THE TIES THAT BIND: RELATIONSHIP ATTACHMENT BETWEEN FORMER SPOUSES

by

Debra Ann Madden-Derdich

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
in
Family and Child Development

Approved:

Joyce A. Arditti, Chair

Jay A. Mancini

Howard O. Protinsky

Laurie Shea

Michael J. Sporakowski

April 6, 1994

Blacksburg, Virginia

THE TIES THAT BIND: RELATIONSHIP ATTACHMENT BETWEEN FORMER SPOUSES

by

Debra Ann Madden-Derdich

Committee Chair: Joyce A. Arditti, Ph.D.

Family and Child Development

Marriage and Family Therapy

(ABSTRACT)

Using survey data from 219 divorced custodial mothers randomly selected from public court records, this research investigated variables which may contribute to increased attachment to a former spouse, postdivorce. A path analysis was conducted to determine the effects of the selected variables on attachment. The findings indicated that attachment was greater for women whose husbands had wanted the divorce, for those who had been married for a longer period of time, for those who were experiencing a difficult time with parenting, and for those who had better coparental relationships with their former sposues. The degree of hostility surrounding the divorce, current conflict between the former spouses, the custody arrangement, and the mother's satisfaction with financial support all had an indirect effect on attachment through their effects on conflict and the quality of the coparental relationship. Possible explanations for these findings as well as implications for therapy are discussed.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this dissertation marks the culmination of an incredible three-year journey for me to which many people have contributed and played a part. I first need to thank my five committee members - Joyce Arditti, Mike Sporakowski, Jay Mancini, Bud Protinsky, and Laurie Shea - your support, advice, and confidence in me throughout this process have been invaluable. Very special thanks go to Joyce Arditti who allowed me to be a part of this research project. Joyce, your mentoring, encouragement, availability, and friendship have meant more to me than I could possibly express.

I want to thank my classmates, Adrian Hickmon, Chuck West, Mary-Eve Zangari, Dave Moore, and Anne Gosling-Goldsmith. The past three years have been an incredible experience for me, and a large part of that is due to all of you. I will always cherish your friendships.

To my parents, Leo and Johnetta Madden, who told the little girl she could be whatever she wanted to be and then worked and sacrificed to make sure her dreams came true. It is with great love that I thank you for your endless encouragement, love, and belief in me over the years.

And to Paul, my husband and my best friend, who enthusiastically set out on this adventure with me three years ago and has never complained once. I do not think there are words to express the incredible emotions I feel for you right now. Thank you for encouraging me, for believing in me, and for always making me smile. Your willingness to share this dream with me has made it all the more special - I love you.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	1
Measuring and Defining Adjustment	2
The Prevalence of Post-divorce Attachment	4
Attachment Theory	4
Attachment Behavior in Adults	5
Distinguishing Between Adult and Childhood Attachment	6
Modification of Attachment Behavior Over the Live Course	7
The Importance of Attachment in Relationship to Post-divorce Adjustment	8
Purpose of the Current Study	10
Women as the Focus of the Study	11
Development of the Model	12
Conflict and the Coparental Relationship	14
Variables in the Model	16
Review of the Literature	19
Previous Variables Associated with Post-divorce Attachment	19
Variables in the Current Model	21
Attachment	21
Defining Attachment in the Marital Relationship	21
Conceptualizing Attachment	22
Measuring Attachment	24
The Coparental Relationship	25
Defining the Coparental Relationship	25
The Bias Against Post-divorce Relationships between Former Spouses	26

The Interrelationships of the Variables in the Proposed Model 27
The Coparental Relationship 28
Length of Marriage 29
Initiator Status 31
Custody Arrangement 32
Parenting Difficulty 33
Child Support 33
Hostility 34
Hypotheses of the Study 35
Methodology 39
Sample 39
Instrumentation 40
Plan of Analysis 43
Results 45
Variables Related to Conflict 45
Variables Related to the Coparental Relationship 48
Variables Related to Attachment 50
Discussion 54
The Differential Effects on Conflict and the Coparental Relationship 55
Variables Predictive of Attachment 58
Quality of the Coparental Relationship 59
Conflict 60
Perceived Difficulty with Parenting 61
Summary 62
Implications for Conducting Therapy with Divorced Mothers ... 64
References 72
Appendix A: Correspondence 83
Appendix B: Variables, Survey Questions, and Coding 98

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Sample Descriptors	41
2	Correlations Between Selected Variables	46
3	Multiple Regression Analysis: Variables Related to Conflict	47
4	Multiple Regression Analysis: Variables Related to Quality of the Coparental Relationship	49
5	Direct and Total Effects Hostility, Custody Arrangement, Who Wanted the Divorce, Months Married, Satisfaction with Support, Parental Difficulty, and Conflict on the Quality of the Coparental Relationship and Attachment	51
6	Multiple Regression Analysis: Variables Related to Attachment	52

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	The Theoretical Model	17
2	Model Indicating Significant Paths	44

Chapter I

Introduction

When a couple divorces, each individual experiences changes throughout multiple dimensions of his/her life, including intrapsychic, interpersonal and social processes (Jacobson, 1983). Divorce requires that each person make legal, social, psychological, economic, and, if children are involved, parental adjustments (Bohannon, 1970; Faust, 1987; Kitson, 1992; Serovich, Price, Chapman, & Wright, 1992).

Even though an increasing number of persons are experiencing divorce and it is often considered to be a part of the developmental life cycle by many theorists and researchers, it continues to be a difficult, stressful, and often painful event for the individuals going through the process (Gold, 1988; Kirkpatrick, 1988; Kitson, 1992). In a review of the literature on individual responses to divorce, Pledge (1992) concluded that divorce is stressful regardless of individual differences or availability of resources. The literature on stress emphasizes that it is important to remember that termination of a relationship is difficult and is often associated with heartache even if love and attraction have diminished between the partners (Albrecht, Bahr, & Goodman, 1983).

The disruptions and adjustments required when divorce occurs often result in financial problems, loss of status, reduced standard of living (particularly for women), and loss of social support and identity (Albrecht, Bahr, & Goodman, 1983; Kitson, Babri, Roach, & Placidi, 1989). Considering the magnitude of the adjustments that divorce requires of the individual, it is not surprising that marital dissolution is associated with distress. Research indicates that marital disruption is associated with psychological distress and

higher rates of physical illness and mortality from natural and violent causes (Bloom, Hodges, Kern, & McFadden, 1985; Bloom, Asher & White, 1978; Faust, 1987; Toro, 1986; Weiss, 1975).

Kitson (1992) found that divorced persons exhibited increased subjective distress, increased symptoms of anxiety and depression, increased problems with self-concept, more psychosomatic complaints and poorer health when compared to married persons. In addition, individuals who experience difficulty making the psychological adjustment to divorce demonstrate higher degrees of loneliness and a more difficult time with single-parenting (Berman, 1988a; Brown, Felton, Whiteman, & Manela, 1980; Kitson, 1992).

Despite these facts, post-divorce adjustment has been researched far less often than the causes or correlates of the decision to divorce (Albrecht, Bahr, & Goodman, 1983; Kitson, 1992), and very few studies have specifically researched the adjustment of the single custodial parent who in 90% of single-parent households is the mother (Thiriot, & Buckner, 1991; Walters, Carter, Papp, Siverstein, 1988). Consequently, relatively little is known about what makes adjustment to a divorce more or less difficult. A much more thorough and detailed understanding of the adjustment process is needed in order to facilitate the development of intervention strategies for mental health professionals working with divorced persons.

Measuring and Defining Adjustment

For the most part, researchers studying post-divorce adjustment have viewed it as a complex, multidimensional construct encompassing a multitude of variables including: self-esteem (Bursik, 1991; Diedrick, 1991; Gray & Silver, 1990; Kitson, 1992; Thiriot & Buckner, 1991), life-satisfaction (Bursik, 1991; Clarke-Stewart & Bailey, 1990; Diedrick, 1991; Gray & Silver,

1990), mood-disturbance (Bursik, 1991; Clarke-Stewart & Bailely, 1990), stress symptoms (Barnet, 1990; Bursik, 1991; Clarke-Stewart & Bailey, 1990), physical health (Bursik, 1991; Kitson, 1992); level of attachment to ex-spouse (Cargan & Whitehurst, 1991; Gray & Silver, 1990; Kitson, 1992; Thiriot & Buckner, 1991; Thompson & Spanier, 1983); subjective distress (Berman, 1988a, 1988b; Kitson, 1982, 1992; Tschann, Johnston, & Wallerstein, 1989); and maintenance of desirable social activities (Cargan & Whitehurst, 1990; Diedrick, 1991).

Adjustment has been defined in various ways throughout previous research. Goode's (1956) definition of adjustment to divorce incorporates the need to develop an identity which is separate from the former spouse and one's married life. Dasteel (1982) characterized adjustment as a process of individuation from a former partner involving grief and depression over the loss and the subsequent reconstruction of self-concept and gain in self-efficacy. Kitson & Raschke (1981) defined it as the development of a separate identity and the ability to function adequately in new roles. And a more recent definition offered by Kitson (1992) states that adjustment to divorce requires "being relatively free of symptoms of psychological disturbance, having a sense of self-esteem, and having put the marriage and former partner in enough perspective that one's identity is no longer tied to being married or to the former partner" (p. 20).

All of these definitions, despite spanning a 35 year time period, incorporate the importance of the individual's developing an identity which is separate from the former spouse and the marriage. It does not come as a surprise, therefore, that the level of attachment to the former spouse has been found to be a critical factor to consider when attempting to understand and facilitate post-divorce adjustment (Berman, 1988a, 1988b; Brown, et al., 1980; Kitson, 1982, 1992; Tschann, et al., 1989; Weiss, 1975).

The Prevalence of Post-divorce Attachment

Research has indicated that the majority of men and women going through divorce continue to experience feelings of attachment toward their spouses. Spanier and Casto (1979) conducted open-ended interviews with divorced persons selected from court records and found that seven out of ten participants exhibited strong or mild attachment. Brown et al. (1980) conducted a study of couples involved in court-supported marital counseling and reported that 47% of the respondents had low, 31% had moderate, and 22% had high attachment scores. Kitson (1982) found that 86% of suburban men and women going through the divorce process in her study continued to experience attachment toward their ex-spouses. In her more recent longitudinal study, Kitson (1992) found that 2 to 3 years after their divorce was granted, 6 out of 10 divorced persons still reported some lingering signs of attachment, as measured by preoccupation for the former spouse and disbelief about the divorce.

It is these continued feelings of attachment for the ex-spouse that lead to the contradictory emotions in the post-divorce situation where a person experiences grief over the loss of someone whom they are also glad to be rid of (Berman, 1988b; Kitson, 1982, 1992). The attachment that is experienced by ex-spouses has been explained primarily through Bowlby's work on attachment (Bowlby, 1969, 1975, 1977).

Attachment Theory

Attachment theory is based within an evolutionary, ethological and biological framework (Byng-Hall, 1991). Bowlby developed his theory of attachment by observing mother-infant bonding in nonhuman primates.

He maintains that there is a biological basis for attachment behavior in both animals and humans (Bowlby, 1969, 1973).

According to Bowlby (1969, 1975), attachment behavior is persistent, learned behavior that begins to develop during infancy. Infants develop an attachment to a small number of individuals with a clear order of preference. These attachments which are formed serve to protect infants from danger by keeping them in close proximity to their adult caregiver. Attachment behaviors include crying and calling, following and clinging, and strong protests when a child is left alone with a stranger (Bowlby, 1977a).

Bowlby divided attachment into two types: secure and insecure. He associated secure attachment with healthy self-reliance and relationship formation while insecure attachment was associated with overdependence, mistrust, and poor ability to form relationships.

Attachment Behavior in Adults

While Bowlby's original research focused on the development of attachment bonds between children and parents, his ideas have also been applied to the study of attachment behavior in adults (Bowlby, 1977a, 1977b; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Kobak & Hazen, 1991; Parkes, 1972; Weiss, 1975). Bowlby (1977a) himself stated that "attachment behavior is held to characterize human beings from the cradle to the grave" (p. 203).

He defined attachment in adults as the propensity of human beings to make affectional bonds with particular others (Bowlby, 1975). He discussed the feelings of alarm and consequent behaviors that emerge when a person is separated from someone with whom they have developed an attachment bond (Bowlby, 1969, 1975, 1977). These behaviors, which include restlessness, searching behaviors to locate the lost person, tearfulness, depression, and

sleeplessness, are particularly apparent in adults during times of distress, illness, or fear.

Ainsworth (1991) considered attachment in adults to be equivalent to an affectional bond which she defines as "a relatively long-enduring tie in which the partner is important as a unique individual, interchangeable with none other" (p.38). Separation from the partner results in distress, and loss of the partner results in grief. In relationships involving attachment, contact with the attachment figure is sought if the person, the attachment figure, or the relationship is threatened (Weiss, 1991).

The irony in situations involving marital separation or divorce lies in the fact that the changes which occur when the decision to divorce is made often create a need for the former spouse who has become a familiar and comforting attachment figure (Kitson, 1982, 1992). This experience of longing for the spouse, who is intellectually known to be ungratifying, is one of the most difficult and confusing aspects of the divorce process (Berman, 1988; Kitson, 1992). The highly charged emotions and subjective distress that follow marital separation are often attributed to the persistence of attachment between spouses (Berman, 1988a, 1988b; Brown, et al., 1980; Kitson, 1982, 1992).

Distinguishing between Adult and Childhood Attachment

Because attachment behavior is often associated with parent-child interactions, it is important to address how attachment behavior changes throughout lifespan development. As children mature and move into adolescence and early adulthood, their attachment figure from infancy and childhood is typically replaced by a peer (Hazen & Shaver, 1992; Weiss, 1982). The attachment relationships which occur in adulthood are qualitatively different from those in childhood in various ways. First, childhood attachment relationships are usually complementary in nature, with the

attachment figure providing care and the child receiving care (Hazen & Shaver, 1992). Adult attachment relationships, however, tend to be based on reciprocity, where the adult both gives and seeks care (Hazen & Shaver, 1992). As a result, adult attachment relationships are structurally more complex than those established in childhood (Shaver, Hazen, & Bradshaw, 1988). One factor contributing to the complexity of adult attachment relationships is that the attachment behavior is often being directed towards a person with whom a sexual relationship also exists (Weiss, 1982).

Another distinction is that attachment in adulthood is not nearly so capable of overwhelming other behavioral systems as in infancy (Weiss, 1982). In the case of infants, when attachment bonds are threatened, they are often unable to attend to or to focus on any other issues. Although adults may experience difficulties with concentration, they are generally able to attend to other relationships and other matters. In the case of divorce, preoccupation with the former spouse may be one example of how concentration is hampered, but generally a person is able to continue with their typical day to day activities and relationships with friends, family, and children.

Modification of Attachment Behavior Over the Life Course

Changes in attachment behavior throughout the lifespan have been explained utilizing Bowlby's concept of internal working models. Internal working models refer to mental representations which a person develops regarding a relationship between themselves and an attachment figure based on past experiences with that figure (Bowlby, 1969). These working models are organized around expectations of how the attachment figure will respond and allow an individual to predict a partner's behavior in a given

relationship (Bowlby, 1969). Working models are classified as secure when a person predicts that a partner is psychologically available and insecure when a person expects rejection or inconsistent responses (Sroufe, 1989).

Historically, attention has been paid to the role of assimilating new experiences into existing expectations (working models). As a result, internal working models have been viewed purely as intrapsychic and historical products of early experiences (Kobak & Hazen, 1991). Bowlby's (1973) theory of attachment, however, places equal emphasis on how working models must accommodate changing circumstances. Bowlby (1981) referred to this as "updating" working models.

Kobak & Hazen (1991) have emphasized the importance of adopting a transactional view of internal working models which incorporates the models both guiding interpersonal behavior through assimilation and updating through accomodation. They specifically address the need to alter internal working models through accommodation during times of dramatic change such as formation or loss of an adult attachment relationship when new information must be incorporated about the self and the partner. The divorce experience is an example of a situation which requires such dramatic change. The former partners must make major adjustments concerning prior expectations they had of their spouses. This situation becomes even more complicated when former spouses must continue to interact as parents while making alterations in their roles as marital partners.

The Importance of Attachment in Relationship to Post-divorce Adjustment

Weiss (1975) discussed the loss of attachment between ex-spouses as the primary cause of "separation distress" among divorcing persons. Separation distress was first addressed by Parkes (1972) in relation to bereavement. Weiss

(1975) was the first person to apply these ideas to persons experiencing divorce. Separation distress is organized around thoughts about and the need to make contact with the lost attachment figure, feelings of anger, and guilt. It results in such behaviors as continued pining for the ex-spouse, restlessness, feelings of fear and panic, sleeplessness, and loss of appetite.

Other researchers have supported Weiss's concept of separation distress by suggesting that the primary source of increased psychological distress experienced by the divorced is a lingering attachment to the ex-spouse (Berman, 1988b; Kitson, 1992). Kitson (1992) conducted a longitudinal study in which she surveyed a group of divorced persons and a married comparison group. Her results indicated that although attachment, self-esteem, and illness contacts (measured as times a person is ill enough to stay in bed, visit a doctor, or be hospitalized) all contributed significantly to subjective distress, attachment accounted for the greatest amount of variance in the regression model. Kitson suggested that attachment is the source of much of the heightened psychological distress experienced by the divorced.

Tschann, Johnston, and Wallerstein (1989) studied the postdivorce emotional and psychological adjustment of women and men over a two-year period. Their results support that, for women in particular, higher levels of attachment to the ex-spouse as measured both "positively" (preoccupation with the divorce and ex-spouse, wish for reconciliation, and wish to be taken care of by the ex-spouse) and "negatively" (anger towards, tension in the presence of, blame of, and inability to acknowledge good and bad aspects of the ex-spouse) were associated with poorer adjustment.

Given the strong relationship between high levels of attachment to the ex-spouse and increased subjective distress, it is likely that a better

understanding of attachment would be beneficial to the mental health practicioner in the development of therapeutic strategies and goals. In particular, more specific knowledge concerning the variables which are associated with increased levels of attachment is needed. This is especially true in light of research which indicates that separated and divorced persons are more likely to seek outpatient therapy than persons of other marital statuses (Bebbington, 1987; Bloom, et al., 1978; Kressel, 1985; Kitson & Morgan, 1990), and Kitson's (1992) research which indicates that, for women, higher attachment scores are associated with seeking mental health help.

