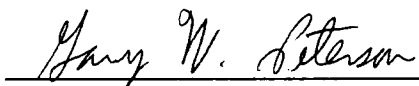


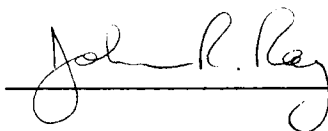
To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Celia Bell Ferguson entitled "Women in Their Thirties: Balancing Needs for Separateness and Connectedness Within the Family." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science, with a major in Child and Family Studies.


Priscilla White, Major Professor

We have read this thesis
and recommend its acceptance:





Accepted for the Council:


The Graduate School

WOMEN IN THEIR THIRTIES: BALANCING NEEDS FOR
SEPARATENESS AND CONNECTEDNESS
WITHIN THE FAMILY

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Science
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Celia Bell Ferguson

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ABSTRACT

The concepts of separateness and connectedness traditionally have been addressed by theorists and clinicians primarily in terms of dysfunction of the individual. Empirical literature concerning these issues is scarce although some attempts have been made recently to extend the investigation of these concepts to include a focus on health in individuals and families. Of primary consideration for this study were perceptions about the processes of meeting individuals' needs for separateness and connectedness within the family.

In-depth interviews with women in their thirties with preschool children were conducted. Questions were asked of these women about 1) their needs for separateness and connectedness as well as their families' tolerance for meeting these needs; 2) ways in which their families functioned in decision making, expression of opinions, and coping in response to stress, and 3) their own definitions of these concepts. Brief questions were included about support beyond their families and the rewards and satisfactions experienced in their adult lives as well as those anticipated for the coming decade.

The importance of meeting needs for both separateness and connectedness was expressed strongly by these women. The most frequently mentioned element in their definitions of both of these concepts was the dimension of time: time for self (separateness)

and sharing time with others (connectedness). Balancing the demands of the work and family systems without being dominated by either was recognized as crucial for the preservation of their sense of identity as well as their sense of family togetherness.

Primary conclusions of this study included the fact that neither separateness nor connectedness alone was sufficient for the well-being of these women, especially in terms of their family relationships. In addition, the idea that identity precedes intimacy was called into question by these results. Implications included the need for a theoretical link between, a research focus on, and a clinical and educational sensitivity to the inter-relatedness of separateness and connectedness issues for individuals as well as for families.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Relationship issues of separateness and connectedness traditionally have been addressed through examinations of intrapsychic functioning. For example, the separation-individuation process has been described extensively by Mahler (1971) and others, usually with the emphasis of inquiry on the dysfunctional individual.

However, without consideration of the familial context, this exhaustive scrutiny of the individual is incomplete. On the other hand, when the family has been the unit of study, attention to dysfunctional elements has continued to be the major focus. Specifically, patterns of family interaction which contribute to individual dysfunction began to receive much attention from family therapists and theorists in the late 1950s (Bateson, Jackson, Haley, & Weakland, 1956; Bowen, 1960; Wynne, Rycoff, Day, & Hirsch, 1958). In addition, recent case studies have been reported of families which included members whose problems with separateness and connectedness warranted diagnoses such as "borderline" or "narcissistic" disorders (Mandelbaum, 1980; Hamilton, 1980; Rinsley, 1980). There have been some exceptions, however, to this focus on dysfunction. For example, Hess and Handel (1959) described another approach toward these interactional processes characterized by separateness and connectedness. Yet, within this body of literature, primary attention has been given to comparing

these processes in clinical versus non-clinical families. The ultimate goal has remained to understand dysfunctional families (Kantor & Lehr, 1975).

Currently family process researchers have addressed related issues as well. For example, Olson, Sprenkle, and Russell (1979) studied individuals' perceptions of their families' cohesion and adaptability. Later, Olson and McCubbin (1982) extended these inquiries of family cohesion and adaptability to questions of how families respond to stress. They suggested that the variability among families in their responses to stress can be explained, in part, through measurements of families' cohesion and adaptability.

Connectedness, or cohesion, and separateness have received some attention also from scholars in the emerging area of family strengths (Lewis, Beavers, Gossett, & Phillips, 1976; Stachowiak, 1975; Stinnett, Sanders, & DrFrain, 1981). In contrast to pathology, the focus in this approach has been on optimally functioning or healthy families. Simultaneously, studies of family stress and coping have been conducted in which mediators to vulnerability to stress and ability to recover from crisis have been discussed (Caplan, 1982; Cobb, 1976; McCubbin, Joy, Cauble, Comeau, Patterson, & Needle, 1980). McCubbin and Patterson (1981) called for an integration of research on family strengths and family stress. By focusing on the strengths which individuals supply within a family rather than on dysfunction of either the individual

or the unit, this integration could be begun. An individual's ability to balance needs for separateness and connectedness and the family's tolerance for such activity by its members can be viewed as strengths contributing to the family's lessening of and adaptation to stress.

I. RATIONALE

The literature concerning the relationship issues of connectedness and separateness clearly is predominated by theoretical and clinical rather than research-based writings. When the context within which these issues are viewed is the family, empirical literature is even scarcer.

Various terms and definitions have been used by theorists to describe these separateness and connectedness issues of individuals in relationships. For example, Hess and Handel (1959) described separateness and connectedness; Bowen (1960, 1978) used the terms emotional divorce and emotional fusion; Stierlin (1974)--centrifugal force and centripetal force; Rosenblatt and Titus (1976)--apartness and togetherness; Barnhill (1979) spoke of mutuality vs. isolation and individuation vs. enmeshment; and Kegan (1982)--independence and inclusion. Although the lack of conceptual clarity concerning these theoretical constructs has been confusing, the basic meanings are quite similar in that these writers seemed to be in agreement that moderate levels of both separateness and connectedness facilitate mental health.

Yet, the application of these concepts to the description of healthy family relationships has received little attention.

These relationship processes of connectedness and separateness are actually two of the major components of the emotional bonds within families. Both of these processes are reflective and, at the same time, regulators of the emotional health of a family's individual members. Fisher (1976), for example, identified a primary family assessment dimension as "the emotional climate of the family and the satisfaction of needs for individual members" (p. 378) and conceptualized the family's emotional climate as an interface between individual and family dynamics.

Family process researchers (Moos & Moos, 1976; Olson, et al., 1979) have begun to investigate this family emotional climate. At the same time, theorists in the area of human development have been expanding and creating new models by which the individual can be described (Gilligan, 1982; Kegan, 1982). The gap between theories of family process and those of human development could be bridged, in part, by research focusing on the link, or interface, between individual and family functioning. Perhaps the most crucial area to examine in terms of this link concerns these processes of connectedness and separateness.

Little research operationalizing these concepts of separateness and connectedness is available; therefore, any research effort in this area at this point in time would be exploratory. Of critical importance for developing measurement

approaches and generating hypotheses for further research is obtaining some data about how individuals perceive these processes in terms of both their own functioning and that of their families. Recently, authors such as Gilligan (1982) and Kegan (1982) have underscored the exclusion of women in samples of research studies that have focused on adult development. Therefore, the present study was an attempt to develop an interview schedule to be used with women in their thirties to elicit their perceptions of the salience of the processes of separateness and connectedness within their own development as well as for the functioning of their families. It is hoped that the data derived from the present study has provided a basis for research questions that can be approached qualitatively as well as quantitatively.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Family process served as the theoretical basis for this study of connectedness and separateness. One's view of family process can encompass both family strengths and family pathology. Similarly, the family stress processes involving buffers against stress and coping resources can be viewed as intermediate actions and reactions linking the pathologies or strengths with the functioning of the family.

Another layer of the theoretical underpinnings of the present study is the interface between individual and family functioning, or the emotional climate. This climate contributes

to, is a result of, and permeates the processes occurring throughout the family system. Figure 1 is a diagram of these components of family process as conceptualized for the present study.

Family process has drawn heavily upon systems theory in that family interrelationships, interdependencies, and interactions are central concerns. The characteristics of these interactions, such as patterns by which separateness and connectedness are balanced, have been studied from the family process perspective (Bowen, 1960; Kantor & Lehr, 1975). The focus of this perspective has been primarily on 1) the individual's interaction patterns with others, 2) pathology or dysfunction, and 3) implications of these processes of interaction for therapy.

At the same time, studies concentrating specifically on stress have tended to ignore the element of the functioning of individuals by their emphasis on the more global concern of the family's functioning in response to stress, especially non-normative stress. For example, Hill's (1949) ABCX model and later Burr's (1973) modification of the model and still later McCubbin and Patterson's (1982) extension of it to a Double ABCX model were descriptions of family patterns of reactions and action in response to stress.

The present study was an inquiry into the ways that the processes involved in balancing separateness and connectedness affected and were affected by the individual's functioning as well as that of the family. In addition, health rather than

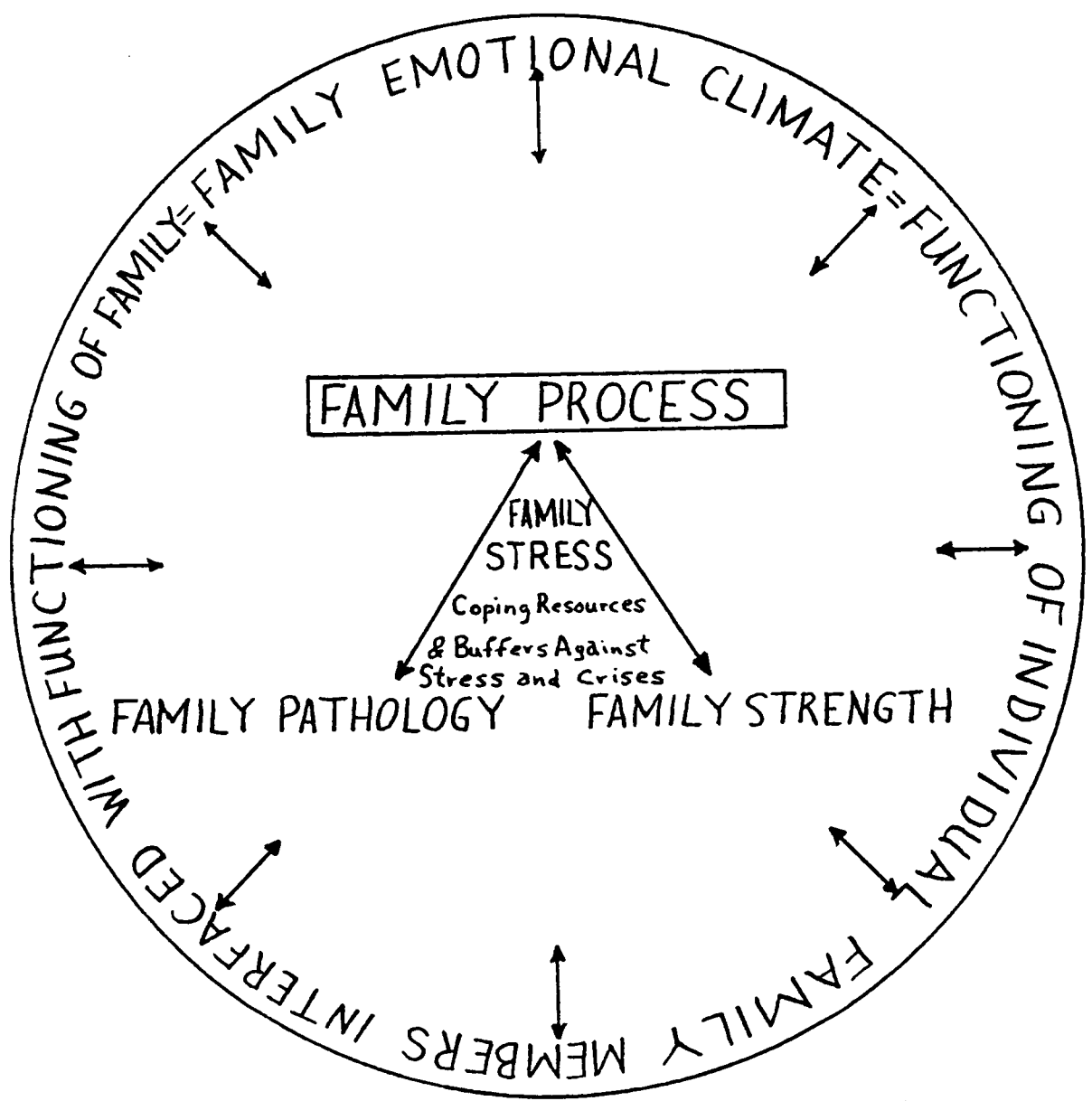


Figure 1. Components of Family Process.

dysfunction was the focus particularly as it related to personal and familial coping resources.

