ROLE TRANSITIONS OF SINGLE-PARENT FATHERS.

by

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ABSTRACT

The single-parent family in which the father is caring for the children is a familial configuration which is increasing in frequency. Yet, the socialization of males, in the past, has not included many of the behaviors that are necessary for success in single parenthood. Consequently, the purpose of this study was to assess what effect this socialization has on single-parent fathers by determining those factors which influence a father's transition to single parenthood. Hypotheses were formulated to determine the relationships between the independent variables and dependent variable and the differential influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable, ease of role transition.

A sample of twenty-seven single-parent fathers was obtained through various community agencies and organizations. Semi-structured interviews were conducted wherein the dependent and independent variables were assessed by rating the subjects' responses.

It was found that the single-parent fathers' role transitions and subsequent adjustments were significantly influenced by several factors. The amount of previous experience in home management and child care influenced the ease with which the subjects made the transition to single parenthood. Also, the degree of role strain, precipitated by intrapersonal and societal expectations, influenced the ease of role transition.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A family life style that has received little attention in the past is that of the single-parent family in which the father is caring for his children without the benefit of the mother being present (Orthner, Brown, and Ferguson 1976). The 1970 U.S. census indicated that there were over 600,000 fathers rearing children under the age of 18 as sole parents (Mendes 1976); in all probability that number has increased significantly.

Death and desertion of the mother contribute to mother-absent families (George and Wilding 1972); however, divorce is the largest single contributor to the rise of single-parent families (Burgess 1970). In the past the mother was usually awarded custody of the child. However, the increased awareness regarding the father's ability to rear his children is resulting in an increase of child custody awards to the father (Benedek and Benedek 1972). It may be expected that both factors of increasing divorce rates and child custody awards to the most appropriate parent, and not necessarily the mother, will increase the number of single-parent father families.

The Father's Influence

Although the father has been viewed as having little direct participation in child rearing (Benson 1968, Parsons and Bales 1955); research has shown that the father does have an important influence on
the child's development (Lynn 1974). The influence of the father on children can be seen in such areas as sex-role development (Sears, Maccoby, and Levin 1957; Bronfenbrenner 1961; Johnson 1963; Biller 1971), juvenile delinquency (Andry 1960, Nash 1965, Smith 1974), achievement and scholastic aptitude (Mutimer, Loughlin, and Powell 1966; Christopher 1967), moral development (Hoffman 1971, Parsons 1953), and self-concept (Lynn 1974). It has been found that a strong relationship between the father and child is a better indicator of a cohesive family than is the relationship between the mother and child (Landis 1962).

**Parenting Skills**

While the father is an important influence in the child's development he does not always have the necessary parenting skills to care adequately for the emotional needs of his children (Mendes 1976). The father is more often viewed as less nurturing and supportive by his offspring. Research on the father has indicated that the father is viewed as the more punishing (Goldin 1969), more powerful (Kagan, Hosken, and Watson 1961), and more threatening (Kagan 1956) parent. The literature provides little to support the view of the father as being expressive in a nurturing manner.

In the past, males have had little encouragement to develop expressive parenting skills that would be beneficial in interacting with their children as single parents (Nash 1965, Lansky 1967). Young boys have traditionally been reared by women and taught that the masculine role was the opposite of the behaviors that were being modeled for them; i.e., nurturing and empathic behaviors of mothers and other women (Lynn
Traditionally it has been unacceptable for boys to develop or exhibit nurturing abilities (Josselyn 1956). Consequently the fathers of today may be deficient in nurturing abilities. This appears in single-parent fathers' reports of inadequacy in dealing with the emotional needs of their children (Mendes 1976).

**Role Transitions**

The traditional socialization norms for males have resulted in the single-parent father experiencing difficulty in making a transition to a new parenting life style (Gasser and Taylor 1976). In attempting to determine the causes of the father's difficulty in adopting the new roles required of single parents it is useful to consider the theory of role transitions (Burr 1973, n.d.; Cottrell 1942; Merton 1968). Role transition theory attempts to explain the ease with which a transition to a new role can be made. Ease of role transitions can be described as the degree of freedom from difficulty that a person has when attempting to adopt a new social role (Burr n.d.). Factors which are presumed to contribute to the ease or difficulty of role transition are anticipatory socialization, role strain, amount of normative change, clearly defined transition procedures, and the perceived goal facilitating effect of the new role (Burr 1973, n.d.).

Anticipatory socialization is the process of learning the normative behaviors of a role before actual participation in that role (Burr n.d.). The greater the anticipatory socialization or exposure in regard to a role the easier the transition into that role (Burr n.d.). In other words, the more one is exposed to, learns from, and participates in, various roles the greater the anticipatory socialization and the easier
the role transition. From this general proposition we can infer a more specific proposition; viz., the more experience a father has in interacting or dealing with children the easier will be his transition into the role of single parent.

Role strain is the amount of stress that an individual experiences when he is unable to comply or has difficulty in adjusting to the expectations of a new role (Burr 1973). The degree of role strain is influenced by the individual's functional expectations concerning a specified role; the cause of the role change, how quickly the change takes place, and the societally prescribed norms available to the individual in making the transition to a new role (Cottrell 1942). The greater the amount of role strain the more difficult the role transition (Burr n.d.). Again, a more specific proposition would be that the father's transition into single parenthood will be smoother if he has a clear understanding of what his responsibilities will be in his new role and his ability to cope with the norms and expectations of the new role.

The degree of normative change that occurs with a variation in roles may ease or hinder the role transition. If the individual has a number of societally prescribed procedures available to him in making a role transition it can be expected that the transition will be easier. Further, if the new role is perceived as one that will contribute to goal attainment the transition will be easier. However, there is a question as to whether these three factors affect role transition as direct variables or indirectly by influencing role strain. In this study these factors will be treated as independent variables directly influencing role transition.
Purpose of Study

To date no conceptual framework has been postulated to explain the role adjustments of single-parent fathers reported by researchers. Role transition theory may provide an explanatory framework for understanding some of the problems that single-parent fathers encounter. Conceptualizing the transition to single parenthood within such a framework may help direct further research on single parenthood. It may also determine those factors which cause the greatest impedence to successful single parenthood. This in turn will prove beneficial to those persons involved with transitions in family life styles; viz., the courts, marriage and family counselors, family life educators, social workers, and social service agencies.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to determine the influence of (a) anticipatory socialization, (b) role strain, (c) normative change, (d) goal facilitation, and (e) transition procedures on the father's perceived ease of role transition. The hypotheses considered were:

1. There will be no significant difference between the scores of the fathers' perceived ease of role transition and fathers' perceptions of each of the following factors: (a) anticipatory socialization, (b) role strain, (c) transition procedures, (d) normative change, and (e) goal facilitation.

2. There will be no significant difference among the variable scores of: (a) anticipatory socialization, (b) role strain, (c) transition procedures, (d) normative change, and (e) goal facilitation and their influence on fathers' perceived ease of role transition.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Father in Theory

A conceptual framework that has had a large impact on the scientific analysis of the family system is the instrumental-expressive dichotomy of Parsons (1955). Although this framework does not appear to be culture-free (Lynn 1974), it does provide a descriptive framework of the parental functions which has been validated through empirical investigation. Parsons (1955) postulates that in any social structure it is necessary for expressive and instrumental roles to be differentiated. The instrumental function is concerned with the relationship of the family system to its interaction with the larger social system. The expressive function is concerned with the internal affairs of the family system; or rather, the maintenance of integrative relations between the members of the family. Both functions work together to maintain an equilibrium between the family subsystem and the social system, and within the family system itself (Parsons and Bales 1955).

The Instrumental Father

Within the family system the instrumental function has been ascribed to the father due to his participation in an occupational role outside of the family and his separation from direct participation in child rearing (Parsons and Bales 1955). The father is placed in a position of power due to the bridge he represents between society and the
family (Parsons 1955). The father's instrumentality rests on two aspects of his role; first, his manipulation of the external environment, and second, discipline and control functions which are carried out in the family (Zelditch 1955). The father has the power in the family and is viewed by the family members as having more power than the spouse (Parsons and Bales 1955, Kagan et al. 1961). Consequently, the assumption has been that the father is the person who wrests the child from the necessary but inhibiting dependency on the mother in order for the child to accept the responsibilities of an adult (Zelditch 1955).

The Expressive Mother

The expressive function in the family system is primarily fulfilled by the mother (Parsons 1955). The socialization of females has inculcated the expressive function into women's roles by virtue of her childbearing and the assumption that the mother has inherent parenting capacities (Chodorow 1974). These factors helped further the belief that the mother is the focus of emotional support in the family (Zelditch 1955). The mother's expressiveness helps to maintain stability in the family subsystem and to complement the instrumental function that has been imposed on the father (Parsons 1955).

The instrumental-expressive dichotomy is a useful framework for the study of family structure and function. In actuality however, such functions are not so clearly delineated. There does tend to be some differentiation of functions along the instrumental-expressive continuum (Johnson 1963, Siegelman 1965, Goldin 1969). However, studies of parent-child interactions indicate that a clear demarcation of instrumental and expressive roles is not found in American society today (Benson 1968,
Lynn 1974). Nor, is it beneficial to the parent or child for these functions to be categorized within sex-role ascriptions. It is important for the father to be expressive (Biller 1971) and the mother to be instrumental (Roberts and Cooper 1967) in the socialization of the child. If parents are to succeed when raising their children alone it is necessary that they have the capacity to fill both the instrumental and expressive functions of parenting.

