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June Adamson, Major Professor

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THE PK SYNDROME: SELECTED CASE STUDIES AND COMMUNICATIONS PROCESSES IN PREPARATION OF A BOOK ABOUT MINISTERS' CHILDREN

A Thesis

Presented for the

Master of Science

Degree

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Dan Stone

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ABSTRACT

Ministers' children are commonly characterized as a predominantly unsavory group, as troublemakers or brats. The persistent generalizations about individuals who seemingly have little in common except parental occupation prompted a study of "preachers' kids" (PKs) to be later expanded into a book on the same subject.

Library research uncovered a considerable list of clergy children whose past and present contributions in widely varying fields have greatly enriched western society. Personal interviews (and mail survey research) with 21 ministers' children of various ages, occupations and religious backgrounds revealed a group of individuals with unexpectedly diverse experiences and perspectives despite what appeared to be similar upbringings.

The ministers' children questioned expressed attitudes toward their clergy upbringing ranging from almost entirely positive to almost entirely negative but for the most part agreed that PKs, as a result of that upbringing, are subjected to particularly difficult pressures and problems.

In addition to these findings, the communications processes of conceptualizing, planning, researching, marketing and promoting the proposed book about ministers' children were discussed and documented to provide an informal record of procedures for development of a publishable book.

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INTRODUCTION

The idea for a book about preachers' kids was probably born the first time a school bus bully grabbed me by my shirttails and snarled, "Give me your milk money, Reverend!" Or maybe it was when that cute little redhead took me by the hand to meet her mother and said proudly, "His daddy's the preacher."

Probably it would have been difficult for a writer raised in a family of ministers, whose father, grandfather, uncles and cousins were preachers, not to have been drawn eventually to the subject of ministers and their families. I grew up in a parsonage, spent most holidays with my grandparents, aunts and uncles in a parsonage and stayed with cousins during summer vacations in a parsonage. Today when my wife and I visit my parents we visit them in the parsonage where they've lived for a record 12 years.

Early in life I realized that I had been born into a select group of individuals who were known not so much by their own names, virtues or achievements, but by the initials "P.K." (Preacher's Kid), and by an unwritten code of behavior that, according to legend, we all conform to.

"Your father's a minister?" exclaimed a total stranger more times than I care to remember. "I thought all preachers' kids were brats." The fact that many preachers' kids are brats never made the statement any easier to take, and I suppose, because of such comments, I have become

particularly sensitive to the fact that my father's line of work somehow sets me apart from the crowd in many people's eyes.

There seem to be immediate assumptions made and conclusions drawn about PKs' upbringing, their training and temperament that are no doubt similar to assumptions made about ministers themselves. But if there is one thing I have learned in my years as a preacher's kid and in associations with others of my breed, it is that we are not all the same. Despite having gone through frequently similar situations, endured similar difficulties and enjoyed similar advantages, we do not all fall neatly out of the same mold to lead similarly saintly--or bratty--lives.

Some of us essentially enjoy our special "status." Some of us don't. Some of us cope relatively well with the high visibility and pressure to please imposed on us by other people. Some of us fail miserably--or never try. Some of us grow to appreciate--even embrace--our parents' values and lifestyles. Some of us find them intolerable and spend our lives rebelling in one way or another. Some of us treasure our childhood memories and are happy with our current lives. Some of us are still trying to forget. Some of us make choices modeled after the good example our parents set. Some of us are still searching for an acceptable alternative. Some of us had parents who were able to be both good parent and good minister. Some of us didn't.

A great deal of time was spent talking to Protestant ministers' children of various ages, occupations and outlooks, finding out their perceptions of life in a parsonage, recording their memories, good and bad, and comparing their perspectives with my own. In the course of my research I have also traced the lives of preachers' kids throughout history and have found a startling number of prominent people who have left a legacy rich in contributions to public service, the arts, science, business, education and the ministry.

If there is a single purpose for this study it is to attempt to convey at least a measure of the diversity present in these individuals so often grouped under a single stereotype. More than anything else, the study provides an opportunity for some of us whose fathers or mothers are ministers to discuss freely the experiences that shaped our lives and our attitudes toward them, to look honestly at where we came from and possibly why we turned out as we did.

It is intended as neither a mass tribute for nor a unanimous diatribe against clergy parents. Rather, it is a chance for a group of people so often seen, to be heard--and, I hope, to be better understood for who we are: imperfect people with similar birth announcements but incredibly diverse life stories.

A secondary, but equally important, objective is to put into practice the journalistic skills acquired as a

communications graduate student and in the process, to examine the communications problems encountered in such a study and document their resolution. Ultimately, this work is intended for expansion into book form to be marketed with a commercial publisher. As much as possible, this work will document the steps taken toward that objective and will include projections for additional research, marketing possibilities and promotions potential.

Thus the study will function on two levels: as an investigation of ministers' children as outlined above and as a record of journalistic procedures applied toward the creation of a marketable book. These procedures will include personal interviews, phone interviews, letters and a questionnaire to be used as a survey where personal interviews are not possible. In addition, library research will play a key role in providing necessary background and in the development of historical perspective on the subject.

It is hoped that, upon its completion, this study will provide not only the foundation for a workable, commercially viable book concept, but a useful account of the necessary steps involved in planning, preparing, marketing and promoting a book as well. Regardless of whether or not the process culminates in the desired objective--acceptance of the concept for commercial publication--the practice obtained in fundamental journalistic and public relations

skills will, it is hoped, prove beneficial for future--and similarly creative--communications projects.

CHAPTER I

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study and the proposed book (tentatively titled The PK Syndrome: Success and Strife Among Ministers' Children) to be taken from it is to provide information and perspective about preachers' kids' lives and to present that information from the preachers' kids' viewpoints. The chapters included here are to be incorporated into a formal book proposal and ultimately, into a book-length manuscript to be submitted for commercial publication.

Literature Review

Before these chapters could be compiled it was necessary to judge the need for such a book by engaging in preliminary research to determine what, if any, books existed on the subject of ministers' children and, thus, the competition for such a work on the current book market.

The first step in this process was to consult the most recent editions of Books in Print for a list of any books published (by the publishers who submit lists to BIP) on the subject of ministers' children or clergy families. Follow-up research revealed an absolute lack of available books about ministers' children written from the PKs' perspective. Books that were available on the subject

approached the topic exclusively from the perspective of the minister and/or the minister's wife.

The one exception, a now-out-of-print work titled, The PK, Problems and Potential, had been published in 1981. It consisted of a collection of do's and don'ts for ministers' children, all based on one PK-turned-preacher's experiences.

The next step in researching the market for a book about PKs was to consult appropriate periodicals indexes and indexes to journals for lists of articles on the subject of ministers' children, particularly any articles written by ministers' children. With the exception of those articles cited later in this study and one other,[1] periodicals, like the books reviewed, offered only materials from the ministers' or the ministers' wives' perspective. Sources included in this search were Christian Periodicals Index, Religion Index, Social Sciences Index, Dissertation Abstracts, and The Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature.

Research Methods

To accomplish the objectives of this study as outlined, three research procedures were utilized. As the purpose of the proposed book is to provide information and perspective about ministers' chidren from their own viewpoints, the obvious source for the bulk of the material comprising such a work is ministers' children themselves. However, to

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[1]Skip Hollandsworth, "Preacher's Kids," Texas Monthly, November 1985, pp 167, 168, 275-277.

obtain historical information and materials on PKs' contributions in various fields, considerable library research was necessary, specifically from sources such as Current Biography and Dictionary of American Biography.

Because the information sought for this study is of a highly subjective nature, it was determined that personal interviews would be the most effective means of gathering data. However, it was understood that personal interviews would not be possible or practical in every case, particularly with efforts to obtain material from well-known or "celebrity" PKs. Consequently a three-page, largely open-ended questionnaire (See Appendix) was devised to be used both as a basis for personal interviews and as a mail survey where personal interviews were not possible. A form cover letter (See Appendix) was also created as a means of introduction to the survey for mail recipients.

When the necessary materials for data gathering had been compiled, it was determined that subjects interviewed for The PK Syndrome would be offered anonymity, i.e., that their actual names would not be used in the published book. There were several reasons for this approach: (1) Because of the highly personal and subjective nature of the information sought, it was anticipated that interviewees would be more candid in their account of personal experiences if they knew that their names would not be used; (2) Offering anonymity minimizes potential hassles with subjects who

might insist upon reviewing their comments before actual publication; (3) Fictionalizing subjects' names minimizes the potential for unnecessary injury to individual and familial relationships where damaging or unfavorable information is disclosed; (4) Subject anonymity reduces the risk of libel or other potential legal problems for the researcher; and (5) Fictionalization of names is a relatively common--and accepted--practice, particularly in popular articles and books such as the one proposed.

Thus a combination of secondary research among library resources such as those noted and the primary research techniques of personal interview and mail survey was used to gather the data presented here and to be included in the proposed book.

CHAPTER II

PREACHERS' KIDS: AN OVERVIEW

Imagine Walter Mondale, Sir Laurence Olivier, Aretha Franklin, Oral Roberts, Grace Jones and Tom. T. Hall as children, eating, sleeping and playing together in the same house. Does this sound far fetched? Could it be a scene from "The Twilight Zone?" It's pretty hard to picture the politician, the Shakespearean actor, the Soul Queen, the TV evangelist, the androgynous rock/film star and the country singer/songwriter sitting for long in the same room together, much less growing up under the same roof.

In a sense, though, each of these individuals did grow up under the same roof--in a parsonage. What they have in common (besides recognizable names and healthy bank accounts) is fathers who were ministers, and the similarly unique upbringing experienced by most ministers' children. Despite their differences they are all individuals who were hearing sermons long before they were hearing applause, who sang in a church choir or recited Bible verses long before they cut records or delivered speeches, and who were known as preachers' kids or "PKs" long before they were known as stars.

It is probably no surprise to learn that some of the world's best known theologians and preachers were ministers' children. It is a tradition at least as old as John the

Baptist (not only was he a prophet and Jesus' cousin, he was also the son of a Jewish priest[1]) that has culminated in several notable "preacher dynasties," such as the New England Mathers--of whom Cotton Mather was the best known--in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century America. From influential theologians like Paul Tillich to nihilist philosopher Freidrich Nietzsche (of "God is Dead" fame) to TV evangelists Oral Roberts and Robert Schuller, men and women have launched theological careers rooted in the strong traditions--and conflicts--of parsonage living.

In his autobiography, Oral Roberts describes the frustration he experienced as a teenager with a speech impediment, a Pentecostal preacher for a father and a mother who insisted her son would be a minister some day:

> . . . I finally came to a place where I felt I had to leave home. I had to run away. I had to get away from it all. I wanted to get away from God. I wanted to get away from the church. I wanted to get away from my parents. I resented the direction in which my life was going. It seemed my future was planned before I was born.[2]

Roberts did leave home. But he also came back, and eventually, his mother's prediction came true. Today he has a worldwide, multi-million dollar ministry of nearly

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[1]Luke 1:5-63.

