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ABSTRACT

In order for any curriculum dealing with the home and family to be successful in the classroom, it is necessary for teachers to accommodate themselves to the requirements of various cultural, ethnic, and religious groups and to become aware of the differences in traditions and situations within all groups. In light of this philosophy, the development of the Social Learning Curriculum for the educable mentally retarded was approached by drawing upon the knowledge of a sociologist. The purpose of this paper is to acquaint teachers with the types, numbers, customs, and patterns of families found in America, providing a basic orientation to the family situations which influence children. The first and lengthiest section of this literature and research review concerns the social factors in the family life and exceptional children. Factors discussed include the extent and identification of retardation, family reaction to the retarded child, effects of family attitudes and reactions, extended family contacts and sibling relationships, and community reactions. Other sections elaborate the topics of the family as process and community; the family and social class, economy, social role, socialization process, and education; and alternative family structures and processes. Related documents are ED 084 658, SO 006 684-686 and 688. (Author/KSM)

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HOME AND FAMILY IN SOCIETY

Thomas Simpson

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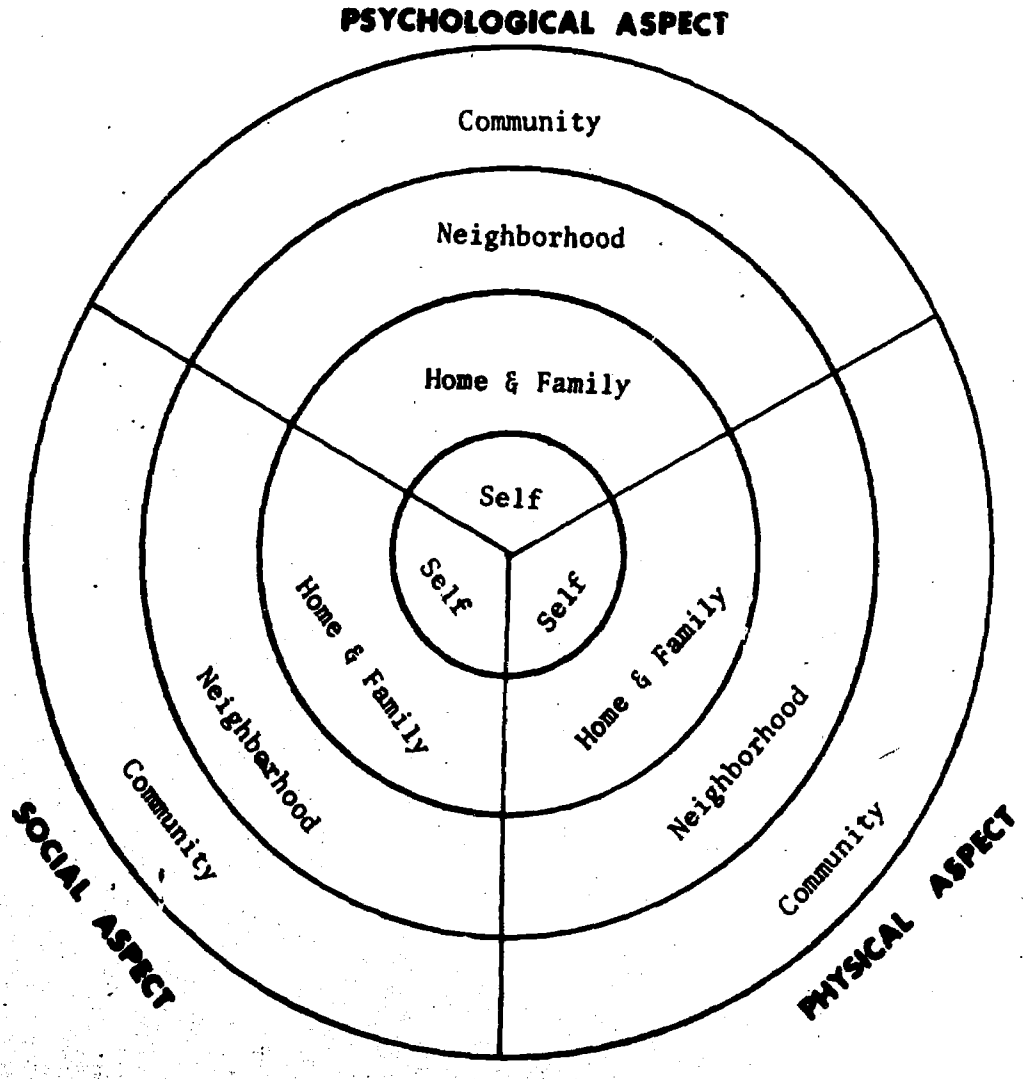

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Preface	
I	The Exceptional Child in the Family	1
II	The Family as Process and Community	29
III	The Family and Social Class	37
IV	The Family and Ethnic Experience	48
V	The Family and the Economy	60
VI	The Family and Social Role	71
VII	The Family and Socialization Processes	76
VIII	The Family and Education	86
IX	Alternative Family Structures and Processes	92
	Bibliography	98

PREFACE

Historically, educators have been held responsible for not only the methodology of teaching, but the content as well. Recent deviations from this approach, notably new math, science and social studies curriculums, have demonstrated the value of having members of the various disciplines determine the content, and letting the educators determine how that content should be taught. The success of these programs is due to the expertise of the mathematicians and scientists who contributed to the conceptualization of the curricular content.

James Gallagher suggested that a similar approach may be called for in developing curriculum for the retarded. He reasoned that curriculum construction is so vast and complex that the expertise of specialists from various disciplines must be incorporated to produce a sound document. It is with these thoughts in mind that the Curriculum Center was formed. Indeed, the initial theoretical framework, concept development, and research orientation were the result of interdisciplinary action.

Along with this philosophy, it seemed important, when approaching the teaching of the Home and Family level, to draw upon the knowledge of a sociologist familiar with different types of home and family situations. We felt that where various family makeups may have sociological implications for education, teachers should be given the opportunity to become familiar with them. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to acquaint teachers with the types, numbers, customs and patterns of families found in America.

Children come into the classroom with vastly differing backgrounds. Because of their varied experiences, training, models, care and upbringing, they are or are not able to benefit from what the school has to offer in varying degrees. The educational system as well as the family has its customs, rules and expectations. In some cases, these may conflict with those of the home and family from which a child comes.

In order for any curriculum dealing with the home and family to be successful in the classroom, it is necessary for teachers to accomodate themselves to the requirements of various cultural, ethnic and religious groups. This can only be done if teachers are aware of the differences in traditions and situations within all groups. The *Home and Family in Society* is designated to provide a basic orientation to the family situations which influence children.

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THE EXCEPTIONAL CHILD IN THE FAMILY

Social Factors in the Family Life of Exceptional Children

There is a great deal of support for the importance of social factors outside the immediate family structure and psychological makeup in discussing the career of the exceptional child in family life. Both in the general sociological literature and in the literature focused on the exceptional child, the evidence indicates the strong societal influences.

For example, Farber (1960) has isolated one crucial social variable (or influence) as being that of socioeconomic class. (See Part 3 for a more extensive discussion.) He believes that the higher the socioeconomic class of the family the greater the impact on family relationships of the labeling of a child as mentally retarded. This is explained, as a class factor, by the fact that this label is in great conflict with the many other labels of a more positive nature generally ascribed by society to the upper class. In a class situation where great value is given to accomplishment and maintenance of social position, a mentally retarded child is perceived as a direct threat to this position and occasions strong emotional impact on family life. Farber notes that the label of <u>educable</u> mentally retarded does not have such a profound effect, but it is unquestionably an effect nonetheless.

This notion could be placed in the larger theoretical framework of Merton (1957) who tried to explain deviance in the following terms. Very simply stated, Merton believes that when the culture places high value on success, the social structure restricts access to approved channels for reaching these

goals for large parts of the population, giving rise to various manifestations of social deviance. This may be directly applied to the case of the upper-class family with a retarded child and is actually the theoretical support for Farber's observations.

If the family under consideration, for whatever reason but particularly for reasons of socioeconomic class, places great value on attainment and social "merit," the family reaction to a retarded child is apt to be very strong.

Continuing with Farber's discussion, in the lower socioeconomic echelons this label is not so different from other labels ascribed to the family by society. Therefore, the label itself is not apt to be a crisis-provoking agent. A good example of this is the lower-class family of certain minority groups wherein the phrase "born to fail" describes the general psychological atmosphere.

Based on some of the work of Farber (which is anchored in sound social theory), we can anticipate that lower- and upper-class parents of retarded children will be confronted with different sets of problems. Additionally, we can predict that they will have different means available to them for coping with the problems. The upper-class family will be more concerned with the social aspect of their family life and the frustration of traditional upper-class goals and lifestyles. The lower-class family will be more concerned with immediate, practical, day-to-day problems such as maintaining domestic roles, coping with the child (and siblings whether retarded or not), and maintaining family needs.

We may extrapolate from this that the programs of action will differ in character as well. It is likely that the upper-class family will, in response to the problem, plan a long-range and sustained program of correction or coping; they will probably do so in connection with other social agents, such as specialized schools and training programs. The lower-class family, on the other hand, will not have either this tradition of action or the means to enact such a program. The response will doubtless be more pragmatic and piecemeal.

We have said nothing thus far about middle-class responses to the problem. Once again, Merton is helpful here. Especially in the lower-middle-class family "parents typically exert continuous pressure upon children to abide by the moral mandates of the society." We may safely add to "moral mandates" educational ones as part and parcel of the same goal syndrome. Middle-class families are quite possibly more adversely effected by mentally retarded children than either upper or lower, especially because they have the worst of two problems: strong goal motivation and more limited means of attaining such goals.

Another example of varying kinds of social reaction and action among families with retarded children is provided by Kennedy (1948). Here we have evidence of social factors aside from socioeconomic class, such as race, education, extended social interaction with outside agencies (extended family or social agencies), family stability, and integration of the family. It was discovered that educable retarded children who greatly progressed and increased their IQ did so in relation to the following factors: 1) Caucasian rather than black; 2) the mothers had more than eight years of education; 3) the mothers interacted to a higher degree with neighbors and friends; 4) the parents tended to have a higher degree of marital integration as reflected by concensus of family values; and 5) the parents were more often in their first marriage.

Culver (1967) discerned that the presence of a retarded child in a family could have considerable effect on the upward class mobility of that family. The effect was generally a depressing one, and it seemed to be stronger when the child was born early in the marriage.

In these few examples of studies of families with retarded children, the effect of extra-family, social factors serve to warn us of the dangers of looking at isolated family situations without considering factors such as social class, race, and ethnic background. We will discover many other social

factors serve to warn us of the dangers of looking at isolated family situations without considering factors such as social class, race, and ethnic background. We will discover many other social factors that come into play such as religion, the economy, the socialization process, and certainly educational and other official and quasi-official agencies.

The Extent and Identification of Retardation: Some Promises and Problems in the Use of Statistical Data

In trying to get at the extent of retardation and how it is variously identified, we shall attempt to make use of and sense from the statistical evidence we find. However, it must be emphasized that these statistics are about as useless and incomplete as those on crime and delinquency. Whenever behavior is either illegal or has stigma attached (and we shall see that the presence of a retarded child does stigmatize a family), statistical data is likely to be misleading and incomplete. There is also the problem of considerable local variation in reporting systems; there is no uniformity in the kinds of questions asked about retardation from one locale to another. Certainly the interpretations placed on statistical information about the retarded child in the family are varied; they are varied quite often in connection with vested interests. As an example of this last point: more retarded children are apt to be reported, discovered, labeled as such in a locale where there is social pressure for a special school for exceptional children. One is reminded of the old commonsensical saying: "Figures don't lie, but liars figure."

Kershner (1970) compared a sample of institutionalized children and children who remained in the community and family. The chief items studied were IQ and SQ. Briefly reported, his findings indicated that IQ increased in those children institutionalized while SQ remained static or somewhat deteriorized. The opposite was obtained in the community-family sample: the SQ increased

faster than the IQ or remained stable while the IQ diminished. This study further examined the influence on family functioning of the decision to institutionalize or not. The decrease in IQ among the noninstitutionalized group seemed to be explained by the continued tension within the family occasioned by the presence of a retarded child. This study obviously suggests larger social questions, which we can make no attempt to answer. For example: Is it better for the children to develop socially at the expense of mental ability? Or: Better for whom in the light of continuing and increasing family tension?

The Stevens (1964) symposium offers us a wide range of statistical data on mental retardation. It is broken down into several aspects of the problem, including the factor of age. From comparative data drawn from the Eastern Health District, Southern Sweden, Onondaga County in New York, and England and Wales, was found that mortality alone could not account for the fact that after the age of 14, the prevalence of retardation is rarely more than half as high as it is at the age of 14. Two explanations were offered for this peculiar fact. "Either these individuals are continuing to be extremely handicapped in later life and are unknown because the services they need are unavailable to them, or they have stopped being retarded in any real sense at all and do not need any special protection, help or services, in which case one had better change one's concept of what 'real' mental retardation 'really' is."

We find this statement and the figure intriguing because it could accord with some larger notions of social problems and social deviance. One of these is the idea of labeling: if the society labels one a delinquent, a criminal, a retarded child, etc., then the social role is not longer valid. Another was set forth by Matza (1964) in a study of juvenile delinquency in which he observed that most juvenile delinquents do not advance into crime; rather, they mature or drift out of delinquent behavior through the socialization, maturation

process. If the entire concept of mental illness or insanity can be successfully challenged by Thomas Szasz (1961) on the base of this labeling and drift theory in combination, perhaps we do indeed need to take a hard look at the way in which we define mental retardation.

Another factor studied was that of grades (school grades) and types reported. The population here was limited to study in Onondaga County, and as such, has no comparative value. The study sought to enumerate all individuals under the age of 18 whom any responsible child-caring or professional person suspected of being mentally retarded. (The word "suspected" is an obvious warning signal for us.)

Of the children under five, more than three-quarters were cared for in the home. Of those not at home 11.6 percent were institutionalized and 14.4 percent were in regular public schools.

In the 5-17 age group, 63.9 percent went to regular classes in the public schools, 8.4 percent in parochial schools. Institutions account for 5.8 and 4.5 percent remained outside any school or other institution. In addition to mental retardation discerned, about a third of the entire sample were also saddled with physical defects.

Of all those in the regular schools, about three-quarters were one or more years behind their proper grade placement. It was found that the number of reported children in the regular schools rose until age 10 and then declined thereafter; very few were reported by the age of 17. (This would tie in with the comparative data reported and interpreted above.)

With regard to sexual division of reported retardation, an interesting item emerges. The sexes are not equally represented in the surveys, with the male being more commonly reported than the female. This held in all the surveys. It appeared to be an even greater disparity in the clinical or chronic brain syndrome groups. It was also discerned that an academic lag more commonly accompanied subnormal boys than subnormal girls--this trend continuing throughout

the school years. A subfinding of this sexual division is that there was an excess of males under the age of five, but that in the five to seventeen age group there was an approximately equal number of both sexes. The investigators explained this by citing a greater mortality rate among mongoloid males.

This item of sexual disparity interests us because there may be a larger social explanation available, and it is a very simple one. American society, as do most other western societies, has a much higher achievement expectation for the male sex. Therefore, despite all the "objective" measurements, the professionals were perhaps more likely to "suspect" retardation in the case of the male.

In examining the place of residence of the over-all sample, some serious statistical problems emerge. There were marked differences between the city of Syracuse, New York, and the rest of Onondaga County. For example, in the 5-9 age group there was a higher rate of reporting in the county than in the city and a markedly higher rate of reporting in the 19-17 age group in the city than in the county. Only a crude geographical determinist could take much pleasure from this observation. The conclusion one may draw from this is the obvious one that the country schools identified more cases in the earlier years and fewer in the later ones. In reality the rates may and probably are identical.

Other data in the study reflects that the rates of cases were a function of age, sex, color, and place of residence. For example, the nonwhite population is congregated in a crowded, undesirable neighborhood (a slum or intersticial area); this neighborhood identified the highest rate that was found for school-age children. Its prevalence rate was twice that of the white children from the same general areas. In attempting to get at the rate of retardation, this presents us with a couple of thorny problems: 1) is actual retardation extraordinarily high in this area, or is it simply that we normally observe more social problems of any kind in a slum area and that similar phenomena go unobserved in other areas? 2) Is the nonwhite rate much higher in actuality or

do we observe it to be so because we are applying the wrong standards of measurement--is it a subtle racism? Whether we can answer these questions is not as important as raising them in connection with the use of statistical data. Quite aside from methodological and interpetative problems, other sets of data indicated that the city reported lower rates than the country. This was interpreted to mean that the city drew off the more intellectually gifted children.

There is also the matter of how the mentally retarded are handled by the schools, and there seem to be considerable differences. For example, in a study by Mullen and Nee (1952) there were varying rates between various Chicago districts of those children excused from school and those placed in ungraded classes. They found that the highest incidence of placement in ungraded classes occurs in the slum areas. They feel, then, that the slum areas are more environmentally conducive to mental retardation. We note, however, that it may be more a matter of selective identification, that nonslum areas may be more apt to reject the problem.