Identification

Identification is the tendency for a person to reproduce the actions, attitudes, or emotional responses exhibited by actual or symbolized models (Bandura and Walters 1963). The process of identification involves the imitation of a model's behavior (Bandura and Walters 1963) and the subsequent internalization of generalized role patterns (Parsons 1955). This process serves an important function in the child's development. The identification process of the child is an attempt to reproduce the admired behaviors of parents or other models admired by the child, or to resolve conflict between the child and the parent (Mowrer 1950). Much of the child's behavioral repertoire is acquired through this imitation and incorporation of important adult's behaviors. The socialization of the child is greatly influenced by identification with a model who exhibits behaviors that are societally sanctioned and appropriate for the child to pattern (Benson 1968). Hence, the process of identification is an important component in parent-child relations and the development of the child. If a parent does not provide an adequate model due to the child rearing practices that are used or the parent's
ab sen ce; difficulties in the child's development and socialization may occur.

Infants, both male and female, identify first with the mother due to her constant presence, care giving, and nurturance (Mowrer 1950, Benson 1968, Bowlby 1969). Following this primary identification with the mother the child extends its imitation of models to include the father (Mowrer 1950, Bandura and Walters 1963, Benson 1968, Lynn 1974). The daughter usually maintains a strong identification with the mother while broadening her identification to include the father. The son shifts his identification to the father while still maintaining an identification with the mother (Mowrer 1950, Lynn 1974). Some believe that the son's identification shift is difficult due to the absence or lack of male models in the young male's world (Lynn 1974, Nash 1965).

The male goes through the first decade of his life beset with a neighborhood awash with mothers, preschools and elementary schools teeming with female teachers with scarcely an adult male in sight except for an occasional mailman or principal. As a result the child's identification with male models is superficial and these models provide only a general map "... showing major outlines but lacking most details" (Lynn 1974, p. 146). All of which points out the importance of the father when he is present and the great influence that he has on his children, both male and female.

Identification and Sex-Roles

The child's identification with the parent, and in particular the father, greatly influences the child's sex-role development. The development of sex-roles and acquisition of sex-appropriate behavior plays a
fundamental part in the child's socialization. In the process of socialization and self-identity development the child relies on those around him to provide guidance as to what behavior is appropriate (Lynn 1974). The child learns that certain behaviors are sanctioned and others are discouraged. The bulk of this societally prescribed behavior that a child must learn is categorized into behavior that is sex-role appropriate (Benson 1968). Consequently, identification with a model that reinforces the child's sex-appropriate behavior will facilitate the child's socialization and development.

In many instances the father provides just such a model. Mussen and Distler (1959) found that five-year-old boys would model their behaviors after their perceptions of their fathers' behavior. While girls of the same age would act in ways that they perceived as being acceptable to their fathers. Research indicates that fathers are the parents more concerned with sex-appropriate behavior in their children and how their children will be accepted in society; thus they encourage sex-appropriate behavior for both sons and daughters (Goodenough 1957, Bronfenbrenner 1961). The father is more inclined to foster masculinity in his son and femininity in his daughter while the mother tends to regard both son and daughter as her "children," not her "little man" and "little lady" (Johnson 1963). In consequence of this emphasis on sex-appropriate behavior the father may become a strong identification figure for both boys and girls. In a review of the literature on the father as an identification figure (Smith 1974) it was found that adolescent boys who identified with their fathers were more contented, better adjusted, happier, and better able to cope with social interaction than boys who did
not strongly identify with their fathers. The daughter who identifies with her father, due to his reinforcing appropriate feminine behavior by manifesting feminine-expressive behavior toward her, will have a more positive feminine sex-role orientation and also exhibit greater potential for instrumental behavior (Heilbrun 1968, Biller 1971). Hence, the father does influence the child's sex-role development and that as a model for identification, he may influence the child's socialization and personality development to a marked degree.

The entire process by which the father becomes an identification figure for both sons and daughters is still not known. The assumption has been that identification with the father is threat-based or support-based (Mowrer 1950, Benson 1968). However, there is indication that it is a combination of the two factors which contributes to the father's importance as an identification figure for the child. In support of this concept Mussen and Distler (1959) found that boys who exhibited high masculinity and girls who exhibited high femininity identified strongly with their father and viewed him as nurturant and rewarding as well as a powerful source of punishment. Sears (1953) found that boys with fathers who were warm, permissive, and fairly easygoing identified more closely with them and would play with "father" dolls more often than "mother" dolls. The amount and type of doll play that a child exhibits has been interpreted to be an indicator of the child's identification with a particular model. Other research has found that in order for identification with the father to occur for both sons and daughters the father must be supportive and nurturant to the child (Benson 1968, Biller 1971, Lynn 1974). It would appear that a father who is both nurturant and to some
degree powerful and dominant will provide the child, whether male or female, with a more adequate identification figure.

The importance of the father as an identification figure and his subsequent influence on the child's development appears to be well-documented in the research literature. However, we are left with the question of whether or not the father understands the importance of his role and if he is fully prepared for it. Therefore, it is necessary to look at the patterns of child rearing that a father may adopt and what effect this may have on his ability to assume the single parent role.

Allied with this consideration are the possible consequences of parental absence or ineffectualness and the male's socialization for the parenting role. These influences on the father's success in undertaking the single parent role will be discussed in the following pages.

**Paternal Child Rearing Practices**

Much of the research on child rearing practices supports the viewpoint of the father fulfilling the instrumental function in the family. In an analysis of research on children's reports of parents' behavior, Goldin (1969) concluded that both boys and girls view fathers as being more punitive than mothers. Other researchers indicate that fathers are perceived as more fear arousing (Kagan 1956) and more powerful (Kagan et al. 1961), and punishing (Goldin 1969, Becker 1964).

However, the investiture of the father with the office of punisher does not always hold true (Goldin 1969, Lynn 1974). As the child grows the father may be perceived as being less punishing and more understanding by the daughter but still the more punishing parent as perceived by the
son. In Siegelman's study (1965) although the father, in general, was
the more punishing parent, boys noted greater physical punishment by the
mother. Roberts and Cooper (1967) found that college students, both male
and female, reported their fathers as employing warm, positive disciplin-
ary practices. The students characterized the mother as being more
psychologically and physically punitive. To cloud the issue further,
pre-adolescent children view mothers as more demanding (Droppleman and
Schaefer 1963) and more powerful (Siegelman 1965). Whereas, adolescents
perceive the same sexed parent as more demanding and less autonomy granting
(Goldin 1969, Roberts and Cooper 1967).

The literature regarding affective and nurturant child rearing
practices indicates that the father is viewed by his children as less
nurturant and loving than the mother (Goldin 1969). Siegelman (1965)
found that nine through eleven-year-old boys and girls see their mothers
as the more loving parent. The boys rated their mothers higher on
affective reward, companionship, protectiveness, and nurturance than they
did their fathers. The girls rated their mothers as more loving than the
father; but also more punishing and demanding than their fathers. Other
studies indicate that children view the father as less loving (Droppleman
and Schaefer 1963), less affectionate (Bach 1946), spending less recrea-
tive time with them (Gardner 1947), and more rejecting (Siegelman 1965).
However, in reference to the father as an identification figure several
studies are noted which describe fathers as being perceived by their
children as nurturant and expressive (Sears 1953, Mussen and Distler 1959,
Benson 1968, Lynn 1974). It has been indicated that such a child rearing
approach contributes to the child's socialization and self-concept to a marked degree.

From these studies it is possible to draw several conclusions. First, the mother is often the only parent who interacts with the children frequently enough to be judged as nurturant, punishing, and demanding by the offspring. Second, the father is viewed as being stricter and more punitive than the mother but also he can be nurturant and lax in his parenting style. Third, the pattern of behavior the father will take toward discipline is subject to great variation. It appears that the father may follow many avenues in his child rearing behavior. To categorize fathers as powerful and punishing in their child rearing patterns and unable to provide nurturing, expressive guidance for their children is an incapacious position.

Parental Absence

Paternal Absence

Since it has been established that the mother and the father are important models of identification for the child (Bandura and Walters 1963, Mowrer 1950), it is imperative to look at some of the consequences of their absence. Most studies of aggression have concluded that there exists a relationship between father absence and aggression on the part of the child (Benson 1968, Lynn 1974). Studies have indicated that father absence results in male children being less aggressive than their peers and female children being more aggressive (Benson 1968; Lynn and Sawrey 1959; Sears, Pintler, and Sears 1946). However, when father absence occurs during adolescence there is indication that aggression may increase
in males (Lynn 1974). The relationship between delinquency and paternal absence is well documented; with indication that delinquency may increase in instances of father absence (Andry 1960; Smith 1974; Grygier, Chesley, and Tutors 1969; Nash 1965). Paternal absence appears to affect the child's independence with father-absent girls exhibiting greater dependence on the mother than father-present girls (Lynn and Sawrey 1959). In a comparison of father-present and father-absent children in classes for the emotionally disturbed, it was found that there were significantly more father-absent children enrolled in the classes (Redding 1971). Hoffman (1971) found that the absence of the father affected moral development in adolescent boys. That is, the boys obtained lower scores when tested for guilt, moral judgment, moral values, and acceptance of blame. No differences between father-present and father-absent girls were found on the same measures. Father absence at an early age has been shown to affect scholastic performance and achievement (Biller 1971, Santrock 1972). In addition, studies indicate that for boys father absence in early childhood results in lessened masculine orientation (Biller 1969, Biller and Bahm 1971). Apparently, the possible effects of father absence may encompass many areas of the child's development and socialization.

