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Comparative Socialization
Practices in Traditional and
Alternative Families

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In the 1960s, middle America was shaken by an important sociocultural movement, the counter culture or youth rebellion (Eiduson, 1978). It was regarded as a momentous social phenomenon with far-ranging consequences, in part because middle- and upper-class Caucasian young adults began to question, reject, and seek alternatives to the traditional nuclear family in which they had been reared. They thought the conventional family unit was not the necessary nor even the optimal way to rear children. The traditional nuclear family became the symbol of the status quo, the life-style that fostered the success-oriented, materialistic attitudes of our dehumanized, technological society. They sought alternative family forms that would allow them to live in ways consonant with their values; they sought life-styles that were fulfilling and gratifying in the present, in which nature provided patterns and pleasures to be followed and enjoyed rather than conquered and obliterated; they sought ways of living that respected individual differences and fostered greater interpersonal involvement and cooperation.

The family models they chose differed in terms of composition, legality, and way of functioning from the conventional family. Some purposely and unashamedly became single mothers; others became "social contract" families, remaining unmarried because a legal contract seemed unnecessary or even damaging to their emotional ties; and others chose communal living groups in order to share important parts of their everyday lives with like-minded people.

Because the young adults were of childbearing age, they offered an opportunity for naturalistic study of how their values and attitudes would shape families and how these families would rear children. Therefore at the end of 1973, a UCLA interdisciplinary group embarked on a child development study of these different life-styles. Two hundred children were in the Family Styles Project: 50

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from single-mother families, 50 from social-contract couples, and 50 from families in communal living groups, as well as a control group of 50 children from traditional two-parent nuclear families. Parent participants were Caucasian, came from middle-class or upper middle-class backgrounds, were aged 18-35, and thus were comparable to the young adults in the counterculture who were instrumental in electing these new family forms (Cohen & Eiduson, 1975). To be recruited, mothers had to be in the third trimester of pregnancy with their first child, or, in some one-quarter of the cases, their second child.

In deciding which of the many extant American variations in family structure to study, we limited selection to those that had been shown to be most viable and that provided some range of conceptual interest, such as number of parents available to the child or extent to which life-styles varied from two-parent nuclear families. Within the three family variants chosen, we tried to include a range of family types so that child development issues of interest—such as multiple caregiving, fathering behaviors, role modeling along sex egalitarian lines—could be addressed with as much generality as possible. This methodological position was supported by findings in our pilot work that showed no "typical" or representative commune, social-contract marriage, single-mother household, or even traditionally married couple in a nuclear unit (Eiduson, Cohen, & Alexander, 1973). In fact, our data thus far show considerable internal variability in terms of family structure, motivation, and resources within each of three alternative life-style groups (Eiduson & Weisner, 1978).

The alternative groups were identified through a combination of referrals from professional agencies and resources, and the indigenous networks in which these populations moved. Referral resources included Lamaze teachers, birth centers, and women's organizations. In addition, notices addressed to prospective parents were posted at universities, natural food stores, co-op centers, and other appropriate places. The traditional married group was obtained by randomly sampling the obstetricians in the California American Medical Association Directory and asking each doctor to nominate one pregnant woman who met our criteria. The woman was then encouraged to contact the project (Eiduson, 1974).

Incentives for participating were of two kinds: (1) parents were paid \$5.00 per procedure to cover expenses involved; (2) \$80.00 per year for each child was given to any provider of pediatric services selected by the parent. The service provider shared with the project codifiable information concerning the nature of illness, reason for contact, diagnosis, and recommended treatment.

At the time they entered the study, 50% of the families lived in Los Angeles and its environs, with the remainder fairly evenly divided among San Diego, San Francisco, and the northern California area. Eighty-three percent of the families resided in urban settings, with the remainder in rural settings.

We have been studying this sample of over 200 families and children for 6 years. Our formal contacts began during the last trimester of the pregnancy and

continued throughout the child's first 6 years of life. We used a variety of data collection techniques: parents' reports including interviews and questionnaires; field studies including naturalistic home observations, dwelling maps, and census forms; standardized tests including structured and semistructured psychological tests, experimental situations, and play observations. A small portion of the data, derived mainly from parental interviews and questionnaires and home observations, are reported in this chapter.

The main intent of the Family Styles Project has been to study the relationships between family life-style and child development, focusing particularly on the pertinent variables affecting child socialization. The project strategy conceives of family socialization in terms of four categories of variables; these variables are obviously interrelated but can also be considered independent variables in terms of their ultimate impact on child development:

1. Family history: Demographic and background history of the parents in their families of origin.
2. Parental values.
3. Current family milieu.
4. Child-rearing attitudes and practices.

The family history variables, the history of the parents in their families of origin, serve as background or frame-of-reference variables. Included here are demographic characteristics as well as variables in family history considered pertinent for parenting role and attitudes. Currently being collected and ultimately to be analyzed among these background variables are measures of the parents' personalities and IQs, as such parental resources are considered critical for parenting attitudes and parenting skills as well as contributing to the understanding of child outcome variables.

Because the search for new family forms was given impetus by the desire of young people to live their daily lives in ways consonant with their values, we include, as an important set of independent variables, the values that alternative families strongly espouse. Our pilot studies of the value systems of alternative life-style adults (Eiduson, 1981; Rocheford, 1978) had elaborated eight dimensions that defined the alternative ideology: (1) the desire for humanism or strong interpersonal relationships, with the aim of building a sense of generalized trust in others; (2) a striving to break away from conventional achievement goals, in favor of achievement that is more creative and personally fulfilling; (3) sex egalitarianism, a recasting of traditional stereotyped roles and responsibilities; (4) a preference for natural-organic ways, making daily life more harmonious with the natural environment; (5) a desire for gratification in the "here and now" as compared to planfulness and an orientation toward the future; (6) animaterialism; (7) an antiauthority perspective that goes along with the desire for less

dependence on medical, social, and educational institutions in society, and an interest in self-help and taking control of one's own fate; (8) an antisocial, antiintellectual bent, in which sensory and intuitive data and mystical sources of knowledge are regarded as worthy supplements to objective, rational ways of problem solving, and knowing.

We hypothesized that the traditional families and alternatives would differ significantly in adherence to such values and, in fact, this was borne out, as discussed later. Because these value dimensions are likely to impact on a number of developmental domains, we are currently studying whether the family's affiliation with each dimension or sets of dimensions will predict certain child-rearing attitudes and practices and whether, in turn, certain aspects of the child's intellectual, social, and emotional behavior will be affected.

Of course the literature on nonnuclear families has also suggested that certain child development outcomes are associated with families that are nonnuclear and non-two parent (Blanchard & Biller, 1974; Hoffman, 1973; Marsella, 1974; McCord, McCord, & Thurber, 1962; Mischel, 1961; Santrock, 1972). Consequently, we are studying relevant family milieu variables likely to be influential in child socialization and development: family organization and functioning; familial changes and mobility; relationship and interaction patterns; parent and parent-surrogate roles and responsibilities; parental occupation and income; adult support system; conflicts, satisfactions, and attitudes towards the family's life-style. We feel that these variables will be particularly important as we study the current consequences of growing up in alternative family life-styles. The family life choices are often seen as voluntary alternatives, rather than as inescapably deviant or pathological aberrations. This may change the outcomes usually expected.

The major thrust of our data collection efforts has been to gain detailed information about specific child-rearing attitudes and practices. The domains of particular interest are those derived from the values of the parents in alternative lifestyles: their natural-organic perspective, attitude to authority, anticonventional achievement orientation, "here-and-now" perspective, and so on. Therefore we studied use of natural foods, attitude toward and types of discipline, motivations, encouragement for learning, etc.