[2]Oral Roberts, The Call, An Autobiography (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1972), p. 20.

unprecedented proportions--and a son who is more or less following in his footsteps. The same could be said for Schuller, Herbert and Garner Ted Armstrong and countless lesser known clergymen.

Not all preachers' kids, however, have been willing to embrace the like-father-like-son tradition. Rock star Alice Cooper, known during his heyday in the early 70s as the king of "Shock Rock" apparently preferred hurling dead chickens and cuddling pythons in front of screaming fans to spreading the gospel. New wave pop star Grace Jones says her rigid upbringing as a Jamaican minister's daughter who was forbidden to attend movies or wear pants led her to choose a lifestyle radically different (possibly the understatement of the decade) from her parents.

Of course, not all ministerial offspring who opt for secular vocations do so with such rebellious fervor. Over a period of 200 years Sir Laurence Olivier's family provided the Church of England with "an almost unending stream of clergymenpreachers." As a child, Olivier became so fascinated by pulpit orators that he began imitating them at home. Eventually, his mother channeled the actor-to-be's bent for mock-sermonizing into recitations of monologues from well known plays, and the junior orator went on to

forge one of the most distinguished stage careers in recent history.[3]

Nor is Olivier the only member of a clergy brood whose name ended up on a marquee. British actress Sybil Thorndike, Marjorie "Ma Kettle" Main, Hattie ("Gone With The Wind's" Mammy) McDaniel, Dorothy Dandridge, Paul Robeson, Dana Andrews, Walter Matthau, Pearl Bailey and John Davidson were all born (though not all reared) in clergy homes.[4]

Swedish filmmaker Ingmar Bergman's father was a Lutheran pastor whose strict traditionalism drove Bergman to rebel against the "iron caskets of duty" in which he felt his parents were caught. Ironically Bergman today credits his family for much of his development:

> That strict middle-class home gave me a wall to pound on, something to sharpen myself against. At the same time they taught me a number of values--efficiency, punctuality, a sense of financial responsibility. . . .

Biographer Peter Cowie wrote that Bergman became a rebel both in spite of, and because of, his clergy background.[5]

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[3]Thomas Kiernan, Sir Larry, The Life of Laurence Olivier (New York: Times Books, 1981), p.5.

[4]Ann Lloyd, Graham Fuller, and Arnold Dresser, eds. The Illustrated Who's Who of the Cinema (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, Inc., 1983).

[5]Peter Cowie, Ingmar Bergman, A Critical Biography (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1982), pp 17-19.

Perhaps the elements of performance and drama often associated with preaching are more closely linked with the world of show business than some would like to admit. Certainly the gospel music influences present in most clergy upbringings have played a key role in the development of popular musician-PKs such as Nat King Cole, Sam Cooke, Aretha Franklin, Gladys Knight, Lou Rawls, and the Pointer Sisters.

Moreover, as recent elections have indicated, show business has come to be regarded as a not-so-strange bedfellow to public affairs and government. Not surprisingly, the exposure to elements of theater and performance that many PKs have parlayed into respected stage careers has been used by others as a foundation for successful--and sometimes controversial public lives.

Perhaps no two names better represent the potentially varied directions taken by some ministers' children than civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. and militant black revolutionary Malcolm X. Both were sons of Baptist ministers, both were of the prophetic tradition of Judaism (King, in Christianity--Malcolm X in Islam), both died equally violent deaths. However, Malcolm X was a notorious street hustler who later became a prominent and violent revolutionary figure among Black Americans. King, of course, was a minister himself, and the force behind the

civil rights movement in the United States during the turbulent 1960s.

Biographer David Levering Lewis wrote that King's upbringing was "pious and deeply influenced" by the various activities stemming from his father's pastoral responsibilities:

> His precocious vocabulary and uncanny appreciation for the rhythms of language were clearly the patrimony of two generations of fundamentalist ministry. Mike (Martin, Jr.) knew by instinct the code that unlocked the powerful emotions of black worshippers. When he was only four, his mother regularly took him to smaller churches in the Atlanta area, where the people "rocked with joy" to his rendering of religous songs.[6]

Preachers' kids have also found their way into the mainstream of American politics. No less than four U.S. presidents (Chester Arthur, Grover Cleveland, Herbert Hoover and Woodrow Wilson) and four first ladies (Abigail Adams, Abigail Fillmore, Jane Pierce and Ellen Wilson) were ministers' children. So was Aaron Burr, the third vice-president of the United States, who is no doubt best remembered for slaying Alexander Hamilton in their legendary duel.[7]

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[6]David L. Lewis, King, A Biography (Urbana, Ill: University of Illinois Press, 1978), p. 4.

[7]Christine Sadler, America's First Ladies (New York: Macfadden Books, 1963), pp 24, 82, 85, 171.

Also numbered among the ranks of PKs-turned-politicians are some notable losers of presidential elections, including 1972 Democratic candidate George McGovern and former Vice-President Walter Mondale. McGovern entered the ministry himself for a short time before turning to teaching and politics as his life's work, and he credits his father's personal philosophy (from Matthew 10:39): "Whosoever shall save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it," for his own personal ideology.[8]

The fact is, ministers' children have distinguished themselves in virtually every field. Well known preachers' kids such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge, The Bronte Sisters, Jonathan Edwards, Cotton Mather, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Stephen Crane, William and Henry James, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Countee Cullen, James Baldwin and Pearl Buck left behind a richly textured legacy of English and American literature. For some of them, the clergy upbringing provided a comfortable loft from which to view and comment upon the world around them. For others, notably Stephen Crane, it was the intolerable, unshakeable albatross described so vividly in Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner."

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[8]Robert S. Anson, McGovern, A Biography (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1972), p. 63.

As biographer R.W. Stallman observed:

> Revolt against the fathers is the common lot of sons, but in Stephen Crane's life it is exemplified more clearly than in any other American writer. His writings are haunted by his religious background. He disbelieved it and hated it, but he could not free himself from it.[9]

Likewise, pioneering preachers' kids have changed the course of American history with their contributions to communications technology, aviation and architecture. Samuel Morse's telegraph, Wilbur and Orville Wright's landmark flight at Kitty Hawk, Lee DeForest's electron radio tube, Charles Martin Hall's aluminum refining process and "Father of American Architecture" Frank Lloyd Wright's designs are only a few of the achievements of ministers' children in science and industry. And in medicine, Albert Schweitzer won the Nobel Peace Prize for his work as a medical missionary in French Africa.

Obviously every man or woman born and raised in a parsonage does not go on to obtain the levels of success typified by those individuals. If the truth were known, a good number of them fail as completely, and in areas equally as diverse, as their counterparts succeed.

The point is that there are ministers' children living and working, winning and losing in practically every occupation (legal and otherwise) in every tax bracket

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[9]R.W. Stallman, Stephen Crane, A Biography (New York: George Braziller, 1968), pp 5, 14.

anywhere in the world. PKs are everywhere. They have been for centuries. And whether their names are in lights or on a jail docket, they are individuals who represent more than a particular group of sons and daughters--and who deserve more credit for their diversity than the common generalizations about them allow.

CHAPTER III

SWEEPING GENERALIZATIONS

"All the doctors' kids I've ever known were knife-happy little monsters. . . ."

"All construction workers' kids love to play with bricks and mortar. . . ."

"Most school teachers' kids are nothing but miniature eggheads. . . ."

"Police officers' kids are naturally bossy and prone to be violent. . . ."

Few people take such blanket generalizations--or the individuals who make them--seriously. Few people with their wits about them would accept as fact the assumption that surgeons' offspring are somehow more likely to come at you with a blade. Or that the neighborhood bully is by definition a cop's son (or daughter). Or that teachers' kids are always straight-A students.

So why pick on preachers' kids? Why are many people willing to accept--and perpetuate--stereotypes about clergy kids? It is just as illogical to assume automatic sainthood--or juvenile delinquency--among clergy children as it is to assume that a pediatrician's daughter will want to work with children or that a mechanic's son will inevitably like grease on his hands.

Nevertheless, ministers' children are often singled out solely by virtue of their parents' occupation and collectively assigned one of two basic characterizations: imp or angel. In fact, there is practically an entire mythology built up around the good versus evil inherent in preachers' kids.

Myth #1: "The Moral Degenerate"

In her Underground Manual for Ministers' Wives, author Ruth Truman wrote:

> Someplace along the way the [minister's] child will discover that he has a name other than his given one. A title, if you will. He is "The Preacher's Kid." A little research on his part will turn up all manner of interesting things that everybody knows but him. Preachers' kids fight more, swear more, talk back more, neck more, and generally raise more hell than any other kind of kid. You desperately need to protect him from this vital information, since he may decide to live up to his reputation![1]

More often than not PKs are lumped together on the dark side of the spectrum of good and evil. Rumor has it that clergymen's kids are the meanest, unruliest, loudest, rudest, most rebellious, least moral, most irreverent and least dependable lot that ever warmed a Sunday school chair.

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[1]Ruth Truman, Underground Manual for Ministers' Wives (New York: Abingdon Press, 1974), p. 56.

Almost anyone can tell you a favorite horror story about the minister's son who got caught selling drugs on the playground or the pastor's daughter who ran off with the leader of a motorcycle gang. What's more, such stories are often told with an "I-told-you-so" smugness that suggests the tragedies were bound to occur. "There's a preacher's kid for you," he or she will conclude, as though this were one of the laws of nature.

Books and movies often contribute to the myth by focusing only on the stories of preachers' kids gone bad, of drug addicts and unwed mothers, drunkards and convicts, perverts and playboys, who all spent their earliest nights in a parsonage cradle. This view of the minister's child as a likely degenerate was even musically expressed by the singer who boasted: "The only boy who could ever reach me/was the son of a preacher man/The only boy who could ever teach me/was the son of a preacher man. . . ."[2]

This is a myth based upon a paradox, namely, that a deliberately moral, highly religious, consistently strict upbringing somehow increases the probability of a purposefully immoral, boldly irreverent, wildly undisciplined human being. It is a myth that implies that children are bound to react against a biblically based, strictly enforced life-

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[2]Bobbie Gentry, Recorded by Dusty Springfield, "Atlantic 2580," 1968.

style and consequently, that a somewhat more compromised approach to parenting will involve fewer risks.

Myth #2: PK Spells "Brat"

Though certainly less scandalous than the "Moral Degenerate" myth, this notion of preachers' kids as inevitable brats is probably the most pervasive--and annoying--generalization made about ministers' children. Perhaps this is because it is the one most likely to be made in the PK's presence, and to his or her face.

