PERCEIVED PROBLEMS IN FIRST AND SECOND MARRIAGES

by

Gerald C. Dineen

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ABSTRACT

Perceived Problems in First and Second Marriages

by

Gerald C. Dineen, Master of Science

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Major Professor: Dr. Larry C. Jensen
Department: Family and Human Development

The purpose of this study was to identify problem areas in second families as compared to first families.

A questionnaire was sent to 31 first married wives and 20 second married wives. Both groups had children living in the home.

The first 19 questions focused on parent-child, and husband-wife relations. Respondents were asked to indicate their feelings on a four-point Lichert-type scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

The next section, which was included for other research purposes, asked respondents how prepared they felt for this current marriage.

Following these questions, 12 items were listed asking respondents to indicate if they would have liked more information in these areas before their marriage.

Next, respondents were asked to indicate if problems existed in any of the following 12 possible problem areas--marital success, in-law relations, parent-child relations, avoiding divorce, childrearing, finances,
religious differences, political differences, interpersonal communication, sexuality, ex-in-laws and ex-spouse.

Lastly, a four-point question ranging from excellent, very good, good and poor asked for a rating of the marriage.

Demographic information and household make-up was solicited on the last page. A letter of transmittal was included as a cover letter. The letter was hand addressed to the respondent and signed by the researcher.

The results indicate that the overriding problem area in the second family as compared to the first family centers strongly on the parent-child relationship.

It should be also noted that when asked to rate their marriages, wives in their first and second marriages reported no statistical difference.
INTRODUCTION

Today there are at least 25 million stepparents. Six million have had no previous parenting experience (Kalter, 1979; Roosevelt & Lofas, 1976). For every five marriages one is a remarriage for at least one of the partners, and approximately one of every eight children is a stepchild (Maddox, 1975). One researcher reports that in 1975 there were 15 million children under 18 living in stepfamilies (Roosevelt & Lofas, 1976). In 1978, Kalter set the number of 18 million.

It is difficult to reach agreement on a simple and operable definition of a stepparent or stepfamily. Duberman (1975) provides a workable definition for the reconstituted family: a family consisting of a husband and wife, at least one of whom has been married previously and who has children from a former marriage (p. 98).

Reconstituted families share many of the problems of normal families yet they have unique problems (Bernard, 1956; Duberman, 1975). Whiteside and Auerbach (1978) emphasize differences in sibling relations. They also state (p. 271) "the transition of 'natural family' role to the analogous 'stepfamily' role violates a portion of the reality experience." Fast and Cain (1966) also say that stepparents in the second family have not had the opportunity to gradually move into their parental roles as have parents in a first family. Their parenthood must begin before they may
have established a parent-child love bond. They specifically refer to the lack of role clarity for stepparents and also feel it is an injustice to "cure" problems in a stepfamily by bringing it into closer alignment with a first family. Duberman (1975) cited in Jones (1978, p. 226), concludes that an important aspect in the reconstituted family is that members of the reconstituted family "make conscious efforts to establish themselves as an entity, yet avoid the illusion of approximating the normative pattern of the nuclear family."

Unfortunately, there is a paucity of empirical data that can be used to specifically identify the major problems facing stepparents. "The current research is quite limited, particularly with respect to empirical research." (Kompara, 1980, p. 69) Also, Walker et al. (1977, p. 285) say, "Better information is needed about the demographic characteristics of remarried families and about the most significant stressers within remarriages for their members." The studies of Schulman (1972), Visher and Visher (1978), and Messinger (1976) provide the best data. However, only Duberman (1975) provides solid empirical data. Missing are data-based comparisons between first and second marriages. In research studies using only second-marriage data, such as Duberman, it is impossible to ascertain if the findings about second marriages would be different from a typical first marriage if the same procedure and instruments were employed.

This study was designed to identify the major problems encountered in second marriages as compared to first marriages using the same
instrument and sample selection procedure. Therefore, the same subject selection procedure and instrument was used to study the first- and second-marriage samples. It is acknowledged that it is impossible to select identical groups for comparison as first and second marriages will inevitably differ on many dimensions. For example, second married couples will usually be older than the first marrieds. However, such associated differences are part of the phenomenon of being a stepparent.

This research has focused on identifying problems thought to be present in second marriages as compared to first marriages. It was necessary to use as a research guide, opinions presented in the professional literature, which unfortunately have usually not been based on empirical data. Obviously, many marriages have problems; and these can be tabulated. What is not known is whether the problems of second marriages differ in type and frequency from those of first marriages. The empirical findings to be presented here do show that there are differences, and the implications will be discussed.
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Glick and Norton (1973) pointed out that between the 1950's and 1970's the divorce rate per 1000 women under the age of 45 increased about two-thirds. The remarriage rate for women under the age of 55 during the same time increased about one-third. Messinger et al. (1978) explain that the divorce rate in the U.S. is increasing by 10% annually and that over three-fourths of the divorced remarry. Of divorced women, Fullerton (1977) found that one in four remarry within 5 months of their divorce. Half remarry within 1 year, and three-fourths marry within 3 years of divorce. Divorced men have remarriage rates that are more than three times those for women (U.S. Public Health Service, 1973, p. 1). The median length of time between divorce and remarriage for men is 1 year (U.S. Public Health Service, 1973, p. 13).

In 1965, Simon reported there were 8 million children living in stepfamilies. In 1975, this number had risen to 15 million (Roosevelt & Lofas, 1976). Kalter, in 1978, set the number at 18 million. One of every eight children in 1975 was a stepchild (Maddox, 1975). According to Dodson in 1977, one of every six children was a stepchild. He projects that by 1980, one out of every four children will be a stepchild.

Today there are approximately 35 million stepparents (Einstein, 1979; Visher & Visher, 1979). One in three marriages is a remarriage for at least
one of the partners (Dodson, 1977). Kalter (1978) points out that one of every five adults in the U.S. is a stepparent or will become one.

Researchers have failed to reach a common consensus on a definition of a stepparent or stepfamily. Duberman (1975) provides a workable definition for the reconstituted family; that is, a family consisting of a husband and wife, at least one of whom has been previously married and who has children from a former marriage. This definition does not include the unwed parent but only the formerly married parent. Whiteside and Auerbach (1978) agree with this definition. An earlier publication, Duberman (1973, p. 284) used this definition of a stepparent: "a stepparent is a spouse of one's natural parent by a subsequent marriage." The American College Dictionary (1960) defines stepparent (i.e., stepfather) as a man who occupies one's father's place by marriage to one's mother. Rawlings (1976) accepts this definition. Goldstein (1974) allows single nonparents as potential stepparents. It would seem many other researchers prefer to leave the defining up to the reader. Without a generally accepted and operable definition of a stepfamily, the interpretation of research could be misleading.

Previous Research

The area of stepparenting has been observed and discussed but seems lacking in scientific investigating and reporting. In 1976, E. M. Rawlings, when reviewing research, found very few scholarly publications.
Since his review, only a few articles and books can be added to the list. Of these, most use a case study, biographical approach, or rely on personal insights or compilations of existing literature (Bowerman & Irish, 1962; Burchinal, 1964; Duberman, 1973; Messinger, 1976; Wilson, Zurcher, McAdams, & Curtis, 1975). Books dealing with the subject of stepparenting reported the same type of information (Baer, 1972; Duberman, 1975; Maddox, 1975; Mayleas, 1977; McCormich, 1975; Meriam, 1940; Smith, 1953; Spann & Spann, 1977; Thompson, 1966; Visher & Visher, 1979).

Kompara (1980, p. 69) states that of the literature available on stepfamilies, "The current research is quite limited, particularly with respect to empirical research."

The reviewed literature seems to break down into two categories: research focusing on a specific problem or on a generalized view. Except for Maddox, most of the researchers do not discuss the entire possibility of role combinations resulting in a stepparent in the family.

The special problem of stepparents has been recognized for years. However, that recognition has not led to an abundance of research. The research has lacked methodological rigor; and consequently, much of it is suggestion and speculation (Walker et al., 1977). William Smith, in 1945, explained that much of the professional and lay public's attitudes about stepparents is based on folklore. Visher and Visher, in 1977, echo Smith's earlier concerns. Schulman (1972) explains the problems of dealing with the "myths" surrounding stepparenting. These researchers have been
concerned about the injustices done to the stepfamily by professionals who treat the stepfamily without really understanding the dynamics involved.

Preconceived notions about stepparents have been the rule; empirical information has been the exception. The data available has been descriptive; i.e., age, sex, type of parent absence, etc.

**Characteristics of the Reconstituted Family**

That reconstituted families share many of the problems of normal families yet also contain unique problems was noted by Jessie Bernard (1956) and by Duberman (1975). For example, Duberman (1973) found that, unlike primary families, the ties which were closest in stepfamilies were between opposite sex siblings.

