experiencing the items. This result supports the proposal frequently made that the set of common issues for Rem families is developmental rather than pathological. Further support for the latter was shown by the significant drop in disturbance in all tests for differences in disturbance between past and present.

Results of the chi square analysis showed a definite trend for women to have more difficulties than men in dealing with Rem family issues. All differences for gender showed women reporting more disturbance than men. This result supports the general agreement in the literature that the mother/stepmother role is most central and, therefore, more likely to be stressful. Even more specifically, the multiple comparisons test showed a strong but not significant tendency for the role of the woman who has children from a former marriage marrying a man who has children from a former marriage to be the most stressful of the six roles. On only one out of six significant chi square tests for difference in disturbance level among roles did this role not show more disturbance than expected.

The literature was also supported by some of the findings on the demographic data. Older age of subject, couples who moved into a new home vs. the former home of either, a longer span of time between divorce and the remarriage, higher education level, and professional help just before or immediately after the divorce were related, though

non-significantly, to less disturbance. However, there was little evidence shown that a woman going into remarriage with no children of her own, children under 19 not living in the Rem home, and lack of professional help from the single-parent stage through the present were related to a higher disturbance score.

The data departed most significantly from the literature when they were analyzed for varying levels of reported disturbance from item to item and subset to subset. Boundary/co-parenting with ex-spousal issues undoubtedly were perceived as causing the most disturbance for this population; in-law/ex-inlaw issues, the least. There was considerable variation in the responses among the items as to the partners' awareness of their impact on their daily lives and as to the disturbance the partner attributed to the items. It appears that the questionnaire items, as a reformulation of the issues and tasks presented in the literature, contributed to a clarification of the Rem partners' awareness of the issues and their impact. Voluntary feedback which accompanied the returned questionnaires affirmed that the items were recognized as being pertinent to the respondents.

Implications

As the issues and tasks considered necessary for the integration of the Rem family are discussed in the literature, there is little information on the relative importance of these items. This study shows that although all of the items in the questionnaire were experienced by at least 17% of the sample earlier in their remarriage and 12% in the present, the number who reported experiencing any one item and the impact perceived by those reporting the item varied greatly from item to item.

This research indicates that those in the helping professions can be less concerned about some of the issues and focus on those that these couples expressed as most pertinent to their well-being. Additional research should be directed towards finding out if the report of this sample is applicable to the larger population of Rem. It is also vital to ascertain whether certain issues are more likely to contribute to dysfunction than others or whether it is the simultaneous presence of a large number of issues that catalyze dysfunction which then centers on certain issues according to a specific family situation.

Despite the fact that these couples reported that some issues are less important to them than others and that there is a significant change over time, the number of issues faced remains high. This situation can be compared to family "pile-up" discussed by McCubbin and Patterson (1982) in their study of family adaptation to crisis where the "crisis" resulted from an apparent overload of responsibilities and a pile-up of expected and unexpected life events. Over time, the families they studied experienced a pile-up of stressors as a result of the initial stressors, the families' efforts to manage their situations and the normal development of the family members. Montgomery (1982) proposed that chronic stressors are a drain on family resources detracting from the family's ability to perform normative functions. It is clear from this study, that for these Rem families the stressors do not go away quickly but remain over a period of time.

Another area of concern in family stress studies is that of boundary ambiguity which is indicated as being disorganizing for families. McCubbin and Patterson (1982) reported intra-family boundary ambiguity

in the families under stress they studied. Boss (1980), in her discussion of normative family stress, reiterated her previous proposal that a high degree of boundary ambiguity in a family system may contribute to dysfunction. She listed boundary ambiguities for the Rem family that could become problematic. In contrast, Visher and Visher (1979), Keshet (1980), and McGoldrick and Carter (1980) predicted difficulties for a Rem family which attempts to draw firm boundaries around the new household membership. This area of contradiction is possibly being expressed in the results of this study where boundary issues were clearly indicated as the most disturbing subset. A particular need for attention to this set of issues in research, education and therapy is indicated.

The partners in Rem in this study do not indicate that they perceive their families are in a state of disintegration, but their reports show a strong trend towards the maintenance over time of numerous interactional and structural problems to be solved. It is suggested that this situation puts them at risk as expected and unexpected changes add additional stressors to their lives.

Limitations of this study for generalizing to the general public are obvious. The high level of education of most subjects indicates a high socio-economic group which is not representative of the total population of Rem families. But if the trend shown in this sample and elsewhere (Bernard 1979; Duberman 1975), that the higher the education the lower the disturbance from Rem is valid, one could assume that the general population would be experiencing even more issues at a higher level of disturbance. Since the number of Rem families is growing

rapidly, it is mandatory that the helping professions be not only aware of the risks but sufficiently prepared to intervene in their behalf.

Table 1

Relationship among mean ranks of subsets for
Moderate to Severe Disturbance Data

Sub. 7	Sub. 4	Sub. 1	Sub. 6	Sub. 2	Sub. 3	Sub. 5
Inlaw Issues	Par./ Steppar. Issues	Resol. of past Issues	Family Decision & Rule- Making	Emo. Issues	Couple Rela.	Bound. Issues

Rank analogue - Fisher's protected LSD (all comparisons $p \leq .05$)
following Kruskal Wallis test

$$H = 20.96 \quad d.f. = 6 \quad p < .03$$

Note: Subsets are ranked left to right, lowest to highest. All
subsets connected by a line have statistically equivalent medians.

Table 2

Relationship among mean ranks of subsets for
Ratio of M.S.D.D. to I.D. Data

Sub. 7	Sub. 4	Sub. 6	Sub. 1	Sub. 3	Sub. 2	Sub. 5
Inlaw Issues	Par./ Steppar. Issues	Family Decision & Rule- Making	Resol. of past Issues	Couple Rela.	Emo. Issues	Bound. Issues

Rank analogue - Fisher's protected LSD (all comparisons $p \leq .05$)
following Kruskal-Wallis test

$$H = 14.82 \quad \text{d.f.} = 6 \quad p \leq .04$$

Note: Subsets are ranked left to right, lowest to highest. All
subsets connected by a line have statistically equivalent medians.

Table 3

Relationship Among Mean Ranks of Total
Disturbance Score for Role

Father- Only	Stepfather- Father	Mother- Only	Stepfather- Only	Stepmother- Only	Stepmother- Mother
-----			-----		

Rank analogue - Fisher protected LSD (all comparisons $p \leq .05$ following
Kruskal-Wallis test

$$H = 17.086 \quad P < .01$$

Note: Subsets are ranked left to right, lowest to highest. All subsets
connected by a line have statistically equivalent medians.

Table 4
Mean Percentages of Responses for Subsets and Clusters

Subsets (1-7)	Clusters (a-d)	CD*	ID	DD	MSDD	MSDD/ID
1.	<u>Resolution of Issues Arising prior to the Remarriage</u>	64.67	49.42	28.21	8.77	.1856
	a. Bitterness from break-up of former marriage	75.30	52.50	33.86	9.70	
	b. Parent-child subsystem from prior marriage	70.22	55.38	34.08	11.40	
	c. Couple Issues/prior bonds	48.00	40.40	16.70	5.23	
2.	<u>Emotional Issues</u>	76.47	59.17	37.51	13.09	.2212
	a. Respondents' Internal Conflicts	93.80	76.50	55.30	19.89	
	b. Children's Emotional Issues	66.60	48.20	25.36	6.87	
	c. Emotional Issues for Rem family members	56.30	39.00	27.96	10.57	
	d. Accepting Differences of Rem Family from First-Marriage Family	89.20	73.00	43.40	15.00	
3.	<u>Establishment of the Rem Couple Relationship</u>	83.10	60.75	35.95	12.10	.1812
	a. Couple bonding	84.70	65.60	36.30	12.45	
	b. Couple executive function	81.50	67.90	35.60	11.75	

Table 4 (Continued)

Subsets (1-7)	Clusters (a-d)	CD*	ID	DD	MSDD	MSDD/ID
4.	<u>Parent/Stepparent Issues</u>	87.09	76.54	40.360	11.208	.1464
	a. Adaptation to Rem Parenting	78.56	56.12	30.480	8.240	
	b. Stepparent role strain	90.70	86.00	65.500	23.600	
	c. Stepsiblings	92.00	87.50	25.000	1.785	
5.	<u>Boundary Issues/Coparenting With Ex-spouse</u>	66.21	50.96	34.550	16.190	.3177
	a. External Boundary Issues	73.70	57.78	41.940	19.200	
	b. Co-parenting with ex-spouses	58.72	44.14	27.160	13.180	
6.	<u>Family Decision and Rule Making</u>	79.98	64.75	31.125	10.720	.1655
7.	<u>In-law/ex-kin Issues</u>	46.35	29.61	7.185	2.205	.0744
	a. In-law/ex-kin issue from divorce/remarriage	31.50	18.67	5.570	1.730	
	b. In-law issues - present marriage	61.20	40.55	8.800	2.680	
Means for All Subsets		71.98	56.74	30.727	10.610	.1870

CD = Couple data - percent of all couples in which at least one of partner experienced the item in the present.

ID = Individual data = percent of all individuals for whom item was applicable who reported experiencing the item present.

DD = Disturbance data = percent of all individuals who reported mild, moderate and/or severe disturbance of those for whom the item was applicable present.

MSDD = Moderate-severe disturbance data = percent of all individuals for whom the item was applicable who reported moderate-severe disturbance in the present.

Table 5

Clusters which show significant differences
among roles and between men and women

Cluster	Roles*	% below median	% above median		
1.b. Parent/child subsystem from previous marriage (Present) n = 93	stm-m	11.8%	18.2%	$X^2 = 9.395$ $P = .0245$	
	stf-f	17.2%	12.9%		
	m-only	5.3%	17.2%		
	f-only	11.8%	5.3%		
	(Past) n = 93	men	27.9%	19.3%	$X^2 = 3.831$ $P = .05$
		women	20.4%	32.2%	
	(Present) n = 93	men	29.0%	18.2%	$X^2 = 7.687$ $P = .0056$
		women	17.2%	33.4%	
1.c. Couple Issues from prior relationship (Past) n = 93	stm-m	8.6%	21.5%	$X^2 = 12.768$ $P = .0052$	
	stf-f	15.0%	15.0%		
	m-only	16.0%	6.4%		
	f-only	12.9%	4.0%		
2.c. Family Emotional Issues (Present) n = 130	stm-m	8.4%	13.0%	$X^2 = 11.249$ $P = .0467$	
	stf-f	10.0%	11.5%		
	m-only	9.2%	6.9%		
	f-only	10.0%	2.5%		
	stm-only	9.2%	3.0%		
	stf-only	9.2%	6.9%		
2.d. Accepting differences (Past) n = 130	men	34.6%	15.3%	$X^2 = 3.267$ $P = .052$	
	women	26.9%	23.8%		

*Roles

stm-m = a woman who has children from former marriage who marries a man who also has children from a former marriage.

stf-f = a man who has children from former marriage who marries a woman who also has children from a former marriage.

m-only = a woman who has children from former marriage who marries a man with no children.

f-only = a man who has children from former marriage who marries a woman with no children.

stm-only = a woman who has no children who marries a man who has children from former marriage.

stf-only = a man who has no children who marries a woman who has children from former marriage.

Table 5 (Continued)

Cluster	Roles*	% below median	% above median	
3.b. Couple Executive Function (Past) n = 130	stm-m	5.3%	15.38%	$X^2 = 13.535$ $P = .0188$
	stf-f	10.7%	10.7%	
	m-only	8.4%	7.6%	
	f-only	10.0%	2.3%	
	stm-only	5.6%	6.9%	
	stf-only	6.9%	9.2%	
(Past) n = 130	men	27.6%	22.3%	$X^2 = 3.756$
	women	19.2%	30.7%	$P = .052$
5.a. External Boundary Issue (Present) n = 130	stm-m	6.9%	14.6%	$X^2 = 12.293$ $P = .031$
	stf-f	10.0%	11.5%	
	m-only	10.7%	5.3%	
	f-only	3.8%	8.4%	
	stm-only	5.3%	6.9%	
	stf-only	11.5%	4.6%	
7.a. Inlaw/Kin Issues from Divorce/Remarriage (Present) n = 93	stm-m	18.2%	11.8%	$X^2 = 7.047$ $p = .0438$
	stf-f	11.2%	12.9%	
	m-only	20.4%	2.1%	
	f-only	11.8%	5.3%	

*Roles

stm-m = a woman who has children from former marriage who marries a man who also has children from a former marriage.

stf-f = a man who has children from former marriage who marries a woman who also has children from a former marriage.

m-only = a woman who has children from former marriage who marries a man with no children.

f-only = a man who has children from former marriage who marries a woman with no children.

stm-only = a woman who has no children who marries a man who has children from former marriage.

stf-only = a man who has no children who marries a woman who has children from former marriage.