Most studies indicate that father absence has its greatest effect on males (Lynn 1974). Such findings are congruent with the postulate that the father is the more important identification figure for the male child. However, there are many other variables involved in the behavioral and emotional problems of children. Much of the adverse effect of father absence is dependent on the reason for the absence, the sex of the
children, the age of the children at onset of paternal absence, the socio-economic status of the family, and the mother's attitude concerning the absent father (Benson 1968, Lynn 1974). As a result, definite consequences have not been found and serious disorders due only to the absence of the father are unusual (Rutter 1972).

Maternal Absence

The research on mother absence is less clear than the findings on father absence. However, disorders of conduct, personality, language cognition, and physical growth have all been related to maternal deprivation (Rutter 1972). Much of the support for these conclusions has come from research which has subsumed cases where the child has been deprived of both parents or the mother at a very early age under the broad heading of maternal deprivation (Rutter 1972, Bowlby 1969, Yarrow 1971). Bowlby's (1969) research on maternal deprivation provided much of the support for the hypotheses that maternal deprivation or mother absence would have ill effects on children. However, Bowlby's research and related studies have been concerned with children that have been institutionalized and deal more with the effects of sensory and experiential deprivation rather than the effects of the mother's absence from the home (Yarrow 1971). The research which has been done on maternal deprivation has focused on findings where institutionalized children's behavior has been generalized to any circumstance where the mother is absent (Yarrow 1971). The circumstance of the mother being absent from the home and the father rearing his children alone can not be compared to the circumstance of the child in an institutional setting. Consequently, a generalization
of such findings to instances where the father is present and caring for the children may be misleading.

There is a paucity of literature dealing with the effects of mother absence from the home where the father is present. There has been virtually no research dealing with the father as a single parent; nor, more specifically, has there been any work to determine the effects of maternal deprivation when the father is present (Price-Bonham 1976). Thus, it is necessary to investigate the possible effects of mother absence on both the children and the father who is attempting to rear his children alone.

The assumption that there are deleterious effects on the child due to the absence of the mother or father does have some basis in the literature. The process of attachment, documented by Bowlby (1969), and the process of primary identification (Bandura and Walters 1963) between the mother and the child leads to the presumption that the absence of the mother may adversely affect the child's development. Albeit, the literature on mother absence provides no indication of consequences of mother absence when the father is present and rearing his children. In the case of paternal deprivation it is difficult for the child to develop characteristics that are sex-appropriate and in conformance with societal expectations (Lynn 1974). It could be supposed that the same consequences of paternal absence might occur in the instance of maternal absence where the father is present. However, there is too little research in this area to allow such inference.

Nevertheless, identification is not a structured invariant process (Mowrer 1950, Bandura and Walters 1963). The child is resilient and has
the capability to utilize surrogate models to accomplish identification processes (Bandura and Walters 1963). It cannot be assumed that the absence of one parent or the other will doom the child to a pathological development. Yet there is some evidence, as has been cited, that difficulties could arise in the child's development in the absence of one parent.

Inadequate Fathering

While there is evidence to suggest that the absence of either parent can result in problems in the child's emotional behavior and socialization (Lynn and Sawrey 1959, Benson 1968, Biller 1969, Bowlby 1969, Hoffman 1970, Redding 1971, Yarrow 1971, Hetherington 1972, Rutter 1972, Lynn 1974); a more important consideration is the effects on the child of an ineffectual parent. The inadequate, or nonfunctioning, parent is one that is present in the home yet ineffective as an identification figure and not meaningfully involved in the development of the child or the day to day functioning of the family (Smith 1974). When the father is the sole parent in the home and he is ineffective as a parent it may be assumed that the effects on the children would be more deleterious than if he were absent or if the mother were there to mediate the relationship between the ineffectual father and the child. While the research on paternal absence has been inconclusive, there is evidence that inadequate fathering affects the child's development to a marked degree (Biller 1971, Benson 1968, Smith 1974).

A significant relationship has been found between inadequate fathering and juvenile delinquency (Andry 1960, Smith 1974, Nash 1965,
Lynn 1974). Andry (1960) found that delinquent males spent less time with their fathers; had a lessened quality of parent-child contact; preferred to deal with their mothers rather than fathers; considered the father to be less clearly the source of authority; felt the father exhibited erratic methods of punishment; and received insufficient praise from their fathers. Smith's (1974) research on delinquent boys in Oklahoma obtain results similar to Andry's (1960) study of delinquents in Great Britain.

The son and daughter both depend on the father for their sex-role development. An ineffectual father does not provide an adequate role model for the children to use in their sex-role development and may produce role ambiguity in both sons and daughters (Lynn 1974). Hetherington (1965) found that both sons and daughters tend to model the dominant parent. If an ineffectual father is not the dominant parent in the family the children may have difficulty in later relationships outside the home due to role expectations which conflict with societal expectations. It has been demonstrated that sons of ineffectual fathers are overly aggressive, antisocial, and exhibit a marked degree of anomie (Nye 1957, Smith 1974).

Without the presence of mediating factors such as alternative role models or a change in the father's behavior; the act of solo parenting by an ineffectual father could prove disastrous to the children in his care.

The Single-Parent Father

The motherless family is not a new phenomenon. In the past the loss of the mother through death was quite common (George and Wilding 1972). However, the maternal mortality rate which was approximately one in
one hundred births in the mid-1800's has decreased to .19 per 1,000 births in 1969 (George and Wilding 1972). Although death as a cause of mother absence has diminished, other factors are resulting in a greater number of mother absent families today (George and Wilding 1972, Burgess 1970). These include: divorce, desertion, and to a small degree, adoption by single males (Orthner et al. 1976). Divorce is by far the greatest contributing factor to the increasing number of single-parent families (Burgess 1970).

In conjunction with the growing acceptance of divorce in our society is the increasing occurrence of the father obtaining custody of the children (George and Wilding 1972, Mendes 1976). In the past, custody of the children was invariably awarded to the mother (Benedek and Benedek 1972, Watson 1969); and it was left to the father to prove the mother unsuitable to the task of caring for the children (Gasser and Taylor 1976, Benedek and Benedek 1972). Such bias in the courts is being overcome and the emphasis is now on the best interests of the child, not on the erroneous assumption that a child must have a mother present to develop properly (Benedek and Benedek 1972). As a result the number of single-parent fathers is increasing (Mendes 1976). Estimates from the 1970 U.S. Census indicated that approximately 10 per cent of all single-parent families were headed by the father (Mendes 1976). It may be expected that the future will bring an increasing number of single-parent fathers.

The changing roles of men and women have given men a greater opportunity to interact with their children (Lynn 1974, George and Wilding 1972). With such a change there may be confusion in regard to
role expectations and the single-parent father is often left without clear guidelines for performing the new role he has accepted (Mendes 1976). A study of sex-role stereotypes and how they influence attitudes toward single-parent families indicated that the single-parent father is often put in an untenable position (MacKay, Wilding, and George 1972). For example, the single-parent father is caught between the expectation to be the provider, to fill the instrumental role, and his own desire to care for his children. The study by MacKay et al. (1972) indicates that 78 per cent of those surveyed felt that the single-parent father should work, while 80 per cent expressed the opinion that the single-parent mother should not work. The respondents felt that it was more respectable for the mother to remain home and receive state support than for the father to do the same. Single-parent fathers reflected these societal expectations and viewed supplementary benefits negatively (Orthner et al. 1976). It may be concluded that the single-parent father has many societal and personal biases yet to overcome in his quest for self-sufficiency as a single parent.

The Adjustment to Single Parenthood

The studies of single-parent fathers, being descriptive in nature, have attempted to determine the characteristics of mother absent families and their adjustment to a new life style (George and Wilding 1972, Ferri 1973, Gasser and Taylor 1976, Mendes 1976, Orthner et al. 1976). The majority of the studies indicate that the single-parent father is capable of, and does make the adjustment to, carrying out all of the necessary components of homemaking for which the mother once had responsibility. He is doing this with the help of his children and without the aid of the
extended family, which in the past was heavily relied upon by single-parent fathers (Glasser and Navarre 1965, Mendes 1976).

One study of single-parent fathers attempted to determine the role adjustment of the single-parent father by comparing his involvement in specific tasks before separation and after becoming a single parent (Gasser and Taylor 1976). These tasks included meal preparation, dishwashing, laundry, ironing, grocery shopping, and house cleaning. It was found that the single-parent fathers were able to carry out these homemaking activities and as a result it was concluded that they were able to make an adjustment to single-parenthood.

Mendes (1976) interviewed 32 single-parent fathers and found that they encountered varying degrees of difficulty in making the transition to single parenthood. Adjustment to the new role was assessed in the areas of supervision and protection of the children, homemaking, the emotional needs of the children, and the rearing of daughters. It was found that the single-parent fathers were able to cope with the new responsibilities of being a single parent in varying degrees in the areas of support and homemaking. All of the fathers reported that they had the most difficulty in caring for the emotional needs of their children and that this area was of greatest concern to them. It was concluded that this difficulty was the result of socialization in our society in which the father is not expected to participate in child care and hence, does not learn the behaviors necessary in caring for his children's emotional needs.

Such a conclusion is supported by the findings of other studies as well as Mendes' (1976). The fathers indicated that their attitudes
toward discipline had changed to a more nurturing, lax style (Orthner et al. 1976, Gasser and Taylor 1976, Mendes 1976). The fathers expressed the need for more information concerning child rearing practices and child development (Mendes 1976). Some fathers reported difficulty in coping with their adolescent daughter's newly emerging sexuality (Orthner et al. 1976). Mendes (1976) also found that fathers who had reported spending more time in career pursuits than with the family experienced difficulty in filling their children's emotional needs and that the father's were confronted with a lack of role clarity as to how to interact with their children. It would appear that there is a great need for an increased emphasis on the father being an active participant in home and child care in preparation for the possible advent of single parenthood.