We also have statistics on specialized cases. The incidence of mongoloids under 18 years of age was 0.744 per 1000 children as found in the Onondaga study. There is also available a conflicting figure from another study (Record and Smith, 1955) that places the incidence at 1.09 per 1000. Going back to the Onondaga study, within the category of mentally retarded itself, the mongoloid rate was reported as 0.22 percent.

On the relationship between families, parents, and children in connection with mental retardation, a study by Penrose (1949) is useful. The study was conducted in Calchester (England) in the late forties and involved a "clinical" group and a "residual" group corresponding roughly to a pathological one and a control group, both with retarded children. Some surprising results are given. Parents of the residual group were found to be retarded three times as frequently as

those in the clinical group. The more severe the patient's retardation, the smaller the possibility that one or both of his parents will also be retarded.

These, and other, studies indicate that we do have statistical information on the extent, identification, and differentiation of the mentally retarded. But we have seen that our information is often contradictory and subject to various interpretations; it is varied in time, place, and methodology (although most of it has been based on surveys). The crucial point to bear in mind in using any of this or other statistical information is to look for social explanations--those of class, race, public policy, etc.

Family Reactions to the Retarded Child

We have a wide range of literature bearing on how the family reacts to the retarded child in its midst, and all is closely tied in with Section IV on the effects on family attitudes. We shall begin with the most general first and then go to some rather specialized studies.

One of these reports is by A. Repond (Tredgald, Laddy, 1956). Repond studies parental reactions to the birth of a mentally defective child. He found that the shock of an obviously mentally defective child is much more severe for the mother than the father, who perhaps does not feel quite as responsible and can detach himself from the event. The degree to which the father becomes involved is likely to be roughly proportionate to his degree of identification with his wife in the common experience of parenthood (many fathers identify completely).

When the deficiency is obvious at birth, or when the realization slowly dawns over the first year or two, the most serious problems are aroused by parental guilt at having produced such a child. Repond finds that the well-adjusted couple who love each other and are bound together by strong mutual sympathy will tend to become even more firmly united, will form a close,

defensive triangle--a triangle from which even the older siblings may be excluded if the parental guilt is very great.

On the other hand, if the bonds between the couple are not strong, or already under some strain, the experience commonly has a disastrously disruptive effect. Each tends to blame the other, increasingly to find fault and criticize; dissension increases and each will deny more children to the other, because of the dark thought that the bad influence of the other will result only in more defective children (the "bad seed" idea). In this way, mutual recrimination may lead even to separation, family disintegration and divorce.

Repond found that mothers loved their mentally retarded child more than other family members. He found this was a guilty love and most mothers were very self-conscious about showing it and therefore hid it. He found that mothers who were deeply religious appeared to accept the handicap more easily than those who were not.

On the entire question of the over-compensatory love pattern, Repond depends highly on the notion of guilt. This over-compensatory behavior may greatly exacerbate the handicap of the child. There is always a danger that the lowering of the expectation that follows the knowledge may further blind the parents to the child's incapacities. At the other extreme, the parents' confidence may have been shaken by the experience, and they may react to the new baby with anxious over-relating. Anxiety may develop when the parents watch a younger child overtake and pass the retarded child in development. To this some parents may react by holding the younger back for the sake of the older retarded child. In the case of the younger sibling, after immediate babyhood he may react to the retarded child with confusion and bewilderment. Parents commonly make the mistake of expecting the younger child to make allowances automatically for the retarded and are often severe with him when he does not.

Repond feels that many behavior problems retarded children develop are not a product so much of the defect as a product of poor family relationships. However, it was found that when the family relationship was good, the mothers did not want their retarded children to grow up, and adopted an over-protective attitude. One of the explanations for this is that as long as they can regard the child as a helpless baby, they will not have to face the true reality of his retardation.

In severe cases of over-compensation the child has to be removed from the mother's care because the mother is limiting the development of the child. When this occurs, Repond found that the mother tends to repudiate the child, who, henceforth, will be dead to her.

Repond found that when fathers were generally ashamed of the situation, they did not fully admit to their share of the responsibility. However, Tallman (1965) reported that a sex difference operated here; fathers tend to be more highly motivated in coping with the problems of retarded boys than those of retarded girls. Repond also noted that in many cases grandfathers play a large role in bringing up retarded children, especially after retirement.

Parents constantly search for new answers, unable to accept the truth. Everyone, for example, who reports on the child's negative behavior is regarded as unfriendly. As a result, the parents develop feelings of hostility toward the outside world. Sometimes these feelings are combined with those of shame and guilt which greatly hampers social relationships generally and leads to a process of deterioration.

Clear rejection may also occur. One form is when the parents refuse to accept the fact that the child is retarded. Another is when the parents reject the child. This may occur at the moment of birth, when the mother will be so shocked that she will ask never to see the child again. Although, as has been pointed out, it is more often the father who evinces such a reaction.

The foregoing analysis of family reactions to the mentally retarded child is strongly psychological; we shall now deal with a more sociological question of the relationship of family backgrounds of educable mentally retarded as set forth by Meyerwitz and Farber (1964) and other researchers. Farber found that there is a greater tendency for parents of normal children than parents of retarded children to belong to voluntary associations. From this we may conclude that the network of the social relationships in families with retarded children is more limited; we may also tentatively conclude that this probably reinforces the retardation rather than ameliorating it. It was also found that parents of retarded children usually belonged to small religious sects rather than the larger traditional religious denominations. They also attended religious services less often than parents of normal children. These findings indicated that parents of mentally retarded children participated less in the formal organizations of society as well as the voluntary, less formal ones than parents of normal children.

Studies (such as Birenbaum, 1970) have also revealed that parents of retarded children tend to have few friends and less interaction with those friends including recreational activities than parents of normal children. Thus, we can begin to see that the child is denied many of the more conventional socializing agents--extended families, neighbors, friends.

The findings of residential mobility suggest that there is less community interaction of the parents of the mentally retarded children compared to the parents of normal children. Parents of the mentally retarded child tend to be more mobile (though a class factor would doubtless operate here), and Farber feels that residential mobility, like low participation in organizations, suggests a lack of identification with the more conventional and major community institutions.

The actual homes of retarded children often reflect instability, inattentiveness, and overcrowding (a finding contrary to the psychological report of overprotectiveness). Inadequate motivation by the parents was suggested by the number

of mothers who regarded the retarded child as a problem child. Frequently it was found that the level of expectation for the child was quite low. These findings suggest that a large number of the educable mentally retarded children in the study can be characterized as culturally deprived with respect to the dominant culture. It would also seem fairly clear that this need not be the case--if the family can be educated to the true nature of the problem and possible solutions.

The work of Farber and others stress strongly the social aspect of mental retardation. The chief factor in the work of psychologists in this field would clearly be the guilt factor. Zuk (1959) found, for example, that the Roman Catholic religion helped dissipate guilt feelings. Phelps (1966) repeats closely the interpretation covered earlier in our discussion of Repond, adding to it the notion of parents harboring death wishes toward their retarded children, and the notion that most of these guilt reactions are not pathological, but quite normal in the circumstances as responses to intense ego-frustrating experiences.

Korher (1965) points out that when these guilt feelings are allowed to dominate the direction of family action the situation is compounded twice over. Parents who thus blame themselves for their child's handicap suffer an additional burden which takes its own toll, both on the child and on the family life generally.

As to immediate and long-range effects on the child, Michaels and Schuchmen (1962) report that the presence or absence of personality problems in retarded adults showed an exceeding high relationship to the extent of parental acceptance, family cohesion, and degree of overprotection. In the families where relationships were characterized as satisfactory, only one-fourth of the parents reported that their retarded children presented serious problems of adjustment or stubborness and overdependence. In contrast, of the families in which tension and rejection of the retarded children were marked, more than three-fourths of the retarded children were reported as presenting adjustment problems. An important factor entering

into adaptation between parents and child is the parents' intelligence. Bright parents who value intellectual attainment have the greatest difficulty accepting the retarded child and his intellectual limitations (we may recall that this has a connection with our earlier remarks on social class). On the other hand, families from marginal intellectual groups are better able to accept even the severely retarded child. (Nelson [1965], by the way, found that the age of the parents was a variable, that younger mothers of handicapped children tend to reject the maternal role more often than did older mothers.) Their lower intelligence protects them somewhat from planning for much more than the immediate future, and their focus on the young retarded child may thus be oriented toward his present emotional responsiveness and compatability rather than toward his achievement (again a class factor enters the picture).

Returning to another study, Farber (1960), we find the amount of stress associated with the birth of a retarded child is sex-linked as well. Fathers react to their male mentally retarded child with more emotional stress than to a female one. The opposite obtains for the mother. In lower-class families, mothers suffered even a greater impact when the retarded child was a girl. However, as children get older, the mothers experience more emotional problems from the boys. It is suggested that, in the early years, parents of retarded children may live through their children and have feelings of guilt. As the retarded child gets older, problems in the development of family roles and in social status dominate. At this point, the retarded boy produces more stress for both parents.

Although these issues are supported in their general conclusions by many different sources, it is not necessary to explicate them all here. However, one further study should be reported (Jorden, 1966). It was found that the impact mental retardation makes on the individual is only partially determined by the severity of the condition. Another important factor is the social-psychological structure of the various people whose lives are disrupted by the presence of

mentally retarded children. As we have seen, many parents go to great lengths to avoid facing the reality that the child is retarded. Such ego-defense behavior is quite understandable, since it is the first line of defense against the anxieties that parents face. Some parents react by simply denying the disorder completely. Others find solutions at fantasy levels. Others, of weaker psychological constitutions, develop psychotic reactions.

People with considerable sophistication sometimes employ more rational defenses or rationalizations. The purpose of these more sophisticated defenses is adaptation to an unacceptable situation. One example given is: Some believed firmly that their child was a member of a new species which matured at a slow rate and would in the long run achieve a higher level of mental development. In such instances, parents are not reluctant to accept the reality of slow progress, but they reject the interpretation placed on that evidence.

Another parental view of the retarded is that the child is essentially sound. It is but a mental block that prevents the expression of a basically sound mind. The way to help the child, in this view, is to find the key that will open the door and remove the block.

Others believe that the child has been diagnosed incorrectly. He really has another problem that is more acceptable to the parents than mental retardation. This reaction provides an opportunity to shield oneself from the finality of what the judgment of mental retardation erroneously seems to imply. It is clear that parents who react in these ways need outside help to aid them in accepting the child's problem.

The study by Tallman (1965) discussed the differing reactions of father and mother. The father showed himself to be less adaptable than the mother, and more vulnerable to social stigma. Tallman suggested that, whereas mothers may react to severely retarded children as a sort of challenge to their social and emotional concerns, such children usually would be more threatening to fathers. This would

occur in part because of the father's universalistic orientation, which makes him more sensitive than mothers to the deviant role that families of retarded children are forced to play in the community.

The fact that the severely retarded child may acquire some domestic skills, but not reach sufficient maturity to master aspects of the instrumental role, can place fathers in a position in which their unique training skills are superfluous. This proves particularly frustrating to the father of the retarded boy, not only because the expectations for their sons are thwarted, but also because they are deprived of the satisfaction accruing from the reciprocal aspects of the identification process. Fathers may experience greater frustration at those functions in the family life-cycle when the normative expectations stress instrumental acts on the part of the children. School is certainly a major life-cycle point in this scale. When the retarded child reaches school age, his deviant role in the family and, especially, in the community may come into sharp focus.

The fathers tend to be more sensitive to social stigma than the mothers, and they will be subjected to more social stress at such "public" moments as the school experience. Social prestige and the social image of the family are more important to the father; this is due in large part to the fact that these factors contribute to success in bureaucratic organizations which in turn make up a large part of the occupational structure of our society. If this is so, then fathers of severely retarded children who are oriented to success in bureaucratic organizations may be under greater strain than fathers who perceive occupational opportunities in terms of their individual skills and endeavors.

Farber further discovered important effects of a retarded child on family integration itself. Basically he discovered that the presence of a markedly retarded child can be conceptualized as cutting short the ordinary progression of family patterns--it is disruptive. Not only is the present behavior of the parents affected, but so are their anticipated roles. Neither parent can look forward to

a time when responsibilities toward his children will have been fulfilled; occupational retirement takes on a different meaning; arrangements must be made to care for the adult retardate after the parents are no longer able to do so. When there are no normal children, the satisfaction of grandparenthood may be denied to the parents as well.

Farber also found that the marital integration of parents of mentally retarded boys at home was lower than that of mentally retarded girls; the difference did not hold true when the child was in an institution. He also found that the retarded boy in a lower-class family had a more adverse effect than did a retarded girl, an effect which became increasingly disruptive as the boy grew older. This difference was not true of middle-class families.

He found in families of moderately or severely retarded children that, when both husband and wife achieve mutual gratification of their own goals, they fared better than those parents who lacked focused goals. This was true regardless of whether the children formed the central focus of the parents' shared goal. Farber found mothers having severely retarded children who faced role-organization crises often developed physical symptoms.

Another major point is found in the indication that many of those mothers who spent considerable time neighboring or working in voluntary associations had low marital integration. This suggests that families with severely handicapped children necessarily disengage themselves from social activities to focus attention on problems within the family. Data is available to suggest that the failure to do so may lead to conflict and disturbance within the family.

Mahoney (1958) reports that in such cases of poor marital adjustment, the retarded child often becomes the focus of unhealthy concern, the rest of the family transfering the tensions they have developed to the child.

We offer in conclusion the results of one last study (Beck, 1969) on some of the problems inherent in the situation. Parents often report that their other

children become upset with them if they are limiting or punishing the retarded child. Just as often they complain that the retarded child is being indulged.

Parents of retarded children are constantly full of fear and anxiety concerning their child's safety. Their young child needs protection in the home and in the nieghborhood, just as often against himself as against others. The lack of judgment will make protection even more of a concern as the child grows older. The parents of the retarded adolescent fears that someone will take advantage of him and lead him into trouble of some sort because he is gullible and lacks the ability to size up situations. Certain studies of juvenile delinquency give support to these fears, we might note in passing. Sexual problems, too, may arise. There is no question that the retarded youngster, male or female may become the victim of sexual advances of other people who are either unscrupulous, ill, or retarded themselves. The usual warnings that work for the average child may not be effective because the retardate may not understand what this is all about and respond to the friendliness or coaxing of a stranger. These problems place great stress on the parents, and in certain severe cases may result in institutional planning for the retarded teenager and young adult.

Another great problem facing these parents is the effect of the retarded children on siblings. If well-handled, it may be an ego-strengthening experience for a child to face and manage a retardate. Parents do not receive enough help on this particular problem, and siblings themselves have received little direct attention.

Other problems facing parents of mentally retarded children are the questions of discipline and setting standards. Many parents are confused as to whether it is fair to impose restrictions and standards on their retarded child. Often there are disagreements between the parents. These problems and others cause great emotional stress (often giving rise to other problems) on both parents and siblings.

The reactions in the family to a retarded child, as we have seen, are both socially and psychologically based. Zuk (1962) sums it up as a "cultural dilemma." This dilemma developes because our culture considers parenthood desirable, but to be the parent of a defective child undesirable--all the more so since our highly competitive society disapproves of those individuals who are unable to maintain the standards of materialistic success.

Effects of Family Attitudes and Reactions

We shall now turn to some of the "products" of these family attitudes and reactions, and the implications for corrective measures. The two are so closely related that some points will be made in both sections.

To begin with some of the immediate and practical effects the presence of a retarded child may have on the family, Philips (1966) reports that in caring for a severely retarded child the health of the mother, who usually bears the brunt of such care, can be affected drastically. Mothers in such families may suffer from chronic fatigue and occasionally verge on mental breakdown. The care of children with associated physical defects and continuing medical needs is a severe financial drain. Extra costs are involved in seeking medical advice and treatment for some, and training and recreational opportunities for others. Even the cost of board and lodging, from which parents of normal children usually obtain relief when the children are grown, may continue indefinitely. Not uncommonly, as we have seen in our discussion of social class, the depletion of the family's resources may have far-reaching consequences on its economic mobility, learning power and, hence, educational level.

Problems of care are heightened in many instances by the unwillingness of parents to leave their retarded children in the care of strangers. In such circumstances, husband and wife seldom go out together and have little chance for relaxation and relief from a stressful situation.

Other studies point out that the problems are compounded by the lack of adequate professional help. Parents feel that at one time or another during their experience with their retarded child, they are faced with inept, inaccurate, and insufficiently constant professional advice. Investigators have noted, for example, that psychologists and doctors have at times failed to bring to the child the best diagnostic procedure--sometimes due to actual ignorance of the nature of mental retardation.

Then we begin to encounter within the category of mentally retarded, special cases with special problems, such as the mongoloid (Hormuth, 1953). Parents of mongoloid children face more severe problems than parents of other retarded children. Fewer clinics will accept the mongoloid for adequate diagnosis; more often they are unable to provide help or adequate therapy. If school facilities are made available at all, the mongoloid is generally segregated and placed in the lowest functioning group.

Hormuth feels that most of the home problems involved in the family care of the mongoloid child stem from a basic prejudice against him. The school of the diagnostic implication, as the school is generally interpreted, sets off a chain reaction which deprives the mongoloid of all rights to be considered as a child, denies him the opportunities for healthy treatment, and effectively stifles potential development. The chain reaction inevitably leads either to institutional placement with inadequate therapy or a vegetable existence within the over-protective family unit.