III. ASSUMPTIONS

Because the family process area draws upon theories of family systems and interaction, many of the assumptions of this study were ones from these theories. For example, the basic assumption of this study was that individuals within a family affect other members of that family through their interactions (Raush, Grief, & Nugent, 1979), their perceptions (Mead, 1934), their rules and roles (Haley, 1963), and their definitions of self (Satir, 1972). The crux of interaction is the interpretations which individuals give to each other's actions.

Secondly, individuals are not simply passive organisms. Burr, Leigh, Day, & Constantine (1979) proposed that "the human is actor as well as reactor" (p. 48). Similarly, McCubbin (1979) stated that "the family is called upon both to react, and to actively employ coping behaviors" (p. 243).

Another assumption of the study was that it is through communication that the nature of relationships is defined. Redundant patterns of communication become the structures which function as organizing dimensions of family life. From these structures evolve family themes, and families operate in light of these principles of organization (Jackson, 1967; Satir, 1975). The family themes are both products and regulators of the communication

processes which define, perpetuate, and determine how family members interact with one another and with the outside world. These communication processes include those of meeting needs for separateness and connectedness.

The final assumption of this study was that development is a life-long process and that there is an interrelationship between individual development and family functioning. This family functioning is a reflection of as well as a contributor to the continual adjustments of a family's rules to accommodate the development and situational needs of its members over time.

IV. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to obtain women's perceptions of separateness and connectedness within the context of both individual and family development. More specifically, the primary objective was to clarify some of the characteristics of the emotional bonds between selected women and their families. Through a structured interview the following dimensions were examined:

- 1) the individual's levels of separateness and connectedness,
- 2) the relationships and situations within which individuals experience tension between separateness and connectedness needs,
- 3) family tolerance for meeting needs of separateness and connectedness, 4) the individual's own definitions of separateness and connectedness, and 5) the balance between the two within the family as reflected in the family's decision-making styles, ways

of expressing opinions, and coping patterns in response to stress. A secondary objective was to gain information concerning these women's perceptions of support beyond their families and past and anticipated rewards and stresses of adult life.

The primary goal of the study was to see whether or not women in a sample of non-clinical families could identify and apply understandings of these processes of connectedness and separateness. A second goal was to identify issues and to generate hypotheses for the application of these processes to a better understanding of female adult development and family functioning.

V. NOMINAL DEFINITIONS

The context within which these individuals were studied in this investigation was the family, defined as a unit of interacting and interdependent persons who have some common goals and themes, have a commitment to each other over time, and, at least for part of their lives, share resources and living space (Andrews, Bubolz, & Paolucci, 1980).

Separateness, or separateness-seeking, for the individual was defined as independence of thought, feeling, and judgment; a sense of responsibility for one's own life; and a relatively clear sense of identity (Barnhill, 1979). Similarly, separateness, or separateness-seeking, within the family was defined as tolerance for individual family members: "to express themselves clearly as feeling, thinking, acting, valuable, and separate people; to

take responsibility for their thoughts, feelings, and actions, . . . and to listen to and respond to others within the family" (Lewis, et al., 1976, p. 57).

Closeness to and togetherness with others, a feeling of needing others, and a sense of responsibility to others was the definition used for connectedness, or connectedness-seeking, for the individual. Likewise, connectedness, or connectedness-seeking, within the family was defined as tolerance for: emotional closeness; giving, receiving, and asking for help in decision making and problem solving; and spending time together (Barnhill, 1979; Lewis, et al., 1976).

VI. LIMITATIONS

Generalizability of the study's results was limited to an upper-middle class, highly educated, white population of women in their thirties with preschool children. Although the random sample was not representative of the population of women in general, it was reflective of the growing number of women in dual-career families with preschool children. Additional care must be taken in generalizing these findings to other populations due to the sample size (n=15).

The exclusive self-report nature of the interview method and the qualitative nature of the data analysis were, by definition, subjective. The depth and the color obtained from the qualitative interviews were at the expense of more specific and numerical statements that could be attempted with a quantitative method.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Issues of separateness and connectedness are impacted by several areas of individual and family functioning. The interface between the individual and the family, influences on family coping, and developmental and gender-role influences on individual functioning are elements to be understood in an investigation of separateness and connectedness within the family.

I. THE INTERFACE BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY FUNCTIONING

Barnhill (1979) identified and discussed eight dimensions of healthy family functioning after reviewing the theoretical literature on family therapy. Included in the basic family theme of "identity processes" were his first two dimensions--the process of individuation versus enmeshment and the process of mutuality versus isolation. He stated that "both individuation and mutuality are necessary in order to prevent enmeshment (closeness without autonomy) or isolation (independence without intimacy)" (p. 95).

The theoretical and empirical literature in the area of family process was reviewed by Broderick and Pulliam-Krager (1979). They conceptualized the bulk of this material as relating to one of two central concerns: "(1) establishing a pattern

of separateness and connectedness, and (2) the nature of the relationships among members and the relationships between them and their social environment" (p. 604). Both Barnhill's and Broderick and Pulliam-Krager's works pointed to the fact that the primary focus of studies on separateness and connectedness has been one of therapy rather than of healthy family functioning.

In the family process studies of Olson, et al. (1979), either enmeshment (extremely high levels of connectedness and limited separateness) or disengagement (extremely low levels of connectedness and high separateness from the family) typically were found to be unhealthy for family functioning as well as for individual development. In other words, extreme levels of either separateness or connectedness can lead to devastating emptiness and/or engulfment (Kerr, 1981).

However, according to Olson and McCubbin (1982), an exception may be that when all the family's members accept the expectation for high levels of connectedness, then these levels can be quite functional. They cited five studies conducted over the last fifteen years with ethnic (Slavic-American, Italian, and Puerto Rican) and religious (Amish and Mormon) groups. In these investigations, normative expectations that strongly emphasized family togetherness were identified. Even in families without these ethnic or religious orientations, Olson and McCubbin proposed that high levels of emotional and physical togetherness in families are not necessarily problematic. This conjecture is a radical

departure from the generally accepted theoretical position that high levels of emotional or physical togetherness are probably indications of difficulties such as pseudomutuality (Wynne, et al., 1958), enmeshment (Minuchin, 1974), or emotional fusion (Bowen, 1978).

In the Olson, et al. studies (1979, 1982), moderate levels of family cohesion and of family adaptability were found to be the most conducive to healthy family functioning for the vast majority of the families studied. In addition, family functioning seemed to be related to individual growth. For example, Moos and Moos (1976) indicated that personal growth depends, in part, on the relationships among family members as well as on organization and control within the family system.

Both of the above-mentioned central concerns of family process encompass the issues of separateness and connectedness. As Ackerman (1959) stated,

a healthy genuine autonomy emerges only as a satisfying and healthy union is maintained. Togetherness and separation are the head and tail of the same coin. No togetherness, no true autonomy Autonomy does not supplant union, it is added to it (p. 75).

More recently, Gilligan (1982), in describing maturity in the individual, found these same issues to be crucial ones for her interview subjects. In reporting her findings, she spoke of

the paradoxical truths of human experience--that we know ourselves as separate only insofar as we live in connection with others, and that we experience relationship only insofar as we differentiate other from self (p. 63).

A relatively recent emphasis within the family field has been upon family strengths. Stinnett and Sauer (1977) surveyed 350 families and found six key characteristics of healthy family functioning: spending time together, having good communication patterns, showing appreciation for one another, being committed to the family group, and tending to be religious. Stinnett (1980) described family strengths as

those relationship patterns, interpersonal skills and competencies, and social and psychological characteristics which create a sense of positive family identity, promote satisfying and fulfilling interaction among family members, encourage the development of the potential of the family group and individual family members, and contribute to the family's ability to deal effectively with stress and crisis (p. 2).

Perhaps the most salient part of this perspective to the present study was the emphasis on "social and psychological characteristics which create a sense of positive family identity." How family identity is related to individual identity was one of the focal points of the present study.

Lewis, et al. (1976) addressed the nature of these relationship patterns in an ongoing research project studying the interactional characteristics of "healthy" or optimally functioning families. One of the five family qualities which they identified as important in the development of capable, adaptive, healthy individuals is the degree of family individuation. According to their research findings, "family systems vary in the degree that individuation is tolerated and encouraged. This

system tolerance for individuation is closely related to the autonomy of family members . . ." (p. 56). Lewis and his colleagues subdivided this quality of family individuation into three more specific, observable, and researchable factors:

- (1) The ability of individual family members to express themselves clearly as feeling, thinking, acting, valuable and separate individuals and to take responsibility for thoughts, feelings, and actions . . .
- (2) The recognition and acceptance that others may perceive differently . . .
- (3) The ability to hear and respond to others within the system . . . (p. 57).

Although their ideas were interesting, it is noteworthy that their focus was on processes of individuation without comparable attention being given to processes of connectedness.

In Stachowiak's (1975) investigation of healthy family functioning, the capacity to balance individual needs and family group needs was found to underlie four major factors of what he termed family effectiveness. In fact, one of the primary implications for clinicians from Stachowiak's research was the need

to learn to focus more on people's strengths . . . to help them grow until they can manage their problems in dealing with separateness and togetherness, so that each individual can be an individual in his [or her] own right and yet come together with the other members of the family as a group when this is indicated (p. 69).

Stachowiak (1975) identified the four factors of family effectiveness as: (1) effective decision making or problem solving resulting from balancing the concrete components of the task at hand with sufficient attention to family members' emotional

needs, (2) the ability to allow one person--not always the same person--to take the leadership position with support from other family members, (3) the possibility for expression and resolution of differences, and (4) clarity of communication exhibited by frequent, short, and specific units of interaction rather than infrequent "general speeches" by family members.

Stachowiak has worked in conjunction with Satir (1975) and the Palo Alto Group; however, Satir has placed more emphasis on communication and self-esteem patterns within the family. One of their commonalities has been a focus on rules for family functioning and the need for the flexibility of these rules accompanied by open communication. Much of the contribution of these researchers to the literature on separateness and connectedness has been in terms of how these issues impact family communication. Yet, the strong clinical orientation of their work has kept it much more within the purview of psychology rather than family studies.

II. INFLUENCES ON FAMILY COPING

Cautley (1980) hypothesized that "coping skills developed by family members depend substantially upon their view of themselves and of their relationships with others" (p. 143). Likewise, Cobb (1976) suggested that having social support from the family enables one to cope with stress and resultant crises more effectively. He defined this social support as based upon perceptions of exchanged information by which a person believes she or he

is cared for and loved, is esteemed and valued, and belongs to a network of communication and mutual obligation. Cobb visualized this social support both as a coping resource and a buffer against stress based on the individual's perceptions of self and relationships with others.

Caplan (1974) described a support system in general as providing help in mobilizing resources, sharing tasks, and providing the individual "with extra supplies of money, materials, tools, skills, and cognitive guidance to improve his [or her] handling of [the] situation" (p. 6). Caplan (1982) later extended this description specifically to support system functions of the family.

According to Burr (1982), "Angell (1936) made the first systematic analysis of factors that were related to the ability of families to recover from crisis" (p. 15). Family integration and adaptability were identified by Angell as two important variables in this process of recovery. These variables of integration, or cohesion, and adaptability have continued to be identified by other researchers as vital elements in a family's coping repertoire (McCubbin & Patterson, 1982; Miller & Sollie, 1980; Olson, et al., 1979; Russell, 1979). One of the problems in this literature has been a lack of conceptual clarity. However, it appears that much of what has been labeled family integration is synonymous with meeting family needs for connectedness.

Another perspective from which the concepts of separateness and connectedness have been studied relating to family coping has been that of Bowenian theory. Viewed from this stance, effective coping is made possible by the family members' abilities to be aware of and make choices for action. On the other hand, ineffective coping is seen as resulting from the continued lack of choice-making dictated by relationship patterns which have evolved and become habitual through former coping attempts. When these habitual patterns are in force, reactions rather than choices for action occur. In Bowenian terms, this awareness of possibility is release from fusion of emotion and intellect; further, as choices for action become more than reactions, creative responses, or coping, can occur (Kerr, 1981).