References

- Anspach, D. F. Kinship and divorce. Journal of Marriage and Family, 1976, 38 (2), 323-330.
- Bernard, J. Remarriage. New York: Russel and Russel, 1971.
- Bitterman, C. M. The multi-marriage family. Social Casework, 1968, 49, 218-221.
- Bohannon, P., & Erickson, R. Stepping in. Psychology Today, January 1978, 53-59.
- Boss, P., & Pauline, G. Normative family stress: Family boundary changes across the life span. Family Relations, 1980, 29 (4), 445-450.
- Cherlin, A. Remarriage as an incomplete institution. American Journal of Sociology, 1978, 84 (3), 634-649.
- Duberman, L. The Reconstituted Family. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1975.
- Furstenberg, F. F., Jr. Recycling the family: Perspectives for a neglected family form. Marriage and Family Review, 1979, 2 (3).
- Glenn, N., & Weaver. The marital happiness of remarried divorced people. Journal of Marriage and the Family, May 1977, 331-337.
- Goldstein, H. Reconstituted families: The second marriage and its children. Psychiatric Quarterly, 1974, 48, 433-440.
- Johnson, H. Working with stepfamilies: Principles of practice. Social Work, July 1980, 304-308.

- Keshet, J. K. From separation to stepfamily: A subsystem analysis. Journal of Family Issues, December 1980, 1 (4), 517-532.
- Kleinman, J., Rosenberg, E., & Whiteside, M. Common developmental tasks in forming reconstituted families. Journal of Marriage and Family Therapy, April 1979, 79-86.
- Kompara, D. R. Difficulties in the socialization process of step-parenting. Family Relations, 1980, 29 (1), 69-73.
- McCubbin, J. I., & Patterson, J. Family adaptation to crisis, from McCubbin, H. I., Cauble, E. A., & Patterson, J. M., (Eds.). Family stress, coping and social supports. Springfield, Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, Pub., 1982.
- McGoldrick, M. & Carter, E. A. Forming a remarried family, from Carter, E. A., & McGoldrick, M., (Eds.). The family life cycle: A framework for family therapy. New York: Garden Press, Inc., 1980.
- Messinger, L. Remarriage between divorced people with children from previous marriages: A proposal for preparation for remarriage. Journal of Marriage and Family Counseling, 1976, 2, 193-200.
- Montgomery, J. Family crisis as process: Persistence and change. University Press of America, 1982.
- Pendergast, E. G. The multiple-marriage family. The Family, 1981, 9 (1), 31-35.

- Perkins, T. F., & Kahan, J. P. An empirical comparison of natural-father and stepfather family systems. Family Process, 1979, 18, 125-153.
- Rallings, E. M. The special role of the stepfather. Family Coordinator, October 1976, 445-449.
- Ransom, J. W., Schlesinger, S., & Derdeyn, A. A stepfamily in formation. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, January 1979, 49 (1), 36-45.
- Reiss, David, & Oliveri, Mary Ellen. Family paradigm and family coping: A proposal for linking the family's intrinsic adoptive capacities to its responses to stress. Family Relations, Vol. 29-4, October 1980, pp. 431-444.
- Rosenberg, E. B. Therapy with siblings in reorganizing families. International Journal of Family Therapy, Fall 1980, 2 (3), 139-154.
- Sager, C. J., Steer, J., Crohn, H., Rodstein, E., & Walker, E. Remarriage revisited. Family and Child Mental Health, Spring, Summer 1980, 6 (1), 19-33.
- Schulman, G. L. Divorce, single parenthood and stepfamilies; structural implications of these transactions. International Journal of Family Therapy, Summer 1981, 87-112.
- Spicer, J. W., & Hampe, G. Kinship interactions after divorce. Journal of Marriage and the Family, February 1977, 118-119.

- Visher, E., & Visher, J. Common problems of stepparents and their spouses. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, April 1978, 48 (2), 252-262.
- Visher, E. E., & Visher, J. S. Stepfamilies: A guide to working with stepparents and stepchildren. New York: Brunner/Mazel, 1979.
- Walker, L., Brown, H., Crohn, H., Rodstein, E., Zeizel, E., & Sager, C. J. An annotated bibliography of the remarriage, the living together and their children. Family Process, 1979, 18, 193-212.
- Walker, K., & Messinger, L. Remarriage after divorce: Dissolution and reconstruction of family boundaries. Family Process. 1979, 18, 185-192.
- Weingarten, H. Remarriage/well-being. Journal of Family Issues, December 1980, 533-559.
- Whiteside, M. F., & Auerbach, L. S. Can the daughter of my father's new wife be my sister? Families of remarriage in family therapy. Journal of Divorce, Spring 1978, 1 (3), 271-283.

APPENDIX A
Literature Review

Remarriage and the condition of those involved in remarriages attracted very little attention before the initial increase of divorce in the 1950's. In the 1970's the upsurge in divorce heralded a new epoch of remarriage, creating a new environment for the remarried couple as being one of many rather than an isolated couple.

It has been suggested that literature that was published before remarriage after divorce became accepted in our society may not be pertinent to remarriage of the last decade and a half (Furstenberg, 1979). Therefore this literature review will begin with literature published in the 1960's at a time when scholars became aware of the family of remarriage as being more than an occasional phenomenon. This review focuses mainly on the issues and tasks proposed as necessary for the integration of a family of remarriage. An additional section of the review will consider structural factors that are proposed to affect the ability of such families to negotiate the issues and tasks successfully. Because the topic of this research necessitates the covering of a large amount of material that has no natural time progression, the review will be ordered by topic rather than by date of publication.

Resolution of Past Issues and Tasks

McGoldrick and Carter (1980) summarized the opinions of many in their statement that remarriage must be perceived as only a part of

the total emotional process which goes back to the break-up of the prior marriage. They specified that the total process may include: the decision of the couple in the former marriage to separate, the actual separation, the legal divorce, the remarriage of either spouse, the death of an ex-spouse, and all the life cycle transitions of the children. Therefore, they observed that the issues and tasks of remarriage arise not just from the fact of the remarriage itself, but from the many elements involved in the total process.

In 1976, Messinger interviewed 70 couples who responded to media advertising about the special problems encountered by the divorce-remarried. The respondents were between 30 and 40 years of age. Her findings paralleled the statements of McGoldrick and Carter. Messinger concluded from her study that the extent to which issues arising during the former stages to the remarriage are resolved will determine the level of problem the stepfamily will experience. Bitterman (1968), Bernard (1971) and Messinger (1976) further qualified this finding to include particularly the emotional and legal aspects of divorce, e.g., property settlement, child custody and support payments. Schulman (1981) referred to the non-completion of the aforementioned processes acting as an invisible thread between the former and the present marital units.

Throughout the literature authors expressed agreement that the complexity of the losses and changes necessitated by the breakup of the intact family and the consequent rearrangement of relationships and resources, contributes to the lack of resolution of issues and tasks that arise prior to the remarriage. In the prior family, there

is intense instability before the separation and divorce. The stage of single-parenting and non-custodial parenting signals even more change with parents in two different places and, at least temporarily, much less effective as new time-space, legal and emotional issues are experienced.

Authors expressed a general concern with the degree to which the ex-spouses work through their relationship with their previous spouses. Bernard (1971) studied information supplied by 2009 informants who knew a remarried family well. The informants filled out the questionnaire about the relationships of individuals within the remarriage and their interactional patterns. Bernard found that hostile attitudes towards a former spouse or towards a former spouse of one's present mate had an unfavorable impact on the remarriage.

Other authors reviewed agreed with Bernard but chose to specify different aspects of the unfinished relationships. Visher and Visher (1979), and Schlesinger (1970) wrote that the ex-spouses may hold out for affirmative validation from the other, as a parent and/or an individual. Mowatt (1972) observed that remarried spouses may use an ex-spouse as a weapon in marital disagreement in the remarriage. Kleinman, et al. (1979) stated that remarried spouses may have mixed allegiances with guilt still felt toward the ex-spouse. The continued parental relationship with the ex-spouse may make it more difficult to give up totally the former couple relationship. Keshet (1980) found that a custodial parent may punish the ex-spouse by interfering with the visitation of the child. Furstenberg (1979) noted that ex-spousal hostilities may sabotage the efforts of the new couple as they deal

with parenting issues in the remarriage.

On the positive side Keshet (1980) observed that remarriage tends to be a time that forces resolution of past issues. The ex-spouses must establish stronger boundaries. They can no longer interact as much or in the same ways. The one who has remarried is also in a stronger position from which to negotiate than before the remarriage.

Keshet (1980) and Schulman (1981) note that the break-up of the prior family is not due to normal family life cycle processes, therefore grief, sorrow and faultfinding are all inevitable. Often these are not resolved as they arise and at the time of remarriage the unresolved mourning constitutes a major roadblock for the new family (Kleinman, et al., 1979). Robinson (198) highlighted the importance of the changes in transactional functioning of the family. She noted that the failure to grieve will have a serious effect on the future lives of all the family members. Ranson, Schlesinger and Derdeyn (1978), and Schulman (1981) further qualify the grief issue as one which must be a family process of mourning the death of the first family where a major healing process must take place.

Theis (1977) agreed that the grieving process is likely to be incomplete and will probably arise again upon remarriage. She proposed that remarriage by one or both biological parents presents a potential crisis event in the life of a child. Along with Whiteside and Auerbach (1978), Visher and Visher (1979), and Rosenberg (1980), she noted that the resolution of the divorce trauma is a major determinant in the child's adjustment to the remarriage. The child must give up his wish for a parental reunion and his hope for the intimacy with the

absent parent that he had when the family was intact. Due to the incomplete development of the child, he is unable to fully mourn this loss until well into or after completion of adolescence. Fast and Cain (1966), Visher and Visher (1978) and McGoldrick and Carter (1980) stressed that the remarried parent may not be able to help the child in dealing with his grief. The guilt feelings that the parent may feel about not being able to maintain an intact family for the child may impede the parent's ability to promote stage appropriate resolution of grief in the child.

Development of the Remarried Couple Relationship

Keshet (1980) considered the couple subsystem the most fragile of all the subsystems of the family of remarriage. She was joined by many writers in noting that the couple relationship is developing in the midst of all the changes initiated by the remarriage along with the prior presence of children and legal, financial and emotional obligations outside the new family system. Keshet observed that because of these factors the level of commitment made by the couple during the courtship is crucial to the survival of the remarriage.

Whiteside, et al. (1978), Kleinman, et al. (1979), and Visher and Visher (1979) considered the primary task of the remarried couple to be that of establishing a close, strong spousal relationship with methods of negotiating conflict that do not include drawing the children between the couple. Fast and Cain (1977) found that because the partners in a remarriage had not had time to establish a generational boundary between the couple subsystem and their offspring, the

inappropriate involvement of children in marital and parental disagreements seemed to be encouraged.

Duberman (1973) reported on her study of a random sample of 88 remarried couples, 45 of which contained two sets of stepsiblings and 43 with only one. She concluded that the marital bond had a strong influence on the integration of the remarried family. When the bond was poor, the integration was not sufficient.

Kleinman, et al. (1979), Visher and Visher (1979), and Keshet (1980) noted that remarried couples often avoided their own relationship issues by diverting on to stepfamily issues. They agreed that there are usually so many demanding family issues that it is convenient for the couple to ignore the marital disagreements.

Most scholars and therapists writing about remarriage agree that there are many potential interfering factors to the bonding of a remarried couple. Often partners in remarriages lack faith in their own ability to sustain a close relationship and are afraid of repeating past mistakes (Goldstein, 1974; Ransom, et al. 1979; Visher and Visher, 1979). Keshet (1980) suggested that concerns over ex-spouse and children may interfere with the bonding. Since couple members may also be members of a parent/child subsystem, neither partner may feel the need to make sufficient moves to strengthen the new couple relationship. Visher and Visher (1979), McGoldrick and Carter (1980), and Keshet (1980) considered that the lack of common history, the lack of loyalties between the new spouses and the stepchildren, and the lessening of private time and space reduce the sense of closeness and romance for the couple. Sager et al. (1980) pointed out that remarriage may

take place at a time in the life cycle when at least one of the partners may have individual tasks that compete for the energy needed to establish a stepfamily. Messinger, et al. (1978) observed that often an individual who has just entered a stepfamily has lived alone for several years and has become accustomed to total privacy and quiet.

Co-Parenting and the Couple Relationship

Weingarten (1980) reported that remarried couples are much more likely than first married couples to feel that children separate them rather than bring them together. Messinger (1976) found that overt conflict over children rated as the top problem when she asked remarried partners to rate their problem areas.

Bohannon and Erickson (1978) studied stepfather families. They interviewed ten biological families and ten stepfamilies to get a sense of what life was like for a stepfather family, how their psychological tasks differed from those of the natural families, and how they dealt with sources of conflict. The researchers affirmed that the discipline of stepchildren was undoubtedly the most important subject in these new households.