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to summarizing our early findings about these four categories of variables: Family History, Parental Values, Current Family Milieu, and Child-rearing Attitudes and Practices. Although there are numerous ways to analyze and present these data, for now we are looking at important life-style differences and similarities. We highlight first the differences between alternative and traditional families, pointing out as well the important areas in which no significant differences were observed or reported. We then look separately at each of the alternative life-styles, pointing out significant within-group differences and comparing this life-style to the other alternatives.

COMPARISONS OF TRADITIONAL MARRIED AND ALTERNATIVE LIFE-STYLE FAMILIES¹

Family History

We found relatively few background variables and attitudes that seemed to differentiate the traditional and nontraditional life-style groups; however, the ones that were significant added to our understanding of the motivations and resources of those seeking an alternative family (Cohen & Eiduson, 1975; Kornfein, Weisner, & Martin, 1977). We found that there was a significant difference in parent age by life-style, with traditional mothers 26.7 ± 2.9 years (mean $\pm$ standard deviation), and the single mothers 2 years younger (24.6 ± 4.4); variances also differed significantly. The mean age of fathers was older than the mothers (28.4), but not significantly different by family style.

As would be expected from the literature on young adults attracted to the counterculture movement in the late 1960s, the alternative group interrupted their education more frequently than the traditional group (Keniston, 1965). Parallelizing the difference in age, the single mothers had significantly less schooling (13.3 years) than the traditional married mothers (14.7 years). However, the social-contract mothers, who were similar in age to the traditional mothers, also had significantly fewer years of education (13.3), reflecting perhaps their different attitudes toward conventional achievement and success or, possibly, different levels of ability. Although the fathers did not differ significantly in terms of age, the social-contract fathers also had significantly less education (14.0 years) than traditional married fathers (15.5 years). Forty-eight percent of the traditional mothers had at least a BA degree, a significantly higher proportion than other mothers (living group, 36%; single mothers, 23%; social contract, 12%). Fifty-two percent of traditional fathers had college degrees, compared to 38% of communal living-group fathers and 30% of social-contract fathers.

No significant difference between alternative and traditionally married families was found in the level of education of their families of origin (maternal or paternal grandparents of the children in the study), nor in the families of origin's overall SES level. This similarity in family backgrounds is very interesting particularly because the alternative parents' own education, income, and occupational levels were significantly lower than those of their traditional married peers (see Current Family Milieu).

Significant differences on a few other family historical variables were of interest, for they suggested that more family instability was experienced by

¹Data in the form of charts and tables have been filed with the National Technical Information Service, Springfield, Virginia and may be accessed in microfilm form upon request.

alternative than by traditional life-style parents. Alternative parents moved more often than traditional during their childhood (58% of the alternatives moved three or more times, compared to 28% of the traditional families). Alternative maternal grandparents also showed a significantly greater number of divorces and remarriages (90% of the traditional married maternal grandparents were still married to each other, compared to 66% of the families of origin of the communal living groups, 63% of the single mothers, and 52% of the social contacts). Paternal grandparents of our alternative families were also divorced more often than were the paternal grandparents of the traditional married families. These data may be more influential than they might at first appear, as they relate to separations, divorces, and remarriages that occurred a generation ago, when family dissolution was less common and even more stressful to family members. There was a significantly greater tendency for the alternative group to view their early childhoods as unhappy; traditional mothers tended to maintain a better relationship with their parents throughout childhood and adolescence than mothers who chose alternative life-styles. Interview data from fathers showed the same trend in relationship with their parents.

Other demographic and family-related variables, such as number of siblings in the family or ordinal place in family, did not differentiate traditional from alternative groups.

Parental Values

When we first met these families there were strong differences in values between the alternatives and the traditionally married families. On seven of eight domains measured, there were significant alternative/traditional married life-style differences. The alternatives were more apt to reject conventional definitions of achievement, be more sex egalitarian, prefer natural ways of doing things, be more oriented towards immediate gratification and less oriented towards the future, be less materialistic, rely more on intuitive and mystical sources of knowledge, and be antiauthoritarian. It is important to note that considerable variability exists within each of the three alternative life-style groups in terms of their values; this variability is particularly evident in the communal living-group sample and is discussed in that section.

Traditional and alternative families did not differ significantly in terms of humanistic values, in their desire for strong interpersonal relationships and concern for the problems of others: instead, the total sample reflected the self-examination interest and the desire to intensify relationships and meaningfulness that corresponded to the surge of the personal awareness movement in the '70s among the general population (Delora & Delora, 1972; Ehrenberg, 1975; Eshleman & Clarke, 1978). Traditional married mothers and fathers were identified particularly by the high values they placed on materialism, scientific ways

of knowing, and conventional authority attitudes, which we hypothesized would be particularly distinctive in shaping their goals and child-rearing practices.

Current Family Milieu

The traditional child was more likely to be born into a more affluent family than was an alternative child. When we first met the parents, the traditional families' incomes averaged more than \$1200 a month, more than three times greater than the single mothers' (\$390), twice that of the social contractors (\$588) and a third higher than the "equivalent" income level of communal living-group families (\$866).² This difference in financial status continued every period throughout the children's first 5 years of life. Furthermore, the income of the traditional family increased slowly over time, and with a regularity that was absent in alternative families, even though in these, too, income increased with child age. Significantly fewer members of the traditional married groups were welfare recipients, or dependent on grandparents for economic assistance.

The fathers' occupational level, as expected, related to the higher average income. A disproportionate number of fathers in traditionally married families were found in the three highest level Hollingshead-Redlich categories, and significantly fewer in the two lowest categories. This differential, identified at the time families entered the study, continued throughout the children's first 5 years. The picture for mothers' occupational level was similar, once mothers returned to the work force. Traditional mothers also earned more per hour than alternatives. The timing of mothers' reentry into the work force and the extent of their participation was not an alternative/traditional difference, as is discussed later.

Hours of employment also covaried with the traditional/alternative distinctions for the fathers. Over 90% of traditionally married fathers worked on a full-time basis at the point of entry, significantly more than the alternative fathers, a pattern that continued throughout the first 5 years of the children's lives. For example, at 3 1/2 years, 92% of the traditional married fathers worked full time as compared with 53% of the communal living group and 65% of social-contractor fathers.

Thus, children from traditionally married homes started life in a comparatively financially advantaged situation. The work model presented by fathers was of an achiever and the main wage earner in the family during the child's first few years—that he worked consistently and regularly in occupations that were at the

²It is difficult to evaluate the exact income level of communal living-group families as work for the group may be exchanged for services, room and board, etc., rather than a paycheck. In the cases, project staff members estimated an equivalent income level for the particular standard living.

high ends of vocational competency scales. These findings correspond to the traditional married sample's higher value of conventional achievement and material success and their identification with conventional sources of authority.

In line with status ambitions and financial resources, traditionally married families lived in abodes with significantly more floor space than alternatives. They had more areas divided by function and more private areas not shared by all family members. Their homes were more frequently detached dwellings rather than apartments, duplexes, small cabins, etc. A significantly larger percentage of children in traditionally married homes had their own rooms and slept in their own beds, beginning at birth and continuing through the early years.

Traditionally married families were also more likely to own certain possessions—cars, personal laundry facilities, savings accounts, insurance, and television. Everyone was likely to own a stereo, however! Also, in line with the more materialistic orientation of parents, the traditional child owned more types of toys. However, this significant difference did not mean a paucity of toys for alternatives, as all children had a sizable number and variety; although some alternative children had to share toys, they were accessible if not owned. As with the amount and use of dwelling space, these are stylistic features, but also features influenced by availability of income.

Although there were differences in quantity of possessions, there were no differences by life-style in terms of the decorative complexity or warmth/child orientation of the household. However, traditional married households ranked lowest in disorderliness and in potential dangers observed.