This awareness often is clouded when stress is experienced by families during times when the connectedness-separateness balance or imbalance within the family's emotional climate is likely to become intensified (Bowen, 1978). "When these interdependence processes become excessive" (Peterson, 1976, p. 6), the "emotional chain reactions" (Kerr, 1981) and "automatic pilots" (Satir, 1972) become the dominant influences in an individual's and, therefore, a family's experience. Because of this excessive emotional interdependence, family members tend to react to one another on a moment-to-moment basis, and they are apt to become engulfed by the relationship as they react emotionally to the immediate situation (Peterson, 1976). To Bowenians, the word

"emotionally" includes more than expression of feelings. Goldenberg and Goldenberg (1980) described people who fuse emotion and intellect as being

dominated by their emotional responses They are less flexible, less adaptive, more emotionally dependent on others, more easily stressed into dysfunction. The more differentiated their emotional and intellectual functioning becomes, the better they are able to cope with stress. . . . A well-differentiated person is not without feeling, but rather can freely experience and express feelings without becoming overinvolved emotionally with others (p. 171).

In summary, it appeared that individuals and families must be able to distinguish between intellectual and affective responses and be able to view their own emotional responses independently of the emotional responses of others in the family.

McCubbin and Patterson (1982) expanded the concept of coping by focusing on the interaction between resources and perceptions. They concluded that balancing the "ever-changing and often competing needs" (p. 41) of the individual family members was a challenge of family life as the family sought to maintain "a balanced needs-resources ratio at both the member-to-member and the family-to-environment levels" (pp. 41-42).

III. INFLUENCES ON INDIVIDUAL FUNCTIONING

Developmental Influences

Erikson's theory of psychosocial development has been a widely used paradigm of human development, particularly in describing the developmental task of acquisition of identity.

Coleman (1980) has defined identity as requiring "not only the notion of being separate and different from others, but also a sense of self-consistency, and a firm knowledge of how one appears to the rest of the world" (p. 17).

According to Erikson (1968), the adolescent who established an identity was prepared to move on to the developmental issue of young adulthood--intimacy versus isolation. In other words, one must establish a sense of self before the vulnerability of intimacy with another can be risked. If identity was not attained, identity confusion/diffusion was the outcome according to this theory.

Among those investigating identity empirically was Marcia (1966, 1976) who expanded Erikson's ideas. Marcia suggested that, instead of the all-or-none perspective of Erikson, there were several identity statuses each of which were achieved through an exploration of crisis and commitment (1966). Later, he amended his approach to identity from a typology to a process with some movement between these identity statuses (1976). However, he has continued to view these "identity statuses as modes of resolution of the identity crisis occurring in late adolescence, as described by Erikson" (p. 145). Rutter (1980), however, argued that:

Of course the development of a personal identity is a crucial part of growing up and much of importance in this connection happens during adolescence, but so it does earlier in childhood and later in adult life (p. 87).

In essence, identity is fluid rather than static, and, although an important basis for identity may be formed in adolescence,

experiences in adult life affect the continuing evolution of identity.

Whether or not the acquisition of identity is a stage-specific issue is only one of the questions concerning identity which has been debated. Another issue has been that of sequence. Viewed from the neo-Freudian stance as described above, the acquisition of identity was seen as preceding that of intimacy (Erikson, 1963, 1968; Orlofsky, Marcia, & Lesser, 1973). However, findings from recent studies have been used to question the validity of this claim. For example, Kacerguis and Adams (1980) found in a sample of both males and females that identity and intimacy were related but cautioned the reader that

these data should not be interpreted as implying that . . . identity is a necessary prerequisite to intimacy formation . . . [Identity] formation may be a sufficient but not a necessary prerequisite to the development of intimate relationships among adolescents and young adults (p. 124).

The samples of Marcia (1966, 1976) and Orlofsky, et al. (1973) consisted entirely of males. Hodgson and Fischer (1979) used both males and females in their sample and found that interpreting their results within the context of Eriksonian theory was more adequate in explaining male than female development.

Gilligan (1982) stated that theories of human development based on Eriksonian theory actually have been theories of typical male development. She claimed that when women's experiences and these theories have not meshed, then the problem has been identified as one of women's development rather than one of

theory-building. Kegan (1982), in commenting upon the work of Gilligan and others, said that they

are now pointing out . . . that differentiation (the stereotypically male overemphasis . . .) is favored with the language of growth and development, while integration (the stereotypically female overemphasis) gets spoken of in terms of dependency and immaturity (pp. 108-109).

Another expansion of Erikson's model of human development was Levinson's (1978) in-depth interviews with 40 men aged 30-50. He identified the thirties as an era in which "settling down," "nest-building," or "getting established" occurred as the man "moves from being a 'novice adult' through a series of intermediate steps to the point where he can assume a more 'senior' position in work, family, and community" (p. 39).

Stewart (1977), in attempting to extend Levinson's model to women, found it difficult to describe the early adult life experiences of her interview subjects according to Levinson's outline with the same consistency and orderliness which had emerged from the study of males. Sheehy (1981, 1976) and other "popular press" authors (Dowling, 1981; Friday, 1977; Scarf, 1980) focused in a similar way on women and their struggles with separateness and connectedness. The authors of these books discussed problems having to do with "power and dependency, love and hate; with the need to be cared for and to nurture others" (Scarf, p. 1).

In contrast to this Eriksonian stage-theory approach to development, Kegan (1982) formulated a Helix of Evolutionary

Truces as a structure for describing both the movement between the tensions favoring separateness and those favoring connectedness as well as the tension itself. He identified five balances, or stages, each of which is a temporary truce between the

yearnings for inclusion and distinctness . . . moving from the over-included, fantasy-embedded impulsive balance to the sealed-up self-sufficiency of the imperial balance; from the overdifferentiated imperial balance to over-included interpersonalism; from interpersonalism to the autonomous, self-regulating institutional balance; from the institutional to a new form of openness in the inter-individual (p. 108).

In other words, Kegan visualized adult development as a continuous movement between the poles of inclusion and independence, negating the necessity of neither element while pointing out the need for balance between them--even balances of varying proportions for different stages of evolution of adult life.

Gender Role Influences

Kaplan and Sedney (1980) examined the "available information on sex differences in ability, self-esteem, achievement motivation, emotionality, and interpersonal interactions" and concluded that "although psychological differences may not be as extensive as myth and stereotype suggest, some do exist" (p. 266). One of the psychological differences that they did identify as existing is relevant specifically to the present study: that women tended to be more concerned than men with the social-emotional aspects of interactions.

Studies by Urbank (1980) and Hodgson and Fischer (1979) resulted in findings highlighting the salience for women of interpersonal relationships in the process of identity formation.

It seems clear . . . that males and females follow identity development pathways discriminately different from each other, choosing to seek the nature of self by confronting very different questions. . . . Her identity issues therefore seem to be based on relating, as if her sense of self rests on the success with which she can resolve issues of getting along with others in ways that satisfy both herself and those important to her (Hodgson & Fischer, 1979, pp.46-47).

Recognizing that women's oftentimes different pathway of development has been viewed as dysfunctional (Kegan, 1982; Gilligan, 1982), results such as those of Broverman, Broverman, Clarkson, Rosenkrantz, and Vogel (1970) are more understandable. Broverman, et al. found that descriptions of the characteristics of the traditional masculine role in contrast to descriptions of the traditional feminine role elicited evaluations by mental-health professionals of healthy psychological functioning in adults. In addition, Bart (1974) found that over-conformity to this traditional female role was characteristic of many profoundly depressed women.

Traditionally, women have been socialized to be nurturant and caring for others at the expense of their own needs and to be dependent upon others for their personal validation and worth. They also have been socialized to view autonomous, independent actions as negative, or masculine, or at least a-feminine. Bernard (1976) discussed women's socialization into the feminine

role as resulting in women's acceptance of a standard of dependency. This dependency limited their ability to cope with stress autonomously. There is little research available investigating the vestiges of this socialization process that have been carried with women into their adult years of development. Noticeably absent are investigations concerning how the woman balances nurturance and care for her own separateness and connectedness needs with the nurturance and care of the needs of those whom she calls family. This void, in part, is that which the present study was designed to address.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

I. SUBJECTS

Fifteen women comprised the sample for this study. They were from 30 to 37 years old with a mean age of 33.3 years. Eighty-seven percent were married, 92% of whom were in their first marriage. All of those who were not married had been in the past.

These women had from one to three children, at least one of whom was a preschool child enrolled in The University of Tennessee, Knoxville Child Development Laboratories. The mean number of children per subject was 1.6. Sixty-two percent of the sample's children were male and 38% were female.

All of the women were white Americans. Thirty-three percent of them had a bachelor's degree or some graduate-level work. Another fifty-three percent had completed a Master's or a doctoral degree. Two of the sample were presently unemployed. The family income for the sample was as follows: \$10,000 - \$21,999 (20%), \$22,000 - \$27,999 (33%), and \$28,000 or more (47%).

II. INSTRUMENTATION

Interview Schedule

A semi-structured, individual interview schedule, entitled Balancing Separateness and Connectedness (see Appendix A), was

designed and field tested by the researcher after reviewing the literature. Elements which had been identified by researchers, theorists, and clinicians as components of the emotional bonds between family members were incorporated primarily into the first two sections of the interview. These sections were used to elicit the subject's perceptions of: 1) her levels of separateness and connectedness in comparison to male and female peers and her parents, 2) the relationships and situations within which tension between connectedness and separateness needs was experienced, 3) family tolerance for meeting separateness and connectedness needs in comparison to other families with young children and her family of origin, and 5) the family balance between connectedness and separateness as reflected in the family's decision-making styles, ways of expressing opinions, and coping patterns in response to stress. Questions concerning support beyond the family comprised the third section which was an adaptation of portions of instruments developed by Wilcox (1981) and Barrera (1981) to assess people's support networks. In sections four and five brief reports of the sample's experiences with and anticipations of rewards and stresses of adult life were obtained.

A set of continua was designed and used in the collection of information about the women's comparisons of themselves and their families to others in terms of connectedness and separateness. Appendix B contains a copy of these continua. Subjects were instructed to consider

a 5 as "same" and, therefore, the numbers below 5 as "less" and the numbers above 5 as "more."

Personal History Inventory

An instrument was developed for this study for the collection of sociodemographic and familial information such as age, marital status, current employment status, race, number and ages of children, level of education, and family income. A copy of this questionnaire is found in Appendix C.

III. PROCEDURES

Sample Selection

After approval was granted by the review committee for research with human subjects, a letter was sent to the Coordinator of The University of Tennessee, Knoxville Child Development Laboratories requesting permission to select and contact potential participants (see Appendix D). The researcher attended two meetings of the Laboratory Advisory Committee--a group of parents, faculty, and staff of the Child Development Laboratories--to explain the project. Then 25 names were chosen at random with replacement from the list of 41 women aged 30-39 who had children in these programs. These women were sent a letter (see Appendix E) explaining the study and requesting their participation. Each was contacted by phone, and interviews were scheduled. All agreed to participate except one who was actually not yet 30 and, therefore, was ineligible for the sample. In addition, due to

scheduling difficulties, uncompleted interviews, and tape malfunctions, the original number of subjects was reduced to 15, or 38% of the available, eligible population.

Data Collection

Before interviews with the actual sample were begun, pilot interviews were conducted with two women who had sociodemographic and educational characteristics similar to those in the sample. As a result of these pilot interviews, a few modifications were made to the interview schedule primarily in terms of specificity in questioning. An additional question was added in each of four parallel sections asking for personal definitions of the concepts of separateness and connectedness.

The researcher conducted all interviews which were scheduled at a time and place of convenience to the subjects. Each woman read and signed an Informed Consent Form (see Appendix F). Even though each interview was being taped with the subject's consent, a rapport between the interviewer and subject was established during the first few minutes of the interview. As a result, the women generally were remarkably candid and talked quite freely and often enthusiastically about the topic. By and large, they seemed eager to contribute to the research project, and all requested a copy of a summary of the group results of the study. At the conclusion of the interview, a Personal History Inventory was completed by each subject.

Data Analysis

The data reduction process for the interview information consisted of six steps. After the interviews were taped and transcribed, the transcriptions were checked for accuracy by the researcher. Then the transcriptions were summarized in detail for the specific answers given to the questions in the interview schedule. Next, the summaries were compiled by categories created from the questions asked. Frequency counts were made of the compilation of responses to each question. Finally, issues and themes were identified from the frequencies of responses. Inter-rater reliability was computed by having a faculty member in Family Studies independently summarize and categorize data from the interviews. Agreement ranged from 90% to 100%.