Purpose of the Current Study

Rice and Rice (1986) have emphasized the importance of the therapist understanding the entire range of factors that affect post-divorce adjustment. Given the positive relationship between continued attachment to an ex-spouse and increased levels of subjective distress and poor adjustment, the purpose of the current study was to gain a more detailed understanding of the concept of attachment by investigating its relationship to selected variables.

Research has indicated that persons experiencing high levels of attachment to their ex-spouse do not find therapeutic approaches based on support building and active coping to be as beneficial as persons experiencing primarily social and economic changes find them (Berman, 1988b; Kitson, 1982). Kitson found that while subjective distress can be modified to some degree by psychological and social resources and social support, attachment has proven to be less influenced by these dimensions (Kitson, 1982). It is hoped that by gaining a clearer picture of which factors are related to high and low levels of attachment, implications can be drawn in regard to therapy which will facilitate the development of new therapeutic strategies.

Women as the Focus of the Study

Divorced custodial mothers were selected as the focus of the current study for various reasons. Previous research has suggested that high levels of attachment interfere with a person's ability to focus greater attention on role changes and children's needs (Kitson, 1982). Given the fact that in 90% of single-parent homes the mother is the primary custodial parent (Thiriot & Buckner, 1991; Walters, Carter, Papp, & Silverstein, 1988), more information is needed on the factors which are associated with high levels of attachment, specifically in regard to women.

Researchers have suggested that men and women are socialized to have differing expectations of relationships. Women, who are primarily socialized to be care-givers, may value relationships more (Chodorow, 1978) and have higher expectations (Ahrons, 1981) than men who are socialized to value work and a career. Clarke-Stewart & Bailey (1990) found this to be the case in their research. The men in their sample placed careers significantly higher in importance, while women were more likely to value being part of a couple relationship. Within our current social structure, masculinity has been defined through separation while femininity has been defined through attachment (Chodorow, 1978). It follows, therefore, that the post-divorce experience of attachment for the ex-spouse may differ for men and women.

Since men and women assume different obligations for children in the post-divorce time period, with women taking primary responsibility for guardianship and parenting responsibilities and men assuming responsibility for support but a more limited parenting role, it follows that men and women would be sensitive to different issues in the post-divorce relationship (Hobart, 1991). Research has indicated that two perceptions of the same

relationship often exist (Ahrons, 1981). Men have been found to perceive themselves to be more involved in sharing child-rearing concerns and in interacting with their ex-spouse than women perceive them to be (Ahrons, 1981; Goldsmith, 1981). These conflicting perceptions may be responsible for increased conflict in the post-divorce relationship which has been found to be a major source of distress for both the adults (Ambert, 1988; Kitson, 1992; Masheter, 1991) and the children (Emery, 1988; Furstenburg & Cherlin, 1991).

Since men and women apparently have quite distinct experiences after divorce, it follows that the factors which influence both their levels of attachment and the degree of conflict in the relationship with the ex-spouse may be different for each gender. Research is needed which investigates the experiences of both men and women independently, so that a clearer understanding of these qualitative differences can be acquired.

Development of the Model

The variables included in the proposed model for this study were selected based on theoretical considerations and previous empirical research. The decision to centrally locate the variables "conflict" and "coparental relationship" in the model was based on the following factors.

First, a large majority of divorced couples must continue to interact with each other concerning parenting issues (Fishel & Scanzoni, 1989; Hobart, 1991; Spanier & Thompson, 1984). Ahrons (1981) found that 85% of the divorced spouses in her sample were continuing to maintain some form of direct contact 1 year after the divorce. Likewise, Goldsmith (1981) found that 84% of her respondents continued to maintain a relationship due to their shared parenting responsibilities. The systemic premise of interdependence has been utilized by researchers in the past (Arditti & Kelly, 1994; Goldsmith, 1981)

when discussing the nature of this continuing relationship between ex-spouses. Even though the ex-spouses have given up their roles as marital partners, their lives continue to be connected as a result of shared parental responsibilities. Despite this fact, little is known about the intricacies and nature of the ex-spousal relationship (Ambert, 1988; Goldsmith, 1981; Hobart, 1991). This lack of knowledge may be due to the fact that cultural definitions of the ex-spousal relationship have not yet evolved (Hobart, 1991). Second, the variables which reflect the nature of a woman's relationship with her ex-spouse, including the frequency and quality of contacts, have been found to be the most significant predictors of her emotional and physical health (Bursik, 1991; Nelson, 1981). Conflictual relationships have also been found to be associated with distress for noncustodial fathers, which in turn has negative implications for the parent-child relationship (Arditti & Allen, 1993). Third, research has indicated that a supportive co-parental relationship facilitates the adjustment of the custodial parent (Ahrons, 1981; Heatherington, Cox, & Cox, 1982; Kurdek & Blisk, 1983). Yet, as Ambert (1988) discussed, and as has been addressed earlier in this paper, frequent contacts with and continued attachment to the ex-spouse lead to poor adjustment. Fourth, a need for further investigation of the factors involved in the functioning of relationships between ex-spouses has been expressed in the literature (Bursik, 1991). In particular, this need has been discussed in regard to the design and implementation of therapeutic interventions (Bursik, 1991), especially in relation to reducing the degree of conflict and hostility between ex-spouses (Arditti & Allen, 1993). Fifth, conflict and tension in the ex-spousal relationship has been found to be significantly related to increased levels of attachment and, consequently, subjective distress and poor adjustment (Berman, 1985; Kitson, 1992; Tschann, et al., 1989).

Conflict and the Coparental Relationship

In previous research which has included the coparental relationship as one of the operationalized variables, conflict has often been the sole measure or has been incorporated as part of a composite variable (Ahrons, 1981; Berman, 1985, 1988a, 1988b; Coysh, Johnston, Tschann, Wallerstein, & Kline, 1989; Fishel & Scanzoni, 1990; Goldsmith, 1981). When developing the current model, the decision was made to measure conflict as a separate variable to determine 1) if conflict and the coparental relationship (as measured by support and communication between former spouses) are predicted by different independent variables, and 2) if conflict in the coparental relationship is predictive of the quality of support and communication between the former spouses regarding parenting issues.

In regard to the post-divorce coparental relationship, no institutionalized norms are available to define or provide a model for these ongoing relationships (Burgoyne & Clark, 1984; Hobart, 1991; Rice & Rice, 1986). Research is needed on the topic in order to begin to establish an understanding of which variables contribute to healthy and unhealthy relationships between ex-spouses (Hobart, 1991; Masheter, 1991).

Research has indicated that conflictual relationships between ex-spouses are related to increased levels of attachment as measured by preoccupation and disbelief (Berman, 1985; 1988b). If conflict and tension in the relationship between ex-spouses contributes to higher degrees of attachment, it would be expected that the couples with less difficult relationships would also be experiencing fewer feelings of attachment and, consequently, less distress. It is also possible, however, that factors involving coparenting (such as the amount of interaction required between former spouses) may also affect the

level of attachment. Some researchers have suggested that spouses who continue to interact on a regular basis may also have a more difficult time resolving feelings of attachment (Coysh, et al., 1989; Serovich, Price, Chapman, & Wright, 1992). These feelings of attachment, which are manifested by preoccupation and disbelief, appear when a person perceives that the former spouse is no longer psychologically available to them. Therapists need to be able to assist couples in developing new definitions of their relationships which encompass how they will and will not be available to one another in the future. Couples who share children are usually required to continue to interact as parents, yet boundaries concerning availability to one another are rarely discussed. Clarification of these issues may relieve some of the distress associated with the sudden unavailability of the former spouse.

Based on the fact that research indicates that the distressed person is more likely to seek therapy (Masheter, 1990), it follows that gaining a more thorough understanding of the issues these clients are more likely to present with (e.g., conflict and tension in the coparental relationship, insecure attachment behaviors) is crucial. Kitson (1992) found that individuals who scored higher on measures of subjective distress, attachment, and illness contacts 1 year after filing for divorce, were more likely to have sought mental health help.

Ahrons (1981) has suggested that in cases of divorce that involve children, what is needed is a renegotiation of roles. She believes that these renegotiated roles (which would allow a continuation of the relationship) would not only meet child-rearing needs, but would also meet the adults' relationship and attachment needs through friendship, shared history, and

extended family. In relation to attachment theory, the idea of renegotiating roles parallels the concepts of assimilating and accommodating internal working models. Former spouses may be able to assimilate changes into their models regarding their roles as parents. Their models regarding their relationships as spouses, however, require the development of new models through accommodation.

The challenge for therapists lies in facilitating clients' adjustment by aiding them in developing new ways of conceptualizing their relationship with their former spouse and coparent in a manner which alleviates distress. Secure internal working models have been disrupted due to the fact that the formerly available spouse may now be perceived as rejecting. It is these feelings of rejection, that have been associated with preoccupation for the former spouse.

Variables in the Model

Six exogenous variables have been included in the model based on theoretical and empirical relevance (see Figure 1). Exogenous variables are variables which originate outside of the model and are not affected by any other variables in the model (Saris & Stronkhorst, 1984). These variables include hostility of the divorce process, custody arrangement, who initiated the divorce, the duration of the marriage, custody arrangement (sole vs. joint), and the mothers perceived level of difficulty with parenting.

Three endogenous variables have been included in the proposed set of relationships. The first endogenous variable in the model is the level of conflict present in the relationship between the former spouses post-divorce. The second endogenous variable is the composite variable coparental relationship with former spouse which encompasses the overall quality of

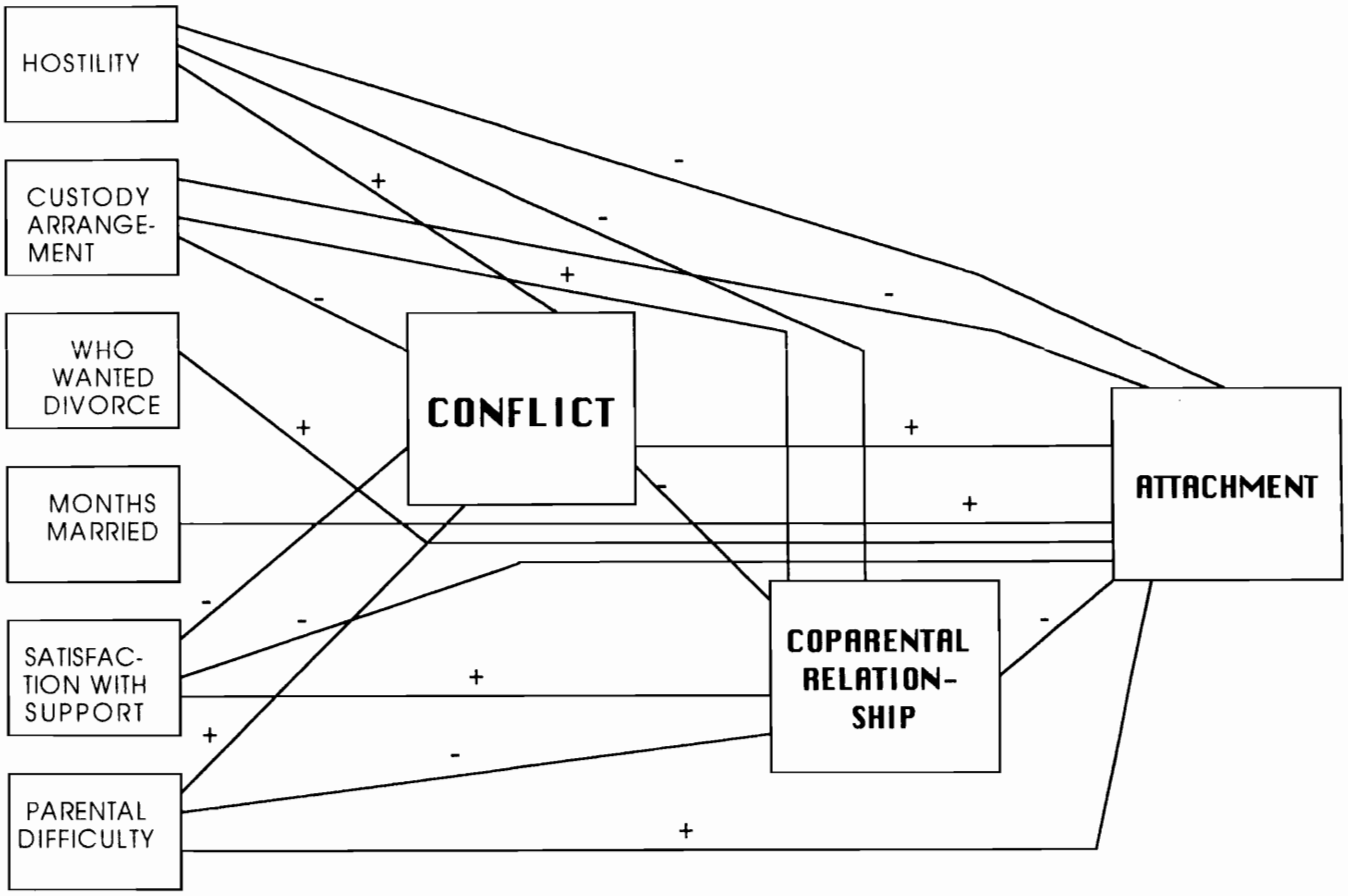

Figure 1. The Theoretical Model

the relationship with the former spouse, the level of parenting support received from the father, and the amount of communication between the parents (see Arditti & Kelly, 1994 for an example of such a composite variable). The final endogenous variable in the model is attachment. Endogenous variables are hypothesized to be affected by other variables within the model (see Saris & Stronkhorst, 1984).

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

The purpose of the following literature review is 1) to briefly disucus variables which have previously been found to be associated with attachment and 2) to discuss the variables which have been selected for investigation in the current study. Previous research, definitions, and sources of measurement will be addressed in order to clarify the theoretical and empirical considerations which guided the development of the proposed model.

Previous Variables Associated With Post-divorce Attachment

Few studies have been carried out which have investigated descriptive characteristics of those experiencing continued attachment to their ex-spouse after divorce (Berman, 1985). Those that have been conducted have found relationships to exist between postdivorce attachment and the following variables: not initiating the divorce (Berman, 1985; Brown, et al., 1980; Kitson, 1982, 1992; Masheter, 1991), remarriage or the existence of a new relationship (Brown et al., 1980; Kitson, 1982, 1992; Masheter, 1991), number of children (Berman, 1985; Tschann, et al., 1989), socioeconomic status (Berman, 1985), tension and conflict in the relationship with the ex-spouse (Berman, 1985; Tschann, et al., 1989), time since divorce (Kitson, 1992), and amount of social involvement (Tschann, 1989; Weiss, 1975).

Research has indicated that the initiator of the divorce tends to have a less difficult time with post-divorce adjustment (Berman, 1985; Kitson, 1992; Tschann, 1989). In terms of attachment, it would be expected that the initiator of the divorce process would feel more in control of the situation and would also have had time to begin emotionally detaching. As a result, initiating the

process may be associated with less distress and in turn, may activate fewer attachment behaviors.

In regard to SES and education, research to date has provided little conclusive evidence which indicates that a relationship exists between these variables and attachment. Berman (1985), however, found that women in lower status jobs and with more economic hardships experienced greater attachment. Congruent with these findings were his results which indicated that women with higher levels of education experienced less attachment. One possible explanation for this finding is that women with higher levels of education may also have additional career-related outlets and focuses which facilitate decreases in preoccupation with the former spouse. It can be assumed that increased levels of education would allow a women to acquire a better paying job, alleviating economic difficulties. Attachment theory can be utilized to explain these results. It would be expected that a reduction in financial hardships would result in a decrease in stress and anxiety, which would in turn, lead to decreased levels of attachment as measured by preoccupation with the former spouse.

The study of the relationship between attachment and the length of the marriage has also produced mixed results. Weiss (1975) has suggested that once a relationship exists for two years, attachment is established and will diminish slowly. Other studies have found both positive (Kitson, 1992) and negative (Berman, 1988a) relationships to exist between these two variables.

Both remarriage (Kitson, 1982; Masheter, 1991; Tschann, et al., 1989) and the amount of time which has elapsed since the divorce (Brown, et al., 1980; Jacobson, 1983; Kitson, 1982; Weiss, 1975) have been found to be negatively associated with attachment. The passage of time may permit the spouses to

detach from each other, renegotiate roles, and develop new intimate relationships. Both the formation of these new relationships and/or remarriage may allow new primary attachment bonds to develop.

The number of children shared between former spouses has been found to be positively related to post-divorce attachment (Berman, 1985; Kitson, 1982). Increased numbers of children require more contact between the ex-spouses which has been found to increase feelings of attachment (Brown, et al., 1980; Masheter, 1991; Spanier & Thompson, 1984; Weiss, 1975). More shared children may also increase conflict and tension in the relationship of ex-spouses who have differing opinions on child-rearing issues. Increased levels of conflict and tension in the post-divorce relationship has also been found to be associated with higher levels of attachment (Berman, 1985; Tschann et al., 1989). This association fits with attachment theory which states that attachment behaviors will increase during times of conflict and distress.

Variables in the Current Model

Attachment

Defining Attachment in the Marital Relationship

The post-divorce experience of longing for the spouse who is intellectually known to be ungratifying is one of the most difficult and confusing aspects of the divorce process (Berman, 1988a; Kitson, 1992). The highly charged emotions and subjective distress that follow marital separation are often attributed to the persistence of attachment between spouses (Berman, 1988a, 1988b; Brown, et.al., 1980; Kitson, 1982, 1992).

Using Bowlby's (1969, 1973) work on attachment and Parke's (1972) work on bereavement as a foundation, Weiss (1975) was the first person to discuss the role of adult attachment in the divorce process. He defined attachment as

"a bonding to the other that gives rise to feelings of at-homeness and ease when the other [attachment figure] is present or, if not actually present, is felt to be accessible" (p. 39). He believed that "separation distress" occurred in response to not being able to access the attachment figure (in the case of marital separation or divorce, the ex-spouse). Separation distress is characterized by the focusing of attention on the lost figure; intense discomfort; unhappiness; anxiety, panic, or fear; loss of concentration; preoccupation with the ex-spouse; and sadness and regret.

In her more recent research on divorce, Kitson (1982, 1992) discussed attachment in regard to the marital relationship and defined it as the emotional bonds of ease, comfort, and security that develop between marital partners. When these bonds are disrupted, even in a relationship that is no longer fulfilling, individuals may react with separation anxiety or distress as discussed by Weiss (1975).

Conceptualizing Attachment

A significant amount of the research which has been conducted on post-divorce attachment has conceptualized attachment as encompassing measures of preoccupation and disbelief (Berman, 1985, 1988a, 1988b; Brown & Reimer, 1984; Kitson, 1982, 1992; Serovich, et al., 1992). These measures (of preoccupation and disbelief) are most likely tapping into a construct which would fit most closely with Bowlby's definition of insecure attachment (Masheter, 1990) since they are most likely to occur when the attachment figure is perceived to be rejecting or unavailable.

