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PERSONALITY AND RELATIONSHIP CHARACTERISTICS OF DIVORCING
PARENTS

The University of Oklahoma

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THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA
GRADUATE COLLEGE

PERSONALITY AND RELATIONSHIP CHARACTERISTICS
OF DIVORCING PARENTS

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By
THOMAS JOHN VAUGHN, JR.
Norman, Oklahoma
1979

PERSONALITY AND RELATIONSHIP CHARACTERISTICS
OF DIVORCING PARENTS

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Abstract

This study assessed the personality and relationship characteristics of divorcing parents with minor age children. Twelve divorcing couples were compared to twelve non-divorcing couples. Each subject was administered the Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory (B-L) to assess the level of regard, empathy, unconditionality, and congruence present in the relationship with their spouse. Personality functioning was assessed by using eleven scales of the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (A, C, E, G, L, M, N, O, Q₁, Q₃, and Q₄). Divorcing parents viewed their relationship with each other significantly more negatively than did non-divorcing parents across all of the relationship characteristics measured by the B-L ($p < .0001$). No significant relationship differences were found by sex ($p > .09$). Significant sex differences were found on personality factors E ($p < .0003$), with males being more assertive, and Q₃ ($p < .05$) with females being more socially controlled. No significant personality differences were found between divorcing and non-divorcing spouses ($p > .18$). Methodological problems and suggestions for helping judges and attorneys were discussed. It was concluded that divorcing parents view their relationship with each other quite negatively; however they do not appear to function differently from non-divorcing parents with regard to personality characteristics.

Personality and Relationship Characteristics of Divorcing Parents

Divorce and its concomitant effects upon parents and children, has in recent years become perhaps the single most concerning social problem facing the mental health professions. At the turn of the century the divorce rate was only about 0.5 per thousand population. By 1971, that rate had climbed to about 3.7 per one thousand total population (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1972), and by 1976 for the first time the divorce rate exceeded 5.0 per thousand population illustrating the extremely rapid increase in the divorcing problem and the number of people affected by divorce in America (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1976).

Today, about two-thirds of those marriages that end in divorce have children, and it is currently estimated that about one out of six children under the age of 18 lives in a single parent home (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1974). In 1955, about 3.3 million children under the age of 18 years of age were affected by divorce (Steinzor, 1969). The latest available statistics, of course, indicate that divorce is continuing to accelerate at a far more rapid rate, such that in 1976 over four million people in the United States married and two million divorced (U.S. Public Health Service, 1976). In urban settings of over 100,000 population this divorce rate of five out of ten marriages increases to seven

out of ten (Kessler, 1976). This means that each year over two million adults and over one million children are affected by family disunion and divorce (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1976).

This continuing increase has been discussed by several investigators (Grossman, 1969; Hunt, 1966; Sprey, 1969). Sprey (1969) has discussed three primary reasons why the divorce rate may be on the increase. The first of these being that parents no longer believe that they are required to stay in a marriage for the sake of the children, and are beginning to recognize the detrimental effects of a bad marriage on children. Second, he believes that many couples may have decided to have children in order to attempt to hold together a very shaky marriage; and third, that it may now be socially acceptable for larger families to attain a divorce than has been true in the past. This increase in family disunion and disintegration has created a marked void in personal support systems for those persons involved, and might affect both the children and their parents in many ways (Ackerman, 1958; Burgess & Locke, 1953; Harsh & Schrickel, 1959).

As divorcing parents come to the realization of the finality of this act they are confronted with the fact that divorce is a process and not an event. This process involves many types of separations on several levels (Bohannon, 1968). The first level is of course the legal divorce, the legal process by which the marriage is dissolved in the court.

Every person is legally entitled to one divorce per one legal marriage. For this divorce, the law requires two persons of the opposite sex, who are legally married to each other (Baker vs. Nelson, 1972; Black, 1968; Clark, 1968; Clark, 1974). In most states this legal marriage must be statutory, meaning marriage by legal contract consisting of a license and a ceremony conducted by a person authorized by the State to perform marriages (Clark, 1968). In several states, Common Law marriage is an acceptable legal marriage, and like statutory marriage requires a legal divorce to dissolve.

After satisfying the legal requirements of grounds, and residence, the court will hear the case. At this hearing evidence of grounds is presented, except in those states which now permit no-fault divorce (Bernard, 1968; Kessler, 1975), and decisions regarding the custody of children, child support, alimony, division of property, etc., are made and usually the divorce is granted (Clark, 1968). The court is directed by law to make provisions for the guardianship, custody, support and education of all minor children, and the court retains jurisdiction until the child reaches the age of 18 years or is legally emancipated (10 Oklahoma Statute, 1978; United States vs. Williams, 1937).

In addition to this legal divorce, there is also the financial divorce. This often radically altered economic condition may add considerable relief, or stress, to the

adjustment period following initial legal divorce (Heatherington, Cox & Cox, 1976; Orthner, Brown, & Ferguson, 1976; Ross & Sawhill, 1975). The economic condition of the father is for the most part upwardly mobile following the divorce; for the mother frequently it is downwardly mobile (Carter & Glick, 1976). Bane (1976), in an investigation of post-divorce income of single women found that their overall income diminished 16.5% at the same time as those of intact families rose about one-third or 33.3%. These economic factors have been suggested as the underlying cause in many of the negative findings in adjustment studies in children (Brandwein, Brown, & Fox, 1974; Ross & Sawhill, 1975).

In addition to both the legal and financial divorce, there must also be an emotional divorce with the family unit, whereby former support systems are terminated. Both children and parents undergoing a divorce face a period of adjustment in which they must establish the re-integration of feelings within the now different, now changed, family unit (Despert, 1953; Gardner, 1974; Killman, 1968).

Krantzler (1975) described a process of mourning that must take place following this loss, a process of letting go, or a decathexis. This appears to be necessary in both those marriages where there was little or no destructive communication, and also in those marriages that were extremely volatile and extremely unpleasant.

Seagull and Seagull (1977) described this process as mourning the relationship with the ex-spouse, and the

non-custodial parent's feelings that he or she has lost their children. This requires the re-establishment, between the non-custodial parent and the children, of a relationship totally separate and distinct from that which was held in the former marriage. In this transition period, which may take years, the decisions that the divorcing couple make as to how they will approach their children in helping them to understand these new relationships would seem to be crucial. They suggest that it is the province of both parents, the mother and father, to explain to the children that at one time they loved each other, but no longer do, and as a result they are deciding to get a divorce. They suggest that it is vital to emphasize that the children are not divorced from the non-custodial parent. Difficulty often arises when the custodial parent has to try to set aside their feelings and need for support, in order to reassure the children that the non-custodial parent's departure has nothing to do with them; and that in fact, that parent still loves them.

In a discussion of the adjustment problems that face new single parents, Parks (1977) reported that 40% of the respondents had moved as a result of their marital separation, 32% found it necessary to begin work or to change jobs, and 2% felt it necessary to go back to school to learn some specific job skill. Over half of the mothers reporting received some form of child support, and half of the fathers reporting in the study paid child support. An additional 25% received

or paid alimony. Forty-three percent reported having had some kind of counseling as a result of the separation, however, less than 10% felt that their divorce had been a disaster, or was particularly emotionally stressful for them, and in fact 89% felt that their lives had improved considerably since the divorce. Although a wide variety of the symptoms were perceived at the time of separation, 91% of the respondents felt that their children had adjusted to the family changes, and about half of the children were seeing their other parent regularly.

Seagull and Seagull (1977) point out that the most beneficial attitude for helping children to readjust to the new familial situation is for both parents to agree that it is all right for the children to love both parents, and not to feel forced to choose between them. For continued healthy development it is necessary that there be a continuity of both parental relationships, and the child's environment. (Goldstein, Freud, & Solnit, 1973). Many other factors would seem to have a continuing influence on the overall outcome and adjustment in both parents and their children. General turmoil in the family and parental fighting and communication has been discussed by several investigators as having profound and severe detrimental affects (Anthony, 1974; Westman, Cline, Swift, & Cramer, 1970). Other authors have pointed to pre-existing pathology in divorcing spouses as well as personality difficulties which tend to lengthen both the

duration and severity of the adjustment process (Blumenthal, 1967; Brun, 1964; Loeb, 1966; Loeb & Price, 1966). The expectations of significant others in the workplace, the family and the community, as well as a lack of emotional support for the divorcing parent (Brandwein, et al., 1974), tend to leave the divorcing parent with confusing and often unrealistic fantasies concerning how they "should" be behaving or adjusting to the divorce.

There is one absolute and essential difference between those couples who have children and those who do not. If there are no children at issue in the divorce, the divorcing parties can separate absolutely on all accounts, legal, financial, and eventually emotional. However, if the divorcing couple have minor children at issue in the divorce, they both retain full parental rights, responsibilities, and obligations. This will require at least minimal contact between the parties as to visitation, support, etc., for the duration of the minor status of their children. Absolute separation in this case is virtually impossible. This couple is faced with the continuous decisions of parenthood; and thus their relationship, good, or bad, will continue to affect their children.

The purpose of this study was to explore the neglected area of the divorcing process as it transpires. The present investigation will attempt to assess: first, the male-female differences between divorcing and non-divorcing

spouses on the four relationship characteristics of regard, empathy, unconditionality, and congruence; second, the male-female differences between divorcing and non-divorcing spouses on eleven personality characteristics. We felt it important to explore these areas at the time of divorce when critical decisions regarding both the future of the spouses, and of their children, are actually being made.

Method

Subjects. Following initial contact with their attorney(s), divorcing couples were contacted and invited to participate in a "divorce program" at a southwestern university. All subjects had either received a letter from the District Court, or had been informed by their attorney regarding the project.

All subjects had filed for a divorce within the last 30 days, were the parents of at least one minor child, were not currently nor within the past 12 months involved in any personal counseling or therapy (excluding marriage counseling); and had not experienced any previous divorce from this or another spouse. A total of 24 subjects, 12 couples, $n = 12$, participated in the study. No subjects who had been separated for more than four months prior to the filing for divorce, were accepted for the study.

An equal number of control subjects to be used for comparison purposes were obtained through various community

groups. These control subjects were not currently considering any divorce or separation, were not currently nor within the past 12 months involved in any personal counseling or therapy, and had not experienced any previous divorce.