Information obtained from the Personal History Inventories was analyzed using descriptive statistics. A compilation of these data is in Appendix G.

Percentages were used to reflect the frequency of responses rather than rank ordering. It is important that the reader be aware of this fact, particularly in reading the sections concerning the themes or definitions identified by the sample.

In order to protect the anonymity of subjects' responses in the results, pseudonyms were used in the quoted material. Same-sex names were chosen for the pseudonyms.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

I. SEPARATENESS AND CONNECTEDNESS FOR THE INDIVIDUAL

Separateness-Seeking

Subjects were given the following working definition of an individual's separateness-seeking: "independence of thought, feeling, and judgment; a sense of responsibility for one's own life; and a relatively clear sense of identity." Many of the women found it difficult to describe themselves as individuals apart from themselves in relation to their families. "So much of what you do is because of your family," said one woman. Nevertheless, subjects agreed to try to answer this first series of questions focusing on themselves in relation to those beyond their families.

Using the above definition, each woman was asked to mark on a series of continua how she viewed herself as compared to others in terms of separateness-seeking. A summary of the women's responses on the continua is found in Table 1. The great majority of the women viewed themselves as more likely to seek separateness than other women their age (93%) and as more prone to be separateness-seeking than their mothers (87%). In making the comparisons to their mothers, several of the subjects noted the importance of the different social milieu in which their mothers

TABLE 1
CONTINUA OF INDIVIDUAL SEPARATENESS-SEEKING

	Less					Same		More							N/A
	-4	-3	-2	-1	%*	0	%	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	%		
Self vs. women her age	0	0	0	0	0%	1	6%	2	6	4	1	1	93%	-	
Self vs. her mother	0	0	1	0	6%	1	6%	3	0	5	3	2	87%	-	
Self vs. men her age	0	1	0	4	33%	2	14%	4	1	1	2	0	53%	-	
Self vs. her father	0	0	1	4	33%	4	29%	2	0	1	1	1	35%	1	
Present vs. wished for (satisfaction)	0	0	1	0	6%	7	47%	6	1	0	0	0	47%	-	

*Percentages rounded down to whole numbers.

functioned. One woman stated this qualification as follows:

I see myself as very similar to my mother. She was always very independent in terms of having her own income and working, making prime decisions. She did things like driving places when other women her age were not driving. Comparing my lifestyle with hers, I see myself as being more independent and separateness-seeking than she was, but comparing her lifestyle with other women in her time, we are similar.

In comparing themselves to men their age, however, only 53% viewed themselves as more likely to seek separateness. "I am interpreting this separateness as 'control' over my own life, and I think probably men have more control than I do," said one woman. Another said, "Women just have more responsibility, are more tied down. Lots of men just go ahead and do what they want to do." Generally, these women were less likely (35%) to see

themselves as separateness-seeking in reference to their fathers than in any of the other comparisons they were asked to make. In addition, 47% indicated that they were satisfied with their present separateness-seeking behavior whereas 47% wanted more and only 6% wanted less.

After completing these continua, the subjects' own definitions of separateness-seeking were requested. Five themes were mentioned most frequently. Illustrative explanations from the women are used to clarify the way in which these themes were discussed. The themes were: 1) a sense of identity (27%)--"being able to know who I am apart from my other roles in life."--2) time for self (33%)--"I have to convince myself that I deserve that time and should not feel guilty about taking the time away from something else, even though in the back of my mind I know I should be at work and I do feel guilty."--3) balance between her own needs and the needs of others (20%),

It's a very delicate balance . . . trying to maintain the balance of me--that I'm a worthwhile human being, but I have other responsibilities. It doesn't sound difficult, but it sometimes is. You try to divide yourself so many different ways, and you wonder if you have struck a good balance--have I given enough to other people, family, friends, other responsibilities on the job or classroom; did I shortchange anybody?

4) independence, including financial independence (20%),

To get my point across and my needs met . . . I've had trouble with that. I had to learn how to stand up for myself, because I really never did until I got out of college At first I wouldn't do that. It seemed easier to go along with the people you had to work with.

and "taking care of everyday things--getting things fixed" and "financial independence or self-sufficiency" and 5) goal setting/decision making (20%).

I think it's important that whether you are a parent or an individual within society that you have established certain goals about your wants and desires . . . knowing what is available to you and not being afraid to reject or accept whatever you want to be.

In summary, the way these women viewed themselves in terms of separateness-seeking was gender specific. That is, the great majority saw themselves as more separateness-seeking than other women, but in comparison with men the figures were quite different. Barely over half of the subjects viewed themselves as more separateness-seeking than men their age. Even more telling, however, is the fact that 65% viewed themselves as the same as or less separateness-seeking than their fathers, but only 35% viewed themselves as more.

In terms of satisfaction, it is apparent that nearly half (47%) of the subjects were satisfied with their present amount of separateness-seeking, and approximately the other half (47%) wanted somewhat more. Those subjects who indicated that they wanted more marked the lower points on this area of the continuum indicating a desire for only slightly more.

Connectedness-Seeking

The same format as above was followed in the section concerning connectedness-seeking. "Closeness to and togetherness

with others, a feeling of needing others, and a sense of responsibility to others" comprised the working definition given of this dimension. Again, a series of continua was marked indicating how the subjects viewed themselves in reference to others. A summary of these responses is found in Table 2. Thirty-three percent saw themselves the same as other women their age, 47% saw themselves as more prone, and 20% saw themselves as less prone than other women their age to seek connectedness. As compared to their mothers, 21% saw themselves the same as, 43% saw themselves as more, and 36% saw themselves as less connectedness-seeking than their mothers. Differences expressed in the focus of the connectedness were highlighted by the woman who said:

TABLE 2
CONTINUA OF INDIVIDUAL CONNECTEDNESS-SEEKING

	Less					Same		More							**
	-4	-3	-2	-1	%*	0	%	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	%		
Self vs. women her age	0	2	0	1	20%	5	33%	2	1	2	2	0	47%	-	
Self vs. her mother	0	0	3	2	36%	3	21%	1	2	1	2	0	43%	1	
Self vs. men her age	0	1	1	2	29%	1	7%	1	3	2	3	0	64%	1	
Self vs. her father	0	1	0	1	14%	3	22%	3	1	1	3	1	64%	1	
Present vs. wished for (satisfaction)	0	0	0	1	7%	6	40%	2	4	2	0	0	53%	-	

*Percentages rounded down to whole numbers.

**Subject did not mark this portion of continua.

I perceive her as having more of her identity focused on family--extended family--to a much greater degree than I am, partly because they live close to my grandparents. She didn't work, didn't have as many other separateness-seeking behaviors. I share with her the importance of nuclear family, but I have more other interests than she. She had more extended family interests.

In comparison to men their age, the majority (64%) saw themselves as more connectedness-seeking. Similarly, the majority (64%) indicated that they were more likely to seek connectedness than their fathers. Forty percent indicated satisfaction with their present connectedness-seeking behaviors while 53% desired more.

The subjects' definitions of connectedness-seeking behaviors were then sought resulting in identification of the following two themes with illustrative comments: 1) sharing time with others (40%)--"just being there; not that you have to do anything; you are just there."--and 2) emotional intimacy and acceptance (33%).

I need people very much . . . not just in my family . . . but having other women as friends and professionals, too. . . . I derive strength from them and enthusiasm for what I'm doing And whatever I enjoy, I enjoy that much more if the other person I'm communicating with understands, too, and appreciates.

and

close, personal friends who know a lot about me, and I know a lot about them We can talk to each other and trust each other. If I am in a bad mood, they accept me anyway. We get mad at each other but are still friends. They are people I like to be with.

Again, the trend of responses was in reference to the gender of those to whom the subjects were comparing themselves. Compared

to other women, the subjects were relatively evenly distributed between the same, less, and more connectedness-seeking. However, in contrast to separateness-seeking, the women saw themselves as less connectedness-seeking than their female peers and mothers and more connectedness-seeking than their male peers and fathers. Subjects' satisfaction with their levels of connectedness-seeking was quite comparable to their satisfaction with separateness-seeking.

Balance Between Separateness and Connectedness for the Individual

Questions were asked concerning the relationships and situations in which subjects were aware of a tension between separateness and connectedness which required a balancing of these needs.

One woman answered, "In any close relationship!"

Five types of relationships were identified by these women, and within these relationships situations were discussed. The relationships were: 1) marriage/partner (60%),

The toughest one is with my husband. Maintaining an image of myself, but also I have a responsibility to the family. If I'm talking about connectedness with someone I meet in class, there is no problem . . . they view me, not as "Mrs. Smith," not as "Tom's mother," but "Ann, who sits beside me in chemistry."

2) parent-child (60%),

I feel tugged With the youngest one, I feel so much more a demand there now . . . whereas I had really felt over the last few years with the older child, that that had lessened and I was able to regain a little bit more of me: stepping out and really striving for a career and those other independent kinds of things that I felt were important for me. And it seems like I had to jump

right back in where I was several years ago and so, from my standpoint, I feel stymied again because of that; and I have a lot of frustration with that. I have the commitment and love for the family and my responsibility . . . but I feel lots of conflict.

3) friends (27%)--"I'm not gregarious . . . and I don't make friends easily. Just when I would strike up a relationship with another wife or someone at work, we would move away. Maybe that's okay for kids . . . but I can't do that."--4) career/work roles (20%),

There are a handful of people . . . and we never seem to have enough time just to get to know each other: people that I would love to be able to sit down for a quiet evening and just talk--really understand each other. . . . When I am in a situation where I am spending a few minutes with one of these people that I would really like to get to know better, I get really frustrated and . . . angry with myself that I don't let whatever else it is I do with my time go, long enough to develop some of these relationships.

and 5) adult child-parent (13%).

My mother is ill all the time and I am her guardian. . . . It really does get to me. I don't want to have to handle this all the time, but I have to do it. So I am real aware that that's what is bothering me.

When subjects were asked to choose which of the two dimensions they were more actively seeking that day, 16% were unable to identify one over the other--"It's really hard to answer. I don't think I can tell you. It really depends on the time of day and what I'm doing." Forty-two percent chose connectedness and 42% chose separateness. One woman said,

It's a teeter-totter right now, and I suppose some days I wake up and it is going to tip toward separateness and other days toward the other one. . . . I will definitely try to balance it toward connectedness but insisting on those few things that give me the illusion of being my own person from time to time.

Concerning the whole idea of balance between separateness and connectedness, one woman said: "I really don't see these as opposites . . . I think it is more on two different tracks, and I think it's possible to be a highly connectedness-seeking person and to be also individual seeking at the same time in your life." Yet another woman talked about the difficulties in balancing these needs: "Now I'm more heavily separateness-seeking in that I feel if I can resolve those things, the other will take care of itself. If I can get content with myself, then it would spill over into my relationships with other people."

II. SEPARATENESS AND CONNECTEDNESS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITHIN FAMILIES

The process for investigating the subjects' perceptions of separateness and connectedness within the family paralleled that described above; however, the focus was on family tolerance for (or emotional permission for, or encouragement of) these behaviors. Again, definitions of these dimensions were given. These definitions were compatible with as well as extensions of the previous working definitions in order to tap the characteristics of the emotional bonds between family members.

Family Tolerance of Members' Separateness-Seeking

The working definition for separateness-seeking within a family was given as "tolerance for individual family members:

to express themselves clearly as feeling, thinking, acting, valuable, and separate people; to take responsibility for their thoughts, feelings, and actions; to recognize and accept the fact that others may see things differently; and to listen to and respond to others within the family." Again, a series of continua were presented to the subjects through questions in which the subjects compared their present families with other families with young children and then with their families of origin. A question on satisfaction was asked as well. A summary of the women's responses on the continua is found in Table 3.

All of the women viewed their present families as more tolerant of separateness-seeking than other families with young children. Ninety-four percent viewed their present families as more tolerant of separateness-seeking than their families of origin, and 6% saw them as the same. The women were relatively evenly distributed between being satisfied with their families' tolerance for separateness-seeking and wanting their families to be more tolerant of separateness-seeking. One of the women expressed her reasons for being satisfied with the current tolerance in her family by saying:

If I really want to do more of the separateness kinds of things, I'll need to give up the job or part of it. I think I'm doing about as much as I can without really depriving the connectedness part--the family obligations and the joys you get from that.