A major difference between alternative and traditional family life-styles is revealed in studies of mobility rates. Traditionally married families are more stable than alternatives. During the children's first 18 months, 19% of the traditional married moved two or more times compared to 46% of the alternatives. From 18 months to 3 years, 12% of the traditional married and 31% of the alternatives moved two or more times; likewise, during the first 18 months almost one-half of the alternatives but only 15% of the traditional married changed household residents (other than mates) by moving in or out of a relative's home, communal living group, or roommate situation. During the subsequent 18 months, 30% of the alternatives and 6% of the traditional married changed household residents. Similarly, by the time the children were 4 years old, 84% of the original group of traditional married were still together, compared to 52% of the social contracts; 4% (2) of the single mothers were with the child's father, 32% had married and 8% (4) were living with a man other than the child's father. Some of the alternative families were repeating the pattern of mobility and life-style changes of their families of origin.

The nature of relationships with the extended family (the child's grandparents) was an area in which there were significant differences between alternatives and traditionals (and among the alternatives as well). Grandparents of traditionals

visited more often, and relationships of parents with their own parents were perceived more positively. When the children were 6 months, 1 year, 18 months, and 2 years old, the mean number of contacts per year was greater for the traditionals; in the alternative groups, the single-mother family showed the next closest number, and the communal living groups the lowest. In our preliminary studies of support systems characteristic of each family life-style, the grandparent family is seen as a model and source of psychological but not financial support for traditionals; for some alternatives, it is the reverse.

In summary then, in comparison to the alternatives, the traditional married family environment is characterized by less geographic and life-style change, by economic advantage, and by some of the possessions and variability in material appurtenances that accompany an initially higher and consistently improving financial status. They also have more contact with the child's grandparents and view them as models to follow.

Childrearing Attitudes and Practices

Beginning with anticipatory socialization, it appears that there were significant differences in the parental desire for a child between the traditional married mothers and those in the single-mother and even social-contract life-styles; the traditional marrieds were significantly more likely to have planned the birth of the child. Traditional married mothers had a history of fewer abortions than the single-mother and social-contract participants. There were no differences in the use of pregnancy preparatory courses, in the obtaining of prenatal care, and general health care of mothers as birth approached.

During the course of the pregnancy, alternative parents tended to modify some of their previous unconventional practices in the areas of diet, drugs, and health care. Although the alternatives had had a significantly higher history of drug use prior to pregnancy, including social use of marijuana and experimental and social use of the psychedelic drugs, drug use by all participants declined by the last trimester of the pregnancy, with alternatives showing a particularly dramatic drop. Fathers' patterns followed mothers' in terms of reduced drug use.

Despite the tendency of alternatives to follow traditional health-care practices during the prenatal period, there were strong traditional married/alternative differences in birth practices. The alternatives were significantly more likely to have natural childbirth and home births; the traditionals were more likely to have instrument-assisted deliveries and Caesarian sections.

For the total sample, 80% of the children were breast-fed initially, but by 1 year, significantly more traditional married children were being bottle-fed than were alternative children. In general, breast-feeding extended longer in alternative populations, in some few cases until 3 years (Weisner & Martin, 1979).

The life-style groups did not differ significantly in use of traditional health-care services, number of well-child visits to physicians, or in relative number of

physician visits by type of illness. Likewise, they did not differ in frequency of immunizations. However, children in the traditionally married population were taken to physicians more frequently for minor respiratory illnesses such as colds than children in the alternative life-styles, reflecting the alternatives' greater tendency to deal with minor illnesses through home remedies, etc.

Surprisingly, there were no significant traditional/alternative differences in terms of the child's primary caretaker during infancy. In all families, mothers were the main caretakers throughout the child's first 18 months. Even in communal living groups where more "substitute" parents were involved, mother was most often the main caretaker until the children became older.

Few differences were noted in psychological aspects of caretaking. Home observations when the children were 6 months and 18 months old permitted detailed studies of affective interchanges between caretaker and child, frequency of child-initiated behaviors, and of parent-initiated behaviors to child, and kind or extent of responsiveness to initiated behaviors. It was striking to note that few significant differences between alternatives and traditionals were observed. Mutuality of affect, observable visual, vocal, and sensory interchanges, tactile and physical stimulations, display of warmth, attentiveness and concern for the child, and appropriate supervision characterized each life-style.

Parental reports through baby books and interviews obtained at 6-month intervals also showed that as the infant matured there were few significant differences in caretaking behaviors. Ways of playing with the child, toilet training, adult responses to a child waking at night, were similar across the four groups. However, a number of differences were found between traditional marrieds and alternatives in caretaking styles, where the alternatives' "natural" perspective seemed to influence their child-rearing practices. Alternatives were more likely to feed their children natural, homemade foods, rather than products purchased in stores. Alternatives, even from birth, tended to take their infants along wherever they went and carried them physically close, using slings. The traditional marrieds were more likely to use "infant seats" and strollers. Traditional marrieds gave vitamin supplements more often and were significantly more likely to use fluorides (Weisner, Bausano, & Kornfein, in press).

We hypothesized that discipline would be one area in which differences between alternatives and traditionals would emerge in line with the differences noted between them in their affiliation with conventional authority. Although there were no significant differences in the kinds of child behaviors for which they disciplined at the 18-, 24-, or 36-month periods, there was a significant difference in the number of different things for which the child was disciplined, with the traditional married (and the creedal living group)³ parents disciplining

³The living-group sample is comprised of two subsets—creedal, or religiously oriented communal groups, which are usually leader directed, and the domestic living group, comprised of families who live together because they share common interests, social goals, and friendships.

for more types of behaviors than the domestic living-group members. All participants reported common modes of disciplinary behavior. The traditional marrieds (again in common with the creedal living group) placed a much higher value on teaching their children obedience and respect for authority.

Compliance styles also were studied in the home observations as a way of assessing disciplinary practices. Although differences in compliance styles and in number of successful compliance requests were not significant, a significant difference was found in the number of unsuccessful compliance attempts: traditional marrieds, like the social contracts and single mothers, made a greater number of unsuccessful attempts than did creedal living-group parents. Traditional married parents were rated as being more directive in their caretaking than social contract and domestic living-group parents, and they were significantly more likely to hover around the child than were caretakers in domestic living groups. No difference was found by life-style in the amount of father control over the child. Observers noted that single mothers were significantly more child focused in their activities than were traditional married parents.

The traditional marrieds (and creedal living groups) were more involved than most of the alternatives with formal religious activities. In this, the traditional family's stance and the creedal group's stance were in line with their strong authority orientation.

The traditionally marrieds described their own households, and were similarly rated by our observers, as organized and scheduled significantly more often than the alternatives, particularly the social contracts.

There were no differences between traditionals and alternatives in their positive/negative perception of their child, as taped in parental interviews 2 weeks after the child was born, and at 6 and at 12 months. Furthermore, at the 18-month period, over 90 adjectives were checked off by the parent as descriptive of the child. Subsequently data were summarized, using a factor analysis, and produced four factors: different, shy, independent, and confident. No significant differences by family group emerged on any of the factors at any age period. However, there was a high level of consistency (from .50 to .65) across time periods in parental ratings. The traditionals tended to perceive children at the high end of the independent and confident dimensions, and at the low end of the shy and difficult dimensions. Single mothers' children scored in the opposite direction, but the overlap among groups was considerable.

DIFFERENCES AMONG ALTERNATIVE LIFE-STYLES: COMMUNAL LIVING GROUPS

The living-group sample was purposely selected in order to be representative of the heterogeneity in this family unit found in our pilot studies (Eiduson, 1979).

The sample consists of 29 families in creedal living groups who are identified with established religious or spiritual philosophies or who have a charismatic leader; and 25 families who were in domestic living groups (i.e., people who banded together because they liked each other, wanted to reside closely so they could share meals and experiences, and so solidify their friendships). Included in the latter are a few triads (i.e., two men and one woman, or two women and a man living ostensibly as a "three-parent" family).

Family History

Thus far, we have not uncovered any strong and consistent differences in Family History variables between members of creedal and domestic living groups. This absence of differences in backgrounds is particularly interesting because there is considerable divergence between these groups in terms of their basic values and related child-rearing practices and attitudes.