Schlesinger (1975) interviewed 96 mainly Protestant middle class couples. At least one of each couple had been married previously. The study was an exploratory effort, primarily descriptive, with little attempt at quantitative analysis. The three problems mentioned most by the couples in the interviews were discipline, adjusting to children, and the gaining of the acceptance of the children. Whiteside, et al. (1978), Visher and Visher (1979) and Kleinman, et al. (1979) concurred

that conflicts over child-rearing could become questions of commitment and create an unspoken but ever present threat that the marriage might be dissolved.

Because the members of a parent/child subsystem in a single-parent system are often very intensely involved with each other, there usually has been considerable sharing across generational lines. Walker and Messinger (1979) and Keshet (1980) pointed out that this intimate self-sufficient subsystem is usually reluctant to share the intimacy and equality with new people. Therefore, it is difficult to integrate the stepparent, and the couple bond is threatened.

Goldstein (1974), Ransom, et al. (1979), Walker and Messinger (1979), Nichols (1980) and Keshet (1980) observed that with remarriage the special companionship of the single-parent/child unit will have to diminish. The child may have become an emotional surrogate-spouse and will need help in becoming a child again. Both members of the parent/child unit may resent the intrusion of the stepparent into this well-established relationship. As a result the new spouse may find it impossible to function fully in his/her role as stepparent.

There was a general consensus among the writers that an overly close relationship in a single-parent/child subsystem may be an obstacle to the necessary primary bond between the spouses. An impermeable boundary around such a subsystem may not allow for the entry of the stepparent (Fast and Cain, 1966; Whiteside, et al., 1978; Visher and Visher, 1979; Keshet, 1980). McGoldrick and Carter (1980) joined the above writers in noting that this impermeable relationship may be reinforced by the guilt the natural parents feel toward their children.

They may feel that they have broken up the children's home and deprived them of full access to the other natural parent. In addition, their remarriage has supplied the children with a stepparent who may not care for them.

Visher and Visher (1979), Sager, et al. (1980), and McGoldrick and Carter (1980) pointed out that the guilt-laden parent may develop strong antagonism towards his/her stepchildren because of his/her feelings of guilt towards his/her own biological children. This antagonism will adversely affect the spousal relationship. Fast and Cain (1966) and Visher and Visher (1979) suggested that the partner may also feel guilt towards the new spouse since his/her children are part of the marital package which the new spouse had to accept.

The stepparent role has been portrayed throughout the literature as ambiguous and fraught with difficulties due to interpersonal and societal constraints. Draughon (1975), Ransom, et al. (1979), and Visher and Visher (1978), among others, noted that the stepparent can never be a total parent because existence or past experience of the other parent of the same sex. To find their role fulfilling, the stepparent must be accepted to a satisfactory degree as having a right to function in the area of discipline and nurturance by both the biological parent and the child. They saw the common practice of attempting to get children to accept the stepparent as their own parent as compounding problems for all concerned. Schulman observed that if either the stepparent or the natural parent of the same sex is ignored in the parenting process, cooperation in the family of remarriage will be hampered.

Fast and Cain (1977), Messinger, et al. (1978), and Visher and Visher (1979) found that it was a common theme in remarriages that the biological parent wanted the stepparent to parent his/her children, but when the spouse became active in the parent role, he/she would be overruled by the biological parent because of his/her ambivalent feelings. The stepparent may be burdened with his/her spouses sensibility to every act or suggestions of negative feelings to the children. Draughon (1975) and Fast and Cain (1966) agreed that the lack of certainty about roles and appropriate behavior by a stepparent can lead to intrapsychic and interpersonal difficulties with the stepchildren. Goldstein (1974) found that one of the most problematic situations for a stepparent was to be "frozen out" of his/her role function. Bernard (1971) and Fast and Cain (1977) reported that visitation by children of the former marriage living with the ex-spouse can be threatening to the remarriage relationship, especially when the child has emotional outbreaks about the division of his nuclear family.

Visher and Visher (1979) and Robinson (1980) agreed with the majority of the writers that the myth of the evil stepparent, particularly the evil stepmother had an important effect upon the parental relationship. Being afraid of the myth, the stepparent may not try to discipline the stepchildren. In addition to this, the stepparent may feel that the child is a burden and a constant reminder of the spouse of the former marriage. Also, the shock of instant parenthood may cause grief for the loss of the intimate couple twosome of the first marriage.

Kompara (1980) looked upon the difficulties of the stepparent as

potentially arising from complications in the socialization process. The stepparent is attempting to deal with children who have been socialized by another parent. Because she/he doesn't have a long-standing relationship with the child with the resultant trust and affectional bond, Bernard (1971), and Visher and Visher (1979) reported that the step-parent found discipline considered appropriate for her/his own children often considered unduly harsh by the stepchild/natural parent subsystem when administered to the stepchild. On the other hand, stepparents reported that insolent behavior, disagreeable in their own children was found intolerable if it came from a stepchild.

Schulman (1972) and Visher and Visher (1979) stated that the parental unit, to be effective had to establish new rules and regulations for the total unit with the co-parental system and children working out a division of labor determined by co-residence and power, as well as convenience and ability. They pointed out that the parental unit in a stepfamily may become rigidly fair in an effort to treat all children alike despite different backgrounds and ages.

Nichols (1980) proposed that the most appropriate strategy for the remarried couple was to strengthen the parenting relationship in the biological parent-child unit and relieve the stepparent/child subset of the parenting tensions during the resettlement of relationships. McGoldrick and Carter (1980) affirmed Nichols position, particularly with adolescents whom they felt might never adjust to a stepparent as a parental figure.

Other Issues Affecting the Couple Relationship

Inheritance questions generally have a greater significance in the lives of a remarried couple than that of the first married. Property is more likely to have been accrued prior to the marriage and bonding if the biological children/natural parent subsystem develops prior to the couple relationship. Messinger (1976), Visher and Visher (1979), and Keshet (1980) reported that because of their uncertainty about the new marriage, some men appear reluctant to revise their wills, insurance and property assets. Bernard (1971) reported that litigation about inheritance issues was more likely to occur, was more complex, and more bitterness was observed when it involved a family of remarriage.

Albrecht (1979) studied 500 divorced persons living in eight western states who were identified through a screening questionnaire sent to a much larger random sample of residents in the area. The subjects were asked to rank major problems in their marriages. Financial difficulties were overwhelmingly number one vs. a distant fourth for persons in first marriages. Subjects reported that the fact that finances overlapped households from that of the ex-spouse to that of the remarriage contributed to the difficulties of their families. Messinger (1976) found money problems second only to the difficulties reported about children by her sample. Walker, et al. (1977) and Visher and Visher (1979) explained that money difficulties increased the conflict in the couple relationship mainly because of the tie money represented to the former relationship. Child support and maintenance payments which were shaped by an adversarial legal system were often a vehicle for punishment of the/or by the former spouse through

extraction or denial.

General Adaptation to Remarriage

A third large area of issues and tasks in the integration of a stepfamily are those involving all members of the two family units as they adapt from two subsystems into a single stable family. These issues include children's emotional issues, accepting the differences between a stepfamily and a family of first marriage, co-parenting between the new household and the former spouses' households, the development of roles in the new family, resolving discrepancies in expectations of all members in the new family, development of new strategies for solving problems, legal issues, and adjusting to the permeable boundaries of the stepfamily.

Childrens' Emotional Issues

Often it is not understood how deeply children are tied to their biological parent by a feeling of belonging to them. Margaret Mead (1971) declared that adjustment of remarried families is impeded by the fact that children in the U.S. are not prepared to trust anyone but their parents. Theis (1977), Bohannon and Erickson (1978), Whiteside, et al. (1978), Visher and Visher (1979), Kleinman, et al. (1979), Schulman (1980) and Sager, et al. (1980) concurred that often any kind of loyalty shown to a stepparent is seen by the child and the biological parent of the same sex as the stepparent as disloyalty to the biological parent. Loyalty issues may prevent the child from accepting badly needed nurturance and support from the stepparent.

Rosenberg (1980) noted that the loss of a parenting figure through

any kind of separation tends to leave the child without consistent parental support and with increased fear of abandonment. Children whose parents remarry suffer a real or imaginary loss of a parent. Visher and Visher (1979), and Sager, et al. (1980) report that children may wish for a reunion of the natural parents and often try consciously or unconsciously to break up the new couple. The wish for a parental reunion prevents stepchildren from forming an attachment to the step-parent. Mowatt (1972), Ralling (1976) and Theis (1976) view the parental divorce and remarriage as a transitional blow to the child's adjustment. Sager, et al. (1980) observed that the child may have been previously scarred by marital strife as well as having experienced physical desertion by one or both biological parents. Visher and Visher (1979) saw the child's self-esteem being damaged by the fact that the biological parents were unable to establish a viable working relationship.

McGoldrick and Carter (1980) pointed out that when remarriage ends a close single-parent/child relationship, the feeling of loss, especially for the child, will have to be dealt with over time. The child may see the stepparent as replacing himself in the affect of the biological parent. Schulman (1980) suggested that the child who has been a parental-child will resent giving up the valued position.

The above authors observed that a predictor of difficulty for a remarriage was the expectation that children will easily accept the remarriage. The lack of awareness of the couple of the emotional difficulties of remarriage for the children leads to misreading and mis-handling of behaviors. Therefore, the children lose stability and

never quite establish a family-like grounding. Nichols (1980) noted that as the child moves back and forth from one household to the other, getting used to two sets of rules, tensions arise that impact on the whole family.

Messinger (1976) and Sager, et al. (1980) agreed that when children were required to respond to the stepparent as if he/she were the biological parent, guilt, rebellion, hostility or withdrawal often resulted. Visher and Visher (1979) called attention to the fact that teenagers were usually busy with the tasks of separation and didn't have time for the tasks involved in the integration of the remarried family.

The Vishers, along with Bohannon and Erickson (1978) noted the confusion that arises for a child who has a last name different from his/her parent. Bohannon and Erickson found that the decision of what to call the stepparent was a difficult one since there is an absence of terms in our language that differ positively from those used for biological parents. They found that when first names were used, they appeared to undermine authority and promote competition.

Mead (1971) and Visher and Visher (1979) proposed that sexual conflicts and tensions were much more likely to arise within stepfamilies than first marriage families because of a lack of incest taboos (Goldstein, 1964; Messinger, 1978; Rallings, 1976; Whiteside, et al. 1978). Because there is much less cohesiveness in the stepfamily than in the nuclear family, non-biologically related persons living in close proximity may experience sexual attraction to each other. This may be acted out as pseudo-hostility between stepsiblings or between

stepsibling and step-parent. Bernard (1971) and Mead (1971) suggested that the lack of set incest taboos does not allow the children to enjoy the physical and emotional comfort from all members in a household freely without fear of tempting or being tempted by others. Kompara (1980), Visher and Visher (1979) and Kleinman, et al. (1979) suggested that it is not unusual for children in a remarriage to have difficulty in adjusting to the undeniable sexual relationship of their parent and stepparent in the new marriage.

Wellbeing of the Stepchild

Bowerman and Irish (1962) studied the relationship of 2145 children living in households of remarriage. They found that the stepchildren in their sample experienced the "greater level of uncertainty of feelings and insecurity of position and strain" than did children in intact families.

Bohannon and Erickson (1978) focused on the stepfather and stepchild family comparing 106 stepchildren with 84 children raised by natural parents to see how the stepchildren and their biological mother felt they fared in comparison to the natural children and their mothers. While stepfathers rated their stepchildren as significantly less happy than natural fathers rated theirs, mothers and stepchildren themselves did not perceive the unhappiness.

Duberman (1975) found that stepfathers were more likely to have good relationships with stepchildren than the stepmothers. She reported that the attitude of the stepchildren was crucial to having a good relationship with stepparents. Twenty four percent of her sample

rated stepparent/stepchild relationships excellent, 38% good, and 38% poor.

Resolution of Expectations and Myths

Many of the writers in the field of remarriage refer to the potential destructiveness of expectations and myths. They observed that remarried family members are particularly susceptible to culturally accepted and fostered myths. They noted the difficulties arising out of discrepancies between inner and outer realities, wishes, fantasies and hopes of the individuals. These often lead to overexpectations and consequent disappointment which can be more damaging in the remarried family than in that of a first marriage, because the members of the stepfamily are already vulnerable from their prior losses. Schulman (1972) and Visher and Visher (1978) stressed the tendency in stepfamilies to increase and stimulate fantasies of the perfect parent and the perfect marriage. Mowatt (1972) in a report on a treatment group of stepfathers and their wives stated that both men and women expressed disenchantment with their spouses' desires to answer to emotional, financial and parenting problems. Bernard (1971), Schulman (1972), Kompara (1980), and Visher and Visher (1979) concluded that in the sudden establishment of basic new relationships of children and parents, neither group having a chance to grow into the relationship over a period of time, very often myths and expectations impeded the remarriage family function. They found the most harmful myths to be: a. Stepfamilies are like nuclear families, b. Death of a former spouse made stepparenting easier, c. Stepchildren are easier to deal with if

they aren't living with the remarried couple, d. Love happens instantly, and e. Stepparents are evil, especially the stepmothers (Messinger, 1976; Johnson, 1980; McGoldrick and Carter, 1980).