Many of the women who expressed a desire for more tolerance for separateness-seeking in their families felt that they were sacrificing more than other family members; for example:

TABLE 3
CONTINUA OF FAMILY SEPARATENESS-SEEKING

	Less					Same		More						
	-4	-3	-2	-1	%*	0	%	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	%	**
Family vs. other families with young children	0	0	0	0	0%	0	0	2	3	3	5	1	100%	1
Family vs. family of origin	0	0	0	0	0%	1	6%	4	0	3	4	2	94%	1
Present vs. wished for	0	0	0	1	6%	7	50%	4	2	0	0	0	44%	1

*Percentages rounded down to whole numbers.

**Subject did not mark this portion of continua.

It's very difficult to get 5 people together and have everybody get along when everybody is independent. There are always compromises, and I feel like I am the one who compromises a great deal of the time--more so than many of the others. However, they may feel the same way . . . I would like to be more in control of myself and have things go my way more than I do.

As in the earlier section, subjects were queried about their own definitions of separateness-seeking within the family. The most frequent aspects of these definitions were: 1) expression of feelings and opinions (57%)--"encouraging family members to express themselves and present their point of view and have that point of view listened to and talked about."--2) respect for others' needs (21%)--"respecting everybody's needs and desires within reason. You don't want anyone running over you, and that goes for children, too." and 3) listening (14%)--"probably the downfall

of the family is not listening." One woman's definition seemed to incorporate many of the foregoing aspects:

I'm taking it to mean a willingness to come together, and you make sacrifices when you have a family but at the same time you are still different human beings. We both have needs that have to be met, and I don't think we have a problem. We make sacrifices when they need to be made. I think we're tolerant of each other's trying to get what we want out of life.

Family Tolerance of Members' Connectedness-Seeking

The researcher defined the family connectedness-seeking dimension as "tolerance for: emotional closeness; giving, receiving, and asking for help in decision making and problem solving; and spending time together." A summary of the women's responses on these continua is found in Table 4. Eighty-six percent of the women perceived their families as more tolerant, 7% saw them as equal to, and another 7% viewed their families as less tolerant of connectedness-seeking behaviors than other families with young children. Seventy-nine percent viewed their present families as more, 14% saw them as the same, and 7% perceived them as less tolerant of connectedness-seeking than their own families of origin. Thirty-six percent indicated that they were satisfied with their families' present level of tolerance of connectedness-seeking behaviors while 64% wanted more.

Of the aspects of this dimension mentioned in the subjects' own descriptions, 1) emotional support (43%)--"allow time for somebody to grow individually . . . facing difficulties together,

TABLE 4
CONTINUA OF FAMILY CONNECTEDNESS-SEEKING

	Less					Same		More					%	**
	-4	-3	-2	-1	%*	0	%	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5		
Family vs. other families	0	0	0	1	7%	1	7%	4	1	3	3	1	85%	1
Family vs. family of origin	0	0	0	1	7%	2	14%	2	2	3	2	2	79%	1
Present vs. wished for	0	0	0	0	0%	5	36%	5	3	1	0	0	64%	1

*Percentages rounded down to whole numbers.

**Subject did not mark this portion of continua.

giving each other strength, . . . giving even more than 50% some-times."--2) time together (27%)--"We try consciously, after work and during weekends, to spend time with the kids; but there are so many demands on your time when you work and only have a limited amount of connectedness time."--3) group problem solving/decision making (21%)--"Any decision that's made always is made with respect for each other; consulting with one another . . . I think we've had to do it in order to survive; our schedules are so complicated."--and 4) listening (21%) were the most common. Two subjects' statements incorporated many of the above-mentioned elements:

It's important to be able to talk things out. If someone is having a hard time, being able to stick with them and talk about it . . . it's important that you can help someone without expecting them to reciprocate.

and

I think the unit knows that the support is there, but sometimes we get caught up in what we are doing or with our own selves, and we don't reach out to tap the other resource . . . those other family members.

The Emotional Climate of the Family as a Reflection of the Family's Balance Between Separateness and Connectedness

Clarifying some of the specific characteristics of the emotional bonds between family members was addressed through more open-ended questions about how families function. Ten questions were asked to tap the balance between separateness and connectedness needs in the emotional climate of a family.

When asked about how their families functioned when a member expressed opinions, several aspects were discussed. These were:

- 1) discussion (50%)--"We recognize the fact that people are not always going to agree on some things. You come from different worlds no matter how close you are, and you are going to have different opinions."--2) listening (33%)--"I think generally we listen and accept, but there are exceptions: a lot of times when [her husband] expresses an opinion that I don't particularly like, I tend not to listen very well."--and 3) arguing (25%)--"If we both feel strongly about it, there is going to be an argument."

When asked further about events following these expressions of opinions especially when they conflicted with others' opinions, the most frequently mentioned responses were: 1) depends on the person (47%),

It's hard with children. They are little people who have needs and desires just like adults. On the other hand I don't believe, like some people apparently do, that they come into the world having the ultimate in judgment. . . . The parents should provide guidance; you are supposed to train them, instill nice habits, etc. It's a fine line.

2) logical and rational discussion (39%)--"[her husband] can just sit down and talk it out; write down the pros and cons"--and 3) compromise (32%)--"When opinions differ, one of us has to give, and it's not always him and it's not always me." Even though discussion was the most frequently mentioned aspect of how families dealt with conflicts, one woman described difficulties with this process:

I have a tendency to fly off the handle, and he has a tendency to keep everything inside until a problem becomes so huge that we don't know where it started or how to work through it. I've just had to encourage him, when I see something is bothering him, to get it out in the open and talk about it.

In spite of the fact that this process was sometimes difficult, 83% of the subjects indicated that it was easy for family members to tell one another how they felt about things, events, or people. The remaining 17% said that they found discussion difficult in their families. An example of this latter response was:

I find it difficult at times. Time restraints are a big factor. You will have something on your mind while you are cooking dinner or something else and you really want to sit down and talk about . . . but you have to wait.

And that's frustrating. We need a quiet time to sit down and relate to each other, and the lack of that time really bothers me--upsets our balance more than anything else. Your emotion level is so different when you have to wait to discuss an issue. Sometimes that may be good because the intensity has died down, but then you may not be conveying what you really want to say. And I lose a lot of it that way.

When asked about what happened when their families dealt with potentially stressful events, the women reported the following responses: 1) emotional support (50%),

My husband is my sounding board. When I get discouraged and have decided the struggle isn't worth it, he is the one who picks me back up and assures me it is not the end of the world and that I can make it. He makes suggestions to me; he listens to me and as a family we really pull together in a crisis.

2) expression of anger (25%),

Other times I just blow up and we are yelling at each other until we have to back up and see where we got off the track. . . . Hard as you try . . . to keep everything under control, there is always that tension that can overwhelm you.

and 3) emotional release (16%).

I just fall apart. . . . I'll talk about it and then usually end up crying. I have always been a crier. If I'm mad, I cry; if someone hurts my feelings, I cry.

In addition to these more affective responses, the women also identified ways in which their families approached coping with stress somewhat more intellectually: 1) problem solving (41%),

We discuss why one feels one way and the pros and cons . . . and either one convinces the other that his way or her way is right, or we find some happy medium. We just discuss it and try to be logical and arrive at some logical conclusions rather than being emotional, illogical and irrational and just arguing.

2) distract or delay (16%)--"Maybe we go out and eat . . . or maybe we just go out for a drive; you need to get away sometimes and remove whatever's happened."--and 3) responding with humor (16%)--"As far as having a bad day, it depends on whether it gets nipped in the bud with laughter. My husband can show me how silly I look and do it in a way that doesn't make me mad."

Seventy-five percent of the subjects indicated that the decision-making pattern in their families was joint. Of the remaining 25%, one woman viewed her husband as the primary decision maker, another indicated that decision making was often left unfinished or unresolved, and the third woman said that it depended on the situation and the issue. Those women who indicated joint decision making in their families described how this process occurred. The two primary factors mentioned were 1) seeking outside information--"If it's a purchase, we sometimes look it up in Consumer Reports. We ask other people. I talked to lots of people in Knoxville before I enrolled Jane in a daycare center."--and 2) including children in age-appropriate decisions--"With Susan, we are trying to give her the chance to make more decisions for herself like what clothes to wear and giving her feedback on her choices. With Joe, it's . . . choices that are appropriate for a two-year old."

In describing how their families functioned in reference to the recurrence of habitual conflict, the most frequently cited responses were 1) learn to live with it or give in (43%)

The fact that it is brought up again and again, it never is resolved! You just learn to live with it; you give in. You have to . . . or just bitch, and who wants to do that all the time? We usually lose it! It's not resolved--we just live with it.

and 2) ignore or deny the existence of the problem (29%)--"My husband may say, 'I need a little time. Let me go outside and weed the garden, plant flowers' . . . or maybe he'll go for a drive by himself . . . or maybe for a walk."

Subjects were then asked to indicate whether group or individual needs took preeminence in their families. Fifty-eight percent said that group needs were most important. One woman said, "Maybe I perceive there will be a lot of time later when the children are older for individual needs, but there is so limited a period of time now, and it seems so crucial and important to lay this sound family foundation." Twenty-one percent of the women felt that individual needs were given greater consideration in their families: "At different times, different individuals. We can't do everything for everybody all the time so I guess I would say that the individual needs are met as much as possible." The remaining 21% were unable to choose one over the other or said that it depended on the situation.

As individuals we are in the family to make the family work, but if we are not connected with ourselves individually, the family is not going to work. I can't choose one or the other. If I am not reasonably at peace with myself, then I am not going to do my family any good at all.

The situations in which these women most frequently experienced a conflict between individual and group needs were when either

spouse's work required extra time and when a family member needed privacy but was unable to have it.

The final two questions in this section were an attempt to identify the situations in which they experienced difficulties meeting their needs for separateness and connectedness. These women found it most difficult to meet their separateness needs when there were 1) conflicts with their children's needs or wants (36%)

There are times when I feel this sudden surge of creativity to do something--write or cook, try new recipes, to have some thinking time. Early in the morning is my favorite time to sit, nursing a cup of coffee and just think. For the last 15 months, I haven't had even 30 minutes in the morning, no matter how early I get up. As soon as I'm up, Tim is awake in an instant!

or 2) scheduling or time crunches (29%)--"There are times when I am required to be on the 'give' all the time, like dinner time . . . when they are pulling on you and everyone's wanting, and you're trying to cut the carrots!" These aspects of role overload are reflected in one woman's evaluation:

I think if you are female, it's awfully easy to fall into a trap . . . I like to do things for people I care about; on the other hand, I do not consider myself a maid . . . women in particular can fall into the trap of doing things for someone they care about, particularly in the family, and then all of a sudden because of social precedence or whatever, it is expected that this or that will be done. . . . Even if you don't keep a tally sheet of who is doing what, . . . I resent being in a position where I am doing more than I can handle without being in a real bind. Suddenly you get in this horrible hole--it becomes expected!

Situations in which the women felt difficulty in meeting their needs for connectedness were quite similar to those in which

they had difficulty meeting their separateness needs. In fact, one woman said that these times were exactly the same for her. Again, issues of role overload, that is when they perceived the demands to exceed the resources for meeting them, were central. One woman said, "When someone is so bogged down with . . . work that has to be done, there is an emotional pinch. . . . You can get so involved that you find it hard to maintain contact with the family routine." These women were very aware of the fact that connectedness was far more than sharing time and space with their families. The following responses exemplify this awareness: "I don't think we do enough together as a family. We work at doing things together, but I don't think it's enough. We're always in this house together; we don't do enough activities outside the house."--and

When you haven't had enough of the separateness, it's hard to enjoy the connectedness because it's enforced, imposed. . . . It's like being in an elevator with no place to go. You are confined with the people but you wish you weren't. If you can't have the physical separateness from people, you have the emotional separateness.

In summary, there was a common thread running throughout the majority of the responses to these questions on family emotional climate. Needs for both separateness and connectedness were expressed strongly. However, of more importance was their recognition of the interdependence of these processes.