Even in the case of a mongoloid problem, if the parents have correct attitudes toward the retarded and if siblings are supplied with true information, the retarded child will rarely affect siblings adversely. If the siblings are provided with a good explanation of the retarded child's condition, they will be secure enough to handle and deal with most of the questions and remarks from the outside world.

Another profound effect of the presence of a retarded child has been found to be the restriction of fertility. One study (Holt, 1958) found that of 201 families with retarded children in England, although additional pregancies were possible in 160, 101 did not want more children.

On the relationship of the psychological and the physical problems, Zuk (1959) found that parents overestimate the social quotient of the retarded child when he is relatively normal in most functions (though this tendency declines in time). Parents of mildly retarded children who are less physically handicapped tend to have a less realistic evaluation of their children's problem than parents of severely handicapped children (this, too, diminishes with time).

The Holt study mentioned above pinpointed five major effects on family life: 1) limitation of family activities (41%), 2) constant supervision (31%), 3) additional expenses (29%), 4) exhaustion of the mother (19%), and 5) frequent attention at night (15%).

An interesting point is made by Farber (1959) who discovered that the sex differential is made even more important in lower-class or very large families. In these situations the boy who cannot contribute to the family income exerts a strain on family relations to a much greater degree than does the presence of a retarded girl. This problem vanished in the middle-class home.

A final variable (before going on to discuss extended family contacts and other relationships with siblings) shows that there are some differences according to family size. Tuckman and Regan (1967) found, in clinical situations, that children from small families had advantages in certain areas over those from large families. School problems and antisocial behavior increased as family size increased. This would seem to be explained by the simple fact that, in a large family, the attention and emotive energy has to be spread thinner than in a smaller one. It is also due to mounting household labor, financial worries and other problems of day-to-day living. On the other hand, it was found that as

family size decreased more of the children had anxiety or neurotic symptoms or had problems with habit formation. It was hypothesized that the children in smaller family units were under more pressure to do well and conform to middle-class standards. Thus we see that while this is a variable, it is not a safe predictor for practical action.

Extended Family Contacts and Sibling Relationships in Retardation

The literature available to us on both extended family kinship contacts among families with retarded children and on sibling relationships is not vast. However, it is sufficient for us to make a rough beginning in this area and perhaps draw a few tentative conclusions.

Perhaps the best information on the matter of extended family contacts is offered by Birenbaum (1970). He reports that families with retarded children tend to socialize less with either kin <u>or</u> friends, thus depriving both themselves and their children of the support and socialization facilities of extended networks. This is further explained by the fact that families with retarded children are always to some extent stigmatized--by friends, relatives, and the community. Birenbaum further uses the phrase "tactful inattention" to describe relationships between the family with a retarded child and outside contacts. This would appear to be a method of giving the impression of "normal as usual" activities within the family unit. Only those outside agents or people who, by a careful if unconscious screening process, could be perceived as <u>not</u> representing a threat to "normal" activities are admitted to the family circle (this is related to our notion of over-protectiveness).

We may expect this notion to vary with social class as we discussed above in our section on family reactions. That is, we may expect that lower-class families will have more extensive associations among kin and friends than upper-class ones.

Much more material is available on the effect upon siblings of a retarded child.

However, there is some variation of opinion.

Phelps (1966) feels that harmful effects of a retarded child on his brothers and sisters are in the minority. He reports that, in fact, some positive effects on the normal child have been reported (note our observations on this in the preceding section). Children largely reflect the feelings of their parents, and if the parents are unashamed of the retarded child, for instance, the normal children are likely to follow their example.

He discusses one such study in which only 15% of the families reported significant emotional disturbances among the normal children. Some of these children were extremely resentful of the attention given the retarded child; others resorted to attention-seeking devices; and still others withdrew from social contacts or attempted to compensate for feelings of deprivation by total absorption in their schoolwork. Rarely was parental rejection of the normal child complete. Considering how often the danger of imitative behavior is proposed as a basic reason for placing the retarded child outside the home, it is significant that in the same study only one family out of 201 reported this to be a problem.

For our purposes we may say that whether a retarded child will have an adverse effect on siblings is related to parental attitudes and adjustments. Further, it is quite possible in the best of situations for the retarded child to have good influences on the normal siblings.

Farber (1963) has gone into this question in a little more detail. The adverse effect seemed to depend on how young the retarded child was and how dependent he was. A very young and an exceptionally dependent retarded child did have some adverse effect on siblings. It was apparently not the mere presence of a retarded brother or sister, but the amount of responsibility assumed by the normal siblings that was the adverse factor insofar as it could be measured. The major part of the burden in the home evidently falls on the normal sisters, who are expected to serve as babysitters and take over much of the housework from an

over-taxed mother. Normal girls who interact frequently with their retarded siblings tend to be involved with the mothers in more tense relationships than those who have little to do with the subnormal child.

Siblings are also adversely affected when the retarded child monopolizes the parents' attention. Occasionally this occurs with a very retarded hyperkinetic child who requires an undue amount of supervision. Very frequently, however, it is not the realistic demands made by the retarded child, but the irrational elements in the parents' behavior toward them that work the hardship on the normal child.

As to possible positive effects, it was found in this report that both boys and girls who interact daily with their retarded siblings emphasize as life goals "devotion to a worthwhile cause" or "making a contribution to mankind." Those who do not interact as frequently with their retarded siblings are more oriented to success in personal relations.

Farber also found that the effect of the retarded child on the life chances of his siblings extends beyond occupation to marriage. Especially where the normal siblings have a close relationship with the retarded child, his presence may influence the choice of a marriage partner on the part of the normal sibling. For example, in many cases the sibling would not marry an individual who could not tolerate his or her retarded sibling.

Finally we may report a special study made of twins, one of whom had cerebral palsy (Shere, 1959). There was a difference in the behavior of the parents toward each twin. The parents placed greater expectations and more responsibility on the noncerebral-palsied child than his age or capabilities would warrant (we might hazard a guess that this could extend to the nontwin sibling case). Also, parents tend to be more responsive to the problems of the cerebral-palsied child and oblivious to those of his twin. Parents over-protected the cerebral-palsied twin, permitting him little discretion in his activities. The noncerebral-palsied

twin was much more curious and adventurous, less patient, more excitable, less cheerful, more resistent to authority, and more prone to emotional outbursts than the cerebral-palsied twin.

In summary, then, we stress that the extent of retarded family interaction in the larger social group will depend upon social factors outside the immediate family, such as acceptance and social class. The affects upon siblings, too, will depend upon these, but also on factors such as successful family adjustment, the closeness of family relationships, and the intelligence of parents in parceling out their attention.

Community Reactions

Some material is to be found on this matter in the general section on family reactions. However, we may also isolate this question for our purposes.

As was noted briefly earlier, many problems found by parents of retarded children are due to the failure of various specialists and professionals to handle the defective child and his family in such a manner as to reduce the strength of the anxieties associated with current problems and to prevent the occurance of future ones. That mental deficiency is an incurable condition should not obscure the fact that many of the psychological and social problems to which it gives rise can either be prevented or greatly ameliorated. The failure to recognize and handle such problems is in large part a function of the inadequate training which the various specialists receive.

But it is not just the professionals who are always to blame, even though this is frequently the tendency. The well-known account of "Peter Beautiful" (Gramm, 1951) reported that neighbors organize and produce great anguish for parents of the mentally retarded. Most parents of the retarded have to learn to survive such phrases as:

> If he is feeble minded, why don't you put him away?
> What a brat; why don't you teach him?
> You shouldn't even take a child like that out of the house.
> If he were mine...

It is not difficult to see this sort of thing as "the most unkind cut of all."

As to the public presentation of the situation, Barsch (1961) observed that parents of brain-injured children used the term "brain-injured" freely in discussing their child with others. However, when the child was only mildly neurologically involved, the parents were reluctant to say he was brain-injured and hesitated to apply any label at all to the child. Others used the term "cerebral-palsied," even if no such diagnosis had been given, since this term is generally understandable to others. (Siblings followed their parents' lead in describing the handicapped child to their playmates.) According to Barsch the nature and severity of the child's handicap did not significantly alter the parents' explanation in public situations.

The influences of community and outside agencies is sometimes crucial to the ongoing family relationship. Prechtle (1963) did a follow-up study, for example, of parents with a minimally brain-damaged child. The results seem to indicate clearly that those parents whose children are damaged but who have not been given professional aid in understanding the condition are beset by worry, self-blame, and anxiety. The entire parent-child relationship is likely to be disturbed and the parents assume the burden as though it were entirely their fault that all is not well.

Phelps (1966), too, stresses the influence of the community. He says quite clearly that the imprint of the larger community cannot be ignored. Feelings of awareness and nonacceptance toward the retarded still characterize public thought and discourage families from vital social contacts. Neighbors stare and make unkind remarks; they complain about the retarded child's behavior; they refuse to let their normal child play with him. Note that friends

of the retarded siblings can be equally hurt by these remarks and actions. Many seek escape from painful and embarrassing questions in self-imposed social isolation. We have noted this last reaction on several other occasions and have noted that it is scarcely beneficial to either the normal or the retarded. If we need further evidence, we may turn to Schonell, et al. (1959) who found in studies of Australian families that half of the families reported an effect from visits to other people's homes and from their shopping arrangements. Parents simply found it impossible to conduct daily social activities.

Summary

This is not as complete a picture of the exceptional child in the family as we would wish to have. Much more work by social scientists from all disciplines is needed. Nonetheless, we have been able to observe a few variables that are important.

We have stressed the necessity for seeing the larger social factors outside the family process in attempting to understand something about the situation. Socioeconomic class was a major factor. The very basic makeup of our social system, with its strong goal-orientation, was another. We noted the adverse effect of "labeling" in the human interaction of both the retarded child and the normal parents and siblings.

We next dealt with the problem of social statistics--what they could tell us and what they could not. We concluded that they were incomplete and sometimes contradictory. The problem is seen as one of varying time, place, and method, as well as one of interpretation and even basic definitions of "retarded."

We then dealt with a wide variety of family reactions to the retarded child, which psychologically ran the gamut from complete rejection to complete absorption. We noted that many of these reactions were in response to the larger social structure, specifically agency and/or community attitudes. There were also reports on a sexual differential as well as a difference in reactions by fathers and by mothers.

The effects were strongly related to the family attitudes, and sometimes a direct causal connection could be made. When we cannot make this direct connection, we shall have to look beyond the realm of the psychological into possible social explanations.

We noted some peculiarities in extended family contacts, and some influences on siblings of the mentally retarded. One clear point on the former emerged: families with retarded children do limit their social activities. We saw that the greater the "healthy" interaction of siblings with retarded child, the more positive and beneficial results would be obtained.

To conclude, we looked at the community role in the situation and decided that, not only is it important, but that it is crucial not to ignore it. We now turn to considerations of home and the family in a broad social context.

ERIC

THE FAMILY AS PROCESS AND COMMUNITY

Introductory Perspective on the Family

In formulating a perspective on the family in society the key concept is that of "process" rather than that of "institution." (Process should not be confused with "progress.") The family is simultaneously an institution, and we may discern very definite types of family structure both comparatively and historically. However, it is an ongoing institution and not a static one. Changes in family structure or behavior have always been closely related to the larger forces of social change from society to society and from time to time. The best general summary of recent important changes in American society is to be found in Bensman and Vidich (1971). The exact sort of relationship is quite problematical. For example, it is not always possible to establish a causal one. Goode (1963) provides a striking historical illustration when he notes that, although the conjugal family fits modern industrialized society, we cannot assume that this fact causes the form or that it is the only form that would fit. He continues by citing the example that, in 12th and 13th century Europe there was a great deal of class mobility through an industrialization process, but it did not cause a change from an extended family to a conjugal one.

It is also helpful in viewing the family as social process to introduce a familiar notion that will serve to locate both the processional and institutional relationship to the larger society. We refer to the concept of "community" as defined by Toennies (1957), Weber (1968), and other early social theorists. Briefly summarized, community refers to those social bonds built upon ties of affection, loyalty, mutuality of interests, tradition, volitional

membership; conceptually, it is opposed to the notion "society," the larger unit based on nonaffective, rational organization which is nonvoluntary. (This concept can be greatly elaborated, but this is sufficient for our present needs.) Nisbet (1962, 1966) updates this idea when he defines community as an intermediate association in the larger society--that is, it simply mediates between the individual and society. It is interesting that one of Nisbet's primary examples of community is the family.

The two chief ideas in the framework for discussing the family, then, are "process," and "community." With this in mind we may now turn to some very general background.

Trends In The Family Process

The family as social process has been strongly affected by the larger social processes operating in both Western and non-Western societies. Because the retarded child is even more vulnerable to the vicissitudes of these processes, this point must be borne in mind in every area of the Social Learning Curriculum. Goode (1963) sees these larger primary processes as being industrialization and urbanization. These are two dominant themes in theories of modern social change. To these, we add the process of bureaucracy which contributes to a breakdown of intermediate associations (community) as meaningful institutions.

The first of these, industrialization is a key economic factor in rendering the family less important as a unit of production. As Goode (1963: 6) points out, "Wherever the economic system expands through industrialization, family patterns change. Extended kinship ties weaken...the nuclear family becomes a more independent kinship unit."

The process of urbanization has led to a greater necessity for social (and class) mobility. Seemingly, the small nuclear family is more adaptive to this process.

When the process of bureaucratization is added to the framework, we are better able to consider larger trends in the family process. For example, authority has largely moved out of the family unit to become vested in large-scale, impersonal, rational organizations; decisions (for example, economic ones) affecting the family often occur outside the family unit itself.

The chief trend seen by Goode and others as world-wide one is that toward the small nuclear family unit away from the extended kinship systems. We are properly cautioned, however, to remember that in different societies this trend begins from a different social base. From this fact, two results follow: 1) the manifestations, both process and institutional, may be somewhat different, and 2) elements in family life may change at differing rates.

The causal connection, as we mentioned earlier, between these processes and this trend is not entirely clear. We feel, however, that some fairly clear connections may be implied. First we should examine two family types that are relevant to contemporary American society: the extended family and the conjugal one.

Models Of The Family

It would be interesting, but rather academic, to examine in detail every possibility for family organization. Suffice to say that the anthropological evidence (Harris, 1971) is for the successful and functional existence of just about any conceivable structure: polygamy, extended kinship, nuclear, matriarchal, patriarchal, etc. The key word here is functional existence, which is to say that, within the societal context the family system works (is successful). We shall examine some of these forms in the later discussion of family roles, but for the moment a catalog of types would simply be confusing. Anthropologists themselves have found it difficult to define marriage in anything but extraordinarily broad terms. For example, Kathleen Gough (in Harris, p. 273)

comes up with the following:

> Marriage is a relationship established between a woman and one or more persons, which provides that a child born to the woman under circumstances not prohibited by the rules of the relationship, is accorded full birth-status rights common to normal members of his society or social stratum.

Although this is at variance with our own dictionary and usual image of marriage, it would appear to be the most universal view possible.

Social theories regarding the family come to sociology largely from the anthropologists' work. One of the earliest ideas, the evolutionary model, was heavily polluted by the intellectual atmosphere of Social Darwinism in the 19th century. This model, closely connected with the notion of "progress," postulated the "growth" of the family from primitive sexual promiscuity through group marriage, matriarchy and patriarchy in a polygamous (more than one female mate at a time) form to "culminate in the highest spiritual expression of the family, Victorian monogamy." (Goode, 1963.) Among social scientists this process model was rejected fairly early in the game (certainly by the turn of the century). However, it is not difficult to observe vestiges operating in the popular imagination. Ethnocentrism dies hard.

Having seen the trend toward the conjugal family on a comparative and historical base, we may examine the implications of this particular model. We should bear in mind that the term conjugal family is not just a technical ideal type, a model, but that it also represents a moral ideal.

The Statistical Abstract of the United States defines "family" as follows:

> The term "family" refers to a group of two or more persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption and residing together in a household. A primary family consists of the head of a household and all other persons in the household related to the head. A secondary family comprises two or more persons such as guests, lodgers, or resident employees and their relatives, living in a household and related to each other.

This is an acceptable working definition based on the statistical data. It should be borne in mind, however, that sociologists somewhat extend this

definition (which would fit the term "nuclear family unit") in order to include in the family group those relatives with whom social interaction is frequent and relatively intense (conjugal family). Residency in a household is not the sole statistical basis for defining a family, although for certain purposes of the Social Learning Curriculum we have used the household as our unit.

From the work of Glick (1957) we are told a great deal about this conjugal family as it operates in the United States. At first marriage the male is 22 and the wife 20. The first child is born within 1 1/2 years, the second within 2 1/2, and the third within three years after the second. Seven of eight American families have their own household, although there are regional differences--in the South doubling up is common. Most women work at some point, but the majority remain outside the permanent labor force. We can even say that one of five women with a preschool child will have an outside job and that women in their 30's are apt to return to work for a brief time. Divorce can occur at anytime, but the median age is 30. The last child usually leaves home when the parents are about 50 years of age. This, then was the model in the 50's; it has probably not changed greatly.

The problem with this model, as is readily apparent as we review these figures, is that it's simply too perfect and does not lend itself to our picture of the variations in conjugal families based on race. ethnic background, social class, education, etc., as discussed below. Therefore we must include a discussion of these other factors.