Although each member of a stepfamily has expectations of proper behavior for the other members, these usually are covert. Bohannon (1979) called this the hidden agenda of a stepfamily. Every member comes onto the scene not knowing the role into which she/he has been cast. Johnson (1980) pointed out that this role-ambiguity causes discomfort which compounds the discomfort caused by a discrepancy between what a member thinks he/she ought to feel and do and what he/she actually does and feels. Johnson noted that the level of expectation for self and others is important because the higher the level the more likely there is to be stress and tension when the expectations are unfulfilled.

Furstenberg (1979) suggested that in a remarriage the members may have to simultaneously learn new expectations. Duberman (1978) found that as long as a stepparent and stepchild had somewhat the same expectations, the role learning (from the former family) appears to be transferable.

Schlesinger (1970), in his research based on interviews of 96 remarried couples, reported that an impressive majority, 85.7% of the males and 81.3% of the females, believed that their marriages met their expectations very satisfactorily. Weingarten (1980) reported that the remarried partners in her study expected different interactions and returns from marriage and the total of their lives than first married partners. The remarried partners were more likely to be dissatisfied

with how they spent their time but to be pleased with the marital relationship itself.

Pseudo-mutuality

Writers generally agreed that stepfamily members are more apt to be sensitive to disagreements and their implications than members of first marriage families. As a result, members of these families often present a surface appearance of absolute agreement and peacefulness which cover a multitude of unfaced, unresolved tensions and conflicts. The authors concurred that the false appearance of mutuality prevents the stepfamily from working through difficulties and disagreements. Goldstein (1974) noted this denial of hostile feelings, labeled it pseudo-mutuality, and wrote about its interference with the stabilization of the remarried family.

Cooperation with former spouses

Hetherington, Cox & Cox (1977) and McGoldrick and Carter (1980) reported that remarriage of a former spouse often activates feelings of depression, anger, anxiety or helplessness in the other spouse, particularly women. Often these feelings contributed to a renewal of financial and custodial difficulties. When the new wife reacted to the first wife's upset or entered into a hostile, competitive struggle over the children, co-parenting was ineffective and the process contributed to instability in the new marriage. Ransom, et al. (1979) stressed the important task of delineating a relationship with the divorced biological parent outside of the family, and task unique to the stepfamily.

Bernard (1971) reported that competition over the child's affection between the new and the old spouse may injure the child and the new marriage. Sager, et al. (1980) wrote that the non-custodial parent could create difficulties in a remarried family that has custody through pampering the child during the short visitation periods. Bernard (1971), Mead (1971), and Kleinman, et al. (1979) looked at the tendency of children to split-off negative feelings from the lost parent and focus them on the stepparent or on the custodial parent. This is usually reinforced by the non-custodial parent and the lack of clear family norms. Keshet (1980) suggested that co-parenting becomes more difficult following the remarriage of one of the ex-spouses because the ex-spouse is necessarily less accessible.

Jealousy among family members

Jealousy is an emotion and an issue most of the authors believe is common and damaging in stepfamilies. Perkins, et al. (1979) referred to the fact that the stepparent and the stepchildren may find themselves within the family perimeter but shut-out of the interpersonal subsystem that is active at the moment, creating feelings of jealousy that are damaging to family unity. Schulman (1972) expanded on this division, noting that as the adult subsystem of the remarriage becomes more coherent and consistent, the children often are less involved, and jealousy between parent/child subsystems and stepsiblings becomes more apparent. Theis (1977) suggested that the need to share the natural parent with a stepparent provoked competition, jealousy and hostility in the child in relation to the new stepparent. In her

study, Bernard (1971) observed jealousy between stepparent and stepchildren, between stepsiblings and stepsibling and between spouse and former spouse. She reported that for the new spouse the former spouse seemed to be everywhere in the new family in the tradition, language, children's memories and personalities. This created feelings of resentment and jealousy in the new spouse about the old life of the new partner and his or her children.

Accepting differences of the family of remarriage from a family of first marriage

McGoldrick and Carter (1980) proposed that the process by which a stepfamily is stabilized and then begins its forward movement is so complex that they (the authors) have come to think of remarriage as a new additional phase in the family life cycle. Keshet (1980), Johnson (1980), and McGoldrick and Carter observed that the survival of the remarriage family depends on the ability of the couple to recognize the differences between the remarried family and the family of first marriage in order to settle their conflicts and tolerate the indefiniteness and ambiguity.

Perkins & Kahan (1979) examined the family system differences between 40 natural father and 40 stepfather families using four different measures: the Family Concept Q Sort, the Semantic Differential test, a demographic questionnaire and an interaction/reaction questionnaire. They affirmed the view of Visher and Visher (1979) and others that role definitions from first marriage families are not adequate for a family of remarriage. Johnson (1980) proposed that realignment in

the family through remarriage is a transaction of gains and losses. There may even be a perceived net loss for some persons.

Schulman (1972), Keshet (1980), and Johnson (1980) noted that the family may be dealing with several ordinarily sequential tasks simultaneously. Visher and Visher (1979) and McGoldrick and Carter (1980) were in agreement that many of the conflicts of a stepfamily could not be resolved in one subsystem because they may involve the interests of parties in the newly formed horizontal extended family of former spouses. Walker, et al. (1979) and Visher and Visher (1979) point out that the increased number of relationships over those in an intact family - those of stepsiblings, half-siblings, stepparents, former spouses and former in-laws - make the remarriage family a unique family arrangement in terms of boundaries and role dimensions.

Messinger (1976) and Keshet (1980) determined that often the couple subsystem in a remarriage could not understand their inability to share intense feelings over the children. They usually expected a quick blending of the two family subsystems. This expectation is contrary to the observation of the authors that the tightly bounded subsystems loosen in time but seldom completely. Goldstein (1974), Visher and Visher (1979), Sager, et al. (1980), and McGoldrick and Carter (1980) concluded that the blending of the separate histories, memories, self concepts, role definitions, expectations, emotions and ideas of solidarity of the two family subsystems had to be achieved deliberately in a family of remarriage. The circumstances are such that this blending is not allowed to mature slowly as in a family of first marriage.

Redefinition of Boundaries

Boundaries in a stepfamily are usually quite permeable, possibly ill-defined, in order to allow the children to move from one household to another. Nichols (1980) stated that not only are the boundaries unclear but they often are quickly shifted when it becomes necessary or desirable for a custodial parent to shift custody onto the other household. This can happen years after the divorce and remarriage.

McGoldrick and Carter (1980) delineated boundary issues in the stepfamilies they had observed. These issues are: a. Who are the "real" members in the family? b. What space belongs to whom? c. Who is in charge? d. What are the time priorities? e.g., "Who gets how much of my time and how much do I get of theirs?" and f. What kind of incest taboos are set and enforced?

Visher and Visher (1979), Keshet (1980), and McGoldrick and Carter (1980) predict difficulty for a family of remarriage when attempts are made to draw firm boundaries around the new household membership by demanding primary loyalty and cohesiveness within the new family. These authors suggest that the more open the line is to all family members across boundaries, the more functional the family will be.

Extended Family, In-laws and Ex-kin

Spicer and Hampe (1977) conducted interviews with 62 divorced males and 42 divorced females in order to determine kinship interaction after the divorce. Their data showed the following: a. After divorce, interaction with consanguineal kin remained the same or increased for the respondents, b. Being female and having custody of the children

contributed to increasing or maintaining very high levels of interaction with blood relatives and maintaining contact at a lower level with former in-laws, c. Kinship interaction with former in-laws decreased for most respondents and d. The most connection with in-laws was with parent in-laws, then sibling-in-laws, then other in-laws.

Anspach (1976) conducted a pilot investigation of 128 women of varying marital status. His remarried population reported a long network of affective kinship ties. Furstenberg (1979) found the same results when he examined case studies for the impact of remarriage on kinship ties. He concluded that bonds between individuals and former in-laws frequently survive the breaking up of the first marriage. His investigation also revealed that grandparents play a central role in helping the family members manage the transition from divorce to remarriage, sometimes taking an active role in child-rearing. Furstenberg proposed that reconstruction of kinship relationships after remarriage is very pertinent to the welfare of the family of remarriage.

Kinship connections have been observed to have sometimes positive, sometimes negative effects on the remarriage family. Bernard (1971) determined in her study that when both sets of parents of the marital couple were in favor of the remarriage, it was likely to succeed. Dubermin (1976) reported that in her sample remarried family relationships were: a. best when the extended family accepted the new family, b. second best when the extended family disapproved or was negative, and c. worst when the extended family was cut-off or indifferent.

Robinson (1980) suggested that extended family, particularly grandparents, can supply a safe place for the child to express

potentially destructive aspects of the mourning process, taking some of the burden from the remarriage family. Bernard (1971) and Mead (1971) noted on the negative side that grandparents may jealously protect the rights and privileges which their son or daughter may have given away or of which they have been deprived, e.g. visitation or custody. The grandparents may interfere with the parenting of the new stepparent by trying to win the child's loyalty away from them. Kompara (1980) stated that the grandparents may side with the child against the new parent. Schulman (1980) observed that grandparents or other relatives often make statements to increase feelings of guilt of a natural parent about his/her not adequately caring for his/her children of a former marriage.

McGoldrick and Carter (1980) suggested that the exclusion of the former grandparents or the combatting of their influence by the remarried couple was a predictor of difficulty for the remarriage. Kleinman, et al. (1979) proposed that it was the task of the remarried family to integrate the vast array of extended family with whom it had maintained ties. If this is done, the new family can be supported and strengthened by the extended ties: if not, they may reinforce the already present tendency for the family to split on the original subsystem lines.

Role Definition

McGoldrick and Carter (1980) spoke for most of the authors in the field of remarriage in stating their observation that role definition in the family of remarriage is complex and potentially overwhelming. They noted that, instead of a step-by-step movement from courtship-to-

marriage-to-parenthood, remarried couples plunge immediately upon marriage into multiple roles which as yet have no societal guidelines. There are no language or kinship labels since all the established cultural forms in our society, the rituals and assumptions, directly relate to the first marriage family. Confusion and ambivalence arise as roles are experienced differently from similar roles in the first marriage.

Cherlin (1978) stated that families of remarriage must solve problems unknown to the first marriage family. Rallings (1976), Kompara (1980), Walker, et al. (1979), Visher and Visher (1979), Perkins, et al. (1979), Sager, et al. (1980) Whitehead, et al. (1978), Cherlin (1978) and McGoldrick and Carter (1980) all discussed the lack of institutionalized solutions to role definitions for the family. They concluded that the lack of specific norms for role behavior, the inconsistent cultural expectations and the resultant role ambiguity and role strain add to the complications of this family form and promote conflict and division. Draughon (1975), Fast and Cain (1966) and Visher and Visher (1979) pointed out that the number of role-learning opportunities available to natural parents is not available to step-parents who more often than not do not know how to act towards a step-child; whether or not to be a parent or friend.

Weingarten (1980), in her study of remarried couples, discovered that significantly more remarried partners felt inadequate in their family role performance than first marriage partners. The remarried partners also felt less adequate as parents and as marital partners because of the lack of norms. It was hard for them to determine if

their performance was adequate and very easy to believe it wasn't.

Ransom, et al. (1979) noted the importance of restructuring family roles, particularly around discipline and nurturance. Messinger (1976) and Sager, et al. (1980) concluded that as long as remarried families attempt to carry out role functions and relationship forms from the first marriage into the second there will be systems ambiguity and role overload.

Structural Variations of Stepfamilies and Their Impact on Integration

Roles of Partners

There is much speculation and a small amount of research about the roles individuals take in their remarriage families and the impact these have on the ease with which the individual adjusts to the remarriage situation. For instance, reports indicate that stepfathers adapt with more ease, and are accepted by stepchildren more readily than stepmothers (Kompara, 1980).

Bowerman, et al. (1970) discovered that the stepfathers in their sample tended to be rated better in relation to a child's biological father than the stepmother is to the biological mother. Duberman (1975) found that when the stepfather had not been previously married he rated himself the greatest percentage of excellent relationships with the stepchildren, but when the stepmother was in the same position she rated herself least positively in relationships with the stepchildren. The poorest relationships were reported when the stepmother and stepchildren did not live in the same household. These results agreed with those of Bernard (1971). There was a shared belief

among writers of remarriage that the wife had the emotionally central role in a remarriage (Messinger, 1976; Visher and Visher, 1979; Walker, et al., 1979).

Visher and Visher (1979) perceived that the stepfather with no children of his own could enjoy his stepchildren more than a stepfather with children since the stepfather without children had no ambivalent feelings about spending time with another person's children while "neglecting" his own. In observing their clinical population the Vishers noted that the stepfather with children of his own often was involved in the most complex structure of all the members of remarried families. Duberman (1975) found that family integration was better if the new spouse had been divorced rather than a bachelor. However, in agreement with the Vishers, she reported that if men had left children behind with their ex-spouses, they did not relate as well to stepchildren as did bachelors. Bohannon and Erickson (1978) reported that stepchildren of stepfathers, in general, were just as happy, just as successful socially and academically as the children in natural families, even though the stepfathers rated themselves poorly as parents. Weingarten (1980) reported that remarried males were less likely to find the parenting role as satisfying as remarried women and men and women in their first marriage.