III. SUPPORT BEYOND THE FAMILY

One of the primary focal points of the investigation of the family's emotional climate as described above revolved around ways the family functioned internally in terms of decision making, handling conflicting opinions, and dealing with stressful events. Additional questions were asked in order to gain information about the sources of external support which these families drew upon in coping with stress. When queried about people they called upon external to their nuclear families, 86% of the sample cited extended family members. When asked whether or not these extended family members actually had been called on for support in the last year, 75% responded affirmatively. The second most frequently cited source of support was friends (72%). Eighty percent of those who identified friends as support people actually had needed and used them during the past year. They also mentioned relying on extra-familial sources of goods and services such as child care, cleaning services, and counseling.

When asked to whom her family could go to borrow \$200, all the women named either siblings or parents of either herself or of her husband. Thirty-three percent said that they would also consider going to a bank or some other financial institution. Only two women said that they would go to friends for the money.

In summary, the women in this sample generally saw extended family as well as certain friends and neighbors as those on whom they could and actually had depended for support. However,

extended family were much more likely to be sources of material aid than friends.

IV. REWARDS AND STRESSES OF ADULT LIFE

Past Rewards and Stresses

Each subject was asked to name the rewards or satisfactions which she had experienced thus far during her adult life. The most frequently mentioned satisfactions were: 1) having children (79%), 2) achieving rewards in her work/career (58%), 3) completing schooling (36%), 4) marriage (29%), 5) spending time with extended family especially during holidays (22%), 6) having significant relationships with friends (22%), and 7) traveling (22%).

Likewise, each woman identified those stresses which she had experienced to the present during her adult life. The stresses which were most frequently mentioned were: 1) disruption of attachment through moving, death, or divorce (66%), having children (36%), combining the role of professional with wife and mother (22%), pressure or discontent at work (22%), and the cumulative aspects of events (22%).

It is interesting to note that many of the things that resulted in satisfaction also resulted in stress.

When [the baby] was born . . . I wanted to be there all the time when he needed me. . . . I just couldn't do it any longer. . . . I thought there must be something the matter with me. I'm not the perfect mother I thought I was: that was the first step. [Next was] realizing that I wasn't going to be.

and

The first time I had worked full-time since Mary had been born . . . and that year was very stressful because I think I had so much more guilt than I do now and at times I wasn't real secure in my job yet, so if a situation came up where I really felt I needed to be home with Mary, I wasn't as comfortable as I would be now calling work and telling them I wouldn't be in . . . sometimes I even questioned whether it was all worth it.

In addition, these women seemed to be aware of the concept of pile-up, as is reflected in this statement:

More than I could cope with . . . one thing after another . . . I got pregnant, had a miscarriage, got pregnant, my mother died, Sue was born; right around the time when Sue was born was when the stress was the greatest. My mother had just died, Joe was not out of school, he was drinking heavily, I was executor of my mother's estate and I really didn't know what I was supposed to do . . . I was getting a lot of pressure from my job . . . the situation between my boss and I really deteriorated. The situation with Joe was getting worse and worse.

Anticipated Rewards and Stresses

The five most frequently identified rewards anticipated for the next decade by these women were: 1) focus on being settled both in terms of family and career (51%), 2) increase in connectedness in the family especially concerning time spent together (36%), 3) continue with their present contentment (36%), 4) increase in separateness (29%)--"A reshifting of the family needs back to career goals, get back academically to do some things that I feel the need to do and to reidentify where I am career-wise and what other challenges I might want to look at."--5) having another child (22%),

The gradual gaining of more private time has been real important to me. We are hoping to have another child, but I don't know if I am ready to go back to getting up all night and having someone live with me every moment for the next two or three years.

and 6) job changes (22%).

Some of the anticipated satisfactions were identified as anticipated stresses as well. In fact, one woman recognized that her stresses were often resultant of rewards she received from challenges and changes:

I think because I tend to be a person who likes change, I will always have to experience stress It's up to me to find a happy balance, if there is such a thing, so that I can be working or at least doing something I consider constructive, and still be able to help my family maintain itself.

The most frequently identified anticipated stresses were:

1) the approaching adolescence of their children (36%), 2) deaths of family and friends (22%), 3) job stress (22%),

I don't know about my job situation. I really can't decide whether I should even try to work with all the other responsibilities I have, when it is not a question of needing money for survival but rather for the sake of feeling I am accomplishing something. It is necessary to put some of my family's needs aside in order to work, and I just can't decide what my priorities are.

and 4) care of aging or invalid family members (22%). Basically, in discussing the rewards and stresses that they anticipated for the next decade, these women identified many of the normative transitions that could be expected by adults in their thirties and forties.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

I. DISCUSSION

As expected, issues concerning separateness and connectedness were crucial for the women of the present sample. Neither separateness nor connectedness alone was sufficient for the well-being of these individuals, especially in regard to their family relationships. In fact, the necessity for both of these components was echoed time and again by these women as they talked about their lives. The results were consistent with there being a relationship between separateness and connectedness as is reflected in the theoretical literature.

Concerning the debate over whether the development of identity precedes that of intimacy, follows, or is simultaneous to it, the indication from these results seemed to be that one of the latter two is most likely. Generally, these women strongly expressed the need for separateness and saw it as being very much related to their sense of identity. However, equally strongly they indicated that if the cost of separateness was loss of connectedness, then the separateness was hollow. Likewise, if the cost of connectedness was loss of separateness, then the connectedness was suffocating. The idea that identity precedes intimacy was called into question by these results. Ackerman's

(1959) idea of separateness and connectedness existing "in union" was supported. Further, Kacerguis and Adams' (1980) description of the ways in which identity and intimacy alter one another throughout life was also supported.

Another aspect of the nature of separateness and connectedness is the level or amount of each which is viewed as satisfying. In this sample, the prevailing opinion seemed to be that a balance between the two was most conducive to meeting the needs of both individual family members as well as the family as a group. This summary highlights the most global conclusions from the present study. However, more specific findings and issues are discussed in the remainder of this section.

Separateness and Connectedness

For Individuals

Subjects' Definitions of Individual Separateness and Connectedness

The primary dimensions of separateness identified by the sample were: time for self, a sense of identity, and ability to set goals. Sharing time with others as well as having emotional intimacy and acceptance were the two primary dimensions of their definitions of connectedness.

These definitions included elements in common with those of identity and intimacy in traditional developmental theory (Coleman, 1980; Erikson, 1968). However, the most frequently mentioned element of their definitions of both separateness and

connectedness was not addressed in this literature. This element is the dimension of time: time for self (separateness) and sharing time with others (connectedness). The focus on intrapsychic processes in this literature may need to be broadened so that the concepts of privacy and companionship are given greater consideration.

The interrelatedness of connectedness and separateness was evidenced by the preponderance of attention these women gave to the ways in which these two issues impacted on one another in their lives. This interrelatedness of separateness and connectedness was not reflected within the context of a theory such as Erikson's where identity was seen as prerequisite to intimacy. Therefore, these results were more consistent with those of Gilligan (1982) and Hodgson and Fischer (1979) and are better explained from the perspective of theoretical writings such as those of Kegan (1982).

Gender Roles

The general trend regarding how the women in this sample saw themselves in reference to others in terms of seeking separateness was the reverse of their perceptions regarding seeking connectedness. For example, nearly all saw themselves as more separateness-seeking than female peers and their mothers while only half saw themselves as more separateness-seeking than male peers and only one-third as more than their fathers. On the other hand, less than half saw themselves as more connectedness-seeking

than other women while nearly two-thirds saw themselves as more connectedness-seeking than men.

In accordance with the literature on gender roles (Broverman, et al., 1970; Kaplan & Sedney, 1980; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1976), these women generally saw themselves stereotypically in comparison with men; that is, most saw themselves as less separate and more connected than men. It is interesting to note, however, that they overwhelmingly saw themselves as more separate than other women and that slightly over half saw themselves as the same or less connected than other women. Some attempt at moving beyond the stereotypic female gender role may be suggested by the latter, yet a recognition of the stereotypic male gender role as an imperfect substitute role may be suggested by the former.

Individual Balance Between Separateness and Connectedness

The relationships and situations in which these women most frequently felt a tension between separateness and connectedness occurred predominantly within their families. Balancing the demands of the work and family systems without becoming dominated by either was recognized as a necessity for the preservation of their sense of identity, one of the major dimensions of separateness which they named.

The literature on identity has not addressed in any systematic way this issue of tension between work and family demands for women. Several reasons for this omission seem

reasonable. First, the samples have been, by and large, comprised only of men (Levinson, 1978; Marcia, 1966, 1976; Orlofsky, et al., 1973). Second, the above studies have been from the perspective of traditional Eriksonian theory whose utility for explaining women's development has begun to be questioned (Gilligan, 1982; Hodgson & Fischer, 1979). Because the findings of the former studies have received wide attention throughout the past two decades by professionals (Erikson, 1963) and the general public as well (Dodson, 1970; Levinson, 1978), this traditional definition and view of identity has become a part of the social milieu of the present. The traditional role of men in American society has not included the management of day-to-day work/family demands on time and energy. Therefore, this element of identity has not been addressed in studies based on a model focused on male development.

Recent exceptions to these all-male samples do exist (Gilligan, 1982; Hodgson & Fischer, 1979; Kacerguis & Adams, 1980; Stewart, 1977). In Stewart's (1977) extension of Levinson's work to a small sample of women, the issue of balancing work and family demands was resolved by all but one woman by choosing career or marriage and family but not both simultaneously. This "either/or" choice has been a part of the traditional female socialization. However, over 50% of the married women in the United States currently work outside the home (Kamerman, 1982). New ways of balancing these competing demands need to be examined in scholarly literature.

Separateness and Connectedness

Within Families

Subjects' Definitions of Family Tolerance for Separateness and Connectedness

Separateness within the family was described most frequently as the ability to express opinions and to respect others' needs. Descriptions of connectedness within the family included sharing time and the ability to support one another emotionally.

Researchers in the areas of family strengths and family stress have identified all of the above-mentioned family characteristics as ones conducive to family health and coping. For example, both Lewis, et al. (1976) and Stachowiak (1975) found one of the most vital family strengths to be that of expression of opinions with the assurance that, over time, individuals' differing opinions would be both heard and responded to by other family members. In addition, McCubbin and Patterson (1982) spoke of respect for others' needs in the family in terms of balancing needs and resources. Stachowiak (1975), in describing effective problem solving, referred to a balance between attention to specific tasks and family members' emotional needs.

The two features of connectedness as defined by this sample have been emphasized in this literature as well. Stinnett and Sauer (1977) found spending time together to be one of the six key characteristics of healthy family functioning. The ability

to support each other emotionally has been highlighted as crucial by researchers on family coping (Caplan, 1982; Cautley, 1980; Cobb, 1976). Cobb (1976), especially, has written extensively on the function of emotional support by the family which can provide a "buffer" for individuals against stress.

All of the women reported that their families were more separateness-seeking than other families with young children, and all but two saw their families as more connectedness-seeking. Yet, they generally indicated a desire for more of both. A greater percentage wanted increased connectedness in contrast to increased separateness. Perhaps this difference is a function of the type of women in the sample. First, most of these women were in dual-career families. This lifestyle is one in which separateness is more likely to be facilitated as well as one probably chosen partly in response to needs for separateness. Therefore, needs for increased separateness might not have been as salient as needs for increased connectedness within these families. Second, lack of time together was one of the most often mentioned deterrents to meeting needs for connectedness. The demands created by this lifestyle for women may make meeting needs for connectedness more difficult.

Family Emotional Climate: Balance Between Separateness and Connectedness

The importance of communication within the family was emphasized by the women in terms of both talking and listening.

Listening, especially, was identified as crucial for these families in decision making, expressing opinions, and coping with stressful situations. Listening was a component of their definitions of both separateness and connectedness. Open communication (Stinnet & Sauer, 1977), hearing and responding to others in the family (Lewis, et al., 1976), and clarity of communication (Stachowiak, 1975) have been identified within the field of family strengths as crucial elements of family functioning. The present data support this perspective.

Joint decision making in the family was the primary pattern reported. The problem-solving process involved in mutual decision making, and its importance to functional families has been described by Satir (1972) and others (Olson, et al., 1979; Stachowiak, 1975). Perhaps one important aspect of a relative balance of separateness and connectedness in families is that it facilitates an emotional climate in which joint decision making can be achieved.