The only statistically significant difference was the mothers' occupational levels at the time they entered the project. The domestic living group mothers had a higher occupational level than the creedal mothers ($p = .045$); the domestic fathers also tended to have higher occupational levels, but the difference only approached significance ($p = .09$); similarly, the mothers and fathers in domestic living groups tended to have more years of education, but again, the difference only approached significance ($p = .10$). Although the communal living-group families contributed to the alternative/traditional married differences reported earlier, there was no strong differences in Family History separating the communal living group from the social contract or single-mother family backgrounds.

Parental Values

Most members of communal living group households did not value the pursuit of conventional achievement or material success; they did not rely on the use of scientific sources of information, for they listened as well to intuitive feelings to guide their actions. They placed a high importance on doing things the "natural" way and were oriented to gratification in the "here and now". In these values the communal living group families were most like the social contract and different from the traditional married families.

The two types of communal living groups strongly differed in their attitudes towards authority and sex egalitarianism. As expected, most members of creedal groups placed a high value on obeying authority; likewise, they did not identify with the goals of the Woman's Movement and did not value sex egalitarianism. In contrast, members of domestic living groups were antiauthoritarian and strongly sex egalitarian in their values.

Current Family Milieu

Living arrangements for communal living groups showed an enormous variability, including adapted motels, rural acreage with permanent and/or temporary dwellings, buses, handhewn houses, large Hollywood mansions. All had combinations of public and private spaces and were not necessarily under one roof. Private spaces were smaller in square footage than in abodes of other family groups.

In our sample some of the creedal living groups had separate quarters for children, and a few had nonbiological parent caretakers on a 24-hour basis, or caretakers who alternated with each other and with parents. In most groups, children resided with their parents, sharing a room or a small apartment. Children generally shared meals with community members, although in a few cases, they ate separately from the adults, or together with their nuclear family. The variability in milieu and eating arrangements was striking.

Twenty-five percent of the communal living groups, like our social contract families, were found in rural areas; these two life-styles comprised over 90% of the rural participant families.

Religious and philosophical tracts had positions of prominence in the communal home, so that when home observers rated households on more than 25 adjectives, which then were summarized by four orthogonal factors, communal living groups were rated as highest on the presence of books being easily visible.

Income of communal living groups was difficult to establish, because in many of the groups personal income was pooled and work for the group was regarded as part of the contribution. However, exploration of the standard of living and finances of the participants revealed that the income equivalent of communal living group families was significantly lower than the level found in traditional married homes, but higher than that of the other alternative life-styles. Many possessions tended to be shared—again, for some, a motivation for moving into and remaining in the life-style.

It was necessary to study both the nuclear unit and the larger unit or extended household to obtain a picture of what participants called "family." Some single mothers, married couples, and unwed couples resided within the communal living groups. As expected, there were more people residing in each household (mean of 5.0 as compared with 2+ for the other life-style groups), including more children as well as more adults. Group size tended to covary with the need for a hierarchical structure, and the presence of formal rules and regulations to divide work, ascribe roles and tasks, etc. Such hierarchical structuring was typical of the creedal groups but not of the domestic living groups.

As expected, from the work of others pointing to criteria for the stability of a "new" family, the domestic groups were less viable. Mobility out of the domestic group proved to be the highest of any life-style, so that by the time children were 3 years old, only eight families remained in domestic groups: four became

social contracts, four became single mothers, and nine became traditional married nuclear families. The picture for the creedal group suggests much more stability; by the time the children were 4½, 21 of the 29 original creedal group members were still in the same groups. The commitment to their stable, highly regularized, often hardworking lives came, at least in part, out of their adherence to group goals, which were regarded as more important than personal goals. In contrast, the domestic groups were more tenuously tied together; for some participants they were advantageous for a particular period in their lives, but then proved frustrating because of conflicts and incompatibility, often centering around child rearing; in some cases there were too many adults giving input to the parents and child; in other cases, there was a disappointing lack of shared responsibility and caretaking.

Consideration of the personal motivations and conditions that lead to movement out of a communal life-style must include not only the degree of personal satisfaction and identification with group goals, and ease of moving out of the unit, but also the family's feeling of competency about making it on the outside. For the most part, the communal living-group members, particularly the creedal mothers and fathers, had lower occupational skills than their traditional married peers "on the outside"; this may have been a factor in their remaining in the groups.

Creedal group populations are also maintained by proselytizing. (and keeping women busy) are served by having more births subsequent to the target child than in any other family group (traditional are second in this characteristic, for reasons that seem to have more to do with the reluctance to have an "only child" family).

Child-Rearing Attitudes and Practices

The literature (Berger, 1967, 1971; Blois, 1971; Cavan, 1972; Kanter & Furcher, 1973) and our own work (Eiduson & Alexander, 1978) had suggested that philosophy (viz. a stated preference for children to learn generalized sense of trust and to be attached to others, as well as availability of other potential caretakers) would result in significant differences in terms of who served as the caretaker of the child throughout the early years. During infancy there was more multiple caretaking in communal living groups than in traditional married families; more adults were present and did some caretaking; this life-style had the highest amount of social stimulation and variety of people present during our home observations. However, even in these groups, in almost every case, the mother was still the infant's *primary* caretaker. By the time the children were 2 years old, the mothers in communal groups were significantly less likely to be the child's primary caretaker; in many of the groups, group care situations existed in which the children spent a good part of their day. Likewise, at 3, 3 ½, and 4

years there was a significant difference between traditional married families and those remaining in communal living situations; the communal child was less likely to have mother as primary caretaker and more likely to be exposed to other caretakers.

Although in most groups children resided with their parents, in some group settings, child and mother were geographically separated by choice of leader or other roles the mother might play (one group that has a number of residences in this country separates mothers and children who become too "tied" to each other; however, even in this extreme example, the children know who their parents are and differentiate them from the other adults.)

Relevant to caretaker roles are the data that from the beginning, communal living-group mothers were also less likely than mothers in other life-styles to do household tasks alone, for they had other household members with whom they shared these responsibilities.

One of the most dramatic characteristics of creedal living group members was their strong identification with spiritual and religious goals. They attended church more regularly. They valued spiritual training for their children significantly more than did domestic living group or social-contract families. Most children received informal, if not formal spiritual training. (In some Eastern religious groups, this means special schools, apart from parents by age 18 months.) This emphasis on spirituality was reinforced by a reduction in other "worldly" stimulation: fewer toys for children, less exposure to TV and other mass media. Again there are examples of significant within-group variance: one communal group had a television on in the children's quarters 24 hours a day. This latter idiosyncratic family notwithstanding, 53% of children in communal living groups watched no TV, a higher percentage than in any other life-style.

The communal living group child had the most nonbiologically related peers in the household, but the fewest social contacts outside the home. Children were significantly less often left at someone's house outside the group. Also, visits by grandparents occurred most infrequently (about two times a year) for this family group; this difference is significant as compared to the traditional and single-mother samples. Their insularity from outsiders was also reinforced by school attendance; only one-third to one-half attended an outside school.

The creedal living group child was likely to be disciplined in line with the group's needs for conformity to operate, and in line with their focus on the child's need to respect authority. Unlike the domestic living group members who did not emphasize obedience and who "reasoned" with their children, creedal group members felt it was paramount to teach obedience and respect for authority. Creedal group parents disciplined for more types of behaviors than domestic group parents, although they did not differ overall in modes of discipline. Creedal group parents saw their own disciplinary practices as harsher than those of their own parents. The domestic group's disciplinary outlooks and practices were more like those of the social-contract families.

DIFFERENCES AMONG ALTERNATIVE LIFE-STYLES: SOCIAL-CONTRACT FAMILIES

Family History

The social-contract fathers had the lowest level of educational and vocational competencies of all groups when entering into the project. Fathers averaged more than 1 year less training than other male parents—this in part reflecting their early "drop-out" status from school. Although the social-contract mothers had fewer years of education than their traditional married peers, and later worked at lower occupational levels, there was not a significant difference in occupational status between mothers in social-contract and other life-styles at the point of entry into the project.