Walker and Messinger (1979) and Visher and Visher (1979) expressed the opinion of many that individuals entering marriage for the first time were likely to have unrealistic expectations and were more likely to express a sense of depreviation about the availability of their spouses. They also exhibited a generally troubled attitude about

their roles in relation to their spouses' roles.

Length of Marriage

Whiteside, et al. (1979) and Kleinman, et al. (1979) observed that their clinical population reported the first few months of remarriage as being particularly stressful. Pendergast (1980) stated that the first two years of the stepfamily's existence are the most confusing with intense stress for its members. The next three years, she proposed, are needed to deal with the processes of integration. After five years, the remarried system has learned to cope with itself, and the family members are all functioning well. McGoldrick and Carter (1980) reported that it took at least two years to stabilize a stepfamily. In contrast, Visher and Visher (1978) stated that the first three or four years of remarriage are the years in which the strain will result in either a splitting-apart of the marriage or in a working out of some viable, though not necessarily satisfying, solution.

Albrecht (1977), in his study of remarried happiness, found that the length of marriage was always positively related to perceived marital happiness. He considered that this might be because the bad marriages would have been terminated by divorce. Messinger (1976) found that couples who had been married longer had arrived at more satisfactorily integrated patterns of family life.

Weingarten (1980) found that the between-group differences of marital problems for first marrieds and remarrieds disappeared after 11 years of marriage. This was particularly true of the attitude of remarried parents that earlier in the remarriage children tended to separate the couple rather than reinforcing the relationship.

Age of the Partners

Duberman (1976) found that the younger stepfathers appeared to have children and stepchildren who got along better together than those of older stepparents. In her population sample there appeared to be no correlation between stepfather age and a successful relationship with the stepchildren, but the age of the stepmother correlated with the quality of her relationship with her stepchildren. Seventy percent of stepmothers aged 40 or less reported excellent relationships with their stepchildren while only 52% of stepmothers over 40 did so. Since it has been observed that stepparent/stepchild relationships impact on the integration or non-integration of the stepfamily, these results would indicate an age-related impact.

Kompara (1980) noted that there was a tendency for age differences between mates in stepfamilies to be wide. This made the socialization process of the stepchildren more complicated, especially for a stepparent who was working with a stepchild either very close or very distant in age.

Age of Children

Reports on the impact of age of children in stepfamilies were more definitive. Bernard (1979) and Duberman (1975) both reported that the younger child is more likely to need the stepparent to be a parent and, therefore, to accept him/her more readily. Nichols (1980) reported that a child's need to have a parent's remarriage continue versus her/his desire to terminate the marriage depends on the age and degree of dependency on the remarried parent, along with person-

ality factors. Bernard added that grown-up children often assimilated a new parent more easily than the adolescent, though this was complicated by sex differences.

Walker, et al. (1979) noted that the older a child at the time of remarriage the higher his/her chance of poor mental health in the following years. Johnson (1980) stated that the age of the child was an important variable impacting on the welfare of the remarried family. McGoldrick and Carter pointed out that wide discrepancies between family life cycle stages added extra dimensions to the difficulties of the remarried family.

Length of Time Between Relationships

Another structural indicator for remarried success from the literature is the length of time between the break-up of the former marriage and the new serious relationship or the remarriage. Robinson (1980) declared that the length of time between physical departure of the lost parent and the arrival of the stepparent is most likely to influence and potentially determine the stage of mourning process the family achieves. Theis (1979) and Johnson (1980) concurred with this opinion. Bernard (1971), Johnson (1980) and McGoldrick and Carter (1980) all indicated that the length of time between loss of the absent parent by death or divorce and the remarriage is a predictor variable for the success of the remarriage. A short time, they indicated, would have a negative effect. Bernard added that for success of the stepfamily there should be at least one year between the divorce or death and the remarriage.

Residence of the Family of Remarriage

Writers agreed that remarried families who move into a new jointly planned-for and chosen residence after the remarriage would do better than those who move into either of the partners' former residences. Keshet (1980) noted that when the remarried family moved into either of the previous residences, the new residents felt like invaders and the old residents felt displaced. Bernard (1979) proposed that this was particularly true for the children. Schulman (1981) and Johnson (1980) considered the issue of turf as having a profound impact on the well-being of the remarriage family.

Place of Residence of the Remarried Partners' Children From the Former Marriage

Bernard (1979) observed from her data that the wife who has exclusive custody of her children from the former marriage did well in the new marriage. Weingarten (1980) wrote that the partners in her sample were less likely to feel adequate as parents when their children lived in another household most of the time. Visher and Visher (1979) noted that the stepmother who does not have her children from a former marriage living with her may tend to idealize her own children. She then compares her stepchildren to her own to the disadvantage of the stepchildren. The Vishers, Messinger (1976), and Schulman (1980) agreed that men whose children lived with their ex-spouse often felt guilt and resentment in providing for their stepchildren. They indicated that they felt they were depriving their own children while taking care of the stepchildren. The Vishers added that wives had

problems dealing with these feelings in their new spouses, and sometimes felt guilt because their spouse had to support the wives' children from the former marriage. Duberman (1975), in examining the results of her study, concluded that the place of residence of the stepchild did not interfere with the quality of the marital relationship.

Johnson (1980) challenged the common assumption that life is easier for the stepparent whose stepchildren are not living with them. Johnson reported her clinical observation that although the intensity of feelings related to all aspects of stepfamily functioning are likely to be greater when stepparent and stepchildren live together, they are present to some degree in all stepfamily relationships.

Children of the New Marriage

Mixed findings were reported on the impact of a child born to the remarried couple on the viability of the remarriage. Duberman (1975) found that with the birth of a child to the new couple, stepchild and stepparent relationships improved and stepsibling interactions became more harmonious. Whiteside, et al. (1978) related that if the stepmother had never had any children of her own, a child born of the new marriage was likely to be a unifying element in the family. The stepmother may have been resentful of having to take care of another person's children while having none of her own. Whiteside, et al. (1978) pointed out a danger in the position for the child who is the only member in the stepfamily related to every other member in the family.

Visher and Visher (1979) suggested that the child of the new

marriage can damage the marriage when the husband is the partner who has never had a child previously. He may tend to be partial to his own child, causing friction with his spouse, and splitting the family on subsystem lines.

Professional Intervention

Writers in the area of remarriage frequently generalize about the need for outside intervention in the lives of remarried families, particularly from an educational standpoint. Messinger (1976) in her proposal for education in preparation for remarriage, stated that partners in remarriage who have children fall heir to problems for which they are not prepared. Noting the need for helping couples establish a joint philosophy of child rearing, she believed that preparation was particularly useful for persons who had never been married before. She proposed that remarriage groups help to clarify the new roles that arise in the stepfamily and stated strongly that until remarriage is institutionalized by our society with appropriate role expectations corresponding to reality, remarriage preparation groups will be needed.

Visher and Visher recommended support groups for stepparents in order to promote the reality testing of their conflicting reactions and feelings. The Vishers reported that in their work with members of remarried families support, information and therapeutic assistance was effective in helping these families deal with the issues specific to remarriage.

Goldstein (1974) had previously suggested that there was therapeutic value in remarried families sharing their concerns that are

specific to the integration of the remarriage. He and Schulman (1972) recommended family therapy as well as premarital and preparental preparation to help the families move through the pseudo-wholeness to a real unity with differentiation and acceptance of differences. Weinstein (1980) found that the remarried couples in her study, in contrast to first-marrieds, were more likely to have used professional help for emotional issues.

Education Level of the Partners

Education level of partners in remarriage has frequently been implicated in the success or failure of the marriage. Both Bernard (1979) and Duberman (1975) reported that in their samples a college level education was a predictor for success in remarriage - specifically some college education for the husband with a professional or semi-professional occupational status following. However, Duberman found a bias towards better stepfather-stepchild relationships when stepfathers had less education than more.

References

- Albrecht, S.L. Correlates of marital happiness among the remarried. Journal of Marriage and the Family, November 1979, 857-867.
- Anspach, D.F. Kinship and divorce. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 1976, 38 (2), 323-330.
- Bernard, J. Remarriage. New York: Russel and Russel, 1971.
- Bitterman, D.M. The multi-marriage family. Social Casework, 1968, 49, 218-221.
- Bohannon, P., & Erickson, R. Stepping in. Psychology Today, January 1978, 53-59.
- Bowerman, C., & Irish, D. Some relationships of stepchildren and their parents. Marriage and Family Living, 1962, 24, 113-121.
- Cherlin, A. Remarriage as an incomplete institution. American Journal of Sociology, 1978, 84 (3), 634-649.
- Draughon, M. Stepmothers' models for identification in relation to mourning in the child. Psychological Report, 1975, 36, 183-189.
- Duberman, L. The Reconstituted Family. Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1975.
- Fast, I., & Cain, A.C. The stepparent role: Potential for disturbance in family functioning. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1966, 36, 485-491.
- Furstenburg, F.F., Jr. Recycling the family: Perspectives for a neglected family form. Marriage and Family Review, 1979, 2 (3).

- Goldstein, H. Reconstituted families: The second marriage and its children. Psychiatric Quarterly, 1974, 48, 433-440.
- Hetherington, E.M., Cox, M., & Cox, R. The aftermath of divorce, from Stevens, J. and Matthews, M., (Eds.). Mother-child, Father-child relations, Washington, D.C.: NAEYC, 1977.
- Johnson, H. Working with stepfamilies: Principles of practice. Social Work, July 1980, 304-308.
- Keshet, J.K. From separation to stepfamily; a subsystem analysis. Journal of Family Issues, December 1980, 1 (4), 517-532.
- Kleinman, J., Rosenberg, E., & Whiteside, M. Common developmental tasks in forming reconstituted families. Journal of Marriage and Family Therapy, April 1979, 79-86.
- Kompara, D. Difficulties in the socialization process of step-parenting. Family Relations, 1980, 29, 67-73.
- Koopmans, L.H. An introduction to contemporary statistics. California: Duxbury Press, 1981.
- McGoldrick, M., & Carter, E. Forming a remarried family, from Carter, E., & McGoldrick, M., (Eds.). The family life cycle: A framework for family therapy. New York: Garden Press, Inc., 1980, 265-294.
- Mead, M. Anomalies in american post-divorce relationships, in Bohannon, P., (Ed.). Divorce and after. New York: Doubleday, 1970.
- Messinger, L. Remarriage between divorced people with children from previous marriages: A proposal for preparation for remarriage. Journal of Marriage and Family Counseling, 1976, 2, 193-200.

- Messinger, L., Walker, K., & Freeman, S. Preparation for re-marriage following divorce, the use of group techniques. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, April 1978, 48 (2), 263-282.
- Mowatt, M.H. Group psychotherapy for stepfathers and their wives. Psychotherapy: Theory, Research and Practice, 1972, 9 (4), 328-331.
- Nichols, W.C. Stepfamilies: A growing family therapy challenge, from Group and Family Therapy, Wolberg, L., & Aronson, M., (Eds.). New York: Bruner/Mazel, Inc., 1980.
- Pendergast, E.G. The multiple-marriage family. The Family, 1981, 9 (1), 31-35.
- Perkins, T.F., & Kahan, J.P. An empirical comparison of natural-father, and stepfather family systems. Family Process, June 1979, 18, 175-183.
- Rallings, E.M. The special role of the stepfather. Family Coordinator, October 1976, 445-449.
- Ransom, J.W., Schlesinger, S., & Derdeyn, A. A stepfamily in formation. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, January 1979, 49 (1).
- Ransom, J.W., Schlesinger, S., & Derdeyn, A.P. A stepfamily in formation. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 1979, 49, 36-43.
- Robinson, M. Stepfamilies: A reconstituted family system. Journal of Family Therapy, 1980, 2, 45-69.
- Rosenberg, E.B. Therapy with siblings in reorganizing families. International Journal of Family Therapy, Fall 1980, 2 (3), 139-154.

- Sager, C.J., Steer, H., Crohn, H., Rodstein, E., & Walker, E.
 Remarriage revisited. Family and Child Mental Health, Spring/
 Summer 1980, 6 (1).
- Schlesinger, B. Remarriage as a family reorganization for
 divorced persons - a canadian study. Journal of Contemporary
 Family Studies, Autumn 1970, 1, 101-118.
- Schulman, G. Myths that intrude on the adaptation of the step-
 family. Social Casework, 1972, 49, 131-139.
- Schulman, G. Divorce, single parenthood, and stepfamilies:
 Structured implications of these transactions. International
 Journal of Family Therapy, Summer 1981, 87-112.
- Spicer, J.W., & Hampe, G.D. Kinship interaction after divorce.
Journal of Marriage and the Family, February 1977, 113-119.
- Theis, J.M. Beyond divorce: The impact of remarriage on children.
Journal of Clinical Child Psychology, Summer 1977, 59-61.
- Visher, E., & Visher, J. Stepfamilies: A guide to working with
 stepparents and stepchildren. New York: Brunner/Mazel, Inc.,
 1979.
- Walker, K.N., Rogers, J., & Messinger, L. Remarriage after
 divorce: A review. Social Casework, May 1977, 276-286.
- Walker, K., & Messinger, L. Remarriage after divorce: Dissolu-
 tion and reconstruction of family boundaries. Family Process,
 1979, 18, 185-192.
- Weingarten, H. Remarriage/well-being. Journal of Family Issues,
 December 1980, 533-559.