Demographic data on the 24 families is presented in Table 1. One significant difference resulted when multiple t -tests were performed. Non-divorcing couples had known each other for a longer interval before they married, $t(22) = 3.46$, $p < .01$. With this single exception, no significant differences were found between the divorcing and non-divorcing groups.

Insert Table 1 about here

Instruments. Each subject was asked to complete the Revised Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory (Barrett-Lennard, 1962, 1969) and the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (Cattell, Eber, Tatsuoka, 1970).

For the Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory (B-L), each subject is asked to read a series of 64 statements and rate each one from +3 (Yes, I strongly feel that it is true) through gradients to -3 (No, I strongly feel that it is not true).

There are four forms of the B-L. Males completed two forms, and females completed two forms. On one form the male rated his feelings and behavior toward his spouse (Myself

toward other), on the other form he rated his perception of his spouse's feelings and behavior toward him (Other toward self). The females also completed the two forms. Therefore each spouse provided an assessment of their own feelings toward their spouse, and their perception of their spouse's feelings toward them.

Each of the four forms yields a score on each of the four relationship characteristics (Scale); level of regard, empathy, unconditionality, and congruence. Each scale consists of 16 items of the total 64-statement B-L instrument. The +3 to -3 rating, on each of the 16 items for each scale, produces a possible total score for each scale ranging from +48 to -48.

Following the work of Rogers (1957) concerning constructive personality change, and continuing through studies by Truax and Carkhuff (1967) on levels of relationship conditions, Barrett-Lennard (1962, 1969, 1978) described the four characteristics of interpersonal relationships. The following is our attempt to synthesize these descriptions into workable definitions.

Regard - The overall level of one person's affective reaction to another, both positive and negative (Barrett-Lennard, Note 1).

Empathy - The process of desiring to know the full present and changing awareness of another person. This involves reaching out to receive their communication and meaning,

the transforming of their words and signs into experienced meaning that matches at least those aspects of their awareness that are most important to them at the moment (Barrett-Lennard, Note 1).

Unconditionality - The amount of variation in feelings, behaviors, or attitudes toward another person, that is contingent on the response of that other person toward the one whose response is being assessed (Barrett-Lennard, Note 1).

Congruence - The degree to which one person is functionally integrated in the context of his relationship with another, such that there is absence of conflict or inconsistency between his/her total experience, his/her awareness, and his/her overt communication (Barrett-Lennard, Note 1).

Reliability of the B-L has been assessed by several studies. Snelbecker (1967) reported split-half reliability coefficients ranging from .75 to .94 for the four scales used in a therapist/patient study. Hollenbeck (1965) obtained split-half reliabilities ranging from .83 to .95 in samples of parent-child relationships, and test-retest correlations over a six month interval of .61 to .81. Mills and Zytowski (1967) also reported test-retest reliability of .75 to .88 with a group of women in relationship with their mothers.

In addition to the author's own work, content validity has been reported to be relatively high in relation to similar types of instruments, including Rogers' process scales (Rogers, 1967), by several authors (Cahoon, 1962; Clark &

Culbert, 1965; Gross & DeRidder, 1966; Kurtz & Grummon, 1972; Tosi, Frumkin, & Wilson, 1968; Van der Veen, 1965; Walker & Little, 1969).

For the purposes of this study, the eight dependent variables used will be the Myself or Other forms of the B-L for each subject, together with the four relationship scales (Regard - Myself, Regard - Other, Empathy - Myself, Empathy - Other, Unconditionality - Myself, Unconditionality - Other, Congruence - Myself, Congruence - Other; see Table 2).

The other dependent measure was the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16 PF). Eleven of the Standard Scales were felt to be applicable to this research. Selection of these eleven scales was based on the literature review in the area of divorce, and also on the author's experience with divorcing parents. Each factor yielded a raw score which was converted to Sten scores (1-10) using the 1968 "Male" or "Female" general population norms for Form A. This instrument has been shown to have high reliability and validity in numerous and widely varied studies over the past 40 years (Cattell, 1944, 1945, 1947, 1950, 1956, 1965; Cattell, Eber & Delhees, 1968; Cattell & Tsujioka, 1964; Eber & Cattell, 1966; Siegelman, 1965; Spivey, 1978).

The eleven Factors used in this study were: A - Reserved...Outgoing, C - Affected by Feelings...Emotionally Stable, E - Humble...Assertive, G - Expedient...Conscientious, L - Trusting...Suspicious, M - Practical...Imaginative, N -

Forthright...Astute, O - Self-Assured...Apprehensive, Q₁ - Conservative...Experimenting, Q₃ - Undisciplined Self-Conflict...Controlled, and Q₄ - Relaxed...Tense (see Table 3).

Procedure. Upon contact from the researcher, all subjects were told that the focus of the study was to find out as much as possible about what is going on in the relationship between divorcing spouses at the time of the divorce. Each subject was contacted, and all data gathered before the divorce decree was granted. Each party was advised that participation in the study was completely voluntary, that reconciliation of the marriage was not the goal, and that all information received would remain confidential, that is, would not be published with any individual recognition. Most subjects were interviewed and tested in their own home; however, those who preferred were asked to come to a local community services office for their appointment.

All subjects were administered in order, a relationship inventory regarding their divorcing spouse, a personality instrument, a relationship inventory regarding self, and a structured interview. Total interview and testing time for each subject was approximately two hours.

Design. For the purpose of this study, the personality factors and relationship characteristics of the male and female subjects were treated independently, that is, no attempt was made to ascertain possible relationships or differences between personality functioning and relationship characteristics.

The B-L focused on assessing the relationship characteristics that existed between the spouses. The independent variables were marital condition (divorce/non-divorce) and sex (male/female). The eight dependent variables were the Myself or Other perceptions on each of the four relationship scales (see Table 2). This yields a 2 X 2 design (sex by marital condition) on each of the eight dependent variables.

The 16 PF focused on the personality dimension. The independent variables were sex (male/female) and marital condition (divorce/non-divorce). This yields a 2 X 2 design, as stated above, on each of the eleven dependent variables.

Results

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to analyze the relationship data. This allowed the testing of group differences which could be associated with sex, marital condition, and the sex-by-marital-condition interactions across all eight B-L dependent variables. A significant difference was obtained between marital conditions (Wilks' $\lambda = .14$, $F(8,37) = 29.24$, $p < .0001$). No significant MANOVA differences were obtained for sex (Wilks' $\lambda = .71$, $F(8,37) = 1.86$, $p > .09$), or for the sex-by-marital-condition interaction (Wilks' $\lambda = .78$, $F(8,37) = 1.26$, $p > .29$).

Subsequent analyses of variance (ANOVA) for each of the eight dependent variables revealed significant differences between the divorce and non-divorce groups on all eight

dependent variables beyond the .0001 level. An examination of the group means indicated that in each comparison, the non-divorce groups's rating was much higher than the rating of the divorce group (see Table 2). This would indicate that divorcing spouses perceive their relationship with each other quite negatively, in comparison to the perceptions of the non-divorcing spouses, across all of the relationship characteristics.

Insert Table 2 about here

For the personality dimension, an initial MANOVA was performed in order to ascertain overall differences in marital condition, sex, and the marital condition-by-sex interactions. A significant difference was obtained for sex (Wilks' lambda = .53, $F(11,34) = 2.74$, $p < .01$). No significant MANOVA differences were obtained for marital condition (Wilks' lambda = .67, $F(11,34) = 1.49$, $p > .18$) or for the sex-by-marital condition interaction (Wilks' lambda = .71, $F(11,34) = 1.26$, $p > .28$). Subsequent ANOVAs for each of the eleven dependent variables revealed significant differences between males and females on factor E, Humble...Assertive, ($F(1,44) = 15.77$, $p < .0003$), and on Factor Q₃, Undisciplined Self-Conflict...Controlled, ($F(1,44) = 4.10$, $p < .04$). An examination of group means indicated that, regardless of marital condition, males experience themselves as significantly more assertive than do females, while females

experience themselves as significantly more socially controlled than do males (see Table 3).

Insert Table 3 about here

Although not significant on the overall MANOVA, and therefore clearly beyond the .05 confidence level, there were additional findings that were significant on the subsequent ANOVAs. These findings are reported solely for possible importance in future research.

On B-L variable Unconditionality - Myself, the interaction of marital condition-by-sex was significant ($F(1,44) = 6.00, p < .02$). The F-Test for simple main effects revealed that the marital condition for male ($F(1,44) = 22.31, p < .01$) and sex for non-divorce ($F(1,44) = 5.58, p < .05$) effects were significant. It is therefore possible that there is no difference in how divorce and non-divorce wives perceived themselves with regard to Unconditionality (the amount of variation in feelings, behaviors or attitudes toward their husbands, that is contingent on his response to them). Neither sex or marital condition was significant on the other relationship characteristics.

On 16 PF factor O, Self-Assured...Apprehensive, marital condition was significant on the individual ANOVA ($F(1,44) = 8.25, p < .006$). The examination of group means revealed that both males and females in the divorcing group experienced

themselves as significantly more apprehensive than non-divorcing males and females. Neither marital condition or sex was significant on the other personality factors.

Discussion

The divorcing parents in this study are experiencing their relationship with their spouse as quite unsatisfying across all of the relationship characteristics that were assessed. This conclusion is based on the extremely negative ratings on the eight relationship variables. On all but the Regard - Myself variable, the means for both divorcing husbands and wives were on the minus side of zero, while the means for the non-divorcing spouses were all on the plus side of zero. This confirms psychometricly both the common sense determination of dissatisfaction with the marriage in general, and the resultant effects of the turmoil and parental fighting reported by Anthony (1974), Westman, Cline, Swift, and Cramer (1970).

The exception of Regard - Myself to follow the otherwise totally negative pattern within the divorcing group may be the result of a last vestige attempt to express some personal respect for the divorcing spouse, and/or a defensive attempt at beginning the emotional divorce by feeling that "I have more respect for him/her than he/she has for me." This lends support to the concept of multiple types and levels of separation discussed by Bohannon (1968), and the process of

mourning and decathexis postulated by Krantzler (1974), and Seagull and Seagull (1977).