I clearly remember the genuine surprise on a Hallmark saleswoman's face when she learned that my father was a pastor. She had watched me spend half an hour trying to decide on a Mother's Day card and was obviously stunned by the truth about my origins.

"Really?" she exclaimed. "Most of the preachers' kids I've ever known were real little brats."

I'm not sure what bothered me most, her obvious acceptance of the stereotype or the implication that merely being choosy about Mother's Day cards (no doubt there's an ax murderer somewhere just as picky) somehow demonstrated my worth as a human being. At any rate, her comment was typical of the persistent attitude that preachers' kids are predisposed to be holy terrors running loose and wreaking havoc in the churchyard, in the school yard--in anyone's yard.

It is an attitude that confronts almost every minister's child--and every minister's child's mother as well. In her book, Home Sweet Fishbowl, Denise Turner, a freelance writer and Baptist minister's wife, struggled with such negative expectations concerning her infant daughter:

> "Could my beautiful little cherub someday become the church terror?" I fretted. "Impossible!" And yet, how many times does a child have to be told that PKs are bratty before he starts believing it--before he starts proving it?[3]

Myth #3: "Poor, Poor, Pitiful PK"

The notion of the preacher's kid as "victim" is one of the lesser known myths; however, some individuals (and some PKs) genuinely appear to regard life in a parsonage as a condition to be pitied. The implication is that having a father who is a minister is somewhat of a tough break, a situation that one must manage to rise above.

Included in this notion is the image of the sheltered, naive child (frequently a daughter) who has been subjected to a mercilessly strict, brutally uncolorful childhood by an uncompromising, intolerant pulpiteer of a parent. It is the equally unrealistic antithesis of the spoiled brat, indulgently nurtured by the preaching parent who is too lenient--or too preoccupied--to discipline his child properly.

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[3]Denise Turner, Home Sweet Fishbowl, Confessions of a Minister's Wife (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1982).

A similar aspect of the "poor, poor, pitiful PK" myth is the assumption that all ministers' children who embrace their parents' values do so out of ignorance of their options. Preachers' kids who adopt their parents' life-styles, this saying goes, are in effect preacher clones, produced through relentless and rigorous indoctrination. Tim Stafford, former managing editor of Campus Life Magazine and a PK, comments:

> Preachers' kids can't win. If we are good, it is no virtue. Whatever we do right, we have been trained or forced to do; whatever we believe, we were taught to believe. . . . I remember trying to convince an incredulous friend that I went to church because I liked to, not because my father would beat me if I didn't.[4]

In addition to the widespread belief that preachers' kids are forced to be good, there is the popular assumption that they are bound to feel poor. Everyone knows ministers are not the highest paid professionals in the world. When is the last time a typical pastor was profiled on "Life-styles of the Rich and Famous?" Generally speaking, most ministers' families do not lead extravagant lives. As a rule, they do not wear the latest designer fashions or jet first class to vacation hot spots all over the world.

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[4]T. Stafford, "Reflections of a Preacher's Kid," Leadership, Winter 1980, p. 54.

Nevertheless, not all PKs feel poor. According to Tim Stafford, poverty is more or less a state of mind:

> As a child, I was reasonably normal, and I felt our lack of status. But . . . I never felt that we were truly poor, although we were. One time we searched the house for hours to find pennies that had rolled under furniture and into corners so we could buy a bag of flour. . . .
>
> When I reflect on my childhood, I realize that my parents must have sometimes felt miserably poor poor . . . and perhaps even afraid. But I didn't catch a hint of that, mainly, I suppose, because they kept their mouths closed.[5]

In the parsonage where I grew up, poverty was a concept as far removed from my own life as Ethiopia is from northern Virginia (where my father has pastored for 12 years). Not only was I spared the shame of feeling poor, I was often made to feel downright privileged.

"Why do people talk as though we are rich or something?" I asked my father once.

"Because we act as though we are rich," he said.

His point was a simple one. You're as rich or as poor as you feel. Some of us PKs--the more fortunate ones--have learned this from experience.

Myth #4: "The Model Child"

Probably the most dangerous myth surrounding preachers' kids is the idea that they are somehow better or kinder or

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[5]Ibid., p. 53.

more obedient or less mischievous than other children. These mythical creatures are the little angels who can always say their memory verse or recite the correct answers in Sunday School, who invariably sing on key in the junior choir and always volunteer to be president--or secretary/treasurer--of the youth group. These little darlings share their toys, never question their parents and set a shining example for all the other poor wretches who lack such moral fiber.

Some people seem genuinely to believe there are preachers' kids who'd rather paint the fellowship hall or mow the church lawn than go swimming on a hot Saturday afternoon. What's worse, some people seem genuinely to expect their pastors' children to fit happily into such a ridiculous mold, and they react with horror when they learn the painful truth.

Authors John and Letha Scanzoni have noted:

> The traditional image of the minister's family is one of happiness and tranquility. Family Bible reading, hymn-sings around the piano, warm relationships with parishioners, invitations to Sunday dinner, the feeling of being needed in the community, the excitement of entertaining parsonage guests, involvement in others' joys and sorrows. . . . Surely here is a family equipped to cope with life's perplexities. Here is a home "where prayer is heard and praise is wont to rise."[6]

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[6]John Scanzoni and Letha Scanzoni, "The Minister and His Family," Eternity, May 1967, p. 14.

Pretty as that picture is, however, it does not quite capture the authentic mood or atmosphere of the modern clergyman's household. Nor does it accurately represent the legitimate and perfectly human flaws that may be found in the fabric of any family, clergy or otherwise.

The point of all this is that ministers' families--preachers' kids--are not members of some subculture that may be succinctly labeled, neatly packaged and promoted like a certain brand of laundry detergent. Unquestionably there are ministers' sons and daughters who fit every description or type mentioned here--and then some. For each myth refuted there are no doubt numerous living, breathing preachers' kids out there who are the epitome of the "moral degenerate" or the "model child." I know because I've met them. Some of them are even introduced later in this book.

This does not, however, negate the fact that such concepts are generalizations. They are stereotypes that can and often do get in the way of realistic attitudes toward and interaction with ministers and their families. PKs are no more subject to such sweeping generalizations than doctors' or lawyers' or teachers' or football players' kids.

This brings us to the question at hand. Why do preachers' kids get stuck with such labels in the first place? Where do these generalizations originate and why? Although ministers' children cannot be categorically lumped together as a distinct segment of the population with

identifiable characteristics, they obviously do have some things in common that separate them from society at large.

Preachers' kids share a certain way of life, a certain set of expectations imposed upon them by other people, a certain responsibility in guarding their words and actions. In short, preachers' kids share--and must deal with--many of the peculiar pressures, problems, rewards and frustrations confronting their parents--the ministers.

CHAPTER IV

THE WAGES OF SERVICE

My father likes to tell about the time when he was in elementary school, and the teacher was going around the room asking each pupil where his or her father worked.

"My dad don't work," the first generation PK said. "He's a preacher."

I've always suspected that the reason my father gets such a kick out of telling that story is at least partially because those words have so often come back to haunt him in his own ministry. He is certainly not alone. Chances are every minister has, at some point in his life, encountered similar statements about his profession.

Contrary to what some might suggest, the attitude behind those words persists even in the 1980s. A friend, now in his late twenties and with a college degree, had the pleasure at his first church of pastoring a congregation whose "adult" members believed "A preacher should work for a living like regular folks." Translation: Pastoring a church is not work.

Granted, such notions are the exception rather than the rule. But there remains a certain mystique about this profession or "calling." More important, there remains a degree of uncertainty about exactly what clergymen do. How do they spend their time? How should they be compensated

for their services? And how should they be regarded by their congregations and communities? Every profession has its advantages and disadvantages. But few professions are as subject to the whims and generosity of other people as the ministry. And few professions require that the professional cater to so many people by playing so many different roles--and playing them well.

Man of Many Hats

Webster defines "minister" as, among other things, "anyone authorized to carry out the spiritual functions of a church, conduct worship, administer the sacraments, preach, etc." The key word in relating this definition to the clergyman's actual job description is "etc." Those few eloquent, inspiring moments at the pulpit each Sunday constitute only a small portion of the average minister's workload.

The Encyclopedia of Careers and Vocational Guidance says a minister is expected to lead worship services; administer sacraments and special rites, such as holy communion and baptism; conduct weddings and funerals; instruct and prepare people to be received as church members; counsel couples planning to marry (or considering divorce); counsel people with emotional or psychological problems; visit the sick; participate in the administration of church members and staff; head building programs, fundraisers and recruitment drives; plan special events;

supervise music and Christian education; and participate in interdenominational and community activities.[1]

Believe it or not, even this exhaustive list omits some of the jobs ministers have to handle themselves at one time or another. My father bulldozed tree stumps to clear land for a new educational plant, convinced a stubborn county zoning board to grant a license for church-operated day care and negotiated a complicated financial package with bank executives to pay off huge debts--all while preaching twice a week, teaching Sunday School and conducting Wednesday night Bible study. Most preachers' kids have similar recollections.

The point here is not just that ministers have so many things to do. The point is that they must do so many things--and do them with efficiency and expertise:

> The modern preacher has to make as many visits as a country doctor, shake as many hands as a politician, prepare as many briefs as a lawyer, and see as many people as a specialist. He has to be as good an executive as the president of a university, as good a financier as a bank president, and in the midst of it all, he has to be so good a diplomat that he could umpire a baseball game between the Knights of Columbus and the Ku Klux Klan![2]

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[1]William E. Hopke, ed., The Encyclopedia of Careers and Vocational Guidance, Vol. II: Selecting a Career (Chicago: J.G. Ferguson Publishing Co., 1984).

[2]David Mace and Vera Mace, What's Happening to Clergy Marriages (Nashville: Abingdon, 1980), p. 19.

Lessons My Bible Teacher Never Taught Me

Further complicating the minister's professional predicament is the fact that in most cases, the men and women called upon to wear these many occupational hats have had little or no formal training for them. Even college and seminary-trained clergymen are often forced to learn high finance or law or construction through the "sink or swim" method of pastoral preparation. The typical pastor's college education consists of numerous courses in biblical languages, theology and homiletics but precious little exposure to balancing budgets or improving church/community relations.

Interestingly enough, the primary qualifications for the ministry listed in the Occupational Outlook Quarterly are not systematic theology or proficiency in Greek and Hebrew, but rather, "leadership and persuasion, helping instruct others, problem solving and creativity, initiative, working as part of a team and ability to handle frequent public contacts."[3] This does not minimize the importance of sound biblical and theological training for ministers; however, it does suggest that members of the clergy, pastors in particular, are being called upon to do much, much more than they're adequately prepared to do. It's one of the

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[3]Gail M. Martin and Melvin C. Fountain, "Matching Yourself with the World of Work," Occupational Outlook Quarterly 26 (Winter 1982).

very real, often unexpected stresses that confront most modern ministers at some point in their careers.