The Theory of Role Transitions

Role transition theory is an important concept relevant to the ability of the father to take over the sole task of rearing his children. This theory addresses itself to the factors that influence the ease of moving in and out of social roles (Burr n.d.). In role transition theory the relative ease of affecting a transition into a new social role is the dependent variable. Ease of role transitions may be described as the degree to which there is freedom from difficulty and the availability of personal and societal resources to either begin or terminate a social role (Burr n.d.). According to Burr (n.d.) the significant factors involved in making role transitions include: (a) anticipatory socialization, (b) role strain, (c) transition procedures, (d) amount of normative change, and (e) facilitation of goal attainment.
Anticipatory Socialization

Anticipatory socialization is the process of learning the normative behavior of a role before being in a social situation where that behavior is required (Burr n.d.). From the work of Cottrell (1942) and Merton (1968), it can be postulated that the more anticipatory socialization concerning a role the easier the transition into the role (Burr n.d.). Anticipatory socialization may be facilitated by identification with significant persons functioning in the role that the individual intends to adopt. The cognitive rehearsal of the behaviors of the new role also aids in anticipatory socialization. Also, imitation or behavioral rehearsal of role behaviors contributes to anticipatory socialization (Cottrell 1942). Anticipatory socialization may be characterized as being on a continuum from an individual having had no prior experience with behavior related to a new role, to an individual obtaining complete socialization into a role before transition into it.

Role Strain

Role strain is the stress generated within a person when he is unable to comply or has difficulty in complying with the expectations of a given role (Burr 1973). The degree of role strain is influenced by the number of available guidelines that an individual has available to him in his attempt to effect a change in roles. If the societal and intrapersonal expectations regarding the new role are congruent, role strain will be lessened. Also, when the individual has a clear conception of the responsibilities and requirements of a new role there will be less role strain. When an individual encounters difficulty in meeting the demands
of a new role and has inconsistent expectations regarding the role the individual may experience greater role strain. The greater the role strain the more difficult it is for a person to make the transition to a new role (Burr 1973, n.d.). Influences on role strain include role clarity and role conflict (Burr n.d.).

Role Clarity. The number of clearly perceived functional expectations that an individual has when adapting to a new role affects role clarity (Cottrell 1942). If an individual is acquainted with the societal expectations and sanctions of a new role and if he has a clear conception of how to fulfill these expectations and sanctions he will experience greater role clarity (Burr 1973). Increased role clarity may be expected to lessen role strain and thus ease role transition.

Role Conflict. The presence of incompatible expectations that an individual has regarding a social role produces role conflict (Burr 1973). Role conflict occurs when an individual, attempting to assume a new role, is confronted with vague and inconsistent expectations. Thus role conflict may increase role strain and lessen ease of role transition (Burr n.d.).

The factors of role clarity and role conflict appear to be the polarities of the continuous variable, role strain. A person with a clear conception of the societal and personal expectations accompanying a new role may experience little role strain. While a person with an inadequate conception of the expectations accompanying a new role may be confronted with a great deal of role strain.
Transition Procedures

An individual's ease of transition to a new role varies directly with the degree of importance attached to the transitional procedures and the explicitness of those procedures used by the society in delineating the necessary behaviors for making a change to a new role (Cottrell 1942). This variable, transition procedures, appears to be on a continuum of procedures rated from unimportant or nonexistent to highly important and precise procedures as prescribed by the society in which the transition is to occur (Burr n.d.). Burr (n.d.) proposes that the more important and/or definite the transition procedure into a role is, the easier the transition will be into the new role. No empirical data has been put forth that assess the validity of this proposition (Burr n.d.). However, it would seem that this factor is dependent on the individual's understanding of societally prescribed transition procedures and that transition procedures may affect role strain more than having a direct influence on ease of role transitions.

Normative Change

It has been postulated that variation in the amount of change that takes place when accepting a new role will influence the ease of transition into that role (Burr 1973). If the change in roles involves a large change in the normative behaviors and values of the individual it will make the transition into the new role more difficult. For example, if a father finds that he must alter his career, social life, place of residence, and form of discipline in his new role of single parent it may be expected that the transition to single parenthood will be more difficult than if no changes had occurred. However, it must also be noted that a
great many changes that are desired may facilitate adjustment but still make the transition more difficult due to the disruption of past patterns of behavior. Thus, there is an inverse relationship between the amount of normative change required and the ease of role transition (Burr n.d.). While this seems to be a reasonable assumption it has not yet been empirically validated (Burr n.d.). Hence, it is unclear whether amount of normative change has a direct influence on ease of role transitions or is an indirect factor influencing role strain (Burr n.d.).

Goal Facilitation

It has been postulated that the ease of role transitions is affected by the extent to which the new role aids the individual in obtaining dominant goals (Cottrell 1942). The more a role facilitates goal attainment the easier the transition into the role (Burr 1973). Goal facilitation is a continuous variable ranging from a new role preventing goal attainment to being highly facilitative in goal attainment. Whether facilitation of goal attainment is an independent variable or a component of role strain is as yet undetermined (Burr n.d.).

The ease of role transition for each individual is influenced by:

(a) the amount of previous socialization and experience he has with behaviors that are a part of the new role, (b) the ease or difficulty he has in complying with the expectations of a new role, (c) the extent of societally prescribed procedures which allow him to adopt a new social role, (d) the amount of normative change involved in movement from his previous role to a new role, and (e) the benefits the individual may accrue through the adoption of a new role. While each of these variables
appears to be a logical proposition regarding the influences on the ease of role transitions, there is little empirical support for them (Burr n.d.). If the ease of making a role transition is of importance in determining the ability of a person to adopt and adjust to a new role, it is imperative to determine what influence these factors have on role transitions.

**Role Transition and the Single-Parent Father**

The propositions concerning role transitions have special significance regarding the father's success in his new role as single parent. While Burr (n.d.) points out that children are exposed to anticipatory socialization for parenting roles, the literature indicates that men are not exposed to socializing experiences that are conducive to an expressive, nurturant relationship with their children (Goldin 1969, Kagan 1956, Lynn 1974, Siegelman 1965, Nash 1965, Becker 1964). The effect of this situation on the father's ability to assume many of the responsibilities that were once in the province of the mother are not known. Also, the factors which contribute to role strain for the single-parent father are not known. Mendes (1976) found that most of her subjects experienced a lack of role clarity and confusion regarding their new roles. The role of single parent is a role in which the father frequently does not have a clear conception of the responsibilities and expectations inherent in caring for the emotional as well as material needs of his children. Also, he frequently has not had prior experience in caring for the affective needs of his children.
Summary

In the past the father's role in child rearing has been subordinated to an auxiliary status in support of the mother (Parsons and Bales 1955, Nash 1965). The American family has been characterized as matricentric (Gorer 1948) and research on the family has reflected this characterization (Benson 1968, Bowlby 1969). However, the father does play an important role in his children's development and socialization (Lynn 1974). As an identification model the father aids in the development of sex-roles (Mussen and Distler 1959, Biller 1971), social competency (Sears 1953), morality (Hoffman 1971), and personality (Lynn 1974). The father's child rearing practices will influence self-concept (Lynn 1974), independence (Lynn and Sawrey 1959), juvenile delinquency (Smith 1974), scholastic performance (Christopher 1967), and sex-role orientation (Biller 1971).

Although the father is important in the child's socialization, males within our culture have little opportunity to develop the parenting skills that will aid them in being effective fathers and consequently models for their children (Nash 1965). Part of a young male's socialization consists of eschewing such "sissy" activities as playing with dolls, playing house, and other activities that would prepare a boy for the parenting role (Lansky 1967). The socialization of the masculine role, in the past, has even made it unacceptable for boys to be nurturant and empathic (Josselyn 1956). In light of such socialization procedures for boys it is understandable that a father is often ill-prepared for parenting and feels uncomfortable with the idea of being loving and nurturant with his children even though it is possible for him to do so (Pleck and
Sawyer 1974). This lifetime of socialization makes it difficult for the father to be more expressive and nurturant to his children. Consequently, he encounters role ambiguity and a feeling of inadequacy in meeting the emotional needs of his children (Mendes 1976).

Role transition theory offers a useful framework within which to investigate the changes that take place in becoming a single parent and what factors may influence success in the role. The need to determine the difficulties that single-parent fathers encounter in rearing their children alone is imperative. As this family life style continues to increase the problems and solutions must be determined in order to aid single-parent fathers, future single-parent fathers, and the children in single-parent families.
CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Sample Selection

For the purpose of this study "single-parent father" was defined as a male who had sole custody of one or more minor children at the time of the study. The unavailability of demographic information that could provide access to the population of single-parent fathers in Tucson negated the possibility of obtaining a representative sample. Therefore, to obtain a sample of single-parent fathers a number of public and private agencies and organizations servicing this client group were contacted.

A search was made of the Pima County Superior Court records from January 1976 to April 1977 to obtain those fathers who had received custody of their children after marital dissolution. Single parent organizations in various churches and Parents Without Partners, Inc., consented to contact their members and ask for their participation. Contact was made with the Arizona State Department of Economic Security's Family and Children's Welfare units in Tucson and the aid of the social workers was enlisted in contacting known single-parent fathers and requesting them to call the investigator. The most productive means of obtaining single-parent fathers was through referral from fathers who had been interviewed.

After an interview the father was asked if he knew of any other single-parent fathers who could be contacted for the study. It was felt
that this gave the fathers more of an investment in the study and it eased the introduction of the study to fathers when they knew that acquaintances had participated. In fact, several fathers contacted the investigator a number of times and rendered invaluable help.