Parental Values

The social-contract parents were the most deviant in terms of nonconventional beliefs and values (Rocheford, 1978). At the point of entry, on six of the eight dimensions they were at the polar end of each scale, signifying high affiliation with unconventionality. They were the least oriented toward conventional achievement; the family group most pulled toward here-and-now gratifications; they identified with using intuitive and sensory modes of input in problemsolving; they showed the most preference for the natural-organic orientation in environmental concerns, foods, and so forth. On all these dimensions they were significantly different from the traditional marrieds and from single mothers. On the sex-egalitarianism dimension they appeared as the most egalitarian-oriented family group, being significantly different from traditionals and creedal living groups. In regard to materialism, they were significantly different from traditional marrieds, but not from the other two alternative family groups, all of whom expressed an antimaterialistic stance. They rejected conventional sources of authority and, further, their antiauthority position remained significantly stronger at 3 years than that of single parents, traditional marrieds, and creedal living group samples—comparable only to the position taken by the domestic living-group families, whose perspectives generally resembled theirs.

Current Family Milieu

Social-contract families had the lowest number of fathers working full time at each period from the birth of the child through 4 years. For example, slightly more than 60% of the social-contract fathers worked full time at the 1- and 3-year periods, a lower proportion than in other life-styles. Vocational level of competency may have played a role in their employment status: 50% of fathers worked in middle-level occupations when children were of preschool age, and a significantly larger number of social-contract fathers compared to other groups were

also in the lowest occupational levels. Further, there were fewer social contracts returning to school, and fewer in college or professional training at the 4-year period, when data showed many indications that some alternatives were returning to mainstream activities.

Social-contract mothers also were the last group to return to the work force—again their later entry, and the numbers entering, were different from other groups. When their children were 3 years old, only 12% were working on a full-time basis, compared to 40% of the single mothers and 27% of the traditional marrieds. Like the fathers, their work activities were dispersed primarily in middle and lower occupational levels; at 3 years these mothers had the lowest occupational level of any life-style group. Their occupational level may be related to their preference for part-time employment and the usual low level of jobs available on this basis.

These significantly lower levels of vocational competency and work involvement are reflected in the low income of this family group. In part, their low income is voluntary, consonant with their antimaterialistic, antimaterialist-success positions, for they are among the "voluntary poor," taking seasonal or casual jobs in order not to be constrained by their jobs and to be available for their families and pursue other interests (Eiduson, 1978). However, it is conceivable that their distance from success-oriented work involvements also rationalizes feelings (and possibly actual indices) of incompetence.

Many social-contract households were in rural or small-town areas to which the adults emigrated feeling they could live closer to nature and have greater control over their lives. A number of their houses were handmade and, although small and primitive in terms of middle-class amenities, quite colorful and creative with the use of recycled wood, stained glass, plants, and wall hangings. Social-contract households were rated as the most "funky" and disorderly. At the same time these homes were also rated as having the most indices of potential danger spots for an infant or young child. In these characteristics, their homes were significantly different from the other life-style groups.

The initial group of social-contract mothers reported greater overall satisfaction than did traditional marrieds in their personal growth and work/homemaker roles as measured over a 3-year period. However, there were no differences in reported satisfaction with their life-style choices, though by the time their children were 4½ years old, 62% of the social contracts had changed life-styles, compared to 16% of the traditional marrieds: 13 married (the largest proportion to their original mates); 16 became single; and 4 moved into communal groups.

Child-Rearing Attitudes and Practices

In line with their value perspectives, this group was more alternative and clearly delineated from other family groups in terms of some infant child-rearing practices. For example, they had a significantly higher number of home births (32% compared to 8% of the traditional marrieds). Most breast-fed, and for a longer

period than traditionals or single mothers; they tended to feed the infant significantly more often and to be particularly oriented toward demand feeding. The breast was regarded as a pacifier for many, not only as the main nutritional source. Natural organic foods were commonly used. Many restricted use of meat, and the use of fluorides.

Children tended to be carried in slings, travel with parents at night, were less often placed in playpens than most other children, and generally were exposed to all family experiences, without much attempt on the parents' part at differentiating the child's experience from the adults'. The parents saw themselves as giving much more time to their child than did their own parents to them.

Social contracts' unconventionality was interesting when discipline was an issue. They did not stress obedience and respect for authority; they considered it important that even a 3-year-old child have a reason to obey. When comparing their discipline practices with those encountered in their families of origin, they described themselves as more lenient.

Their more permissive life-style was also evident in regard to attitudes towards sexuality. Data collected at the 3-year period suggested that social-contract mothers and fathers bathed more frequently with their children, fathers went nude more frequently in front of children, and children were allowed to be nude in front of other children more frequently than in other family groups. For example, 67% of the social-contract parents were casual about or encouraged their child to play nude in front of other children, compared to 46% of the communal parents, 44% of the single mothers and 22% of the traditional marrieds.

The social contracts felt school was important to children. By 3½, 67% of social-contract children were in nursery school; the mean for the total sample was 54%. At 5 years, 79% of the social-contract children were in some type of school, only slightly less than the children of traditional married parents. These data are interesting in terms of their antiauthoritarianism and general distaste for dependence on existing social institutions. However, they were attracted to schools with alternative programs and used these significantly more than the traditional marrieds and single mothers. For their children they wanted nature appreciation, social adjustment, and happiness stressed—and ranked such educational goals significantly higher than did other families; spiritual training was lowest in importance for the child to learn.

DIFFERENCES AMONG ALTERNATIVE LIFE STYLES: SINGLE-MOTHER FAMILIES

Family History

The elective mother was the youngest of the groups. She averaged approximately 13.3 ± 2 years of schooling; 14% lacked a high school diploma, and 23% had

college degrees. On the basis of their educational level and vocational competency, as well as their motivation for pregnancy, it was possible to identify certain subsets within the population: the "nest builder," "post hoc adaptors," and "unwed mothers" (Kornfein et al., 1976; Eiduson, in press). The nest builders, who comprised one-fourth of the group, had consciously planned to become pregnant and selected a man who might be a suitable father. These were the older, more career-oriented and experienced of the single mothers; they usually lived by themselves, had the highest income, and were the most economically, socially, and psychologically self-sufficient. The post hoc adaptor group was made up of women who had not intended to become pregnant, but once aware that they were, felt sufficiently happy about the pregnancy and were able to adjust to the circumstances. Their work experience had been in lower-level administrative and clerical jobs, because their education was more limited than that of the nest builders, and vocational goals less specific. These single mothers often shared small houses or apartments with friends or relatives such as siblings or aunts. For the unwed mothers pregnancy was unhappily anticipated. They were the youngest and least vocationally competent group; they worked prior to pregnancy in clerical, skilled, or semiskilled areas. They were rarely financially independent, using welfare or their parents for economic assistance. They either lived with roommates or with relatives, often returning to the neighborhood or dwelling of their own parents for practical support.

Parental Values

The most salient finding in regard to the values of single mothers was their ambivalent alignment with alternative values. As a total group, they were at times more like the traditional married family sample, and at other times more like their alternative cohorts. For example, the single mother shared the same high values placed on conventional achievement as did the traditional marrieds, but she was much less concerned with materialism, and drawn to sensory and intuitive modes of thinking, as a useful supplement to scientific and rational thought.

The notable within-group variability that led us to identify a number of subtypes of single mothers in the sample was reflected in their values. The career-oriented nest builders were high on the sex-egalitarian dimension; the post hoc adaptors scored in the middle range; and the unwed single-mother subgroup scored very low on the sex-egalitarian dimension. This same kind of within-group variance was found in regard to planfulness and future orientation. Although we had hypothesized a strong anticonventional, antiauthority thrust in the single parents as a group because of their antiauthoritarian behavior in regard to having a baby without benefit of wedlock or a man in the picture, analysis of data again showed significant variance.