Berman (1988c) has discussed the role of preoccupation and pining in easing attachment distress. He points out that either physical or psychological proximity to the attachment figure will be effective in easing the degree of distress the person is experiencing due to separation. Consequently, if

personal interaction with the attachment figure is not possible, proximity can be partially achieved through mental images of the attachment figure - hence the recurrent thoughts and preoccupation. Jacobson (1983) also discussed the role of preoccupation in maintaining the relationship with the ex-spouse. He classifies it as a type of wish-fulfillment which allows the relationship to continue through thoughts and fantasies rather than actual physical contact.

The practice of defining post-divorce attachment as preoccupation and pining for the ex-spouse requires consideration when discussing research findings which indicate a positive relationship between post-divorce attachment and high levels of subjective distress (Berman, 1988; Kitson, 1992; Tschann, et al., 1989). Continued preoccupation and pining for the former spouse are most likely indications that the person has not worked through the emotional aspects of the divorce, and would therefore, be expected to be associated with poor adjustment.

In her literature review of post-divorce relationships between exspouses, Masheter (1990) addressed the fact that divorce research has primarily been conducted from the viewpoint that post-divorce attachment between exspouses is distressing. She emphasizes the importance of investigating the possibility that postdivorce attachment may also have positive implications. Research which she has conducted (Masheter, 1991) supports the idea that attachment is a two-dimensional concept which encompasses both affect (friendly vs. hostile) and preoccupation. As a result, she suggested that attachment can be connected to both healthy and unhealthy associations between former partners.

It is important to keep in mind that attachment can be conceptualized in ways which are qualitatively different. Masheter's research makes it apparent

that the healthy adjustment to divorce does not require that the ex-spouses have no relationship or attachment. It is the qualitative nature of the attachment that is important, not its presence or absence. In the majority of the literature to date, attachment has been conceptualized as preoccupation and pining and has been found to be related to subjective distress and poor adjustment. The current study also measured attachment as preoccupation in an attempt to gain a better understanding of attachment behaviors which are associated with distress.

Measuring Attachment

According to Bowlby (1977) the concept of attachment in adults can be operationalized and observed by noting the thoughts and actions of a person that serve to maintain emotional proximity to the attachment figure.

Kitson (1982) developed a scale to measure attachment based on Parkes' (1972) model of bereavement which encompasses denial, disbelief, pining or preoccupation with the former spouse, guilt, anger, loss of normal patterns of conduct, and apathy. Based on the results of an orthogonally rotated factor analysis, Kitson determined that four items which illustrate preoccupation and pining for the spouse and disbelief over the divorce are the primary components of attachment accounting for eighty-two percent of the variance. It is important to recognize Kitson's scale was developed based on Parke's (1972) previous work on bereavement for a deceased spouse. A critical distinction which is often ignored between loss of a spouse through death and loss of a spouse through divorce is that the latter often requires a continuing relationship with the former partner.

Berman (1985) has also developed a scale to measure post-divorce attachment which incorporates the frequency of "spouse-related thoughts".

He reported that his three-item scale, which measures the frequency of intrusive thoughts about the ex-spouse, is as valid a measure of attachment as Kitson's scale which measures preoccupation and pining for the ex-spouse and disbelief over the divorce.

Spanier and Thompson (1984) measured attachment by utilizing two of Kitson's items which reflect preoccupation and pining and one alternative measure which asked whether or not the respondent experienced loneliness as a longing for the former partner. Their results indicated that men were more likely than women to experience loneliness in relation to longing for the former spouse.

As can be seen from the three examples offered above, attachment to former spouses has been measured primarily through items which tap into preoccupation, pining, disbelief, and intrusive thoughts. Unless otherwise indicated, all references to the measurement of attachment in the current literature review can be assumed to encompass these items.

The Coparental Relationship

Defining the Coparental Relationship

A large majority of divorced couples must continue to interact with each other concerning parenting issues (Fishel & Scanzoni, 1990; Hobart, 1991; Spanier & Thompson, 1984). Ahrons (1981) found that 85% of the divorced spouses in her sample continued to maintain some form of direct contact one year after divorce. Similarly, Goldsmith (1981) found that 84% of the divorced couples in her study had continuing parental relationships.

Bohannon (1970) has referred to this process as the coparental divorce which he considers to be one of the most difficult tasks facing divorcing adults. Goldsmith (1981) has discussed this process as involving two kinds of relationships: the relationship each parent develops with the children

(parent-child) and the relationship the former spouses develop with one another about the children (coparental).

Bohannon (1970) has defined the coparental relationship as one that permits ex-spouses to continue their childrearing obligations and responsibilities after divorce. Ahrons (1981) believes that to achieve a succuessful coparental relationship, divorced spouses must separate their spousal and parental roles. The spousal roles require termination, while the parental roles require redefinition. This task is made difficult, however, because society does not offer any direction regarding what relationships between ex-spouses should involve. In regard to attachment theory, this lack of norms makes it difficult for divorced persons to know how to reorganize their internal working models which define their relationship with their former spouse.

The Bias Against Post-divorce Relationships Between Former Spouses

No institutionalized norms or models exist which specify how ex-spousal relationships should be patterned (Burgoyne & Clark, 1984; Hobart, 1991; Rice & Rice, 1986). Consequently, former spouses who become friends and relate in constructive ways receive little support from the general community (Textor, 1989). In addition to friends and family withholding support for these relationships, research by Kressel, Lopez-Morillas, Weinglass, & Deutsch (1979) indicates that most therapists, lawyers, and clergymen view continued involvlement between ex-spouses as reflecting separation distress.

Ambert (1988) interviewed respondents concerning how they thought they should behave towards their former spouses. Her research elicited several themes surrounding the nature of these relationships from the participants: 1) ex-spouses should treat each other courteously (92%), 2) they

should not talk against each other (98%), 3) they should not treat each other with love (98%), 4) they should stand by each other when they share children (97%), and 5) they should keep what happens between them to themselves (72%). In terms of the nature of the relationship, 28% felt they should be friends, 34% thought they should remain distant, and 37% felt the relationships should be neutral. When asked if they actually met these norms which they had defined, only 41% felt they actually treated their ex-spouse in accordance with the themes discussed above.

These findings, which indicate such a broad gap between what is considered to be the ideal and what actually occurs in reality, are one reason for the need for further investigation of the continuing relationship between ex-spouses. Successful postdivorce relationships between ex-spouses have been found to have positive implications for both children and adults (Ahrons, 1981; Kitson, 1992; Masheter, 1991). Several studies have been conducted which offer descriptive information concerning the postdivorce relationships of former spouses (Ahrons, 1981; Ambert, 1988; Goldsmitih, 1981; Hobart, 1991), but studies which have actually investigated variables which influence the quality of these relationships are scarce (see Arditti & Kelly, 1994 for an example of one such study). More information is needed in this area so that former spouses (and therapists) have a clearer idea of how to make the ideal match reality.

The Interrelationships of the Variables in the Proposed Model

As discussed earlier, previous research has indicated a relationship between several background variables and post-divorce attachment between ex-spouses. Although a variety of background variables have been investigated throughout various studies, contradictory relationships for

several of the variables have been reported between studies. Past research and theoretical and empirical considerations were utilized when developing the current model, both in terms of variables selected and their temporal placement.

The Coparental Relationship. The majority of post-divorce relationships between ex-spouses are described as conflictual (Ambert, 1988; Goldsmith, 1981). Goldsmith (1981) found that 75% of the divorced parents in her study found their relationships to be conflictual, stressful, or involving basic differences of opinion in regard to childrearing. Research has indicated that the presence of conflict and tension in the relationship between former spouses is positively related to postdivorce attachment (Berman, 1985; Tschann, et al., 1989). According to attachment theory, adults are most likely to experience separtion distress or attachment distress during times of illness, fear, or distress. When conflict and tension is present in the ex-spousal relationship, the paradoxical result is often an increase in insecure attachment behaviors toward the ex-spouse. A consideration which has not been investigated in the past is the possibility that lingering hostility from the divorce proceedings results in higher levels of conflict, which in turn has a detrimental effect on coparental support and communication. It is possible that a decline in support and communication causes the former partner to be perceived as less available or rejecting, consequently leading to increased preoccupation.

It has not been until recently that an increasing amount of research has begun to look at attachment between ex-spouses in terms of its having a beneficial role in the continuing coparental relationship of former spouses (Ahrons, 1981; Emery,1988; Furstenburg & Cherlin, 1991; and Masheter, 1991).

Ahrons (1981) has suggested that in cases of divorce that involve children, what is needed is a renegotiation of roles. She believes that these renegotiated roles (which would allow a continuation of the relationship) would not only meet child-rearing needs, but would also meet the adults' relationship and attachment needs through friendship, shared history, and extended family. Although this idea is of great theoretical interest, little has been written about innovative ways of defining and measuring attachment within a more postive light.

Further research concerning the coparental relationship between ex-spouses and its association with attachment is needed to clarify several issues. First, the factors which affect the quality of the relationship between former spouses need to be established so that adjustment can be facilitated (Hobart, 1991). In particular, the variables which affect different aspects of the coparental relationship (conflict, communication, and support) need to be investigated. Second, a clearer understanding of how various types of attachment (representing secure and insecure working models) can be operationalized and measured is needed. Third, the association that the quality of the relationship between ex-spouses (including support and communication) has with the various types of attachment needs to be clarified and a clearer understanding of the role of conflict is needed.

Length of Marriage. Various findings have been reported in the literature regarding the relationship of marriage length and attachment. Several researchers (Berman, 1985; Brown, et al., 1980; Kitson, 1982; Spanier & Thompson, 1983; Weiss, 1975) have indicated that no relationship between these two variables, either positive or negative, was found to exist. Weiss (1975) believed that within a two year time period, the marriage becomes engrained as a part of the person's life. As a result, once a marriage exists for

this duration, attachment is established and separation or divorce will result in separation distress even if the marriage has been unsatisfying.

Berman (1988a) found length of marriage and thoughts about the ex-spouse to be negatively correlated. He attributed this finding to the fact that his sample was comprised primarily of Catholic respondents whose marriages may have continued despite a lack of interconnection. He suggested that the marriages may have existed for many years under chronic strain before the decision to divorce was made. As a result of chronic conflict, the respondents may have begun disengaging from each other long before the divorce and therefore, may have already achieved emotional detachment.

Kitson (1992) found the opposite results in her longitudinal study of suburban divorced persons. Her research indicated that a positive relationship exists between length of marriage and post-divorce attachment. She suggests that longer marriages may have more good times as well as bad which make it more difficult to break attachment bonds. This idea is congurent with Weiss' idea of an attachment bond being firmly established after a two year time period.

As can be seen from this brief review, no conclusive findings are available regarding the relationship between length of marriage and attachment. Berman and Kitson have both alluded to the nature of the relationship between ex-spouses being a contributing factor to their findings. Perhaps research which places the relationship with the ex-spouse as an intervening variable between length of marriage and attachment would help to clarify these inconsistent findings by determining if the length of the marriage differentially affects the degree of conflict in the relationship, the quality of the coparental relationship, and subsequently attachment.

Initiator Status: Women are more likely than men to file for divorce (Dixon & Weitzman, 1982; Goldsmith, 1981; Spanier & Thompson, 1984; Thompson & Spanier, 1983; Masheter, 1991) and research has indicated that the initiator of the separtion or divorce fares better in terms of psychological adjustment (Hill, Rubin, Peplau, 1976). Since one of the primary components in post-divorce adjustment is attachment (Berman, 1985; Kitson, 1992; Tschann, et al., 1989), it would be expected that a a negative relationship would exist between being the initiator of the divorce and attachment. Persons who initiate the divorce may have already begun the emotional separation process and, as a result, may have already updated their internal working models related to the relationship with the spouse. The majority of the research investigating the relationship between these two variables supports this assumption (Brown, et al., 1980; Berman, 1985; Kitson, 1982; Spanier & Thompson, 1984). Brown, et al. (1980) found that spouses who did not want a divorce and who had not initiated the physical separation had higher levels of continued attachment.

Ponzetti & Cate (1987) discussed the course of conflict during marital dissolution. They suggested that since divorce is rarely a mutually-agreed-upon course of action, the process of dissolving the marriage is often conflictual. They believed that conflict may be used as a means of maintaining the relationship. They have found a postive relationship to exist between high levels of conflict and high levels of ambivalence in regard to terminating the marriage. When the separation is a joint decision, however, a more supportive coparental relationship has been found to exist. In light of these findings, conflict would be expected if either the husband or the wife initiated

the separation. Consequently, where initiator status may be a predictor of attachment when the spouse wants the divorce, conflict may result regardless.

Custody Arrangement: Research has also indicated that joint legal custody arrangements may be advantageous for parents (Arditti, 1992; Coysh et al., 1989; Ilfeld, Ilfeld, & Alexander, 1982; Luepnitz, 1986). Mothers who share joint legal custody report being able to rely on the other parent for substitute childcare and as being able to avoid burnout by getting time off from parenting (Luepnitz, 1986). Fathers with joint legal custody arrangements report more contact with their children and greater satisfaction with joint custody arrangements as a result of feeling closer to and having more influence over their children (Arditti & Keith, 1993).

Shared advantages for both mothers and fathers have also been found to exist (Coysh et al., 1989; Ilfeld, et al., 1982; Luepnitz, 1986). First, relitigation occurred much less frequently in joint custody families than in sole custody families (Ilfeld, et al., 1982; Luepnitz, 1986). Second, joint custody parents reported less conflict, partially due to a more civilized manner of disagreement (Luepnitz, 1986) and greater levels of cooperation (Bowman & Ahrons, 1985). And related to the above two advantages, the overall quality of the relationship between the ex-spouses has been found to be better in joint custody couples (Stewart, Schwebel, & Fine, 1986). Improved overall quality fits with findings from previous research which have indicated that the relationship between former spouses is more likely to be positive when fathers are satisfied with the custody arrangement (Arditti & Kelly, 1994; Goldsmith, 1981; Wright & Price, 1986).

Some disadvantages of joint custody arrangements have also been addressed in the literature. In regard to women, safety from physical abuse needs to be considered when a history of violence exists, and some women

are dissatisfied with the restraints placed on geographic mobility when joint custody is awarded (Luepnitz, 1986). An issue which can affect the adjustment of both parents is the effect shared parenting arrangements have on delaying emotional resolution of the divorce, by fostering attachment to the former spouse (Coysh, et al., 1989).

Parenting Difficulty: A much neglected variable when considering the relationship betwen former spouses has been the custodial parent's perceived level of difficulty with parenting. Research indicates that when a couple separates or divorces, the parenting skills of both often decrease at least temporarily (Holloway & Machida, 1991). As a result of the stress of the divorce, custodial mothers have been found to be much less consistent in their parenting (Heatherington, Cox, & Cox, 1978). It has been suggested that one consequence of the economic stress and increased parenting responsibilities may be increased preoccupation with the former spouse who previously provided financial and parental assistance (Berman, 1985). It would be expected that mothers who perceive themselves as having a more difficult time with single-parenting may also experience more frequent thoughts about their former spouse and more disbelief about the divorce.

Child Support: Financial strain has been consistently addressed as one of the major stresses affecting divorced custodial mothers. Where one in ten married couples with children live below the poverty level, it is estimated that one in two single mothers live below poverty (Garfinkel & McLanahan, 1986). The estimated postdivorce income of single mothers is only 67% of their income prior to divorce (Duncan & Hoffman, 1985). Given that only 50% of mothers receive the full amount, 26% receive a partial amount, and 24% do not receive any of financial support awarded by the courts (Garfinkel

& McLanahan, 1986), it is not surprising that dissatisfaction with child support payments is common. It follows that dissatisfaction with support payments would be associated with increased conflict and difficulties in the coparental relationship. In addition, as discussed above, it has been suggested that women who are experiencing economic difficulties may also be more preoccupied with their former spouse who previously provided financial assitance (Berman, 1985).

Hostility. High levels of hostility often remain after divorce, with children being one of the primary avenues for expression (Furstenburg, 1982). For men, hostility during the divorce process often influences satisfaction with custody, visitation, and child support payments (Arditti & Allen, 1993). Men reported that a hostile divorce process and feeling excluded from their children's lives often resulted in increased conflict with their former spouse (Arditti & Allen, 1993). Limited research is available which reports women's experiences in regard to these factors. Interviews with a sample of noncustodial mothers (Arditti & Madden-Derdich, 1993) indicated that the women believed that lawyer involvement made the relationship with their ex-spouse and the hostility of the divorce proceedings worse. It would be expected that a hostile divorce process would result in increased conflict with their former spouses and less communication and support in the coparental relationship.

Hypotheses of the Study

Figure 1 summarized the expected relationships encompassed by the proposed model. The following relationships are expected to be supported by analysis of the data.

Hypotheses Related to Conflict

1. Hostility surrounding the divorce process was expected to have a positive effect on the amount of conflict between former spouses.

2. Joint custody arrangements were expected to have a negative effect on conflict, with joint custody parents experiencing less conflict in their relationship.

3. The woman's being the initiator of the divorce was not expected to have an effect on conflict due to the fact that conflict could result as a consequence of either spouse being the sole initiator.

4. Duration of the marriage was expected to vary independently from the amount of conflict.

5. The mother's satisfaction with financial support was expected to have a negative effect on conflict, with more satisfied mothers indicating less conflict.

6. Perceived parental difficulty on the part of the mother was expected to have a positive effect on conflict, with mothers who were having more difficulty also reporting more conflict.

Hypotheses Related to the Quality of the Coparental Relationship

1. Hostility surrounding the divorce process was expected to have a negative direct effect on the coparental relationship. Hostility was also expected to negatively affect the coparental relationship indirectly through the conflict variable.

2. Joint custody arrangements were expected to have a positive direct effect on the quality of the coparental relationship, with joint custody parents reporting higher quality relationships. Joint custody arrangements were also expected to a have a positive indirect effect on the coparental relationship through the conflict variable. It was expected that joint custody parents would experience less conflict and consequently report better coparental relationships.

3. The mother's initiating the divorce was expected to vary independently from the coparental relationship.

4. The duration of the marriage was expected to vary independently from the coparental relationship.

5. The mother's satisfaction with support was expected to have a positive direct effect on the coparental relationship, with more satsified mothers having better quality relationships. Satisfaction with support was also expected to have a positive indirect effect on the coparental relationship through the variable conflict. More satisfied mothers were expected to report less conflict and, consequently, better coparental relationships.