There are other stresses common in this profession. Contrary to the image some may have of the minister as an overfed, golf-playing gentleman of leisure (though there are some), the typical clergyman must deal consistently with tragedy, suffering and the emotinally exhausting responsibility of supporting a church full of people through various personal and family crises. He must also deal with long hours and an irregular schedule. A survey of ministers showed the average pastor is home less than four waking hours a day regardless of the size of the church or the number of children still at home.[4]

Though it is true that most ministes are largely responsible for their own schedules in terms of time spent studying, counseling, preparing sermons and attending meetings, it is also a fact that ministers frequently lack control over the specific events and circumstances demanding their time and attention. It is difficult to pencil in a possible funeral on one's list of Things To Do This Week, just as it is difficult to predict with any accuracy how many illnesses, weddings or family crises will crop up in the congregation during any given time period.

The clergyman, not unlike his counterpart in the medical profession, is on call twenty-four-hours-a-day--but

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[4]Mace, p.63.

with no weekends off. Not only are clergymen frequently called away from their families for emergencies, but more often than not, the minister must plan to accommodate the schedules of church members who work "normal" nine-to-five, Monday-through-Friday jobs.

Even after more than twenty years in the ministry, my father, who generally arrives at his church each weekday around 6:30 A.M. and leaves around 4 P.M., frequently returns in the evenings after dinner to conduct workers' meetings or counseling sessions for church members--on the nights when there is no regularly scheduled worhip service. It's an accepted part of the pastor's plight that he works on the days when most other professionals are mowing the lawn or are out on the lake. A "day off" for many ministers consists of nothing more than the luxury of taking the phone off the hook for a few hours of uninterrupted sermon preparation.

And All For What?

As any physician knows, ministers are not the only professionals having to deal with long hours and unpredictable schedules. Nor are ministers the only professionals called upon to perform a variety of tasks in the course of their careers or to confront a number of job-related stresses on a day-to-day basis.

Clergymen often can be distinguished from other professionals, however, by their relatively meager salaries and

unimpressive benefits. A 1976 Bureau of Labor Statistics (the latest available for this study) reported:

> . . . Out of 432 occupations listed, clergymen are number 316 [rankings based on salary, educational level and prestige ratings]. . . though they rank next to the bottom economically, educationally they rank with the ten top earning occupations. . . . [also] clergy showed the lowest percentage of salary increase among their professional peers in a ten year period.[5]

Six years later the situation had not improved greatly. In 1982, the Occupational Outlook Quarterly ranked 247 occupations in order of their median salaries. At an estimated weekly salary of $284, clergymen ranked 136th, well below auto mechanics, bus drivers, cement and concrete finishers and hucksters and peddlers, not to mention teachers, attorneys and physicians.[6] The ministry was ranked at the lowest of three earnings levels despite the fact that its entrance requirements were ranked among the highest possible levels.

Unlike many occupations that have unions to establish standard scales for wages and benefits, ministers often depend upon the generosity of individual members of a local church congregation for their livelihood. There are often

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[5]Lucille Lavendar, They Cry, Too! What You Always Wanted To Know About Your Minister But Didn't Know Whom To Ask (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1976).

[6]Peter Ward, "Occupational Earnings from Top to Bottom," Occupational Outlook Quarterly 26 (Winter 1982).

no standard pay scales for clergymen within denominations, much less across denominations, so the minister must be able either to depend upon members of the existing congregation or work longer and harder to win new members who will assume responsibility for the pastor's needs. Some denominations, in fact, base the minister's salary on the number of members listed on the church roster, with increased membership, rather than cost of living, being the only real criterion for an increase in salary.

Benefits for clergymen also tend to leave much to be desired. Though most churches provide housing or a housing allowance for pastors, ministers and their families must more or less live in whatever conditions the congregation deems appropriate. Parsonage purchases must generally be justified to the congregation or church council, and clergy families must learn to be content in a house that is not their own.

Ministers seldom earn enough to buy or build their own homes. Consequently they often have no place provided for their retirement--or for their spouse's and children's security in case of death. Only recently have church organizations begun to provide health insurance and retirement plans for ministers, and many still make no allowances in the church budget for travel and church-related business expenses.

In addition, ministers often have little or no control over where they work or how long they may stay at any given place. The average tenure of a staff member in one of the largest denominations (unnamed in this source) in the United States is less than twenty-two months.[7] Furthermore, if a minister is fired or resigns from his church, there is often no available unemployment compensation because of the minister's self-employed tax status.[8]

Similarly, when budgeting for the pastor's salary and expenses, few churches take into account the cost involved in a minister's formal education--and in his continuing education as a professional:

> Since World War II, a rising percentage of male seminarians are married and many already have children. Decisions must be made involving the wife's work, a second and maybe third job for the husband, the children's care. . . . Costs must be measured both in terms of dollars and cents and in terms of the price of his family's sacrifice in being uprooted and living under intense pressure while perhaps both parents work in addition to the father's being enrolled in seminary.[9]

Clergymen often spend years paying back the loans used to finance the high level education their profession requires.

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[7]Robert W. Bailey and Mary Francis Bailey, Coping with Stress in the Minister's Home (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1979), p. 66.

[8]Philip L. McKown, "Demythologizing Minister's Compensation," Church Administration, March 1984, p. 31.

[9]Bailey, pp 54-55.

And they must often take even more money out of their own pockets to pay for the conferences, seminars and study courses necessary to continue performing their duties at peak proficiency.

There's More

So big deal; ministers are overworked and underpaid. It's tough all over, right? Indeed, some might argue that these disadvantages, real as they are, are no more inherent in the clergy than in many other equally stressful, equally underpaid and undercompensated professions. Whether or not members of the clergy can justly cry "foul" when it comes to salary, compensation and job security, however, they do have to face certain situations--certain pressures that are most definitely unique to their profession and that most definitely have an impact on their families.

Ministers are one of the few groups of professionals forced to work with and depend upon a largely (or entirely) volunteer staff. The minister is faced with the problems of working with lay volunteers "who run hot and cold with the passing of the seasons and programs. He has the difficulty of dealing with people who may be inconsistent, inconsiderate or incompetent in their jobs, and yet, he must be careful not to offend these gracious, willing volunteers--the only army he can muster."[10]

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[10]Ibid., p. 77.

Clergymen also face a peculiar sort of isolation and alienation from other people. Though most ministers and their families frequently interact on some level with church members, through church socials, visitation, Sunday dinners, etc., many clergy families find it difficult to bridge the gap into genuinely intimate personal relationships. Friendships between ministers (and ministers' families) and church members are often one-sided, with the clergymen on the short end of the give-and-take stick.

Sometimes this isolation is the minister's own doing, a defense he throws up to protect himself from charges of favoritism. Sometimes it is merely an inevitable outgrowth of the congregation's image of what the preacher should be, a product of unrealistic and sometimes unfair expectations:

> He occupies the pulpit. Raised high above the congregation and apart form all others, he is marked out as special, different, the authority. When he preaches, he is delivering the authentic Christian message. Sunday by Sunday, he tells the congregation how to live the Christian life. He has the answers. He is not "one of us"--he is set apart. . . .
>
> The obvious implication is that, if he is the one to <u>tell</u> us how to live the Christian life, he should also be the one to <u>show</u> us.[11]

Many clergymen reject such double standards for themselves and their families, refusing to assume any greater responsibility for exemplary living than the

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[11]Mace, p. 57.

dedicated lay person. Others, however, appear eager to prove themselves--and their families--to be shining examples, capable of cheerfully fulfilling even the most unreasonable expectations or demands. And as often happens with individuals in public office, they later discover that they cannot live up to such ideals and are forced to conceal their failures behind a successful facade. The minister carefully constructs a public persona capable of satisfying his congregation's needs and effectively camouflaging his very real shortcomings to all but those living with him behind parsonage doors.

You Called?

Like their secular counterparts, ministers can and often do become "workaholics," driven to succeed and to be the best in their field:

> The ministry in the U.S. is a highly competitive system, squarely based on the American success syndrome. From the moment he places his foot on the lowest rung of the ladder, the young pastor is constantly encouraged to climb upward to higher and higher levels of the hierarchy. The rewards come in terms of recognition, status and salary. The credits are awarded for skill, popularity, and hard work. The evidences of worth consist mainly in increasing congregational membership, raising money, putting up buildings, and achieving favorable publicity by whatever means.[12]

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[12]Ibid., p. 55.

The crucial distinction between ministers and other workaholics, however, is the motivation that frequently fuels this drive to succeed. Many clergymen experience a definite sense of being chosen for their vocation, a clear and specific call from God to pursue a career in the ministry. They consider their profession to be sacred and their responsibilities to be of the highest order. Both my grandfather and father said they received direct, specific calls into the ministry, one while praying on a mountainside in southwestern Virginia, the other while parked beside the muddy Dan River in the textiles town of Danville, Virginia.

Such a calling is not required to enter the ministry, nor is it a universally experienced phenomenon among clergymen. Despite the tradition toward personal revelation in his family, my cousin, now a third generation minister, experienced no such calling. He simply knew (with annoying confidence) from the time we were boys that he, too, would become a minister, and despite my wild predictions to the contrary, he did.

The point here is not that some ministers are called, and some are not. The point is that ministers differ in their perception of that calling--and more important, they differ in their responses to it. Often it is the minister's attitude toward his profession that largely determines how successful he will be in it, and how that profession will affect his family.

The potential disadvantages of the ministry have been well documented, but the advantages are just as real. The minister and his family have a unique opportunity to develop a sustaining faith and to experience uncommon spiritual growth. The clergy family are able to participate directly in the minister's work. They frequently can travel to interesting places and meet many different kinds of people, and they have the potential to exert considerable positive influence on other individuals and families.

In the best possible situations, preachers' kids are privileged to grow up under the influence of fathers and mothers who love their work and are genuinely committed to serving others. The rewards of such dedication, when combined with effective parenting, are seldom lost on a minister's family.

The fact remains, however, that the "lifestyle chosen and lived by more than a few ministers shortens their lifespan, ruins their health and dissipates the joy and potential of their families."[13] It is also true that "the pastor's image of his ministerial calling seems to determine his attitudes and actions in his role of husband/father."[14]

Certainly the clergyman faces considerable stress and awesome responsibility, regardless of how he perceives his

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[13]Bailey, p. 46.

[14]John Scanzoni and Letha Scanzoni, "The Minister and His Family," Eternity, May 1967, p. 14.

calling. But the evidence does indicate that, rather than the peculiar problems and pressures they face, it is the preachers' methods of coping with and carrying out their call that most strongly affect the preachers' kids--for better or worse.