Whiteside, M.F., & Auerback, L.S. Can the daughter of my father's new wife be my sister? Families of remarriage in family therapy. Journal of Divorce, 1978, 1 (3), 271-283.

APPENDIX B

Supplementing Information on Present Study

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

Data were collected from 100 remarried partners (50 husbands and 50 wives) who had been remarried no less than six months yet no longer than five years. In each remarriage, at least one of the couples had been divorced from a previous marriage. In addition, at least one of each couple had brought into the marriage a child from a former relationship who may or may not be living with the couple.

The time limitation of no less than six months was chosen because the researcher wanted to allow a minimum period for the dynamics of the remarried family to develop. On the other end, a limit was chosen since the researcher was to be establishing data related to length-of-time passage and age of subjects.

The second criterion, that of one partner in the marriage having been previously divorced, was chosen because of the researcher's desire to study the typical remarried family. Glick (1980) stated that nine tenths of all persons who remarry do so after divorce.

The third criterion, that of at least one partner bringing into the remarriage a child from a previous relationship, was also chosen in order to study a typical family of remarriage. Furstenberg (1980) claimed that most remarriages involve a child of a former relationship, either as a resident member or a visitor. In addition, the current literature on issues and tasks of the remarried family is almost entirely devoted to discussions of the remarried family with stepchildren.

A list of names was obtained from a group of remarried couples who attended an evening seminar on the current status of the stepfamily in

research and literature in July, 1981. The group was asked for names of other couples who might be helpful in providing names of remarried couples. A total of 42 informant couples was obtained. A letter was sent to each of these during May, 1982, requesting help in locating a sample of remarried couples. A form for listing names and a self-addressed stamped envelope were included. The informant couples were also asked if the researcher could use their names as the referring source when contacting the prospective subjects. The informant couples were from eight Southeastern states.

An educational seminar was held locally for couples in remarriages. The couples attending were asked to take part in the research. In addition, they were asked to supply names of remarried couples they knew that were not attending the group.

Subjects: The partners in the remarriages ranged in age from 24-65 years ($\bar{X} = 40.4$). The mean length of marriage was 32 months. Twenty of the 130 respondents were in their first marriage, all others had been divorced. Thirty seven had no children when they entered their remarriages. In twenty eight of the couples both spouses had children from a previous marriage. In 21 couples only the wife had children from the previous marriage, and in the other 16 couples only the husband brought children into his new marriage. Two of the couples were expecting children, and two had adopted a joint child. For 19 of the couples, all children in the Rem families were 1-10; for 25 couples, all children were 10-20; three couples had children all over 20. The rest had children ranging in age from one through age 30.

Ninety seven of the respondents had engaged professional help for emotional problems sometime between the threatened breakup of the former marriage and the present. Educational level of the sample tended to be high. Thirty five of the respondents had finished high school or attended a technical school, community college or one year at a four year college. Of the rest 30 had a four year degree, 37 had Master's degrees, and 27, doctoral degrees. On a scale for marital happiness, 12 reported their marriages less happy than others, 31 reported their marriages as happy as others, and 87 reported their marriages happier than others.

Data Collection

Prior to data collection a letter was mailed to each couple suggested by the contact couples in July, 1982. This letter (see Appendix) requested the couple's cooperation in the research and listed the criteria regarding length of marriage, prior marital and parental status. It also included a statement that the subjects would be sent the results of the research if they wished. The couples were asked to return a self-addressed stamped postcard if they were willing to cooperate. They also were asked to list the names of other couples they knew who met the criteria. In addition, each letter was ended with a personalized post-script including the name of the referring couple. One hundred couples agreed to participate.

Upon receipt of the postcards, surveys were mailed to the couples with instructions to fill them out separately. Instructions were given the couples for requesting results of the survey. A self-addressed, stamped envelope was included for the return.

Couples attending the local educational seminar were given the survey to be completed before the first meeting. The couples they referred were contacted by telephone, told of the research and asked for their cooperation. The questionnaires were delivered to their home by the researcher and picked up a week later. One reminder was sent to those from whom the questionnaire was not received. Sixty-five fully completed sets were returned. Ten other sets were either not complete or were returned after data was already being processed.

Instrumentation

In order to execute the study, the researcher abstracted from the current literature the issues and tasks that are considered to be necessary for the successful integration of the family of remarriage. A questionnaire (Appendix) was then developed covering the varying aspects of these issues and tasks as partners in remarriages might perceive them.

The items were distributed randomly. They were developed to cover three areas: 1. Issues and tasks arising from stages of the family life cycle of the two subsystems joined in the remarriage which arise prior to the remarriage, 2. Issues and tasks involved specifically in the couple relationship in the remarriage which can be resolved only by the couple, and 3. Issues and tasks that involve family members across subsystems and across remarried family-ex-spousal and extended family boundaries. In addition, the information section of the survey contained items which were developed from a list of structural factors abstracted from the literature. These factors are implicated

by authors in the field as impacting on the remarriage family's ability to integrate successfully.

The survey was designed in order that the researcher could clarify whether or not the partners in a remarriage family considered the issues and tasks from the literature to be ones they had experienced. The researcher also wanted to ascertain whether or not an issue or task that had been experienced by the couple had been perceived by them as creating disturbance and if so, to what degree.

Section one of the questionnaire contained 58 items (see Appendix). There was a short set of instructions preceding the items. The respondent was asked whether or not he/she had experienced the item. The respondent indicated if the item was not applicable to his or her particular situation. If the item was applicable and the respondent perceived that she/he had experienced it, she/he was asked to indicate the level of disturbance she/he experienced because of the item. Choices were (1) no problem, (2) mild disturbance, (3) moderate disturbance, and (4) severe disturbance. The subject was asked to rate the present and the early stages of the present marriage.

Section two of the survey requested information about structural factors in the respondent's family of remarriage, such as role played by the respondent in the remarriage, length of remarriage, and age of children. Item 18 was a marital satisfaction scale with choices one-ten. Item 19 was a scale of satisfaction with self as a stepparent. Again, choices were one-ten.

Statistical Analysis

Analysis of data was completed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). A total disturbance score was obtained for each subject. To obtain this each item completed was scored as followed: "no" equals zero, "yes" equals one, two, three or four as circled. Those items checked as not applicable were omitted. All items answered zero, one, two, three or four were averaged for each subject for the total disturbance score. This method was chosen so that omitted items would not affect the results adversely. The paired t-test was used to test for significant differences in the total disturbance scores remarried partners reported they had in the past from that which they reported in the present.

Percentages were tabulated for each item as a percent of all of those for whom the item was applicable. Not all items were applicable to all respondents. This varied according to the respondent's role. Percentages were tabulated for: (in the past and in the present)

1. couple data - percent of couples in which at least one of the partners reported experiencing the item,
2. individual data - percent of individuals eligible for the item who reported experiencing the item,
3. disturbance data - percent of all individuals eligible who reported experiencing any level of disturbance (mild, moderate or severe),
4. moderate to severe disturbance data - percent of all individuals eligible who reported experiencing moderate or severe disturbance.

Paired t-tests were run to detect significant differences between percentage means for in the past (earlier in the marriage) and in the present (now in the marriage) for couple data, individual data, disturbance data and moderate to severe disturbance data.

In addition, items were sorted into clusters according to content. This was done using two criteria - the topic of the items and the roles played by the actors in the items. All items in a cluster were related to one set of roles; for instance, items pertaining to parents' perception of emotional issues between themselves and their children from a previous marriage. No items pertaining to persons who did not have children from a former marriage were included in this cluster.

These clusters were then tested for significantly different responses by role: 1. stepmother, mother and wife, 2. stepfather, father and husband, 3. mother and wife, 4. father and husband, 5. stepmother and wife, 6. stepfather and husband, and for men vs women, using the χ^2 (chi square) test. Only those roles were included in the analysis of a particular cluster that were appropriate to the items in the cluster. In order to carry out this test each subject's responses were totalled for each cluster. Based on these scores, the subject was placed in either the high or the low disturbance category for each cluster. Because the data was discrete, it was not practical to divide it at the median. Therefore it was divided in such a way as to split the sample as nearly in half as possible. The result was a modified median test to determine if the probabilities for high and low scores differed according to roles.

Means were computed for two sets of data for each subset (moderate to severe disturbance data, in the present; and proportion moderate to severe disturbance data was of individual data, in the present).

In order to test for quantitative differences between the subsets for level of M.S.D.D. and for the proportion M.S.D.D. was of I.D. a Kruskal-Wallis procedure was followed. Because the number of items in each subset was small, the subsets were reclustered according to content to increase their size. (Role was no longer a factor.) When the Kruskal-Wallis test indicated that there was a significant difference between subsets, the rank analogue to Fisher's protected LSD procedure was followed to ascertain which subsets differed from which others. The rank analogue to Fisher's protected LSD is discussed in Koopman (1981). The actual procedure used in the study differs slightly from that in Koopmans (which is a simpler but less rigorous version).

APPENDIX C

Supplementary Tables

Table I

Issues and Tasks Necessary for the Successful
Integration of the Stepfamily

Item	C.D.* %	I.D.** %	D.D.*** %	M.S.D.D.**** %
1. Subject's ex-spouse being hurt, angry or bitter about the former marriage and the divorce.	83.0 69.2	62.7° 49.1	49.0° 21.8	34.5° 10.0
2. Subject dealing with own left-over anger and bitterness from the break-up of the former marriage.	83.0 69.2	59.0 45.4	50.0 39.8	36.3 8.1
3. Subject's children having hurt feelings, anger, and bitterness left-over from the loss of the first marriage family.	83.0 87.6+	72.0 63.0	64.0 40.0	42.0 11.0
4. Subject and new spouse having different expectations of what the remarriage should be like.	73.8 76.0	62.5 56.4	52.3 39.2	31.2 13.8
5. Subject having mixed feelings about the old separate ties and experiences of new spouse - developing common ground with him/her about old relationships.	83.0 83.0	66.9 53.8	41.9 16.9	13.7 3.8
6. Subject and new spouse finding time for just the two of them, away from rest of family.	92.3 92.3	82.5 81.5	53.1 50.7	22.2 17.6
7. Subject and new spouse finding time and privacy to work out difficulties.	89.0 87.6	74.6 70.7	42.0 38.4	17.4 14.6
8. Subject and new spouse working out an agreement about how much of spouse's time and resources will be spent on spouse's children of former marriage.	55.3 56.4+	46.2 51.1+	22.6 22.7	10.7 3.4

Table I (Cont.)

Item	C.D.* %	I.D.** %	D.D.*** %	M.S.D.D.**** %
9. Subject and new spouse work-on agreement about how much of subject's time and resources are spent on subject's children from former marriage.	49.2 49.2	37.0 40.0 ⁺	23.0 20.0	16.0 8.0
10. Subject dealing with the fact that present spouse makes contact with his/her former spouse over issues not involving the children - or spends more time with him/her on the phone or otherwise than subject is comfortable with.	52.3 38.4	35.4 30.1	23.6 7.5	17.2 4.3
11. Subject and new spouse learning to work together making decisions about all the children.	86.1 84.6	71.8 68.4	41.0 38.3	18.8 10.0
12. Subject and new spouse working together making financial decisions - how to pay day-to-day expenses - who pays for what.	95.3 84.6	86.5 81.0	47.6 38.9	24.6 14.6
13. Subject and new spouse having different ideas about how to raise children.	86.1 83.0	69.0 66.1	48.4 40.7	26.1 15.5
14. Subject and new spouse making decisions about inheritance issues.	78.4 73.8	65.8 56.1	27.7 24.6	13.4 6.9
15. Subject getting used to personalities, habits and behavior of new members of the family.	93.8 93.8	86.5 76.9	69.0 46.1	36.5 16.1
16. Subject accepting the children's difficulties with the remarriage - the children's complaints and resentment are normal.	93.8 80.0	69.4 61.5	39.6 21.0	15.0 6.0

Table I (Cont.)