Even though these divorcing parents view their relationship with each other negatively, they do not appear to function differently from non-divorcing parents with regard to personality characteristics. These results are at variance with the findings of Blumenthal (1967), Brun (1964), Loeb (1966), and Loeb and Price (1966) who discussed pre-existing pathology and personality difficulties in divorcing spouses. One possible explanation may lie in the continued dramatic increase in the divorce rate since these studies were completed. As divorce has become both more socially acceptable, and more legally available through no-fault legislation, a greater number of persons are choosing to end their marriages.

This lends support to the hypothesis of Sprey (1969) with regard to more parents recognizing the detrimental effects of a bad marriage on children, and the increasing social acceptability for larger families to attain a divorce. As divorce has become more acceptable, persons other than those with pathological personality traits are more willing to face the realities of a continuing unsatisfactory marriage.

In their discussion of factor E (Humble...Assertive), Cattell, Eber and Tatsuoka (1970) relate that this is one of the personality factors that distinguishes males from females.

Regardless of marital condition, the males in this study experienced themselves as significantly more assertive than did the females. This is in agreement with the work of Alberti and Emmons (1970) who felt that women, children and minorities have been taught that assertive behavior is inappropriate except for white adult males; and also with the dominance-submission studies of Allport (1961).

This greater assertion by males may also be related to their relative experience of themselves as free thinkers who follow their own urges. Thus, in factor Q_3 (Undisciplined Self-Conflict...Controlled), it is the females who express respect and concern for conformity to socially approved behavior. This leads to the belief that these two effects (E , Q_3) are related to socio-cultural influences.

It is interesting to note that non-divorcing couples in the study had known each other significantly longer prior to marriage than had the divorcing couples. This lends support to the popular notion that marriages will be more stable if couples get to know each other well before they marry.

The subjects in this study may not be a representative sample of the total divorcing population. The screening process of families through their attorneys prior to referral to the study was a problem. Divorces in which there was extreme hostility or bitterness were less likely to be referred. A few attorneys were uncooperative, and chose not to refer any of their cases at all.

Perhaps the most important contribution in this study lies within the methodology itself. Originally it was believed that intrusively injecting researchers into the lives of parents at the time of divorce might not be possible without contraindicated emotional results. However, as the researcher continued to talk to the parents, quite the opposite became evident. They wanted and needed someone with whom to discuss their feelings. This, together with the desire to feel that their experience might help others, seemed to make their pain more bearable. They were not alone, and felt that perhaps participation gave their negative experience a positive purpose.

The involvement of the judges, the attorneys and the Bar Association contributed not only to the technical logistics of research, but also to a better understanding of the problems these legal professionals face, often without benefit of any counseling training. As one attorney put it, "we get the 'help me make it through the night' calls too, but we usually wind up re-explaining the legal process because we just don't know what else to say." Many attorneys requested (and were provided with) a bibliography of books for themselves, and to recommend to their clients. Others wanted to know about community resources that might be available to help their clients with job training, counseling, financial assistance, or educational information. The level of assistance and cooperation received in this research was

due primarily to the willingness to provide real life service to the attorneys and their clients.

From experience and discussions with practicing attorneys, the researcher became aware of their need and desire for counseling skills. There is a need for law schools to institute or increase behavioral science and counseling courses within their curriculum, especially in regard to domestic relations cases. In most universities, this could easily be accomplished through cooperation with already established programs in these areas.

For the clinician, these findings indicate that parents who are in the process of getting a divorce are no different with regard to personality than other persons in stressful circumstances. Some need support in learning to cope with the changing demands of their new life style, while others need help with the mourning process of the emotional divorce discussed by Krantzler (1975). It is obvious that most of these parents are expressing a great deal of dissatisfaction in their relationship with their divorcing spouse; however, as reported by Parks (1971) it is heartening to note that they will generally come out of it all right.

In summary, the results of this study indicate that divorcing parents view their relationship with each other quite negatively. They do not appear to function differently from non-divorcing parents with regard to those personality characteristics measured by the 16 PF. The judges, attorneys

and the parents all express the need for help in coping with the problems of divorce, and are generally open to cooperative consultation from mental health professionals. There is clearly a need for further validation of the findings of this study with a more representative and larger population sample. Many questions such as the role of attorneys and judges in the emotional divorce, the effects of presence or absence of adequate support systems for parents and children, and the extent of family dysfunction prior to separation, all remain to be investigated. It would appear that, with sensitivity on the part of the researcher, these and other questions can be intrusively studied without harm to the participants.

Reference Note

1. These definitions were extracted from several sources authored by G. T. Barrett-Lennard (1962, 1969, 1978). Every effort was made to maintain consistency with the original conceptualizations of the author.

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Table 1
Demographic Table by Marital Status

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>Divorce</u>	<u>Non-Divorce</u>
Number of children	Mean 1.58	1.91
	S.D. .79	.79
Age of children	Mean 5.12	5.24
	S.D. 3.87	3.70
Age of Husband	Mean 28.58	29.83
	S.D. 7.39	4.09
Age of Wife	Mean 27.00	28.75
	S.D. 5.39	4.31
Number years of education - Husband	Mean 14.58	15.42
	S.D. 3.29	2.50
Number years of education - Wife	Mean 13.50	14.17
	S.D. 2.19	2.12
Number of years known before marriage	Mean 1.62	4.25
	S.D. 1.10	4.28

Table 2
Means and Standard Deviations of Barrett-Lennard
Relationship Variables by Marital Status and Sex

Variable		<u>Divorce</u>		<u>Non-Divorce</u>	
		Male	Female	Male	Female
Regard - Myself	Mean	14.00	3.25	41.42	38.00
	S.D.	16.12	25.33	6.04	7.56
Regard - Other	Mean	-5.08	-4.58	38.92	39.25
	S.D.	18.03	22.96	6.10	8.83
Empathy - Myself	Mean	-2.17	-1.67	17.17	17.08
	S.D.	10.96	10.59	9.61	9.25
Empathy - Other	Mean	-14.75	-26.17	20.67	18.25
	S.D.	12.02	11.85	7.15	9.25
Unconditionality - Myself	Mean	-8.92	-2.50	18.58	4.83
	S.D.	14.21	15.51	12.85	14.35
Unconditionality - Other	Mean	-13.50	-14.25	8.91	5.42
	S.D.	7.74	12.21	10.33	16.20
Congruence - Myself	Mean	-9.92	-3.08	30.00	28.50
	S.D.	15.65	16.27	9.43	11.85
Congruence - Other	Mean	-16.50	-22.50	30.67	30.25
	S.D.	11.42	14.66	12.96	12.67

Table 3
Means and Standard Deviations of 16 PF
Variables by Marital Status and Sex

Variables			<u>Divorce</u>		<u>Non-Divorce</u>	
			Male	Female	Male	Female
A	Reserved... Outgoing	Mean	3.67	4.67	5.42	5.00
		S.D.	1.50	2.57	2.23	2.49
C	Affected by Feelings... Emotionally Stable	Mean	5.42	4.92	6.08	5.33
		S.D.	1.88	2.27	1.56	1.67
E	Humble... Assertive	Mean	8.17	6.08	8.42	6.58
		S.D.	1.70	1.62	1.38	2.07
G	Expedient... Conscientious	Mean	4.25	6.42	5.58	5.67
		S.D.	2.45	1.88	2.15	1.83
L	Trusting... Suspicious	Mean	7.17	6.08	6.17	5.83
		S.D.	1.75	1.83	1.80	1.70
M	Practical... Imaginative	Mean	5.00	4.67	5.00	5.58
		S.D.	2.37	1.23	2.22	1.73
N	Forthright... Astute	Mean	4.83	5.17	5.08	5.50
		S.D.	2.21	2.86	1.62	2.15
O	Self Assured... Apprehensive	Mean	6.50	5.08	4.08	4.75
		S.D.	2.24	2.39	1.98	2.42
Q ₁	Conservative... Experimenting	Mean	6.50	6.42	6.83	5.75
		S.D.	2.20	1.73	1.75	2.26
Q ₃	Undisciplined Self-Conflict ...Controlled	Mean	4.00	5.67	5.33	5.75
		S.D.	1.65	1.83	1.83	1.92
Q ₄	Relaxed... Tense	Mean	7.25	6.17	6.08	5.58
		S.D.	2.01	2.17	2.35	1.68

APPENDIX A

PROSPECTUS

Personality and Relationship Characteristics of Divorcing Parents

Divorce and its concomitant effects upon parents and children, has in recent years become perhaps the single most concerning social problem facing the mental health professions. At the turn of the century the divorce rate was only about 0.5 per thousand population. By 1971, that rate had climbed to about 3.7 per one thousand total population (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1972), and by 1976 for the first time the divorce rate exceeded 5.0 per thousand population illustrating the extremely rapid increase in the divorcing problem and the number of people affected by divorce in America (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1976).

Today, about two-thirds of those marriages that end in divorce have children, and it is currently estimated that about one out of six children under the age of 18 lives in a single parent home (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1974). In 1955, about 3.3 million children under the age of 18 years of age were affected by divorce (Steinzor, 1969). The latest available statistics, of course, indicate that divorce is continuing to accelerate at a far more rapid rate, such that in 1976 over four million people in the United States married and two million divorced (U.S. Public Health Services, 1976). In urban settings of over 100,000 population this divorce rate of five out of ten marriages increases to seven out of ten (Kessler, 1976). This means that each year over

two million adults and over one million children are affected by family disunion and divorce (U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1976).

This continuing increase has been discussed by several investigators (Grollman, 1969; Hunt, 1966; Sprey, 1969). Sprey (1969) has discussed three primary reasons why the divorce rate may be on the increase. The first of these being that parents no longer believe that they are required to stay in a marriage for the sake of the children, and are beginning to recognize the detrimental effects of a bad marriage on children. Second, he believes that many couples may have decided to have children in order to attempt to hold together a very shaky marriage; and third, that it may now be more acceptable for larger families to attain a divorce than has been true in the past. This increase in family disunion and disintegration has created a marked void in personal support systems for those persons involved, and might affect both the children and their parents innumerable ways (Ackerman, 1958; Burgess & Locke, 1953; Harsh & Schrickel, 1959).

The present investigation will attempt to explore the personality factors and relationship variables that exist between the divorcing spouses at the time of divorce. The intention is to gain additional understanding of how divorcing spouses see themselves, and their mate, at a time in their lives when critical decisions concerning their future, and that of their children, are being made.