CHAPTER V

LIFE UNDER GLASS: PROFILES OF SELECTED MINISTERS' CHILDREN

Profiles

Marie, 30[1]

I was the kind of minister's kid who tried to do everything right. I was picked on sometimes because of that. There is this pressure not to embarrass your father, to behave correctly. I just felt like everybody was looking at me all the time. It was my goal in life to be perfect.

I think I felt more pressure at church than in the community. I remember in Sunday School, when the teacher would be asking questions and no one would answer, it was always up to me to answer. A few times I just said, "I don't know" when I probably could have answered but just didn't want to.

We were a close family. My father did a lot to help raise my sister and me because his schedule was more flexible than my mother's (she was a school teacher). He took us to school every morning and did a lot of things with us. He played games with us and took us to plays. He would also have special outings just with me or my sister.

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[1]Profiles are compilations of direct quotes from personal interviews and/or written responses to a mail questionnaire. All names have been changed.

I don't have any regrets about being a minister's daughter, but I don't miss it, either. It's nice now not to have to be in church all the time. I'm not as active in church now as I was when I was growing up. Now I choose what I want to be active in. I've taught Sunday School and I sing in the choir. But I don't do everything.

I was sure when I was eleven or twelve that I was going to be a missionary. My family was very service-oriented. That's probably one reason why I chose a service profession--librarianship. My sister is a nurse.

I think when I have children I would like to try not to pressure them quite so much. I always felt this pressure not to make any big mistakes. When I went through my divorce, it was devastating for me because I had made this really big mistake. I often think that if my father had been alive it would've been even harder.

Being a preacher's kid was good for me in that it encouraged me to be more outgoing. And I've gotten to know a lot of different kinds of people. I'm still very conscious, though, of trying not to offend anyone, of being tactful and always nice. I cannot break out of that mold, and I'm not sure that's healthy. Even when I'm angry things come out nice. I guess I'm still trying to be good.

Samantha, 16

There were things I enjoyed about being a PK--the traveling and particularly, the bond with other ministers'

kids. My family is very stable, and my parents have always provided a Christian atmosphere at home.

But the pressure!!! There's pressure to "perform" for parents, the congregation, peers. Everyone's eyes are focusing on you, forming a spotlight and you are constantly in that spotlight. Everyone sees everything you do.

People seemed to expect me to be a little angel on earth. I had to be perfect. Consequently I really messed up. In the ninth grade I began smoking and started drinking in the tenth grade; I also started going to movies--all behind my parents' backs. I lied to cover my tracks and "graduated" from Bud Light to vodka and whiskey in no time.

In the eighth grade I had attempted suicide, but God intervened before I could go through with it. Then in tenth grade I tried again. I took a bunch of pills and didn't tell my parents. I just got really sick. Mom and Dad still only know about the eighth grade incident. If it weren't for a good friend--the closest thing to a sister I have--and God, I'd probably be dead now.

My parents have taught me that God can do anything, and I appreciate all their prayers. But being a PK has left me with a lot of bitterness and hurt that only God can resolve. I used to think that God hated PKs. I still have real problems with depression. I also still envy other people's kids when they're not expected to be perfect.

Lisa, 19

I never wanted to be anything but a PK. When I was a young child I loved it. The attention and the feeling of importance I received was great. As I got older, naturally some of that faded, but I've still never wasted any time letting people know that I'm a preacher's kid.

Though I've always felt that people were watching me and comparing me to other kids--and there have been times when I wasn't allowed to do certain things or go certain places because it might cause problems for Dad--I've never resented the church or the ministry. Our family has always been close and able to share the good and the bad.

I've always had a very close relationship with my father. Even though I'll always be his little girl I've been fortunate to have a dad who's fairly open-minded and who has allowed me to grow up at my own pace. Both parents were strict but not to the point that they smothered me or didn't allow me to be my own person.

They've had everything to do with the way I believe and my perspective of God. They've made me realize the importance of God in my life and of being a Christian. There aren't many things within the church that I disagree with them about. However, I do feel as though I do certain things because I've always been expected to do so or out of habit and not because I want to. I'm not sure at what point--or age--that will change.

Glen, 40

I would've enjoyed not being a minister's son. I always hated having to be an example, always feeling like if I did anything even remotely out of line it would be a reflection on my father's ministry. I had a couple of strikes against me: I was also Glen, Jr. I really resented being asked when I was introduced to someone, "Oh, are you going to be a preacher like your father?" I've probably been called to preach by more people than anyone around.

I had major insecurities stemming from the fact that I felt I could never measure up to what my father had accomplished. As the top official of our denomination, he seemed to have one success after the other, and since I was Glen, Jr. everyone seemed to expect me to be like a little Oral Roberts--or Richard Roberts. I felt like people thought I was a failure because I wasn't.

I'm a terrible public speaker, but I get calls almost weekly to go preach somewhere. And I get letters addressed to Rev. Glen Barnes, Jr. People cannot believe I'm not a preacher.

I never liked using my father's name or reputation to impress people. One reason I think I hated that so much was because I remember when I was in college, walking across campus and hearing a girl scream out to someone who had apparently been bothering her: "Do you know who my father is?!" I knew who her father was. I still remember

to this day who he was and what he was doing at the time. I said to myself then: I'll never be guilty of that.

Still I've heard it said that I've gotten this position or that position because of who my father is--even when he didn't know I'd applied for the position. I think the worst thing a person can do is name a son or daughter after themselves.

I never felt like I was cut out to lead the same kind of life my father has lead. I wouldn't want to. I wouldn't want to be away from my children like that. I don't think God requires that from anyone. My father was sometimes gone as long as three months at a time. I can remember when I was in the fourth grade Dad was in Africa and Europe. When he came home my younger brother would just follow him around like a little dog, going, "Daddy this and Daddy that." Dad was just sort of ignoring him and finally my brother looked up at him and said "You don't care if I call you Daddy, do you?" That finally got his attention.

I spend a lot of time with my kids. I started on the basketball team in college for three years, and I can't recall my father ever attending a full game. He just didn't have time for a frivolity like that.

I always had a fear of my father. He was such an authority figure he scared me, and I was almost afraid to move without consulting him. Later on that changed. I now have a deep affection for him. I understand him more, and

the relationship has grown from one of fear and misunderstanding to one of friendship. But some of that change I've had to fight for. I had to prove I was my own person.

Wayne, 35

Being a PK caused big problems for me. I think it's not the best way for kids to grow up. I always felt like I was supposed to set some kind of example, but I'm not sure I ever knew what that example was. It's always been my nature to do the exact opposite of what I'm told. My father is sort of one of the leaders of the Baptist group that doesn't buy the Southern Baptist thing, so I went to a Southern Baptist seminary--and then became a Methodist. I think in the back of my mind I thought, this is really good. This'll piss him off.

On top of all that I worked at a Catholic university and had a job in a Presbyterian church and I was just this raging drug addict for several years. I think it all goes back to, I can be what I want no matter what, and what I wanted to do was the worst I could do.

I got into drugs in the sixties when everyone was getting into drugs. I was living with this woman in New Orleans who used harder drugs, and I really liked that. Eventually I found myself addicted to crystal methodrine--a kind of speed--to the tune of about $400 a day, and I was having to sell it to support my habit. So I would go teach at my Catholic university and work at my Presbyterian

church during the day then go sell drugs to prostitutes all night. It wasn't until I got arrested that I realized what a mess my life was.

Up until then my parents had no idea what was going on. But I almost died and so they came to the hospital to participate in my therapy. They were real supportive at the beginning. The doctor had told them that if I did drugs for two more months I was going to die. If they'd just been told, oh, your son's a drug addict, come help him out, I'm not sure what they would've done. Now it's like it never happened. We just don't talk about it.

We were never a close family, although I think my parents perceived it as being a real close family. The absence of a father was the worst. It was sort of like a tease--you knew he was there but he really wasn't. Dad's real successful. He built up his church from nothing. Now it's enormous--has about 2,500 people. For sure, though, his family was never as important as his work. I guess I know ministers who juggle the church and family thing real well--my father just wasn't one of them.

Regina, 28

I went to fifteen different schools before I graduated, but I always loved moving. It taught me how to meet people and it gave me a chance to start over--at school and with new friends. If I wanted to change any part of me I could,

like, if I was a nerd at one school I could try to get over that at the next one.

The bad part of that was that by the time I was in second grade I had found out I wasn't really going to be good friends with people because I wasn't going to be anywhere that long. I learned not to get too close. I remember once when I was at summer camp my parents called and said, "We're moving. We'll be in a new place when you get out of camp." I never got to see any of those old friends again. I didn't get to say goodbye.

It bothered me that I didn't have anybody to talk to about my problems. I couldn't talk to anybody in the church because they'd think I wasn't spiritual enough, and I couldn't really talk to anyone outside the church because they wouldn't have understood. I always assumed that I had to hold everything in.

One guy told me that one reason some guys didn't ask me out was that they knew if they asked me out, they would be stared at and looked upon like the preacher's daughter, that the church would start looking at them like they looked at me.

I remember the first guy I really dated, if I came down from the choir--I always had to sing in the choir--I couldn't go down and sit by him because if I did, people would talk about how forward I was. So I would have to go sit by a friend and leave room for him, and he would come

up and sit by me during the prayer or something. That way it would be his move and not mine.

I pray almost daily that I won't end up marrying a minister--especially after seeing what my mother has had to put up with. Once when my Dad was working as an associate pastor for my grandfather, who is also a minister, my mother had a pair of glasses with chrome on them--this was when cat-eyes were fashionable--that reflected whatever color she wore. Well, there was this woman in the church who just really raised it because she said we were so rich that my mother had a different pair of glasses to match every outfit. When you have to deal with that kind of thing, you start to wonder if it's all worth it.

I guess if it was God's will, if He opened up the skies and came down and said, "Regina, marry thou this minister," I would probably do it. But I wouldn't be happy about it.

Stephen, 28

Moving around like we did made me very gregarious in that I can meet anyone and get along with them. It also made me insecure. We would move into some place and I would have to make friends quickly and feel accepted into a group very quickly, so I went overboard to do that. I would probably do anything someone asked me to do because I grew up trying to be so accommodating.

I come from a very conservative Church of Christ background. We were not allowed to go mixed swimming (boys and girls together), we were never allowed to dance. I grew up thinking I should be ashamed of my body--up until about five years ago I never wore shorts. Another no-no was touching a member of the opposite sex. No public display of affection. No familiarity. Familiarity leads to sin. Holding hands might lead to kissing. Kissing might lead to petting and before you know it, you're in the sack.

All this came off to me as females somehow being put on a pedestal. They were not supposed to work or speak out in church. Men were to be the providers and take care of them. On the other hand, it was okay to dance when only guys were around or to go swimming with the guys. So when I was eighteen and went to my first gay bar, it didn't feel strange at all. I never really came out like many gay people. I'd been close to boys all my life. It always felt completely natural, whereas with women, I was afraid. I didn't want the responsibility.