All single-parent fathers who could be contacted were included in the sample. This resulted in a range of subjects in regard to socio-economic status, age, age and number of children being cared for, and the circumstances surrounding their becoming single parents. However, no conclusion could be drawn in regard to the sample being a cross-section of the population of single-parent fathers.

The sample consisted of 27 subjects. Contact was made with 31 single-parent fathers. Three fathers became unavailable after the first contact with them due to moving out of town or leaving the Tucson area during the data collection period. Only one father that was contacted refused to participate in the study. The subjects ranged in age from 23 to 53 years, with a mean age of 38.4. The length of single parenthood ranged from one month to thirteen years with 74 per cent of the subjects having been single parents for three years or less and 52 per cent for one year or less.

The Interview Form

The general propositions of role transition theory postulated by Burr (1973, n.d.) were used to construct questions concerning the role transitions of single-parent fathers (see Appendix A). In adapting Burr's propositions to the role transitions of single-parent fathers the following factors were included: previous experience in caring for children and the household, the transition procedures involved in their becoming single
parents, their perceptions of whether or not single parenthood was helpful in attaining their goals, the extent of changes that took place in their lifestyle, the degree of role strain they experienced in various areas, and their perceived ease or difficulty of role transition. The ease with which an individual accomplishes a role transition varies with the individual's own perceptions of the effect of the variables on role transition (Burr 1973). Therefore, the questions in the interview were open-ended so as to allow the individual to respond meaningfully to his own circumstances while still giving an answer that could be rated.

Through consultations with individuals acquainted with role transition theory the investigator constructed interview questions that were appropriate to the investigation of role transitions in single-parent fathers. Such considerations as the lack of available research on role transition theory, the small number of subjects that were available, and the lack of control over intervening variables (e.g., age and sex of children, length of single parenthood, number of children, etc.) due to sample size negated the use of a standardized self-administered questionnaire. Given these considerations, it was concluded that the instrument used in this study would be satisfactory at this point in the investigation of role transition theory.

Interview items were developed for each variable, with questions directed toward both the instrumental and expressive areas of child rearing. The items for each variable (see Appendix A) were: anticipatory socialization (questions 1-9), transition procedures (questions 11, 12), goal facilitation (questions 10, 13-16), normative change (questions 17-22), role strain (questions 23-29), and ease of role transition
(Questions 30, 31). Questions 8 and 9 were removed from the anticipatory socialization factor after interviewing began. This was due to the small number of subjects whose wife had been employed and the apparent irrelevance of participation in day care arrangements to anticipatory socialization.

Item scores were determined by the fathers' responses to the questions. These responses were rated by the interviewer from 1 to 4. An item rating of 1 indicated that there had been little or no amount or influence of the variable related to the item, in the individual's past experience or transition to single parenthood. Conversely, a rating of 4 indicated that there had been a large amount or influence of the variable. For example, a subject who had remained in the established family residence after dissolution of the marriage would have been rated 1 in amount of normative change. Whereas, a subject who had moved from a $60,000 home to a two-bedroom apartment in a new city would have been rated 4 in amount of normative change. A rating guide (see Appendix B) was used as a reference in rating the subjects responses to the questions in order to minimize interviewer bias.

The Interview Procedure

The subjects were interviewed in their homes or any location that was most convenient for them. All interviews were conducted by the investigator. Before the interview began the subjects were given a letter describing the study and explaining the provisions for insuring anonymity and confidentiality. The interview was begun after any questions had been answered to the subject's satisfaction and they had given their verbal consent to proceed.
The interviewer would ask the subjects each question in the interview form (see Appendix A). If necessary the questions were repeated until the subject understood the question. However, it was found that in most instances the subjects could lucidly answer and elaborate on each question. Notes were taken by the interviewer for each question and after each question had been discussed the interviewer rated the subject's response. Immediately after leaving the interview the interviewer would verify the ratings with the notes and rating guide (see Appendix B). Interviews averaged 50-60 minutes with one lasting 35 minutes and one more than two hours.

Statistical Analysis of Data

Various statistical tests were used in evaluating the hypotheses. The associations between each of the independent variables and the dependent variable were analyzed by using the Pearson product-moment coefficient of correlation. Step-wise multiple regression analyses were carried out to test the differential influence of the independent variables on ease of role transition. The regression analyses were carried out separately for the dependent variable of ease of role transition, item 30 and item 31. These two items constituted the dependent variable, ease of role transition (see Appendix A). The observed F-scores for the independent variables in each of these analyses suggested that items 30 and 31 may have been assessing unrelated areas of role transition. Consequently, a Chi-square analysis of the independent variables' F-scores obtained in each regression analysis was carried out to test for significant differences.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic information, while not used in the testing of the hypotheses, does clarify the type of sample of single-parent fathers that was found. The summary of interview ratings provides a description of the subjects' responses and the apparent relationship of the variables of role transitions to the experiences of single-parent fathers. Finally, an examination of the Hypotheses and the results of the statistical analyses will be presented.

Background Information

The socioeconomic status of the subjects was determined from information concerning education, income level and occupation. Of the 27 subjects in the sample, 20 (75 per cent) had completed at least some college. Five subjects (18.5 per cent) had graduate or professional degrees. Six subjects (22 per cent) had completed high school only. One subject did not complete high school. Seventeen subjects (63 per cent) earned more than $15,000 in the preceeding year while three subjects (11 per cent) earned less than $5,000. Two of the subjects were of Mexican-American descent and the remaining 25 were White. The occupations of the subjects included: unemployed students, a day-care center worker, mechanics, businessmen, engineers, salesmen, high school and college teachers, and one physician. On the basis of education, income level, and
occupation it was concluded that the sample was predominantly middle class.

Twenty-three of the subjects were divorced or separated and four were widowers. The length of marriage before becoming single parents ranged from one to twenty-five years with a mean length of marriage of 13.8 years. One-third of the subjects had been married from six to ten years. The length of single parenthood ranged from one month to thirteen years. Twenty (74 per cent) of the fathers had been single parents for three years or less. Fourteen (70 per cent) of those 20 fathers had been single parents for one year or less.

A total of 47 children were being cared for by the 27 single-parent fathers. The number of children in each family ranged from one to four with a mean of 1.7 children per father. Of the 47 children, 33 (70 per cent) were male and 14 (30 per cent) were female. The ages of the children ranged from 18 months to 17 years. The mean age for all of the children was 10.7 years; the mean age for females was 8.2 years and the mean age for males was 11.8 years. Ten (71 per cent) of the females were less than 12 years of age while 19 (58 per cent) of the males were between 30 and 17 years of age.

The age and sex difference in the children may be attributed to several factors. In most instances older children and adolescents were given a choice as to which parent they preferred to live with at the time of the divorce. Consequently, the male children in the family would often choose to go with the father while the daughters would choose to go with the mother. The parents tended to make decisions regarding custody of smaller children using the same reasoning that the males should go with
the father and females with the mother. In most cases where there was a young daughter in the care of the father she was the only child from the marriage.

The one commonality shared by the subjects was that they had all been single parents for some period of time. It was found that there was a correlation of \(-.55\) \((p<.01)\) between length of single parenthood and perceived ease of role transition. Those fathers who had been single parents for a shorter period of time reported an easier role transition. Perhaps reflecting the lessening of the stigma around a father caring for his children alone. Or it could be an artifact of fathers still in the transition painting a rosy picture in order to minimize current difficulties.

Summary of Interview Ratings

Anticipatory Socialization

The distribution of ratings for the variable of anticipatory socialization (see Table I) indicated that the majority of subjects (55.6 per cent) had very little experience with child care in their youth. However, during their marriage most (70.4 per cent) had become involved in caring for their own children and nearly all (85.1 per cent) were involved in disciplining their children. Most of the single-parent fathers (59.2 per cent) reported that they had performed only traditionally masculine tasks while in their parents' homes (i.e., lawn care, taking out the garbage). However, they reported that they were actively involved in housework during their marriage (55.5 per cent). This finding regarding the fathers' greater participation in child care than housework during marriage is similar to the findings of Gasser and
Table I. Anticipatory Socialization Variable

Distribution of Responses by N and Percentage for each Rating, the Mean Item Rating and Mean Rating for the Variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Item</th>
<th>Item Rating</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Mean Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Care of siblings or other children during youth</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>55.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Performance of household tasks before marriage</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Participation in classes on parenting or child development</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>66.7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Materials read on parenting or child development</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Child care during marriage</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Discipline of children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Performance of household tasks during marriage</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Variable Rating: 2.52
Taylor (1976). In addition, the majority of the fathers (66.7 per cent) had not participated in family life education classes, nor did they report having read any books or articles on child rearing or parenting before they became single parents (59.2 per cent).

Transition Procedures

The majority of fathers (51.9 per cent) indicated that they had a clear idea of the procedures involved in making the transition to single parenthood (see Table II). Apparently, these fathers perceived that the processes of divorce and widowhood were clearly defined. It appears that the factor of transition procedures may not have played a large role in these subjects' role transitions.

Table II. Transition Procedures Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distribution of Responses by N and Percentage for each Rating, the Mean Item Rating and Mean Rating for the Variable.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interview Item</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Delineation of specific procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Perceived as typical or atypical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Variable Rating</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Goal Facilitation

Ratings for the variable of goal facilitation (see Table III) indicated that the majority of the subjects (40.7 per cent) felt that single parenthood did not inhibit their personal goal or the goals they had for their children. Some of the subjects (18.5 per cent) felt that it would be better for their children in the long run if their mothers were present; but they felt that the children were not being unduly harmed by the absence of their mother. The intent to remarry for the benefit of the children did not enter into future plans for most of these men. Only two (7.4 per cent) of the fathers reported that they were actively seeking a spouse for the purpose of aiding in child rearing. Both of these fathers were rearing daughters and felt that they needed a female in the home. This finding is similar to the remarriage attitudes found by Orthner et al. (1976).