When describing how their families functioned in response to stressful situations, the most frequent response was support for one another emotionally. Emotional support has been addressed by scholars both in the family stress area (Caplan, 1982; Cobb, 1976; McCubbin & Patterson, 1982) and the family process area (Olson, et al., 1979). However, Bowen (1978) and other writers in the family therapy area (Minuchin, 1974) have tended to focus on the problems of enmeshment or emotional fusion and the importance of individuation without emphasizing the significance of

emotional support within the family in relation to mental health and coping.

For example, although Bowenian theorists have spoken of "basic change in the individuality-togetherness balance of a system . . ." (Kerr, 1981, p. 164), the positive attributes of connectedness, such as emotional support, in relation to the family's vulnerability to stress and ability for recovery from crisis has received little attention in this body of literature. Bowen's concept of emotional fusion has been linked to the family's inability to cope with stress and resulting dysfunction (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 1980). Individuation has been presented as the goal to strive for while the importance of balancing separateness and connectedness has been largely ignored (Lewis, et al., 1976). This emphasis on dysfunctional to the exclusion of functional aspects of connectedness is unfortunate. To borrow from the terminology of Wynne and his colleagues (1958), the question might be stated as: Is mutuality forfeited in the negating of pseudomutuality?

Regarding areas of recurring unresolved conflict, these women described their families most frequently as either learning to live with these conflicts or ignoring or denying them. As would be expected, it was when they were tired that neither of these approaches worked. As their tiredness was often a result of a lack of time for rest and scheduling difficulties, again the reality of the dual-career lifestyle impacted on these families' coping patterns (Skinner, 1980).

The above styles of reacting to unresolved conflict are linked with the ways the subjects saw their families over time in terms of choices made between individual and group needs. The majority of the women indicated that group needs had to take precedence over individual needs; that is, meeting group needs was an important way that they saw for their families to continue. This characteristic, being committed to the family group, was one of the six identified by Stinnett and Sauer (1977) in their description of strong families. Almost unanimously, however, a qualification followed the assessment of the importance of group needs. This qualification was that this group orientation, or the "glue" holding the family together, could not be at the expense of any one individual's needs continuously, especially if due to that person's gender or role within the family. Otherwise, the "glue" that held the family together would stifle the development of the person who was consistently asked to sacrifice personal needs for the good of the family. For example, one woman who felt that the bulk of the family's needs were met at her expense was also the one who anticipated continued problems in her marital relationship. These results substantiated Stachowiak's (1975) finding that the balance between separateness and connectedness affected the family's ability to meet individual needs and "yet come together with the other members of the family as a group when this is indicated" (p. 69).

Separateness was seen to be most difficult to achieve for these women when their children's needs or wants conflicted with their own. It is interesting that the separateness issue was generally more important in relation to the mother role than the wife role. From the child development literature (Brazelton, 1974; Erikson, 1963; Haswell, Hock, & Wenar, 1982; Piaget, 1960) have come explanations of the young child's egocentrism and negativism. It is reasonable to expect that women with preschool children, as in this sample, could easily experience that relationship as a very difficult one within which to maintain their own separateness since children are so dependent during this stage of development. In addition, if the mother of the young child responds to the mother-child relationship in terms of the network of communication and mutual obligation described by Cobb (1976), the mother can become increasingly connected to and decreasingly separate from the child. Thus, distinguishing the child's wants and needs from her own becomes quite difficult. In reality, very young children do not negotiate nor do they participate in mutual obligations and communication, and expecting them to do so can lead the mother and the child into a problematic situation.

This situation is one of several which could have contributed to the second reason given most often by these women for difficulty in having sufficient separateness--that of the scarcity of time. The dual-career literature on role overload is applicable here (Hopkins & White, 1978; Skinner, 1980). The scheduling required

for the daily routines of family life usually fell to these women. Again, dual-career research is relevant in that, even in families with more egalitarian relationships between spouses than is traditional, women generally have, or at least assume, the responsibility of time management for the family.

Not surprisingly, the situations in which it was difficult to have separateness were the same as those in which it was difficult to have connectedness for these women. Again, the linkage between the two was an issue of time. The demands on time and energy from within as well as from outside the family coupled with her needs for time for herself contributed to the difficulties in maintaining a balance between these needs. Neither research nor theory have been used to address how the issue of time influences this balance between separateness and connectedness.

Social Support Beyond the Family

Extended family was seen as a crucial source of support for the vast majority of these women, both materially and emotionally. Friends were identified generally as an important source of emotional support but not material support. Caplan's (1974, 1982) description of support systems can be applied effectively to the functions served by friends, and especially extended family members.

Within the family stress literature, social support has received much attention (Caplan, 1974, 1982; Cautley, 1980; Cobb,

1976). The connectedness aspects of support systems are evident. In relation to the extended family, however, such connectedness between adult children and parents, especially, has tended to be viewed primarily in terms of dysfunction (Bowen, 1978). These results support two conclusions. Extended family ties were an important source of emotional support in conjunction with friends. Further, in terms of supplying material aid, the extended family was turned to almost exclusively. Again, the positive aspects of these family ties have been underemphasized.

Rewards and Stresses of Adult Life

The most frequently identified rewards for these women in their adult lives were their children. The second most frequently cited reward related to their careers, and third was completing their education. One of the most surprising results of this study was that the marital relationship was fourth, being specified by 29% of the sample. However, much attention has been given in the family studies literature to the decline of marital satisfaction during the childbearing/childrearing years (Blood and Wolfe, 1960; Rollins & Feldman, 1970).

Another paradox was found in that, for many, the rewards were also the stresses. As above, the most frequently identified source of stress was children. Conflict between career and family was mentioned frequently as a source of stress which was the other side of the reward of combining the role of professional with that of wife and mother.

The most frequently identified stress was that of disruption of attachment (66%) such as deaths, illnesses, miscarriages, difficulties in making friends, and divorce. This finding is consistent with the work of Weiss (1975) and Lynch (1977) who described the stresses created by these disruptions.

Their anticipated rewards had to do with "settling down" as Levinson (1978) and Sheehy (1976) have described. Focusing on being in one place where they could establish "roots" as well as spending more time with family were seen as the rewarding outcomes of this process. It is interesting to note that neither material comforts nor career stability were mentioned by more than one or two subjects. In contrast to this anticipation of settling in, a reward which was hoped for by a few was a shifting back from a focus on family needs to a focus on career needs.

Anticipated stresses included their children moving into adolescence within the next decade. Also mentioned were the deaths of family and friends as well as caring for aging parents. These women seemed to be able to accurately anticipate the normative stresses which they quite probably will face within the next decade.

II. IMPLICATIONS

Implications for Theory

The traditional judgment on the healthiness of individuation and the overt or implied dysfunction of connectedness

needs to be addressed by theorists. Reframing the importance of separateness within the context of healthy amounts of connectedness is advised. The importance for families of healthy connectedness with extended family should be considered as well.

By looking at connectedness with closer scrutiny, theorists can strengthen the link between the family process and the family stress bodies of literature. Already noted within family process theory is the idea that families function most effectively when their members are differentiated. In family stress theory the importance of emotional support within the family as a coping resource is emphasized. Yet, these ideas never have been theoretically linked.

A third theoretical implication is that there is a need for expanding theories of human development to be inclusive of the issues addressed by women in adult life. Data from the present study highlight the salience of work/family issues in particular. Further, these theories need to address the interrelatedness of identity and intimacy throughout adult life for both men and women.

Implications for Research

The primary implication of these results for research is that there needs to be some! Due to difficulties with operationalizing the concepts of separateness and connectedness, relatively little empirical testing of the body of theoretical literature

has been attempted. One purpose of this study was to begin this process of operationalization of concepts and generation of hypotheses in order that future hypothesis testing could be facilitated.

The research on these concepts that has been done within the family process area has focused primarily on the pathology of the individual particularly in relation to a lack of separateness. An opposite overemphasis within the recently developing area of family strengths has produced limitations as well. For example, although health has been a focus, attention has been primarily on the health of the family unit and not the individual, especially in terms of the necessity of connectedness factors. Both of these perspectives could be broadened to include elements of each with resultant investigations of individuals within non-clinical families focusing on the balance between separateness and connectedness rather than the extent of one or the other.

Generation of hypotheses for further research was part of the purpose of the present study. The importance of the work/family issues of time has been highlighted for studies of the balance between separateness and connectedness. No one has addressed this issue in the literature on separateness and connectedness as yet. In fact, the discussions of these concepts generally have occurred from a rather esoteric stance in which the pragmatics of people's lifestyles often have been ignored. This tendency to disregard the realities of day-to-day life

should be reversed in future inquiries. In the vein of Bridges' (1980) reminder of a philosophy which contains the adage, "After enlightenment, the laundry" (p. 150), there is now the need for studies of separateness and connectedness to be anchored in the actualities of a quite common lifestyle of work and family characterized by the strain of time.

Another implication for future research is that comparisons between women who work outside the home and those who are not employed could be instructive in terms of the differences and similarities in their ways of balancing separateness and connectedness. Especially interesting would be the comparison between the two groups' experiences in relation to time management.

Looking at these issues within the context of relationships is another suggestion for research. For example, data from both husbands and wives could be used to identify similarities and differences in their views of themselves and their family regarding these issues of separateness and connectedness. In this study, women generally saw a difference between their perceptions of themselves as compared to men and as compared to other women. They also saw a difference between their views of themselves and their views of others in terms of these issues. Having data from other adult family members' perspectives about these relationship issues would be important.

Development of measurement approaches for the concepts of separateness and connectedness is needed. In the process of

preparing this study, an exhaustive search for scales was carried out. It was quite difficult to find instruments that could be used to assess these dimensions.

Not only do the issues of identity and intimacy need to be addressed. There is also the need to address the process of how they change and of how one affects the other over the course of adult life and relationships. How this process proceeds over time is of utmost importance to the understanding of the well-being of individuals with families.

Implications for Therapy

Clinicians should be sensitized to the possibility that women probably do not fit the typical developmental model of Erikson in which identity precedes intimacy. In addition, the ways in which these theories of development direct the goals that therapists set for the process of intervention need to be considered.

When working with dual-career couples, especially those in stages of the life cycle when there are high demands from both work and family, skills of time management need to be taught. There is the need to communicate to couples that neither individual nor group leisure time is expendable but that both are, instead, crucial resources for healthy family and individual functioning, especially during times of stress. This study supports the idea that shared time with other family members is

of great significance in terms of connectedness. Family members could be helped in making decisions about allocating their time and energy based on what they identify as important and of value rather than just responding to the demands that are presented to them. This idea of action rather than only reaction has emerged in the literature as both a sign of health and of coping. The manifestations of the links between health and coping and time management for clients should be pursued actively by clinicians.

Promoting health in families needs to be a focus of clinicians. This perspective from the family strengths literature highlights a crucial element to be a striving for some symmetry in family members' needs for separateness and connectedness. These issues need to be dealt with simultaneously rather than independently.

Implications for Education

In teaching about human development, educators need to alert people to the fact that there probably is a male bias in theories of human development. Totally disregarding these theories is not being suggested, but rather attending to ways that these theories may be incomplete particularly in the adult years of life is urged.

Another implication for educators is the need for helping people see how traditional sex-role socialization has created problems for both males and females in balancing these

separateness and connectedness needs. Discussions should occur about the idea that the issue really is not of one at the expense of the other but rather of being able to meet needs in both of these areas. Balancing needs for connectedness and separateness may be the true meaning of androgony.

In both education and therapy it is of great importance to help people see that they have choices, that they can identify what these choices are, and that they are empowered enough to actively make choices rather than continually try to adjust themselves to the script they have internalized about what the right or wrong choices have to be. Even though Maslow (1954) did not use these terms or concepts, although he did talk about belongingness, his self-actualized persons seem to be those who have achieved a balance between separateness and connectedness which has freed them to actualize their potential. Until this optimal balance is reached, potential is not freed up due to the focus on unmet needs.

III. CONCLUSIONS

The interrelatedness of separateness and connectedness was the focus of the primary conclusions of this study. Needs for both separateness and connectedness rather than one at the expense of the other were met by achieving a balance between separateness-seeking and connectedness-seeking by the sample. Due to this strong interrelatedness, the acquisition of identity

as a necessary prerequisite to the capacity for intimacy was questioned. In addition, the element of time as an important component of both of these concepts was introduced by the sample, particularly concerning balancing the demands of the work and family systems.