I never had one of those typical, one-sided family relationships you hear about. My dad was home a lot, and he spent a lot of time with me. We played ball together, and he took me hunting and fishing--the whole bit. And my mother is not overbearing. She's very submissive to my

father because that's what the church teaches--women in submission to men.

But I never felt that way. I never wanted to be ruler over someone. The women I saw got to stay home and take care of the children--something I dearly loved to do--and they got to cook and clean and sew--all things that I could do, too, while I was supposed to go out to some job and make all the money and bear all the responsibility financially and authoritatively for the household. That was not my idea of a relationship.

When I started going to gay bars and out with guys, it felt normal because, in a sense, I'd been going with guys all my life. Homosexuality was never mentioned in the Church of Christ, really. I did feel guilty about it because of what my parents would say, but I never felt ashamed.

I lived a heterosexual life until I was eighteen--though I abstained from sex with girls. After that I went back and forth for several years. I'd play it straight for a while then start going back to the bars and going home with a different guy every night. At the time my parents had no idea what was going on. I could not face my mom with the words, "I am a homosexual." It would've killed her, I thought. It would've killed me to have to tell her.

I'm really lucky to have gotten the love and support that I've gotten from my parents since they found out. I

was eventually disfellowshipped from the church, and the Church of Christ has a policy that says you're not suppposed to have anything to do with someone who's been disfellowshipped--except to try to get them back in church.

I quit going to church because I felt like I was a hypocrite. I feel guilty about sitting there when I don't believe any of what they teach. And, maybe down inside somewhere, I still think that it's wrong being gay. I mean, the Bible is very clear on homosexuality.

I'm looking around at other religions. I thought about converting to Judaism, but I can't deny the fact of Jesus, so what's the point? Right now I'm leaning toward the Episcopal side of Catholicism. I couldn't deal with the Baptists or other fundamentalists. If I'm going to be part of a group like that, I want to really believe what they say. But what group is going to say homosexuality is okay?

Besides that, I don't really feel wrong about being homosexual. I might would feel wrong if I belonged to a congregation that believed it was wrong. So I don't go. I pray on my own and read the Bible. Sometimes I read to Tony (my lover for five years). He doesn't know anything about the Bible. He didn't even know about Noah and the ark. Can you believe that?

Being a PK wasn't all bad. I loved the wholesome atmosphere I was brought up in, and the church people gave

us everything--food, clothes. That bond, that feeling of belonging is what I miss the most. Being part of a group called homosexuals is nothing like being part of the Church of Christ. I used to say so proudly that I was Church of Christ. It was a feeling of being part of a group and sticking together.

At times it's just a big pain in my heart. I feel like I grew up too fast and that I know too much. There is a yearning in me for that innocence I lost. The way that gay people come out, the sleeping around, the whoring around, and now AIDS and all the misunderstandings and stuff they have to put up with. Many of them are very sensitive people, but they become very cold because of all they go through. I've seen things I wish I'd never seen.

If I could go back and have things be different, I would make my parents not be Church of Christ, and I would not be a minister's son. . . . I would be straight, and I would marry a dark-complexioned girl with chestnut hair and light green eyes and have beautiful kids who were straight.

I would like to be straight--a normal joe--because it's so much easier. But I know it's never going to happen.

Brett, 26

I always considered it a real honor to be a PK. Even as an elementary school student I remember that when kids found out my dad was the preacher, it kind of caused a

change in their countenance. They would approach me a little differently, and I found out I could maintain a certain amount of respect myself just because of my father's position.

My dad had a reputation as being a little different. He was something of a pioneer of contemporary fashion in the ministry. I don't think he ever owned a black suit and black tie. His personality was such that people expected him to come up with something a little different, a little out of the ordinary.

I think I kind of inherited that. I believe that at a very early age people began saying, "He's just a chip off the old block." To me that was a compliment because my father's always been a well-liked man and respected for his ministry. People looked at me and said, Well, we expect this cat to be a little different. We don't expect him to behave just like every other preacher's kid or we don't expect him to have just the pat, Bible school answers.

Early on I was allowed to do and say things that I felt like doing. I began to be very creative and very imaginative, very expressive when I was very young. Like when our family was singing once (as we did often), I was probably four or five, and we were in a very staunch, stiff church in North Carolina. We were singing an uptempo number, and I got happy and jumped up on the altar and

started twisting away to what we were singing. People just laughed and thought I was cute.

That kind of thing just progressed throughout my life. I became known as being witty, silly. People who needed someone to do something stupid in front of a crowd would ask me. It became the expected thing that I would dress up in costumes and trip across the stage, tell jokes or sing solos or whatever needed to be done. I don't think I was expected to behave like the traditional PK.

It got old, though. In college I made quite a name for myself as being someone who would do anything for attention or to get a laugh. Then when I began to try to look at life a little differently, to develop a sense of my own personal ministry, it was difficult because people had come to expect foolishness from me.

Another pressure I had to deal with was that, in a small church, when you're the pastor's son and have obvious talents, you're expected to give 200 percent in every area in any way. When I was 16 I was men's fellowship president, captain of the men's softball team, head of the youth group and a choir member--not to mention janitor for the church.

Also, as you get older, people not only expect you to behave yourself, they expect you to know everything there is to know about the Bible. People kind of expected me to have the right answer or have a strong opinion--to know the order of the Old Testament books. . . . Sometimes I didn't

know. Sometimes I didn't admit it--I just covered up. The pressure was--was I good enough, was I spiritual or knowledgeable enough?

Mostly, though, the ministry was an exciting thing for us. It was fun and a challenge because my parents never forced us to abide by laws and regulations but rather taught us obedience to God's word and the reasons why. They made it exciting to be a minister's child.

We were a very close family. There were four of us under the age of five at one time. We did everything together. My parents were very open to giving me freedom to make my own decisions. They didn't really force me to come under their beliefs. But when they sat me down and showed me what they believed and why, it was very easy for me to accept it and apply it in my life.

Now I'm very much into full-time ministry myself, and I wouldn't ever consider doing anything else. From the human standpoint, my father is 100 percent responsible for that. Because of him I was open to God and service to Him. If I'd been anything but a preacher's kid, I probably would've been miserable.

Discussion

The ministers' children profiled were selected from a group of twenty-one individuals--all minister's children--ranging in age from sixteen to seventy-four. The subjects were located through word-of-mouth recommendations and

through their responses to a classified ad in The Daily Beacon newspaper soliciting preachers' kids as volunteers for interviews.

The fifteen personal interviews were conducted in Cleveland, Tennessee and Knoxville, Tennessee, and there were six mailed-in responses to the twelve questionnaires (See Appendix) sent to subjects (obtained by word-of-mouth recommendations) in Virginia, Georgia, Tennessee, Connecticut, Kansas and Missouri.

Eleven occupations were represented among the ministers' children interviewed: librarian, computer specialist, pastor, junior high school teacher, neurobiologist, youth minister, professional singer, college administrator, deaf education instructor, college psychology instructor and state educational administrator. Also included were undergraduate electrical engineering and pre-law students, graduate communications and chemistry students and three high school students.

Subjects' current or past religious affiliations included Southern Baptist, American Baptist, Church of Christ, United Methodist, Presbyterian, Church of God and Inter-denominational. Occupations of subjects' parents who were ministers included associate pastor, pastor, evangelist, college president, chaplain, missionary, youth and Christian education director, state administrative official (i.e., overseer) and national administrative official (e.g.,

Vice-President, General Overseer, Director of World Missions).

It is apparent from the profiles presented above that the ministers' children included in this study differed considerably both in terms of their respective experiences and their perspectives on being ministers' children. Those differences were evident both in the demographics of the group and in their responses to interview questions.

However, certain similarities were observed. Of the twenty-one ministers' children interviewed, fifteen had moved five or more times since they were born; seven had moved seven or more times since birth--with an average of five moves per person questioned. On this, as with most other issues, subjects disagreed as to the positive or negative impact of frequent moves.

Of the ministers' children questioned, fifteen out of twenty-one said they had not nor would they ever consider entering the ministry themselves or marrying a minister. Reasons for the apparent aversion to their parents' occupation varied from a strong sense of "not being called" to an unwillingness to make what were perceived to be the inherent sacrifices and/or compromises involved in full time ministry.

Perhaps most significant was the fact that sixteen out of twenty-one PKs said they believed that ministers' children are called upon to deal with unusually difficult

pressures and problems. In virtually every instance where this was the case, the pressures commented upon were those stemming from the high visibility of ministers in the church and community, visibility that, according to these individuals, carries over to ministers' children.

Each of the eight individuals profiled--as well as the other subjects who responded positively on this matter--expressed feelings of being on display, "in the spotlight," of being watched and evaluated in terms of proper behavior, knowledgeability of scripture or spiritual matters or "spirituality" in general. Each individual was conscious of being expected to conform to certain expectations or preconceived notions only because he or she was "the preacher's kid." The key word in each case was pressure--pressure to perform, pressure not to mess up or make mistakes, pressure to please parents, friends, churchmembers--in short, pressure to be perfect.

The individuals included in this study dealt with that pressure in varying ways with varying success. Indeed the truth that emerges as most self-evident among these ministers' children is not their similar backgrounds and experiences but rather their considerable diversity, particularly with regard to their respective outcomes. The choices made in terms of occupation and personal priorities, relgious beliefs and lifestyles reflect a diversity that is

most definitely incompatible with common notions that preachers' kids are all this or all that.

Summary

While some might argue that there are indeed representatives of the "Moral Degenerate," the "Brat" or the "Model Child" (See Chapter II) among those profiled, careful study of their experiences--and their perspective on those experiences--clearly demonstrates that, despite growing up in what appear on the surface to be rather similar environments, these ministers' children are a group of notably diverse individuals. Their diversity manifested itself primarily in terms of their attitudes toward being preachers' kids, with perspectives ranging from almost entirely postive to almost entirely negative. In the end, the only real conclusion to be drawn from the study suggests that PKs are individuals as different from each other as are, in actuality, the environments they grow up in--and the ministers who raise them.

Implications for Future Research

It is, of course, difficult to generalize about ministers' children from so small a sample. This study was limited both by the relatively small number of subjects and by their somewhat narrow range of backgrounds, particularly in terms of geography (all personal interviews were with

Tennessee residents and/or University of Tennessee students) and religious affiliation.

The chief problem in carrying out this research was the task of efficiently locating substantial literature by or about ministers' children and the logistics of obtaining PKs for interviews. As they are an unorganized, unofficial grouping with no clearinghouse or resource center, obtaining subjects is largely a matter of happenstance and personal networking.

However, the findings of even so small a sample suggest considerable potential for future research. Presumably a larger number of subjects would provide even richer material not only for those interested specifically in the clergy and clergy homes but for those interested in the experiences and perspectives of individuals whose parents occupy leadership positions in general.