6. Perceived parenting difficulty of the mother was expected to have a negative effect on the coparental relationship, with mothers who were having more difficulty reporting poorer quality relationships. Parenting difficulty was also expected to have a negative indirect effect through the variable conflict. Mothers experiencing more difficulty were also expected to report more conflict and consequently worse coparental relationships.

7. Conflict was hypothesized to have a negative direct effect on the coparental relationship, with higher degrees of conflict resulting poor relationship quality.

Hypotheses Related to Attachment

1. Hostility of the divorce process was expected to have a direct positive effect on the woman's reported level of attachment, with more hostile divorces resulting in more attachment behaviors.

2. Hostility was also expected to have an indirect positive effect on attachment by increasing conflict, which would, in turn, result in a poorer coparental relationship, which was expected to result in greater attachment behavior.

3. Joint custody arrangements were expected to have a negative direct effect on attachment. Joint custody was also expected to have a negative indirect effect on attachment due to less conflict and better coparental relationships. Better, less stressful relationships were expected to result in less attachment.

4. The spouse's being the initiator of the divorce was expected to have a postive direct effect on attachment.

5. The number of months married was expected to have a positive direct effect on attachment, with longer marriages resulting in increased attachment.

6. The mother's satisfaction with support was expected to have a negative direct effect on attachment, with higher satisfaction resulting in less attachment. Satisfaction with support was also expected to have a negative indirect effect on attachment by higher satisfaction leading to less conflict, better coparental relationships, and consequently less attachment.

7. Perceived parental difficulty was expected to have a positive direct effect on attachment, with mothers who were struggling more expected to be experiencing more attachment. Parental difficulty was also expected to have a

positive indirect effect on attachment by increasing conflict, which would lead to a poorer coparental relationship and consequently higher attachment score.

8. Conflict was expected to have a positive direct effect on attachment, with increased conflict resulting in higher levels of attachment. Conflict was also expected to have a positive indirect effect on attachment through the coparental relationship. Higher degrees of conflict were expected to lead to poor coparental relationships and consequently more attachment.

9. The coparental relationship was expected to have a negative direct effect on attachment behavior, with women reporting better coparental relationships also reporting lower attachment scores.

Chapter III

Methodology

Sample

The study utilized data collected from two counties and one city in southwestern Virginia. The population of the study was selected from court records in Roanoke County, Roanoke City, and Montgomery County. In order to participate, subjects had to have been granted a divorce between 1986 and 1991 and had to have been awarded custody of at least one minor child at the time the divorce was granted.

Contact of the selected participants was attempted through a series of three waves of mailings. The first wave of correspondence included a copy of the survey, a letter explaining the purpose of the research project and a request for the person's participation (see Appendix A for copies of all correspondence). A stamped, addressed return envelope was also included. A postcard was sent to all of the women who had not returned a completed survey within 15 days of the mailing of the first wave. The purpose of the postcard was to remind them of the project and to once again request their participation. The third wave of the project was sent to all women who had not yet returned a survey and whose original correspondence had not been returned as "unable to deliver" by the post office. This wave was mailed three weeks after the postcard and included a copy of the survey, a letter which once again explained the project and its importance, and a stamped, addressed return envelope.

Contact of 917 women was originally attempted. Of the 917 potential respondents, 518 were successfully contacted by mail. A total of 219 surveys were completed and returned, resulting in a response rate of 42%. The mean

age of the participants was 36 years. The average number of children reported was 1.72. The women in the sample had been divorced an average of 37 months with the marriages having lasted 10.43 years on average. Twenty percent of the women reported being remarried at the time the survey was completed. Of the participants, 11.3% were black and 87.3% were white. Approximately 75% of the women had continued their education beyond high school with 36% being college graduates. (See Table 1 for sample descriptors)

Instrumentation

Exogenous Variables

Five of the six exogenous variables (Hostility of the divorce process, custody arrangement, who initiated the divorce, length of marriage, and satisfaction with financial support) were measured from direct, single-item questions on the survey. Perceived parenting difficulty was measured utilizing the parent and social domains of The Parenting Stress Index (Abidin, 1986). These domains incorporated 33 5-point Likert scale items, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". (See Appendix B for the survey question and coding system utilized for each individual variable in the model).

Conflict Variable

The variable "conflict" was measured by utilizing Ahron's (1981) interparental conflict scale which is a subscale of the communication scale. The interparental conflict subscale incorporated four 5-point Likert scale items (ranging from "never" to "always") which measured the degree of hostility, conflict, tension, and disagreement that was present when the couple discussed parenting issues.

Table 1
Sample Descriptors

	X	SD	Range
Age	36.1	7.2	19 - 59
Number of Children	1.7	.8	1 - 5
Number of Months Divorced	37.3	22.4	4 - 99
Number of Years Married	10.4	6.7	0.7 - 37.4
Child Support Received (Monthly)	$379.3	$234.1	$0 - $3850
Miles From Former Spouse	91.9	234.1	1 - 2090

	n	%
Remarried		
No	170	79.80
Yes	43	20.20
Race		
Black	24	11.30
White	186	87.30
Other	4	1.40
Income		
Less than $5,000	22	10.60
$ 5,000 - $ 9,999	19	9.20
$10,000 - $14,999	47	22.70
$15,000 - $19,999	27	13.00
$20,000 - $24,999	32	15.50
$25,000 - $29,999	21	10.10
$30,000 - $39,999	25	12.10
$40,000 - $49,999	5	2.40
$50,000 +	9	4.30
Education		
1st through 8th	4	1.90
9th through 12th	52	24.50
Vocational/Some College	86	40.60
College Graduate	50	26.60
Post Grad/Professional	20	9.40

Coparental Relationship

The variable "coparental relationship" was measured as a composite variable which incorporated scores from Ahron's (1981) coparental interaction scale, scores from Ahron's (1981) mutual support scale which is a subscale of the communication scale, and, finally, a global rating of relationship quality. The coparental interaction scale included two questions which measured the degree to which the parents discussed daily and major decisions regarding the children's lives. The mutual support subscale encompassed six items which tapped into the degree to which the mother perceived her spouse to be a resource and support to her as a parent. All of the items from Ahrons' scale were measured as 5-point Likert scales ranging from "never" to "always". The global rating was measured by asking the respondent to desribe the quality of the relationship they currently had with their former spouse, based on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from very good (1) to very bad (5).

The creation of the composite variable followed a similar logic utilized when creating latent variables in LISREL. This particular composite variable was developed based on previous definitions of the coparental relationship which have encompassed childrearing issues and obligations and quality of the relationship (Ahrons, 1981; Bohannon, 1970). A correlation analysis was conducted to determine if the three items (coparental interaction, mutual support and relationship quality) were related. Given significant correlations between coparental interaction and mutual support ($r = .55$), between coparental interaction and relationship quality ($r = .47$), and between mutual support and relationship quality ($r = ..65$), a composite variable was constructed by calculating the mean of the three items.

Attachment Measure

The variable "attachment" was measured using a 4-item scale developed by Kitson (1982) which encompasses measures of preoccupation and disbelief. The items included: 1) I find myself spending a lot of time thinking about my former spouse, 2) I spend a lot of time wondering what my former spouse is doing, 3) Sometimes I just can't believe that we got a divorce, and 4) I feel I will never get over the divorce. Each item was responded to on a 4-point Likert scale with one representing "not at all", two being "slightly", three indicating "somewhat", and four being "very much".

Plan of Analysis

A non-experimental research design was utilized for the study, thus no manipulation of the independent variables occurred. A path analysis was conducted to determine the effects of the various variables on each other as indicated in Figure 1. Path coefficients and their level of significance were obtained by running a series of three multiple regressions. The magnitude and direction of the path coefficients represent the degree of the relationship between variables at each end of that path, with the effect being in the direction of the arrow. Both direct and indirect effects were calculated. Indirect effects were calculated by multiplying the coefficients of two paths that appear in temporal order (from left to right). A probability value of .05 was established as the criterion for path significance. Figure 2 illustrates the paths which proved to be significant.

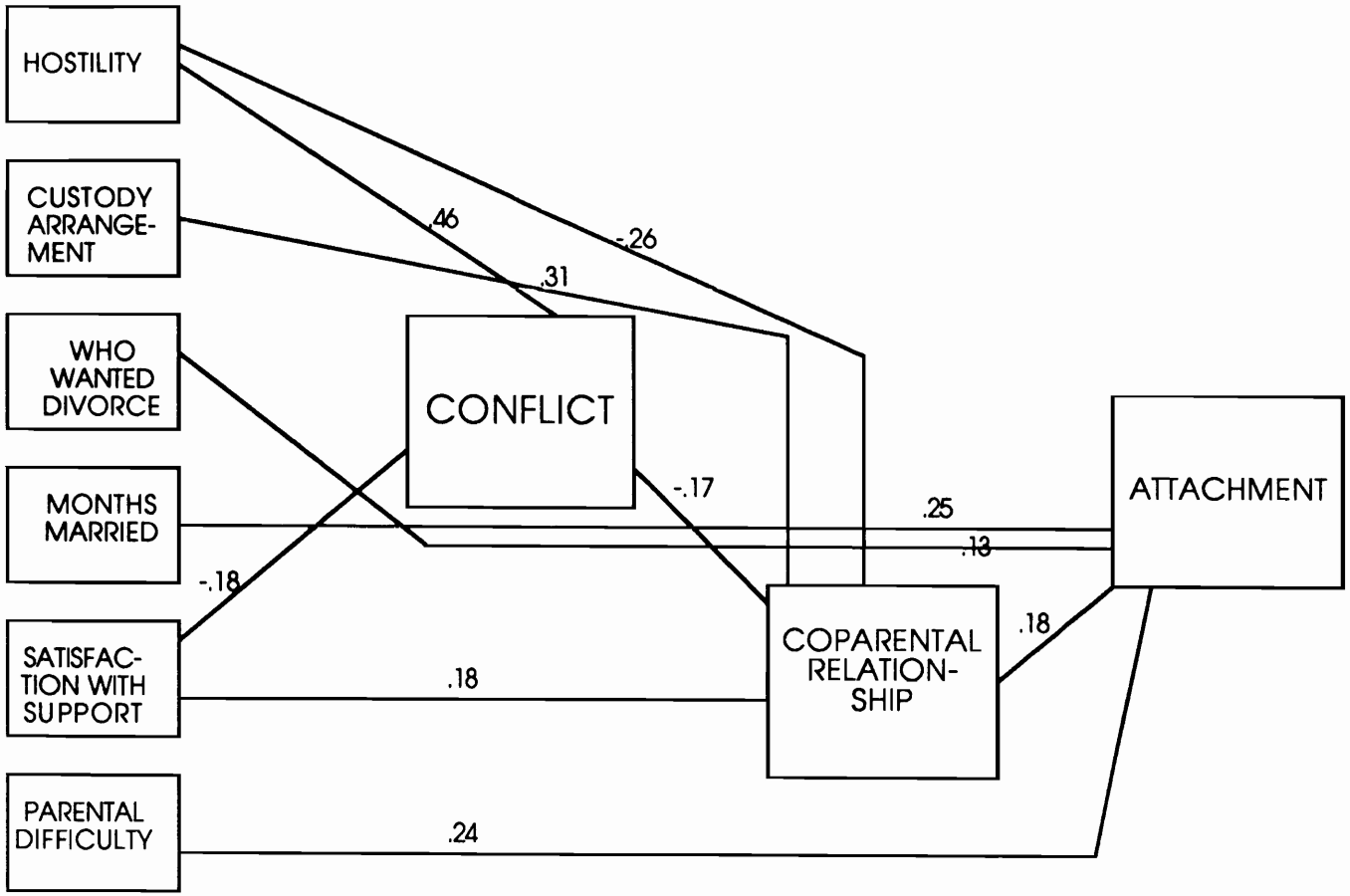

Figure 2. Significant Paths

Chapter IV

Results

A correlation matrix of the variables included in the path model was produced (see Table 2) and examined as a test for multicolinearity. None of the independent variables were correlated with each other strongly enough to threaten the quality of the regression analyses. A value of .70 or below was set as the criterion for evaluating the acceptable degree of correlation between any two independent variables. An additional check of multicolinearity was conducted by checking the tolerance value (1 - the squared multiple correlations, where each IV in turn serves as a dependent variable while the others are IV's) of each variable in the model. In regression, low tolerance values can be used to indicate multicolinearity (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1983; Norusis, 1985). A value of .60 or greater was set as acceptable for ruling out concern about multicolinearity.

Variables Related to Conflict

The results of the first standard multiple regression analysis are presented in Table 3. Six exogenous variables which assessed the duration of the marriage, the nature of the divorce experience (hostility and which spouse initiated the divorce), the custody arrangement, the mother's satisfaction with financial support, and the mother's perceived difficulty with parenting were established as the independent variables and degree of conflict in the spouses' post-divorce relationship was established as the dependent variable. The magnitude and direction of the relationship between variables was indicated by the standardized regression coefficients (Beta). Two variables emerged as significant predictors of the amount of conflict present in the relationship between the former spouses. The degree of hostility which

Table 2
Correlations Between Selected Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Coparental Relationship	1.00								
2. Satisfaction With Support	.24**	1.00							
3. Custody Arrangement	-.11	.10	1.00						
4. Months Married	-.07	.11	.10	1.00					
5. Hostility	-.40**	-.04	-.14*	.04	1.00				
6. Who Wanted the Divorce	.12	.10	.03	.04	-.05	1.00			
7. Parental Difficulty	-.03	-.17*	-.09	-.16*	.04	.00	1.00		
8. Conflict	-.33**	-.25**	-.06	-.10	.44**	-.01	.19**	1.00	
9. Attachment	.12	-.03	.22*	.22**	.04	.14*	.22**	-.023	1.00
Mean	2.64	2.59	1.16	125.13	3.04	1.50	.002	2.96	1.46
SD .92	1.36	.37	80.02	1.35	.70	.49	1.06	.67	

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

Table 3
Multiple Regression Analysis: Variables Related to Conflict

Variable	b	Beta	Std. Err. of b	T	Tolerance
Hostility	.36	.46	.05	7.50***	.97
Custody Arrangement	.17	.05	.19	.89	.97
Who Wanted the Divorce.	.03	.02	.09	.35	.98
Months Married.	-.00	-.07	.00	-1.13	.97
Satisfaction with Support.	-.14	-.18	.05	-2.90**	.96
Parental Difficulty	.23	.11	.13	1.80	.96

*p < .05
**p < .01
***p < .001

R^2 = .273
R^2_{adj} = .250
SE_{est} = .894

F = 12.18***

surrounded the couple's divorce had the strongest direct effect on conflict, indicating that the more hostile the divorce process, the higher the level of conflict in the post-divorce relationship. The mother's satisfaction with the amount of financial support she was receiving was negatively related to the level of conflict.

Variables Related to the Coparental Relationship

The second standard multiple regression analysis utilized the same six exogenous variables as the first regression plus the conflict variable for a total of seven independent variables. The dependent variable in this analysis was the composite variable, quality of the coparental relationship which encompassed measures for the quality of the relationship, level of parenting support received from the former spouse, and the level of coparenting. The results from this analysis are presented in Table 4.

Direct Effects. Four of the seven independent variables emerged as significant predictors of the coparental relationship. The variable which proved to be the most significant predictor of the quality of the coparental relationship was the custody arrangement (ß = .31). Joint custody arrangements were associated with better quality coparental relationships than sole custody arrangements. Hostility was the second most significant factor affecting the coparental relationship. An estimated beta coefficient of -.26 indicates that higher levels of hostility throughout the divorce process are associated with poor coparental relationships. Like high degrees of hostility, higher levels of conflict were also associated with poor coparental relationships (ß = -.17). The fourth variable which was found to be significantly associated with the coparental relationship was the mother's satisfaction with financial support. The more satisfied the mothers were with

Table 4
Multiple Regression Analysis: Variables Related to Quality of the Coparental Relationship

Variable	b	Beta	Std. Err. of b	T	Tolerance
Hostility	-.18	-.26	.05	-3.81***	.76
Custody Arrangement	.85	.31	.16	5.22**	.96
Who Wanted the Divorce.	.11	.08	.08	1.43	.98
Months Married.	-.00	-.10	.00	-1.75	.96
Satisfaction with Support.	.12	.18	.04	2.96**	.92
Parental Difficulty	.08	.04	.11	.74	.94
Conflict	-.15	-.17	.06	-2.54*	.73

*p < .05
**p < .01
***p < .001

R^2 = .329
R^2_{adj} = .305
SE_{est} = .760

F = 13.59***

the support they received, the better the reported quality of the coparental relationship (ß = .18).

Indirect Effects. Hostility also affected the coparental relationship indirectly through the conflict variable (see Table 5 for a summary of direct and total effects). Hostility was significantly related to increased conflict between former spouses, and conflict proved to be a significant predictor of the coparental relationship with a beta coefficient of -.17. Satisfaction with support also affected the coparental relationship indirectly through the conflict variable. More satisfied mothers experienced less conflict in their relationship with their former spouses (ß = -.18) and consequently had better coparental relationships.

Variables Related to Attachment

The final regression analysis added the composite variable, coparental relationship, to the previous seven independent variables. The dependent variable was attachment to the former spouse, as measured by preoccupation.

Direct Effects. Four of the IV's had a direct effect on attachment (see Table 6). The duration of the marriage was positively associated with the mother's level of attachment (ß = .25). Women who had been married longer were experiencing higher degrees of preoccupation. The ex-husband's having been the initiator of the divorce also resulted in higher levels of attachment for the mothers in the study (ß = .13). The mother's perceived level of parenting difficulty was also positively related to increased levels of attachment (ß = .24). And finally, the quality of the coparental relationship also proved to be a significant predictor of attachment. Women who had better coparental relationships indicated that they experienced higher levels of preoccupation related to their former spouses (ß = .18).

Table 5

Direct and Total Effects of Hostility, Mothers' Custody Satisfaction, Who Wanted the Divorce, Number of Months Married, Satisfaction with Support, Parental Difficulty, and Conflict on the Quality of the Coparental Relationship and Attachment.