We also note trends of lesser statistical significance (such as communal families and the other alternative processes discussed below in section 8), especially as they seem to have an historical base in American society. We say lesser statistical significance because the Statistical Abstract reports that of household heads, 86.8 percent were married with a spouse present.

For the moment we shall hold to the model of the conjugal family and attempt to see its relationship to the larger society. As Goode (1963: 8) reports, "The most important characteristic of the ideal typical construction of the conjugal family is the relative exclusion of a wide range of affinal (sic.) blood relatives from its everyday affairs." Just how well this holds up we shall have to examine in the later investigation of roles, socialization, etc.

As we noted earlier, the model of the conjugal family includes the notion of community in that the small marital unit is the main place in society where the emotional "input-output balances" as Goode puts it, of the individual husband and wife and children is maintained.

The model is seen as a locus of upward mobility in industrialized society in that the individual is less hampered by an extended kinship system from rising in the job structure. However, we should exercise caution. A class factor would seem to operate: among the upper strata, the extended kinship ties would often seem to facilitate maintainance and mobility. A classic example would be the X family (Lynd and Lynd, 1937) in the Middletown studies, who, by a network of kinship relations, quite literally owned Muncie, Indiana in the 20's, 30's and 40's. A more contemporary example would be the closure of the Rockefeller extended kinship system.

Still, these last examples of extended family units stand in marked contrast to our conventional image of the traditional American kin family as described by Goode (1964). Summarized, the image of the kin family (or extended family) is a pretty picture of life down on the farm with lots of happy children and many kinfolk living together in a rambling old house. Everybody works hard; they are self-sufficient. There is a tremendous emphasis of harmony and happiness throughout the life cycle. No one divorces, etc., etc.

Historically, when industrialization begins, it is the lower-class conjugal family that profits most in the sense that it has little to lose in changing its

patterns from an extended family; later it may be the upper-class patterns that begin to change.

Our model of the conjugal family includes the notion of authority and obligation. It tends to specify the status obligations of each member in much less detail than does an extended family system (Goode, 1963). Fewer rules are needed to integrate a small group as opposed to a larger one.

Finally we must note that our model of the conjugal family is a rather radical idea historically in that it is destructive of older traditions of community through extended kinship. As for the future of this model, we can only examine some contemporary trends and note that what Goode says about the breakdown of the extended family could occur to our neat conjugal family, that is: "Debates about the philosophy of the family weaken the self-evident rightness of the older system. And although its first spokesmen may be the elite, debates soon take place at all levels...."

The Family Community In Process

Before turning to our discussion of family and social class, let us for a moment return to the primary themes of process and community. For this, we consider more carefully the work of Nisbet (1962). Seen in the context of larger social process, we may have to reexamine the generally approving notions and model of the conjugal family. While discussing the loss of community as expressed in the popularization of the idea of alienation, the work is chiefly concerned with the power of all intermediate associations, including the family.

In discussing the ideological base for the processes that have attentuated the power of community (including family), Nisbet notes, "The historic emphasis upon the individual has been at the expense of the associative and symbolic relationships that must in fact uphold the individual's own sense of integrity."

Translated into our concerns, we can see this operating in the breakdown of the extended kin family in the United States. It is also possible to see the distinct possibility of it occuring in the case of the conjugal family as well as assuming no change in the direction of social process.

Nisbet is worth quoting at greater length:

> The family inspires a curious dualism of thought. We tend to regard it uneasily as a final manifestation of tribal society, somehow inappropriate to a democratic age, but, at the same time, we have become ever more aware of its possibilities as an instrument of social reconstruction. The intensity of theoretical interest in the family has curiously enough risen in direct proportion to the decline of the family's basic institutional importance to our culture (1962: 58-9).

Here is a clear statement on the family as a social process and as a nonstatic institution. A final quote, which could just as easily open our detailed discussion as close our statement, is to the point:

> To suppose that the present family, or any other group, can perpetually vitalize itself through some indwelling affectional tie, in the absence of concrete, perceived functions, is like supposing that the comradely ties of mutual aid which grow up incidentally in the military unit will long outlast a condition in which war is plainly and irrevocably banished....no social group will long survive the disappearance of its chief reasons for being...(1968: 61).

Whether we wish to subscribe completely to some of the underlying assumptions here (such as the family having no important function),* these phrases underscore the necessity for our perspective on the family being process, and always seen as a community or intermediate association in structure and purpose.

*Clearly, we do not accept this completely. As we have stated elsewhere (SLC, 1969): "The family is one social agent whose function it is to develop in its members the means for fulfilling the basic need or desire for Identification, Performance, Conservation, Grooming, Health and Safety, Comfort, Experiences, Assistance, Protection, Authority, Responsibility, Communication, Social Skills, Recreation, Necessities, Luxuries, Emotional Security, Respect, Expression, and Control." See also the material from Clausen in Part VII.

THE FAMILY AND SOCIAL CLASS

Family and Class in General

One of the major social variables in all human existence is that of social and economic class. This was recognized early in the formal history of sociology, but all social philosophers from the earliest times have dealt with class in some fashion. The most fruitful discussion in modern times comes from Max Weber (1968). Weber offers the broadest and most comprehensive framework in which to operate. Very briefly and simply, we may say that Weber considered all analysis of social class to have three dimensions. These are power, privilege, and prestige. A group or individual may possess all three, any combination, or none at all. Most class or stratification studies in American sociology have unfortunately limited themselves to a focus on power, feeling that prestige and privilege flow directly from the holders of real political and economic power. However, as America becomes a more pluralistic society (in terms of such writers as Dahl, 1961), we find too many examples of a group (or as Weber puts it, a "status community") with high prestige and little real power to limit our analysis entirely to economic power in the Marxian sense. Put another way we may find individuals or groups with high prestige and great privilege with power only within a limited status community.

The foregoing is but the slightest introduction to some general notions about social class and social stratification, but will serve out present purposes. Class is a crucial element in family life. As Goode (1964) states:

> The interrelationships of family and stratification are many and complex, but may be categorized under two forms: (1) the class distribution of family patterns and processes, and (2) which kinds of family systems are associated with which kinds of stratification systems.

With regard to Goode's second point, we shall examine the black family below. Before doing so, however, Goode very succinctly lists some of the relations between class position and family variables as follows:

1. In Western countries, the age of men at marriage rises with class position.
2. Generally, however, the nobility of Western countries married at younger ages than did other classes.
3. In Western countries, and perhaps generally where there is no frontier land available, farmers marry later than other groups.
4. Toward the upper social strata, young people are granted less freedom of mate choice.
5. When cross-class marriages occur, the woman is more likely than the man to marry upward.
6. In the West, the birthrate increases as we approach the lower classes. However, within each social ranking or stratum, families with higher income have more children. And very likely in most societies the upper stratum had a higher birthrate, before the introduction of effective contraceptives.
7. Engagement or betrothal is longer toward the upper strata.
8. Where there is a bride price or a dowry system, the economic exchanges between the bride's family and the groom's family are more likely to approach equality toward the upper strata than toward the lower strata.
9. If polygamy is practiced, it is the men of high social or economic position who are more likely to have more than one wife.
10. In the West, it is likely that the frequency of sexual intercourse is higher among couples toward the lower strata.
11. When contraceptives are introduced, the upper social strata are more likely to begin using them than are the lower social strata.
12. In the West, premarital sexual intercourse begins at an earlier age among men in the lower social strata.
13. In the West, extramarital sexual intercourse increases in frequency with increasing age among men in the upper strata, but decreases among men in the lower social strata.
14. The authority of elders and of men is higher toward the upper social strata.
15. The kinship network is more extended toward the upper strata.
16. In the U.S., upper-class mothers are more likely than middle-class women to justify their demands on children by asserting their authority; middle-class mothers are more likely to appeal to a general moral principle or to a rule originating outside the family circle itself.
17. In the U.S., middle-class families rear their children more permissively than do lower-class families, but demand higher achievement in the areas of skill, knowledge, and initiative.
18. The divorce rate is higher toward the lower social strata.

We may assume that this list is not exhaustive; Goode cites only those relationships that have been proved by empirical studies.

A crucial influence of the class factor upon family life, as we shall see in our examination of the black family, is that of differential family control. As Goode (1964: 84) describes the process in upper-class families: (families) "are engaged in a ceaseless struggle to maintain their position, by controlling access to opportunities, preventing acceptance, and by forcing their children to hew to upper-class standards," and, further, that "....upper-class families can control the futures of their children more effectively, since the rebel upper-class child has more to lose than does the rebel lower-class child." Perhaps, as a more concrete illustration, it would be useful to touch upon one of the dominant theories of causality in juvenile delinquency as put forward by Cloward and Ohlin (1960). It is closely associated with this matter of differential family control and is simply stated as a principle of "differential opportunity," which in practice is fairly obvious in relation to class structure. The idea is derived somewhat from the classic Sutherland (1966) formulation of "differential association." Because of later studies in middle- and upper-class delinquency, we can see that these theories are not complete explanations, but clearly they are related to family socialization and the notion of differential control. They have strong relevance for parents of retarded children, who are more vulnerable to these differential considerations.

Another influence of the class situation can be seen in considering differential divorce rates (Goode, 1964, 88-90): "Research data has demonstrated by the early 50's that there is an inverse correlation between class ranking and the divorce rate in the United States." This fact has some historical background; we must recall that until the 20th century in most Western countries,

divorce was obtainable primarily by the elites and the rate was consequently higher in the upper classes. Once the legal factor was removed by more equitable class divorce possibilities, then other factors came into play to produce the datum given above. As Goode notes, the economic class factor is important in producing harmonious or disharmonious marital relations. A subsidiary factor is that of income commitment among the upper strata which places a relatively higher importance upon housing, private education, insurance, etc. Withdrawing support of this life style creates more problems than it would in the lower strata. Ideologically, divorce attitudes may be more liberal among the upper classes, but in practice the extended kinship bonds work to stabilize the conjugal family.

Having established a few class variables in family life, we now examine one manifestation of family as viewed in terms of social and economic class, the black family.

Family and Class--the Black Family

We include an important part of our discussion of the black family in this consideration of social class because, especially in low-status families, class would appear to be a crucial variable. One of the best available sources is Kramer (1970, 222-229), partially because it so thoroughly surveys the literature on this question. The basic theme is that the lower-class black family is the locus of many of the social problems that have seemed to be typical of the black population.

This position is also supported by Sebald (1968) as he notes:

> The United States Negro population is disproportionately lower class. For the majority of Negro teenagers, family life still means lower-class life. The two variables, family life and lower-class condition, are intricately intermeshed and, if one intends to make valid generalizations about the vast majority of American Negroes, it would be unrealistic to try to discuss the two separately.

It is important to note that social disorganization is not particularly inevitable among black families, although the more stable families seem to occur with a rise through a class hierarchy. In fact, it need not occur even in the ranks of the lower classes. However, as Kramer notes, "Living in the social isolation of their categorical status, men and women are often unable to make a whole life for themselves, and the consequences are perpetrated upon their children, whom they cannot shelter sufficiently." H. Lewis (1967), further reported that "....most families express middle-class values of stability and security, at least verbally. They are simply not able to live up to them."

Behavior in the black lower-class family is no more caused by ethnic values than any social behavior is predestined. It would seem, rather, to be a necessary, forced, response to their material situation. Kramer reports that

the values are not essentially different from those of the dominant society, but the behavior necessarily deviates. For example, we get the all-too-familiar profile of husbands who cannot support their families or, if they are employed, are poorly rewarded. This usually leads to what is termed "role strain"; that is, an ambiquity and tension resulting from being unable to fulfill the expectations of oneself and others. The conventional position of the father in the family is undermined and a vicious circle ensues until, quite often, we obtain the matriarchal black family.

We must stress that this pattern does not result from some integrated ethnic substructure but is simply a response to situations of economic class. Weber (1968, Vol.I, Chap. 4) put this phenomenon slightly differently when he categorized class situations as depending on "life-chances," a self-explanatory term.

This conflict, between dominant-group values and aspirations and the realities of lower-class life-chances, results in very great tension within the family. They know what "ought to be," but they also are faced with "what is." In such a class situation, even the most ordinary, everyday problems are aggrevated. However, in contrast with our common sense expectation that a retarded child in the lower-class family would result in great tension, we discovered in Part One that this family is better able to assimilate such a child.

The resulting psychology of the lower-class black family is one of "born to fail," as Kramer put it. And, since chronic failure is the pattern, there is a definite basis in reality for this style of thinking and living. Until recently, most lower-class black family tensions have been released against other family members. With the black activist movements, however, we are seeing a new pattern of "spleen venting" against the larger social system.

One of the great problems here is that the black ghettos in our urban areas have never engendered a supportive tradition for family life (Vidich, 1971). Viewed historically, the pre-and early post-bellum Southern caste system

provided the black family with a sort of tradition that was supportive psychologically in the limited sense that it was at least stabilizing. For a time, the Northern ghetto repeated the patterns of the Southern caste system, especially those of political leadership and family (matriarchal) behavior. The ghettos were political and emotional "protectorates," with a few black leaders (for example those from the black Protestant churches) mediating between the ghetto and the dominant culture. At the time we are seeing the breakdown of both this Southern caste system and the ghetto culture through the generation-gap youth rebellion against both traditions. And, of course, nowhere is this more clear than in the conjugal black family, especially in the lower class. Whether this will result in genuine social change among the lower-class family is completely open to question.

At present, however, the picture of the lower-class black family still holds. Bernard (1966), for example, reports that in 1960 only 76.1 percent of all black men over 14 years of age who were ever married were living with their wives, and only 58.5 percent were living with their first wives. Almost 39 percent of all non-white families have an income under $2,000, and 59.9 percent of the female-headed families have incomes of less than $2,000. If we need further emphasis on the persistent matriarchal character of the lower-class black family, Bernard offers the datum that 27.1 percent of all black heads of households were women in 1960. Kramer (1970) feels that many of these lower-class family patterns originated in slavery which gave greater economic value to women.

By way of contrast, we observe that in the Statistical Abstract (1970) it is reported that in 1969 matriarchal families existed in 8.9 percent of the white families and 28.6 percent of the black ones. In the matter of income, 1.8 percent of all American families had an income of less than $1,000 per year; 1.5 percent were white, 4.1 percent were black and "other."

In the group of $3,000-3,999 per year, 6.1 percent of the total families reported were further broken down into 5.4 percent white, 12.0 percent black and other. The closest meeting of these racial groups is found in the $6,000-6,999 category, which included 7.6 percent of all families, with 7.6 percent being white and 7.7 percent black and other. The top income category ($15,000 and over) included 14.7 percent of all families, 15.7 percent black and other.

Moving along, then, to the black middle class, we discover that family patterns come a bit closer to those of the dominant group. That is, the male assumes greater authority based in a more secure economic position. Here we find middle-class ideology operating with a vengeance. There is a very great emphasis on respectability and morality as a source of pride and social action. As Kramer points out, their sexual mores, for example, approach the puritanical. Children (and their behavior and accomplishments) are also a great source of pride and legitimatizing of their middle-classness. Family stability is a "critical symbol" as Kramer puts it.

Still, according to Kramer, Lewis (1968), and Frazier (1957), among others, social class and improved life chances do not seem to solve all the problems, particularly those related to role. Despite an improved economic lot and a somewhat superficially acquired middle-class ideology, the wife tends to assume a strong role in family decision-making, especially with regard to socialization of children. Here, however, Lewis reports that her dominance is socially-based rather than economic. That is, she may dominate by virtue of her greater social skill in the ways of the black bourgeoisie. As Kramer cautions us, so much of the literature has focused on the black, lower-class matriarchal family that we may overlook problems that develop when the father is not only present, but present in a stable economic situation. This is partly explained by the fact that our concept of class has more than an economic dimension. Social emasculation can

be just as effective on the black father as the economic sort.

An important corollary to this situation is that, when the father's postion in the family is socially emasculated, his physical presence in the family unit may be almost or entirely cancelled out with regard to his contribution to his children's socialization. As a matter of fact, with middle-class educators and other outside agents of socialization, the children may be even more perceptive of the father's situation than children in a lower-class family where the father's absence is part of their tradition. The sense of black powerlessness is thus brought home early to the middle-class black child because it is imbedded in the family situation and the socialization process.

Insufficient study has been made of the numerically small black upper class. About all we can say at the moment is that the general principle that stabilization increases with increased status (both economic and social) probably holds. However, we might also expect to find some of the same problems inherent here because of the black tradition (and lack thereof) in American society.

Before leaving our consideration of the class factor in the black family, we must at least mention an oft-neglected dimension of class, that of life-style. One of our best guides here is the work of Finestone (1957), although it is limited to the lower-class black family. Briefly summarized, because of the inability of the lower-class child (again <u>both</u> economically and socially) to emulate dominant culture styles of dress, culture consumption, education, speech, etc., he develops fairly early in the family situation a "cat" culture, which gives him a sense of uniqueness in the positive sense and helps to legitimize or mediate his low social status. This style is a response to difficult situations with a "super cool," ingratiatory, "hip" attitude. Primarily it is a way of dealing with the aware world, which is the prized victim of the "cat." The work ethic is altogether absent; the entire purpose is to get by

without conventional work, to "hustle." The style is expressed through a special argot ("pad" for house, "flicks" for movies, "dig the scene" for observe, "bread" for money, "hustle" for obtaining goods or services illegitimately or easily), through special styles of pop music, and in dress style. This style may also be considered in almost classic terms (Cohen, 1955) as a response to "status-crisis." When you don't have a life-style given to you by tradition, invent one. We note in passing that at present in American society, the youth of all classes both in dominant and nondominant culture seem to be rejecting their recently-acquired "traditions" and "rolling their own" in more ways than one. Let us note the process-in-reverse in which middle-class white youth emulate the cat culture of the black lower class.