Duberman (1975) focuses on the demographic differences between the two type of families. The 88 families in her sample were only Caucasian couples who had remarried during the years of 1965–1968 who were under 45 years of age and who had children under 18 at the time of the remarriage. The reconstituted family in that sample was larger, 4.0 children compared to 2.7 children in the traditional family type. The mean age of the parents was greater, 35.0 years to 22.8 for men and 34.6 to 20.5 for women. There was less homogamy between the parents in the reconstituted family. She identifies the reconstituted family's desire to behave as if they were a "normal" family. Interestingly, her observation revealed that the reconstituted family resembles the ideal type of family to a greater degree than does the primary (traditional)
type. Jones (1978, p. 226) cites Duberman: "members in a reconstituted family make conscious efforts to establish themselves as an entity, yet avoid the illusion of approximating the normative patterns of the nuclear family."

Fast and Cain (1966) also say that stepparents have not had the opportunity to gradually move into their parent roles. Their parenthood must begin before they may have established a stepparent-child bond. These researchers feel it is an injustice to "cure" problems in the stepfamily by bringing it into closer alignment with the "normal" family. The attempt to reproduce the "normal" family in a stepfamily is doomed to failure. They specifically refer to the lack of role clarity between stepparents and step-siblings. In Duvall's (1971) family development model, these families skip the first stage of parenthood. Draugon (1975) contrasts the sudden onset of stepmotherhood in the second family compared to the gradual process of biological motherhood.

Walker et al. (1977) shows another differences between the nuclear family and the second family by explaining the complex parental and in-law configuration. Perhaps there could be three or even four parental adults involved, any two of whom live inside the household although the others may have visitation rights. Instead of just two sets of grandparents, there could be four. These authors feel that the nuclear family model is clearly inappropriate for the remarriage family. Whiteside and Auerback (1978, p. 271) explain that "the translation of 'natural family' roles to the analogous 'stepfamily' roles violates a portion of the reality experience."
The stepfamily could conceivably have two first-born children, one brought by each parent. Add to this a possible third first-born, the biological child of the pair. What are the implications presented?

**Intra-Stepparent Differences**

Of the literature reviewed, only a few articles examined stepparent differentiation. O'Hara and Levin (1978) controlled for marital history of the husband. Their study compared the fertility of marriages made up of remarried women with remarried men and the fertility of remarried women with previously unmarried husbands. A greater reduction in fertility was found in the group containing remarried husbands. They speculate that previous parenthood may be a deterrent to fertility among previously married men and women.

Burchinal in 1964, Bowerman and Irish in 1962, and Schulman in 1972 divided stepfamilies into three groups: 1) a nonfather married to a mother, 2) a nonmother married to a father, and 3) both parties bringing children into the second family. They explain how, in a variety of situations, each of these types may be affected differently; i.e., the stepfather, the stepmother, and the combination family as being separate types of stepfamilies. Bowerman and Irish (1962) point out that remarriages may be divided as to how the first family broke up. Divorce is indicative of marital problems while death of a spouse is less discernible.
The stepparent status may be more confounded. The stepparent may or may not have been previously married, may or may not have been a parent, may or may not have custody of his or her child, and may or may not have adopted the stepchild.

Need for a Model-Typology

In a current article, Visher and Visher (1978) explain, "At present, no adequate conceptual framework of stepfamily organization has been offered. They feel they know what the stepfamily is not. It is not an initial nuclear family. What the stepfamily is eludes them as well as the rest of the professional and lay public. Fast and Cain (1966, p. 490) felt strongly enough about the separateness of the stepfamily and the need of a model to make the following comment:

More important, an alternative framework is both available and promising of more heuristic formulation of questions. That is, the stepfamily can be conceptualized as a structural variation of importance equal to the Kibbutz pattern in Israel; the working class pattern in France; the urban, rural, nuclear extended families in this country. From this organizational point of view then, potentially soluble can be formulated concerning, for example, the patterns of transition from one marriage to another, processes in the integration of two sibling groups in a single family, or the appropriate allocation of individual and joint functions of the two same-sex parents. Since the stepfamily is likely to be an increasingly common pattern of family organization, the resolution of such problems might warrant our considerable effort.

The framework they refer to was not revealed in the readings.
Early Stage of the Stepparent Family

The initial stage of the stepfamily formation is characterized by lack of role clarity and instability which is not conducive to positive stepparent-stepchild relations (Fast & Cain, 1966). The intact family obviously fits very neatly into Duvall's Family Life Cycle Stages framework. How does the stepfamily fit? The model assumes the entire family experiences growth through the stages at the same time (age of oldest child). Perhaps by expanding the model, the development of the stepfamily could be better visualized.

Messinger et al. (1978) noted, in a series of 70 interviews with divorced, remarried couples, the following create the complexities involved in the second family: 1) ties of each partner to the previous marriage 2) "doubling" of parental roles, 3) ambiguous roles and responsibilities between stepparents and stepchildren, 4) redefinition of family identity, 5) ex spouse's family, and 6) former social networks.

Duberman (1975) sees the relationship between the stepparent and stepchild as the most agitated. This, she feels, is due to undefined roles and obligations and the negative mythology surrounding that relationship. The newness, the lack of stepparent experience, and the lack of normative guides lead to difficult role transition adding to the agitation.

Schulman (1972) points out the adjustment problems and stresses on the stepfamily. Stresses may be in the form of the individual member's heightened sensitivity to criticism or rejection as a result of death or divorce.
and feelings of being "unnormal." Feelings of worthlessness also help to create a greater vulnerability to pressures from within and outside the family.

In an article published in the *Journal of Divorce*, Shirley Jones (1978) relates the initial stage of the stepparent family as involving awkward descriptive problems, confused kinship patterns conflicting roles and allegiances, generally creating confusion and anxiety among all members, included in the article is a quote from Bohannan (1970, p. 219):

> In the majority of cases, the stepparent is an addition not a replacement. And the American norm is either to disregard the subject completely or that special care be taken that no difference appears on the surface between stepparenthood and "real" parenthood. Stepparents are not "real" and the culture so far provides no norms to suggest how they are different.

Jones contends that individuals going into step relationships are often unprepared and ineffectively coping.

Fast and Cain (1966) found a variety of manifestations by stepfamily members. Uncertainties about appropriate role behavior, related intrapsychic conflicts, and problems due to failures in reciprocal role behavior lead to these acting out situations. Arguments between the stepparent and the natural parent were most often about definition of appropriate step-parental roles. It was also noted that stepfamilies do not gradually grow from a marital pair to the familial bond but are thrown together and do not experience the normal developmental stages at the same time.

William Smith in 1945 painted a portrayal of the stepfamily that remains accurate today. He describes the stepfamily as having a greater
incidence of emotional insecurity resulting in greater disorganizing influences, although more current research has shown that second families rate themselves as happy as the first (Glen & Weaver, 1977).

From the literature, a picture of the stepfamily can be drawn. In stepfamilies, complexities arise due to ties to the past, doubling of parental roles, ambiguous role definition of stepparent and stepchild, redefinition of a family identity to nonnuclear family status, negative myths surrounding the stepfamily, lack of stepparent experience, heightened sensitivity to criticism or rejection, feelings of being "unnormal" and unworthy, awkward descriptive problems, confused kinship patterns, conflicting roles, anxiety, and an unwillingness of society at large to accept the stepfamily as a unique family unit different from the nuclear family unit. The stepfamily is more vulnerable to negative, harmful pressures from within and outside of the stepfamily.

Added to this is the finding by Dean and Gurak (1978) that second marriages are less homogamous than the first. Besides not having clear role definitions, the stepparent is less likely to be similar in age, education, and religion to the ex-parent. This also increased the amount of adjustment to develop family cohesiveness. Yet, Glen and Weaver's (1977) research may be saying that even with these possible problem areas, second families still rate themselves as happy as the first. Second marriages are homogamous in one respect. Divorced people tend to marry other divorced; and the widowed marry the widowed (U.S. Public Health Services, 1973, p. 10).
This atmosphere, characteristic of the initial stage of stepfamily development, may be less than conducive to healthy intrafamilial relations and may be the cause of many familial breakdowns. Yet, this is where the stepparent–stepchild relations begin to develop.

**Parent–Child Relations**

Smith (1945) describes the situation negatively. The child involved has usually lost an important adult and feels emotionally adrift. The child may not know why his parents have parted and may not know to whom he belongs. The stepparent may be viewed as an interloper; someone to compete with for maternal affection. If the stepparent brings children of his own, the child may feel invaded as well. Pololsky (1955) added a lack of stepparenting skills to the problem of a resenting, suspicious, and distrusted child. He felt the younger the child and stepparent the easier the adjustment. Bernard's (1971) findings support this partially.