Many of the fathers (33.3 per cent) felt that single parenthood was a help in attaining their goals because the marriage had been much more disruptive than the difficulties of single parenthood. Other fathers stated that they were now financially better off and able to pursue goals that they had previously dropped because of marriage. In general, the single-parent fathers in this study did not view single parenthood as a hindrance to the pursuit or fulfillment of their personal goals. Nor did they feel the absence of the mother would disrupt their children's futures.
Table III. Goal Facilitation Variable

Distribution of Responses by N and Percentage for each Rating, the Mean Item Rating and Mean Rating for the Variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Mean Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. Change in goals from marriage to single parenthood</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Expected change in goals at time of role transition</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Single parenthood as a help or hindrance in obtaining goals</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Changes needed to attain goals</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Variable Rating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Normative Change

The large amount of reported change that took place in the subjects' lives is indicated by the mean variable rating of 2.80 (see Table IV). In some instances the changes were of a type that would tend to ease role transitions. For example, the fathers who reported a change in discipline style toward their children reported the change had been toward a more lax style. Also, the majority of the fathers (48.1 per cent) reported that their relationship with their children had become much closer than before single parenthood. Such changes in the discipline style of single-parent fathers and the parent-child relationship have also been found by other researchers (Mendes 1976, Orthner et al. 1976).

Subjects reported that the greatest change that took place was in their interpersonal relationships and social life. While still maintaining an acquaintanceship with past male friends and co-workers, most of the subjects (77.8 per cent) reported that they no longer associated with married couples to any extent. This change had taken place over time and primarily in a voluntary manner as they found more satisfaction in associating with other singles. Apparently, the fifth-wheel phenomenon (Burgess 1970) is as prevalent in the social life of single-parent fathers as it is for single-parent mothers. It would appear that the fathers in this study experienced few disruptive changes in terms of socioeconomic status, occupation, income, or parent-child relations. The changes that did take place were often for the better.

It could be expected that these changes in the parent-child relationship would aid in the transition to single parenthood by lessening
### Table IV. Normative Change Variable

Distribution of Responses by N and Percentage for each Rating, the Mean Item Rating and Mean Rating for the Variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Mean Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Change in discipline</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>44.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Change in relationship with children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Change in residence</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Change in occupation</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Change in social life</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Additional changes</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


areas of role strain that could develop. Burr (1973) has stated that a large amount of normative change would lessen the ease of role transi-
tion. However, certain types of changes may in fact heighten the ease of role transition. It would appear that not only the magnitude of normative change but also the quality of normative change must be taken into account when assessing the influence on ease of role transition.

Role Strain

The relatively low reported degree of role strain that the subjects experienced is indicated by the mean variable rating of 2.33 (see Table V). The area of greatest reported role strain was found in the concern the subjects expressed for their performance, as single parents, in relation to their perceptions of social expectations and role-performance levels. For the most part, the fathers perceived that they had to prove themselves capable of caring for their children alone. Several fathers reported that they felt that their families and in-laws did not expect them to succeed. Consequently, they felt pressured to prove that they could succeed in rearing their children alone.

The child's adjustment to the absence of the mother was an important variable that could either greatly help or hamper the father's adjustment and role transition. When the children easily adjusted to the mother's absence it lessened the father's role strain. Ten (37.0 per cent) of the fathers reported that their children's adjustment had helped ease the role transition to single parenthood. Whereas, a diffi-
cult adjustment for the children resulted in more role strain for the fathers. Eleven (40.7 per cent) of the fathers felt that their children's
Table V. Role Strain Variable

Distribution of Responses by N and Percentage for each Rating, the Mean Item Rating and Mean Rating for the Variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Item</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Mean Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23. Time conflicts</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Congruence of personal with societal expectations</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Resistance from others</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Congruence of expectations with experiences</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Aid of extended family</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Effect of children's adjustment on subjects</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Strain caused by caring for children alone</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean Variable Rating 2.33
difficult adjustments made the transition to single parenthood more
difficult.

Ten (37.0 per cent) of the subjects reported little strain in
caring for their children as single parents. While four (14.8 per cent)
reported that they had a difficult time in caring for their children's
needs. The fathers reported that the logistics of child care (i.e.,
supervision, housework, physical support) were adequately handled. The
area of role strain that did occur in rearing children alone was in the
time synchronization and scheduling of all activities of single parenting.
When the fathers were asked if they felt capable of caring for the
emotional needs of their children six (22.2 per cent) of the fathers
felt they had trouble in this area. The balance of the fathers (77.8
per cent) expressed varying degrees of concern in this area but felt that
they could handle most problems. In contrast to these fathers' reported
ease of caring for the emotional needs of their children Mendes (1976)
reported this area of parenting as being the most difficult for the single-
parent fathers she interviewed.

Most of the fathers reported that the greatest strain they
experienced in their role transitions was not in becoming a single parent,
but rather, in becoming single. When asked what was the greatest diffi-
culty in making the transition to single parenthood, 52 per cent of the
fathers indicated that it was the loss of their wives' companionship.
Seven fathers succinctly stated the greatest impediment to their transi-
tion in one word, "loneliness." Nearly all of the divorced fathers felt
that having the children with them had made coping with the loneliness
and subsequent adjustment much easier. The feelings of most fathers were
summed up in one subject's statement, "I am much better off personally for having them (the children). I would rather care for them than be free and loose."

Orthner et al. (1976) found that the single-parent fathers in their study made extensive use of the extended family. While Mendes (1976) found that most of the subjects in her study made little use of the extended kinship system. The majority (66.6 per cent) of the fathers in this study did not have an extended kinship network in close proximity to aid them. The diversity of findings in this area would indicate that the use of the extended family may be dependent on geographical regions and the mobility of today's family; rather than any conscious attempt by single parents to avoid the use of the extended family. However, most of the fathers did feel that they had the emotional support of their families in their attempts to rear their children alone and this helped in lessening role strain.

Ease of Role Transitions

The dependent variable, ease of role transition, occurred at a moderate level, as indicated by the mean variable rating of 2.57 (see Table VI).

A majority of the fathers (37.0 per cent) responded to item 30 by stating that they felt prepared for single parenthood and that this helped in their role transitions. The same number (37.0 per cent) responded to item 31 by stating that the transition to single parenthood was difficult. The mean ratings for items 30 (2.89) and 31 (2.26), which constitute the variable of ease of role transition, suggested that
Table VI. Ease of Role Transitions

Distribution of Responses by N and Percentage for each Rating, the Mean Item Rating and Mean Rating for the Variable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Perceived preparation and effect on transition</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25.9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Perceived ease of role transition</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

these items may have been measuring two different facets of role transition. There was also the possibility that the subjects may have been responding in a conventional manner. A Pearson product-moment coefficient of correlation analysis indicated that the fathers who had been single parents for a shorter time reported an easier role transition (p<.05). Perhaps the long time single parents were more willing to admit the transition had been rough.

Therefore an analysis was conducted to determine the validity of the two items used in measuring ease of role transition. A multiple regression analysis was performed on items 30 and 31 separately as well as the entire variable of ease of role transition during the testing of Hypothesis 2. The results of this analysis will be presented in the examination of Hypothesis 2.
Examination of Hypotheses

Hypothesis I

There will be no significant difference between the scores of the fathers' perceived ease of role transition and fathers' perceptions of each of the following factors: (a) anticipatory socialization, (b) role strain, (c) transition procedures, (d) normative change, and (e) goal facilitation.

In the analysis of Hypothesis 1 a Pearson product-moment coefficient of correlation was utilized. The levels of association between each of the dependent and independent variables were determined (see Table VII).

Table VII. Pearson Product-moment Correlation Coefficients for All Independent Variables and the Dependent Variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ease of Role Transition</th>
<th>Normative Change</th>
<th>Transition Procedures</th>
<th>Goal Facilitation</th>
<th>Role Strain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anticipatory Socialization</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Strain</td>
<td>-.47*</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td>-.47*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal Facilitation</td>
<td>.39**</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transition Procedures</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative Change</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.02
** p<.05
It should be noted that the coefficient of correlation for role strain and ease of role transition (-.47) was significant at the .02 level and the coefficient of correlation for goal facilitation and ease of role transition (.39) was significant at the .05 level. Thus indicating that the relationship between the subjects' reports of perceived ease of role transition and their reports of role strain and goal facilitation were more than a chance occurrence. It may be concluded that as perceived role strain increases the perceived ease of role transition will decrease. Whereas, when perceived goal facilitation is at a high level the ease of role transition will be at a high level. The association between ease of role transition and anticipatory socialization, transition procedures, and normative change were found not to be significant at the .05 level.

A correlation of -.47 (p<.02) was determined for the variables of role strain and goal facilitation. This could indicate that these two variables are components of the same concept. It may be assumed that a high level of role strain would be accompanied by a lessened perception of the goal facilitating effect of a new role. Conversely, a highly goal facilitating role transition would be accompanied by lessened role strain. Whether goal facilitation was a component of role strain or role strain a component of goal facilitation could not be determined from this analysis.

Thus, Hypothesis 1 is rejected for the variables of role strain and goal facilitation. The hypothesis is held tenable for the variables of anticipatory socialization, transition procedures, and normative change.
due to the absence of significant correlations between these variables and ease of role transition.

Hypothesis 2

There will be no significant difference among the variable scores of: (a) anticipatory socialization, (b) role strain, (c) transition procedures, (d) normative change, and (e) goal facilitation and their influence on the fathers' perceived ease of role transition.