Variable	Coparental		Attachment	
	Direct	Total	Direct	Total
Hostility	-.26	-.34	.---	-.06
Custody Arrangement	.31	.31	.---	.06
Who Wanted Divorce	.---	.---	.13	.13
Months Married	.---	.---	.25	.25
Support Satisfaction	.18	.21	.---	.04
Parental Difficulty	.---	.---	.24	.24
Conflict	-.17	-.17	.---	-.03

Table 6
Multiple Regression Analysis: Variables Related to Attachment

Variable	b	Beta	Std. Err. of b	T	Tolerance
Hostility	.06	.12	.04	1.54	.70
Custody Arrangement	.03	.02	.15	.24	.84
Who Wanted the Divorce.	.12	.13	.06	1.91*	.97
Months Married.	.00	.25	.00	3.63***	.95
Satisfaction with Support.	-.04	-.08	.04	-1.09	.88
Parental Difficulty.	.33	.24	.09	3.45***	.94
Conflict	-.04	-.07	.05	-.85	.70
Coparental Relationship	.14	.18	.06	2.33*	.67

*p < .05
**p < .01
***p < .001

R^2 = .155
R^2_{adj} = .120
SE_{est} = .642

F = 4.43***

Indirect Effects. The remaining five IV's all had indirect effects on the mothers' reported levels of attachment (see Table 5). Joint custody arrangements and satisfaction with financial support from the father both resulted in better coparental relationships, which, in turn, resulted in higher levels of attachment for the mothers. Hostile divorce processes were associated with higher levels of conflict between the former spouses. As discussed earlier, increased conflict had a negative effect on the coparental relationship, which, in turn, led to less attachment on the mother's part.

Chapter V

Discussion

The purpose of the current study was to investigate the extent to which a set of empirically and theoretically relevant variables were able to predict both the nature of the coparental relationship between former spouses and the degree of attachment which divorced women continued to experience for their former spouses. Before discussing the findings and implications of the project, however, it is important to point out certain limitations of the study. Due to the high degree of geographic mobility among divorced persons, only 518 of the original 917 women were successfully contacted. Although the response rate of 42% of the 518 was consistent with previous studies of divorced persons, it is necessary to be cautious of possible selection bias for the sample. We do not know how the mothers who completed and returned the survey differed from those who could not be contacted and from those who chose not to participate. It is possible that the women who chose to participate in the study were experiencing more stress and a more difficult time with adjustment and were, therefore, more invested in both wanting to share their stories and in seeing research conducted on the topic.

Caution is also required when considering the generalizability of the results. The mothers who participated in the current study were predominantly white and had at least some post-secondary school education. The sampled population was identified by utilizing the court records of two counties and one city in southwestern Virginia. A key factor which may have influenced the findings of this study is the fact that Virginia is a relatively traditional state in all aspects of divorce law. Previous researchers have suggested that the legal context in which divorce occurs can influence the

postdivorce relationships between former spouses (Arditti & Allen, 1993). Because Virginia is an equitable distribution state rather than a community property state, it is one of the few remaining states where fault continues to permeate throughout many aspects of the divorce case (Smith, 1989). As a result, the divorce process may have the potential to involve more hostility, and, consequently, more distress, than in less traditional, pure "no fault" states.

Keeping these cautions in mind, the results of the study supported many of the initial hypotheses and clarified several of the questions set forth at the beginning of the study. Of particular interest are: 1) the different predictors of conflict and the coparental relationship; 2) the unexpected positive relationship between the quality of the coparental relationship and attachment; and, 3) the relationship between parental difficulty and attachment.

The Differential Effects on Conflict and the Coparental Relationship

The variable conflict in the coparental relationship was looked at separately from support and communication surrounding coparenting to determine if it had a distinct path of influence on the independent variables. Previous research which has included the coparental relationship as an operationalized variable has tended to use conflict as the sole measure or to include it as part of a composite variable (Ahrons, 1981; Berman, 1985, 1988a, 1988b; Coysh, Johnston, Tschann, Wallerstein, & Kline, 1989; Fishel & Scanzoni, 1990; Goldsmith, 1981). The results of the current study indicated that although the two variables which were found to predict conflict (hostility in the divorce process and satisfaction with financial support) also predicted the amount of support and communication in the coparental relationship,

additional variables played a role in accounting for the amount of variance in the coparental relationship.

The variables which were found to be predictive of conflict in the coparental relationship included the amount of hostility during the divorce process and the mother's satisfaction with financial support. Prior research with divorced fathers indicated that a hostile divorce process resulted in increased conflict with their former spouses (Arditti & Allen, 1993). The results of the current study indicate that for women, hostility was the most significant predictor of conflict in communication between former spouses.

As hypothesized, the woman's satisfaction with financial support was also predictive of the amount of conflict between the former spouses. Financial problems and a reduced standard of living result in substantial disruptions and consequent adjustments in the postdivorce situation for many women. It is estimated that the income of single mothers is only 67% of their predivorce income while men's income is estimated to remain at about 90% of what it was prior to the divorce (Duncan & Hoffman, 1985). It is not surprising, therefore, that dissatisfaction with financial matters is associated with conflict between former spouses. Another factor which may contribute to dissatisfaction with support and increased conflict is the fact that only 50% of divorced single mothers receive the full amount of support awarded by the courts (Garfinkel & McLanahan, 1986).

Qualitative data collected from a subgroup of the sample of mothers utilized in the current study indicates that mothers not only experience frustration over financial concerns, but they also have a great deal of guilt about not being able to provide for their children in a manner which they consider appropriate (Arditti & Madden-Derdich, 1994). The degree of

frustration experienced by the women was worse when the father's financial contribution was not considered to be satisfactory.

As discussed above, one of the contributions of the current study was to investigate conflict as a separate variable from the coparental relationship. The hostility of the divorce process and the mother's satisfaction with financial support were found to have direct effects not only on conflict but also on the coparental relationship. By placing conflict temporally prior to the coparental relationship, it was also evident that conflict (when considered independently) was negatively related to the quality of coparenting. By looking at the significant paths in the model (see Figure 2), it is apparent that the effect of the divorce-related variables of hostility and satisfaction with financial support on the coparental relationship is amplified as a result of having both direct and indirect effects (through conflict). These findings are significant in that they speak to the fact that hostile divorce proceedings not only foster conflict between former spouses, but that they have a significant negative effect on the coparental relationship which has been found to be detrimental to children's adjustment. Previous research with both mothers (Arditti & Madden-Derdich, 1993) and fathers (Arditti & Allen, 1993) has addressed the fact that lawyer involvement is perceived as making the relationship with the former spouse worse. It continually becomes more apparent that reforms in the current legal system are critical in order to foster better postdivorce adjustment for men, women, and children.

The strongest predictor of the quality of the coparental relationship was the custody arrangement. As expected, couples who reported having joint legal custody of their children had better coparental relationships. This finding is consistent with the hypothesis put forth in the current study and with previous research which indicated that both mothers (Luepnitz, 1986)

and fathers (Arditti & Keith, 1993) benefit from joint custody arrangements. Joint custody arrangements have been found to reduce role overload for mothers (Luepnitz, 1986), to allow fathers to feel closer to their children (Arditti & Keith, 1993), and to decrease the amount of relitigation which occurs (Ilfeld, et al., 1982; Luepnitz, 1986). It follows that these factors would be expected to facilitate positive coparental relationships as the current data indicate.

It is important to note that, although joint custody was the strongest predictor of the quality of the coparental relationship, it was not found to be significantly predictive of conflict. Previous research had indicated that joint legal custody arrangements result in better coparental relationships due to lower levels of conflict between former spouses (Luepnitz, 1986; Bowman & Ahrons, 1985). The results of the current study, however, suggest that the relationship between custody arrangement and coparenting is a direct one, rather than indirect through conflict. Interpretation of the current findings suggests that joint custody arrangments improve the quality of shared parenting by increasing support and communication rather than by decreasing conflict.

Variables Predictive of Attachment

Although this study is important because it is one of the first to investigate variables which predict postdivorce attachment between former spouses, one of the most significant findings was the differential relationship which conflict and coparenting played in predicting attachment behavior. Previous research has consistently included a measure of conflict as part of the coparental relationship, and a negative relationship has been found to exist between the quality of the coparental relationship and attachment. This

relationship has been attributed to the fact that poor coparental relationships are associated with higher levels of distress, which in turn initiate attachment behaviors towards the former spouse. This hypothesis was not supported by analysis of the current data.

Quality of the Coparental Relationship. Contrary to the initial hypothesis of the current study, better coparental relationships were found to predict higher levels of attachment to the former spouse rather than lower levels. Previous research has suggested that conflict and tension in the postdivorce relationship between formers spouses results in higher degrees of preoccupation (attachment). Once again, when considering this particular finding, it is important to note that the measure for coparenting in the current study incorporated support and communication in the coparental relationship but **not** conflict.

One possible explanation for this finding is that couples with strong coparental relationships were also interacting more frequently. Two characteristics of harmonious coparenting relationships reported in previous research include frequent interaction and nonparental interaction between former spouses (Ahrons, 1981; Ambert, 1988; Hobart, 1990; Luepnitz, 1986). It is important to recall that the strongest predictor of a positive coparental relationship was a joint custody arrangement which tends to require more frequent contact between parents.

The irony in this situation is that although joint custody arrangements and supportive coparental relationships have many advantages for the women, men, and children involved, they may also delay emotional resolution of the divorce process, thereby fostering attachment and poor adjustment (Coysh, et al., 1989). The emotional divorce may be made more

difficult by frequent visitation and coparental communication (Serovich, et al., 1992), resulting in increased levels of attachment (Ambert, 1988).

Several researchers (Ahrons, 1981; Bohannon, 1970; Goldsmith, 1981) have addressed the fact that divorcing couples who share children must learn to separate their spousal and parental roles. While the spousal roles must be terminated, the parental roles require redefinition. These changes require that a divorcing person develop new and adjust old internal working models which define their expectations in relationship to their former spouse. This process is made difficult, however, for two reasons. First, society does not offer any direction in regard to what relationships between formers spouses should look like. This lack of norms makes it very difficult to develop new expectations when one is not sure what will be supported and what will be frowned upon. Second, even when divorcing persons have sought assistance through therapy, therapeutic approaches have tended to focus on the building of support networks rather than on redefining the ongoing relationship with the former spouse. Although support building has proven to be successful in dealing with social and economic matters, it has not proven to be as successful in facilitating reduced attachment and better adjustment (Berman, 1988b; Kitson, 1982).

The results of the current study emphasize the need for new therapeutic strategies and approaches which facilitate both healthy, supportive coparental relationships and resolution of the emotional aspects of the divorce.

Conflict. Some interesting findings also resulted in regard to the conflict variable. Although conflict resulted in less support and communication in the coparental relationship, no direct relationship to attachment was found as expected. One explanation for this finding is that as conflict increases, distancing occurs and talking stops (Fishel & Scanzoni, 1989). This idea is

congruent with the suggestion above that the positive relationship found between coparenting and attachment may result from increased interaction between the former spouses. Conflict may influence attachment indirectly by decreasing the amount of communication and contact between spouses, which in turn facilitates resolution of the emotional divorce leading to decreased attachment. These findings contradict the findings of previous research which have indicated that increased levels of conflict are associated with increased levels of attachment. It would appear that in the current sample of mothers, conflict indirectly resulted in less attachment to the former spouse by decreasing the amount of coparental interaction and communication. If conflict does result in distancing and a decrease in communication as suggested by Fishel & Scanzoni (1989), then mothers with conflictual relationships with their ex-spouses may be able to work through the emotional divorce more readily as a result of decreased coparenting and interaction with the former spouse.

Perceived Difficulty with Parenting. The more difficulty a woman perceived herself as having with parenting, the more preoccupation she experienced for her former spouse. One explanation which has been posited for this relationship is that preoccupation for the former spouse who previously provided financial and parental assistance increases as a result of increased parenting responsibility (Berman, 1985). The fact that parenting difficulty was not found to be predictive of the amount of support or coparental communication as we had expected speaks to the psychological nature of the variable. Increased parenting difficulty does not appear to result in decreased or poor coparenting, but rather manifests itself as a preoccupation for the former spouse.

It is important to note that the "parental difficulty" variable asked the mother to rate her perceptions of both herself as a parent and her interactions with her child. Mothers who perceive themselves as having a difficult time with parenting may also experience a higher degree of self-blame and guilt over the divorce. The "ideal motherhood" in our society tends to be conceptualized as occuring within a heterosexual marriage, and all mothers tend to be judged by this standard. Divorced mothers who do not share this social context are often marginalized (Baber & Allen, 1992; Sands & Muccio, 1989). Women who are experiencing a difficult time with single-parenting, may be even more vividly aware of the value placed on raising children within a heterosexual marriage. One consequence of this may be a preoccupation with the former spouse and disbelief concerning the loss of the marriage.

This ideology may also influence how mothers believe the divorce has affected their children. Qualitative data from a subgroup of this sample of mothers (Arditti & Madden-Derdich, 1994) indicated that mothers are concerned about the loss of father involvement for their children and the loss of a "normal family". Parenting difficulty may tap into these feelings, resulting in an increase in both thoughts about the former spouse and disbelief about the divorce.

Summary

Past research has indicated that the degree of conflict in the relationship between former spouses is positively related to the amount of postdivorce attachment (Berman, 1985; Kitson, 1992; Tschann, et al., 1989). By considering conflict and coparenting as two separate variables, the current study added new insight into how these processes may be related. The first significant

finding was that conflict was most strongly influenced by the degree of hostility surrounding the divorce process, while the quality of the coparental relationship could best be predicted by the custody arrangement. It is important to note that hostility, dissatisfaction with financial support, and conflict were all predictive of poor coparental relationships.

One of the surprising findings of the study was the positive relationship between quality of the coparental relationship and attachment. Based on previous research, it was hypothesized that poor coparental relationships would result in increased levels of distress and consequently more attachment. The current findings, however, suggest that frequent coparental interaction with the former spouse may make it more difficult to resolve the emotional aspects of the divorce, including attachment to the former spouse. This suggestion is supported by the fact that joint custody arrangements, which usually result in more frequent contact and interaction between former spouses, were the strongest predictor of coparental communication and support.

Another significant outcome of the study was the finding that perceived parenting difficulty, while positively related to increased attachment, was not related to the amount of coparental communication or support. This finding supports Berman's suggestion that increased parenting responsibility leads to more frequent thoughts about the former spouse who provided parental assistance in the past. The findings also speak to the need, however, to view the experience of single mothers within the larger sociopolitical context. Since motherhood continues to be a large part of how women are defined in our society, we need to better understand how parenting difficulty may be internalized as self-blame and guilt over the loss of a "normal family".

Implications for Conducting Therapy with Divorced Mothers

Because divorce has primarily been viewed as a "crisis", therapeutic approaches have tended to focus on building systems of support for women rather than focusing on personal growth and identity development (Sirota, 1992). More recent literature (Sev'er & Pirie, 1991) has addressed the need to view divorce as a "social transition", described as "an ongoing process of negotiation of relationships between intimates" (p. 318). Adaptation of a social view of divorce will have important implications for therapy, particularly in the case of couples who must continue to interact due to shared parenting responsibilities. Along with assisting women in developing support systems which will aid them in times of crisis, therapeutic strategies will need to focus on developing new stories and beliefs concerning a woman's new role as a single-mother.

Narrative therapy provides a useful and appropriate framework for conducting therapy with divorced women who are attempting to redefine themselves not only as individuals, but also in relation to their children, to their former spouse, and to society. Narrative therapy fits well with a "social transition" perspective of divorce in that it does not propose the existence of an underlying structure or dysfunction in the family which determines the behavior and interactions of the family members (White & Epston, 1990). Rather, narrative therapy assumes that behaviors and interactions between family members are determined by the meanings that persons attribute to events and life experiences (White & Epston, 1990).

Research has indicated that persons who are separated and divorced are more likely than persons of any other marital status to seek therapy (Bebbington, 1987; Bloom, et al., 1978; Kressel, 1985; Kitson & Morgan, 1990) and that, in particular, women who continue to experience attachment for

their former spouses are more likely to seek therapy (Kitson, 1992). White believes that people seek therapy when their "lived experiences" contradict the dominant narratives of their families or of society (White & Epston, 1990). When women divorce, their new experiences as single mothers often do not fit with the dominant stories about marriage and motherhood valued by society. In order for women to "reauthor" their stories and make them their own, they first need to be aware of the broader sociopolitical context which provides a frame for their personal experiences. Narrative therapy allows us to consider these broader contexts in which women's stories are embedded.

Integrating Narrative and Feminist Family Therapy

In the past, family therapy has tended to be more interested in the narratives of individuals and families rather than sociocultural narratives that construct the contextual framework from which individuals and families select the ingredients to develop their own narratives (Laird, 1989). This practice is particularly relevant when working with women, because it has resulted in a failure to recognize the larger stories which shape and constrain women's roles in families.

Feminist family therapists have found that in many cases female clients do not recognize how social structures and institutions shape and limit their life experiences (Zangari & Gosling-Goldsmith, 1993). Rather, clients tend to internalize problems and attribute them to their own shortcomings. Feminist family therapists approach these situations by introducing issues related to gender whenever they are pertinent to the problem being presented. In the case of divorced mothers, gender-related issues abound. Fortunately, narrative family therapy easily accommodates an understanding

of the role which the sociopolitical context plays in influencing how women view their life experiences (Zangari & Gosling-Goldsmith, 1993).

Society's Dominant Stories Regarding Marriage and Motherhood

A critical aspect of understanding the divorce experience for women is consideration of the social context in which beliefs about marriage and motherhood are established. Many women who have divorced during the past decade, particularly those in their 30's and 40's, have been socialized with a more traditional set of values (Sirota, 1992). Incorporated in this societal value system are several beliefs related to marriage and motherhood. First, is the belief that the ultimate fulfillment in life for women is attained through marriage. Second, women continue to be socialized to believe that individual pursuits, including a career, should be secondary to marriage and motherhood. A married woman's identity is often formed around her relationship with her husband rather than around individual goals and achievements (Sirota, 1992). And third, the "ideal motherhood" is seen as occurring within a heterosexual marriage (Baber & Allen, 1992). Consequently, single-motherhood is often judged as deviant and inferior.

As a result of internalizing these traditional values and belief systems (sociocultural stories) regarding marriage and motherhood, women who divorce often experience a critical loss of identity. Divorced women's everyday life experiences no longer fit the valued cultural stories against which they judge their own lives. This discrepancy between daily lived experiences and the dominant cultural narratives concerning marriage and motherhood often result in personal narratives which are contradictory and full of ambivalence and guilt (Zangari & Gosling-Goldsmith, 1993). The data from the current study clearly illustrate this discrepancy, particularly in regard

to the relationship with the former spouse and the mother's perceptions of herself as a parent.