Item	C.D.* %	I.D.** %	D.D.*** %	M.S.D.D.**** %
17. Subject having mixed feelings when other parent-child subsystem reminisces.	75.3 72.3	51.2 44.6	35.2 24.6	12.8 5.3
18. Subject having guilt feelings about effect of remarriage on the children.	76.9 70.7	54.7 46.9	47.6 30.7	23.0 6.2
19. Subject having mixed feelings about the children keeping contact with their other parents outside the remarriage.	73.8 76.0 ⁺	53.1 50.7	42.0 30.0	23.8 7.6
20. Subject having mixed feelings and confusion about how he/she acts and reacts toward the stepchildren.	90.7 90.7	88.1 86.0	76.3 65.5	38.7 23.6
21. Subject learning to let new spouse tell children what and what not to do, backing him/her up even when he/she does it differently than subject.	81.5 76.9	70.0 65.0	42.0 28.0	26.0 8.0
22. Subject giving up the close feelings and sharing the subject had with children while a single parent.	64.6 75.3 ⁺	49.0 45.0	36.0 29.0	15.0 8.0
23. Subject having guilt feelings about effect of the past divorce on his/her children - their losses.	87.6 76.9	81.0 60.0	74.0 45.0	52.0 20.0
24. Subject having guilt feelings about not doing enough for his/her children.	73.8 69.2	63.0 58.0	54.0 46.0	27.0 14.0

Table I (Cont.)

Item	C.D.* %	I.D.** %	D.D.*** %	M.S.D.D.**** %
25. Subject's children complaining or upset-disliking the remarriage, for example - not liking to have a new parent-preferring first marriage family or the single-parent family before this marriage.	69.2 55.3	61.0 48.9	51.0 22.4	32.0 7.1
26. Subject learning how to support ex-spouse emotionally in order that the children feel free to enjoy him/her without feeling disloyal.	50.17 49.2	43.0 38.0	30.0 17.0	19.0 5.0
27. Subject and former spouse having different ideas of how to raise children.	81.5 69.2	68.0 58.0	60.0 44.0	43.0 24.0
28. Subject's new spouse's ex-spouse influencing step-children to change their living and/or visiting arrangements without consulting subject and spouse.	55.3 49.2	42.0 39.7	34.8 26.8	21.0 13.9
29. Subject's ex-spouse influencing the children to change their living and/or visiting arrangements without consulting subject and present spouse.	58.4 ⁺ 60.0 ⁺	39.0 36.0	31.0 25.0	24.0 15.0
30. Members of subject's present family, subject and subject's former spouse negotiating ways to enable everyone who wishes to take part in important family occasions without feeling a lot of discomfort....graduations, weddings, etc.	70.7 66.0	42.8 49.0 ⁺	29.3 23.0	20.6 8.0

Table I (Cont.)

Item	C.D.* %	I.D.** %	D.D.*** %	M.S.D.D.**** %
39. Family members trying to keep everything calm - (pseudomutuality).	61.5 56.9	41.2 30.0	31.7 26.1	14.2 11.5
40. Subject's Rem Family having experienced sexual tensions and/or attractions because there are biologically unrelated persons of both sexes in the household.	27.6 24.6	17.4 12.3	10.0 3.0	3.96 .769
41. Children feeling that if they love or enjoy their stepparent, they are being disloyal to their other parent out of the family.	56.3 58.4 ⁺	51.8 43.8	40.8 33.8	23.6 11.5
42. Children getting used to changes in their lives because of the remarriage.	90.3 92.3 ⁺	84.1 68.4	60.47 30.0	28.5 3.8
43. Children wanting to move back and forth from one parent's home to another when they don't like what is going on in one or the other.	58.4 49.2	43.6 32.3	29.3 12.3	19.0 5.3
44. Subject giving up independence and freedom developed before marriage, having been able to make all kinds of decisions freely, not having to account to anyone.	95.3 92.3	80.4 72.3	61.1 45.3	26.9 16.1
45. Subject having conflicting feelings over decisions made by self that effect marriage and family; division of time, resources among own needs, and others.	95.3 95.3	82.54 80.77	68.2 65.3	33.33 23.68

Table I (Cont.)

Item	C.D.* %	I.D.** %	D.D.*** %	M.S.D.D.**** %
31. Rem family working out ways to settle problems in family- considering needs of each and setting priorities in making decisions.	95.3	85.3	60.1	26.8
	93.8	81.5	46.3	17.6
32. Rem family deciding how to divide up work and responsibilities.	92.3	80.9	52.3	19.0
	92.3	77.6	42.3	13.0
33. Rem family making decisions about the use of space in home, sharing....	83.0	69.8	37.3	21.4
	81.5	65.3	30.6	12.3
34. Rem family making decisions about what names or terms should be used...should step-mother be called by first names, or mother.	66.1	50.7	11.9	.794
	52.3	34.6	5.3	.0
35. Other family members having unfulfilled expectations about the remarriage family- their disappointment and dissatisfaction with the new family - not getting enough time and attention.	55.3	34.4	24.8	12.8
	47.6	30.7	20.0	4.6
36. Members of subject's family showing signs of not feeling accepted, not feeling important to others or feeling neglected...withdrawing-acting out.	81.5	70.4	62.4	38.6
	80.0	66.9	50.7	19.2
37. Members of subject's family feeling jealous of others- feeling that others get more than share of time and attention, caring.	72.3	59.0	51.1	25.9
	67.6	55.0	40.0	16.9
38. Subject being comfortable with the words step-father, stepmother, etc.	70.7	43.0	23.8	6.3
	64.6	39.2	17.6	1.5

Table I (Cont.)

Item	C.D.* %	I.D.** %	D.D.*** %	M.S.D.D.**** %
46. Subject getting used to decisions being made outside the family by an ex-spouse effecting the family.	93.8 86.1	77.7 68.4	67.4 55.3	43.6 31.5
47. Subject getting used to dealing with an ex-spouse or wife who has to be considered when making decisions in the family involving the children.	89.0 86.1	73.0 67.6	59.5 46.9	34.1 12.3
48. Complications in making plans for family - vacations and special family times.	83.0 84.0 ⁺	69.0 71.5 ⁺	60.3 47.6	26.1 20.7
49. Having court negotiations over custody or needing lawyers to settle issues out of court.	56.9 40.0	42.0 27.6	38.8 18.4	31.7 12.3
50. Subject and spouse making decisions with former spouses about the time the children spend in each household, etc.	77.8 72.3	59.5 53.8	53.1 41.5	36.0 19.2
51. Subject recognizing that the family will never be like a first marriage family - that it will have a different kind of interaction - a different way of making arrangements, because of other systems outside the family.	84.6 84.6	74.1 68.4	50.8 33.8	20.1 10.0
52. Subject recognizing that nothing seems to stay settled in family, new happenings always arise, and old ones come around again to be worked on.	92.3 93.8 ⁺	81.4 77.6	63.7 53.0	36.2 20.0

Table I (Cont.)

Item	C.D.* %	I.D.** %	D.D.*** %	M.S.D.D.**** %
53. Spouses working with the children as step-siblings to help them enjoy and respect each other as allies and friends.	72.3 92.0	65.6 ⁺ 87.5 ⁺	32.8 25.0	11.9 1.785
54. Subject and spouse having to deal with attitudes of subject's parents carrying over bad feelings about subject's divorce.	36.1 29.2	18.8 15.3	8.6 3.0	4.6 3.0
55. Subject and spouse having to deal with attitudes of in-laws from former marriage carrying over bad feelings from subject's divorce and remarriage.	41.5 35.3	23.6 21.5	13.3 7.6	5.5 .7
56. Subject and spouse having to deal with attitudes of in-laws of present marriage carrying over bad feelings from divorce and/or the remarriage.	36.0 30.0	33.0 19.2	10.3 6.1	4.7 1.5
57. Subject's parents being involved in affairs of remarriage family.	55.3 56.4 ⁺	36.5 39.5 ⁺	9.5 9.2	1.58 .769
58. Subject's in-laws of present marriage involving themselves in the affairs of the remarriage.	72.3 66.0	41.2 41.5 ⁺	11.9 8.4	3.9 4.6

⁺Scores rose from in the past

^ofirst score is for earlier in marriage, second score for in the present.

*couple data--% of couples in which at least one experienced the item.

**individual data--% of individual who report having experienced item.

***% of individual reporting any level of disturbance for the item

****% of individuals reporting moderate to severe disturbance for the item.

All percentage tabulated for those who experienced the item out of all those who are eligible for the item, since not all items are applicable to all respondents.

APPENDIX D

Letters Sent to Partners in Remarriage



COLLEGE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061 - 8299

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (703) 961-4794 or 4795

June 20, 1982

Dear

I am currently conducting a research project on the topic of the adjustment of remarriage families. Your names were suggested to me as persons who would be interested in participating in this pioneering project.

Remarriage is an area where little factual information has been gathered. There is a great need to have solid data on which marriage and family scholars and therapists can establish their work. This research is designed to further the collection of such information.

I have designed a questionnaire to uncover the issues and tasks couples find they have to work with in order to stabilize their families after remarriage. Specifically I am looking for couples who meet several criteria.

1. They have been remarried between 6 months and 5 years.
2. At least one of the partners was divorced from the previous marriage.
3. At least one of the partners has at least one child from a previous marriage who may or may not live with the couple.

If you meet these criteria and can take the time to help out with this important study, please return the enclosed, self-addressed, stamped post card. If you know of any other couples who would be interested in this project, please list their names on the post card. On receipt of the postcard, you will be sent the questionnaire. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Cecile James Pirie

CJP/pkz

Enclosure

P.S. Confidentiality of your responses will be protected. You will be sent the results of the research, if you wish.



COLLEGE OF HOME ECONOMICS

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

CENTER FOR FAMILY SERVICES (703) 961-7201

July 12, 1982

Dear

Attached is the questionnaire we are using in our research on the adaptation of remarriage families. There is a copy for each partner. Please complete the questionnaire independently so that we can determine the difference between the experience of husbands and wives.

Your participation in this research is completely voluntary and your response will be handled anonymously. We greatly appreciate your cooperation.

Enclosed is a stamped, self-addressed envelope for returning the questionnaire. If you would like us to send you the results of the study, please underline your name on the return envelope.

Thank you for helping us get a better understanding of the adjustments people make in remarriage. Please contact Cecile Pirie, 306 Eakin Street, East, Blacksburg, VA 24060; Phone (703) 552-5305 if you have questions.

Sincerely yours

Cecilie Pirie, M.S.

Howard Protinsky, Ph.D.,
Associate Professor

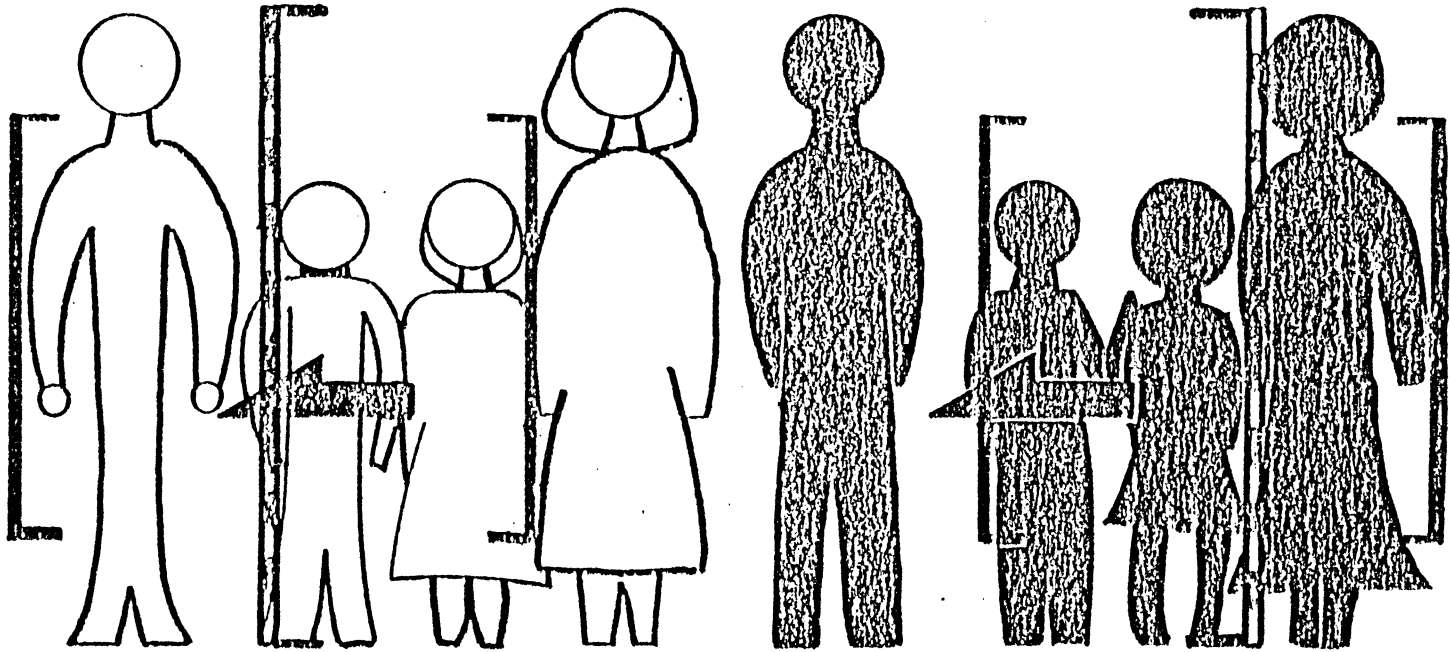
HP/rcc

Attachment

APPENDIX E

Questionnaires Sent to Partners in Remarriage

STEPFAMILY
SURVEY



STEPFAMILY SURVEY

SECTION ONE:

Please read each item carefully and according to your experience. Is this an issue that you have experienced?