Legal Process of Divorce

Often, divorcing parents have considered and do agree on questions of custody, support, and education of their children. Equally often, these questions have been considered but no agreement has been reached. Both children and parents undergoing a divorce face a period of adjustment in which they must establish the re-integration of feelings within the now different, now changed, family unit (Despert, 1953; Gardner, 1974; Killman, 1968).

If the parents cannot agree, the court acting on behalf of the children, will make these determinations. In the divorce action the court is directed by law to make the provision for the guardianship, custody, support, and education of all minor children (12 Oklahoma Statute, 1978).

Every person is legally entitled to one divorce per one legal marriage. For this divorce, the law requires two persons of the opposite sex, who are legally married to each other (Baker vs. Nelson, 1972; Black, 1968; Clark, 1968; Clark, 1974). In most states this legal marriage must be statutory, meaning marriage by legal contract consisting of a license and a ceremony conducted by a person authorized by the State to perform marriages (Clark, 1968). In several states, Common Law marriage is an acceptable legal marriage, and like statutory marriage requires a legal divorce to dissolve. Although there is some slight variance from state to state, generally, Common Law marriage is an agreement by both

parties that they are now already married. A stated plan to marry at some future time does not constitute a legal common law marriage. A divorce is a legal process. There is no common law divorce (Clark, 1974).

The obtaining of divorce requires legal grounds such as adultery, desertion, cruelty or incompatibility, etc. One or both parties must file a legal petition with the court, usually the county or district court, requesting the divorce and stating the grounds. The filing party must be a resident with legal domicile in the jurisdiction where the action is filed. This legal domicile is a permanent place of residence of the party, and is defined as that place that he or she intends to return to permanently if left temporarily, i.e., moving to another state on a temporary job assignment does not establish legal domicile in that state (Clark, 1968; Stevens vs. Stevens, 1971).

After satisfying these requirements the court will hear the case. At this hearing evidence of grounds is presented and decisions regarding the custody of children, child support, alimony, division of property, etc., are made and usually the divorce is granted (Clark, 1968). The court is directed by law to make provisions for the guardianship, custody, support and education of all minor children, and the court retains jurisdiction until the child reaches the age of 18 years or is legally emancipated (10 Oklahoma Statute; 1978; United States vs. Williams, 1937).

Since early common law in England, the courts have exercised jurisdiction over child custody under the doctrine of *Parens Patriae*, the duty of the king to protect his subjects (*Ex parte Skinner*, 1824; *Eyre vs. Shaftesbury*, 1722; *Falkland vs. Bertie*, 1696). This has led to numerous decisions culminating with *Finley vs. Finley* in 1925 where the court held that the doctrine of *Parens Patriae* resided with the court in all child custody cases. With this decision the court established what has come to be known as "the best interest of the child doctrine" stating that the best interests of the child controls the award of custody and/or visitation. This doctrine, although widely criticized by scholars and laymen alike as being too general, continues to be standard by which the court makes all custody decisions (Zuckman & Fox, 1973).

In defining the best interest of the child doctrine, most states include the temporal, mental and moral welfare of the child, and allow a child of sufficient age to express a preference (*Ludlow vs. Ludlow*, 1949; 30 Oklahoma Statute, 1978). Neither parent is automatically entitled to custody, but the court has held if the child be of "tender years," which is generally accepted to be five or under, it should be given to the mother, and if it is of age to require education and preparation for labor or business, then it should be given to the father. It should be noted that a New York court has ruled that the tender years doctrine violates the equal protection clause of the fourteenth amendment (*Watts*

vs. Watts, 1973). Legal rulings have established an order of preference for custody: 1. A parent; 2. One indicated in the will of the deceased parent; 3. One already a trustee of a fund for support of the child, and 4. A relative. Any or all of these, however, may be altered by the best interest doctrine, i.e., the court may rule that the best interests indicate that the child be given to a relative rather than to a parent (30 Oklahoma Statute, 1978).

The courts have held that if the child can be properly cared for physically, emotionally, and intellectually, then relative economic and social situations between contesting parties should not be considered, and also that a parent must be shown to be clearly unfit before custody may be given to a third party (Duncan vs. Duncan, 1969; Hood vs. Adams, 1964). The court has also held that weight may be given to the psychological parent, or the person who has actually developed and maintained a parental relationship with the child, and has given him ties and support essential to his welfare and for his normal growth and development. There has also been an increasing trend for judges to listen to the child's feelings and preferences, both in chambers and in open court, and consider the desirability of keeping siblings together, especially when they are old enough to have developed close ties with, and dependency on each other (Bishop vs. Benear, 1928; Sims vs. Sims, 1960). As an outgrowth of this trend, there seems to be a growing awareness of the need to appoint council for the child and the child's best interests,

especially when both parents retain council to protect and/or assert their rights and interest. There is no guarantee that the most successful party in court should be the one who is awarded custody (Inker & Parreta, 1971).

It is important to understand that the divorcing process frequently, in fact commonly, does not end with the granting of a divorce decree. Perhaps the greatest contributor to the backlog in domestic relations courts across the country today is the filing of a "motion to modify" the conditions of a divorce agreement. This occurs when one of the parties becomes dissatisfied with all, or part of the original decree, or when that party believes that the other party is not keeping a part of the agreement. A motion to modify is most commonly filed to seek a change in custody or support, or to gain specific visitation rights (Ex parte Frear, 1942; 12 Oklahoma Statute, 1978).

A change in custody generally requires a change in the circumstances of the party who has custody (Ex parte Miller, 1949). Preference is usually given to the party who has custody in the original proceedings (Ex parte Jones, 1950; Penn vs. Penn, 1913). The court has held that a detrimental change of climate in terms of the child's health should be considered and that if unfitness of one parent is claimed, it must be established by "clear and convincing evidence." The court should not award or change custody to punish one parent for the contemptuous conduct toward the other, however such conduct may be considered in determining the child's best

interest (*Brim vs. Brim*, 1975; *Crow vs. Crow*, 1966; *Hammer vs. Hammer*, 1944; *Irwin vs. Irwin*, 1966). It is interesting to note here that an attempt to alienate the child's affections for the opposite parent is usually regarded as reprehensible, and contrary to the child's best interest (*Jones vs. White*, 1952; *Swenson vs. Swenson*, 1929).

Under the law a parent is morally and legally obligated to support minor children. In most states, the father is primarily obligated; the mother only if support and education the father can give is inadequate, or if the divorce has been granted because of the fault of the wife. This is usually within the discretion of the court, and once she becomes legally responsible her duty is equal to that of the husband (*Peters vs. Peters*, 1935; 12 Oklahoma Statute, 1978; *Wright vs. Wright*, 1952). It should be noted here that there is a good argument that such provisions are discriminatory, and do not meet the constitutional requirements of due process and equal protection. The Pennsylvania State Court has held that this provision was unconstitutional in terms of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Pennsylvania constitution. Most states have criminal penalties for non-support, however there is no duty to support step-children unless they are accepted into the family (*Barker vs. Barker*, 1909; *Daniel vs. Tolan*, 1916; *Washington vs. State*, 1922). There is no obligation to support a child who has been duly committed to a penal or mental institution, and the obligation of support is terminated if the child becomes of age, marries, joins the Armed

Forces, or leaves the parent without cause (14 Oklahoma Law Review, 1961).

The father's support obligation does not terminate upon his death but rather the estate becomes responsible (Guggenheimer vs. Guggenheimer, 1955; 37 NDL Review, 1961). The dollar amount of support is determined by the court and must include "necessities" such as food, clothing and shelter, education, and medical care (Perry vs. Myers, 1927; Trahern vs. Mulkey, 1932). The court may include as necessities, those items commensurate with the father's "station in life," i.e., if he can provide more, he may be required to do so. This may include such diverse items as a college education or a country club membership (Anderson vs. Neiman-Marcus, 1939; Gimbel Brothers vs. Pinto, 1958). In deciding the level of support the court may also include future earning power, whether the earnings of the father are likely to go up or down. The denial of visitation rights does not excuse non-payment of child support. The court has held that the child should not be punished for the misconduct of the custodial parent (Kimbrell vs. Kimbrell, 1965; Schwartz vs. Schwartz, 1964).

Research on Divorce and Parents

As divorcing parents come to the realization of the finality of this act they are confronted with the fact that divorce is a process and not an event. This process involves many types of separations on several levels (Bohannon, 1968).

These levels include, of course, the legal divorce, the legal process by which the marriage is dissolved in the court. This level includes the filing of the legal papers, and the completion of testimony as to the grounds for divorce, except in those states which now permit no-fault divorce (Bernard, 1968; Kessler, 1975).

In addition to this legal divorce, there also must be an emotional divorce in the family unit, whereby former support systems are terminated. In addition to both the legal and emotional divorce there is also the financial divorce. This often radically altered economic condition may add considerable relief, or stress, to the adjustment period following initial legal divorce (Heatherington, Cox & Cox, 1976; Orthner, Brown, & Ferguson, 1976; Ross & Sawhill, 1975). The economic condition of the father is for the most part upwardly mobile following the divorce; much more frequently for the mother it is significantly downwardly mobile (Carter & Glick, 1976).

Bane (1976), in an investigation of post-divorce income of single women found that their overall income diminished 16.5% at the same time as those of intact families rose about one-third or 33.3%. These economic factors have been suggested as the underlying cause in many of the negative findings in adjustment studies in children (Brandwein, Brown Fox, 1974; Ross & Sawhill, 1975).

In a discussion of the adjustment problems that face new single parents, Parks (1977) reported that 40% of the

respondents had moved as a result of their marital separation, 32% found it necessary to begin work or to change jobs, and 2% felt it necessary to go back to school to learn some specific job skill. Over half of the mothers reporting received some form of child support, and half of the fathers reporting in the study paid child support. An additional 25% received or paid alimony. Forty-three percent reported having had some kind of counseling as a result of the separation, however, less than 10% felt that their divorce had been a disaster, or was particularly emotionally stressful for them, and in fact 89% felt that their lives had improved considerably since the divorce. Although a wide variety of the symptoms were perceived at the time of separation, 91% of the respondents felt that their children had adjusted to the family changes, and about half of the children were seeing their other parent regularly.