The Relationship with the Former Spouse

An unexpected finding of the current study was the positive relationship between the quality of the coparental relationship and increased preoccupation for the former spouse. It was hypothesized that poor relationships would result in more preoccupation due to increased distress. The results, however, actually lend more support to the idea that more frequent and better quality relations with the former spouse make it more difficult to resolve the emotional aspects of divorce. Bowlby discusses this process in terms of developing new working models which define what interactions with the former spouse should look like after the divorce. By considering these findings against the backdrop of the dominant narratives within our society, as suggested by narrative therapy, an explanation emerges which supports just how difficult the development of new working models (or stories) can be.

First, the cultural narrative regarding the ex-spousal relationship tends to be negative in the sense that ongoing positive relationships are thought to indicate an inability to resolve the emotional aspects of the divorce. Research has indicated that professionals, family members, and friends usually frown upon a positive, nonconflictual relationship between ex-spouses (Kressel, et al., 1979; Textor, 1989).

Yet, no norms are available for divorcing couples who must continue to have a relationship due to shared parenting responsibilities. As a result, a cultural narrative does not exist which individuals can compare their postdivorce experiences with their former spouse against. Narrative theorists have stated that problems arise when there is no acceptable story available to

compare individual life experiences against (Laird, 1989). The confusion experienced as a result of this lack of cultural norms may manifest itself as a preoccupation with the former spouse and the marriage.

The only norm which does exist incorporates an expectation for conflict between the former spouses. The findings of the current study indicated that women with less support and communication in their relationship with their former spouse had an easier time resolving continued attachment. Narrative theory would suggest that these women may have been able to resolve the emotional aspects of the divorce more readily as a result of their personal narratives (of a poor relationship with their former spouse) matching the narratives of their family and culture.

The desirable outcome of therapy from a narrative approach is the development of alternative stories that allow a person to incorporate their personal lived experiences (White & Epston, 1991). Sirota (1992) emphasizes the importance of a woman's being able to differentiate between individual difficulties she may be experiencing and societal values and institutions that affect all women. As women become more aware of cultural stories about marriage and divorce through therapy, they become better able to separate from cultural narratives and begin to reauthor their lives and relationships in fulfilling ways.

Divorce for women in today's society is often viewed as the woman's failure to do her job as the emotional caretaker of the family (Lund, 1990). One possible interpretation of the results of the current study is that frequent contact with the former spouse serves to remind women of what they have "failed" at in terms of what is valued by society. Therapy needs to aid divorced women in being able to identify the role that societal and family

stories play in influencing their interpretation of their experiences. Women need to be able to reorganize their roles and identity at both the familial and societal level after divorce in order to promote growth and individuation (Lund, 1990). Once an identity is formed which does not revolve around the marriage, it may be possible to renegotiate and redefine a relationship with the former spouse which is not associated with poor adjustment.

Women as Single-Parents

As a therapist practicing from a narrative perspective, it is critical to be conscious of the fact that not all stories are valued equally in the sociopolitical context. Single motherhood exemplifies this fact clearly. The "ideal motherhood" in our society tends to be conceptualized as occurring within a heterosexual marriage and all mothers tend to be judged by this standard. Divorced mothers who do not share this social context are often marginalized (Baber & Allen, 1992). Single mothers tend to be aware of this bias under the best of circumstances. When they perceive themselves as having a difficult time with parenting, the awareness becomes more vivid.

If the ideologies which designate the two-parent traditional family as "best" and all other forms as deviant (Zangari & Gosling-Goldsmith, 1993) are not deconstructed, parenting difficulties may increase a woman's preoccupation with the former spouse and marriage. By approaching therapy from a narrative perspective, these dominant stories can be deconstructed, allowing a woman to choose a story of her own authoring rather than having one imposed on her by society (White, 1991).

Summary

Therapy with divorced mothers needs to move beyond the focus of building support networks. Therapeutic strategies need to focus on assisting

women in renegotiating their new roles as single mothers and their new roles with their former spouses with whom they continue to share parenting responsibilities with.

Narrative/feminist therapy approaches allow therapists to aid clients in constructing new life stories. Part of this process involves educating women on the dominant narratives of our culture which may no longer match their current life experiences. This knowledge will hopefully enable women to understand their continued attachment to their former partner and may free them to reauthor new narratives which can incorporate their current life experiences.

Implications for Future Research

The findings of the current study clearly indicate a need for a more detailed understanding of women's post-divorce experiences. In particular, a more thorough definition of attachment is needed which encompasses not only negative aspects, such as preoccupation, but aspects which may be of a more positive nature. Due to a lack of norms in society regarding post-divorce relationships between former spouses, much confusion exists surrounding these relationships throughout society, including the professional community of mental health workers.

Ahrons (1981) emphasized the need to develop positive ways of defining post-divorce relationships, particularly for couples who share childrearing responsibilities. Yet, the past decade has seen few developments in terms of viewing these relationships through a more positive lens. The negative view of continued attachment between former spouses clearly exemplifies this fact.

Research is needed which begins to investigate post-divorce relationships which are considered to be successful by the individuals involved. Such

research would allow researchers and practicioners to: 1) develop a definition of attachment which incorporates positive experiences; 2) develop new measures of attachment which reflect these experiences; and 3) design therapeutic strategies which are supportive of positive, ongoing relationships between former spouses. By obtaining a better understanding of the processes involved in developing successful coparental relationships post-divorce, the adjustment of women, men, and children can be facilitated. Qualitative methodologies may offer the most efficient route to obtaining a detailed, rich, process-oriented perspective on these topics.

REFERENCES

Abidin, R. R. (1986). Parenting Stress Index. Charlottesville, VA: Pediatric Psychology Press.

Ahrons, C. R. (1981). The continuing coparental relationship between divorced spouses. American Journal of Orthopschiatry, 5(13), 415-428.

Ainsworth, M. D. S., (1991). Attachments and other affectional bonds across the life cycle. In C. M. Parkes, J. Stevenson-Hinde, & P. Marris (Eds.), Attachment across the life cycle (pp. 33-51). New York: Routledge.

Albrecht, Bahr, Goodman (1983). Divorce and remarriage: Problems, adaptations, and adjustments. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Ambert, A. M. (1988). Relationship between ex-spouses: Individual and dyadic perspectives. Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 5, 327-346.

Arditti, J. A. (1992). Investigating differences between joint custody and noncustodial fathers. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 62, 186-195.

Arditti, J. A., & Allen, K. R. (1993). Understanding distressed fathers' perceptions of legal and relational inequities postdivorce. Family and Conciliation Courts Review, 31(4), 461-476.

Arditti, J. A., & Keith, T. Z. (1993). Visitation frequency, child support payment and the father-child relationship postdivorce. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 55, 699-712.

Arditti, J. A., & Kelly, M. (1994). Fathers' perspectives of their coparental relationships postdivorce: Implications for family practice and legal reform. Family Relations ,43(1), 61-66.

Arditti, J. A., & Madden-Derdich, D. A. (1993). Noncustodial mothers: Developing strategies of support. Family Relations, 42(3), 305-314.

Arditti, J. A., & Madden-Derdich, D. A. (1994). No regrets: Custodial mothers accounts of the difficulties and benefits of divorce. Unpublished Manuscript, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Blacksburg, Virginia.

Baber, K., & Allen, K. (1992). Women and families. New York, New York: Guilford Press.

Barnet, H. S. (1990). Divorce stress and adjustment model: Locus of control and demographic predictors. Journal of Divorce, 13(3), 93-109.

Bebbington, P. (1987). Marital status and depression: A study of English national admission statistics. Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica, 75, 640-650.

Berman, W. H. (1985). Continued attachment after legal divorce. Journal of Family Issues, 6(3), 375-392.

Berman, W. H. (1988a). The role of attachment in the post-divorce experience. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 54(3), 496-503.

Berman, W. H. (1988b). The relationship of ex-spouse attachment to adjustment following divorce. Journal of Family Psychology, 1(3), 312-328.

Berman, W. H. (1988c). The attachment bond as a unique aspect of divorce. Journal of Family Psychology, 1(3), 333-336.

Bloom, B. L., Hodges, W. F., Kern, M. B., & McFaddin, S. C. (1985). A preventive program for the newly separated: Final evaluation. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 55(1), 9-26.

Bloom, B. L., Asher, S. J., & White, S. W. (1978). Marital disruption as a stressor: A review and analysis. Psychological Bulletin, 85, 867-894.

Bohannon, P. (1970). Divorce and after. New York: Anchor Books.

Bowlby, J. (1969). Attachment and loss, Vol.1. Attachment. New York: Basic Books.

Bowlby, J. (1973). Attachment and loss, Vol. 2. Separation: Anxiety and anger. New York: Basic Books.

Bowlby, J. (1975). Attachment theory, separation anxiety, and mourning. In S. Arieti (Ed.), American handbook of psychiatry (pp. 292-309). New York: Basic Books.

Bowlby, J. (1977). The making and breaking of affectional bonds I: Aetiology and psychopathology in the light of attachment theory. British Journal of Psychiatry, 130, 201-210.

Bowlby, J. (1977). The making and breaking of affectional bonds II: Some principles of psychotherapy. British Journal of Psychiatry, 130, 421-431.

Bowlby, J. (1981). Attachment and loss: Vol. 3. Loss, sadness and depression. New York: Basic Books.

Bowman, M., & Ahrons, C. (1985). Impact of legal custody status on fathers' parenting post-divorce. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 47, 481-488.

Brown, P., Felton, B. J., Whiteman, V., & Manela, R. (1980). Attachment and distress following marital separation. Journal of Divorce, 3, 303-317.

Brown, S. D., & Reimer, D. A. (1984). Assessing attachment following divorce: Development and psychometric evaluation of the Divorce Reaction Inventory. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 31, 520-531.

Burgoyne, J., & Clark, D. (1984). Making a go of it: A study of stepfamilies in Sheffield. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Bursik, K. (1991). Correlates of women's adjustment during the separation and divorce process. Journal of Divorce and Remarriage, 14(3-4), 137-162.

Byng-Hall, J. (1991). An appreciation of John Bowlby: His significance for family therapy. Journal of Family Therapy, 133, 5-16.

Cargan, L., & Whitehurst, R. N. (1991). Adjustment differences in the divorced and redivorced. Journal of Divorce, 14(2), 49-78.

Chodorow, N. (1978). The reproduction of mothering. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Clarke-Stewart, K. A., & Bailey, B. L. (1990). Adjusting to divorce: Why do men have it easier? Journal of Divorce, 13(2), 75-94.

Coysh, W. S., Johnston, J. J., Tschann, J. M., Wallerstein, J. S., & Kline, M. (1989). Parental postdivorce adjustment in joint and sole physical custody families. Journal of Family Issues, 10, 52-70.

Dasteel, J. C. (1982). Stress reactions to marital dissolution as experienced by adults attending courses on divorce. Journal of Divorce, 5, 37-47.

Diedrick, P. (1991). Gender differences in divorce adjustment. Journal of Divorce and Remarriage, 14, 33-45.

Dixon, R. B., & Weitzman, L. J. (1982). When husbands file for divorce. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 44, 103-115.

Duncan, G. J., & Hoffman, S. D. (1985). A reconsideration of the economic consequences of marital disruption. Demography, 22, 485-498.

Emery, R. E. (1988). Marriage, divorce, and children's adjustment. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Faust, R. G. (1987). A model of divorce adjustment for use in family service agencies. Social Work, 32(1), 78-80.

Fishel, A. H., & Scanzoni, J. (1989). An exploratory study of the post-divorce coparental relationship. Journal of Divorce, 13(2), 95-119.

Furstenburg, F. F., & Cherlin, A. J. (1991). Divided families: What happens to children when parents part. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Garfinkel, I., & McLanahan, S. S. (1986). Single mothers and their children: A new american dilemma. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.

Gold, J. H. (1988). Divorce as a developmental process. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press, Inc.

Goldsmith, J. (1981). Relationships between former spouses: Descriptive findings. Journal of Divorce, 4, 1-19.

Goode, W. (1956). After divorce. New York: Free Press.

Gray, J. D., & Silver, R. C. (1990). Opposite sides of the same coin: Former spouses' divergent perspectives in coping with their divorce. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 59(6), 1180-1191.

Hazan, C., & Shaver, P. (1987). Romantic love conceptualized as an attachment process. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 52(3), 511-524.

Hazen, C., & Shaver, P. (1992). Broken attachments: Relationship loss from the perspective of attachment theory. In T. L. Orbuch (Ed.), Close relationship loss: Theoretical approaches (pp. 90-108). New York: Springer-Verlag.

Heatherington, E. M., Cox, M., & Cox, R. (1978). Long-term effects of divorce and remarriage on the adjustment of children. Journal of the American Academy of Child Psychiatry, 24, 518-530.

Heatherington, E. M., Cox, M., & Cox, R. (1982). Effects of divorce on parents and children. In M. E. Lamb (Ed.), Nontraditional families: Parenting and child development (pp. 233-288). Hillsdale, N. J.: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Hill, C. T., Rubin, Z., & Peplau, L. A. (1976). Breakups before marriage: The end of 103 affairs. Journal of Social Issues, 32, 147-168.

Hobart, C. (1991). Relationships between the formerly married. Journal of Divorce and Remarriage, 14(2), 1-23.

Holloway, S. D., & Machida, S. (1991). Child-rearing effectiveness of divorce mothers: Relationship to coping strategies and social support. Journal of Divorce, 179-199.

Ilfeld, F., Ilfeld, H., & Alexander, J. (1982). Does joint custody work: A first look at outcome date of relitigation. American Journal of Psychiatry, 139, 62-66.

Jacobson, G. F. (1983). The multiple crises of marital separation and divorce. New York: Grune & Stratton, Inc.

Kirkpatrick, M. (1988). Some clinical perceptions of middle-aged divorcing women. In J. H. Gold (Ed.), Divorce as a development process (pp. 79-99). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press, Inc.

Kitson, G. C. (1982). Attachment to the spouse in divorce: A scale and its application. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 44, 379-393.

Kitson, G. C. (1992). Portrait of divorce: Adjustment to marital breakdown. New York: The Guilford Press.

Kitson, G. C., Babri, K. B., Roach, M. J., & Placidi, K. S. (1989). Adjustment to widowhood and divorce: A review. Journal of Family Issues, 10(1), 5-32.

Kitson, G. C., & Morgan, L. A. (1990). The multiple consequences of divorce: A decade review. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 52, 913-924.

Kitson, G. C., & Raschke, H. J. (1981). Divorce research: What we know, what we need to know. Journal of Divorce, 4, 1-37.

Kobak, R. R., & Hazen, C. (1991). Attachment in marriage: Effects of security and accuracy of working models. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 60(6), 861-869.

Kressel, K. (1985). The process of divorce: How professionals and couples negotiate settlements. New York: Basic Books.

Kressel, K., Lopez-Morillas, M., Weinglas, J., & Deutsch, M. (1978). Professional intervention in divorce: The views of lawyers, psychotherapists, and clergy. Journal of Divorce, 2, 119-155.

Kurdek, L. A., & Blisk, D. (1983). Dimensions and correlates of mothers' divorce experiences. Journal of Divorce, 6, 1-24.

Laird, J. (1989). Women and stories: Restorying women's self-constructions. In McGoldrick, Anderson, & Walsh (Eds.), Women in Families (pp. 427-450). New York, New York: W. W. Norton & Company.

Luepnitz, D. A. (1986). A comparison of maternal, paternal, and joint custody: Understanding the varieties of post-divorce family life. Jounral of Divorce, 9(3), 1-12.

Lund, K. L. (1990). A feminist perspective on divorce therapy for women. Journal of Divorce, 13(3), 57-67.

Masheter, C. (1990). Postdivorce relationships between exspouses: A literature review. Journal of Divorce & Remarriage, 14(1), 97-122.

Masheter, C. (1991). Postdivorce relationships between ex-spouses: The roles of attachment and interpersonal conflict. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 53, 103-110.

Nelson, G. (1981). Moderators of women's and children's adjustment following parental divorce. Journal of Divorce, 4(3), 71-83.

Norusis, M. J. (1985). SPSSX Advanced Statistics Guide. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Parkes, C. M. (1972). Bereavement. New York: International Universities Press.

Pledge, D. S. (1992). Marital separation/divorce: A review of individual responses to a major life stressor. Journal of Divorce & Remarriage, 17(3/4), 151-181.

Ponzetti, J. J., & Cate, R. M. (1987). The developmental course of conflict in the marital dissolution process. Journal of Divorce, 10, 1-15.

Rice, J. K. & Rice, D. G. (1986). Living through divorce: A developmental approach to divorce therapy. New York: Guilford Press.

Saris, & Stronkhorst, (1984). Causal modelling in nonexperimental research. Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Sociometric Research Foundation.

Serovich, J. M., Price, S. J., Chapman, S. F., & Wright, D. W. (1992). Attachment between former spouses: Impact on co-parental communication and parental involvement. Journal of Divorce & Remarriage, 17(3/4), 109-119.

Sev'er, A., & Pirie, M. (1991). Factors that enhance or curtail the social functioning of female single parents: A path analysis. Family and Conciliation Courts Review, 29(3), 318-337.

Shaver, P. R., Hazen, C., & Bradshaw, D. (1988). Love as attachment: The integration of three behavioral systems. In R. J. Sternberg & M. L. Barnes (Eds.), The psychology of love (pp. 68-99). New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Sirota, C. (1992). Divorcing women: Psychological, cultural, and clinical considerations. In A. Tieman, B. Danto, & S. V. Gullo (Eds.), Divorce Shock: Perspectives on counseling and therapy (pp. 68-84). Philadelphia, PA: Charles Press.

Smith, G. N. (1989). The subject matter jurisdiction of Virginia courts in divorce and equitable distribution proceedings. George Mason University Law Review, 11, 73-98.

Spanier, G., & Casto, R. (1979). Adjustment to separation and divorce: A qualitative analysis. In G. Levinger & O. C. Moles (Eds.), Divorce and separation (pp. 211-227). New York: Basic Books.

Spanier, G., & Thompson, L. (1984). Parting: The aftermath of separation and divorce. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Sroufe, L. A. (1989). Relationships, self and individual adaptation. In A. J. Sameroff and R. N. Emde (Eds.), Relationship disturbances in early childhood: A developmental approach (pp. 70-94). New York: Basic Books.

Stewart, J. R., Schwebel, A. I., & Fine, M. A. (1986). The impact of custodial arrangement on the adjustment of recently divorced fathers. Journal of Divorce, 9(3), 55-65.

Tabachnick, B., & Fidell, L. S. (1983). Using multivariate statistics. New York: Harper & Row.

Textor, M. R. (1989). The divorce transition. In M. Textor (Ed.), The divorce and divorce therapy handbook (pp. 3-43). Northvale, New Jersey: Jason Aaronson, Inc.