In a discussion of stepparent difficulties, Fast and Cain (1966) point out the futility of the stepparent's attempts at completely assuming the parental role. Social norms require that the stepparent accede to the parental rights of another, to be nonparent; to share residential, educational, and financial decisions about the child with both natural parents. Also, in the case of the death of the natural parent, the stepparent may be competing with an exaggerated legacy of the perfect parent and mate. Messinger (1976) noted that the basic problems of the first marriage were a lack of maturity, marital
readiness, and sexual difficulties. Children and money were at the bottom of the list, whereas in the second marriage children and money problems were listed as two primary difficulties. Rawlings (1976) characterized the step-parent as a naive individual entering a complex web of relationships expecting the worst but hoping for the best. The ensuing role-strain and self-fulfilling prophecy will be detrimental to the mental health of all. He charges the family educators have not dealt with the role of the stepparent. The instant parent has nowhere to turn for explicit information and guidance. Anticipatory socialization for the role of stepparent is nonexistent. Feelings of abandonment, guilt about loss of the parent, hostility toward the stepparent, and assuming responsibility for his parent's loneliness and unhappiness are a part of the child's negative self-image.

Bitterman (1968) feels the stepparent is in a double bind, trying to fill the role of parent while being viewed as antagonist by the child. The abrupt confrontation between stepparents and stepchildren on basic issues as nurturance and discipline raises questions about what roles the stepparent is to take. He is not afforded the opportunity to grow into the relationship that the biological parent has had. The stepparent lacks the benefit of having grown with the "new" family. Goldstein (1974) feels that in most stepfather-mother families, the mother is the administrator of discipline. This is a breakdown in the usual role structure. The stepfather is at best reluctant and at worst unable to provide discipline. When the stepfather is not the limit-setter or rule enforcer and wants to be, it is crucial that the mother
support him and not allow her children to deny or ignore his authority. Her support could lead to less role conflict and a more appropriate male role model.

Messinger et al. (1978) explained ambiguous stepfather roles as common in stepfamilies. A number of male participants in her study expressed the "double bind" communications they received from their partners. The mothers seemed relieved at having a "father figure" in the home but frequently would override his authority, leaving him feeling frustrated and without any real role in the family. Earlier, Schulman (1972) expanded the problem to include the strain put on the mother to soothe the stepfather's feelings when his authority is denied. Some mothers eventually cause the stepfather to step further out of the family and then interpret this as being a lack of interest in the family. Fast and Cain (1966) see this as eventually causing an increased mother-child bond further ostracizing the stepparent. Visher and Visher (1978) agree with these views and feel that the stepparent's past parenting experience is being questioned and his ties with his previous family may lead to increased stepparent-stepfamily conflict.

Bhatt and Mehta (1975) found that in India, the society's perception of the stepparent-stepchild relationship greatly affects the relationship. In India, positive relations between stepmother and stepchildren are rare. This is a reflection of that society's perceptions. In generalizing this to the United States, what are the effects of missing societal norms and negative mythologies surrounding the stepfamily?
Solutions to the problems of stepparents are usually suggestive and speculative. The only article empirically evaluating the effectiveness of three stepmother models upon the development of positive ties between stepmother and stepchild was conducted by Margaret Draughon in 1975. The three models were: 1) primary mother, 2) other mother, and 3) friend. Her findings revealed that the model of "primary" mother may be assumed effectively if the child's psychological mourning of his mother is complete. If the natural mother is still psychologically alive, the model of "friend" is more conducive. The "other" mother model revealed no advantages. These findings seem to indicate that children find that having two mothers when everyone else has one is conflicting and that the more accepted and defined roles of "primary mother" and adult "friend" are most acceptable.

**Parent Absence--Stepparent Presence**

Nye (1957) indicates that a broken home is better as far as adolescent adjustment than an unhappy unbroken home, and contrary to previous speculation, a stepparent home can be a facsimile of the happy, unbroken home. Bernard in 1956 found that the child's age at the time of parental detachment is crucial in subsequent adjustment to a stepparent. She found a negative correlation between age of child and adjustment to the stepparent. Bowerman and Irish (1962) were not able to reinforce these findings in their study. They went on to report that the reactions of adolescent children indicate that stepmothers have more difficult roles
than do stepfathers. Stepdaughters generally manifested more extreme reactions toward their parents than did stepsons. The presence of a stepparent in the home usually lowered the level of adjustment of the adolescent to his natural parents.

Perry and Pfuhl (1963) reported that children from homes broken by divorce or death did not differ significantly on three measures of adjustment. They found a lack of significant differences on tests of children in unbroken, "solo," and "remarriage" homes. The measures of adjustment were: 1) reported delinquent involvement of subjects, 2) psychoneurotic tendencies, and 3) school grades.

Another study conducted by Lee G. Burchinal (1964) divided family status into the following five types: 1) unbroken families, 2) mothers only, 3) mothers and stepfathers, 4) fathers and stepmothers, and 5) both parents remarried. He found no significant differences in terms of their responses on the Minnesota Test of Personality. Significant differences were found on certain sociometric scales and school attendance but generally no differences were found between the five groups.

In a study measuring the relation of type of paternal absence and age of child to cognitive development, Santrock (1972) discovered father absence due to divorce, desertion, or separation had the most negative effect for boys and girls under age 2 at the time of absence. This does not reinforce Bernard’s earlier work. Father absence due to death was found to be most detrimental when it occurred between the years of 6 and 9 for a boy.
Father-absent boys consistently performed worse than father-absent girls and father-present boys. Boys whose fathers had died when the boy was under 2 seemed to score higher in sixth grade IQ tests than father-present boys. Remarriage of boys' mothers who were divorced, deserted, or separated in the initial 5 years of the boy's life had a positive influence. Most father-absent boys with a stepfather were higher than father-absent boys. The presence of a stepfather brought these boys' scores more in line with father-present boys. Interestingly, the entrance of a stepfather into a previously father-absent girl's home did not have a positive influence on her cognitive development. Girls may feel more stress when a male enters her mother's life than boys feel when a new "dad" is brought into the house. Psychoanalytic explanations of the girl's stress would be a sense of competition between the mother and daughter. In the same vein, it would seem the boy would feel competition with the new male for the mother's affection. Apparently, this is not so or at least subconsciously denied.

Duberman (1975, pp. 105-106) relates interesting findings in her book, The Reconstituted Family (essentially the same as her 1973 article, "Step-Kin Relationships). She writes about stepparents:

Protestant stepparents were more likely to achieve a good relationship with their stepchildren than any other religious group, although the finding is more significant for stepfathers than it is for stepmothers. The age of the stepfather was not an influence in his relationship with his stepchildren. Younger stepmothers were more likely to have good relationships with their new children than older stepmothers. When the stepmother has been widowed, she was more apt to
develop a good relationship with the stepchildren than a divorced or previously unmarried stepmother. However, stepfathers who had never been married before formed better relationships with their stepchildren than stepfathers in either of the two other categories.

The age of the stepchild was not important in the relationship with the stepfather, but stepmothers were able to develop better relationships with their stepchildren when the children were under 13 years of age. Furthermore, women seemed to get along better with stepchildren if their own children lived with them. And when a remarried couple had children together, both parents achieved a higher parent-child relationship score with their stepchildren than when no children were born into the new marriage.

The husband-wife relationship was associated with the parent-child relationship. When the husband and wife did not have a good relationship, the stepchild and stepparent usually failed to achieve a good relationship. The inference can be made then that the relationship between husband and wife influences the relationship between the stepparent and the stepchild.

Duberman also noticed that the higher the frequency of stepparent-stepchild interactions the more likely they will develop a positive relationship. The attitude of the stepchild is related positively to the success of the stepfamily. She does not speculate as to whether or not the child’s attitude is an antecedent to or a consequence of stepfamily dynamics. Child effects studies would be most revealing.

Embedded Figures Test and Scholastic Aptitude Test scores for college students from father-absent, stepfather, and intact homes were analyzed by Chapman (1977). His findings showed lower scores for the father-absent group. Males in the stepfather group did better than the father-absent group but not as good as the intact group. Females in the
stepfather group had higher scores than either of the other two groups. He attributes this finding to his sample, calling attention to long-range effects of stepfathering and female cognitive performance. It should be noted here that Santrock's 1972 sample consisted of relatively young girls who had not been exposed to the long-range effects of stepfathering.

Comparing scores of college males on the Ego Identity Scale, Oshman and Monosevitz (1976) found those males in the father-present group and those in the stepfather group to be higher than males in the father-absent group. In no case did the father-present and stepfather groups differ from each other in EIS scores. Analysis of variances was done to determine if significant interactions existed between reason for father absence, death vs. divorce, and presence or absence of a stepfather. No significant interactions were found. They report that father absence affects personality development and that the effects of early father absence persist into late adolescence. They also report that stepfathering is an important factor in mitigating the typically deleterious effects of father absence.