Certainly, future research among a larger pool of preachers' kids would contribute to the understanding of how environment and upbringing influence individuals' attitudes and choices. And possibly such research could help put to rest some of the misconceptions--and thus some of the pressures--commonly encountered among this group of individuals.

CHAPTER VI

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF A BOOK ABOUT PKS

Objective

As stated in the introduction this study began as an idea for a book about ministers' children. The premise of The PK Syndrome: Success and Strife Among Ministers' Children is that preachers' kids represent a far more richly varied segment of the population than most people would imagine. The purpose of the book is to communicate the fact that most ministers' children are neither perfect saints nor hopeless sinners but rather, that they are typically complex, imperfect but essentially worthwhile human beings whose backgrounds may lead anywhere from stunning achievement to astounding failure.

Projections

It is this varying degree of success and failure--traced back to a shared upbringing--that will be presented in The PK Syndrome. The book will allow readers to hear directly from the ministers' children, to experience firsthand their thoughts and feelings about their unique upbringing and their varied responses to it.

An estimated ten to twelve additional chapters (See Appendix) will be included in the final book manuscript. Those chapters will consist of material from interviews of ministers' children from all walks of life and from as many

professions and age groups as possible and from "celebrity" PKs--some of whom have already been contacted--such as George McGovern, Walter Mondale, David Hartman, Pearl Bailey, Aretha Franklin, The Pointer Sisters, Tom T. Hall and Grace Jones. Profiles and quotes from these interviews will be combined with opinions of counselors and authors on the subject of the clergy and clergy homes--and the personal experiences of the author--to provide as rich as possible an understanding of the diversity in experience and outlook revealed among ministers' children.

Promotions Plan

In publishing, publicity means working with the media to communicate knowledge about a book to the public in order to generate interest in it and to create a market for it. Though publicity is only part of any total book marketing campaign, it can be the least expensive and most effective means of promotion.

While publicity is an important and efficient means of promotion, only about fifty of the more than 1,350 commercial royalty publishers in the United States have a publicity department capable of performing the four essential publicity services: (1) casing book reviews through personal communication and advance publicity; (2) getting stories about the author and the book into the media; (3) letting dealers know what the media is saying about a book and/or author; and (4) getting the author on television

and radio talk shows in areas where the book has dealer distribution.[1]

Another problem in publicizing books is the fact that some books (usually because of the topic involved) simply do not lend themselves to publicity. Also, competition for "free space" in the media is fierce. Even publishers with competent, fully staffed publicity departments must choose carefully the books they are going to back with a full-scale promotional effort. Obviously the books generally selected for such promotion are those with the greatest potential for a profit.

Because publicity is such an important and cost-sensitive part of book promotion, and because the chances of a full-scale promotional effort from a publisher are so slim, it is often up to authors to see that their books are promoted as effectively as possible. Given the knowledge of the subject area involved and his or her assumed knowledge of the potential audience, the author is perhaps in the best position to see that a book gets the publicity it deserves.

Target publics for author-promotion of The PK Syndrome fall into two general categories: book dealers (including librarians) and potential readers. The first step in attracting the attention of book dealers is to attract the

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[1]Aron Mathieu, The Book Market, How to Write, Publish and Market Your Book (New York: Andover Press, Inc., 1981), p. 73.

attention of reputable, recognizable names in the publishing industry and to secure favorable reviews in appropriate publications. To accomplish this the author will compile a review copy candidate list from sources such as Literary Market Place, Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory and Magazine Industry Market Place. At least four months prior to publication date, the author will select forty to fifty reviewer candidates to receive copies of the book along with written news releases emphasizing any newsworthy aspects of the book.

Another important step in attracting the attention both of booksellers and book buyers is obtaining media coverage of the book and the author. In approaching print journalists, the author will use a minimum two-page news release (See Appendix) based on the book and focusing on anything unique or newsworthy in it. The release, accompanied by a photo of the author, will be mailed to selected newspaper editors in selected cities where the book will be sold.

The author will also make himself available for interviews on radio and television. Appropriate media contacts in selected cities, obtained from the publisher's publcity department and sources such as TV Publicity Outlets Nationwide and National Radio Publicity, will receive news releases (See Appendix) and copies of the book accompanied by a press kit consisting of an author

bio (See Appendix) and any favorable reviews available. These mailings will ideally precede a minimum two-week promotional tour with television and radio appearances scheduled for almost every day as well as opportunities for interviews with local print journalists.

Many of the promotional efforts aimed at book retailers will also apply to potential readers. In addition to these programs, however, the author will be able to promote The PK Syndrome through speaking engagements (See Appendix) at seminars, particularly those oriented toward clergymen, ministers' wives or parents in general; church conventions, library and educational conventions (See Appendix).

Besides creating and taking advantage of opportunities to promote the book in person, the author will send news releases--and indicate availability for interviews--to his hometown and college newspapers and the publications of any professional organizations he may belong to. These contacts will be timed to coincide with various newsworthy stages in the life of the book, such as when the contract is signed, when the book is published or about to be published and when (or if) the book sells a particularly large number of copies.

Market Potential

As stated earlier The PK Syndrome is unique both in its approach to the subject of ministers' children and in the nature of the research involved. Available sources reveal

no other books and few recent periodical articles that address these matters from the PKs' perspective.

Consequently potential markets for a book of this sort are practically as varied as the PKs themselves. There is an obvious "built-in" potential appeal to ministers' children and to their parents. However, it is also believed that such a book will appeal to anyone else who has ever wondered about life in a parsonage--and its consequences. As it seems many people have, at some point in their lives, known or heard about a preacher's kid "gone bad," a book that deals openly with those gone bad--and those doing well--will more than likely arouse curiosity.

Thus The PK Syndrome will, it is hoped, be marketed both in religious bookstores and in general retail bookstores. In addition, the chapter on well-known PKs, past and present (See Chapter II), a reference chart of important historical figures who were ministers' children (listing names, occupations, birthdates and birthplaces and names of parents) and an exhaustive bibliography will make this book a valuable reference tool. Currently there is no reference book available that systematically lists well-known ministers' children and documents their startling record of achievements. Librarians will more than likely welcome the addition of such a tool to their collection of reference materials.

With these goals established, a formal book proposal, including an overview of the book concept, author bio, chapter-by-chapter outline and sample chapters[2] will be forwarded with a cover letter (See Appendix) to prospective publishers. Completion of The PK Syndrome: Success and Strife Among Ministers' Children, it is hoped, will follow receipt of at least a tentative contract for the book's publication.

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[2]Michael Larsen, How To Write A Book Proposal (Cincinnati, Oh.: Writer's Digest Books, 1985), pp 14-15.

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APPENDIX

MAIL QUESTIONNAIRE

Age _____ Occupation _____
Education _____
(high school, college. post-baccalaureate.
Church affiliation _____
Father/Mother's position _____
(circle which parent is a minister)
Parents' church affiliation _____

SURVEY

(NOTE: If more space is required to answer any questions, please continue your answers on back of page or attach a separate sheet.)

1) List in order the cities/states/countries where you've lived since birth and the approximate time spent in each location. _____

2) How did moving affect you? Any especially good or bad times resulting from a move? What was your attitude toward moving then and now? _____

3) Describe how you felt about being a preacher's kid when you were growing up. _____

4) How would you describe your family life when you were growing up? What was good about it? What was not so good? _____

5) What bothered you most about being a preacher's kid?

6) What did you like most about being a preacher's kid?

7) Do you feel your minister-parent spent enough time with you when you were growing up? yes _____ no _____

8) Did you feel that people expected more out of you or expected you to act a certain way because your parent was a minister? Explain.

9) Did you ever resent the church or have a desire to rebel against your parents' lifestyle? yes _____ no _____
What did you do about it? _____

10) How would you compare your own lifestyle/values with that of your parents? _____

11) Did your minister-parent lead your family in regular Bible study or devotions when you were a child?
yes _____ no _____

12) Who do you consider the single most important influence in your life? Why? _____

13) Did you ever feel you were not as important to your parent as his/her work or the church? How did this feeling affect you? _____

14) Do you feel that PKs must deal with unusually difficult pressures and problems? Explain. _____

15) Describe how your parents affected your perspective of God and religion? _____

16) Describe your relationship with your minister-parent. How has it changed over the years? _____

17) Have you or would you ever consider entering the ministry yourself or marrying a minister? yes ____ no ____

18) Do you feel that being a PK left you with any "hang-ups" or problems yet to be resolved? Explain. _____

19) As a parent, what would you do differently from your parents? _____

RELEASE

I hereby give permission to Dan Stone to use material in this questionnaire in the book he is writing on ministers' children, tentatively titled, The PK Syndrome: Success and Strife Among Ministers' Children, or for related articles issued prior to publication of said book.

_____

NAME OF INTERVIEWEE (signature)

_____

_____

ADDRESS/PHONE OF INTERVIEWEE

_____

NAME OF INTERVIEWER (signature)

_____

DATE OF AGREEMENT

COVER LETTER ACCOMPANYING QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear:

Being a preacher's kid (PK) yourself, you've probably heard most of the remarks about ministers' children being either brats or troublemakers, holy terrors or little angels. Unless you think such diverse figures as Woodrow Wilson, Walter Mondale, Ingmar Bergman, Martin Luther King, Jr., Orville and Wilbur Wright, Aretha Franklin, Laurence Olivier and Oral Roberts (all PKs) fit into these categories, you probably realize that such generalizations can be either way off base or right on target, depending on the individual minister and the kind of home environment he or she creates.

I am writing a book about the special advantages and disadvantages, pressures and privileges of being a preacher's kid. I am a college communications instructor and a freelance writer, but this subject is close to my heart because I'm a PK, too. I know what my experiences have been, but I want to know what others have been through and how they feel about growing up with a preacher for a parent.

Specifically, I'm interested in what you have to say about this subject. How did "life with preacher" affect you as a child? A teenager? Now? Your experiences would add a great deal to my book, and I'm hoping that you will be interested enough in the topic to fill out the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the stamped, self-addressed envelope also enclosed. I'm certain that your comments will mean a great deal to readers.

If you have no objections to being quoted in my book, tentatively titled, The PK Syndrome: Success and Strife Among Ministers' Children, please sign the release at the end of the questionnaire. If you would be interested in talking with me in person or by phone, don't hesitate to contact me via the SASE enclosed or call collect at the phone number listed above.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Dan Stone

THE PK SYNDROME: SUCCESS AND STRIFE

AMONG MINISTERS' CHILDREN

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1 HERE A PK, THERE A PK. . . .
A mini-history of PKs from John the Baptist to Richard Roberts. This chapter notes important literary figures, theologians, scientists . . . whose fathers were ministers, as well as providing a who's who among contemporary PKs.