Thiriot, T. L., & Buckner, E. T. (1991). Multiple predictors of satisfactory post-divorce adjustment of single custodial parents. Journal of Divorce & Remarriage, 17(1/2), 27-48.

Thompson, L., & Spanier, G. B. (1983). The end of marriage and acceptance of marital termination. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 45, 103-113.

Toro, P. A. (1986). A comparison of natural and professional help. American Journal of Community Psychology, 14(2), 147-159.

Tschann, J. M., Johnston, J. R., & Wallerstein, J. S. (1989). Resources, stressors, and attachment as predictors of adult adjustment after divorce: A longitudinal study. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 51, 1033-1046.

Weiss, R. S. (1975). Marital separation. New York: Basic Books.

Weiss, R. S. (1982). Attachment in adult life. In C. M. Parkes & J. Stevenson-Hinde (Eds.), The place of attachment in human behavior (pp. 171-184). New York: Basic Books, Inc.

Weiss, R. S. (1991). The attachment bond in childhood and adulthood. In C. M. Parkes, J. Stevenson-Hinde, & P. Marris (Eds.), Attachment across the life cycle (pp. 66-76). New York: Routledge.

White, M. (1991). Deconstruction and therapy. Postmodernism, Deconstruction and Therapy, Dulwich Centre Newsletter, 3, 21-40.

White, M., & Epston, D. (1990). Narrative means to therapeutic ends. Adelaide, South Austrailia: Dulwich Centre Publication.

Wright, D. W., & Price, S. J. (1986). Court-ordered child support payment: The effect of the former spouse relationship on compliance. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 48, 869-874.

Zangari, M., & Gosling-Goldsmith, A. (1993). Feminist family therapy and the narrative approach: Dovetailing two frameworks for therapy. Unpublished Manuscript, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Blacksburg, Virginia.

APPENDIX A

CORRESPONDENCE

1~ 2~ 3~ 4~ 5~
6~
7~ 8~ 9~

Dear 1~ 4~:

Divorce is increasingly touching all of our lives--as parents, as children, and as husbands and wives. Research examining the impact of divorce on families is important in order to better help divorced parents and their children. More and more women find themselves heading single-parent households and raising children alone. It is estimated that approximately half of all children born during the 1970's and 1980's experience parental divorce--the majority during their early childhood years. For some divorced mothers, single parenting may be a stressful experience, while for others, "going it alone" may prove less stressful and more satisfying than expected. How well mothers cope with divorce is one of the key determinants of children's adjustment. Information pertaining to mothers' experience during and after the divorce process is essential in order to develop supportive laws, policies, and mental health programs for families experiencing divorce.

You have been chosen at random from the Roanoke or Montgomery County (or Roanoke City) court records to participate in a study about divorced mothers. In order that the results truly represent the experience of divorced mothers in Virginia, it is important that each questionnaire be completed and returned. You may be assured of complete confidentiality and anonymity. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only. This is so that we may check your name off of the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire.

The results of this study will be made available to other social scientists and interested citizens. You may receive a summary of results by writing "copy of results requested" on the back of the return envelope and printing your name and address below it. Please do not put this information on the questionnaire itself.

We would be glad to answer any questions you might have. Please feel free to write or call and leave a message. The telephone number is 703-231-4794. Thank you for your involvement in this project--your participation is greatly appreciated!

Sincerely yours,

Joyce A. Arditti, Ph.D.
Project Director

Debra Madden-Derdich, M.A.
Project Assistant

JAA/DMD/ndj

Just A Reminder...

We just wanted to write and remind you about the survey we sent you two weeks ago in relation to the Divorced Mothers Project. The survey is part of what we believe to be a very important research project regarding divorced mothers who have custody of their children. If you have already completed the questionnaire, please accept our sincere thanks. If you have not, we ask you to consider doing so at your earliest convenience. If you need another survey to be sent to you or if you have any questions regarding the research, please call Dr. Joyce Arditti, Project Director at 703-231-5758.

Again, we thank you for your participation.
Sincerely,

Joyce A. Arditti, Ph.D.
Project Director
Dept. of Family and Child Development
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & SU

Debra Madden-Derdich, M.A.
Project Assistant

Dear Participant:

Several weeks ago we sent you a survey in relation to the Divorced Mothers Project. We have not heard from you, but we wanted to take this final opportunity to invite you to participate in this very important study. More and more women find themselves heading single-parent households and raising children alone. Information pertaining to mothers' experiences during and after the divorce process is essential in order to develop supportive laws, policies, and mental health programs for families experiencing divorce.

You have been chosen at random from the Roanoke or Montgomery County (or Roanoke City) court records to participate in a study about divorced mothers. In order that the results truly represent the experience of divorced mothers in Virginia, it is important that each questionnaire be completed and returned. You may be assured complete confidentiality and anonymity.

You may receive a summary of results by writing "copy of results requested" on the back of the return envelope and printing your name and address below it. Please do not put this information on the questionnaire itself.

We would be glad to answer any questions you might have. Please feel free to write or call and leave a message. The telephone number is 703-231-4794. Thank you for your involvement in this project -- your participation is greatly appreciated!

Sincerely yours,

Joyce A. Arditti, Ph.D.
Project Director

Debra Madden-Derdich, M. A.
Project Assistant

QUESTIONNAIRE

Part I: Children

First, I would like to ask you some questions about you and your child(ren). (If you have children from more than one marriage, please answer according to your most recent divorce.)

1. How many children did you and your former spouse have in your marriage?

   _____
   Enter number.

2. Please tell me the sex and age of each of these children from the oldest to youngest.

	Sex (M/F)	Age (Yrs/Mos)
First child	_____	_____
Second child	_____	_____
Third child	_____	_____
Fourth child	_____	_____
Fifth child	_____	_____

3. Who has custody of your child(ren)?
   - _____ 1. I have custody of all children
   - _____ 2. My former spouse has custody of all children
   - _____ 3. Joint custody
   - _____ 4. Children are split
   - _____ 5. Neither has custody

4. Was custody decided by ...
   - _____ 1. Mutual agreement
   - _____ 2. The courts
   - _____ 3. Your child(ren)
   - _____ 4. Other (please specify): _____

5. a. How satisfied are you with the custody agreement? Are you ...

   1 2 3 4 5
   Very Satisfied Not at all Satisfied

   b. How satisfied do you think your former spouse is with the custody arrangement? Is he ...

   1 2 3 4 5
   Very Satisfied Not at all Satisfied

6. Which statement best describes the way you feel about having major responsibility for children?
   - _____ 1. I'm glad to have custody, it hasn't been a problem
   - _____ 2. I'm glad to have custody, but it's been a burden
   - _____ 3. I'm glad to have custody, but I'm not sure I can handle the responsibility
   - _____ 4. I'm not sure whether I'm happy about having custody or not
   - _____ 5. It's too much responsibility for me to handle right now
   - _____ 6. I think it would be better if my former spouse had custody

7. How often does your former spouse visit your child(ren)?
   - _____ 1. Daily
   - _____ 2. A few times each week
   - _____ 3. About once a week
   - _____ 4. A few times a month
   - _____ 5. About once a month
   - _____ 6. Less than once a month
   - _____ 7. Yearly
   - _____ 8. Never

8. While visiting, what is the approximate length of time your child(ren) spend with your former spouse during the school year (i.e. average duration of visits)?
   _____ 1. a few minutes
   _____ 2. 1 or 2 hours
   _____ 3. a whole day
   _____ 4. a weekend
   _____ 5. several days
   _____ 6. a week or more

9. Some mothers are closer to their child(ren) than others. Before the divorce, how close to your child(ren) do you think you were?

1	2	3	4	5
Very close				Not at all close

10. Since your divorce, how close are you to your child(ren)...

1	2	3	4	5
Very close				Not at all close

11. Since your divorce, do you think your former spouse's closeness to the child(ren) has ...
    _____ 1. Increased_____ 2. Stayed the same _____ 3. Decreased

12. Since your divorce, does your former spouse spend more, less, or the same amount of time with your child(ren)?
    _____ 1. More time _____ 2. The same amount _____ 3. Less time

13. During your marriage, how much of your free time did you spend with your child(ren). Did you spend...
    _____ 1. Most of it
    _____ 2. Some of it
    _____ 3. A little of it
    _____ 4. None of it

14. Would you like to spend more or less time with your child(ren)?
    _____ 1. More time _____ 2. The same amount _____ 3. Less time

15. Did you postpone the divorce because of your child(ren)?
    _____ 1. No _____ 2. Yes

16. How well would you say that visits go between your children and your former spouse?

1	2	3	4	5
Very well				Very Badly

17. Please rate any of the following problems you might have regarding visitation, indicating for each whether it is 1) a serious problem, 2) a slight problem, or 3) not a problem.
    _____ A. Transporting children to and from visits
    _____ B. Visits too short or infrequent
    _____ C. Father is late picking up or dropping off
    _____ D. Father cancels visits at short notice
    _____ E. Child(ren) don't want to go on visits
    _____ F. Child(ren) not cared for properly during visits
    _____ G. Child(ren) behave(s) badly upon return from visits
    _____ H. Visits create scheduling conflicts (for mother/children)
    _____ I. Other (please specify): _____

18. How involved is your former spouse in each of the following areas:
(1 = not at all, 5 = very much)

	Not at all				Very Much
	1	2	3	4	5
Disciplining the children	1	2	3	4	5
Celebrating significant events with the children	1	2	3	4	5
Attending school or church related functions	1	2	3	4	5
Taking the children for recreational activities	1	2	3	4	5
Discussing problems with the children that they might be having	1	2	3	4	5

19. What is the approximate number of miles between you and your former spouse?

_____
Enter number of miles

20. Please circle whether you strongly agree, agree, have mixed feelings, disagree, or strongly disagree about each of the following statements as they apply to a mother.

a. A mother should realize that her greatest rewards and satisfaction in life come through her children.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Mixed Feelings	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

b. A mother should work only if the family really needs the money.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Mixed Feelings	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

c. A working mother should give up her job whenever it makes a hardship for the children.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Mixed Feelings	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

d. A mother of preschool children should not work because it is not good for the child.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Mixed Feelings	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

e. Mothers should be able to work as many hours per week as fathers.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Mixed Feelings	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

21. In answering the following questions, please think about the child you are <u>most concerned about</u>:

Child's age _____(yrs/mos.)
Child's sex _____ (M/F)

The following questions ask you to mark an answer which best describes your feelings. Please mark the degree to which you agree or disagree with the following statements by circling the number which best matches how you feel. If you are not sure, please circle #3.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

22. My child is so active it exhausts me.
    1 2 3 4 5
23. My child wanders away much more than I expected.
    1 2 3 4 5
24. My child is much more active than I expected.
    1 2 3 4 5
25. My child squirms and kicks a great deal when being dressed or bathed
    1 2 3 4 5
26. My child rarely does things that make me feel good.
    1 2 3 4 5
27. Most times I feel that my child likes me and wants to be close to me.
    1 2 3 4 5
28. Sometimes I feel my child doesn't like me and doesn't want to be close to me.
    1 2 3 4 5
29. My child smiles at me much less than I expected.
    1 2 3 4 5
30. When I do things for my child, I get the feeling that my efforts are not appreciated.
    1 2 3 4 5

31. Which statement best describes your child?
    1. Almost always likes to play with me.
    2. Sometimes likes to play with me.
    3. Usually doesn't like to play with me.
    4. Almost never likes to play with me.

32. My child cries and fusses:
    1. Much less than I had expected.
    2. Less than I expected.
    3. About as much as I expected.
    4. Much more than I expected.
    5. It seems almost constant.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

33. My child seems to cry or fuss more often than most children.
    1 2 3 4 5
34. My child generally wakes up in a bad mood.
    1 2 3 4 5
35. I feel that my child is very moody and easily upset.
    1 2 3 4 5
36. My child doesn't seem to learn as quickly as most children.
    1 2 3 4 5
37. My child doesn't seem to smile as much as most children.
    1 2 3 4 5
38. My child is not able to do as much as I expected.
    1 2 3 4 5
39. My child reacts very strongly when something happens that he/she doesn't like.
    1 2 3 4 5

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

40. Leaving my child with a babysitter is usually a problem.
    1 2 3 4 5
41. My child gets upset easily over the smallest thing.
    1 2 3 4 5
42. My child easily notices and overreacts to loud sounds and bright lights.
    1 2 3 4 5
43. My child usually avoids a new toy for a while before beginning to play with it.
    1 2 3 4 5
44. It takes a long time and it is very hard for my child to get used to new things.
    1 2 3 4 5
45. My child doesn't seem comfortable when meeting strangers.
    1 2 3 4 5

46. Think carefully and count the number of things which your child does that bother you. For ex.: dawdles, doesn't listen, overactive, cries, interrupts, fights, whines, etc. Please circle the answer which indicates the number of things you counted.
    1) 1-3 2) 4-5 3) 6-7 4) 8-9 5) 10+

47. There are some things my child does that really bother me a lot.
    1 2 3 4 5
48. My child seems to be much harder to care for than most.
    1 2 3 4 5
49. My child is always hanging on me.
    1 2 3 4 5
50. My child makes more demands on me than most children.
    1 2 3 4 5
51. I have had more problems raising children than I expected.
    1 2 3 4 5
52. I often have feelings that I can't handle things very well.
    1 2 3 4 5

53. When I think about myself as a parent I believe:
    1. I can handle anything that happens.
    2. I can handle most things pretty well.
    3. Sometimes I have doubts, but I can handle most things without too much problem.
    4. I have some doubts about being able to handle things.
    5. I don't think I handle things very well at all.

54. I feel that I am:
    1. A very good parent
    2. A better than average parent
    3. An average parent
    4. A person who has some trouble being a parent
    5. Not very good at being a parent

55. What were the highest levels of school or college completed?
    a. For you:
    1. 1-8th 2. 9-12th 3. Vocational or some college
    4. College graduate 5. Graduate or professional school

    b. For your child's father:
    1. 1-8th 2. 9-12th 3. Vocational or some college
    4. College graduate 5. Graduate or professional school

56. How easy is it for you to understand your child's wants and needs.
    1. Very easy
    2. Easy
    3. Somewhat difficult
    4. Very hard
    5. I usually can't figure out what the problem is.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

57. It takes a long time for parents to develop close, warm feelings for their children.
    1 2 3 4 5
58. I expected to have closer and warmer feelings for my child than I do and this bothers me.
    1 2 3 4 5
59. Sometimes my child does things that bother me just to be mean.
    1 2 3 4 5
60. The number of children that I have now is too many.
    1 2 3 4 5
61. Most of my life is spent doing things for my child.
    1 2 3 4 5
62. I find myself giving up more of my life to meet my children's needs than I expected.
    1 2 3 4 5
63. I feel trapped by my responsibilities as a parent.
    1 2 3 4 5
64. I often feel my children's needs control my life.
    1 2 3 4 5
65. Since having this child, I have been unable to do new and different things.
    1 2 3 4 5
66. Since having children, I feel that I am almost never able to do things I like to do.
    1 2 3 4 5
67. It is hard to find a place in our home where I can be by myself.
    1 2 3 4 5
68. When my child misbehaves or fusses too much, I feel responsible, as if I didn't do something right.
    1 2 3 4 5
69. I feel every time my child does something wrong, it's my fault.
    1 2 3 4 5
70. I felt sadder and more depressed than I expected after leaving the hospital with my baby.
    1 2 3 4 5
71. After my child had been home from the hospital about a month, I noticed that I was feeling more sad & depressed than I had expected.
    1 2 3 4 5
72. When I had my child, my former spouse did not give me as much help and support as I expected.
    1 2 3 4 5
73. Having a child caused more problems than I expected in my relationship with my former spouse.
    1 2 3 4 5
74. When I had my child, my former spouse and I did not do as many things together as we had before.
    1 2 3 4 5
75. After I had my child, my former spouse and I did not spend as much time together as a family as I had expected.
    1 2 3 4 5
76. I feel alone and without friends.
    1 2 3 4 5
77. When I go to a party, I usually expect not to enjoy myself.
    1 2 3 4 5
78. I am not as interested in people as I used to be.
    1 2 3 4 5

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Agree	Agree	Not Sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

79. I often have the feeling that others my own age don't particularly like my company.
    1 2 3 4 5
80. Since having children, I have a lot fewer chances to see my friends or make new friends.
    1 2 3 4 5
81. During the past six months, I have been sicker than usual.
    1 2 3 4 5
82. Physically, I feel good most of the time.
    1 2 3 4 5
83. I don't enjoy things as I used to.
    1 2 3 4 5

84. Since I've had my child:
    1. I have been sick a great deal
    2. I haven't felt as good
    3. I haven't noticed any change in my health
    4. I have been healthier

1	2	3	4	5
Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor

85. Rate the quality of your relationship with:

a. your daughter	1	2	3	4	5
b. your son	1	2	3	4	5
c. your mother	1	2	3	4	5
d. your father	1	2	3	4	5

Part II: Circumstances Surrounding Your Divorce

I would like to ask you some questions now concerning some of the circumstances surrounding your (most recent) divorce.

86. How long ago was your divorce acutally granted?

    _____
    Enter number of months

87. Who wanted the divorce first?
    _____ 1. I did _____ 2. My former spouse did ____ 3. Mutual

88. Who actually filed for divorce?
    _____ 1. I did _____ 2. My former spouse did

89. Did you or your spouse contest the divorce?
    _____ 1. I contested _____ 2. My former spouse contested _____ 3. Neither

90. Did you hire or consult a lawyer? (If you answered no, please go to question #93.)
    _____ 1. Yes _____ 2. No

91. How satisfied were you with the job your lawyer did concerning legal matters?
    1 2 3 4 5
    Satisfied Not at all satisfied

92. Would you say that dealings with lawyers made your relationship with your former spouse ...
_____ 1. Better _____ 2. Had no effect _____ 3. Worse

93. If you had to assign blame for the breakup of your marriage, whom would you blame?
_____ 1. My former spouse _____2. Both _____3. Myself _____ 4. Neither or noone
_____ 5. Other person (please specify) _____ _____ 6. Don't know

94. How would you describe your divorce? Using the scale below, please indicate whether you think it was "Very Hostile" or "Not at all Hostile."

1	2	3	4	5
Very Hostile				Not at all Hostile

Part III: Relationship with Former Spouse

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about your relationship with your former spouse.

95. Please pick the choice which best describes your feelings toward your former spouse.
_____ 1. I still love him.
_____ 2. I still like him, but I don't love him.
_____ 3. I don't feel much of anything for him.
_____ 4. I dislike him.
_____ 5. I hate him.
_____ 6. I both love and hate him.