Current Family Milieu

Of the single mothers, 96% were urban, much like the traditional married population. Like the other alternatives, they were less likely than traditional marrieds to live in a single-family home and they had fewer rooms and functionally distinct areas than were present in traditional married households. Their households were significantly more often rated as disorderly/funky than traditional marrieds, however, they were not as disorderly and funky as social contract households.

Income was comprised of a number of sources: part and full-time work, welfare, grandparents, and in some few cases, father support. During the child's early years, total income tended to be the lowest for the samples studied, with a mean of approximately \$5000 a year during the first 3 years of the child's life. During infancy only 10% of the single mothers were in high socioeconomic status groups, 36% were in the middle, and over 50% were in the lowest groups.

Few single mothers were employed when their children were infants, and about 51% were not working when the children were 3. This was related to the fact that about 25% had married by then and had life-styles in which fathers were the main wage earners. When the single mothers did work, they were more likely than other mothers to work full time.

When single mothers did work during their child's infancy, they were more likely than social contract and communal mothers to be in the three highest Hollinghead-Redlich categories, second only to the traditional married women. This suggests of course that it may be most satisfying and financially worthwhile for the woman with a higher occupational status to return to work.

Of all the alternative groups, the single mothers made significantly more residential moves. Furthermore, through the child's first 18 months, the single mother had a higher number of total changes (moves, life-style changes, separations from child) than did any other group. From 18 months to 3 years, and again from 3 to 4 1/2 years, the single mother made significantly more changes than the traditional married group. Variance here was significant, suggesting that within this sample were a few members who were more stable, and others particularly prone to resolving difficulties or conflict situations through environment change.

Related to these change behavior data was the finding that by 1 year the single mother was, of all the mothers, the least satisfied with her fate. Some 42% expressed ambivalence about the life-style and 20% were openly negative. At 3 years, the single-mother group again appeared to have the most negative feelings concerning life-style status. These attitudes may be related to their low economic status, and to the data showing that the single-mother group, from infancy on, was the family unit in which the mother was responsible for more household and child-care tasks by herself than were women in any other group.

Child-Rearing Attitudes and Practices

Our single mothers had significantly more abortions than traditional marrieds prior to this pregnancy, and most reported not planning to have this baby.

Therefore our calling them "elective" single mothers refers to their decision to have a baby once pregnant, not their attitudes toward planning the pregnancy (with the exception of the nest builders).

Like the traditional marrieds, almost all (94%) single mothers opted for a hospital delivery with a medical doctor present; 74% had an anesthetic, significantly more than did other alternatives. Generally, they had long labors, in fact significantly longer than traditional married mothers. Although these mothers had fewer males present to lend support at birth, they had a higher number of female and other adult friends present to compensate.

Infancy and early childhood patterns of caretaking did not distinguish this group from the other alternative groups. There were few differences that were significant in terms of feeding or sleep arrangements, nor in psychological patterns such as mother/child attentiveness or involvements. In extent or kind of caretaker responsiveness to child-initiated contacts, affective interchanges, verbalizations or contact initiated by the mother, a home observation at 6 months revealed no significant differences between the single-mother sample and any other group. Some differences, however, were noted in summary scores of intensity and variability of social and nonsocial stimulation, with the single mother slightly lower.

As noted earlier, there were no significant differences by life-style in the ways parents perceived children. However, it is noteworthy, although not significant, that single mothers tended to have more children in the "difficult" and "shy" categories than did the other groups. Similarly, on a self-report measure (Ireton) in which mothers reported development of their children in a number of areas, such as self-help, comprehension, perceptual-motor development, and so on, the single mothers' boys emerged in the borderline or problem areas more often than did children from other groups, although overall, very few children were so rated in the total sample.

Although our population did not differ in use of traditional medical care, number of well-child visits to physicians, or in relative number of visits by type of illness, single mothers did tend to take their children to physicians more frequently for psychological or behavioral problems than parents in other alternative life-styles. This tendency may not indicate greater frequency of problems, but rather reflect the single mothers' lack of practical and psychological support within their own households, and perhaps attributing their own psychological difficulties to their children.

A greater percentage of single-parent children attended day care or preschool than did children in any other alternative group: over 75% by age 3 1/2. Such exposure to outside inputs was in line with findings earlier that the single mother's child had more exposure to radio, television, and other forms of mass media than other alternative groups. Again, the single mother was like the traditional mother population, and different from alternatives, to a significant degree.

As a group, the single mothers' child rearing was distinctive in terms of

conscious desire on the parent's part not to sex-stereotype children's toys, activities, or personalities. This is particularly interesting in light of the single mothers' voiced preference for girls at birth.

As we try to understand the kinds of stresses to which the single-mother family was subjected, it is noteworthy that the single mother had the highest total stresses for almost every period. The single-mother families had the highest number of potential stresses related to residence and life-style change as well as other stresses potentially affecting the child (Eiduson & Forsythe, *in press*).

DISCUSSION

Some of the compelling modifications of family in America initiated during the 1970s have been projected as continuing into the 1980s (Masnick & Bane, 1980). It is anticipated that one-third of all children born during the '70s will be spending part of their childhood living with a single parent. Only one-quarter of all American households will be conventional ones, if "conventional" is defined as including mother, father, and children. Thirteen separate types of households will eclipse in numbers the conventional units. Most of our understanding of the ways children in families are socialized is derived from studies of conventional two-parent nuclear units. However, because Bureau of Census data are "eliminating the typical family," as reported in one announcement (Peirce, 1980), normative data on values and practices relevant to child development in family variants are essential in order to assess the implications for the child who grows up in a variant family form. Our data are suggesting that what parents want for their children, the behaviors they value as competencies and try to foster, are different in traditional two-parent families, and some of the pluralistic family forms. These differences are expressed in child-rearing attitudes and practices.

What are the implications for the child who is growing up in one of the alternative family forms? Until now our understanding of the ways in which child functioning is affected by growing up in variant family forms rests mainly on data obtained on families whose nonconventional status arose by default, not choice—widowhood, desertion, unwanted pregnancy. Child outcome data in these studies have suggested wide-ranging negative consequences for cognitive growth and socioemotional development, which fostered an association of deficit family or deviance with the family that was nontraditional and non-two parent. These findings have been put into question because studies on which they were based are fraught with methodological problems (Billler, 1974, Herzog & Sudia, 1970, Hetherington, 1967, Pedersen, 1976). However the association of deficit with nontraditional families remains, and needs the kind of reexamination that this study is providing.

We have had the opportunity to study nontraditional, nonnuclear families who elected their family style and who felt that certain values could better be ex-

pressed in one of the pluralistic family forms than in the traditional unit. Further, they regarded these family forms as developing in the child competencies and knowledge that were desirable, and also adaptive for tomorrow's world (Brim, 1975).

What competencies would a nontraditional family put a premium on, and reward in a child? On the basis of our findings about their family functioning, values, and child-rearing preferences and practices in the early years, we hypothesized that a social-contract family child would be rewarded were he or she creative, tended to act on his or her own impulses, rather than being compliant and meek, be able to evade and not be felled by frustrating situations, have high personal sensitivity, and be strongly self-motivated. For the communal living group we felt that successful functioning in a creedal living group might demand a child who was selfless, who would deny impulses, and have a great deal of social poise, have a single-minded pursuit of goals of the group, be compliant, nonassertive, and be able to integrate personal and group needs. In the domestic living group, we thought that the most highly valued would be a flexible child, who was able to express himself or herself, be able to tolerate group conflict, and be able to adapt without being distressed by change. We thought the single-mother population would value a child who was dependent on the mother for affective needs, and who could also be affectionate and nurturing of the mother, be independent and self-reliant in other areas, and able to play alone; be assertive if a girl and resemble the mother, especially if she were interested in women's causes; be able to face the reality of not having a father but nevertheless behave in ways that were so "normal" that the child would not feel differentiated from other children. The traditional married two-parent family, by contrast, would value an achievement-oriented, task-oriented child, one who set goals and subgoals, who was organized, energetic, able to delay immediate satisfactions for future pleasures, and who showed good control.