In summary, one of the chief reasons for including so much of our discussion of the black family under class factors and the family is that it would seem that both economic class and social class are crucial determinants to the family styles and patterns.

Overall, comprehensive statistical evidence on the relationship of class and race to retardation is difficult to come by. However, Hurley (1969) offers some indicative insights and reports. For example (p. 45) he states:

> The great majority of the American Negroes and the poor.... have no organic damage; rather they fail to live up to middle-class demands because they are grossly deprived. Due to the statistical chaos that characterizes mental retardation research, it is impossible to say with accuracy what the ratio is between those who suffer from organic damage and those who do not, but there are probably eight poor, deprived people--including Negroes--who are not organically damaged to every person who is.

Offering some statistical data (p. 47) he reports the following breakdown from eleven New Jersey school districts of those placed in special education programs:

earning less than $3,000 per year	.74 percent
in median income	.62 "
unemployed	.74 "
nonwhite	.42 "

A further statistic on organic impairment at birth is useful (p. 57): overall birth impairment was 6.8 percent for white, 11.4 percent for nonwhite. Additionally, based on the literature and other studies, he states (p. 72): "Poor, culturally deprived children comprise the majority of the retarded." A further, causal connection between mental ability and economic class is indicated by the following observation: in a Chicago study of welfare recipients, 6.6 percent were illiterate, but "50.7 percent also tested as functionally illiterate, even though many of these people had attended public schools for a considerable number of years (p. 95)." Strengthening his case of the causal connection extending into the school system he presents the following statistical table on school failures:

INCOME GROUPS	SOCIAL STUDIES	ENGLISH
I (lowest)	14.6	16.8
II	13.9	10.9
III	12.7	9.3
IV	10.2	8.5
V	7.9	6.6

He further connects economic class to general health (p. 130): "...in New York City 43.8 percent of all adult recipients of public assistance were reported to have some kind of chronic illness or disability."

This will not be as much the case with other ethnic and racial groups primarily because of their stronger social traditions which tend to mitigate and even transcend class considerations. It seems fairly clear that the black family community has no authentic tradition that they are prepared to accept. Both the invention of "cat" culture and the turning to Afro ideologies are attempts to create a tradition from a vacuum. Neither can be expected to solve basic problems that are economically and socially based. Mythologies sometimes have unfortunate results.

THE FAMILY AND THE ETHNIC EXPERIENCE

In our discussion of ethnic background as a variable in family life, we consider two broad groups: the Jews and the Catholic national groups. Generally, Kramer (1970, 79-160) is the most thorough guide here. Because of historical background and accident of birth (that is, they are racially whites), ethnicity of itself seems the primary variable and not class based on skin color (as in the case of the blacks) or economy (as in the cases of the Hispanic groups).

Historically, Kramer notes that: "The minority community as we know it today had its origins in the ghettos of the first generation. The uprooting of the immigrants led to the formation of ethnic enclaves to meet the needs of their alien status. Their way of life was adapted to their shared experiences in a new world. Indeed, their alien status became the basis of integration for their community, since traditional values eventually lost their meaning in a secular society."

The fact that ethnic communities tend to have a physical locus (and are usually isolated) is important for family life. The fact that they also tend to be culturally isolated is probably even more important, especially for socialization of these children who are in any way exceptional (see Chapter One).

Sketched broadly, we must observe the patterns of transition from first-generation lower-class immigrant to middle-class "gilded ghetto" status (Kramer and Leventman, 1961) to third- and fourth-generation assimilation throughout the spectrum of the American class system.

This pattern obviously indicates "progress" in the commonsensical meaning. Why this progress among ethnic groups that we have not been able to observe among racial ones and those limited to the culture of poverty, or that rather special case of

the American Indian?

Part of the answer is a historical one. That is, both the Jewish and Catholic ethnic groups arrived on the American scene at a time of great industrialization and business growth. The second part is that their backgrounds and experience enabled them to be assimilated more quickly into the working and small-scale business force. This is admittedly a very superficial sketch, but our chief task is to examine the effects on these families.

The Jewish Family

As was the case historically with other ethnic groups, the Jewish family was closely bound by religion into a minority community that represented adaptation to minority status. In sharp contrast to the black situation, this ghettoization was a response to fulfilled, shared social function, rather than any formal legal enactment of the dominant group.

Psychologically, this process both in the community and the family may be seen as a defense mechanism that operated with extraordinary efficiency at least in the early generation(s). Robert Park (1952, 99-100), the distinguished sociologist of the early University of Chicago school, put it this way: "Every one of these segregated groups inevitably seeks, in order to maintain the integrity of its own group life, to impose upon its members some kind of moral isolation." A central corollary to this observation is that put forth by Stonequist (1937) that, through the family, the individual was socialized to a solid, integrated set of values and that the personality of the ethnic enclave was a highly integrated one. To an extent, even changes in the direction of the dominant society were incorporated by these forms of socialization within both the immediate family and the ethnic community. We shall observe later generations seeking to escape this very integration in a socially perverse fashion.

Most ethnic communities have certain characteristics common to at least the first generation. Carolyn Ware notes a few:

1) low economic status
2) often without leadership
3) successful members leave the community
4) mutual benefit societies
5) social gathering points (local shops, etc.)
6) shared ideologies
7) preservation of traditions

Concerning the preservation of traditions, it is interesting to note the observation made by Arthur Vidich (1971) on cultural preservation. Several immigrant groups such as the Swedes in Minnesota, preserved their Swedish tradition so perfectly that, upon their return visit to Sweden, they found a society vastly different from that which they had so successfully maintained in complete social isolation. Swedish society had changed, but their version of it had been artificially preserved. From this we may infer an interesting point about life-styles in the early ghettos; that is, they are essentially artificial no matter how real their base may be. The educational system, too, may be a preserver of artificial life-styles. It is one of the primary aims of the Social Learning Curriculum to enable teachers to accomodate themselves to the requirements of various nondominant groups by making them aware of differences in traditions and situations.

"With few indigenous institutions surviving migration, religion became central to ethnic identity (Kramer, 1970: 83)." The family is seen as the locus and focus of interpersonal life, the church of the communal life. With specific regard to the Jewish situation, Kramer (1970: 89) states: "Without a homeland for centuries, the Jews...had a set of institutions already adapted to exile." In the ghetto situation, "Its inner solidarity law in the cohesion of family life, and families in turn gained status within the community through the organization of the synagogue." Louis Wirth (1928) put it slightly differently when he said: "The real inner solidarity of the ghetto community always lay in

the strong family ties. Here each individual, who was just a mere Jew to the world outside, had a place of dignity, and was bound to the rest by profound sentiments." In this last, we may observe a convergence of values and functions between the Jewish family and the Hispanic one.

In passing from the ghetto stage of the Jewish family, it should be noted that a report from Poll (1962) indicated the survival of such a form into the 60s in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn, New York.*

The stage of minority community was reached fairly rapidly by the Jewish population. As noted in Kramer (1970: 113): "Their relatively rapid mobility into the middle class afforded the Jews an acculturated community by the second generation." Looking ahead for a moment, we shall see that in the third generation, the minority community is abandoned, to be replaced by a status community based on education, occupations, and social status. This sort of extraordinary assimilation and upward mobility is rare with any ethnic group and in any society. Glazer and Moynihan offer us some concrete evidence of this: in New York 24 percent are proprietors, managers, and officials; 15 percent are professionals and semiprofessionals; and 25 percent are in white collar and sales occupations.

Yet not all traditional ties are being abandoned as this mobility occurs. Glazer and Moynihan also tell us that Jews still tend to concentrate geographically, showing a preference for residing in neighborhoods that are at least 50 percent Jewish. Kramer notes that "Although they don't want their children to be any more

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*Also in passing it may be noted that the Chinatowns of New York and San Francisco particularly until recently most closely resembled in organization and family life the classic ghetto. However, this situation is breaking down so rapidly as to warrant only this quick note.

religious than necessary, they want them to be sufficiently Jewish to avoid intermarriage." Or, as Glazer and Moynihan would have it, "The parents favor residence in a neighborhood that has such a high density of Jewish families that the probability of their children marrying a Jewish person approaches certainty."

The Jewish family as a unit of a minority community (in the second generation) retains many of the distinctive patterns associated with it as a unit of the ghetto: a strong family life, a low rate of alcoholism, and a high degree of political liberalism. Summarizing what Kramer reports and concludes: "They may be less Jewish than before, but Jewish they remain." What we may have here is an interesting case of acculturation without assimilation of family life-styles. For example, Rosenthal (1960) reports that Jews continue to choose neighborhoods with high in-group density in order to encourage endogamy, the point made by Glazer and Moynihan above.

Marden and Meyer (1962: 400) report that, in this generation the cohesiveness of the family is still quite strong, even though the family follows the nuclear patterns of the dominant "WASP" group. Relatives tend to keep in closer touch and visit more often than in the case of the dominant group family. Winch, et al. (1967) offer some statistical data on this phenomenon: 150 Jewish and 150 non-Jewish households were studied; 78 percent of the Jewish households, 35 percent of the Catholic households, and 14 percent of the Protestant households had at least 12 households of kin in the same urban area. Seventy-one percent of the Jewish households, 33 percent of the Catholic households, and 16 percent of the Protestant households reported regular interaction with at least five kin households.

The implication for sources of support and assistance during problem times for the family is clear. Specifically, when contrasted to the Puerto Rican family, the Jewish family is much less likely to look to nonfamily agencies for family support and is much less likely to become a welfare family. Another

implication is that, in considering the theories of delinquency mentioned elsewhere, Jewish families are less likely to produce "bad" children. More realistically stated, Jewish children are less likely to come into contact with the police at all, or, when they do, that contact will not usually result in a recorded offense.

The structure of the Jewish family is a strong element in their upward mobility in the values placed on "good" or supportive behavior, on education, on "getting ahead."

In turning to the third generation Jewish family, or what we might term the contemporary situation, it is well to consider a remark or two by Kramer on the transition out of minority status: "Presumably, when dominant values were acquired, they would undermine the basis for a separate community. However, they could do so only if the achievements of the minority were accorded social recognition by the dominant group. The community persists in large part because of continued differential treatment by the larger society..." A second general principle involved in a transition is that greater conflict occurs between dominant and nondominant groups as greater claims are made by the latter, and with greater legitimacy.

The Kramer and Leventman study (1961) of third generation Jews in Minneapolis shows some interesting new things were taking place. One of the most influential on family life was that of the emerging Jewish business or organization man without an inherited family business who enters heretofore closed corporate systems of employment in the managerial class. This may imply that the life-style of the family and the status community in which they participate is becoming more influenced by an occupation and occupational circle than by the previous ethnic factor. Accompanying this development seems to be a further decline in orthodoxy. The study reveals further that, although retaining close ties with Jewish friends from childhood, their interests are turning to a

shared-interest base rather than a shared-birth one in their social life. Still, endogamy for their children seems to be preferred.

The young Jews of the third or later generation hold both Jewish and non-Jewish affiliations in voluntary associations. Goldstein and Goldscheider (1968) state: "Young Jews are now no different from members of the dominant group, but to a large extent the Jewish community remains an identifiable separate entity." As we might expect, their study also reveals a greater rate of intermarriage. There would seem, also, to be a growing desire for status acceptance in the dominant group among younger Jewish families, and certainly among younger children. This is an obvious clash with the older values, and must inevitably lead to a necessary abandonment of certain family ties, especially those built about religious learning in the family. In fact, among third and later generation families, the focus of religious (and, to a degree, secular) education has distinctly shifted from home to synagogue (Sklare and Greenblum, 1967).

This last study also gives us some interesting data on the changing marriage ideology when the authors note that fully 85 percent of those surveyed opted for the American concept of romantic love over the traditional form of endogamy. And, further, that 93 percent were fully prepared to accept an intermarriage, which implies that their identification with their children now takes precedence over their commitment to the Jewish community and traditional family.

This overview of the Jewish family shows us once again the vital necessity for regarding the family as a distinctly ongoing process. It should be noted in conclusion that, as in the case of any social process, certain "mixtures" of elements will be found. That is, in the "pure" first- second-, or third-generation Jewish family, there may be some small variance from these descriptions.

The Catholic Family

The Catholic family of various nationalities has a process history of forms and types. It may be a little more complicated because of differences of national origin, but some clear characteristics emerge.

Kramer (1970: 95) notes that in the first generation of Catholic immigration, the family remained the focus of tradition and social interaction. However, while coming from a sacred society where religion could be taken for granted, once faced with an essentially secular society, religion became the source of social organization. (We will recall that, basically, the family was the source of social organization for the Jews.)

We can note at the beginning that, by orienting their social activity around religion, the Catholic community built little basis for economic mobility (as contrasted with the Jewish groups). Using the example of the Irish Catholics in New York, Moynihan (1963) points out that all economic effort (and what little surplus that was available) went to strengthening the Irish Catholic church. This single fact has important implications for the early family process; that is, locating it in the lower class and insuring that it would remain there for some time.

Accompanying this economic "error," was an educational one. There was little respect for learning (not unusual in the lower strata of the time) and, consequently, little learning available for the young. Moynihan (1963) points out that, as a result, the best available Catholic youth were drawn away from the community and maintained only token ties with their families. Thus the traditional extended-kin Catholic family began to break down very quickly.

The Polish Catholic family follows a similar pattern in the first generation, although it tended to settle in the Midwest, in the Great Lakes area near industrial centers such as Chicago. Their family culture was extremely

traditional and based on a strong patriarchal organization with extended kinship ties. This structure was to prove very resistant to change (Lopata, 1964).

Even so, the family structure proved to be subsidiary to the power of the transplanted church, which in the transplantation became a primary focus such as in the Irish case. As the church gained ascendancy in the daily lives of its parishioners, family ties were attenuated and individual fortunes were no longer entirely identified with the family ones.

As Marden and Meyer (1962) and others point out, the Italian Catholic patterns operated somewhat differently. At the risk of trying to explore something as nebulous as "national character," it is still possible to say that nationality was more important here than religion. The early groups came from the south of Italy and were peasants and landless laborers. The family and the extended kin system were extremely strong. Largely illiterate and resistant to change, their entire lives were built around the authority of the family circle to the point that "outsiders" even from the same village were distrusted. Obviously this made for minimal social mobility and very limited achievement by the children of the family (an implication for the identification of exceptional children in this group). Although patriarchal in the authority system, the "Italian mama" exerted her traditional <u>covert</u> power. From personal observation we can say that this peculiar combination of patriarchal-matriarchal shared authority is present in Italy today outside the major cities. The lines of authority are simply expressed differently, with the former being formal and overt, the latter emotive and covert.

Because of this family system, children of the first generation were completely family-oriented and usually left school early to provide family income.

In the later 1950's, Herbert Gans (1962) made an important study of second-generation Italians around and in Boston. Essentially he discovered that those

Italians settling in urban areas made some major steps toward acculturation by being forced into an exploited labor category of unskilled factory or construction labor.

Still, as regards the family, the more that economic circumstances changed, the more the family remained the same. This stands in some contrast to the other Catholic groups and, again, our guess is that it is due to the national Italian tradition rather than the Catholic one. The family unit remained central: "As a result of the surrounding strangeness, the immigrants tried to retain the self-sufficiency of the family circle as much as they could. They founded a number of community organizations that supported this circle, and kept away from the outside world whenever possible (Gans, 1962: 204-5)." One may draw from the Italian experience (see particularly Barzini,1964) sufficiently to say that the essential anticlericalism of the Italians is an explanation for the continuing family tradition.

At a later stage of development we can observe some progress along the social scale among the Catholic groups. Still, the lines are quite different from either the Jewish communities or the dominant group in that they have prospered chiefly in those areas requiring manipulation and organization of manual labor (construction, for example) or services (the police). Still, when they own businesses at this stage, those businesses tend to be family ones, tending once again to preserve the strong family unit and extended kin ties.

Glazer and Moynihan feel that for the Irish Catholics a rise into the middle class is accompanied by certain tensions that often result in alcohol addiction. This seems to be a fairly common problem and creates tensions within the family, whose children nonetheless tend to remain very loyal even to alcoholic parents.

With regard to the Polish community, social isolation is continued into the

second generation, and sometimes beyond. Their upward mobility is quite limited and there is often conflict when they come into contact with the dominant group. This is reflected (Lopata, 1964) in considerable family disorganization, and an alcohol problem is often encountered.

In the Italian group we find greater acculturation, "...but even after three generations, (they) remain traditionally bounded by family and neighborhood (Kramer, 1970: 122)." As Gans observes, the strongest survival in this community is the family system. Food habits remain and Italian is spoken but not taught to the children:

> Social relationships are almost entirely limited to other Italians, because much sociability is based on kinship, and because most friendships are made in childhood, and are thus influenced by residential propinquity. Intermarriage with non-Italians is unusual among the second generation, and is not favored for the third. As long as both parties are Catholic, however, disapproval is mild.