96. For each of the following statements, I'd like to know in what way it expresses your feelings about the divorce now. Pick the choice which best reflects your feelings.

	Not at all	Slightly	Somewhat	Very Much
I find myself spending a lot of time thinking about my former spouse.	1	2	3	4
I spend a lot of time wondering what my former spouse is doing.	1	2	3	4
Sometimes I just can't believe that we got a divorce.	1	2	3	4
I feel I will <u>never</u> get over the divorce.	1	2	3	4

97. When you talk to your former spouse, do you usually ...

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Discuss major decisions regarding the children's lives.	5	4	3	2	1
Discuss daily decisions regarding children's lives.	5	4	3	2	1
When you and your former spouse discuss parenting issues, how often does an argument result?	5	4	3	2	1
How often is the underlying atmosphere one of hostility and anger?	5	4	3	2	1
How often is the conversation stressful and tense?	5	4	3	2	1

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Do you and your former spouse have basic differences of opinion about issues related to childrearing?	5	4	3	2	1
When you need help regarding the children, do you seek it from your former spouse?	5	4	3	2	1
Would you say that your former spouse is a resource to you in raising the children?	5	4	3	2	1
Would you say that you are a resource to your former spouse in raising the children?	5	4	3	2	1
If your former spouse has needed to make a change in visiting arrangements, do you go out of your way to accommodate?	5	4	3	2	1
Does your former spouse go out of the way to accommodate any changes you need to make?	5	4	3	2	1
Do you feel that your former spouse understands and is supportive of your special needs as a parent (custodial or noncustodial)?	5	4	3	2	1

97. How often do you see your former spouse?
____ 1. Daily ____ 2. Weekly ____3. Monthly
____4. Yearly ____ 5. Less than yearly

98. Do you ever make an effort to avoid seeing your former spouse?
____ 1. No ____ 2. Yes

99. How would you describe the quality of the relationship you currently have with your former spouse? Woud you say that it is ...

1	2	3	4	5
Very Good		So-So		Very Bad

Part IV: Economics

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about your economic situation.

100. Choose the letter that corresponds to your average yearly income before taxes.
_____ A. Less than $5,000
_____ B. $5,000 to $9,999
_____ C. $10,000 to $14,999
_____ D. $15,000 to $19,999
_____ E. $20,000 to $24,999
_____ F. $25,000 to $29,999
_____ G. $30,000 to $39,999
_____ H. $40,000 to $49,999
_____ I. $50,000 and above

101. Please choose the letter that best reflects the combined yearly income of you and your former spouse one month before the divorce.
_____ A. Less than $5,000
_____ B. $5,000 to $9,999
_____ C. $10,000 to $14,999
_____ D. $15,000 to $19,999
_____ E. $20,000 to $24,999
_____ F. $25,000 to $29,999
_____ G. $30,000 to $39,999
_____ H. $40,000 to $49,999
_____ I. $50,000 and above

102. At the time of your divorce, were you awarded child support or spouse support?
_____ 1. Child support
_____ 2. Spouse support
_____ 3. Both child support and spouse support
_____ 4. I was not awarded any financial support

103. Do you receive any child support or spouse support?
_____ 1. Child support
_____ 2. Spouse support
_____ 3. Both child support and spouse support
_____ 4. I was not awarded any financial support

104. How much support do you receive per month? _____ (Enter $ amount)

105. How much support did you receive last year? _____ (Enter $ amount)

106. Please indicate how satisfied you are with this amount of support.

1	2	3	4	5
Very Satisfied				Not at all Satisfied

107. How regularly have child support payments been received?
_____ 1. Never
_____ 2. Fairly Irregularly
_____ 3. Fairly Regularly
_____ 4. Always on Time

108. Would you say that your former spouse's current monthly expenses are ...
_____ 1. Greater than yours
_____ 2. The same as yours
_____ 3. Less than yours
_____ 4. Don't know

109. Was there a legally arranged property settlement? (If you answered no, please go to Question # 111).
_____ 1. No _____ 2. Yes

110. How satisfied are you with the legally arranged division of property?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Satisfied				Not at all Satisfied

111. Since your divorce, would you say that financially you are much better off, somewhat better off, about the same, somewhat worse off, or much worse off?

1	2	3	4	5
Much Better	Somewhat Better	About the Same	Somewhat Worse	Much Worse

112. How about your former spouses financial status since the divorce? Would you say that it is ...

1	2	3	4	5
Much Better	Somewhat Better	About the Same	Somewhat Worse	Much Worse

113. Please indicate how much financial strain you felt during your marriage.

1	2	3	4	5
A lot of strain				No strain at all

114. How much financial strain do you feel now?

1	2	3	4	5
A lot of strain				No strain at all

Part V: Background Information
Finally, I would like to ask you some background questions about you and your former spouse.

115. What is your age? _____

116. What is the age of your former spouse? _____

117. How long were you and your former spouse married? _____

118. What is your race?
_____ 1. Black
_____ 2. Hispanic
_____ 3. Asian
_____ 4. Native American
_____ 5. White
_____ 6. Other (please specify) _____

119. Would you say that you are ...
_____ 1. Very religious
_____ 2. Somewhat religious
_____ 3. Slightly religious
_____ 4. Not at all religious

120. How many times, if any, were you divorced _____ or widowed_____ (Enter number) before this marriage?

121. Are you currently remarried?

_____ 1. No _____ 2. Yes (If yes, how long have you been remarried? _____(Mos)

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation! Your contribution to this study is greatly appreciated. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experiences as a divorced mother?

APPENDIX B

VARIABLE, QUESTIONS, & CODING

Variables in the model, survey questions from which the variables were derived, and the coding of those variables.

Variable	Question	Coding
HOSTILITY	How would you describe your divorce?	1 = Very Hostile to 5 = Not at all Hostile
CUSTODY ARRANGEMENT	Who has custody of your child(ren)?	1 = I have custody of all children
		2 = My former spouse has custody of children
		3 = Joint custody: legal ____ physical _____
		4 = Children are split
		5 = Neither has custody
WHO WANTED THE DIVORCE	Who wanted the divorce first?	1 = I did; 2 = Mutual; 3 = My former spouse did
MONTHS MARRIED	How long were you and your former spouse married?	Yrs. _____ Mos. _____
SATISFACTION W/ SUPPORT	Please indicate how satisfied you are with this amount of support.	1 = Very Satisfied; 5 = Not at all Satisfied
CONFLICT *	When you and your former spouse discuss parenting issues, how often does an argument result?	1 = Never; 5 = Always
	How often is the underlying atmosphere one of hostility and anger?	1 = Never; 5 = Always
	How often is the conversation stressful and tense?	1 = Never; 5 = Always
	Do you and your former spouse have basic differences of opinion about issues related to childrearing?	1 = Never; 5 = Always
ATTACHMENT **	I find myself spending a lot of time thinking about my former spouse.	1 = Not at all; 4 = Very Much
	I spend a lot of time wondering what my former spouse is doing.	1 = Not at all; 4 = Very Much
	Sometimes I just can't believe that we got a divorce.	1 = Not at all; 4 = Very Much
	I feel I will never get over the divorce.	1 = Not at all; 4 = Very Much

Variables in the model, survey questions from which the variables were derived, and the coding of those variables (Continued)

Variable	Question	Coding
COPARENTAL RELATIONSHIP *		
SUPPORT	When you need help regarding the children, do you seek it from your former spouse?	1 = Never; 5 = Always
	Would you say that your former spouse is a resource to you in raising the chilren?	1 = Never; 5 = Always
	Would you say that you are a resource to your former spouse in raising the children?	1 = Never; 5 = Always
	If your former spouse has needed to make a change in visiting arrangements, do you go out of your way to accommodate?	1 = Never; 5 = Always
	Does your former spouse go out of the way to accommodate any changes you need to make?	1 = Never; 5 = Always
	Do you feel that your former spouse understands and is supportive of your special needs as a parent?	1 = Never; 5 = Always
COPARENTING	Discuss major decisions regarding the children's lives.	1 = Never; 5 = Always
	Discuss daily decisions regarding children's lives.	1 = Never; 5 = Always
RELATIONSHIP QUALITY	How would you describe the quality of the relationship you currently have with your former spouse? Would you say it is...	1 = Very Good; 3 = So-So; 5 = Very Bad

Variables in the model, survey questions from which the variables were derived, and the coding of those variables (Continued).

Variable	Question	Coding
PARENTAL DIFFICULTY ***	I have had more problems raising children than I expected.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	I often have feelings that I can't handle things very well.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	When I think about myself as a parent I believe:	1 = I can handle anything that happens. 2 = I can handle most things pretty well. 3 = Sometimes I have doubts, but I can handle most things without too much problem. 4 = I have some doubts about being able to handle things. 5 = I don't think I handle things very well at all.
	I feel that I am:	1 = A very good parent 2 = A better than average parent 3 = An average parent 4 = A person who has some trouble being a parent 5 = Not very good at being a parent
	How easy is it for you to understand your child's wants and needs.	1 = Very easy 2 = Easy 3 = Somewhat difficult 4 = Very hard 5 = I usually can't figure out what the problem is.
	It takes a long time for parents to develop close, warm feelings for their children.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree

Variables in the model, survey questions from which the variables were derived, and the coding of those variables (Continued).

Variable	Question	Coding
PARENTAL DIFFICULTY (Continued)	I expected to have closer, waremer feelings for my child than I do and this bothers me.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	Sometimes my child does things that bother me just to be mean.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	The number of children that I have now is too many.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	Most of my life is spent doing things for my child.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	I find myself giving up more of my life to meet my children's needs than I expected.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	I feel trapped by my responsibilities as a parent.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	I often feel my children's needs control my life.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	Since having this child, I have been unable to do new and different things.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	Since having children, I feel that I am almost never able to do things I like to do.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	It is hard to find a place in our home where I can be by myself.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	When my child misbehaves or fusses too much, I feel responsible, as if I didn't do something right.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	I feel every time my child does something wrong, it's my fault.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	I felt sadder and more depressed than I expected after leaving the hospital with my baby.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	After my child had been home from the hospital about a month, I noticed that I was feeling more sad & depressed than I had expected.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree

Variables in the model, survey questions from which the variables were derived, and the coding of those variables (Continued).

Variable	Question	Coding
PARENTAL DIFFICULTY	When I had my child, my former spouse did not give me as much help and support as I expected.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	Having a child caused more problems than I expected in my relationship with my former spouse.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	When I had my child, my former spouse and I did not do as many things together as we had before.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	After I had my child, my former spouse and I did not spend as much time together as a family as I had expected.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	I feel alone and without friends.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	When I go to a party, I usually expect not to enjoy myself.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	I am not as interested in people as I used to be.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	I often have the feeling that others my own age don't particularly like my company.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	Since having children, I have a lot fewer chances to see my friends or make new friends.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	During the past six months, I have been sicker than usual.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	Physically, I feel good most of the time.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	I don't enjoy things as I used to.	1 = Strongly Agree; 5 = Strongly Disagree
	Since I've had my child:	1 = I have been sick a greate deal.
		2 = I haven't felt as good.
		3 = I haven't noticed any change in my health.
		4 = I have been healthier.

* Reprinted with permission from the American Journal of Orthopsychiatry. Copyright 1981 by American Orthopsychiatric Association, Inc.

** Reprinted with permission from the Journal of Marriage and the Family. Copyright 1982 by National Council on Family Relations.

***Reprinted with permission from the Pediatric Psychology Press. Copyright 1986.

DEBRA ANN MADDEN-DERDICH
Route 2, Box 181
Willis, Virginia 24380
(703) 789-4147

EDUCATION:

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE & STATE UNIVERSITY
Blacksburg, Virginia
Doctoral Candidate
Marriage and Family Therapy
GPA: 3.98
Expected graduation date: May 1994
Dissertation: The Ties that Bind: Relationship Attachment Between Former Spouses

HOLLINS COLLEGE
Roanoke, Virginia
Master of Arts, December 1990
Experimental Psychology
GPA: 3.81

WASHINGTON & JEFFERSON COLLEGE
Washington, Pennsylvania
Bachelor of Arts, May 1987
Psychology
GPA: 3.35

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

LEWIS-GALE PSYCHIATRIC CENTER
(October, 1993 to Present)
Salem, Virginia
Family Therapy Intern for Alcohol & Drug Treatment Program
Responsibilities:
Conduct individual, couple, and family sessions with an inpatient population. Lead groups concerning family issues. Participate in team meetings once a week for each client.

OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF HUMAN RESOURCES - VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE & SU
(August 1991 to May 1992; August 1992 to May 1993)
Blacksburg, Virginia
Graduate Assistantship in Development
Responsibilities:
Organized College of Human Resources career fair which required recruiting participants, interviewing and selecting a chairperson, supervising undergraduate committees, and making presentations regarding progress to the board of directors. Researched and wrote articles for the College newsletter.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE: Continued

DIVORCED MOTHERS PROJECT - VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE & SU (May 1992 to Present)
Blacksburg, Virginia
Project Assistant
Responsibilities:
Assisted in the development of the survey instrument. Collected, managed, coded, and analyzed the resultant data. Conducted library research. Supervised undergraduate assistant in activities involving data management, data coding, and follow-up with participants.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES - VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE & SU (August 1992 to May 1993)
Blacksburg, Virginia
Graduate Assistant
Responsibilities:
Continually updated computerized records concerning the status of the undergraduate students in the Department of Family and Child Development. Conducted library research. Acted as a substitute teacher in the Child Development Lab. Organized undergraduate practicum schedules and acted as a liaison to practicum sites.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF THE MARRIAGE & FAMILY THERAPY PROGRAM - VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE & SU (May 1992 to August 1992)
Blacksburg, Virginia
Graduate Research Assistant
Responsibilities:
Assisted with the preparation for the accreditation site team visit. Conducted library research on the topic of supervision.

NONCUSTODIAL MOTHERS RESEARCH PROJECT VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE & SU (September 1991 to May 1992)
Blacksburg, Virginia
Project Assistant
Responsibilities:
Conducted interviews with noncustodial mothers. Conducted library research. Managed, coded, and analyzed resultant data.

HOLLINS COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH INSTITUTE (May 1988 to August 1991)
Roanoke, Virginia
Staff Psychologist & Researcher
Responsibilities:
Administration of the Precision Fluency Shaping Program, a behavioral therapy program for stutterers. Designing and conducting research in the area of stuttered speech. Instruction of therapy material to small classes (10-18 persons). Preparation and presentation of seminars to groups of approximately 150-200 persons.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE: Continued

WASHINGTON & JEFFERSON COLLEGE (1986-87)
Washington, Pennsylvania
Peer Counselor
Responsibilities:
Conducted counseling sessions with college students concerning academic and personal matters.

WASHINGTON COUNSELING CENTER (1985-1987)
Washington, Pennsylvania
Office Manager
Responsibilities:
Organization of office activities and client scheduling.
Administration and scoring of psychological inventories and tests.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University
Visiting Instructor
Human Sexuality - FCD 3314
Summer II, 1993

Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University
Visiting Instructor
Human Sexuality - FCD 3314
Fall, 1993

RESEARCH:

Project Assistant - Divorced Mothers Project - VPI & SU (Spring 1992 - Present)

The Gender Project - A qualitative study of student and faculty experiences in relation to the integration of gender issues into marriage and family therapy courses - VPI & SU (Summer 1992 - Present)

Project Assistant - Noncustodial Mothers Research Project - VPI&SU (1991 - 1992)

The Effects of Vocal Feedback on Disfluency Rates and Voice Onset Abruptness in Stutterers (Master's Thesis)

The Effects of Speech Feedback on the Disfluency Rates of Stutterers (1987)

The Effects of Vocal Feedback on the Disfluency Rates of Stutterers (1987)

A Compilation of Case Studies of Women Suffering From Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia (1987)

PUBLISHED ARTICLES:

Arditti, J. A., & Madden-Derdich, D. A. (1993). Noncustodial mothers: Developing strategies of support. Family Relations, 42(3), 305-314.

Sporakowski, M., McKeel, J., & Madden-Derdich, D. A. (1993). Attributions related to wife abuse: A comparison of the perceptions of volunteer advocate-counselors and marriage and family therapists. Contemporary Family Therapy, in press.

PRESENTATIONS:
(National Level)

Madden-Derdich, D. A. Relationship attachment with former spouses: Therapeutic implications for divorced mothers. (Poster session) National Conference on Family Relations, Baltimore, MD. November, 1993.

Arditti, J. A., & Madden-Derdich, D. A. Mommy doesn't live here anymore: A feminist perspective of divorced mothers' decision to relinquish custody. (Paper session) National Conference on Family Relations, Baltimore, MD. November, 1993.

Sporakowski, M. J., Madden-Derdich, D. A., & McKeel, A. J. Attributions of blame in wife abuse situations: A comparison of the perceptions of shelter advocate-counselors and marriage and family therapists. (Paper session) National Conference on Family Relations, Baltimore, MD. November, 1993.

PRESENTATIONS:
(State & Regional Level)

Madden-Derdich, D. A., West, C., Moore, D., & Batzel, D. Narratives of graduate students in a doctoral program in marriage and family therapy: A qualitative pilot study. Southeastern Symposium, Blacksburg, VA. April, 1992.

HONORS:

- College of Human Resources Tuition Scholarship - Spring '93
- Dept. of Family & Child Development Tuition Scholarship - Spring '92
- College of Human Resources Faculty Scholarship Recipient (1992)
- Research Fellowship - Hollins College, 1987-1988
- Recipient of F. J. McGuigan Award for Outstanding Graduate Work - Hollins College (1988)
- Psi Chi Honor Society - Member

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

American Association of Marriage & Family Therapy - student member
Virginia Association of Marriage & Family Therapy - student member
National Council on Family Relations - student member
Southeastern Council on Family Relations - student member
American Psychological Association - student member

CONFERENCES ATTENDED:

American Association of Marriage & Family Therapy
(1991 - Dallas, Texas; 1992 - Miami, Florida)
Virginia Association of Marriage & Family Therapy
(1991 - Roanoke, VA)
Family Therapy Networker Symposium (1992 - Washington, DC)
National Conference on Family Relations (1993 - Baltimore, MD)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: ACTIVITIES:

Advances in Treating Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Empowering the Healing Process II. Presented by The Institute for Advanced Clinical Training, Inc. Washington, DC. November, 1993.

"Training the future professoriate" - Graduate Teaching Assistant Workshop. Sponsored by the Virginia Tech Graduate School, Blacksburg, VA. September, 1992.

Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (Presented by Scott Miller) Sponsored by Lewis-Gale Hospital, Salem, VA. February, 1992.

Debra Madden-Derdich