Because stepfamilies have many different make-ups, some items may not be applicable to you. For instance, if the item is about stepchildren, and you yourself have none, you cannot answer the item. Answer only for yourself, not your spouse. (If the item states stepchildren and you have only one, answer for stepchild.)

As you read each item, determine whether or not it is applicable to your situation. If it is not, circle N/A and move on to the next item. If the item fits your situation, decide whether or not you, yourself, have experienced it, and circle yes or no.

If you circled yes on an item then move on to the right side of the survey and circle the rating that best represents how much of a problem that item is and has been for you (how disturbing it is or has been in the past). The choices are (no problem), (mildly disturbing), (moderately disturbing), and (extremely disturbing).

Please answer for in the past and in the present.

In your present marriage.

The positive outcomes of remarriage are fully recognized and appreciated. Because of the nature of the research the focus of the survey will be only on the problems involved.

Read the item carefully:

1. My present husband and I having different expectations of what our marriage should be like.

Have you experienced this?

Past
N/A...Yes...No
Present
N/A...Yes...No

If you have experienced this issue how would you rate the degree of disturbance it has caused for you? Circle a number.

	no	mildly	moderately	very
	problem	disturbing	disturbing	disturbing
.
.
.
.

Read the item carefully:

	Have you experienced this?	no problem	mildly disturbing	moderately disturbing	very disturbing
2. My having conflicting feelings over the decisions that I make that affect my marriage and family, for example decisions on how to divide up my time, attention and resources among my needs, my husband's needs and the needs of the children.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
3. My having mixed feelings about the children keeping contact with their other parents outside our family.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
4. Other family members having unfulfilled expectations about our remarriage family, for example their disappointment and dissatisfaction with the new family-not getting enough time and attention	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
5. My children complaining or upset - disliking our remarriage, for example, they don't like to have to pay attention to a new parent or put up with him. They really preferred the first-marriage family or the single parent family before this marriage	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
6. Making decisions with former spouses about the time the children spend in our house and the time spent with the other parent, for example, how much visiting-changing of schedules and not being able to count on regular times	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4

Read the item carefully:	Have you experienced this?	no problem				mildly disturbing				moderately disturbing				very disturbing			
7. Members of our family feeling jealous of others, for example, feeling that others get more than their share of time and attention, that others are cared for more.	Past																
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
	Present																
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
8. Children feeling that if they love or enjoy their stepparent, they are being disloyal to their other parent out of the family - that the other parent wouldn't like it.	Past																
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
	Present																
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
9. Having court negotiations over custody of at least one of the children or having needed lawyers to settle issues out of court	Past																
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
	Present																
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
10. Learning how to support my ex-husband emotionally in order that the children can feel free to enjoy him without feeling disloyal to me or my present husband	Past																
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
	Present																
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
11. My having guilt feelings about the effect of the past divorce on the children - the losses that they have had	Past																
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
	Present																
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
12. My having guilt feelings about the effect of our remarriage on the children, for example, the changes they have had to make, the emotional problems they have felt	Past																
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
	Present																
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
13. My having guilt feelings about not doing enough for my children - either living with us or out of the family.	Past																
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
	Present																
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.

Read the item carefully:	Have you experienced this?	no problem				mildly disturbing				moderately disturbing				very disturbing			
14. My being uncomfortable with the words stepfather, stepmother, etc.	Past																
	N/A...Yes...No	. . . . .1	. . . . .2	. . . . .3	. . . . .4												
15. Our family making decisions about what names or terms should be used in our family, for example, should the step-parent be called mother/father or by their first names, etc.	Past																
	N/A...Yes...No	. . . . .1	. . . . .2	. . . . .3	. . . . .4												
16. My husband and I making decisions about inheritance issues, for example, who will leave their money and belongings to whom	Past																
	N/A...Yes...No	. . . . .1	. . . . .2	. . . . .3	. . . . .4												
17. Our family making decisions about the use of space in our home, for example, how we used shared space, how we divide up space, what do we do about individual property and sharing	Past																
	N/A...Yes...No	. . . . .1	. . . . .2	. . . . .3	. . . . .4												
18. My having mixed feelings when other members in the family share old times, old experiences, talk about things that happened before I met them - in a nostalgic fashion. I felt left out.	Past																
	N/A...Yes...No	. . . . .1	. . . . .2	. . . . .3	. . . . .4												
19. Having complications in making plans for family vacations and special family times. So many special arrangements need to be made, often we are unable to carry out plans because of needs or demands of the children's other parent outside the family or because of conflicting needs of so many people.	Past																
	N/A...Yes...No	. . . . .1	. . . . .2	. . . . .3	. . . . .4												

Read the item carefully:

	Have you experienced this?	no problem	mildly disturbing	moderately disturbing	very disturbing
20. Getting used to dealing with an ex-husband or wife whom we have to consider when we make decisions in our family that involve the children.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
21. Getting used to decisions being made outside our family by an ex-husband or wife affecting our family, such as financial decisions, vacation decisions, etc.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
22. My giving up the close feelings and sharing that I had with my children while I was a single parent	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
23. My getting used to the personalities, habits and behavior of new members of the family.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
24. Our family deciding how to divide up work and responsibilities.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.
25. My learning to let my husband tell my children what and what not to do, and backing him up even when he does it differently than I - letting him have a say in important decisions about the children - trusting his judgment about the children.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1.	.2.	.3.	.4.

Read the item carefully:

	Have you experienced this?	no problem	mildly disturbing	moderately disturbing	very disturbing
26. Our working with the children as step-brothers and stepsisters, to help them enjoy and respect each other as allies and friends.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	. 1 . . . . .	. 2 . . . . .	. 3 . . . . .	. 4
27. My recognizing that our family will never be like a first marriage family - that we will have a different kind of interaction - a different way of making arrangements, etc. because of the ex-husband and/or ex-wife outside our family, the ex-inlaws, that can have an effect on our family	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	. 1 . . . . .	. 2 . . . . .	. 3 . . . . .	. 4
28. My having mixed feelings about the old separate ties, friendships and experiences my husband had before our marriage - trying to develop a common ground with him about them - deciding where I fit.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	. 1 . . . . .	. 2 . . . . .	. 3 . . . . .	. 4
29. Our family working out ways to settle problems in the family, for example, developing ways for us to listen to each other and to consider each other's needs and priorities in making decisions that involve other family members	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	. 1 . . . . .	. 2 . . . . .	. 3 . . . . .	. 4
30. My recognizing the fact that nothing ever seems to stay settled in our family, new things are always coming up that have to be worked on, and old ones always seem to come around again and again.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	. 1 . . . . .	. 2 . . . . .	. 3 . . . . .	. 4

Read the item carefully:

	Have you experienced this?	no problem	mildly disturbing	moderately disturbing	very disturbing
31. The children getting used to the changes in their lives because of our marriage. . .	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
32. Family members trying to keep everything calm for fear that our family may break up. Often efforts are made to keep things calm, to always be nice to each other, normal feelings of anger, disappointment, etc. are upsetting to the family, or some of the members. . . .	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
33. Children wanting to move back and forth from one parent's home to another when they don't like what is going on in one or the other.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
34. My dealing with my own left-over anger and bitterness from the breakup of my former marriage	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
35. My present husband and I having different ideas about how to raise children	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
36. Members of our family sometimes showing signs of not feeling accepted, not feeling important to others, or feeling neglected, for example, sometimes withdrawing or acting out	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4

Read the item carefully:	Have you experienced this?	no problem	mildly disturbing	moderately disturbing	very disturbing
37. My former husband and I having different ideas of how to raise our children. . . .	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
38. Members of my present family, myself and my former husband working out things so that we can take part in important family occasions, for example, everyone is able to comfortably attend weddings, recitals, baptisms, graduations, if they choose . .	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
39. My giving up the independence and freedom I developed before this marriage, for example, having been able to make all kinds of decisions freely, not having to account to anyone.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
40. My husband's ex-wife influencing my step-children to change their living and/or visiting arrangements without consulting my husband or me.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
41. My own parents being involved in the affairs of my remarriage family	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
42. My husband and I working on agreements about how much of my time and resources I spend on my children from my former marriage	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
43. My in-laws of my present marriage being involved in the affairs of my present marriage.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4

Read the item carefully:

	Have you experienced this?	no problem	mildly disturbing	moderately disturbing	very disturbing
44. My husband and I having to deal with attitudes of my parents carrying over bad feelings from my divorce.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
45. My ex-husband influencing the children to change their living and/or visiting arrangements without consulting my husband and me.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
46. My husband and I working out an agreement about how much of his time and resources he spends on his children of his former marriage.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
47. My present husband and I finding time for just the two of us, away from the rest of the family.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
48. My dealing with the fact that my present husband makes contact with his former spouse over issues not involving the children, or spends more time with her or on the phone with her than I am comfortable with	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
49. My children having hurt feelings, anger and bitterness left over from the loss of our first family through divorce.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4
	Present				
	N/A...Yes...No	.1	.2	.3	.4

Read the item carefully:

	Have you experienced this?	no problem	mildly disturbing	moderately disturbing	very disturbing
50. My husband and I finding time and privacy to work out our differences.	Past N/A...Yes...No	. .1. . . . .	.2. . . . .	.3. . . . .	.4.
	Present N/A...Yes...No	. .1. . . . .	.2. . . . .	.3. . . . .	.4.
51. My ex-husband being hurt, angry, or bitter about our former marriage and the divorce.	Past N/A...Yes...No	. .1. . . . .	.2. . . . .	.3. . . . .	.4.
	Present N/A...Yes...No	. .1. . . . .	.2. . . . .	.3. . . . .	.4.
52. My accepting the children's difficulties with our remarriage - that their complaints and resentment are normal	Past N/A...Yes...No	. .1. . . . .	.2. . . . .	.3. . . . .	.4.
	Present N/A...Yes...No	. .1. . . . .	.2. . . . .	.3. . . . .	.4.
53. My having mixed feelings and confusion about how I act and react with my step-children	Past N/A...Yes...No	. .1. . . . .	.2. . . . .	.3. . . . .	.4.
	Present N/A...Yes...No	. .1. . . . .	.2. . . . .	.3. . . . .	.4.
54. My present husband and I learning to work together making decisions about all the children	Past N/A...Yes...No	. .1. . . . .	.2. . . . .	.3. . . . .	.4.
	Present N/A...Yes...No	. .1. . . . .	.2. . . . .	.3. . . . .	.4.
55. My husband and I working together making financial decisions, for example, how we pay day-to-day expenses - who pays for what - whether or not we pool all money coming into the family, including support money	Past N/A...Yes...No	. .1. . . . .	.2. . . . .	.3. . . . .	.4.
	Present N/A...Yes...No	. .1. . . . .	.2. . . . .	.3. . . . .	.4.

Read the item carefully:

Have you experienced this?

no problem mildly disturbing moderately disturbing very disturbing

56. Our family having experienced sexual tensions and/or attractions because we have biologically unrelated persons of both sexes in the household.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	. . 1 . . . . .	. 2 . . . . .	. 3 . . . . .	. 4
57. Our having to deal with attitudes of in-laws of my present marriage carrying over bad feelings from divorce and/or our remarriage	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	. . 1 . . . . .	. 2 . . . . .	. 3 . . . . .	. 4
58. Our having to deal with attitudes of in-laws from my former marriage carrying over bad feelings about my divorce and/or remarriage.	Past				
	N/A...Yes...No	. . 1 . . . . .	. 2 . . . . .	. 3 . . . . .	. 4

14. Have you ever sought professional help or attended a group to help you deal with problems that came up during the break-up of your former marriage, or during the time you were living as a single parent, or after you began your present marriage?

Yes _____ No _____

15. If yes to the above, indicate which type below.

a. individual counseling before my separation	_____	for	_____	for how long?
b. individual counseling after my separation	_____	for	_____	
c. a divorce group	_____	for	_____	
d. single-parent family counseling	_____	for	_____	
e. a stepfamily group	_____	for	_____	
f. stepfamily counseling	_____	for	_____	
g. other	_____			

16. Did you find this counseling or group experience helpful? _____

Explain. _____

17. What is your level of education? grade school _____ high school _____ technical training _____
community college _____ college _____ how many years or
degree obtained? _____

18. How satisfied are you with your present marriage on a scale from 1-10, one meaning totally dissatisfied, ten meaning satisfied totally. Circle a number.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

19. How satisfied are you with yourself as a stepparent? Circle a number.

1.....2.....3.....4.....5.....6.....7.....8.....9.....10

Appendix F

Vita

**The vita has been removed from
the scanned document**