A step-wise multiple regression analysis was performed to test this hypothesis. The influence of anticipatory socialization on ease of role transition indicated that the subjects' reported anticipatory socialization affected perceived ease of role transition beyond the .05 level of significance. The subjects' reports of role strain were found to influence the perceived ease of role transition at the .01 level of significance. No significant differences were found between the subjects' perceived ease of role transition and the remaining variables: goal facilitation, transition procedures, and normative change.

Multiple regression analyses were also performed using items 30 and 31, respectively, as dependent variables. The results of these analyses indicated that each of the items constituting the variable of ease of role transition may in fact have been assessing two unrelated concepts. However, a Chi-square analysis failed to demonstrate any significant difference between the F-scores for the variables ease of role transition, item 30 and item 31. It was concluded that the items used to assess ease of role transitions were valid predictors of the dependent variable and that the initial regression analysis was valid.
It was concluded that Hypothesis 2 can be rejected. Anticipatory socialization has a significant influence on the ease with which an individual is able to make a transition to a new role. Role strain appears to be the factor most influential regarding the ease or difficulty with which an individual makes a role transition.
CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The problems of single-parent fathers lie in the social forces which influence preparation for fatherhood and the role expectations for fathers. The consequences of the present socialization processes for fatherhood are apparent when analyzing single-parent fathers from the perspective of role transition theory. These consequences are manifested in fathers' preparation for parenthood and the expectations that society has for fathers.

The variable of anticipatory socialization was found to lack a significant correlation with the dependent variable, ease of role transition. However, the regression analysis performed in testing Hypothesis 2 indicated that the extent of the subjects' anticipatory socialization was the second most influential factor in determining the ease with which the subjects were able to make the transition to single parenthood. These findings tend to support Burr's (1973) assumption that anticipatory socialization and ease of role transition is a curvilinear relationship in which a low amount of anticipatory socialization is as beneficial to ease of role transition as a moderate to high amount. In other words, it is important that all males receive at least some training for parenthood.

One approach to providing an appropriate source of information, for single parents, is to have parenting classes (Orthner et al. 1976). Parent education classes and classes on single-parenthood would benefit
both parents and children. More importantly, involvement of young males in family life education courses would do much to prepare fathers for the increasing likelihood of being single parents. This is in addition to the benefit that fathers of intact families would be better prepared for the role of parent.

The significance of the preparation and education of males for parenting bears repeating in the context of lessening role strain. The lessening of role conflict and an increase in role clarity (Burr 1973) through education in the form of workshops, counseling, and family life curriculum involving males to a greater extent, will improve the chances of fathers having a clear understanding of the behaviors and attitudes necessary for success in single parenting. It may be expected that this advance preparation will significantly lessen role strain for new single-parent fathers.

The variable of role strain was found to be significantly correlated with reported ease of role transition. The greater the role strain the more difficult the transition to a new role. Also, it was found that role strain was the most influential variable in determining the ease with which the subjects were able to accomplish the role transition. It may be concluded that the role strain experienced by a single-parent father will greatly affect his transition to the single-parent role and his subsequent adjustment.

There were two major areas of role strain as reported by the subjects in this study. The fathers felt that they had to prove themselves as single parents. They often felt that societal expectations, manifested through family, friends, and associates, were directed toward
failure in their new roles; even though these same persons also gave the single-parent fathers support and encouragement. (It seems that we cheer for these fathers but don't really expect them to succeed. After all, fathers can't take the place of mothers.)

The other major area of role strain was in aiding their children in their adjustments to the absence of the mother. When the children's adjustments were relatively smooth it aided in the fathers' adjustments. Conversely, when the children encountered difficult adjustments it increased role strain for the fathers. The subjects reported that in these instances they felt ineffectual in helping their children understand the reasons for their mothers' absence. They did experience some role strain in caring for all of their children's needs but felt confident in their ability to do so. The difficulties in parenting that were encountered by these single parents were not unlike the difficulties encountered by most parents.

The remaining variables of goal facilitation, transition procedures, and normative change did not significantly influence the subjects' reported ease of role transition, as determined by the testing of Hypothesis 2. However, in light of the significant correlations that were found between goal facilitation and ease of role transitions as well as goal facilitation and role strain there is some indication that this variable and possibly transition procedures and normative change do influence ease of role transition.

Conclusions

It may be concluded that most fathers can be successful single parents. It is necessary that they be prepared to rear their children
and that resources be made available to provide education and support, thereby lessening the strain of accepting the task of solo parenting as well as improving the parenting skills of all fathers. The same recommendation applies to single-parent mothers. The preparation for parenthood as well as training in both the instrumental and expressive areas of parenting are needed for all individuals.

Although fathers still have much to learn about parenting they appear to be capable of fulfilling the expressive and instrumental needs of their children in a successful manner. It is the conclusion of this investigator that some fathers and especially single-parent fathers are finally divesting themselves of the idea that they can not be nurturant and effective child rearers. These fathers are realizing that they can adequately care for their children and they enjoy doing it.

In regard to the transition to single parenthood these conclusions may be made. A successful and relatively easy transition to single parenthood is marked by sufficient anticipatory socialization and a low level of role strain. This means that those fathers who have:

(a) actively participated in rearing their children, (b) gained some understanding of child development, (c) participated in household management responsibilities, and (d) been involved in the discipline of, and nurturant interaction with, their children will find it easier to make the transition to single parenthood. A successful transition of roles will be experienced by those fathers who: (a) are confident in their new role as single-parent fathers; (b) do not feel they have to prove they can be successful single parents; and (c) have the knowledge and resources
to care for their children and themselves both emotionally, socially, and materially.

Limitations of the Study

The methodological limitations of this study include: (a) the small sample which restricted the degree to which the results can be generalized and which limited the extent of statistical analysis; (b) the sample was geographically limited to the greater metropolitan area of Tucson, Arizona; (c) variable control was limited due to small sample size, i.e., no specific control of the duration of mother absence could be made, nor could the age or sex of the children be analyzed; (d) no measure of conventionality was made; (e) no racial balance was achieved; and (f) the limited amount of research on role transition theory which restricts the nature and degree of conclusions which can be drawn from the data.

Implications for Future Research

As with any study, each step in the investigation has produced many questions along with some answers. Many avenues for future investigation have appeared in the course of this study. Some of the more important include the following:

1. Admittedly, there are numerous differences between single-parent fathers and single-parent mothers in their adjustments and family functioning. These differences need to be thoroughly investigated. However, an investigation of the many difficulties that are shared by all single parents is a necessity. Such areas as interpersonal relations, time synchronization and scheduling, discipline, and
parent-child relations are problems common to all single parents and further investigations into these similarities would be invaluable.

2. In-depth investigations of each of the variables which influence ease of role transitions need to be conducted. It is still unclear how these variables influence role transitions and the question of whether goal facilitation, transition procedures, and normative change are independent or indirect variables is still unanswered.

3. Role transition theory appears to be a conceptual framework well suited to explaining the ability of an individual to adjust to a new role. The postulates contained in this framework need to be extended to the study of the role transitions of all single parents as well as other role transitions that occur within the family.

4. Turning to single-parent fathers, there are still many areas that need to be investigated. What are the motivations for fathers to seek custody of their children? There are many suppositions but no empirical findings. Also, what resources are available for single-parent fathers and to what extent are they utilized? Ortnner et al. (1976) offered several recommendations for single parents and in particular single-parent fathers. Are they being instituted by communities and utilized by single parents?

5. A need for educational programs to prepare men not only for single parenthood but for parenthood is imperative. What types of programs would be best for preparing fathers? How can fathers be
interested in participating in programs for improving their parenting skills? When should preparation for fatherhood begin and what should that preparation include?

6. Finally, and possibly most importantly, what are the effects of mother absence on children in the care of single-parent fathers? How are custody arrangements made and what part do the children play in making the decisions? On an even broader scope, the role transitions and adjustments of children in all types of single parent families must be studied directly. Find out from the children what it is like and what changes they have to make.

There is still much to be learned about the single parent family. However, it is imperative that this family configuration be approached not as a "phenomenon" but as a viable and acceptable family life style.
APPENDIX A

THE INTERVIEW FORM

Interview #_____________

FIRST, WE WOULD LIKE TO GET SOME INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR BACKGROUND. THIS INFORMATION WILL BE USED TO COMPARE FATHERS WHO ARE GROUPED ACCORDING TO AGE, TYPE OF WORK THEY ARE INVOLVED IN, NUMBER OF CHILDREN, ETC.

PLEASE CIRCLE THE MOST APPROPRIATE CHOICE OR FILL IN THE BLANKS.

1. Date of Birth: __________/_______/_____
   Month Day Year

2. Which of the following best describes your race?
   1. Black
   2. Mexican American
   3. American Indian
   4. Oriental or Asian American
   5. White
   6. Other (Specify)_____________________

3. What is the highest grade you completed in school?
   1. No formal schooling
   2. Some grammar/elementary school
   3. Completed the 8th grade
   4. Some high school
   5. Completed high school
   6. Some college
   7. Completed 4 years of college
   8. Some post-graduate work
   9. Graduate or professional degree

4. What is your religious preference? ________________________________

5. Would you consider yourself to be:
   1. Not religious
   2. Somewhat religious
   3. Quite religious
   4. Very religious

6. What kind of work do you do? ________________________________

7. Please circle the income range listed below that comes closest to the total income for your household during the last year.
   1. Under $5,000
   2. $5,000-$9,999
   3. $10,000-$14,999
   4. $15,000-$19,999
   5. $20,000-$24,999
   6. $25,000 or more

8. Please give the age and sex of each of the children you have living with you. ____________________________________
9. How long have you been a single parent?
   _______ years _________ months

10. What was the cause of your separation from your wife?
   1. Death
   2. Divorce
   3. Desertion
   4. Other (Specify) _______________________________________________________

11. How long were you married before you became a single parent?
   _______ years _________ months

Interview #__________

PRE-MARRIAGE SECTION

Anticipatory Socialization

1. Did you help care for your own brothers and sisters or other children when you were growing up? EXPLAIN.

   RATING 1 2 3 4

2. What kind of household tasks did you perform in your parent's home? How often?

   RATING 1 2 3 4

3. Did you take classes in child development, family relations, psychology, or sociology in high school or college? EXPLAIN.