The peer group is extremely important for Italian Catholic children, and that peer group is centered around family members and friends. This is confirmed by Gans and several others who have investigated this group at differing times--for example Whyte's classic study (1955). The strength of this peer group should not be underestimated, especially in the education and socialization of youth. The in-group loyalty is extremely strong, and there is hostility to outsiders, which definitely includes the educational system, an important point for those of us involved in the Social Learning Curriculum. Gans flatly states: "Children thus acquire little interest in learning."

"By the third generation, the previously separate Catholic nationality groups are beginning to merge into a pan-Catholic community (Kramer, 1970: 147)." The effect on the family is clearly observed by Gans (1962: 214):

> New occupational and educational attainments are likely to have repercussions on the structure of the family, and on the peer group society generally. For one thing, they will create more

> social and cultural differences between people. This, in turn, will affect the family circle, for relatives who have resonded to the widening opportunities may begin to find they have less in common, and are no longer compatible in their interests. At the same time, since people have fewer children than in previous generations, the number of potential family circle members will be reduced. Consequently, the family circle may be somewhat harder to maintain (in the third generation) than in the second generation (Gans, p. 214).

One clear implication here is that we may expect to find more family problems occuring in later generations and more recourse to outside institutions for their solutions.

Catholics do seem more inclined than Jews to establish intimate interpersonal relationships outside their own group. Lenski (1961) reports that 30 percent of the Catholics are married to someone who was raised as a non-Catholic in contrast to the high proportion of Jews who married other Jews. Only 44 percent of Catholics have Catholics as all or nearly all their close friends.

In summary, although the patterns of family process have differed among these ethnic groups, one overall trend emerges, that of assimilation or integration into the dominant group. As this occurs the integrative force of the family becomes less important, although traditional ties may be maintained. If, unlike the case of the black family, the dominant society continues to be more including of these ethnic groups, we may expect family processes to continue until the type approximates the dominant type almost completely.

THE FAMILY AND THE ECONOMY

Our discussion of several ethnic and racial family groups (Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, and Indian) will follow in this section. We will investigate the relationship of family life to the economy. The rationale for this approach is as follows. We saw earlier that, in addition to economic deprivation, the black family was socially molded by inadequate social integration or traditions. As Kramer (1970) puts it, "In addition to being personally invisible as individuals, racial groups are socially inconsequential in their poverty." However, as we shall see, the difference between an economic situation and a social one may be mediated by cultural content, integration, or tradition.

For example, it is perfectly true that the Mexican-American and the Puerto Rican family experience severe economic problems and generally fall into lower-class economic life in the United States. It is also perfectly true that they are not well qualified for integration into middle-class life. It is nonetheless also true that their cultural tradition and values attached to family life are quite different from those of the black family and serve to insulate them from the black marginality and, to an extent, protect them from the social consequence of relative economic deprivation. It is this insulating cultural base and peculiar forms of economic adaptation that ensues from low-economic opportunity that leads to what Oscar Lewis (1968) has called the "culture of poverty."

As with most poor families, the Mexican-Americans and the Puerto Ricans are quite aware of middle-class values; many prefer them and seek to emulate the particular forms prevalent in the American middle-class family. However, their economic situations simply will not allow such emulation, at least on a satisfactory scale. Some of the same problems of the black family follow from this. In a culture of poverty, individuals have a feeling of helplessness that is similar

to the blacks' feeling of chronic failure. This affects the family in a negative fashion. Family members may come, in short order, to feel powerless to help each other; they may become unavailable to each other for emotional support as they are unavailable for material support. The pain and alienation of this peculiar situation is perhaps even more severe than that in the black family. In *La Vida*, Oscar Lewis points out that it is entirely possible for a preliterate or "primitive" people to be impoverished and still have an integrated and satisfying culture, without family conflict. It is not nearly so easy for a people with a rich cultural heritage and tradition, which in the Mexican-American case may be a combination of two extraordinarily high cultures. Certainly, in both Mexican-American and Puerto Rican cases, the family is historically a very stable community.

Therefore tensions in family life are felt quite severely, especially as these groups tend to be well aware of the economic source of the problems.

The Mexican-American Situation and Family Life

While economically similar to the Puerto Rican family, the Mexican-American family partakes of differing and unique traditions. Historically the Mexican-American people may be said to be indigenous. In the Southwest, there has developed an indigenous Hispanic culture; in a sense, a Mexican-American who first comes to the Southwest feels that he is returning home (McWilliams, 1949). It is important to note that this Hispanic culture is socially isolated and quite homogeneous, for this fact tends to inspire the Mexican-American family toward traditional organization and values. This group is quite resistant to change.

For the most part, the Mexican migration has been composed of members of the lower class (McWilliams, 1949). The employment structure in the United States has perpetuated this economic class situation (we are quite familiar with the migrant worker story, but in fact virtually all employment avenues for this group seem to be dead end). The migrant employment structure, with the father absent from

the family, has led to family problems not too unlike those in the matriarchal black family.

The community that is built from this sort of economic base is likely to be quite shaky and "institutionally inadequate" (Kramer, 1970: 171). The economic factors have effectively prevented the rise of a middle class and a middle-class family life as we know it from our model of the conjugal family. The family life-style is deprived of emulation of both the dominant-group middle-class family and any in-group middle-class family. The model for family adaptation is simply missing. They have nothing but tradition and that is frequently disrupted by the new economic situation.

The physical community is derived from the economic situation and is not conducive to any sort of social mobility or solution to family problems. Most Mexican-Americans are concentrated in the LA area where, by and large, they live in *colonias*. Broom and Shevky (1952) point out that many of these communities were originally labor camps; certainly some of this ambience is strongly present today.

Those Mexican-Americans who migrate from the Southwest tend to assimilate to American living patterns more easily, but, because of the social isolation of the group, they still tend to intermarry thus continuing the family process largely unchanged. As the Mexican poet Octario Paz has brought home to us, the quality of fatalism in Mexican culture does not encourage social change; rather it engenders acceptance of a problem whether it be national or related to the conjugal family unit (such as the presence of an exceptional child).

The Mexican-American family tends to be quite large when compared to our normative conjugal family model. One-third of these units have four or more children under the age of 18. It is an intensely traditional family and operates within a very extended kinship group. As a matter of fact, as a type, it may be seen as a throwback to the ideal 19th-century American Western family. The extended kinship relations include several generations. It is a patriarchal family

with a sharply defined sexual division of labor. As we saw earlier, its values do not include change or mobility (Heller, 1966). Male authority is supreme (which is related to the tradition of *machismo* or super-masculinity).

Heller notes that familial solidarity is very important in this extended unit and that it is a very serious offense to violate an obligation to kin. As a sanctuary in a hostile world, the family is valued above any individual achievement; its needs are put before those of the self. (This may be an obstacle to achievement of children in educational settings.) Of course there are generational differences; as the family becomes more acculturated, some of the rigidity of the processes diminishes (Madsen, 1964).

Some important information for our purposes is given by Madsen on the place of children. Apparently among the lower-class family (and we must remember that this class dominants), children are regarded very much as working members with a de-emphasis on education. Madsen points out that this is in the tradition of the changeless, inevitable culture. Heller sees the family as the absolute center of all social life, even though there may be small changes in emphasis from one generation to another. Religion is a factor here in the solidarity of family life inasmuch as the religion is predominantly Catholic.

The preservation of this sort of family processes is likely to continue when members of the family do not aspire to, nor necessarily believe in the superiority of, family processes and values in the dominant American culture. As Madsen reminds us, they are first and foremost members of *la raza*, the race.

The Puerto Rican Situation and Family Life

The immigration of the Puerto Rican community follows patterns different from those of the Mexican-American. Because of a thriving travel business, it has a near-commuter quality. From this follows some of the tentativeness of the quality of their life in the United States, chiefly New York City and the East Coast. However, as Mills et al. (1950) note, they too find employment only in the lower ranks of the service trades and as unskilled labor, making for an insecurity close to that of the Mexican-Americans.

For our purposes in considering the family life of the Puerto Rican community, it is important to note the observations of Glazer and Moynihan (1963) that they no longer have a distinctively Hispanic culture because of their close contact for the past 60 years or so with mainland culture. Their life-styles have also been strongly affected by the impact of mass media.

Still, some qualities crucial to the family life-style remain. As Marden and Meyer (1962) observe, there is still the importance of *dignitad*, self-possession, and masculinity. These are seen in the family patterns which, like the Mexican-Americans', tend to fall into a strong extended-family kin system. But here too, the influence of the mainland has been felt. Especially given the employment structure of New York City, it is often as easy for the wife to find employment as the husband, contributing to some attenuation of the masculine authority role. One would tend to think that the extended kin system would mediate the effects upon children, and sometimes this is indeed the case. However, when the god-parents or other kin remain on the island and the family dissolution occurs on the

mainland, this system cannot help but break down somewhat. The tendency seems to be that the government is then seen as a substitute for extended kin, often giving rise to the structure commonly known as the "welfare family."

Padilla (1958) offers information on some residence and family patterns that may be contrasted with those of the Mexican-Americans. The family still constitutes the basic set of social relations and reciprocal expectations, but it is defined as much by residence as by blood (it may be important to know more about the neighborhood than the family background when confronted with the children's problems and attitudes). Also, the neighborhood is often characterized more by its state of poverty than by any sense of community, Hispanic or otherwise. As Padilla notes (1958: 62):

> There is a high incidence of violation of norms because of their ineffectiveness in providing the individual with suitable personal and social adaptations. The slum has a culture of its own. It is a way of life whose consistency is partly determined by its position at the fringe of the larger society. Its code for living makes allowances for behavior not necessarily tolerated by other segments of the society. (Emphasis furnished.)

The religious factor does not seem to be crucial. Although, almost entirely Catholic, the church has not seemed to have taken the interest in cultivating nationalistic parishes for Puerto Rican communities as it did with the earlier immigrants (such as the Irish). Therefore, problems of family life cannot very often be referred to religious counsel. This is probably another factor in the tendency of problem families to depend upon the local and state government bureaucracy. When this occurs, it is a prime example of one of our introductory points (Chapter Two) regarding family decisions being made outside the home.

The cultural displacement of the Puerto Rican family into the impact of rapid social change in the urban setting induces critical strains upon the family. And, as the older traditions are attenuated the family unit does not seem to be capable of providing even the minimal bonds that we observe in the Mexican-American family.

Just as in the culture of poverty of the Mexican-American family, we find little social mobility among the Puerto Ricans. Mills et.al.(1950) feel that this engenders a minimal level of aspiration and that most are pessimistic about achieving even that level. However there is greater interest in the mobility of children than in the Mexican-American situation. The Mills study of 1950 reveals that 61 percent of a sample in New York City said they would like their children to go to college, but only 25 percent expected them to actually do so. A current survey would probably reflect differing attitudes with the new open-admissions policy of the City University of New York and other systems throughout the country.

Education is generally a difficult experience for both the Mexican-American and the Puerto Rican child, and the Glazer study reports a high drop-out rate. However, we must always bear in mind that all these studies and the principles that emerge from them took place in the early sixties. There is some indication that generational differences are aligned to some upward mobility across the board, though it may be relatively insignificant when compared to dominant and even other minority groups.

In concluding our section on social class and family life, we note some of the shared characteristics of the two family groups examined. Certainly the most obvious is the shared language (similar to earlier immigrant groups in America) and the attempt to preserve certain Hispanic traditions against the inroads (especially those made by American mass media) of the dominant culture. The family is certainly the locus of this characteristic. A more crucial, and negative, factor is that of poverty. As Seligman (1968) observes generally about the poverty situation in contemporary society:

> As the economy settled, those trapped in poverty found themselves in an unending cycle. Poverty became self-perpetuating. The poor had been trapped by being born to the wrong parents in the wrong part of the country in the wrong racial group.

As for prospects for the future, we continue to emphasize that the sense of pride may be crucial to weathering and perhaps even overcoming the poverty situation. Social movements of protest and organization have begun, often led by rebelling youth. It is always difficult to predict the outcome of a social movement, but we are certain that at least the result will serve to organize the communities in some fashion.

ERIC

The First Americans as a Minority Family*

The American Indian family is a rather unique situation and process, although historically it is closely related to the minority situation of the American black, with the poignant difference that the Indians are the indigenous population of America. The chief factor in both situations, however, is that accompanying their legal subordination is what anthropologists call "deculturation," or "detribalization" when specifically applied to the Indian case. This is nothing more nor less than the complete destruction by the dominant group of all traditional values, affectual ties, and communal support. If we wish to put the case strongly, we may call it cultural genocide.

We can be brief in the Indian case because its historical development is fairly simple--three stages, in fact. The first of these, the pre-conquered era, is accurately described by the anthropological literature. The family structure varied somewhat from tribe to tribe, or nation to nation. Generally, however, it was a stable, traditional institution based on extended kinship ties.

The second era, that of reservation culture, sought successfully to preserve this structure. There were no alternatives available as reservation culture operated to preserve the Indian culture as a living artifact. In fact, deprived quite literally of their freedom in benevolent concentration camps, the Indians were hard put to recall and practice their own traditions. Anthropologists who came in large numbers after the Second World War (and before) to study various

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*We are indebted to the lectures of Arthur J. Vidich for the bulk of this material. A thorough discussion is also found in Kramer (1970).

nations were often the educators, educating the Indians to their own cultural heritage. Certainly there was no change in the preexisting family structure. In fact, one may say that the only change was steady economic deterioration and cultural decay. Only a few tribes in the Southwest seized upon their new-found anthropological education to fashion small businesses based on tourism.

If we can speak of a modern Indian family at all, it is only in very recent times. As we have seen the basic economic situation is one of nonintegration into the larger society due to three factors:

1) nonadaptability to the labor situation,
2) being uprooted and moved to marginal economic areas, and
3) detribalization and genocide.

World War II is seen as a turning point (as it was in the life changes and fates of several other minority groups). The generation of Indians who served in the war returned to the reservation having expressed what aggression they felt against an outside enemy, largely content to live out their lives in suspended animation assisted by alcohol and drugs.

The generation following this, however, encountered a totally new phenomenon--the anthropological field worker of a new breed, who, identifying with the Indians, created a built-in set of spokesmen. This group, largely composed of Indian youth was encouraged by the Office of Economic Opportunity under President Johnson to become a pressure group. The traditional Indian family was altered overnight. Authority was transferred from elders, patriarchs, to young leadership of a political nature operating through governmental agencies.

We have spent little time on the Indian family because about all that we can note is that it is in limbo. We cannot determine what direction it may take, but there are at least two possibilities discernable:

1) integration into the welfare structure.
2) complete abandonment of the past and surrender to the dominant group.

The first of these would direct the modern Indian family into patterns similar to those of the lower-class blacks or Puerto Ricans. The second might direct them into patterns of assimulation and mobility. The inability to say which possibility, if either, will occur and the current state of flux renders the Indian family problems particularly hard to deal with.

ERIC

THE FAMILY AND SOCIAL ROLE

Without overburdening ourselves with a detailed sociological discussion of the concept of role, we must look first at some formal definitions and notions about a commonsensical idea. First of all, what do we mean by "role"? Theodorson and Theodorson (1969: 352) define it thus: "A pattern of behavior, structured around specific rights and duties and associated with a particular status position within a group or social situation." In our discussion of the role in the family process, we shall emphasize 'rights and duties."

The social definition of role is further refined into various kinds of role processes. For example, there is the notion of achieved role, one that is possessed by virtue of choice or a result of individual efforts and actions. Opposed to this is ascribed role, one that is assigned at birth or at a stage of life, or, in the notion of social class, one that is inherited. Assumed role is synonymous with achieved role. Internalized role has to do with a learning process; children are socialized by internalizing roles and norms set forth by others, most often their parents. Perceived role is that which a person believes others expect him to play in a given situation. Sometimes this does not accord with his own personal role definition, in which case we have what is called role conflict. Close to this is prescribed role, one that is prescribed socially, setting certain limits on behavior.

It is commonsensically clear to us that all of these ideas operate at various stages in the family interaction process. Let this seem a too rigid, definitional

structure, we should stress the interpretation of behavior and use of roles by a group of social psychologists termed "symbolic interactionists." Very briefly stated, the emphasis of this group is on process, on the fact that the establishment of a role is an ongoing procedure and, in fact, is constantly changing through human interaction. For these people, human roles are manufactured by symbolic encounters. It is essentially a dramaturgical model, most clearly set forth by Goffman (1964), but widely accepted by others. A simple example will clarify all this: As we will see, the conventional role assigned to the mother in the family is one of emotive and supportive character. However, due to a temporary absence of the father from the family or his sudden permanent removal from the family, the mother may have to learn a new role and learn to play it convincingly, that of decision-maker and authority-figure. Whether she can successfully do so depends on more than her personal behavior. In this situation the children legitimate the role by a proper, obediant response; if they do not, the mother may experience role conflict.