Krantzler (1975) described a process of mourning that must take place following this loss, a process of letting go, or a decathexis. This appears to be necessary in both those marriages where there was little or no destructive communication, and also in those marriages that were extremely volatile and extremely unpleasant.

Seagull and Seagull (1977) described this process as mourning the relationship with the ex-spouse, and the non-custodial parent's feelings that he or she has lost their children. This requires the re-establishment, between the non-custodial parent and the children, of a relationship

totally separate and distinct from that which was held in the former marriage. In this transition period, which may take years, the decisions that the divorcing couple make as to how they will approach their children in helping them to understand these new relationships would seem to be crucial. They suggest that it is the province of both parents, the mother and father, to explain to the children that at one time they loved each other, but no longer do, and as a result they are deciding to get a divorce. They suggest that it is vital to emphasize that the children are not divorced from the non-custodial parent. Difficulty often arises when the custodial parent has to try to set aside their feelings and need for support, in order to reassure the children that the non-custodial parent's departure has nothing to do with them; and that in fact, that parent still loves them.

Seagull and Seagull (1977) also point out that the most beneficial attitude for helping children to readjust to the new familial situation is for both parents to agree that it is alright for the children to love both parents, and to not feel forced to choose between them. For continued healthy development it is necessary that there be a continuity of both parental relationships, and the child's environment (Goldstein, Freud, & Solnit, 1973). Many other factors would seem to have a continuing influence on the overall outcome and adjustment in both parents and their children. General turmoil in the family and parental fighting and communication have been discussed by several investigators as having

profound and severe detrimental affects (Anthony, 1974; Westman, Klein, Swift, & Cramer, 1970). Other authors have pointed to pre-existing pathology in divorcing spouses as well as personality difficulties which tend to lengthen both the duration and severity of the adjustment process (Blumenthal, 1967; Brun, 1964; Loeb, 1966; Loeb & Price, 1966). The expectations of significant others in the workplace, the family and the community, as well as a lack of emotional support for the divorcing parent (Brandwein, et al., 1974), tend to leave the divorcing parent with confusing and often unrealistic fantasies concerning how they "should" be behaving or adjusting to the divorce.

Statement of the Problem

Based upon the review of the literature in the area of the effects of divorce on parents, families, and children, it has become clear to this investigator that very little is known about divorce, and its process at the time the legal event is transpiring. Previous investigations into this area have dealt for the most part in a post hoc fashion with divorce. Investigators have focused their attention primarily on the divorce adjustment process, to the virtual exclusion of the divorcing process.

There is one absolute and essential difference between those couples who have children and those who do not. If there are no children at issue in the divorce, the divorcing parties can separate absolutely on all accounts, legal,

financial, and eventually emotional. However, if the divorcing couple have minor children at issue in the divorce, they both retain full parental rights, responsibilities, and obligations. This will require at least minimal contact between the parties as to visitation, support, etc., for the duration of the minor status of their children. Absolute separation in this case is virtually impossible. This couple is faced with the continuous decisions of parenthood; and thus their relationship, good or bad, will continue to affect their children.

The purpose therefore of this study will be to explore the neglected area of the divorcing process as it transpires. The present investigation will attempt to explore: First, the male-female differences between the divorcing spouses on four levels; these being the level of regard, empathy, unconditionality, and congruence, at the time of divorce, when critical decisions regarding both the future of the spouses, and of their children, are actually being made; second, personality characteristics of divorcing spouses that may be significantly different from those of the non-divorcing population; and third, personality characteristics of divorcing males that may be significantly different from those of divorcing females.

Method

Procedure. Subjects for the study will be obtained from current divorce filings at the District Court of Oklahoma for

Cleveland County. These divorce petitions will be available to the researcher through the cooperation of the District Judges of Cleveland County.

Due to the circumstance of no requirement for the plaintiff or defendant's address or telephone number on the divorce petition, the attorney who represents the filing party or parties will be contacted. The attorney will be informed of the nature of the study, and will be asked for his cooperation in gaining contact with his client or clients.

Divorcing couples will be contacted following the initial communication with their attorney (see Appendix B), and invited to participate in a "divorce program" at The University of Oklahoma. All subjects will have either received a letter from the Cleveland County District Court (see Appendix C) or will have been informed by their attorney regarding the program (see Appendix D). Upon contact from the researcher, all subjects will be told that the focus of the study is to find out as much as possible about what is going on in the relationship between divorcing spouses at the time of the divorce. Each subject will be contacted, and all data will be gathered before the divorce decree is granted (by state law divorces involving minor children must wait at least 30 days between the date of filing, and the date of the hearing for the divorce).

Each party will be advised that participation in the study is completely voluntary, that reconciliation of the

marriage is not the goal, and that all information received will remain confidential, that is, will not be published with any individual recognition. Most subjects will be interviewed and tested in their own home; however, those that prefer will be asked to come to the Cleveland County Youth and Family Services Office for their appointment.

All subjects will be administered in order, a relationship inventory regarding their divorcing spouse, a personality instrument, a relationship inventory regarding self, and a structured interview. Total interview and testing time for each subject will be approximately two hours. Each instrument will be scored by the researcher, or by a qualified assistant, and will be checked for accuracy by at least one additional researcher. All data will then be placed on computer cards for storage awaiting analysis.

Each subject will be told that following the study, they will be invited to a mini-workshop that will include information on the results of the study (debriefing), and other information on financial adjustment problems and needs of children from each parent, problems of visitation and child support, and available community agencies and services.

Subjects. All subjects will have filed for a divorce within the last 30 days, will be the parents of at least one minor child, will not currently nor within the past 12 months have had any personal counseling or therapy (excluding marriage counseling), and will not have experienced any previous

divorce from this or another spouse. A total of 24 subjects, 12 couples, $n = 12$, will participate in the study. No subjects that have been separated for more than four months prior to the filing for divorce, will be accepted for the study. Participation of all subjects in the study is voluntary (see Appendix E). The number of cases lost from the sample due to the criteria established will be recorded and reported, as will demographic data such as education, socio-economic group, length of marriage and so forth.

An equal number of control subjects to be used for comparison purposes will be obtained through various community groups. These control subjects will not currently be considering any divorce or separation, will not currently nor within the past 12 months have had any personal counseling or therapy, and will not have experienced any previous divorce. They will be matched as closely as possible with divorcing couples as to length of marriage, number of children, ages of children, socio-economic group, level of education and so forth.

Instruments. Each subject will be asked to complete the Revised Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory (Barrett-Lennard, 1978), and the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (Cattell, Eber, & Tatsuoka, 1970).

Dr. G. T. Barrett-Lennard (1962) devised an instrument to measure interpersonal relationship characteristics. This original inventory was revised to use language that the

ordinary person would respond to in reference to any significant relationship with another person (Barrett-Lennard, 1978). This revised inventory consists of 64 items, and measures the level of regard, empathic understanding, unconditionality, and congruence that exists within a significant relationship between two people.

The Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory (B-L) is an individually administered, paper and pencil instrument (see Appendix F). The subject is asked to read a series of 64 statements and rate each one from +3 (Yes, I strongly feel that it is true) through gradients to -3 (No, I strongly believe that is not true). The time required for completion of the 64 items is approximately 20 to 30 minutes.

There are four forms of the B-L. Males will complete two forms, and females will complete two forms. On one form the male will rate his feelings and behavior toward his spouse (MO-F-64). On the other male form he will rate his perception of his spouse's feelings and behavior toward him (OS-F-64). The females will also complete two forms. On one form, the female will rate her feelings and behavior toward her spouse (MO-M-64); and on the other she will rate her perception of his feelings and behavior toward her (OS-M-64). Therefore each spouse will provide an assessment of their own feelings toward their spouse (Myself toward other) and their perception of their spouse's feelings toward them (Other toward self). The forms differ only in the gender pronouns

referred to in the item, i.e., "I respect her" or "I respect him."

Each of the four forms yields a score on each of the four relationship characteristics (Scale); level of regard, empathy, unconditionality, and congruence. Each scale consists of 16 items of the total 64 item B-L instrument. The +3 to -3 rating, on each of the 16 items for each scale, produces a possible total score for each scale ranging from +48 to -48.

Following the work of Rogers (1957) concerning constructive personality change, and continuing through studies by Truax and Carhuff (1967) on levels of relationship conditions, Barrett-Lennard (1962, 1969, 1978) described the four characteristics of interpersonal relationships as follows:

Regard - The overall level of one person's affective reaction to another, both positive and negative.

Empathy - The process of desiring to know the full present and changing awareness of another person. This involves reaching out to receive his communication and meaning, the transforming his words and signs into experienced meaning that matches at least those aspects of his awareness that are most important to him at the moment.

Unconditionality - The amount of variation in feelings, behaviors or attitudes toward another person, that is contingent on the response of that other person toward the one whose response is being assessed.

Congruence - The degree to which one person is functionally integrated in the context of his relationship with another, such that there is absence of conflict or inconsistency between his total experience, his awareness, and his overt communication.

Reliability of the B-L has been assessed, and found to be relatively high, in several studies. Snelbecker (1967) reported split-half reliability coefficients ranging from .75 to .94 for the four scales used in a therapist/patient study. Hollenbeck (1967) obtained split-half reliabilities ranging from .83 to .95 in samples of parent-child relationships, and test-retest correlations over a six month interval of .61 to .81. Mills and Zytowski (1967) have also reported strong test-retest reliability with a group of women in relationship with their mothers. Their figures range from .75 to .88 on the Other (OS) form and .80 to .87 on the Myself (MO) form.

Barrett-Lennard (1962), in the development of this instrument, assessed its content validity and found it to be relatively high. In addition to the author's own work, studies by Cahoon (1962), Clark and Culbert (1965), Gross and DeRidder (1966), Kurtz and Grummon (1972), Tosi, Frumkin and Wilson (1968), Van der Veen (1965), and Walker and Little (1969), have found positive relationships between the B-L and other similar types of instruments, including Rogers' process scales (Rogers, 1967).