   RATING 1 2 3 4

4. Before you became a single parent did you read books or articles on parenting and child rearing? What were they like?

   RATING 1 2 3 4
MARRIAGE SECTION

Anticipatory Socialization

5. When you were married did you help care for the children? In what way?

_____ RATING 1 2 3 4

6. Who disciplined the children? In what way?

How often did you discipline them? In what way?

_____ RATING 1 2 3 4

7. When you were married what kinds of things did you do concerning household tasks? How often?

_____ RATING 1 2 3 4

8. Was your wife employed outside the home? What was her occupation? Full-time or part-time? How did this affect your role in the family; meaning, what responsibilities did you have?

_____ RATING 1 2 3 4

9. Who arranged for day care and who would usually pick the children up?

_____ RATING 1 2 3 4

Goal Facilitation

10. While you were married what goals did you have for ... Yourself? Your children?
Transition Procedures

11. In becoming a single parent were there specific procedures that you had to go through? What were they?

_______ RATING _______ 1 2 3 4

12. Do you think these procedures were particular to your circumstances or do most single parents encounter the same procedures?

_______ RATING _______ 1 2 3 4

SINGLE PARENT SECTION

Goal Facilitation

13. At the present time what goals do you have for . . . Yourself? Your children?

_______ RATING _______ 1 2 3 4

14. When you first became a single parent did you think that there would be a change in your goals for . . . Yourself? Your children?

_______ RATING _______ 1 2 3 4

15. Do you view single parenthood as a help or hindrance in achieving your goals? EXPLAIN.

_______ RATING _______ 1 2 3 4

16. What do you feel that you need to do to attain your goals?

_______ RATING _______ 1 2 3 4.
Normative Change

Since becoming a single parent has there been a change in . . .

17. Your discipline toward your children?
   What was it like before?
   What is it like now?

   RATING  1  2  3  4

18. Your relationship with your children?
   Before?
   Now?

   RATING  1  2  3  4

19. Your place of residence?
   Before?
   Now?

   RATING  1  2  3  4

20. Your occupation?
   Advancement?
   Type of work?
   Working hours?

   RATING  1  2  3  4

21. Your friends or social life?
   Do you have the same friends as before?
   In what way has your social life changed?

   RATING  1  2  3  4

22. Were there any other changes that occurred that we have not discussed?

   RATING  1  2  3  4
Role Strain

23. How has being a single parent affected your allotment of time for . . .
   Personal activities?
   Work?
   Being with your children?
   Doing household chores?
   RATING 1 2 3 4

24. Do you feel that your own expectations about single parenthood were
    congruent with what others expected of you?
    Family?
    Children?
    Friends?
    RATING 1 2 3 4

25. Do you feel that you encountered resistance from other people about
    your being a single parent?
    In what way?
    RATING 1 2 3 4

26. Is being a single parent the same as what you thought it would be?
    EXPLAIN.
    RATING 1 2 3 4

27. Has your family been of help to you?
    In what way?
    How did this affect your adjustment?
    RATING 1 2 3 4

28. What were your children's adjustments like?
    How did this affect you?
    RATING 1 2 3 4

29. How do you feel about caring for your children alone?
    RATING 1 2 3 4
EASE OF ROLE TRANSITION

30. Do you feel that you were prepared to be a single parent? EXPLAIN.

   RATING       1  2  3  4

31. What was the transition to single parenthood like?

   RATING       1  2  3  4

32. What was the greatest difficulty you encountered in making the transition to single parenthood?

COMMENTS:
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW RATING GUIDE

1. Rating based on the subject's response indicating the extent to which he cared for children before he was married and what kind of tasks he performed.

   1. Never cared for children.
   2. Watched smaller children but never bathed, fed, diapered, etc.
   3. Babysat small children; performed child care tasks occasionally.
   4. Babysat for hire; cared for children on a regular basis.

2. Rating based subject's report of participation in household tasks of traditional feminine genre. Rating shall be based on the basis of performing at least two tasks:

   1. Less than once a week.
   2. 2-3 times a week.
   3. 4-5 times a week.
   4. 6-7 times a week.

3. Rating based on the kind of classes taken in school and how these affected his child rearing viewpoints and abilities.

   1. 0-1 class with no self-perceived affect on his child rearing attitudes.
   2. A few classes with some affect on child rearing attitudes.
   3. Specific classes in child development and/or family relations that influenced his child rearing attitudes and practices to a noticeable extent.
   4. Was a major in the social sciences; which greatly affected his child rearing attitudes and practices.

4. Rating based on the amount and content of reading matter.

   1. 0- a few articles in popular magazines.
   2. Quite a few articles in magazines.
   3. Articles in parenting or family magazines; also, popular books on children and parenting.
   4. Primarily books on parenting skills and child development; participation in parenting courses; articles from professional journals and books.
5. Rating based on subject's description of caring for his children during marriage. Looking for behaviors that would normally be the province of the mother; e.g., bathing, feeding, diapering, supervising while mother is absent, etc.

1. Only cared for the children once in a while.
2. Participated in 1-2 things each week.
3. Participated in 3-4 things quite often in the week.
4. Participated in care taking activities each day to a great extent.

6. Rating based on who disciplined the children most often and what kind of discipline it was. Rated on a ratio of discipline by father/overall discipline.

1. 0/4 never.
2. 1/4 one-fourth the time.
3. 2/4 the time.
4. 4/4 all the time.

7. Rating based on subject's participation in household tasks traditionally the responsibility of the wife, e.g., cooking, cleaning, laundry, ironing, etc. Rated by frequency of performance.

1. Less than once a week.
2. 1-2 times a week.
3. 3-4 times a week.
4. 5 or more times a week.

8. Rating based on the number of responsibilities subject had due to his wife's employment.

1. No responsibilities.
2. 1-2.
3. 3-4.
4. 5 or more.


1. Had no responsibility.
2. Occasionally transported children to day care.
3. Arranged for day care and occasionally transported children.
4. Arranged for day care and usually transported the children.

10. No rating. Used in Question 13 rating.
11. Rated on the subject's ability to delineate the procedures involved in his transition to single parenthood.
   1. No procedures.
   2. Vague procedures.
   3. Some procedures but not clear.
   4. Very clearcut procedures.

12. Rating based on the subject's perception as to whether the procedures he encountered were societally established procedures or particular to his own circumstances.
   1. No procedures.
   2. Particular to own circumstances.
   3. Common to most persons in same situation.
   4. Invariable procedures for all persons.

13. Rating based on the amount that goals have changed since single parenthood.
   1. Goals have completely changed.
   2. Most goals have changed.
   3. Some goals have changed.
   4. No goals have changed.

14. Rating based on the extent to which the father viewed the role of single parenthood as goal facilitating.
   1. No facilitative effect.
   2. Little facilitative effect.
   3. Some facilitative effect.
   4. A great deal of facilitative effect.

15. Rating based on how the subject views single parenthood now.
   1. No facilitative effect.
   2. Little facilitative effect.
   3. Some facilitative effect.
   4. A great deal of facilitative effect.

16. Rating based on the number of things the father wants to change and the kind of things he wants to change.
   1. Change everything.
   2. Change a lot of things.
   3. Change some things.
Ratings on Questions 17-22 based on the amount of change that took place after becoming a single-parent father.

1. No change.
2. Little change.
3. Some change.
4. A great deal of change.

23. Rating based on subject's perception of how much strain has been produced due to time allotment for various responsibilities.

1. No strain.
2. Little strain.
3. Some strain.
4. A great deal of strain.

24. Rating based on whether subject felt strain due to incongruence between his role performance and societal expectations.

1. A great deal of congruence.
2. Some congruence.
3. Little congruence.
4. Not congruent at all.

25. Rating based on the strain produced by resistance from others concerning the subject's newly assumed role of single parent.

1. No resistance.
2. Little resistance.
3. Some resistance.
4. A great deal of resistance.

26. Rating based on subject's perceived congruence between his own expectations and reality.

1. Completely the same.
2. Somewhat the same.
3. Very little similarity.
4. Not at all similar.

27. Rating based on subject's perceived adjustment due to extended family's assistance.

1. A great deal of help in adjustment.
2. Some help in adjustment.
3. Little help in adjustment.
4. No help in adjustment.
   1. No strain.
   2. Little strain.
   3. Some strain.
   4. A great deal of strain.

29. Rating based on the subject's report of difficulty in caring for his children.
   1. No difficulty.
   2. Little difficulty.
   3. Some difficulty.
   4. A great deal of difficulty.

30. Rating based on subject's perceived preparation in caring for his children.
   1. Not at all prepared.
   2. Little prepared.
   3. Somewhat prepared.
   4. Well prepared.

31. Rating based on the subject's perceived ease or difficulty in becoming a single parent.
   1. Very difficult.
   2. Somewhat difficult.
   3. Little difficulty.
   4. No difficulty.
REFERENCES


Burr, W. R. "Contemporary Theories about the Family." Unpublished manuscript at Brigham Young University. (n.d.).