This is but a simple example, and most of us can imagine many other, more complicated situations, i.e., by the rejection by either parent of a retarded child (see Chapter One). In fact, another school of social psychologists, the ethnomethodologists, such as Garfinkel (1967), carry this scheme of analysis much, much further to say that <u>all human existence</u> is a thin tissue of artificially constructed symbols which collapse completely if perceived roles are not properly played out.

Let us look at various family roles as they are defined in a traditional conjugal family of any social class, historically and comparatively. Goode is our best guide to this model.

It seems that both "biosocially" (nonhuman families) and culturally (the approved authority of human families) the adult male parent is given the dominant role and the moral privilege of authority. In all cultural cases, a hierarchy

exists to achieve order and, in most, it places the male at the top. He is seen as stronger, more enduring and not interrupted by menstruation, birth, and lactation. It is important to note that this holds only so long as the society socializes the male child to want to perform these tasks. If this dominant role is not rewarded, then it may not be the desired one.

Thus we get a picture of the following roles that are ideally played by the father in the family:

1) instrumental leader
2) organizer
3) problem-solving of outside world
4) sex model for children

The ideal, typical model of the female family role is, to an extent, based on some opposite supposed qualities of the male, that is, weaker, less enduring, and interrupted...The mother is assigned the following roles in family life:

1) biological functions
2) psychological functions
3) expression and emotion
4) integrative
5) sex model for children

It is important to remember that roles change at most points in the life cycle, but may also change at any time because of other social happenings. It is also important to recall that traditional roles are shaped by <u>total</u> family interaction. Goode reports that, comparatively, the greatest societal uniformity is in defining male and female behavior. For example, of 100 societies he studied, 87 percent more of the males were more strongly pushed to achievement and self-reliance than females. Other than this very general statement, we must observe that, while the sexual division of labor is universal, the forms it may take are culturally defined and dependent on the society under consideration. Certainly we may say that these model roles would apply to the general conception of the American family; this is reflected in several textbooks examined.

Still another element is added to our notions of family roles when we note that Kirkpatrick (1963) sees changing roles of family members (all family members), especially the child, as a struggle for power. He observes that the parents' role may be exploitative and represent a struggle for domination of each other and the children. Some such subtle operation may obtain in the Italian family as we observed the complimentary overt and covert authority roles of father and mother. Another example, as we previously observed, is that of the middle-class black mother who may retain dominance over the father via social functions.

Emphasizing for a moment the changeability of roles, we note the most extreme form, that of role reversal. Goode notes a consensus among writers that, when this occurred, the socialization process is usually endangered. This may have some application in families greatly influenced by the tenets of Women's Liberation or in the very little we know about homosexual marriages. We feel, however, that Goode and others neglect an important variable; role reversal may not be "dangerous" to the children if this reversal is legitimated by them, accepted as a norm, or if the reversal engenders little apparent role conflict between the parents. It would seem that this has been inadequately studied to make concrete conclusions.

Having, however briefly, noted the traditional roles of father and mother in the model family, let us examine some variations in these patterns. It turns out from what we have already seen that the variation is very great.

We found the role of the father ranging from subservient or totally absent in the lower-class black family to complementarily authoritative in the Italian Catholic family of all classes to the extraordinarily authoritative characteristic of the Mexican-American family. In these three examples, the position of the mother varied inversely.

Yet can we say with certainty that this variation in traditional roles is the chief variable in the presence of or lack of family problems, particularly with socialization of the children? It is the answer often given. However,

looking back to our consideration of the origins of family problems in these groups, we find that the crucial variable really seems to be that of class in the case of the black family, ethnicity in the Italian Catholic, and enforced poverty in the Mexican-American. Therefore, we feel that role variation may not be the entire answer, that perhaps we should consider other variables in examining family problems, particularly those of the youth.

Building upon this notion, we would like to suggest for the most serious consideration the theory that the assumption of any roles by either father or mother may be functional to the successful socialization of children. We should open this for discussion, although we cannot hope to adequately prove or disprove it until more empirical studies have been undertaken in such situations.

Fundamental to this consideration is both the idea of perceived role and prescribed role, for, as we have stressed, the family does not exist in isolation from the larger society. Even in the closed minority communities, the family interacts with other institutions and processes, such as church and religion. Thus far, it has largely been the case that the approved family roles are those approved by the churches, the schools, and peer groups. Causally, it may be a chicken-and-egg question that we can never answer satisfactorily.

THE FAMILY AND SOCIALIZATION PROCESSES

Most of us have a very good commonsensical idea of what we mean when we speak of "socialization." Goode (1964: 10) provides us with a perfectly succinct and workable definition: "Socialization is the process by which the young human being acquires the values and knowledge of his group and learns the social roles appropriate to his position in it."

For the most part this will suit our purposes admirably. However, any sort of in-depth investigation of the literature on socialization raises many more questions than it answers. For example, when does socialization begin and when does it end? The range of answers here would be from Freud for whom all socialization takes place in the earliest childhood years to the symbolic-interaction social psychologists for whom the process is unending unto death.

Another ticklish question is that of the interrelationship of biological and cultural factors in socialization. In American social science, the behavioral psychologists such as Watson favored biological explanations and held sway until the work of George Herbert Mead (1934). Simply stated, Mead added to behavioral notions the idea of a <u>transactional</u> socialization. The two approaches are illustrated by the rudimentary figures below:

<u>Watson</u>

<u>Mead</u>

Mead's psychology of socialization calls for a social rather than a mechanical (Watsonian) behaviorism. The essential difference lies in the notion of meaning discourse between object and stimulus, an interpretation and reinterpretation (Perinbanayagam, 1971). Put in the form of a crude formula, it would look something like this:

Watsonian behaviorism: $S \rightarrow R$

Meadian social psychology: $S \rightarrow \text{Meaning} \leftarrow R$

Passing from this rudimentary note on how socialization occurs, our main interest is in the agents of socialization, and the family in particular. A thorough review of all the agents of socialization is not necessary for our purposes. However, it must be noted that almost every process and institution in our society is to some extent and at one time or another, an agent of socialization: family, peer group, school (especially when the family offers only inadequate socialization), business, the status community, government bureaucracies, community, and all manner of voluntary associations. All and any of these may be primary or serially primary at various times in the life cycle. In a socially pluralistic society such as would seem to be emerging in the United States, it is all the more difficult to determine in advance the chief agents of socialization of individuals--even individuals born into very specific family situations about which we think we know a great deal. For those who wish a thorough review of the various theories and approaches to socialization, we refer them to Clausen et.al. (1968: 3-72). For the moment a few quotes from this source will indicate the range of views on socialization:

> Most simply, the study of socialization focuses upon the development of the individual as a social being and participant in society. If one takes a developmental perspective, socialization may be regarded as the core of social psychology. As a process, socialization entails a continuing interaction between the individual and those who seek to influence him, an interaction that undergoes many phases and changes.

> For Elkin, it is 'the process by which someone learns the ways of a given society or social group well enough so that he can function within it.'
>
> For Child, socialization is 'the whole process by which an individual born with behavioral potentialities of enormously wide range, is led to develop actual behavior which is confined with a much narrower range--the range of what is customary and acceptable for him according to the standards of his group.'
>
> Aberele, however, puts the stress on the social apparatus which influences the individual's learning and defines for him the range of what is acceptable: 'Socialization consists of those patterns of action or aspects of action which inculcate individuals the skills (including knowledge), motives and attitudes necessary for the performance of present or anticipated roles.'
>
> Whether or not inculcation or coercion is suggested in the definition, socialization does imply that the individual is induced in some measure to conform willingly to the ways of his society or of the particular groups to which he belongs. (emphasis added)

This is merely suggestive of the rich variety of approaches to this subject.

For our purposes we begin with the notion that the family, especially our model conjugal dominant family, is the primary agent of socialization in our society. We can still say that this is so even when our model of the family is stretched a bit. For example, and returning to some basic notions of G.H. Mead, we assumed that the first stage of socialization of the child is at the "play stage" when all or most interaction is symbolic. Major roles are "played at" here, for example the sex role. Interestingly enough for our purposes, Perinbanayagam (1971) offers the example of the great difference of role-learning at this (and other) stage between retarded children with retarded parents and "normal" families. For the retarded, this would seem to be a critical stage. At the play stage, the chief agent within the family would be the "significant other" (in Mead's terminology: that individual exerting primary influence). Now, in families such as the lower-class black family, the father is often absent. This does not necessarily mean that the child will not have a father-figure as a "significant other"; on the contrary, his "father-significant-other" may be an uncle in an extended kin system, or perhaps a male totally unrelated to the

conjugal family. The locus of the significant other is flexible. This same principle would apply as well to any missing family member, mother or sibling. The crucial question at the play stage, and even later at the "game stage" (when the child begins to become a "public person") is that significant others be functionally present. From the point of view of social psychology, the chief problem for the child in the socialization process are caused by a confusion of conflicting significant others. This holds true also at the later play stage, if more universal figures (generalized others) are in conflict.

The real question in the socialization of the child would then seem to be not "who" but "whether and how." As we shall see below in our examination of family roles, there is a wide range of authority within our various family groups. Later we shall see that there is an equally wide range of socialization purposes and patterns within the family, some of which would appear to be based on distinct class, racial, and ethnic differences.

But, to continue our general perspective, let us look rather closely at the essay by Clausen (1968: 132-181). As we noted earlier, socialization is a cumulative, never-ending process; "...socialization is accomplished both through the explicit efforts of socialization agents and through social-structural or contextual factors that influence the individual's life experiences." Further:

> (Socialization) includes the transmission of cultural norms and contents and also the evolving of particularistic relationships within the broad guidelines of normative prescriptions. The ordering of the manifold phases of socialization and their outcomes will depend on the particular culture and the segment of society or the matrix of persons in which the individual is located. It will also depend, of course, on the individual's attributes, on his intellectual and physical capacities, his temperament and appearance, especially as these have been nurtured and resonded to by others in early childhood.

The emphasis is added above because it stresses a major point we wish to make here: it is impossible to expect all forms of family and social life to act as agents of socialization in precisely the same way or with the same results;

it would be a grave error to employ either expectation as a value judgment.

Continuing with Clausen:

> In attempting to determine the effectiveness of any particular socialization technique employed at a given time, we face the problem of disentangling the contribution of the technique from the effects of individual differences in potential, variations in earlier socialization experience, lack of comparability in the cultural content transmitted, and variations in the relationships between socialization agents and the individual being socialized.

Here Clausen notes the problem of interlocking variables such as class, etc., that we mentioned above. This is expanded upon when he notes:

> Studies which seek to establish the effects upon child behavior of socialization techniques or parental attitudes may manage to characterize the parental relationship (for example, "warm" or "cold), but neither the cultural content, nor the social context, nor the child's capacities are likely to receive any attention.

Through Clausen, we emphasize that we cannot judge the efficacy of a particular form of socialization by an examination of either family structure or parental attitudes alone:

> It would be perilous to impute causal significance to the parental attitudes and behaviors. The child may shape his parents' attitudes as much as he is shaped by them, especially in the years beyond early childhood.

The interactionist perspective is well represented by the following somewhat descriptive but useful passage:

> The child undergoing socialization may not be aware of the significance of influences that impinge on him or even of the beginnings of shifts in his interests and identifications, yet he has an unmatched view of his own life history. He knows how tired he gets of hearing the same old admonitions from parents or teachers; he can recall how breathtakingly fresh a particular discovery was for him years ago. He has a sense of who he is and what he wants, and both come into play over the course of socialization. Parents, too, can view their children's development over the long run. They live with hopes and fears for each child. At times they see their relationships with a child grow suddenly tense and anger-laden; they know the bewilderment of having their own values and goals challenged and occasionally discarded.

As we know from geneticists and biologists, every human being begins with

somewhat unique potentialities. We also know that almost immediately these potentialities begin to be shaped by nobiological processes:

> His original social matrix--family, social class, ethnic background--not only provides him with initial orientations and trained abilities but carried also an implicit social stereotype of attributed characteristics. Within this matrix, the child develops characteristic ways of interpreting and responding to others.

We may imply that our pictures of the various family groups in this presentation correspond roughly to the "stereotypes of attributed characteristics" referred to by Clausen. However, we must recall that this process is not necessarily completely deterministic, only most likely: "Socialization agents will respond both to the social stereotype derived from appearance and background and to the child's characteristic patterns of behavior." One implication for us of this statement is that we probably could not expect automatic improvement in the retarded child, or "problem" child, by placing him in a "better" family situation.

A word or two further might be said about the retarded child in socialization. "Within the various milieus and settings in which his socialization takes place, the child is exposed to very different 'assumptive worlds.'" These assumptive worlds may very much be in conflict with the retarded child. His family may impress upon him his attractiveness, his worthiness, his goodness. However, the assumptive world of his peer group may present a conflicting impression of his strangeness. The school situation may present still another impression of his distinct unworthiness and lack of ability. Clauson also notes that these close, primary worlds are mediated by larger societal structures and processes:

> Quite apart from the specific aims of socialization agents, the child confronts different constellations of values, beliefs, people, and opportunities depending on where his family is located socially, geographically, and temporally.

A major burden of socialization is placed on the child himself, not just in his power to interact and re-form the interactions of his parents and kin, but through his own internalization processes. As Clausen puts it:

> The child must manage to incorporate and to some extent integrate experience from situation to situation and from setting to setting. He must become skilled at discerning not only what is wanted of him by any given socialization agent but the degree of leeway that is available and the costs of noncompliance with any particular influence attempt.

This would seem to be one of the major problem areas of the retarded child, in that these capacities are the most severely retarded. However, even with the nonretarded child "...there are limits to the degree to which the children bridge conflicting demands or incompatible expectations.

Inseparable from this notion is that of the child's ability to conceptualize:

> To be fully incorporated into a group, an individual must know and understand the role of group member, must be capable of performing that role, and must be motivated to do so. Adequate socialization experience is a necessary, but not a sufficient, prelude to full membership status; the individual must elect to maintain a degree of commitment to the group and its purposes, but such commitment is not an autocratic resultant of socialization.

It is fairly safe to guess that most parents are not self-consciously aware of all the socialization tasks they will be called upon to perform with their first child. The degree and rapidity of such awareness comes in a varied fashion from family type to type and individual to individual. The number of tasks taken on by parents also varies greatly from family to family. Clausen lists seven that he considers major:

1) Provision of sustenance and nurture for the infant.
2) Training and channeling of physiological needs.
3) Teaching, skill training, practice of motor skills, language, etc.
4) Orienting the child to his immediate world of kin, community, and society.
5) Transmitting cultural goals and values; motivating the child toward parental and societal goals.
6) Promoting interpersonal skills, concern for and responsiveness to feelings of others.
7) Controlling the scope of the child's behaviors.

Very specifically, we offer the table from Clausen (p. 141) in slightly abbreviated form:

Types of Tasks of Early Childhood Socialization in the Family

Parental Aim or Activity	Child's Task or Achievement
1. Provision of nurturance and physical care.	Acceptance of nurturance (development of trust).
2. Training and channeling of physiological needs.	Control of the expression of biological impulses.
3. Teaching and skill-training.	Learning to recognize objects and cues.
4. Orienting the child.	Developing a cognitive map of one's social world; learning to fit behavior to situational demands.
5. Transmitting cultural and subcultural goals.	Developing a sense of right and wrong; developing goals and criteria for choices.
6. Promoting interpersonal skills.	Learning to take the perspective of another person; responding selectively to the expectations of others.
7. Guiding, correcting, helping the child to formulate his own goals, plan his own activities.	Achieving a measure of self-regulation and and criteria for evaluating his own performance.

With regard specifically to the retarded child, Clausen may have an important point when he speaks quite generally about child models and guidance: "Stimulation and the provision of models for the child is important, but so is opportunity to perform. The mother who always dresses and feeds her child does not maximize the child's ability to dress and feed himself." We feel this notion is directly applicable to parents of retarded children, and to teachers in the classroom.

It is clear that the interaction aspect is crucial: "...the response that others make to the child in any situation teach him to fit his behavior to situational demands." Any child is apt to receive a variety of responses to any given situation; the retarded child will receive, however, a much wider range of responses, which in turn will usually be stronger responses. This is one of the sources of psychological conflict.

Many of the greatest conflict problems in socialization begin to occur as the child moves out from the family into the larger society (the "game stage" as social psychologists put it). Certainly it is at this stage that nondominant-group families encounter difficulty. (However, note above in Clausen's table-point 5 which stresses that subcultural goals are also part of socialization.)

It is precisely at this point that factors other than primary family socialization come into play: class, race, and ethnicity are the ones we have chosen to focus upon. Returning to our review of these various minority families, we can anticipate some problems and potential conflicts based on these factors.

Clausen lists some of the crucial relationships between later outside socialization agents as well as those within the family, and those being socialized with respect to roles, as follows:

1) Affectively, nature of the emotional tie: loving or hostile, and involved or neutral.
2) Relative power of agent and inductee, including resource control.
3) Relative degree of initiative allocated to agent and inductee.
4) Specificity of diffuseness of the claims of each individual upon the other.
5) Explicitness and primacy of socialization aims of agent as against other objectives (that is, commitment of the agent to bringing about changes in the orientations, skills, feelings, etc., of the inductee).
6) Consonance, congruence, or resonance of the goals of agent and inductee in the relationship generally and in regard to specific socialization aims.
7) Interpersonal skills of both parties and the clarity of communication between them.
8) Group and contextual supports for or in opposition to agent's aims and methods (normative solidarity versus alienation, subterranean values, conflict orientation).