CHAPTER 2 SWEEPING GENERALIZATIONS
The mythology that has built up around PKs--the stereotypes and common wisecracks, the generalizations and faulty assumptions.

CHAPTER 3 THE WAGES OF SERVICE
A realistic look at the modern clergyman's life: his earnings, level of respectability, standard of living, typical responsibilities (job description), etc.

CHAPTER 4 LIFE UNDER GLASS
What pressures do PKs have to deal with resulting from parent's high visibility occupation, and what are the consequences of pressure from church members, peers, and others?

CHAPTER 5 WHEREVER HE MAY LEAD
How do PKs feel about frequent moves? How difficult (or not) are they to adjust to? What problems result, and what long-term effects can develop?

CHAPTER 6 LIVING IN A MATERIAL WORLD
Do PKs feel underprivileged? Less fortunate than their peers? How does the minister's standard of living affect children? What long term effects may result?

CHAPTER 7 MAKE AN APPOINTMENT
How do PKs feel about their parent's being "on call?" Do they feel their parent spends (or spent) enough time with them? What effects can the minister's schedule have on family life?

CHAPTER 8 WORK OUT YOUR OWN SALVATION
Where do PKs get their perspectives on God? To what extent do they embrace parents' beliefs and values?

To what extent do parents' beliefs/actions influence PKs' choices? And how so?

CHAPTER 9 FOLLOWING IN THE PREACHER'S FOOTSTEPS

Why do so many PKs end up as ministers themselves? What steps lead to acceptance of the "calling" and how much did being a PK have to do with the decision?

CHAPTER 10 I AM THAT I AM

What are the pressures unique to being a preacher's kid? How do PKs deal with those pressures and develop an identity of their own, particularly when their own choices differ sharply with parents', churchmembers' etc.?

CHAPTER 11 THE BAD NEWS

What happens when preachers' kids "go bad." What goes wrong in the home and in the individual's life when the PK fails, when the worst happens?

CHAPTER 12 WHAT'S THE WORD?

What biblical guidelines are available for preventing "PK Syndrome?" What does the Bible say about ministers and their obligations to their families versus their churches? What about priorities?

CHAPTER 13 PRACTICE WHAT IS PREACHED

What do experts (authors, counselors, etc.) suggest for preventing "PK Syndrome?" How can effective parenting be better applied in the parsonage?

CHAPTER 14 THE GOOD NEWS

These are the success stories: PKs who feel good about their experiences as clergy kids, who have resolved whatever problems they may have had with their upbringing, who have survived life in a parsonage and emerged from it with favorable reviews.

EPILOGUE

NEWS RELEASE TO PRINT REVIEWERS

Exclusive To You In Your City

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ministers' children are often victims of parents who are too busy serving others to care properly for their own families, says Dan Stone, author of "The PK Syndrome: Success and Strife Among Ministers' Children."

"Ministers are called upon to shoulder enormous responsibilities, and frequently they are just as driven to succeed as any aspiring executive," Stone says. "As a result, their families, particularly their children, can be lost in the shuffle, confronting problems that affect them for the rest of their lives."

"The PK Syndrome," released by Fleming H. Revell Publishing Co. last month, is a book about preachers' kids ("PKs"), a frequently stereotyped group of individuals who, according to Stone, are forced to cope with complicated, often unfair pressures stemming from their parents' profession.

"Clergy kids are not simply the brats or troublemakers people joke about," Stone says. "They are individuals who

encounter unusual problems. They either resolve those problems or escape from them and go on to succeed or fail in surprisingly diverse areas, to widely varying degrees."

In his book, Stone presents case studies of clergy kids and how they cope with their lot in life, their perspectives on the ministry and on ministers as parents. The book also features comments from "celebrity PKs" such as George McGovern, Walter Mondale, singers Aretha Franklin, Rita Coolidge and Tom T. Hall, actress Grace Jones and tennis star Virginia Wade.

"Preachers' kids have achieved spectacular successes in every field, from the invention of the telegraph to the presidency of the United States," the author says. "Many of them go on to become ministers or missionaries themselves-others end up behind bars."

"Regardless of how they turn out, though, they all seem to begin at the same place, under much the same conditions. It is their ability to adapt to those conditions--and the influence of the minister-parent, either good or bad--that determines their outcome."

The author, a pastor's son originally from northern Virginia, is a freelance writer whose articles have appeared in numerous religious and specialty magazines. He is currently teaching communications at Lee College in Cleveland, Tennessee.

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NEWS RELEASE FOR TELEVISION

EXCLUSIVE TO YOU IN YOUR CITY

Despite the wisecracks about all preachers' kids being brats, ministers' children are actually as different from each other as Laurence Olivier is from Aretha Franklin. Both of them are PKs as are Walter Mondale, actress Grace Jones, tennis pro Virginia Wade, filmmaker Ingmar Bergman and a host of other well known figures.

Author Dan Stone's first book, The PK Syndrome: Success and Strife Among Ministers' Children (released by Fleming H. Revell Publishing Company last month) presents case studies of clergy kids and how they cope with life, plus their perspectives on the ministry and on ministers as parents.

Stone says clergy kids are not simply the wild troublemakers people joke about. In his words, many of them are individuals who have achieved spectacular successes in every field, from the invention of the telegraph to the presidency of the United States. Others have ended up behind bars.

The 28-year-old author is a pastor's son originally from Woodbridge, Virginia and is currently teaching communications at Lee College in Cleveland, Tennessee.

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AUTHOR BIO FOR PRESS KIT

Dan Stone has been working as a freelance writer and editor for more than three years. His feature articles have appeared in national magazines such as Tables and Best of Business, published by 13-30 Corporation, in national religious periodicals such as Charisma, Contemporary Christian, HIS, Lutheran Women and The Lighted Pathway and in daily newspapers in Woodbridge, Virginia and Knoxville, Tennessee.

In addition, he has written promotional materials, biographies and news releases for national evangelists and recording artists in Nashville and in Cleveland, Tennessee, and he has created press kits and promotional bios for public relations agencies in Knoxville, Tennessee.

Stone has a bachelor's degree in English and psychology from Lee College in Cleveland, Tennessee and a master's degree in communications from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, but his most important qualification for writing The PK Syndrome is the fact that his father has been a pastor for more than 20 years, his grandfather, more than 40 years.

He and his wife (who is a minister's daughter) currently live in Knoxville, Tennessee, where, like many PKs, they attempt to maintain a low profile and avoid stereotypes.

PITCH LETTER TO SOLICIT SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Dear:

The subject of effective parenting and how parent-child relationships affect children never fails to arouse the interest of most parents. Ministers and their spouses are certainly no exception.

Indeed, given the too-common perception of "PKs" (preachers' kids) as brats and born troublemakers, clergy parents are perhaps more concerned than some others about the development--physical, emotional and spiritual--of their children and how the ministerial lifestyle can better promote that development.

I'm a writer and a pastor's son. I've written a book that takes an honest look at life in a parsonage--from the minister's child's point of view. The PK Syndrome: Success and Strife Among Ministers' Children is a compilation of case studies, material from interviews and surveys and personal experience that deals with the advantages and disadvantages, problems, pressures and privileges of being a preacher's kid.

The book was released last month by Fleming H. Revell Publishing Company, and so far, has been well received. I've enclosed a couple of reviews to give you an idea of what others are saying about it, but what I would really like is an opportunity to share the book in person with you and the other members of your organization.

I understand that your annual convention is scheduled for _____. I believe that you and your colleagues will be fascinated by what preachers' kids have to say about preachers, about the clergy lifestyle and about how being a minister's son or daughter affects them throughout their lives.

If you would be interested in arranging a time for me to speak at your annual convention, please contact me at your earliest convenience. It would be a privilege for me and, I think, a worthwhile experience for you.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

CONTACT LIST FOR POTENTIAL SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

Ministerial

National Association of Ministers' Wives

American Association of Women Ministers

American Association of Pastoral Counselors

Pastoral Ministry Institute

Academy of Parish Clergy

Family/Parenting

Pro-family Press Association

United Parents Under God

Religious Media

Religion Research Association

Christian Broadcasting Association

Library

American Library Association

Association of Christian Librarians

Public Library Association

Evangelical Church Librarians

American Theological Library Association

Association of College and Research Librarians

COVER LETTER ACCOMPANYING BOOK PROPOSAL

Dear:

You've probably heard most of the cracks about preachers' kids (PKs) being either brats or mama's boys, holy terrors or little darlings. You probably also realize, either from experience or association, that such generalizations can be either way off base or right on target, depending on the individual minister and the kind of home environment he or she creates.

I am writing a book about the advantages and disadvantages, problems, pressures and joys of being a preacher's kid. My own experiences as a PK have been primarily positive; others have horror stories to tell.

The book I'm proposing, The PK Sydrome: Success and Strife Among Ministers' Children, is unique in that it approaches the subject of life in a parsonage (and its consequences) from diverse perspectives. Other books have dealt with clergymen or clergy wives, but they do not specifically deal with ministers' children.

As I envision it, The PK Syndrome will consist largely of biographies of PKs--their own stories, good or bad, in their own words. Along with these biographies I will include material from relevant books and periodical articles, interviews with pastoral counselors and other authors--and my own experiences and perspective as a minister's son. And I am compiling a comprehensive list of prominent PKs throughout history that includes political figures, industrialists, artists, writers, U.S. presidents, etc.

I am planning to inteview "celebrity" PKs such as Senator George McGovern, Pearl Bailey, author Katherine Paterson, entertainers Aretha Franklin, Grace Jones and Roy Acuff. I have enclosed a complete proposal with sample chapters of The PK Syndrome for your review. Obviously this is a subject close to my heart. I'm hoping that you, too, will find it worthwhile and will consider the book for publication. I have included a SASE for your reply. I'll look foward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Dan Stone

VITA

Dan Stone is a minister's son originally from Woodbridge, Virginia. He graduated summa cum laude from Lee College in Cleveland, Tennessee in 1981. There he edited the student magazine, Omnibus, was voted Most Outstanding Senior and earned a bachelor's degree in English and psychology.

The author has served editorial internships with the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance in Reston, Virginia and with 13-30 Corporation in Knoxville, Tennessee. In addition he has been working as a freelance writer and editor for more than three years. His feature articles have appeared in national magazines such as Tables and Best of Business, published by 13-30 Corporation, in national religious periodicals such as Charisma, Contemporary Christian, His and Lutheran Women, and in daily newspapers in Woodbridge, Virginia and Knoxville, Tennessee.

The author is a member of The Society of Professional Journalists/Sigma Delta Chi. Upon completion of his master of science degree with a major in commmunications (August 1986), he will be employed as a communications instructor at Lee College. He and his wife, Athena, who is also a minister's daughter, currently reside in Cleveland, Tennessee.