As yet, these anticipated differences among the children are not evident. However, at 6 years, when assessment measures are stronger, we think that we shall see differences in the expected directions. Further, we think that at that point we shall be able to delineate the variables that when considered together with family structure and composition, account for differences in child competencies.

To what extent are the family forms developed for the '80s able to prepare a child for a world in which rapid change, mobility, population pressure, and stress are considered commonplace? The family forms under study seem to be adopting a variety of ways of coping with the contemporary way of life. Some family forms remain a part of society but resist certain pressures when they see them as antithetical, even destructive of human needs, and in those aspects they find ways to live differently from mainstream families. Other families attempt to modify society through extolling group goals that they think have the potential of meeting social needs in an enriched way. Still others insulate themselves through

retreating geographically to a more "simple" life. Some families continue to try to swim upstream in order to demonstrate that determination can make what looks outwardly like a "handicapped" family, a normal, and even forward-looking one.

These are goals set by adults. The children, who are faced with the consequences of having to adjust to mainstream institutions, will tell us, through the adaptiveness of their coping strategies, their conflicts, anxieties, and symptoms, the usefulness and effectiveness of these family styles for child adjustment. Do any of these family styles put a child at intellectual, social, or emotional risk? What family strategies are adjustment producing, and what are limiting or handicapping? Are there ages or conditions when these family situations are more risk producing than others? Our studies of families continue to elucidate many such mental health issues and point to the extent to which each of these families meets the needs of children.

DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN

We conclude with some initial findings on child outcome measures. Children were essentially a normal sample at birth. Data on the Obstetrical Complications Scale adjusted (OCS) revealed mean scores that were average or better for each life-style (total mean 111.2 ± 21.4 as compared to the standardization mean of 111 ± 11), suggesting that births were generally uneventful. Results on the Newborn Neurological Examination (NNE) also indicated that mean scores were average or better for each life-style (total mean 101.6 ± 21.5 versus standardization mean of 100 ± 20). There appeared to be no relationship between the two measures (Pearson $r = .01$) nor between children flagged at risk (1 or 2 SD below average) by either measure.

No differences attributable to life-style were significant on these measures; although single mothers' infants were lowest in rank, there was in all only a 7-point difference between the lowest ranking (single-mother) infants and the highest ranking (living-group) infants (100.0 versus 106.9 , $p = .28$). When NNE scores were dichotomized to identify those infants scoring below 80, or at risk (one standard deviation below average), 22 or 11% met this criterion, randomly dispersed over all life-styles.

On the Obstetrical Complications Scale, life-style differences approached significance, specifically because scores for single mothers were 8 or more points lower than those of the other groups (104.3 versus 111.6 , $p = .07$). Other groups were generally similar to each other. From these data we proceeded on the assumption that essentially no children in any group would demand differential caretaking because of neurological difficulties evident at birth, and that any differentials that existed in caretaking practices would reflect family values,

preferences, and propensities, rather than responses to identified anomalies or deficits.

Our first studies of the ability of the child to meet developmental milestones came in the home observations at 6 months, and in the administration of the Bayley Scales of Infant Development at 8 months and 12 months. At 6 months, the child's range of affective behaviors, ability to initiate responsiveness to caretaker-initiated behaviors, and smiling and crying behaviors were studied through time and event sampling methods at a feeding period. In general, all babies showed a normal range of behaviors, and no notable difference between groups on such maturational parameters was found. At 8 months, children as a whole were average (MDI 103.6 ± 14.9 , PDI 105.6 ± 12.1). Slight life-style differences favoring traditional married over living-group children on mental developmental measures were noted ($p = .06$). In development focusing on motor behavior, single-mother children scored significantly higher ($p = .05$) than living-group children.

These differences disappeared by one year (MDI 109.6 ± 10.6 , $p = .75$, PDI 98.3 ± 13.5 , $p = .14$) in part revealing a regression to the mean. However, scores on mental development rose significantly for all but children in traditional homes. Motor development scores dropped significantly for all groups. When 8-month and 1-year scores were compared to birth status as revealed in Obstetrical Complications Scale and the Newborn Neurological Examination Scores, no life-style-dependent differences were seen.

In order to assess the child's reaction to separation from mother as an indication of extent and kind of attachment to her, all 1-year-old infants and their mothers were observed at 1 year of age in the Strange Situation and Mother Attachment Procedure developed by Ainsworth for 1-year-olds (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Well, 1978). Using Ainsworth's classification, attachment is of three kinds: (1) Group A (avoidant), in which there is "little or no tendency to seek proximity to or interaction or contact with the mother, even in the reunion episodes" (p. 59). In general, "either the baby is not distressed during separation, or the distress seems to be due to being left alone rather than to his mother's absence." In this study 15% of the children were rated A. (2) Group B (attached) consisted of children who wanted "either proximity and contact with the mother or interaction with her, and actively seek it, especially in the reunion episodes." In this sample 76% were rated B. (3) Group C (anxious-resistant) identified the child who might display "generally 'maladaptive' behavior in the strange situation. Either he tends to be more angry than infants in other groups, or he may be conspicuously passive." Only 19% of the sample rated C.

We had hypothesized that differences in family composition and structure, as well as differences in experiences during year 1 would result in life-style-dependent differences. However, differences in the Stranger Test attributable to life-style were negligible and undoubtedly due to chance.

We had also hypothesized that parental differences on the sex-egalitarian dimensions might emerge on the children's tests. On the Strange Situation Test, we had some first indications of sex differences, albeit few. Surprisingly, girls moved more often than boys as assessed in the situation as a whole ($p = .04$). When the mother returned after an absence, girls differed by more often showing toys, smiling, and speaking than boys ($p = .009$), and girls also more often stopped crying within 30 seconds of the mother's return ($p = .02$). In addition, few sex differences in toy preference were noted—an issue about which there are controversial findings in the literature. However, when the child was joined by the stranger in the last episode, no sex differences were elicited, as others have noted. In the last episode, when the mother returned, girls more frequently smiled at the mother than did boys ($p = .05$).

In the Strange Situation Test we also had the opportunity to study comparatively aspects of children's visual, locomotive, and manual manipulative behaviors under the familiar situation of mother present, with a stranger present, and while alone in a strange room. Also, the coping styles used when secure with mother, or in distress occasioned by the mother's absence (such as seeking or avoiding proximity and contact) are thought to be possible precursors of later reaction in the child. Our sample showed a range of behaviors comparable to the data presented by Ainsworth. Very minimal differences by our four family groups emerged, thus supporting the position that reactions to separations at this early point may be maturational, rather than family-environment dependent. Although differences did not reach significance, traditional children seemed to have a differentially strong need for "mothering" as revealed by their wanting to be held more often, doing less exploratory or manipulative toy play, and refusing to be soothed following separation.

Because children were not seen for developmental assessment between ages 1 and 3, parent-report measures on child maturation were embedded in other data being collected.

On the Ireton Minnesota Child Development Inventory, a parent-report measure given at 18 months, the general development index for the total population was average (101.8 ± 14.1). Neither sex nor life-style differences reached significance. Ireton recommends using this measure to identify children at risk, rather than to focus on minor deviations from average. Children who were rated by their mothers at 18 months as falling 30% below average on general development or, in terms of a ratio score, to be functioning at the defective level (DQ 70) were identified. In all, only seven children (or 4%) were so rated. Of responding parents who so labeled their child, there were three single mothers, two social contracts, one living group, and one traditional married. Twenty-two parents reported developmental levels which gave their children borderline scores: eight single mothers, six social contracts, five in living groups, and three traditional married.