We may summarize our estimate of the importance of the family in socialization with the single comment that it would seem to be of primary importance during the earliest stages, but that it appears to lose its primacy when the child reaches the play stage or thereabouts--when outside agencies such as the school begin to be influential.

If we examine the various family processes that we have described elsewhere (the blacks, etc.) with relation to the performance of tasks as put forth in the table by Clausen, we must admit that <u>every</u> family fulfills its socialization obligations. Every family provides nurture, channeling of physiological needs, teaching, orientation, transmission of goals, promotion of skills, and guidance. The question of just how satisfactorily this is accomplished immediately introduces

larger, societal factors, over which in many cases the family can have absolutely no control. For example, we have seen that it is the task of the family to provide subcultural goals as well as dominant cultural ones. Applied to the Jewish ghetto family, we can observe that the transmission of subcultural goals of isolation and protection were unquestionably functional for this family at that point in time. Generally speaking, in the minority situation, the transmission of "nonacceptable" subcultural goals is not dysfunctional, but offers protection from the conflict engendered by contact with the dominant society. On the other hand, we must bear in mind changing times and changing processes; traditional subcultural goals may, at a certain point when the group is experiencing upward mobility, be dysfunctional. Measurements, when they can be made at all, must be made against the background of the larger social order.

THE FAMILY AND EDUCATION

After some general observations about the relationship of family life and the educational process, we will examine two primary factors in family education: class and minority status.

Education in family life is viewed as flowing from considerations of socialization in family life and is closely linked thereto.

Formally stated (Clausen, 1968: 153): "The family may be the ideal unit for nurturing the child and guiding his early steps toward participation in the larger social life, but insofar as technical knowledge must be imparted to any significant proportion of the population in the course of socialization, some other instrumentality or institution is required." Anecdotally, at a national meeting of the American Anthropological Association not long ago, a distinguished anthropologist and expert in the family admitted to a colleague that much of his work on socialization was in error because he had insisted that it was accomplished exclusively in the family unit. His colleague responded that this had occurred to him some time ago. He was asked why? He answered: "Because my mother didn't teach me geometry."

The educational process is viewed in socialization as standing somewhat between the family and the larger society. Clausen's analysis is an interesting one along the lines of larger political power factors. "Schools may be established and maintained by the state, by religious orders or other special interest groups, or by private groups or individuals to serve their own needs, whether educational or economic." From this he concludes: "A government or religious order that

controls the training of teachers, their selection, and the curriculum to be taught is in a position largely to determine the world view of its pupil products. Schools may be used both for indoctrination and for recruitment or allocation to occupational slots." Obviously the implications of such statements are both positive and negative, but the central point for us is that educational processes mediate in the socialization process in terms of the goals of the larger social system. Tied to this is the simple fact that societal goals are at different times differently defined by a variety of circumstances and pressure from various interest groups. For example, by an accident of presidential succession from Kennedy to Johnson, social science study shifted from middle-class delinquency to poverty; from Johnson to Nixon, the shift was from a "war" on poverty to a "war" against violence and crime.

Professional educators can, we are certain, point to many such shifts in educational emphasis, shifts that leave old problems unsolved as the shifts in the solution of larger social problems usually mean that some are simply dropped and new ones defined and taken up.

Clausen feels that a fairly consistent policy issue in American education has been that of the extent to which schools should prepare the child for social as well as academic participation in the larger society. We may say that there has always been a great variation among institutions as to emphasis within a given time as well as from one time to another. For example, in observing "correctional" practices for juvenile delinquents Korn (1969) notes that, depending upon social class, an apprehended delinquent may be sent to a state institutional correctional school or an expensive prep school for "problem" children--an even clearer example of the role of the class factor.

However, in the early grades "the socialization aims and activities of the teacher tend to overlap with those of the parents (Clausen, p. 155)." Some of this overlap may be seen in the primary aims and activities that Clausen selects:

1) Teaching and encouraging skill learning--specific cognitive skills.
2) Imparting information, orienting the children to the educational system and to the intellectual heritage, seeking to commit them to its ends.
3) Transmitting dominant cultural goals and values, making clear their meaning and relevance.*
4) Providing guidance and models for problem-solving; maintaining an atmosphere conducive to learning.
5) Overcoming gross deficits in preparation and attempting to deal with individual differences and with personal problems of the child that hinder his performance; in some instances consulting with the parents or with guidance personnel.

We realize that these aims and efforts cannot be quite so neatly tabulated because the extent to which they overlap those of the family will depend on class and minority status among other factors. It will also depend heavily on special problem families, specifically those with retarded children. In this last case the school will have to assume some of the functions ordinarily provided by either the nuclear family or by kin.

One important reason for an extended function in the case of a retarded child is offered by Birenbaum (1970), who was also discussed in Part One. To summarize his view: studies reveal that families with retarded children tend to socialize less with either kin or friends, thus depriving both themselves and their children of the support and socialization facilities of extended networks. Birenbaum uses as his focus Goffman's work on the subject of stigma (1966). Goffman uses, to us, a rather curious phrase to describe the stigma attached to those who are associated with deviants or those primarily stigmatized--courtesy stigma. (We find the phrase curious because it would appear to describe a distinctly discourteous situation.) Basically it applies to those having a spoiled identify because of sharing a web of affiliation with the stigmatized. The family relationships are described by Birenbaum as having to thrive on tactful inattention. For those with a courtesy stigma, there would seem to be but two choices: either they must embrace the

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*There is a subtle but important difference between the goal-objective here and that listed in the table on page 83, point 5.

stigmatized or seek to dissociate themselves from the affiliation. As Birenbaum states: "Mothers of mentally retarded children provide an outstanding example of persons with courtesy stigma who seek to maintain a normal-appearing round of life." The crucial, practical results were that visits to other homes were curtailed and visitors to the home were carefully screened. There was estrangement from the community at large. The screening finally admitted "Considerate individuals (who) did not indicate by their reactions that the family was being re-evaluated as a result of having a retarded child." Few resondents established close ties with other mothers of retarded children. This may be, according to Birenbaum, because "Friendships with others who are stigmatized do not support a normal-appearing round of life..." Continuing with his findings, community-sponsored facilities, too, could not be depended upon in the case of a retarded child. Family decision-making was, therefore, more crucial. The validation of normal-appearing rounds of life seemed to decrease with maturation of the retarded child, meaning simply, that the dependency upon the educational system for support extends far beyond the usual age of the nonretarded.

Because of the over-dependence on the educational system, we may project that, especially in such cases, the normal aims and objectives of a teacher will be extended and taxed, perhaps beyond reasonable limits.

The relationship of the family and the school is an important one. Without great documentation, we may say that preparation of children when they first enter school varies greatly. Clausen reports that there is a great deal of evidence that communication between family and school is easier and more positive in character at middle-class than at working-class family levels. From what we already know about class factors in our various families we can extrapolate that the same relationship operates between dominant-group and minority-group families.

In the lower-class and minority situations, the school may well have to take over much of the socialization role from the parents.

The child's perception of his achievement, too, is related to questions of class and minority status. As reported in Clausen- Luszki and Schmuck "...suggested that the child's perception of parental support and interest in his schoolwork is related to social status, is highest at the lowest grades, and correlates significantly with the child's own attitude toward school and actual performance..."

We have already observed in the case of certain minority groups, such as the Italian Catholics and the Mexican-Americans, that education is held in low esteem. This negative factor is reinforced by family tradition and is bound to place an added burden on both the child and the school. Ironically enough, we may observe that the more rapidly such a child advances within and conforms to the educational system, the more apt he is to have problems associated with family traditions at home.

Clausen (p. 166) observes that the school system not only trains but sorts out children. Based on what we already know about the dynamics of dominant-group classification of the lower economic and social strata, and of minority groups, the educational experience is potentially both positive and negative. The educational system may either alter or confirm negative status. If, for example, the subcultural norms inculcated in the black family child are confirmed by the behavior and attitudes of the personnel of the educational system, then the negative identity is further confirmed. This same process operates with respect to the retarded child.

We would suspect that it is all too often the case that this is true. Negative confirmation can occur in covert and overt ways; it may occur in situations of "good intent." Rosenberg and Silverstein (1969), in attempting to get at the self-image of delinquents, report the following exchange, which is worth quoting in full:

> (Do you think you are a bad boy?)
> Yeah.
> (Why?)
> Because I'm going to a 600 school.
> (And that makes you a bad boy?)
> I wouldn't be going there if I wasn't a bad boy.
> (Well, why did they send you there?)
> They said I was smoking cigarettes. They said I was trying to choke other boys. They said I was throwing firecrackers out the bathroom window. They said I was hitting the teacher.
> (And were you doing all these things?)
> I didn't throw firecrackers out the window, I didn't try to choke no guy. I didn't smoke no cigarette. I did hit the teacher--after she scratched me in the face...and twisted my arm around. I tried to break away, and then I went like that, and I hit her in the lip.

Now, clearly it is not the intent of a 600 school to confirm an image of "bad" behavior, yet the boy's connection has an indisputable internal logic of its own. We may contrast this with the upper-class youth whose style of delinquency is more sophisticated and whose actions are more severe. The crucial difference is that he is sent to a prep school where he may continue his delinquent activities and improve upon them, but where he may maintain his self-image as a "good boy." There was a survey some time ago conducted at the University of Texas (Porterfield, 1946) in which it developed that a high percentage of the undergraduates responding were guilty of offenses ranging from minor delinquency to more severe offenses; yet these students were all regarded as "good" people.

The class and minority factor operates strongly in the educational process. This process may serve to label either positively or negatively. This label may be delinquent or nondelinquent, good or bad, educable or noneducable.

The last example is of course applicable to the educational handling of the mentally retarded. It is in this case, that the school's role as an intermediate association between the family and the larger society is vital.

ALTERNATIVE FAMILY STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

Our final section on family processes will be somewhat briefer than the others. This is primarily because the many processes we shall discuss are practiced by a statistical minority (so far as we know). However, it is also because some forms are relatively recent in origin (although some have historical precedent in our society), and very little concrete information is available about them. We will offer a conjecture or two along the line, but it must be taken as just that and no more.

Some of these new processes are anything but new (which is exactly why we have chosen to title this section "alternative"). Some are almost exact reproductions of 19th-century models (the communal family) with adaptations to the exigencies of contemporary life. Others are quite literally ancient (polyandry and polygymy) and have their models among pre-literate peoples.

In our view the very presence of these alternative processes may indicate several things about American society:

1) The conjugal family unit is no longer either necessary or viable.
2) Alternative forms are a direct reflection of social and cultural pluralism.
3) Formalized retreatism of alienated youth.
4) Legitimation of sexual behavior labeled deviant.
5) Society is in a period of rapid transition and social institutions along with it.
6) A questioning of the "natural" state of marriage and the family.
7) Changing expectations of family roles.

We shall investigate a few of the alternatives that seem to be emerging as a result of these questions and views.

Communal Marriage

It would appear that this alternative to the conjugal family or the extended kin family is receiving a great deal of attention today among youth of all social classes. Its class locus, however, would appear to be among middle-class youth.

The actual structure of a communal family or commune is greatly varied as to the number of participants, economic base, sexual composition, division of labor, and geographical location. We hazard a guess that the average commune would have between 6 to 12 people of the middle class. It would be fairly divided among the sexes, with a division of labor based on individual talents (and necessities of existence). Reports indicate occurrence throughout the country, although there is a high concentration wherever land is cheaply available, and in large urban centers. Vermont, for example, has a goodly number.

Historically this alternative has a precedent in American society. It dates back to the utopian communities of the 19th century (such as New Harmony, Indiana; Shaker Heights in Ohio, and a Shaker community just outside Pittsfield, Massachusetts). There are great differences today, in that most of the utopian experiments were organized on a religious base with very specific and rigorous sexual control. The religions were millenarian in nature and the sexual control was usually abstinence--one obvious explanation of their lack of viability. The economic base was one of complete self-subsistence and the work ethic was very strong (another striking contrast to contemporary middle-class youth communes whose economic base is savings from a high-paying job in advertising or elsewhere, and whose work ethic is, shall we say, flexible).

The earlier communes were relatively stable in membership over long periods of time. The contemporary commune has a membership more or less constantly in flux; in fact, this seems to be part of the "hang loose" ideology. The predominant mode of the earlier communes was participatory democracy; this seems to

be the official mode of the contemporary ones as well. The 19th century communes were nonbureaucratic (but then, so was the larger society for the most part). One of the desires of the contemporary commune is to escape the bureaucratization of modern society; yet the participants in the modern commune are well-educated and trained middle-class youth to whom bureaucracy is second nature. The bureaucratic ethos seems to creep in the back door of the contemporary commune whenever there is a major organizational or economic crisis.

We would make no evaluative statement beyond that of saying that, theoretically, communal living could be successful and productive. We should note, however, on a commonsensical level that, if it is difficult for a nuclear unit family to solve interpersonal problems, the problems may be intensified by a group of 6-12 unrelated adults with their offspring.

Serial Monogamy

The process of divorce and remarriage (serial monogamy) has become accepted in our society and no detailed comment is necessary. The only problem in this procedure has been extremely unequitable and complicated divorce laws--and the fact that legal marriage and divorce is required in the first place. Advocates of this view (such as Cuber as reported in Otto, 1970) stress the necessity for alteration of the legal apparatus so that we can accomodate "pairings of the socially and physically mature..at any time at the mutual consent of the partners."

Closely related to this notion is one advanced by Greenwald (see Otto): that of marriage as a nonlegal voluntary association, the hypothesis being that "If state registration were eliminated, people would stay together for the only reason that makes marriage really viable--because they wanted to."

Marriage in Two Steps

This is the notion advanced by the distinguished anthropologist Margaret Mead (see Otto, 1970). Simply put, it involves two kinds of marriage:

1) Individual ("a licensed union in which two individuals would be committed to each other as long as they wish to remain together, but not as future parents").
2) Parental (explicity directed toward the founding of a family).

Polygyny

Kassel (see Otto, 1970) calls for polygyny (husband with more than one wife) after age sixty when "...there just are not enough men... Therefore, any man over sixty could marry two, three, four or five women over sixty." This seems to us harmless enough with, obviously, no implications for the family. The obvious drawback would seem to be an economic one.

Homosexual Marriage

Here we have much less information because such a union is not only illegal or nonlegal, but is also labeled as deviant behavior. We refer to a marriage between male and female, one or both of whom are homosexual (there are available statistics on unions of male-male and female-female but, since a family with children are not usually involved, this is not within our purview).

We can conjecture a great deal, but we actually know little. However, a detailed analysis of the literature on homosexuality per se indicates that the instances where one partner covertly practices homosexuality without the other's knowledge are more frequent than might be supposed.

Just recently (Ross, 1971) a report has come to hand of a statistically insignificant sample of 11 Belgian couples. Briefly, it focuses on the following questions and conclusions:

1) Why marry? unacknowledged homosexuality, flight from homosexuality, rational choice, social pressure.
2) Accepted because of ignorance of the status or belief that the partner would change.
3) Problems ensued with declining sexual contact and the formation of liaisons outside the marriage.
4) Modes of adjustment were: separation, platonic marriage, the double standard (no menage a trois reported), and a consideration of the situation as innovative marriage.
5) Most successful adjustments occurred with complete acceptance of other conventional norms.
6) The adjustments observed produced stable marriages, but very unhappy ones (as perceived by the respondents).

As in the case of the commune, it would appear that we have a situation which theoretically could be perfectly successful, but what little empirical evidence we have indicates that it is not. However, a strong cautionary note should be added that, in any investigation of socially disapproved behavior, whether it be communal marriage, homosexual marriage, etc., the vast majority of cases which come under sociological study are those with problems of one kind or another. It would be in error, for example, to attempt to construct the perfect criminal psychological type from a sample, no matter how large, made up entirely of criminals under psychiatric care.

Single Parents

In relatively recent times, the standards and requirements for the adoption of a child have been revised to allow a single person to adopt. There have been examples in most parts of the United States, although the statistical significance is still probably not great. No formal studies have been undertaken at this point to determine whether such family groups are successful in socialization. However, the long tradition of a single person appointed as a ward for the children indicates that there is no theoretical reason for predicting failure.

Institutions as Families

A great deal of our experience with institutional rearing of children results from our studies of juvenile delinquency, specifically detention homes and various "after-care" treatments (such as various out-patient services). If we take recidivism as one good indication of the success of these institutions, then they are bleak failures. Our juvenile detention homes have two effects: 1) the training of more professional juvenile delinquents and the preparation for adult crime and/or 2) the dehumanization of the individual.

Other sorts of institutions, such as orphanages, have in turn tended to produce more than their share of juvenile delinquents, who then may come under the care of the detention system. Goffman (1961) writes of these, and many other kinds of institutional "homes," as being "total institutions." This last notion carries with it the connotation of totalitarian institution. As far as history can be a teacher, totalitarian institutions have always led to dehumanization and disorientation of the individual.

Our discussion of some alternative models has been brief and inconclusive. The chief purpose has been to simply remind ourselves that, in a rapidly changing society, we must be alert to changes in all smaller processes, associations, and institutions.

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