Wilson et al. (1975) used secondary data analysis of the 1973 National Opinion Research Center data and the 1973 University of Michigan Youth in Transition Survey in an exploratory analysis of stepfather and stepchildren and came to the following conclusion:

That a child’s experience with a broken home and (if entered) a subsequent reconstituted family can be a predominantly positive, predominantly negative, or mixed experience, depending on a wide array of preexisting transitional and adaptive factors. The
child who is part of a stepfather family may have a predominantly positive, predominantly negative, or mixed experience in that family. (p. 535)

One interpretation of the above quote from Wilson et al. (1975) is that there is no specific predictable pattern as a result of being in a broken or reconstituted family. Perhaps other variables need to be controlled as well as family form (Marotz-Baden et al., 1979).

Stepfather

In Henry Biller’s chapter in The Role of the Father in Child Development, edited by Michael Lamb (1976) entitled "The Father and Personality Development: Paternal Deprivation and Sex-Role Development," he explains that the data reviewed show that competent, nurturant, and available fathers positively influence their children (p. 89). How does the stepfather fit into the competent category since no definition of competent exists for him? (Bohannan, 1970; Duberman, 1976; Jones, 1978; Kompara, 1980). Should the stepfather be immediately available? If a stepfather enters a home that has an 8 year old and an 18 year old, will the effects of "availability" be the same?

An important variable in a boy's masculinity development is his perception of family interactions. This perception can be influenced by his mother's behavior. Some mothers appeared to prevent their husbands from serving as adequate models by constantly competing with them for the decision-making role (Biller, 1976). This sounds very much like the
"double-bind" messages some stepfathers hear their wives making (Goldstein, 1974; Messinger et al., 1978).

Perhaps the child in a stepfamily by virtue of setting is doomed to a lowered sense of self-esteem. He may fit into the high paternal nurturance combined with low paternal availability or the low paternal nurturance combined with high paternal availability, which Biller (1976) feels can decrease self-esteem. Paternal involvement increases the son's responsibility towards others. In a father bound by visitation rights or a reluctant stepfather really involved? (Biller, 1976). Mother's attitudes again towards her ex-spouse may influence the amount of paternal nurturance as perceived by the boy.

Biller (1976, p. 106) lists a number of factors that increase anxiety and maladjustment in children. These factors can easily be used as descriptors of the solo motherhood-stepfamily transition. The child was paternally deprived and may be the subject of interim inadequate fathering leading to insecurity and a lowered self-esteem. He may also feel anxiety because of an overly intense relationship with his mother, economic insecurity, concern about the well-being of his father, and feelings of being different.

Several studies pointed out by Biller (1976) revealed that many families in clinical situations were more likely to be dominated by mothers. Children in families with a positive masculine role and a distinct, positive feminine role had better personality development than those in homes where the roles were reversed or mixed. This role reversal or ambiguity is apparent in the stepfamilies' initial stages (Jones, 1978).
Conclusion

From the literature reviewed in the previous section, it is concluded that the stepfather role is characterized by ambiguity and conflicting role expectations. At the same time, the stepchild may be uncooperative, distrustful, suspicious, resenting, feeling guilty, alone, and invaded. This is all happening within a familial situation that is full of anxiety and frustration with little or no positive reinforcement as to what is the correct behavior for the members. All stepfamilies obviously are not confusing or negative. The literature assures that most stepfamilies do experience many of the above feelings at some time. Common sense tells us that the degree of intensity varies. Whether or not stepparenting is helpful, harmful, or ineffectual is apparently due to a constellation of variables.

There is need for this research. More specific data and complete analysis are required. This is a relatively unexplored region of human social structure. Here are problems dealing with a legal, affectional pair-bonding for which society has few norms to guide behavior. Data needs to be scientifically gathered and analyzed dealing with the complexities involved in the instant family.

As mentioned in the Introduction, empirical comparisons between first and second marriages is needed. It is important to identify stress or problem areas. To do this the following study was undertaken.
METHOD

Sample

Names of wives from first and second marriages were drawn from their marriage applications on file with the Bureau of Vital Statistics in Salt Lake City, Utah. Because the study was designed to measure wives' attitudes about parent-child and husband-wife relationships, a sample that had been married for at least 3 years was considered necessary. The month of April was randomly selected as a starting point from which to draw names of subjects. Applications filed in Salt Lake and Weber Counties were used since these counties contain large urban populations.

The selection system was to locate a non-first marriage for the bride by noting her answer to question number 6 on the marriage application. This question asks whether this is her first, second, or later marriage. The next application that listed a first marriage was then selected for inclusion in the first-married group. The wives' first names and the husbands' last names and addresses gave the information necessary to conduct a survey. Three hundred and two names were collected for each group.

Instrument

A questionnaire to identify problems in the family was developed.

The instructions stated:
You can provide helpful information towards a better understanding of the problems and rewards in contemporary family life by responding to the following questions as they are perceived by you. If in doubt, please choose the closest answer. If you do not have children living in your home, please disregard these questions and return the questionnaire.

Each wife was asked about her current marriage. The items were constructed by the researcher based on a review of literature with heavy reliance on Duberman's (1975) study and from personal discussions with parents in second marriages. (See Appendix A for a copy of the questionnaire.)

The first 19 questions focused on parent-child and husband-wife relations. Respondents were asked to indicate their feelings on a four-point Lichert-type scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree.

The next section, which was included for other research purposes, asked respondents how prepared they felt for this current marriage.

Following these questions, 12 items were listed asking respondents to indicate if they would have liked more information in these areas before their marriage.

Next, respondents were asked to indicate if problems existed in any of the following 12 possible problem areas—marital success, in-law relations, parent-child relations, avoiding divorce, childrearing, finances,
religious differences, political differences, interpersonal communication, sexuality, ex-in-laws, and ex-spouse.

Lastly, a four-point question, excellent, very good, good, and poor, asked for a rating of the marriage.

Demographic information and household make-up was solicited on the last page. A letter of transmittal was included as a cover letter. The letter was hand-addressed to the respondent and signed by the researcher.

Procedure

Six hundred and four questionnaires were mailed on June 25, 1979. Two weeks later a reminder card was sent to those who had not returned the survey. One week later a second reminder was sent. The data was coded and analyzed 6 weeks after the first mailing.

The larger mailing was needed for several reasons. First, it was assumed that 3 year old addresses would no longer be current. The address listed by the groom may have been his parents' or roommates' address or the address of a dorm. Most likely the couple's residence after marriage would be different than the husband's before marriage. Many of the questionnaires would not reach the respondents since it is the postal policy not to forward mail after 1 year. Also, since many of the names and addresses from the applications were handwritten, it was difficult to insure the correct spelling of names and addresses. Adding these concerns to the expected normal
shrinkage of mailed questionnaires, it was assumed that a large mailing would be necessary to yield a workable sample population.

Of the total 604 mailed questionnaires, 292 marked "return to sender" were rejected, 28 were returned by childless couples and were not analyzed because a main focus of this research was on parent-child relationships and the desired samples were to include only first- and second-married wives with children in the home. Five were rejected because they were a third or later marriage.

Each wife was asked to complete the three-page questionnaire only if children were present in the home. Of the 45 first-married respondents, 14 (31%) reported childlessness. Ten of the 30 (33%) second marriages reported the same. It should be mentioned here that reasons for a childless home in the two groups may differ. Second marriages may consist of parents whose children are in a previous family or who have children who have grown and left home.

Data Analysis

Comparisons between first and second marriages were made on each of the 20 Lichert-type questions, on each of the 12 problem areas, and on the four-point inquiry of marriage success. A Chi Square statistic was used because of discrete data. The percentage of each group selecting a category was tabulated and analyzed. The number and percentage of each group
checking a problem area was analyzed using an analysis of variance statistic.