There do appear to be differences in how these women perceived separateness-seeking and connectedness-seeking when they compared themselves to other women versus when they compared themselves to men. It is obvious that concepts of masculinity and femininity are relevant to the perceptions of these characteristics in self and other. Hypotheses need to be generated and tested related to these issues.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

BALANCING SEPARATENESS AND CONNECTEDNESS

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Development has been described as a movement back and forth between two poles. Separateness or independence or distinctness is one of these poles, and the other is connectedness or inclusion or closeness. Striking a balance between these two poles seems to be an issue with which many people deal again and again throughout their lives.

I. Individual

This separateness-seeking part of the balance has to do with:

- independence of thought, feeling, and judgment
- a sense of responsibility for one's own life
- a relatively clear sense of identity

A. On a continuum of 1 (extremely low) to 10 (extremely high), how independent or separateness-seeking do you presently see yourself

- 1) . . . as compared with other women in your age group?
- 2) . . . as compared with men in your age group?
- 3) . . . as compared with your mother?
- 4) . . . as compared with your father?
- 5) Where would you be most comfortable on this continuum in comparison with where you see yourself now?

A'. How would you define separateness-seeking?

This connectedness-seeking part of the balance has to do with:

- closeness to and togetherness with others
- a feeling of needing others
- a sense of responsibility to others

B. On a continuum of 1 (extremely low) to 10 (extremely high), how connectedness-seeking do you presently see yourself

- 1) . . . as compared with other women in your age group?
- 2) . . . as compared with men in your age group?
- 3) . . . as compared with your mother?
- 4) . . . as compared with your father?
- 5) Where would you be most comfortable on this continuum in comparison with where you see yourself now?

B'. How would you define connectedness-seeking?

C. Balancing these leanings toward separateness and toward connectedness seems crucial.

- 1) In what relationships are you aware of a tension between these two at least 50% of the time?
- 2) In what situations have you been conscious of this tension at least 50% of the time?
- 3) Today, would you say that your balance between separateness and connectedness is more toward one or the other? If so, which?

II. Within families these issues for individuals such as yourself become intertwined with these same issues for others in the family.

Within a family this separateness-seeking part of the balance has to do with the tolerance for individual family members:

- to express themselves clearly as feeling, thinking, acting, valuable, and separate individuals
- to take responsibility for their thoughts, feelings, and actions
- to listen to and respond to others within the family

A. On a continuum of 1 (extremely low) to 10 (extremely high), how tolerant of individual family members' separateness-seeking do you presently see your family

- 1) . . . as compared with other families with young children?
- 2) . . . as compared with the family in which you grew up?
- 3) Where would you have your family be on this continuum in comparison with where you see your family now?

A'. How would you define separateness-seeking in the family?

Within a family this connectedness-seeking part of the balance has to do with the tolerance for:

- emotional closeness
- giving, receiving, and asking for help in problem solving and decision making
- spending time together

B. On a continuum of 1 (extremely low) to 10 (extremely high), how tolerant of connectedness-seeking within the family is yours

- 1) . . . as compared with other families with young children?

- 2) . . . as compared with the family in which you grew up?
- 3) Where would you have your family be on this continuum in comparison with where you see your family now?

B'. How would you define connectedness-seeking in the family?

C. Balancing these leanings toward separateness and toward connectedness within a family becomes even more complicated. The emotional climate or atmosphere of the family seems to reflect this balance. Let's talk a little about that climate.

- 1) What happens when family members express their opinions?
- 2) What happens when family members express their opinions and they are different from those of other members' opinions?
- 3) Is it easy or hard to tell each other how you feel about things, events, people? In what ways?
- 4) What happens when potentially stressful events occur in your family?
- 5) How are decisions made in your family?
- 6) Could you describe how your family members would function in a discussion about a long-standing "gripe" of one of you?
- 7) Which do you see as more important in your family: individual needs or group needs?
- 8) Do you see them conflicting at times? What happens?
- 9) When do you find it difficult to have separateness in your family?
- 10) When do you find it difficult to have connectedness in your family?

III. Individuals within families often need other people beyond their own household for support.

- A. Who are the people you think you could count on in a stressful situation?
- B. In the past year, who are the people you actually called on when you found yourself in a problematic situation?
- C. If you needed to borrow \$200, to whom could you go?

IV. Rewards and stresses of past adult life

- A. What have been some of the most rewarding or satisfying events or relationships in your adult life?

- B. What have been some of the most stressful events or relationships in your adult life?

V. Anticipated rewards and stresses for the next decade.

- A. In looking toward the next 10 years, what do you anticipate in terms of rewards or satisfactions?
- B. In looking toward the next 10 years, what do you anticipate in terms of stresses or problems?

APPENDIX B

INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY SEPARATENESS-SEEKING AND CONNECTEDNESS-SEEKING

Individual Separateness-Seeking

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

06

Family Tolerance of Separateness-Seeking

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

Individual Connectedness-Seeking

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

Family Tolerance of Connectedness-Seeking

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

APPENDIX C

PERSONAL HISTORY INVENTORY

Please circle the letter beside the most appropriate response or fill in the blank.

1. How old were you on your last birthday? _____
2. Are you presently married?
 - a. yes (If yes, proceed to item 3a.)
 - b. no (If no, proceed to item 3b.)
- 3a. If you are presently married, which marriage is this for you (first, second, etc.)? _____
- 3b. If you are not presently married, have you ever been in the past?
 - a. yes
 - b. no
4. Please write the age and sex of each of your children.

a. _____	d. _____
b. _____	e. _____
c. _____	f. _____
5. How would you describe your ethnic background or race?
 - a. White American, Caucasian
 - b. Black American, Negro
 - c. Native American, American Indian
 - d. Spanish Surnamed American, Chicano, Puerto Rican
 - e. Oriental American, Asian
 - f. Other (please specify) _____
6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - a. grade school
 - b. high school or G.E.D.
 - c. vocational, technical, or certificate program
 - d. some college work but no degree
 - e. two-year college degree
 - f. Bachelor's degree or equivalent
 - g. one or two years of graduate or professional school
 - h. Master's degree or equivalent
 - i. Ph.D. or Ed.D.
 - j. Other (please specify) _____

7. What is your current employment status?
- a. not employed
 - b. employed part-time (less than 35 hours each week)
 - c. employed full-time (35 hours each week or more)
 - d. other (please specify) _____
8. If you are employed, what is your current employment position or title?
- _____
9. Within what range did your family income fall during the past year (before taxes)?
- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| a. below \$7,000 | d. \$13,000 - 15,999 | g. \$22,000 - 24,999 |
| b. \$7,000 - 9,999 | e. \$16,000 - 18,999 | h. \$25,000 - 27,999 |
| c. \$10,000 - 12,999 | f. \$19,000 - 21,999 | i. \$28,000 or more |

APPENDIX D

LETTER OF REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO SELECT AND CONTACT SAMPLE

Dear

We are conducting a study in order to learn more about the developmental issues of adult women and how these issues affect their views of their families. Unfortunately, little is known about the interrelatedness of these complicated areas of women's lives. Therefore, we would like to add to the understanding in this area.

Our purpose in writing to you is to request help in identifying women in their thirties with children. In accordance with our discussion at the Fall, 1982 Laboratory Advisory Committee, we are now ready to proceed with talking with mothers of children in the Child Development Laboratories to see if they are interested in participating in our study. We have obtained the approval of the review committee for research with human subjects here at the University, and we can assure you and those who participate that there are no risks associated with participation in this study.

We will be in touch with you within a few days to discuss this request with you further. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. Enclosed you will find a copy of the letters which will be sent to those women in their thirties randomly chosen to be included in our sample.

Sincerely,

Celia Bell Ferguson,
Master's student

Enclosure

APPENDIX E

LETTER OF EXPLANATION AND REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION IN SAMPLE

Dear

We are conducting a study in order to learn more about the developmental issues of adult women and how these issues affect their views of their families. Unfortunately, little is known about the interrelatedness of these complicated areas of women's lives. Therefore, we would like to increase the knowledge and understanding about these concerns.

Because we are interested in studying women in their thirties with children, we are contacting you and some other women whose children are enrolled in child care programs in Knoxville. If you agree to participate in our study, we will schedule a one-hour individual interview at a time and place convenient to you. In addition, we will ask you to complete an Informed Consent Form and a very brief demographic questionnaire. Both of us are in our thirties also, and we're aware of some of the complexities of balancing family and individual concerns. With your help we expect to be able to identify some of the strategies that women and their families use concerning these areas.

We can assure you that any information you give to us will remain strictly confidential. A summary of the group results will be sent to you if you wish. We know that you may be very busy; however, your participation is extremely important as we seek to learn more about the development of adult women and their families.

We will be in touch with you within a few days to discuss this request with you further. Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, and we hope you will join our study.

Sincerely,

Celia Bell Ferguson,
Master's student

Dr. Priscilla White
Professor/Department Head

APPENDIX F

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

We would like for you to understand our commitment to the following safeguards in your interest:

1. Your confidentiality as a participant will be maintained by the use of code numbers instead of names on all materials. The data gathered will be reported in summary form with no reference to you personally. Individual data and participant identities will not be shared with anyone.
2. You are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation in this study at any time.
3. Answers to any questions you may have about the procedures of this study are available at any time. Contact Celia Ferguson either at Department of Child and Family Studies, The University of Tennessee, 1218 White Avenue, Knoxville 37916 (phone: 974-5316) or at home (phone: 687-3797).
4. There are no specific risks or benefits associated with your participation in the study, but the group results may be of interest to you.
5. It should take approximately one hour of your time to participate in the interview.

I have read this form and on the basis of informed consent agree to participate in this study.

Date: _____ Signature: _____

I would be interested in receiving a copy of a summary of the group results. Yes _____ No _____

APPENDIX G

SUMMARY OF DATA FROM PERSONAL HISTORY INVENTORY

1. How old were you on your last birthday?

Range: 30 to 37

Mean: 33.33

2. Are you presently married?

Married: 86.66%

Not married: 13.33%

- 3a. If married, which marriage is this for you?

First: 92.30%

Second: 7.69%

- 3b. If not presently married, have you been in the past?

Yes: 100%

4. Please write the age and sex of your children.

Number of children: Range - 1 to 3; Mean - 1.6

Sex of children of sample: 15 males; 9 females

5. How would you describe your ethnic background or race?

100% chose "White American, Caucasian"

6. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

1 chose "some college work but no degree" (d)

1 chose "two-year college degree" (e)

4 chose "Bachelor's degree or equivalent" (f)

1 chose "one or two years of grad. or prof. school" (g)

5 chose "Master's degree or equiv." (h)

1 chose "Ph.D. or Ed.D." (i)

2 chose "Other" (these were J.D. & M.D.) (j)

7. What is your current employment status?

2 chose (a) "not employed"

2 chose (b) "employed part-time - less than 35 hours each week"

11 chose (c) "employed full-time - 35 hours each week or more"

8. If you are employed, what is your current employment position or title?

Physician
Manager - Personnel
School Library Media Specialist
Software Engineer
Teacher
Clerk III
Assistant Professor of Nursing
Residential Coordinator (social worker)
Not employed (home)
Art Teacher
Laboratory Research Assistant
Computer Systems Engineer
Kindergarten Teacher
Graduate Teaching Assistant - student

9. Within what range did your family income fall during the past year (before taxes)?

1 - \$10,000 - 12,999
1 - \$16,000 - 18,999
1 - \$19,000 - 21,999
2 - \$22,000 - 24,999
3 - \$25,000 - 27,999
7 - \$28,000 or more

VITA

Celia Bell Ferguson was born in Stillwater, Oklahoma on January 24, 1950. She attended public schools in Knoxville, Tennessee and graduated from Young High School in June 1968. She began her undergraduate studies at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Then she married Andy Ferguson, transferred to Tennessee Technological University for a year, and in 1973 received her Bachelor of Music Education from Meredith College in Raleigh, North Carolina.

After teaching public school music for two years in North Carolina and private piano lessons in Virginia for two years, she spent several years as the full-time mother of David Andrew and Jane Ellen. During that time she became active first as a participant and then as a staff person with a parent education program in Knoxville. In 1981 she enrolled in the Master's program in Child and Family Studies at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The author is a member of Phi Kappa Phi and the National Council on Family Relations. She also chairs the Holston Conference United Methodist Commission on the Status and Role of Women. Ms. Ferguson will be continuing her graduate studies in the interdisciplinary doctoral program in the College of Home Economics, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville upon completion of her Master's degree.