At 2 years the children were again rated by their parents, with the sample as a whole rated average (104.3 ± 14.7). Here sex differences favored boys, but no

life-style differences were found. However the number of children rated as defective in general development rose to 19 (14%); social contract six, single mother six, living group five, traditional married two. Nineteen other children were rated as borderline (14%); social contract four, single mother five, living group seven, and traditional married three. Because these are parent-report measures, the discrepancies between parent report and scores on another measure were studied. Only two of the ten children who were rated as borderline or below by the parent at two successive time points, 18 months and 2 years, had significantly low Binet scores, whereas one seen by the mother as average at the second test had a low Binet at age 3. These data suggest differences in parent perception of child ability, even though no significant differences were supported by our direct assessment data.

When children reached 3 years of age, we hypothesized that measures of competence could be more diverse and would be more reliable and valid. On the Stanford-Binet, a test admittedly heavily loaded in verbal areas, the sample again scored as normal, verifying earlier data indicating that the children constituted a normal sample so far as general functioning level was concerned. The mean IQ was 102.9, standard deviation 15.0, very close to the national average. Comparison of children by life-style did not reveal more than minimal differences by group. Both social contracts and traditional marrieds revealed identical means (103.0) slightly surpassed by living-group children (104.2) who were, incidentally, the most diverse ($SD 17.7, p = .09$). Single mother children showed the lowest mean score (101.1).

Scores on Binet correlated significantly with both 8-month and 1-year developmental measures ($MDI r = .20$ and $.25, p$'s $= .01$; $PDI r = .17$ and $.13, p = .05$). The higher correlation of the MDI at 1 year with the Binet probably reflected the increasing amount of language being measured by age 1.

We had hypothesized that some gross differences noted in environments might affect object recognition, and the subsequent ability to label objects. However, on the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, scores for the total sample were average (102.4, $SD 16.6$) and again life-style differences were not significant. Again single-mother children had the lowest mean score (98.2), whereas traditional married children scored highest (104.5), and social contract and living group were close to traditional marrieds. Rural/urban differences, differences in parent education level and/or SES did not appear to discriminate family groups. Hypotheses relating verbal competency to large family size (and therefore more verbal interaction) were not confirmed, although the one-parent family showed slightly lower scores. When an "intellectual risk" score summarizing performance on both the Peabody and Binet was calculated, a total of 18 children were identified as at risk. The four groups contributed almost evenly to this group. The three children from the traditional married group seemed to be those with possible minimal brain damage, although only one had evidence of difficulty at birth.

A number of other cognitive-related abilities were also tested at 3 years;

because language development is a critical milestone by age 3, our tests of verbal development and language receptivity were supplemented by a test of articulation ability. Findings showed that these children had typical articular skills for their age, although living-group children tended to surpass single-mother children.

A global assessment of creativity was based on amount and kind of originality shown in fantasy play on the semistructured World Test as well as nonconventional responses on the Rorschach. Results did not reach significance, but traditional married and social-contract children appeared more free to express their fantasy as compared to the communal living-group children.

Persistence, a characteristic related to task orientation, was based on a number of verbal tasks well completed, continuous pulls on an insoluble drawer task, and number of attempts to overcome a barrier without showing distress. There was considerable variance within groups, and no significant difference by life-style. Traditional and single-mother children were most persistent however, and social-contract children least. This appeared to be related to ability level, with social-contract children who scored lower on receptive vocabulary more apt to refuse the verbal tasks.

The Strange Situation Test was repeated at 3 years, assessing a number of socioemotional behaviors. We hypothesized that there would be no spread in these data because at this age, the separation anxiety elicited when mother leaves is a developmental phase already passed. We found only eight children (4%) rated as avoidant-anxious or "C." None of these had been so rated at year 1. Four were from the traditional married sample, three from single mothers, and one was a social-contract child. Examination of environmental data for these children showed that all but one had recently been subjected to marked stresses such as parental divorce, separation, and hospitalization. Yet other children experiencing such stresses rated in accordance with the total sample in the A (56%) or B (39%) categories, both of which suggest ability to experience separation without visible distress.

The stability of the Stranger Test from age 1 to 3 was assessed for the 172 children who took both tests. Of the total sample 37% did not change classifications, with the most (70%) remaining securely attached (B rating), and the rest remaining avoidant of mother (A). No child in any life-style was rated insecurely-anxiously attached (C) at both time periods. By life-styles, stability (i.e., those rated either A or B at both time periods) ranged from 31% for children of single mothers to 42% for living-group children, who changed least. Both two-parent family samples were identical in stability (38% social contract and 37% traditional married).

A conceptually related variable, fearfulness and/or anxiety, was developed as a summary variable based on frightening themes produced in the World Test, a global rating of behavior as fearful, and the frequency of frightening or anxious content on the Rorschach. Results showed a tendency for traditional married children to be least fearful and living-group most.

Because of the antiauthority stance of some alternative families, such child behaviors as aggression, hostility, and failure to cooperate also were assessed. Aggression, rated on the basis of extent of aggression expressed motorically or verbally during the play on the World Test; and hostility, assessed in terms of hostile ideation (for example, mistreatment of dolls), expressed on the World Test were nonsignificant by family group. However, social contracts were slightly high and living-group children a bit low.

Although differences were minimal, measures of cooperativeness (identifying children who were able or willing to follow instructions on a Simon Says task, and in a global rating by the psychologist) showed that living-group and single-mothers' children tended to be more cooperative, whereas social-contract children were least. Thus although differences between children were not significant, we have a first indication of compliance in the living-group sample's children, a characteristic hypothesized as desirable for adaptation in this large family unit, and some anticompliance tendencies in our most permissive and alternative family group, the social contracts.

Also of interest because of the alternative families' orientation toward the "here and now," was the child's tolerance for frustration. Tolerance for frustration under stress was rated on the basis of response to the Drawer Barrier and a frustrating (Room Barrier) situation. Single-mother children tended to be most tolerant, social-contract least. Activity level was measured in terms of mobility under stress in the Strange Situation Test and on an overall rating from the Bayley Behavioral Record; no life-style differences were significant, but social-contract children were more apt to approach a rating of "hyperactive" and living-group children least.

Extent of attentiveness, based on a rating of distractible behavior as observed on four difficult tasks (including Drawer Pull and Competing Sets) again revealed no significant life-style differences, but single-mother children were rated highest and social-contract children were lowest.

Some global measures of social maturity were obtained. Mothers provided data for the Vineland Scale, a well-standardized social maturity measure. Scores were slightly above average for the sample as a whole (107.6 ± 14.5) and revealed no life-style differences. Single-mother children had the highest mean (surprising in light of their reports on the written Minnesota Child Development Inventory) and the most dispersion (108.8 ± 16.0), and living-group children had the lowest mean and least dispersion (106.5 ± 13.5).

Also, a summary adjustment variable was developed in terms of use of play during separation in the Stranger Test; the ability to perform a task when confronted with a frustration barrier (Room Barrier); and attempts at finding a solution during an insoluble task (Drawer Barrier), as well as the number of responses showing personal resources on the Rorschach (M & FM). On this variable, single-mother children tended to be rated highest, social-contract lowest.

Further, general maturity was assessed from a composite of the Vineland, level of articulation, cooperativeness in test taking, and the number of mature perceptions (P, M) on the Korschach. Again single-mother children tended to be rated more mature; social-contract, less mature.

Finally, social, intellectual, and emotional competence scores summarizing the child's performance on all 3 year tests revealed no differences by life-style. All three scores were highly interrelated for all groups ($r = .45-.55$).

In sum, the psychological development of the children was assessed thoroughly and repeatedly during the first three years of their lives. Although a number of developmental constructs were assessed, the life-style of the family in which the children were being raised had no systematic effect on the children's development. Stated differently, the children in all groups appeared to be developing normally.

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