Preliminary and main comparisons are described in the Results section.
RESULTS

Demographic Data

From the demographic information, sample characteristics were first obtained. These data are presented in Table 1. The average age of the 31 first-married wives was 23.5. The husband’s average age was 25.6. Readers should be cautioned not to assume that these demographics are descriptors of the situations at the time of the marriage but 3 years hence. Ninety percent of the first-married wives reported Mormon as their religion. Eighty-three percent of the husbands reported the same. While religious affiliation is not available in the United States census figures for Salt Lake and Weber Counties in Utah nor in the Utah Statistical Abstract, 1979, informal estimates obtained from faculty of the Utah State University Sociology Department place estimates of Mormons at 70% of the population. A comparison of Mormons with non-Mormons using the same statistics showed that the two groups were comparable for purposes of this study. On the 20 Lichert items, there was a difference at or beyond the P < .05 level of significance only on questions dealing with communication between spouses, in-law relations, religion, and compatibility of values. Within the parameters of this study, these particular questions were not found to discriminate between first and second marriages except for question 9 asking whether the children readily comply with the spouse’s request.
**Table 1**  
Demographic Checklist of First and Second Marriages

**First Marriages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>Second</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of years of school completed by you?</td>
<td>12.7 years</td>
<td>13.6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Spouse?</td>
<td>13.6 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were you raised in a stepfamily?</td>
<td>yes 9.7</td>
<td>no 90.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was Spouse?</td>
<td>yes 3</td>
<td>no 97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your combined family income?</td>
<td>$15,000 - $20,000</td>
<td>$20,000 - $30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your age</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>35.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband's age</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>41.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children in the home</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your religious affiliation?</td>
<td>Mormon</td>
<td>Mormon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your husband's religious affiliation?</td>
<td>Mormon</td>
<td>Mormon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Second Marriages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>Second</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of years of school completed by you?</td>
<td>13.6 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>By Spouse?</td>
<td>13.5 years</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were you raised in a stepfamily?</td>
<td>yes 20</td>
<td>no 80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was Spouse?</td>
<td>yes 10</td>
<td>no 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your combined family income?</td>
<td>$20,000 - $30,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your age</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>41.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband's age</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children in the home</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your religious affiliation?</td>
<td>Mormon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your husband's religious affiliation?</td>
<td>Mormon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Duberman (1975, p. 25) in her study collapsed religion, saying "As anticipated, it was found that neither the religion of the family nor a difference of religion of members of the family was a factor in family integration."

Therefore, the Mormon and non-Mormon subpopulations were collapsed. It should be noted that Duberman's sample contained no Mormons and that this sample contains a majority of Mormons. This should be considered in the interpretation of the data since the Church of the Latter-Day Saints emphasizes a strong family philosophy.

The average educational level of the wives in the first group was 12.7 years. For the husbands it was 13.6. Average combined income for both partners was reported at $15,000 to $20,000. Ninety percent of the wives reported they had not grown up in stepfamilies. Ninety-seven percent of the husbands were not raised in stepfamilies. The average number of children in the first family was 1.6.

The wives in the second marriages had an average age of 35.5. The husband's average age was 41. Eighty-five percent of these wives reported themselves as Mormons, and 75% of the husbands listed the same. The average educational level of the second-married wives was 13.6; the husbands had a mean of 13.5 years of education. The mean income in the second group was $20,000 to $30,000. Twenty percent of the wives and 10% of the husbands had been raised in stepfamilies. The average number of children per family was 2.5.
It was assumed that for the majority of marriages, the children were in the custody of the mothers since the United States courts ordinarily award custody of the children to the mother (Brandewein, Brown, & Fox, 1974).

In summary, the first- and second-marriage groups seem comparable on most demographic characteristics except age and income.

**Comparison of First- and Second-Married Wives**

The percentage of first- and second-married wives selecting each of the four alternatives (strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree) was tabulated. Comparisons between first and second marriages was made on each of the first 19 questions and the question on marital happiness using a Chi Square statistic. Results are presented in Table 2. There were seven differences at or beyond the $P < .05$ level of significance. Examination of the first five significant items, 3, 5, 7, 8, and 9, all refer to children. The sixth significant item, 11, could also refer to children. The other item is number 15 which concerns choice of friends. Wives in the first marriages were more favorable toward their husbands’ relationships with the children. On all the other questions referring to children, 1, 2, 4, 9, and 10, wives from first marriages reported more satisfaction; but the differences were not significant.

Other areas in which there were no significant differences included finances, 12; domestic work, 13; leisure activity, 14; religion, 16; communications, 17; in-laws, 18; values, 19; and preparation for marriage
Table 2
Comparisons of First and Second Marriages on Family Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SURVEY QUESTIONS</th>
<th>1st Strongly Agree</th>
<th>1st Agree</th>
<th>1st Disagree</th>
<th>1st Strongly Agree</th>
<th>2nd Strongly Agree</th>
<th>2nd Agree</th>
<th>2nd Disagree</th>
<th>2nd Strongly Agree</th>
<th>χ²</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My spouse provides a good example for the children in our home.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.509</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My spouse is a good counselor in childrearing.</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.1182</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My spouse shows affection toward all the children in our home.</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.0197</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My spouse spends enough time with the children in our home.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.5087</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. My spouse uses physical affection with the children in our home.</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.0193</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.919</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. My spouse is compatible with all the children in our home.</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.2816</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My spouse uses the correct amount of discipline.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.0239</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.447</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The children show affection toward my spouse.</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.0150</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.472</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The children readily comply to my spouse's requests.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.0051</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10.571</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The children in our home get along well with each other.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.4371</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. In general, I feel my spouse's expectations of the children match mine.</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.0024</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14.448</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. My spouse and I have about the same attitudes toward financial matters in or</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.3168</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. My spouse assumes a fair share of the domestic work.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.9684</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. My spouse and I enjoy the same type of leisure activities.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.4914</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. My spouse and I enjoy the same group of friends.</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.0393</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.329</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. My spouse and I share the same emphasis on religion.</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.2670</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. My spouse and I communicate to one another adequately.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.2669</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. My spouse has a positive relationship with his in-laws.</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>.1308</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. In general, I feel my spouse's values and mine are compatible.</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.2034</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. I would rate my marriage as:</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>.1215</td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

χ² = Chi-square, df = degrees of freedom, p = significance level.
which was question 1 in part II. In general, the first-marriage wives were
more favorable in their evaluations of these items, but the differences in
percentages selecting one of the four alternatives was not significant. The
fact that significance was found in the items dealing with children shows that
either the sample size was sufficient or that the item format was sensitive
enough to provide adequate power in the statistical test of differences.

Wives were also asked to check areas where they had problems in
their marriages. The percentages of wives in each group who checked a
problem is presented in Table 3.

The same areas of difference between first and second marriages
emerged in these questions regarding problem areas as had emerged in
questions 1-19. Four problem areas were statistically significant. Thirty-
five percent of the second-married wives reported problems on parent-child
relationships while only 7% of first-married wives checked this area
\( F = 1/49 = 7.56; P < .008 \). Also, 25% of the second married reported prob-
lems in child rearing while only 7% of the first married checked this area
\( F = 1/49 = 3.64; P < .062 \). The other area of significant difference in prob-
lem areas checked was in sexuality with 36% of first married considering it
a problem compared with only 10% of second marrieds \( F = 1/49 = 4.34; 
P < .042 \). An expected statistical difference was found in problems with
ex-spouse but only second marrieds would have problems in this area.
Thirty-five percent of this group felt the ex-spouse to be a problem.
Table 3
Comparisons of First and Second Marriages on Perceived Problem Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem Areas</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Marital success</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In-law relations</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How to avoid divorce</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Parent/child relations</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>7.56</td>
<td>1/49</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Childrearing</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>1/49</td>
<td>.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Sexuality</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>1/49</td>
<td>.042</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Religious differences</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Political differences</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Finances</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Interpersonal communications</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Ex in-laws</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Ex spouse</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16.038</td>
<td>1/49</td>
<td>.0002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The last question to be analyzed requested a rating of the marriage as either excellent, very good, good, or poor. Although first-married women checked the categories of excellent and very good more frequently and the good and poor categories less frequently, the differences were not significant (see Table 2).
DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to empirically identify problem areas in second families as compared to first families because there is a lack of empirical data (Kompara, 1980; Walker et al., 1977). In order to begin to fill this research deficit it was necessary to secure comparable sample groups to be tested. Samples were drawn from marriage applications on file in Salt Lake and Weber Counties, Utah. April was randomly selected as a beginning point. The 3 year delay (1977) was selected to improve the probabilities of reaching families with children in the home. Sample populations consisted of first- and second-married mothers. The wives' perceptions of husband-wife, parent-child, and marital success were solicited. The questionnaire used a four-point Lichert-type scale. Wives were also asked to indicate problem areas. The Chi Square method of data analysis was used. Identical questionnaires and follow-ups were mailed to the first- and second-married groups.

In reviewing the data analysis, a general pattern of problems emerges. The major problem area in second marriages relative to first marriages centers around the parent-child relationship. Three of those questions that proved to be statistically significant were: the husband in the second family did not show enough affection toward the children, did not use physical affection toward the children, and did not use the correct
amount of discipline when dealing with the children. Bernard (1956) found one-third of the divorced men were not affectionate with the children acquired through marriage. The two other items of statistical significance within the parent-child relationship in the second family were that the children did not show affection toward or readily comply with the husband's requests. Lastly, wives in the second marriages reported that her spouse's expectations of the children did not match her own. This difference in expectations of the children may be a crucial factor related to the parent-child problems in the second family.

The absolute number of respondents checking an unfavorable category to describe their parent-child relationships appears to be substantial from a common sense point of view. For example, in second marriages, 30% of the wives feel that spouses do not use the correct amount of discipline. Thirty percent of the second-married wives feel the children do not comply readily with the spouse's request; and nearly half the sample does not feel that their expectations of the children match those of the spouse. Thus these are large percentages as well as being statistically significant.

It is interesting to note that when the problem list is prioritized (see Table 4), the first-married wives reported finances, sexuality, and in-laws as problem areas. Duberman (1975) and Messinger (1976) found sexuality to be a significant problem in the first marriage but that finances were placed much lower on the list. Second-married wives in this study
Table 4
Prioritized List of Problem Areas in First and Second Marriages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>1st Marriages</th>
<th>2nd Marriages</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>Finances</td>
<td>1. Interpersonal communications</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>Sexuality</td>
<td>2. Finances</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>In-law relations</td>
<td>3. Parent/child relations</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Interpersonal communications</td>
<td>4. Ex spouse</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Religious differences</td>
<td>5. Childrearing</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Marital success</td>
<td>6. In-law relations</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>How to avoid divorce</td>
<td>7. Marital success</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Parent/child relations</td>
<td>8. Sexuality</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Childrearing</td>
<td>9. Political differences</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Political differences</td>
<td>10. How to avoid divorce</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Ex in-laws</td>
<td>11. Religious differences</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Ex spouse</td>
<td>12. Ex in-laws</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
placed communications, finance, parent-child, and ex-spouse near the top of their problem list. This is in closer alignment with Duberman and Messinger.

Feelings of inadequacy as a stepparent or lack of acceptance and lack of expected love and competition with an ideal family may be stressers in the parent-child relationship. When these are added to the possible stressful situations in any family, the second family seems to find itself facing greater problems. When asked where the problems exist in the second family, wives in second marriages as compared to their first marriage counterparts reported more problems in parent-child relations and child-rearing. These were statistically significant. Sexuality as a problem was found more often in the first-married population than in the second-married population. This finding was expected because it is the first encounter with sexual behavior in a marital relationship for these younger wives.

The reader is reminded that the results apply to this sample and are not representative of all second families. With this consideration in mind, the analysis of the data in this study indicated that parent-child relationships are the major stresser in the second families. Whether this is due to a lack of stepparent norms, lack of acceptance by the child, or a host of other variables is uncertain. Perhaps these findings are related to the second-married wives' reports that the spouse's expectations of the children did not match hers. Duberman (1975) and Messinger (1976) also found that the parent-child relationships had a high priority as a problem in second
marriages. Perhaps in the second families in this study, 3 years may not be enough time to adjust fully and compensate for the demands of the new relationship.

Although not focused on in this study, some variables affecting parent-child relationships in the new family are past experiences in parenting. Visher and Visher (1978) felt past parenting experiences to be crucial in second-family stability. The ex-spouse or ex-in-laws may communicate negative feelings through the children or the children may be seen as reminders of the spouse's first mate. Children also have expectations based on previous parents, and these expectations may be a source of frustration between the child and the stepparent. The situation may be intensified if the new father is competing with a sugar daddy or the saintly memory of a deceased father. Fast and Cain (1966) felt the reason for biological father absence to be a variable, although Oshman and Monosevitz (1976) found this not to be true. The weekly shuffling of children and expected or unexpected visits by an ex-spouse may also add confusion and frustration.

Finances were listed in this study as a possible problem area in the second family. Fathers in these families may see themselves as taking care of someone else's children and having little or none of the benefits (Fast & Cain, 1966). During times of recession, feeling like a walking checkbook may add resentment toward the children. These same fathers may feel pressure from ex-wives to contribute more financially to their first families.
The findings that parent-child relationships are the real problems receive credence as most of the other response items were not statistically significant, including the rating of the marriage itself. Wives within the second family felt as happy, even with an increased number of problems. Glen and Weaver (1977) also found this to be true. It appears that there are no other major problem differences between first and second marriages except the unique areas where they can occur only due to special situations in the second family; e.g., problems dealing with an ex-spouse. In this study, 35% of the second wives reported ex-spouse to be a problem.

The only other item with statistical significance was "my spouse and I enjoy the same group of friends." More second-married wives felt they did not share the same circle of friends as their spouse. This may be true of only recently formed second marriages. Because of the partners' age in the second marriage (35.5 for the women and 41 for the men), it is likely that they would have established long-standing friendships that would endure after the second marriage more than would be the case with younger first-married couples. Other reasons may include feelings of jealousy and blame. Old friends of the husband may see the new wife as a competitor or a home breaker, and the same is true of the wife's friends. Perhaps the time to accept new friends is longer for older persons. Also, due to increased psychological independence developed while solo, the wife may simply chose not to include his friends as her own. Thus, the findings do need to be interpreted by keeping in mind that the samples differed in age and income as
well as being first and second married. These two additional sample differ-
ences (age and income) are a meaningful dimension of the second-marriage
phenomenon and should not be excluded in constructing samples for compari-
son. To be accurate and to acknowledge the natural state of the marriage,
the second-married group is older and have incomes reflecting a longer
employment history. It could accurately be said that the comparisons were
between older second-married couples with higher incomes and younger
first-married couples with smaller incomes. There were no significant
differences in other characteristics, including the number of children.
Acknowledging this description of the samples only reflects the actual
characteristics of the families that were intended to be studied.

The findings presented here generally support conclusions based on
the clinical impressions of Messinger (1976), Visher and Visher (1979), and
previous research by Duberman (1975). This research helps establish by
providing much needed empirical data, that the parent-child relationships
play the key role in second-marriage satisfaction. The data clearly high-
lights the importance of the parent-child relations as a major and overriding
factor in second marriages.

The limitations of this study need to be considered when interpreting
this data. These limitations should also be removed when future research
is done.

The final sample size, N = 51, was quite small due to postal regula-
tions, errors in copying handwritten names and addresses from the marriage
files, 3-year-old addresses, plus the expected normal shrinkage involved in mailed survey research. Personal interviews and a rigid follow-up procedure would insure a larger sample.

This sample included marriages that were 3 years in duration. This is a limitation since certain problems may be more evident during this stage of a marriage as compared to earlier or later stages. A longitudinal study or a study of marriages at yearly intervals would reveal a more accurate picture of first marriages as compared to second marriages.

The generality of this sample to other marriages is limited by being predominantly Mormon. The Church of Latter-Day Saints strongly emphasizes and reinforces a pro-family orientation. Future sample populations should include a sampling of many religions as well as be inclusive of all socio-economic background in order to be representative.

Variables that need to be controlled for in order to empirically reveal a more accurate portrait of the second family includes reasons for the termination of the first family, past parenting experience, time spent as a single mother or father, age and number of children, age of parents at the time of the remarriage, whether a stepmother or stepfather is present, ex-partner involvement, and whether or not one or both parents bring children into the second family.

These considerations need to be controlled in future studies which are very necessary in order to understand the dynamics involved in the second family. By gaining an understanding of those dynamics, perhaps the
Table 5
Areas Where Wives in First and Second Marriages Would Have Liked More Information Before This Marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marital success</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-law relations</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/child relations</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to avoid divorce</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childrearing</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finances</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious differences</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political differences</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal communication</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexuality</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>1/49</td>
<td>0.0587</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ex in-laws</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>NS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ex spouse</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>16.038</td>
<td>1/49</td>
<td>0.0002</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do you feel you were adequately prepared for this current marriage?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
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<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
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<td>26</td>
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<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
members of second families can more successfully deal with the unique situations presented to them.

It was interesting to note that while using religion as a variable, it was found that Mormon marriages and non-Mormon marriages, defined as a marriage in which at least one spouse was not Mormon, differed on only one question dealing with the parent-child relationships which was that the children in non-Mormon families do not readily comply with the spouses' requests. Perhaps parental agreement on religion is a supportive factor in child obedience or rather parental disagreement is a contributor to children's disobedience. This may be true when the mother is the more religious and raises her children in her own religion perhaps contributing to the husband's lack of parental credibility. This is difficult to ascertain since the ages of the children vary greatly. How a 2 year old perceives his/her father's religion may be different than how an older child would perceive his/her father's religion. The other findings at a significant level dealt more with the husband-wife relationships. An expected difference was found on the question asking, "My husband and I share the same emphasis on religion." This seems self-explanatory. Non-Mormon wives disagreed more often on the questions of adequate husband-wife communication, positive relations with in-laws, and values compatibility. They also felt less prepared for their marriage. An interesting study could be done on reasons for these reactions by wives in non-Mormon families in Salt Lake and Weber Counties.
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Santrock, John W. Relation of type and onset of father absence to cognitive development. *Child Development,* 1972, 43, 455-469.


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Appendix A: Copy of Survey Instrument
Dear Mrs. 

Every year, various organizations attempt to assess the opinions of the general public. Rarely, however, do these studies focus on questions of greater importance than the quality of family life. How can it be improved? Answers to these questions are the concern of this survey.

Your help is critical in making our study a success. We need to secure the views of mothers. It is requested that you complete the survey form without input from your husband or others. Since we are using scientific sampling, the accuracy of our study is dependent upon your willingness to answer the questions. We believe the importance of the study will justify the time you give. However, if there are no children living in your home, indicate that fact and return the blank questionnaire to us.

We assure you that all answers will be held in the strictest confidence. This commitment is absolute. We are interested only in the overall distribution of responses for your community.

We sincerely hope you will find the questions interesting, and that you will complete and return the survey to us while you have it at hand. We will welcome any comments you might make and will endeavor to answer any questions you might choose to raise. Please feel free to call us collect at Utah State University, Department of Family and Human Development, 752-4100, Extension 7605, if you need further assistance.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Larry Jensen, Ph.D.
Project Leader

Gary Dineen
Field Study Director
FAMILY LIFE QUESTIONNAIRE

You can provide helpful information towards a better understanding of the problems and rewards in contemporary family life by responding to the following questions as they are perceived by you. If in doubt, please choose the closest answer. If you do not have children living in your home, please disregard these questions and return the questionnaire.

Circle the word that is closest to your opinion.

1. My spouse provides a good example for the children in our home.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

2. My spouse is a good counselor in childrearing.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

3. My spouse shows affection toward all the children in our home.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

4. My spouse spends enough time with the children in our home.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

5. My spouse uses physical affection with the children in our home.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

6. My spouse is compatible with all the children in our home.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

7. My spouse uses the correct amount of discipline.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

8. The children show affection toward my spouse.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

9. The children readily comply to my spouse's requests.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree

10. The children in our home get along well with each other.
    - strongly agree
    - agree
    - disagree
    - strongly disagree

11. In general, I feel my spouse's expectations of the children match mine.
    - strongly agree
    - agree
    - disagree
    - strongly disagree

12. My spouse and I have about the same attitudes toward financial matters in our home.
    - strongly agree
    - agree
    - disagree
    - strongly disagree

13. My spouse assumes a fair share of the domestic work.
    - strongly agree
    - agree
    - disagree
    - strongly disagree

14. My spouse and I enjoy the same type of leisure activities.
    - strongly agree
    - agree
    - disagree
    - strongly disagree

15. My spouse and I enjoy the same group of friends.
    - strongly agree
    - agree
    - disagree
    - strongly disagree

16. My spouse and I share the same emphasis on religion.
    - strongly agree
    - agree
    - disagree
    - strongly disagree
17. My spouse and I communicate to one another adequately.
   strongly agree agree disagree
   strongly disagree

18. My spouse has a positive relationship with his in-laws.
   strongly agree agree disagree
   strongly disagree

19. In general, I feel my spouse’s values and mine are compatible.
   strongly agree agree disagree
   strongly disagree

The following questions about your present marriage may seem personal, but we ask your cooperation and appreciate your honesty. Please check the answers that apply.

1. Do you feel you were adequately prepared for this current marriage?
   strongly agree agree disagree
   strongly disagree

2. In what areas would you have liked more information before this marriage?
   Marital success
   In-law relations
   Parent/child relations
   How to avoid divorce
   Childrearing
   Other, please specify
   Finances
   Religious differences
   Political differences
   Interpersonal communication
   Sexuality
   Ex-in-laws
   Ex-spouse

3. If problems existed in your marriage where would they most likely be?
   Marital success
   In-law relations
   How to avoid divorce
   Parent/child relations
   Childrearing
   Sexuality
   Other, please specify
   Religious differences
   Political differences
   Finances
   Interpersonal communication
   Ex-in-laws
   Ex-spouse

4. I would rate my marriage as:
   Excellent
   Very good
   Good
   Poor
For statistical purposes the following information is needed to make group comparisons. Data will be coded into numbers and will be confidential.

Is this your first marriage? (yes, no) If no, how long were you married before? _____ years
If no, reason for termination. Divorce____ Death____ Other____

Is this your spouse’s first marriage? (yes, no) If no, how long was other marriage? _____ years
If no, reason for termination. Divorce____ Death____ Other____
If no, does your husband have custody/legal adoption of your children? yes____ no____

How long have you been married to current spouse? _____ years

Number of years of school completed by you? _____ years By Spouse? _____ years

Were you raised in a stepfamily? yes____ no____ Was Spouse? yes____ no____

What is your combined family income?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-$5,000</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5-10,000</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10-15,000</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15-20,000</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20-30,000</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30-40,000</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$40-50,000 or above</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Your age_________ Husband’s age_________

Age and sex of husband’s children by previous marriage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where are they? In present home____ In previous home____

Age and sex of your children by previous marriage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where are they? In present home____ In previous home____

Age and sex of children born to both of you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is your religious affiliation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protestant</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Mormon</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

What is your husband’s religious affiliation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protestant</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Mormon</th>
<th>Jewish</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

We greatly appreciate the time and effort spent on this questionnaire. Would you please use the stamped, self-addressed envelope and return it now while you have it in hand. Again we thank you for helping.
Appendix B: Data Analysis: Questions 1-19, 1, and 4
Dear Mrs.,

Every year, various organizations attempt to assess the opinions of the general public. Rarely, however, do these studies focus on questions of greater importance than the quality of family life. How can it be improved? Answers to these questions are the concern of this survey.

Your help is critical in making our study a success. We need to secure the views of mothers. It is requested that you complete the survey form without input from your husband or others. Since we are using scientific sampling, the accuracy of our study is dependent upon your willingness to answer the questions. We believe the importance of the study will justify the time you give. However, if there are no children living in your home, indicate that fact and return the blank questionnaire to us.

We assure you that all answers will be held in the strictest confidence. This commitment is absolute. We are interested only in the overall distribution of responses for your community.

We sincerely hope you will find the questions interesting, and that you will complete and return the survey to us while you have it at hand. We will welcome any comments you might make and will endeavor to answer any questions you might choose to raise. Please feel free to call us collect at Utah State University, Department of Family and Human Development, 752-4100, Extension 7605, if you need further assistance.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Larry Jensen, Ph.D.
Project Leader

Gary Dineen
Field Study Director
FAMILY LIFE QUESTIONNAIRE

You can provide helpful information towards a better understanding of the problems and rewards in contemporary family life by responding to the following questions as they are perceived by you. If in doubt, please choose the closest answer. If you do not have children living in your home, please disregard these questions and return the questionnaire.

Circle the word that is closest to your opinion.

1. My spouse provides a good example for the children in our home.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   - strongly disagree
   Percentages (%)
   - 29
   - 35
   - 65
   - 50
   - 7
   - 10
   - 0
   - 5
   $x^2 = .509$

2. My spouse is a good counselor in childrearing.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   Percentages (%)
   - 38
   - 25
   - 58
   - 50
   - 3
   - 20
   - 0
   - 5
   $x^2 = .1182$

3. My spouse shows affection toward all the children in our home.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   Percentages (%)
   - 71
   - 40
   - 29
   - 35
   - 0
   - 20
   - 0
   - 5
   $x^2 = .0197$

4. My spouse spends enough time with the children in our home.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   Percentages (%)
   - 32
   - 20
   - 42
   - 45
   - 26
   - 30
   - 0
   - 5
   $x^2 = .5087$

5. My spouse uses physical affection with the children in our home.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   Percentages (%)
   - 65
   - 35
   - 32
   - 30
   - 3
   - 30
   - 0
   - 5
   $x^2 = .0193$

6. My spouse is compatible with all the children in our home.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   Percentages (%)
   - 61
   - 40
   - 36
   - 45
   - 3
   - 10
   - 0
   - 5
   $x^2 = .2816$

7. My spouse uses the correct amount of discipline.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   Percentages (%)
   - 32
   - 25
   - 65
   - 40
   - 3
   - 30
   - 0
   - 5
   $x^2 = .0239$

8. The children show affection toward my spouse.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   Percentages (%)
   - 81
   - 40
   - 19
   - 45
   - 0
   - 10
   - 0
   - 5
   $x^2 = .0150$

9. The children readily comply to my spouse’s requests.
   - strongly agree
   - agree
   - disagree
   Percentages (%)
   - 26
   - 20
   - 74
   - 50
   - 0
   - 30
   - 0
   - 5
   $x^2 = .0051$