The B-L has been used as a research instrument over the course of twenty years, and across various kinds of

relationships (Armstrong, 1969; Barrett-Lennard, 1962; Bozarth & Grace, 1970; Culbert, 1968; Gross & DeRidder, 1966; Hollenbeck, 1967; Mason & Blumberg, 1969; Nathan, Bull & Rossi, 1968; Scheuer, 1971; Truax, 1966; Wargo & Meek, 1971). It has been used to assess different aspects of relationships. Pencer (1971) used the B-L in studying the need for personal space within marriage. Thornton (1960) investigated the quality of marital adjustment in terms of the perceived relationship between the spouses. And Epstein and Jackson (1978) employed the B-L to assess the effectiveness of short term communication training on improving the relationships between married couples. Throughout some 200 studies, the B-L has shown itself to be a robust and versatile research instrument.

The other dependent measure will be the Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16 PF), an objectively scored and relatively brief personality instrument, which measures 16 personality dimensions. Eleven of the standard scales were felt to be applicable to this research (see Figure 2). Each dimension or factor yields a raw score which is converted to Sten scores (1-10) for each factor. The 1968 "Male" or "Female" general population norms for Form A will be used in converting Raw scores to Sten scores.

This instrument has been shown to have high reliability and validity, and has been used in numerous and widely varied studies over the past 40 years (Anastasi, 1956; Bakker & Levenson, 1967; Cattell, 1944, 1945, 1947, 1950, 1956, 1965;

Cattell, Eber & Delhees, 1968; Cattell & Gibbons, 1968; Cattell & Tsujioka, 1964; Eber & Cattell, 1966; Hartman, 1966; Johnsgard & Ogilvie, 1968; Karson & Pool, 1957; Mitchell, 1961; Siegelman, 1965; Spivey, 1978).

In addition to these two instruments, each subject will be given a structured interview (see Appendixes G & H) to gather demographic data. This will provide information on the educational level, type of employment, length of separation, socio-economic group and background, length of time acquainted with spouse before marriage, significant problems in the marriage, and so forth.

All testing will be administered by persons trained in psychometric evaluation techniques, and explicit instructions will be given to each subject for each instrument following the standardized procedures for that instrument. All examiners will be either volunteers from graduate programs at The University of Oklahoma, paid examiners hired for this purpose, or a member of the Divorce Program research team.

Design. For the purpose of this study, the personality factors and the relationship characteristics of the male and female subjects will be treated independently; that is, no attempt will be made to ascertain possible relationships or differences between personality functioning and relationship characteristics of divorcing couples.

The Barrett-Lennard Relationship Inventory will focus on assessing the relationship characteristics that exist between

divorcing spouses. The independent variables will be marital condition (divorce/non-divorce) and sex (male/female). The eight dependent variables will be the Myself or Other perceptions on each of the four relationship scales (regard, empathic understanding, unconditionality, and congruence). This yields a 2 x 2 design (sex by marital condition) on each of the eight dependent variables (see Figure 1).

Twelve wives along with their husbands will rate themselves and their spouses on the four B-L scales. Therefore in the design each cell will have the same 12 male, or 12 female subjects. Due to the two forms of the B-L, there will be a total of 24 observations from 12 females, and 24 observations from 12 males across each scale. Half of these observations will be Other ratings and half Myself ratings. There will be 48 observations across all four B-L scales; 12 from each of the 12 males and 12 from each of the 12 female subjects, on each of the four scales, on both forms of the B-L. The same is of course true for the non-divorcing couples. Therefore, a comparison will be made not only within marital condition but also between marital conditions.

The 16 Pf will focus on the personality dimension. The independent variables will be sex (male/female) and marital condition (divorce/non-divorce). The dependent variables will be 11 of the 16 scales of the 16 PF, chosen for their applicability to this research. This yields a 2 x 2 design (see Figure 2).

Figure 1
Design for relationship characteristics

MARITAL CONDITION				
		Divorce	Non-Divorce	
SEX	♂	12 subjects	12 subjects	n = 24
	♀	12 subjects	12 subjects	n = 24
		n = 24	n = 24	Total N = 48

Dependent Variables

Regard - Myself

Regard - Other

Empathy - Myself

Empathy - Other

Unconditionality - Myself

Unconditionality - Other

Congruence - Myself

Congruence - Other

Figure 2
Design for personality characteristics

MARITAL CONDITION				
		Divorce	Non-Divorce	
S	♂	12 subjects	12 subjects	n = 24
E				
X	♀	12 subjects	12 subjects	n = 24
		n = 24	n = 24	Total N = 48

Dependent Variables

A	Reserved	Outgoing
C	Affected by feelings	Emotionally Stable
E	Humble	Assertive
G	Expedient.	Conscientious
L	Trusting	Suspicious
M	Practical.	Imaginative
N	Forthright	Astute
O	Self-Assured	Apprehensive
Q ₁	Conservative	Experimenting
Q ₃	Undisciplined Self-Conflict.	Controlled
Q ₄	Relaxed.	Tense

Twelve divorcing wives along with their husbands will complete the instrument, as will 12 non-divorcing couples. Therefore in the design each cell will have either 12 male or 12 female subjects in each marital condition. All 12 males and all 12 females within each marital condition will be the same subjects. There will be 12 observations from the 12 females, and 12 observations from the 12 males across each scale. There will be 132 observations across the 11 scales of the 16 PF for each sex of each marital condition. Comparisons will be made within and between marital conditions.

Data Analysis. For the B-L instrument, a MANOVA will be calculated for the two independent variables. The alpha level for the tests of significant differences will be set at .05. If the overall MANOVA is significant, 2-way ANOVA's will be performed on each dependent variable. If this 2-way ANOVA indicates significant interactions, then individual comparisons will be conducted to determine the effects on each independent variable.

For the 16 PF instrument a MANOVA will be calculated for the two independent variables. If the overall MANOVA is significant, 2-way ANOVA's will be performed on each dependent variable. If this 2-way ANOVA indicates a significant effect, the individual comparisons will be conducted. This will allow the researcher to closely inspect the personality characteristic of husbands and wives, and to make both within the between marital condition comparisons. The alpha level for the tests of significant differences will be set at .05.

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APPENDIX B
LETTER MAILED TO ATTORNEYS

ALAN J. COUCH
JUDGE



LARRY SHALBERG
CSR

DISTRICT COURT OF OKLAHOMA
CLEVELAND COUNTY

COUNTY COURTHOUSE
NORMAN, OKLAHOMA 73069

TELEPHONE 405-321-6251

TO:

DATE:

SUBJECT:

For Cleveland County, a direct service and research program is being conducted in the area of divorce. The District Court and the University of Oklahoma are cooperating in an effort to obtain information regarding the effects of divorce on parents and minor children. Parents are frequently involved in continuing court matters surrounding divorce, and many children are detrimentally affected by the actions of their parents for long periods of time following the actual divorce.

This program will attempt to find out as much as possible about 1) parental communication in the interim between the date that a divorce petition is filed and the final decree, and 2) the trauma or impact on children themselves by the divorce proceedings. Only those cases assigned to Judges Couch and Trimble will be involved in the study. Judge Wilson's cases will be used for control purposes.

In cases where minor children are involved, Thomas J. Vaughn and Roy M. Isenberg will be contacting the attorney(s) in hopes of securing a telephone number for each party so that they may be invited to participate. These individuals have sixteen years of experience counseling with parents and children under stress. This experience includes community guidance centers, the juvenile court and the Child Study Center at the University of Oklahoma Medical School. Participation is voluntary, and reconciliation is not the goal. All statistics will be stored in a computer without individual identification so confidentiality is assured.

The assistance of each attorney in obtaining the cooperation of their client, as well as the phone number of the client's spouse, will contribute substantially to the validity of the study, and hopefully will lead to revelations that might help reduce the trauma of divorce on parents and children in the future.

For any further information concerning the program and its services please feel free to contact us at 325-1746, the University of Oklahoma Divorce Program, P. O. Box 2911, Norman, Oklahoma, 73070.

APPENDIX C
LETTER TO DIVORCING PARENT
WITHOUT ATTORNEY INTERCESSION

ALAN J. COUCH
JUDGE



LARRY SHALBERG
CSR

DISTRICT COURT OF OKLAHOMA
CLEVELAND COUNTY
COUNTY COURTHOUSE
NORMAN, OKLAHOMA 73069
TELEPHONE 405-321-6251

Date:

Dear Mr./Ms. _____:

The Cleveland County District Court is cooperating with Tom Vaughn and Roy Isenberg who are conducting research at the University of Oklahoma regarding communication in the divorcing process.

Your divorce has been selected as one of several that we would like to include in a confidential program. The purpose is not to attempt any reconciliation of spouses, but to learn as much as we can about the problems faced by parents who are divorcing. This information will be useful in establishing future programs for parents. If you will participate, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire concerning your present relationship with your divorcing spouse, and to provide some demographic information such as your age, occupation, years married, children's ages, etc.

We believe that your voluntary cooperation in this program will help us to gain knowledge about the difficulties of the divorcing process, and may provide you with considerable knowledge and skills that could be useful to you in the future.

You will be contacted by telephone within the next few days with more specific information regarding the program. If we are unable to obtain a phone number, we would appreciate a response by you through the enclosed postcard. If you have any questions concerning this program please feel free to contact me at 325-1746, the University of Oklahoma Divorce Program, P. O. Box 2911, Norman, Oklahoma 73070.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vaughn
Divorce Program Co-Director

APPENDIX D

LETTER TO DIVORCING PARENT FORWARDED BY ATTORNEY

ALAN J. COUCH
JUDGE

LARRY SHALBERG
CSR



DISTRICT COURT OF OKLAHOMA
CLEVELAND COUNTY

COUNTY COURTHOUSE
NORMAN, OKLAHOMA 73069

TELEPHONE 405-321-6251

Date:

Dear Mr./Ms. _____:

The Cleveland County District Court is cooperating with Tom Vaughn and Roy M. Isenberg who are conducting research at the University of Oklahoma regarding communication in the divorcing process.

Your divorce has been selected as one of several that we would like to include in a confidential program. The purpose is not to attempt any reconciliation of spouses, but to learn as much as we can about the problems faced by parents who are divorcing. This information will be useful in establishing future programs for parents. If you will participate, you will be asked to fill out a questionnaire concerning your present relationship with your divorcing spouse, and to provide some demographic information such as your age, occupation, years married, children's ages, etc.