10. The children in our home get along well with each other.
    - strongly agree
    - agree
    - disagree
    Percentages (%)
    - 32
    - 15
    - 55
    - 60
    - 3
    - 10
    - 0
    - 5
    $x^2 = .4371$

11. In general, I feel my spouse’s expectations of the children match mine.
    - strongly agree
    - agree
    - disagree
    Percentages (%)
    - 42
    - 35
    - 52
    - 15
    - 7
    - 45
    - 0
    - 5
    $x^2 = .0024$

12. My spouse and I have about the same attitudes toward financial matters in our home.
    - strongly agree
    - agree
    - disagree
    Percentages (%)
    - 36
    - 25
    - 55
    - 50
    - 10
    - 25
    - 0
    - 5
    $x^2 = .3168$

13. My spouse assumes a fair share of the domestic work.
    - strongly agree
    - agree
    - disagree
    Percentages (%)
    - 19
    - 25
    - 42
    - 40
    - 32
    - 30
    - 7
    - 5
    $x^2 = .9684$

14. My spouse and I enjoy the same type of leisure activities.
    - strongly agree
    - agree
    - disagree
    Percentages (%)
    - 39
    - 30
    - 46
    - 40
    - 16
    - 30
    - 0
    - 5
    $x^2 = .4914$

15. My spouse and I enjoy the same group of friends.
    - strongly agree
    - agree
    - disagree
    Percentages (%)
    - 29
    - 30
    - 66
    - 40
    - 3
    - 50
    - 0
    - 5
    $x^2 = .0393$

16. My spouse and I share the same emphasis on religion.
    - strongly agree
    - agree
    - disagree
    Percentages (%)
    - 58
    - 40
    - 16
    - 40
    - 23
    - 15
    - 0
    - 5
    $x^2 = .2670$
17. My spouse and I communicate to one another adequately.

- strongly agree
- agree
- disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>55</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
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\( x^2 = .2609 \)

18. My spouse has a positive relationship with his in-laws.

- strongly agree
- agree
- disagree

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>20</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

\( x^2 = .1308 \)

19. In general, I feel my spouse's values and mine are compatible.

- strongly agree
- agree
- disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
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</table>

\( x^2 = .2034 \)

The following questions about your present marriage may seem personal, but we ask your cooperation and appreciate your honesty. Please check the answers that apply.

1. Do you feel you were adequately prepared for this current marriage?

- strongly agree
- agree
- disagree
- strongly disagree

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( x^2 = .4957 \)

2. In what areas would you have liked more information before this marriage?

- Marital success
- In-law relations
- Parent/child relations
- How to avoid divorce
- Childrearing
- Other, please specify
- Finances
- Religious differences
- Political differences
- Interpersonal communication
- Sexuality
- Ex-in-laws
- Ex-spouse

3. If problems existed in your marriage where would they most likely be?

- Marital success
- In-law relations
- How to avoid divorce
- Parent/child relations
- Childrearing
- Sexuality
- Other, please specify
- Religious differences
- Political differences
- Finances
- Interpersonal communication
- Ex-in-laws
- Ex-spouse

4. I would rate my marriage as:

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Poor

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>15</td>
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\( x^2 = .1215 \)
For statistical purposes the following information is needed to make group comparisons. Data will be coded into numbers and will be confidential.

Is this your first marriage? (yes, no) If no, how long were you married before? ____ years
If no, reason for termination. Divorce_____ Death_____ Other_____

Is this your spouse’s first marriage? (yes, no) If no, how long was other marriage? ____ years
If no, reason for termination. Divorce_____ Death_____ Other_____
If no, does your husband have custody/legal adoption of your children? yes_____ no_____

How long have you been married to current spouse? ____ years

Number of years of school completed by you? _____ years  By Spouse? _____ years

Were you raised in a stepfamily? yes_____ no____ Was Spouse? yes_____ no____

What is your combined family income?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>0-5,000</th>
<th>$5-10,000</th>
<th>$10-15,000</th>
<th>$15-20,000</th>
<th>$20-30,000</th>
<th>$30-40,000</th>
<th>$40-50,000 or above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Your age__________ Husband’s age__________

Age and sex of husband’s children by previous marriage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Where are they? In present home_____ In previous home_____

Age and sex of your children by previous marriage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

Where are they? In present home_____ In previous home_____

Age and sex of children born to both of you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

What is your religious affiliation?

- Protestant____ Catholic_____ Mormon____ Jewish____ None_____ Other

What is your husband’s religious affiliation?

- Protestant____ Catholic_____ Mormon____ Jewish____ None_____ Other

We greatly appreciate the time and effort spent on this questionnaire. Would you please use the stamped, self-addressed envelope and return it now while you have it in hand. Again we thank you for helping.
Appendix C: Additional Resources, Articles, and Books
STEPPARENTING BIBLIOGRAPHY

Articles


Santrock, J. Relation of type and onset of father absence to cognitive development. *Child Development*, 1972, 43.


Books


Reingold, Carmel B. _How to be happy if you marry again, all about children, money, sex, lawyers, ex-husbands, ex-wives, and past memories._ New York: Harper-Row, 1976.


Ryder, H. _How to get married again._ Tenafly, New Jersey: Bullentine, 1974.


Spann, Owen, & Spann, Nancie. _Your child--I thought it was my child._ Pasadena, California: Ritchie, 1977.


Stover, Lillian. _I have two daddies._ San Diego, California: Grossmont Press, 1977.


Annotations


This is a study of 88 remarriages. The purpose of the study was to investigate the second marriage and discover any similarities that may exist. Duberman explains the results of her study.


The book, The Half-Parent: Living with Other People's Children, is "an honest exploration" of the emotional and adjustmental problems, as well as the rewards, of living with other people's children--written by a half-parent, for and about the parent-by-marriage.

The book, How to Live with Other People's Children, is based on interviews with stepparents and stepchildren and was written to provide "insight and guidance for all who might be a part of the step relationship--parents, children, live-in grandparents, as well as for the temporary guardians of a friend's or relative's child. Not only as problems identified, but specific advice and recommendations are given from people who have lived through step relationships, and answers are provided with analyses and conclusions from psychiatrists, family counselors, and other professionals."


Remarriage is intended to be an exploration of several aspects of the process of remarrying. Throughout this book the author reports segments of interviews, primarily with divorced and remarried persons, to enable people involved or potentially involved in remarriage to learn from the experience of others.


Living in Step is a book for stepparents written to examine the "roots of the resentments endemic to the stepfamily." The authors draw upon personal experience and interviews with stepparents and stepchildren to identify the "conflicts which exist in every direction in the recently formed stepfamily." Ultimately, their objective is to show how some families have found solutions to those problems and achieved a kind of harmony.


Your Child--I thought it was my child is a book for stepparents which "contends that people do not have to feel guilty or angry and that children's lives aren't necessarily ruined because of their parents split up." The authors describe and analyze, sometime in disagreement with each other, the problems which they surmounted in establishing their stepfamily. Supportive quotes from a variety of experts are interspersed in the dialogue.

We are finally breaking through to acknowledge the stepfamily. There is no reason why a stepfamily cannot be a first class place for bringing up children and also helping the adults involved to live creatively. In the past there were so many negative myths that a stepfamily was almost doomed to failure.

The Visher's have done a beautiful job in bringing new meaning to old myths and calling the problems what they are—namely, difficulties in relationship. In an understandable, clear way, they show positive directions for bringing in new possibilities, thus giving new esteem to the whole venture of creating the stepfamily.

Instead of approaching living in a stepfamily as a make-do situation, it can become a creative challenge for a new life for everybody.
VITA

Name: Gerald C. Dineen

Born: November 20, 1949
Stevens Point, Wisconsin

Marital Status: Single

Education

1957-1962 St. John the Baptist
Grade School, Plymouth, Wisconsin

1962-1964 St. Lawrence Seminary
Mt. Calvary, Wisconsin

1964-1967 Kiel High School
Kiel, Wisconsin

1967-1971 University of Wisconsin
Stevens Point, Wisconsin

1978-1980 Utah State University
Logan, Utah

Degrees

B.S. Major--Sociology/Psychology/Education
Minor--Anthropology
University of Wisconsin
Stevens Point, Wisconsin

M.S. Family and Human Development
Utah State University
Logan, Utah

Professional Experience

1978-1980 Research/Teaching Assistant
Utah State University
Logan, Utah
Memberships  Wisconsin Education Association
              National Education Association
              Wisconsin Association of Adult and Vocational Educators
              American Vocational Association
              Wisconsin Council on Family Relations
              National Council on Family Relations

Occupation

Instructor--Lakeshore Technical Institute
            1290 North Avenue
            Cleveland, Wisconsin 53015