We believe that your cooperation in this program will help us to gain knowledge about the difficulties of the divorcing process, and may provide you with considerable knowledge and skills that could be useful to you in the future.

If you participate you will be offered to attend two evening meetings with others experiencing divorce. These meetings will include information on the effect of divorce on children, common problems of the custody and non-custody parent in talking with their children about divorce, and will present methods of effective communication between family members.

Your attorney has agreed to forward this letter to you. In order to provide you with more specific information regarding this program, I would like for you to contact me at 325-1746, the University of Oklahoma Divorce Program, P. O. Box 2911, Norman, Oklahoma, 73070. I would greatly appreciate your participation.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Vaughn
Divorce Program Co-Director

APPENDIX E
CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

I _____ do hereby consent to participate in a research program regarding the relationship between divorcing parents. I have been informed that this study is being conducted by Thomas J. Vaughn at the University of Oklahoma, in cooperation with the District Court of Cleveland County.

I understand that all information provided by me is confidential, and that I will not be individually identified in any verbal or written report of the findings of this study.

I understand that in about two months I will be invited to a meeting of parents in order to be informed of the preliminary results of this study, as well as other information concerning the effects of divorce on children and parents. I have been informed that this meeting is voluntary, and that my participation in the study does not mean that I agree to attend the parents meeting.

I further understand that my participation in the study is completely voluntary, and that I may withdraw from participation at any time.

(Signed)

(Witness)

(Print Full Name)

(Street Address)

(City & State)

CONSENT FOR RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

I _____ do hereby consent to participate in a research program regarding the relationship between divorcing parents. I have been informed that this study is being conducted by Thomas J. Vaughn at the University of Oklahoma, in cooperation with the District Court of Cleveland County.

I understand that all information provided by me is confidential, and that I will not be individually identified in any verbal or written report of the findings of this study.

I understand that I am a CONTROL subject in this study; that is that the information provided by me is to be used for comparison purposes with persons who are in the process of obtaining a divorce.

I further understand that my participation in the study is completely voluntary, and that I may withdraw from participation at any time.

(Signed)

(Witness)

(Print Full Name)

(Street Address)

(City & State)

APPENDIX F
BARRETT-LENNARD RELATIONSHIP INVENTORY

Reprinted by permission of G. T. Barrett-Lennard.

RELATIONSHIP INVENTORY

Below are listed a variety of ways that one person could feel or behave toward another. Please consider each statement with reference to your present relationship with your divorcing spouse. Mark each statement by drawing a circle around the number at the right, according to how strongly you feel that it is true, or not true, in this relationship. Please mark every one. Circle +3, +2, +1; or -1, -2, -3, to stand for the following answers:

+3: Yes, I strongly feel that it is true.

+2: Yes, I feel it is true.

+1: Yes, I feel it is probably true, or more true than untrue.

-1: No, I feel that it is probably untrue, or more untrue than true.

-2: No, I feel it is not true.

-3: No, I strongly feel that it is not true.

- | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1. She respects me as a person. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 2. She wants to understand how I see things. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 3. Her interest in me depends on the things I say or do. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 4. She is comfortable and at ease in our relationship. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 5. She feels a true liking for me. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 6. She may understand my words, but she does not see the way I feel. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 7. Whether I am feeling happy or unhappy with myself makes no real difference to the way she feels about me. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 8. I feel that she puts on a role or front with me. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 9. She is impatient with me. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 10. She nearly always knows exactly what I mean. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 11. Depending on my behavior, she has a better opinion of me sometimes than she has at other times. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 12. I feel that she is real and genuine with me. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 13. I feel appreciated by her. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |

14. She looks at what I do from her own point of view.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
15. Her feeling toward me doesn't depend on how I feel toward her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
16. It makes her uneasy when I ask or talk about certain things.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
17. She is indifferent to me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
18. She usually senses or realises what I am feeling.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
19. She wants me to be a particular kind of person.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
20. I nearly always feel that what she says expresses exactly what she is feeling and thinking as she says it.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
21. She finds me rather dull and uninteresting.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
22. Her own attitudes toward some of the things I do or say prevent her from understanding me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
23. I can (or could) be openly critical or appreciative of her without really making her feel any differently about me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
24. She wants me to think that she likes me or understands me more than she really does.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
25. She cares for me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
26. Sometimes she thinks that <u>I</u> feel a certain way, because that's the way <u>she</u> feels.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
27. She likes certain things about me, and there are other things she does not like.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
28. She does not avoid anything that is important for our relationship.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
29. I feel that she disapproves of me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
30. She realises what I mean even when I have difficulty in saying it.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
31. Her attitude toward me stays the same: she is not pleased with me sometimes and critical or disappointed at other times.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
32. Sometimes she is not at all comfortable but we go on, outwardly ignoring it.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3

33. She just tolerates me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
34. She usually understands the whole of what I mean.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
35. If I show I am angry with her she becomes hurt or angry with me, too.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
36. She expresses her true impressions and feelings with me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
37. She is friendly and warm with me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
38. She just takes no notice of some things that I think or feel.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
39. How much she likes or dislikes me is not altered by anything that I tell her about myself.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
40. At times I sense that she is not aware of what she is really feeling with me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
41. I feel that she really values me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
42. She appreciates exactly how the things I experience feel to me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
43. She approves of some things I do, and plainly disapproves of others.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
44. She is willing to express whatever is actually in her mind with me, including any feelings about herself or about me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
45. She doesn't like me for myself.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
46. At times she thinks that I feel a lot more strongly about a particular thing than I really do.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
47. Whether I am in good spirits or feeling upset does not make her feel any more or less appreciative of me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
48. She is openly herself in our relationship.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
49. I seem to irritate and bother her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
50. She does not realise how sensitive I am about some of the things we discuss.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
51. Whether the ideas and feelings I express are "good" or "bad" seems to make no difference to her feeling toward me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3

52. There are times when I feel that her outward response to me is quite different from the way she feels underneath.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
53. At times she feels contempt for me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
54. She understands me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
55. Sometimes I am more worthwhile in her eyes than I am at other times.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
56. I have not felt that she tries to hide anything from herself that she feels with me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
57. She is truly interested in me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
58. Her response to me is usually so fixed and automatic that I don't really get through to her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
59. I don't think that anything I say or do really changes the way she feels toward me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
60. What she says to me often gives a wrong impression of her whole thought or feeling at the time.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
61. She feels deep affection for me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
62. When I am hurt or upset she can recognise my feelings exactly, without becoming upset herself.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
63. What other people think of me does (or would, if she knew) affect the way she feels toward me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
64. I believe that she has feelings she does not tell me about that are causing difficulty in our relationship.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3

RELATIONSHIP INVENTORY

Below are listed a variety of ways that one person could feel or behave toward another. Please consider each statement with reference to your present relationship with your divorcing spouse. Mark each statement by drawing a circle around the number at the right, according to how strongly you feel that it is true, or not true, in this relationship. Please mark every one. Circle +3, +2, +1; -1, -2, -3, to stand for the following answers:

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+1: Yes, I feel it is probably true, or more true than untrue.

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-2: No, I feel it is not true.

-3: No, I strongly feel that it is not true.

- | | | | | | | |
|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1. He respects me as a person | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 2. He wants to understand how I see things. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 3. His interest in me depends on the things I say or do. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 4. He is comfortable and at ease in our relationship. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 5. He feels a true liking for me. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 6. He may understand my words, but he does not see the way I feel. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 7. Whether I am feeling happy or unhappy with myself makes no real difference to the way he feels about me. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 8. I feel that he puts on a role or front with me. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 9. He is impatient with me. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 10. He nearly always knows exactly what I mean. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 11. Depending on my behavior, he has a better opinion of me sometimes than he has at other times. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 12. I feel that he is real and genuine with me. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 13. I feel appreciated by him. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |

14. He looks at what I do from his own point of view.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
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43. He approves of some things I do, and plainly disapproves of others.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
44. He is willing to express whatever is actually in his mind with me, including any feelings about himself or about me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
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46. At times he thinks that I feel a lot more strongly about a particular thing than I really do.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
47. Whether I am in good spirits or feeling upset does not make him feel any more or less appreciative of me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
48. He is openly himself in our relationship.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
49. I seem to irritate and bother him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
50. He does not realise how sensitive I am about some of the things we discuss.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
51. Whether the ideas and feelings I express are "good" or "bad" seems to make no difference to his feeling toward me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3

52. There are times when I feel that his outward response to me is quite different from the way he feels underneath.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
53. At times he feels contempt for me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
54. He understands me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
55. Sometimes I am more worthwhile in his eyes than I am at other times.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
56. I have not felt that he tries to hide anything from himself that he feels with me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
57. He is truly interested in <u>me</u> .	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
58. His response to me is usually so fixed and automatic that I don't really get through to him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
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60. What he says to me often gives a wrong impression of his whole thought or feeling at the time.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
61. He feels deep affection for me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
62. When I am hurt or upset he can recognise my feelings exactly, without becoming upset himself.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
63. What other people think of me does (or would, if he knew) affect the way he feels toward me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
64. I believe that he has feelings he does not tell me about that are causing difficulty in our relationship.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3

RELATIONSHIP INVENTORY

Below are listed a variety of ways that one person could feel or behave in relation to another. Please consider each statement with reference to your present relationship with your divorcing spouse. Mark each statement by drawing a circle around the number at the right, according to how strongly you feel that it is true, or not true, in this relationship. Please mark every one. Circle +3, +2, +1; or -1, -2, -3, to stand for the following answers:

+3: Yes, I strongly feel that it is true.

+2: Yes, I feel it is true.

+1: Yes, I feel it is probably true, or more true than untrue.

-1: No, I feel that it is probably untrue, or more untrue than true.

-2: No, I feel it is not true.

-3: No, I strongly feel that it is not true.

- | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1. I respect her as a person. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 2. I want to understand how she sees things. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 3. The interest I feel in her depends on the things she says or does. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 4. I feel at ease with her. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 5. I really like her. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 6. I understand her words, but do not know how she actually feels. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 7. Whether she is feeling pleased or unhappy with herself does not change my feeling toward her. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 8. I am inclined to put on a role or front with her. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 9. I do feel impatient with her. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 10. I nearly always know exactly what she means. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 11. Depending on her actions, I have a better opinion of her sometimes than I do at other times. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 12. I feel that I am genuinely myself with her. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 13. I appreciate her as a person. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |

14. I look at what she does from my own point of view.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
15. The way I feel about her doesn't depend on her feelings toward me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
16. It bothers me when she tries to ask or talk about certain things.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
17. I feel indifferent to her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
18. I do usually sense or realise how she is feeling.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
19. I would like her to be a particular kind of person.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
20. When I speak to her I nearly always can say freely just what I'm thinking or feeling at that moment.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
21. I find her rather dull and uninteresting.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
22. What she says or does arouses feelings in me that prevent me from understanding her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
23. Whether she criticises me or shows appreciation of me does not (or would not) change my inner feeling toward her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
24. I would really prefer her to think that I like or understand her even when I don't.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
25. I care for her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
26. Sometimes I think that she feels a certain way, because that's the way I feel myself.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
27. I like her in some ways, while there are other things about her that I do not like.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
28. I don't feel that I have been ignoring or putting off anything that is important for our relationship.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
29. I do feel disapproval of her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
30. I can tell what she means, even when she has difficulty in saying it.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
31. My feeling toward her stays about the same; I am not in sympathy with her one time and out of patience another time.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
32. Sometimes I am not at all comfortable with her but we go on, outwardly ignoring it.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3

33. I put up with her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
34. I usually catch and understand the whole of her meaning.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
35. If she gets impatient or mad at me I become angry or upset too.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
36. I am able to be sincere and direct in whatever I express with her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
37. I feel friendly and warm toward her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
38. I ignore some of her feelings.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
39. My liking or disliking of her is not altered by anything that she says about herself.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
40. At times I just don't know, or don't realise until later, what my feelings are with her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
41. I value our relationship.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
42. I appreciate just how her experiences feel to her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
43. I feel quite pleased with her sometimes, and then she disappoints me at other times.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
44. I feel comfortable to express whatever is in my mind with her, including any feelings about myself or about her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
45. I really don't like her as a person.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
46. At times I <u>think</u> that she feels strongly about something and then it turns out that she doesn't.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
47. Whether she appears in good spirits, or is bothered and upset, does not make me feel any more or any less appreciation of her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
48. I can be quite openly myself in our relationship.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
49. Somehow she really irritates me (gets under my skin).	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
50. At the time, I don't realise how touchy or sensitive she is about some of the things we discuss.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
51. Whether she is expressing "good" thoughts and feelings, or "bad" ones, does not affect the way I feel toward her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3

52. There are times when my outward response to her is quite different from the way I feel underneath.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
53. In fact, I feel contempt toward her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
54. I understand her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
55. Sometimes she seems to me a more worthwhile person than she does at other times.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
56. I don't sense any feelings in relation to her that are hard for me to face and admit to myself.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
57. I truly am interested in her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
58. I often respond to her rather automatically, without taking in what she is experiencing.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
59. I don't think that anything she says or does really alters the way I feel toward her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
60. What I say to her often would give a wrong impression of my full thought or feeling at the time.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
61. I feel deep affection for her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
62. When she is hurt or upset I can recognize just how she feels, <u>without</u> getting upset myself.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
63. What other people think and feel about her does help to make <u>me</u> feel as I do toward her.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
64. I feel there are things we don't talk about that are causing difficulty in our relationship.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3

RELATIONSHIP INVENTORY

Below are listed a variety of ways that one person could feel or behave in relation to another. Please consider each statement with reference to your present relationship with your divorcing spouse. Mark each statement by drawing a circle around the number at the right, according to how strongly you feel that it is true, or not true, in this relationship. Please mark every one. Circle +3, +2, +1; or -1, -2, -3, to stand for the following answers:

+3: Yes, I strongly feel that it is true.

+2: Yes, I feel it is true.

+1: Yes, I feel it is probably true, or more true than untrue.

-1: No, I feel that it is probably untrue, or more untrue than true.

-2: No, I feel it is not true.

-3: No, I strongly feel that it is not true.

- | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1. I respect him as a person. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 2. I want to understand how he sees things. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 3. The interest I feel in him depends on the things he says or does. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 4. I feel at ease with him. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 5. I really like him. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 6. I understand him words, but do not know how he actually feels. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 7. Whether he is feeling pleased or unhappy with himself does not change my feeling toward him. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 8. I am inclined to put on a role or front with him. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 9. I do feel impatient with him. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 10. I nearly always know exactly what he means. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 11. Depending on his actions, I have a better opinion of him sometimes than I do at other times. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 12. I feel that I am genuinely myself with him. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 13. I appreciate him as a person. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |

14. I look at what he does from my own point of view.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
15. The way I feel about him doesn't depend on his feelings toward me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
16. It bothers me when he tries to ask or talk about certain things.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
17. I feel indifferent to him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
18. I do usually sense or realise how he is feeling.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
19. I would like him to be a particular kind of person.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
20. When I speak to him I nearly always can say freely just what I'm thinking or feeling at that moment.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
21. I find him rather dull and uninteresting.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
22. What he says or does arouses feelings in me that prevent me from understanding him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
23. Whether he criticises me or shows appreciation of me does not (or would not) change my inner feeling toward him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
24. I would really prefer him to think that I like or understand him even when I don't.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
25. I care for him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
26. Sometimes I think that he feels a certain way, because that's the way I feel myself.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
27. I like him in some ways, while there are other things about him that I do not like.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
28. I don't feel that I have been ignoring or putting off anything that is important for our relationship.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
29. I do feel disapproval of him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
30. I can tell what he means, even when he has difficulty in saying it.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
31. My feeling toward him stays about the same; I am not in sympathy with him one time and out of patience another time.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
32. Sometimes I am not at all comfortable with him but we go on, outwardly ignoring it.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3

33. I put up with him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
34. I usually catch and understand the whole of his meaning.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
35. If he gets impatient or mad at me I become angry or upset too.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
36. I am able to be sincere and direct in whatever I express with him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
37. I feel friendly and warm toward him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
38. I ignore some of his feelings.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
39. My liking or disliking of him is not altered by anything that he says about himself.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
40. At times I just don't know, or don't realise until later, what my feelings are with him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
41. I value our relationship.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
42. I appreciate just how his experiences feel to him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
43. I feel quite pleased with him sometimes, and then he disappoints me at other times.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
44. I feel comfortable to express whatever is in my mind with him, including any feelings about myself or about him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
45. I really don't like him as a person.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
46. At times I <u>think</u> that he feels strongly about something and then it turns out that he doesn't.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
47. Whether he appears in good spirits or is bothered and upset, does not make me feel any more or any less appreciation of him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
48. I can be quite openly myself in our relationship.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
49. Somehow he really irritates me (gets under my skin).	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
50. At the time, I don't realise how touchy or sensitive he is about some of the things we discuss.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
51. Whether he is expressing "good" thoughts and feelings, or "bad" ones, does not affect the way I feel toward him.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3

- | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 52. There are times when my outward response to him is quite different from the way I feel underneath. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 53. In fact, I feel contempt toward him. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 54. I understand him. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 55. Sometimes he seems to me a more worthwhile person than he does at other times. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 56. I don't sense any feelings in relation to him that are hard for me to face and admit to myself. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 57. I truly am interested in him. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 58. I often respond to him rather automatically, without taking in what he is experiencing. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 59. I don't think that anything he says or does really alters the way I feel toward him. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 60. What I say to him often would give a wrong impression of my full thought or feeling at the time. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 61. I feel deep affection for him. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 62. When he is hurt or upset I can recognise just how he feels, <u>without</u> getting upset myself. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 63. What other people think and feel about him does help to make <u>me</u> feel as I do toward him. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |
| 64. I feel there are things we don't talk about that are causing difficulty in our relationship. | +3 | +2 | +1 | -1 | -2 | -3 |

Code:.....

RELATIONSHIP INVENTORY SCORING SHEET

Date answered: 102

R.I. form:.....

64 item forms

.....

Type of relationship (e.g. husband/wife).

Respondent's position in relationship (e.g. husband).

Level of Regard		Empathy		Unconditionality		Congruence	
Positive items	Answer	Positive items	Answer	Positive items	Answer	Positive items	Answer
1		2		7		4	
5		10		15		12	
13		18		23		20	
25		30		31		28	
37		34		39		36	
41		42		47		44	
57		54		51		48	
61		62		59		56	
Sum: Sub-total #1							
Negative items	Answer	Negative items	Answer	Negative items	Answer	Negative items	Answer
9		6		3		8	
17		14		11		16	
21		22		19		24	
29		26		27		32	
33		38		35		40	
45		46		43		52	
49		50		55		60	
53		58		63		64	
Sum (for neg. items)							
-1 x Sum: Sub-total #2							
Sub-total #1 + #2: Scale Score							

APPENDIX G
STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FOR DIVORCING PARENTS

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Date Married: _____ How long known before marriage? _____

Husband's age now? _____ Wife's age now? _____

How long separated now? _____

Ever separated before? _____ Number of times separated before _____

Longest separation? _____

Have either spouses parents:ns been divorced? _____

Age of Husband : at time of his parents divorce _____

Age of wife at : time of her parents divorce _____

Highest grade or degree completed:

Husband _____

Wife _____

Employment:

Husband's current job or training for job _____

Wife's current : job or training for job _____

Where did Husband grow up? _____ Wife? _____

Socio-economic class of parents: (Lower, Middle, or Upper)

Husband _____ Wife _____

Biggest problems in the marriage?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Explanatory notes for any of the above answers:

APPENDIX H

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW FOR NON-DIVORCING PARENTS

STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

Date Married: _____ How long known before marriage? _____

Husband's age now? _____ Wife's age now? _____

Number of Children? _____ Children's ages? _____

Ever separated before? _____ Number of times separated before? _____

Longest separation? _____

Has either spouse been divorced before? Husband _____ Wife _____

Have either spouses parents been divorced? _____

If so, age of Husband at time of his parents divorce _____

If so, age of Wife at time of her parents divorce _____

Highest grade or degree completed:

Husband _____

Wife _____

Employment:

Husband's current job or training for job _____

Wife's current job or training for job _____

Where did Husband grow up? _____ Wife? _____

Socio-economic class of parents: (Lower, Middle, or Upper)

Husband _____ Wife _____

Biggest problems in marriage?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Explanatory notes for any of the above answers:

