Family ties: a longitudinal analysis of children's conceptions of family during childhood and adolescence

Citation

Cook, Susan J. 1983. "Family ties: a longitudinal analysis of children's conceptions of family during childhood and adolescence." Qualifying Paper, Harvard Graduate School of Education.

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FAMILY TIES:

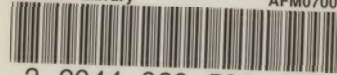A LONGITUDINAL ANALYSIS OF

CHILDREN'S CONCEPTIONS OF FAMILY

DURING CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE

QUALIFYING PAPER

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DECEMBER 1983

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CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

For two women who will always be part of my family
because I have pictures of them when I was young
and because I will always remember them.

Susan AnneMarie Crehan

1951 - 1975

Hazel May Spencer

1892 - 1975

Introduction

In Judgement and Reasoning in the Child, (1959, orig, 1928)

Piaget continues his examination of the developing child's

understanding of physical and social reality. The results of one

study reported in this work are offered as evidence complimentary

to Piaget's hypothesis that the developmental path of "the idea"

is marked by a transition from an "egocentric immediacy" to

"objective relativism" and that the process of socialization of

childhood thought is indeed long and gradual. Thirty boys

between the ages of seven and ten were interviewed concerning

their definition of the idea of family. Piaget remarks that

while the exploration of children's thought in this domain of

social reality seems apparently unconnected to the logic of

relations between ideas about the physical world, his data

demonstrate that indeed the thought of his young subjects

constrains the idea of family which they entertain. He defines

three stages of understanding, noting that before age 10, his

subjects take no account of blood-relationship. At the first

stage, "just as a child can know of which parents his brother is

the son of and yet not be led to the reciprocity of the relation

of brother, so in attempting to define his family, he gets no

further than the point of view of the moment," (p. 117) and

defines family only by the circumstance of living togeher.

At the second stage, "the idea of relationship intervenes but does not yet supplant the fact of living together...Family relationships are therefore not yet thought of by the child as independent of time and place " (p. 118).

It is not until the third stage (reached at approximately age 11) that the child becomes capable of eclipsing his own "immediate perception of things" and conceptualizes the family as a continuous "idea" captured in the relationship. Piaget concludes that the defects of childhood logic are again revealed in the young child's awareness of this realm of reality. Because each idea is anchored to its own compelling immediacy, the child is ignorant of both the relations between solitary ideas (reciprocity) and lacking in "a desire to avoid contradiction" which in mature reasoning is reflected in the reversibility of thought.

Social cognitive theory has elaborated Piaget's contention that the child's immature logic limits understanding of relationship (Borke, 1975; Chandler, 1973; Chandler and Greenspan, 1972; Cox, 1975; Dodwell, 1963; Feffer and Gourevitch, 1960; Fishbein et al, 1972; Flapan, 1968; Flavell et al, 1968; Garner and Plant, 1972; Glucksberg et al, 1966; Greenspan et al, 1973; Hoy, 1974; Laurendeau and Pinard, 1960; Maratsos, 1973; Masanzkay et al, 1974; Sheehan-Watson, 1975). The idea and the child's focus on the point of view of the moment become, in

social cognition, the child's perspective. This domain of social
psychology has examined the notion that the child's inability to
decenter from his/her own perspective creates an egocentric
deficit in the child's conception of interpersonal relations. The
brevity and transitory quality of the young child's thought
applied to understanding of social reality implies that the
young child cannot be aware of relationship as continuous. Robert
Selman's (1981) analysis of the development of the child's
coordination of social perspectives suggests that children do not
conceptualize friendships as continuous, enduring or
interdependent until somewhere between the ages of 9 and 15. The
logical deficits of the child's awareness are seen as limiting
the child's potential to understand relationship with another
per son as true involvement between self and other because the
child cannot cognitively grasp the concept of "relationship". In
this scheme, relationship means the creation of a third
perspective which unifies the separate perspectives of two
individuals. If this construct is not available for reflection,
the child's capacity for true self-other engagement is seriously
questioned.

Our central thesis is that social cognitive theory has
minimized the contribution of the experience of close
relationship during childhood to the development of the child's
interpersonal awareness. In its allegiance to Piagetian notions

of egocentrism and the empowering capacity of logical understanding to bridge human difference, social cognitive theory has made the assumption that mature social logic makes awareness of closeness, dependence and continuity in relationship possible. From this theoretical perspective logical understanding makes mature adult relationship possible.

This reliance on mature perspective-taking as the cognitive magnet which allows human beings to be aware of close relationships overlooks the ontogenetic fact that children are born into a condition of dependence and reared in the context of responsive and continuous relationship in their families. We suggest that the application of a logical configuration of social knowledge built on the coordination of social perspectives to the child's awareness of relationship fails to capture significant features of the child's interpersonal awareness, specifically in the context of the family. While Selman has sought to map the development of children's conceptions of friendship, we offer preliminary data which suggests that he has framed children's understanding in a stencil of logic. The imposition of this stencil on the child's understanding subordinates the engaging power of the contextual experience of human relationship and responsivity to the structures of logical thought that Selman has identified.

In this paper we will examine the features of this

subordination and analyse the assumptions of cognitive-developmental theory which create them. We will also present data on children's conceptions of family which suggest that significant characteristics of the child's awareness of the interpersonal world have not been captured as a result of this subordination.

Carol Gilligan (1981) suggests that psychological theory has often excluded the experience of human relationship as a significant influence on development. Theory, Gilligan points out, has defined the trajectory of growth as thrusting us ever-onward toward a "mature" state of separation, autonomous self-agency and self-reference. Developmental theory has been built on research samples which largely exclude women. Females, Gilligan says, oftentimes fall short of theory's definition of maturity because relationships retain a salience throughout the life cycle which men may not experience. Selman's paradigm defines a somewhat different arc of development. In his analysis of the development of interpersonal awareness, the child's understanding moves from the insularity that egocentricity and fleeting perspectives create to the potential acquisition of a conception of relationship at adolescence or late latency. To define the trajectory of growth as moving from egocentricity to dependence or from dependence to separation is to fail to capture the ontogenetic and phyllogenetic human condition within

which development unfolds. We begin and spend much of our lives in dependent relationship. Development changes the quality of dependence, the human vulnerability that is responded to in close relationship and introduces the task of reconstructing dependent relationship with people with whom we have no organic or genetic tie. Growth does not create dependent relationship or eliminate it from the repetoire of human concerns.

This longitudinal pilot study of children's conceptions of family was begun as an analysis of the meaning of the psychological construct of attachment during latency and adolescence, family serving as a metaphor for the experience of attachment. Our preliminary analysis suggests that the child's understanding in this realm does not demonstrate the deficits in awareness of relationship that Selman describes in children's coneptions of friendship.The discrepancies we will describe raise questions concerning the limitations of the application of cognitive-developmental theory to the domain of human relationship.

The task we undertake here is to contrast cognitive perspective-taking as the psychological process that precipitates understanding of relationship and the experience of close relationship as a precipitant of psychological processes which shape our awareness of social reality. Specifically, we define experience as the context which close relationship creates, a

context of response to our inborn vulnerability which breeds both
an awareness of relationship as continuous and an awareness of a
configuration between self and other, an engagement. We suggest
that current theory does not explain or address the psychological
process that allows the isolated moment of response to have a
significant impact on the child's awareness. Cognitive-
developmental theory ties the child's awareness of the present to
the constraints imposed by the limitations of development. What
we explore in this paper is psychological theory that explains
how the present in all its nuance and splendor is brought to bear
upon itself.

The acquisition of an awareness of other human beings (and
therefore relationship) as significant features of our
surroundings is fundamental to human socialization. We gravitate
toward other people throughout the life cycle. The potentialities
that we acquire at different times in the life cycle dictate the
nature of the gravitation but as infants, toddlers or adults we
are capable of demonstrating a profound interest in other human
beings. This gravitation, which we call engagement remains
vulnerable to the power of the moment, the single gesture of
human response, in ways which our logical structuring is not.
Psychologists observe engagement between toddlers and mothers, in
the study of intimacy, in close friendships, but the significance
of its influence on our awareness of the interpersonal world and

the way in which we know others has not been examined. In order to understand the role of engagement in the development of knowing the interpersonal world, we must demonstrate that it exists in the knowledge of children and then seek theory that explains the psychological process that prompts this kind of knowing.

The data we will present begins to suggest that although logic may constrain the complexity of thought that we bring to our reflections on the process of engagement, it does not constrain our awareness of our engagement. Children's conceptions of family reveal features of their way of knowing the interpersonal world and its configuration which the application of the stencil of logic to their conceptions has not captured.

Comparing Ways of Knowing

The author's Conceptions of Family interview was developed as a tool to examine the meaning of the psychological construct of attachment, serving as a metaphor for the experience of attachment. In 1980, fourteen children (4 males, 10 females) ranging in age from 7 to 17 years of age were interviewed using Piaget's classic "probing" techniques as a means of tapping subjects' underlying reasoning and establishing their psychological structuring of this realm of interpersonal awareness. Second interviews were conducted in 1983 at an

average Time 2 of 29.4 months (range of Time1/Time2 lapse = 22 to 32.5 months). We will begin our comparison of the influence on interpersonal awareness of perspective-taking and the experience of close relationship by presenting two examples of children's definition of the family.

Ku, age 7 yrs. 7 mo., a subject in Piaget's study, was asked to define a family and is presented by Piaget as an example of the first stage of understanding in which "egocentric immediacy" precludes an awareness of the continuity of relationship because the child "gets no further than the point of view of the moment." Sam, age 7 yrs. 10 mo., was interviewed by the author during Time 1 data collection. An important qualifying statement concerning methodology should be made. Piaget was content to rely on the child's verbal descriptions of the present family as both necessary and sufficient data from which to draw conclusions about the underlying structure of the child's in-this-case unverbalized reasoning. The author carried the inquiry one step further and probed the tenacity of child's point of view of the moment by asking him to construct his definition of the family in the context of the future. Piaget's example is quoted as it appears in his book (p. 116).

Ku (7 yrs. 7 mos.)	Sam (7 yrs. 10 mos.)
A family is "when they are all together." IS THIS A FAMILY? "No, when	WHEN YOU'RE 50 AND YOUR SISTER IS 53, WILL YOU STILL BE A FAMILY? "No."

they both have the same
family name." But cousins
and aunts are not in the
family "because they don't
live with us." IF YOUR AUNT
LIVED WITH YOU WOULD YOU SAY
SHE WAS IN THE FAMILY? "Yes."

HOW COME? "Because I
think when you're 20
you sort of go out alot
and you sort of don't
come home very often and
you, like, stay out late,
and then finally, one day
you get married and then
that's when you really don't
see your family very much."
SO IF YOU DON'T SEE THEM
VERY MUCH DOES THAT MAKE IT
NOT A FAMILY? "Well, no.
We're still a family, but
we're still not broken up."
YOU'RE STILL A FAMILY, BUT
YOU'RE STILL NOT BROKEN UP?
HOW COME YOU'RE STILL A
FAMILY? "Because. That's a
hard one. Because you're
still a family. Like your
Mom and Dad still remember
you and they have pictures of
you when you're young and
stuff and you'll always be a
family and even when Mom and
Dad die, we'll still be a
family because I'll always
remember them."

If we had followed the tradition of psychology prior to the

introduction of Piaget's "methode-clinique", we would have been

satisifed that Sam's first response established his definition of

family as much like that of Ku. But Piaget has taught us that we

must allow our subjects to reveal their world views in their own

terms, by elaborating the private meaning they attach to events.

It is by seeking out the "reasons" Sam calls upon to justify his

definition of family, "in connexion with certain problems raised

by the child himself, in connexion with his language and

especially with the evolution of meaning which he attaches to certain expressions" that we reveal, as Piaget speculated, "the most significant and the most unforeseen features" of Sam's awareness of interpersonal relationship (1928, p. 135).

If it is the irreversibility of Ku's logic that prevents him from grasping the "idea" of relationship, what is the psychology of knowing that brings Sam to an awareness of his family relationship as irreversible and continuous, to describe it as an engagement that is independent of time and place? If Sam's "logic" does not preclude an awareness of relationship as continuous and engaged, why have social cognitive psychologists built a theory premised on the notion that egocentricity precludes this awareness of the relation between self and other?

The absence of a sense of attachment in Ku's conception perhaps can be attributed to Piaget's failure to comply with his own "probing" interview technique. We can only speculate about the direction Piaget's theory construction might have taken had he asked Ku why a family has to live together to be a family. Perhaps if Ku, like Sam, had generated a notion of relationship as independent of time and place, he would have been deemed precocious. Alternatively, Piaget might have been led to include in his theory an explanation that acknowledges Sam's way of knowing his interpersonal world. Social cognitive theory that has evolved from Piaget's early work does not currently explain Sam's

evasion of the deficits of logic in his relationship.

Another explanation for the discrepancy between Sam and Ku might lie in the realm of experience. Sam's language implies an engagement felt between he and his parents that overrides the illogic of his inattention to possible future conflict. He may know about the continuity of his family relationship and the staying power of their interpersonal engagement not because of his logical understanding but because of his experience. Sam's family creates a context where people respond to him for no logical reason. They simply do and they always have. His ability to construct a logic for the psychology of human response is probably limited but Sam has experienced the activity of care, the moment of human response from his earliest hours. We suspect that it is this experience of responsivity that has bred the felt engagement that Sam's language implies. Formal operational thinking and mature logic will not provide Sam with a reason that explains why people have responded to him. Mature logic may allow him to reflect on intentionality, human subjectivity or rules for childrearing. But the reason for response that a 7 year old can reflect on does not become illogical with the acquisition of formal logic. Sam's family responds because they care about him. They love him.

If formal logic does not provide a "reason" for human responsivity, does that mean that Sam's awareness of it must be

relegated to the realm of affective functioning? Does it mean that this area of social experience lies beyond the circle of awareness that social cognition can address? Because Ku can only generate one idea to define family, Piaget's analysis suggests that Ku is unaware of this collective experience of responsivity—that his logic constrains the influence of his felt-engagement. Perhaps our comparision of Ku and Sam only demonstrates that there is a division between what can be known about relationship through the use of logic and what can be known through feeling. It may be that the application of Piaget's stencil affirms that division. In this light, one explanation for Sam's precocious awareness of relationship could be that he has been temporarily overwhelmed by feeling, a brief flood of affect, a large school of tiny fish that have emerged from the recesses of his psyche to tip his usually steady logic on its side.

We know from Piaget's writings that his position concerning the relationship between affect and cognition is unequivocal: "Failure to understand the concommitant indissocability and fundamental heterogeneity of cognition and affectivity leads to paradoxical explanations" (1981, p. 15). Thus to conclude that the discrepancy between Sam and Ku arises because Sam is feeling and Ku is thinking is to succumb to a deficit of the current status of theory.

Problems of Theory

This brings us to a point where we can begin to discuss some of the paradoxes that exist in social cognitive theory as it is presently formulated and phenomena which it does not adequately explain. Sam's conception of his family is one example of the limited capacity of social cognitive theory to fully capture awareness. The consequences of the subordination to social logic of the engaging power of the contextual experience of human relationship will be discussed in 4 areas of concern. First we will examine the validity of egocentrism as a cognitive construct and examine the extent to which it has been confirmed as a way of knowing independent from other ways of knowing. Second, we will discuss the utility of perspective-taking in explaining adult social behavior . Third, we will examine in detail the deficits immature perspective-taking creates for understanding of relationship that Robert Selman has described. The discussion makes clear the specific ways in which the context of relationship is qualified as an influence on awareness. Finally we will return to th problem of feeling, being engaged in relationship, and knowing. We will examine existing social theory that begins to recognize the continuing influence of our immediate surroundings, the context of experience, in both engaging us and influencing our awareness.

Egocentric Knowing and the Case for its Validity. Piaget's analysis of the child's developing construction of reality has been an effort to demonstrate how truly different the young child's experience of reality is from our own. Fundamentally, the young child's experience is held to be egocentric, because of the status of his/her cognitive structure.Structure emerges, he says, from "the constant duality, or bipolarity, of always being simultaneously structuring and structured." The functional rules or factors which govern the development of structure are assimilation, whereby the child takes in or fits novel pieces of experience into his/her existing view and accomodation, which Piaget described in one of his earlier and lyrical moments as "the self's desire to be always repeating the history of things so as to become adapted to them" (1928, p. 173). It is the dynamic interaction of these two functions that create structure, the child's worldview; the process through which the child's worldview both becomes like that of the world around him/her and through which it remains the same. Cognitive structure, Piaget holds, is both resistant and necessarily receptive. In its construction it creates the necessity that things be structured and that they be seen as they have been structured.

> Structures - in being constructed - give rise to that
> necessity which a priorist theories have always thought it
> necessary to posit at the outset. Necessity, instead of
> being the prior condition for learning, is its outcome
> (1970, p. 62).

The reconstruction of the capacity to <u>know</u> human knowledge takes a long time thus the transformation of structure to its highest level where thought becomes our own product, "takes a good dozen years", according to Piaget (1970, p. 62). Thus, transformation or change of cognitive structure is a long process. Fundamentally, this suggests that the moment of social response and experience is limited in its capacity to change awareness.

The central point is this. In the endeavor to determine how structure in its various states forecloses and qualifies the child's knowledge of the physical and social world, cognitive-developmental psychologists come to a point where the child's experience as the recipient of response is salient only in its collective conflict-arousing force as a precipitant of structural change. Structure, then, as the hackneyed filter of experience, resists the influence of the power of the moment. The contextual feature that engages as the child receives response is tied to the status or lability of his/her existing structure.

For the young child, the deficit that cognitive structure imposes is, in part, an egocentric view of the world. The search for empirical support for the validity of egocentrism has been the primary thrust of the research of social cognitive psychologists. If one cannot prove that egocentrism is a way of knowing independent and distinct from the limitations imposed by

other intellectual or social propensities (intelligence, social skills, extroversion) then the case for claiming the existence of egocentrism as a unified psychological construct is undermined. The centrality of cognitive structure as a filter of experience is questioned.

Egocentrism as a Way of Knowing. Martin Ford (1979) has called into question the construct validity of egocentrism and the conclusiveness of empirical data which has been accrued as evidence of its existence as a psychological construct. He proposes that if egocentrism is unitary, pervasive and as limit-invoking as Piaget and his followers contend, then different measures of egocentrism across children's visual-spatial, affective and cognitive-communicative awareness should be positively and significantly correlated as should measures within each mode. His extensive review of existing data concludes, "measures of egocentrism are typically as highly correlated with other constructs (e.g. IQ , conservation and popularity) as they are with measures of the same construct." "In general, the proportion of egocentric errors is small at all ages and the major developmental trend is not a tendency to make proportionately fewer egocentric errors but rather simply for children to make fewer errors of all kinds" (p. 1183). Ford suggests that the common variance shared among different measures of egocentrism may be the result of some social and cognitive or

personality dimension like social insight or sensitivity, but that egocentism alone is an untenable explanation. Ford concludes that perspective-taking ability seems to account for little variance in performance on egocentrism tasks after age 4 or 5. Indeed, Piaget's (1928) reported "egocentrism coefficients" of the language of children between the ages of 3 and 7 range from .56 for his 3 year old subjects to .27-.30 for seven year olds, suggesting a barely dominant percentage among very young children. "Round about the age of 7, egocentrism diminishes rapidly after having gradually decreased up to that point" (1928, p. 257).

Social cognitive theory suggests that the deficit that egocentric thinking imposes on awareness of the interpersonal world persists until late latency."General intelligence, verbal comprehension, specific spatial or perceptual cognitive factors, characteristics specific to the response required (verbal or nonverbal, symbolic vs. concrete) or variables highly specific to the task, such as whether a real person or a doll is sitting in the position in which a visual/spatial perspective must be inferred" are all offered by Ford as tenable explanations for why young children have difficulty with perspective-taking tasks. We should note that when a child is asked to take the perspective of a real person rather than a doll, performance on the role-taking task improves (Cox 1975). In summary, Ford's

careful review and critique suggests that egocentrism may not be the primary influence on the child's cognitive awareness of the world and, indeed has not been clearly established as a characteristic of the young child's way of knowing and processing social experience.

Knowing and Behavior. If egocentrism is a significant deficit of the young child's thought, then adults should be better perspective-takers in actual social situations. If understanding is ultimately important because it influences our behavior, then we should be at our non-egocentric best as adults. We should not only be able to take the perspective of the other but behave in ways that demonstrate that we can see things through another's eyes when social situations demand a response. A review of studies of adult behavior in emergency situations reveals another paradox that social cognitive theory does not explain. When adults are confronted with emergency situations, contextual features of the immediate surround remain highly influential in determining whether adults actually take the perspective of the victim and respond.

The research on bystander intervention in emergency situations accrued at an accelerated pace following the 1960's murder of Kitty Genovese in a New York City residential section. The reasons why the 38 witnesses who observed the episode failed to take Kitty's perspective and intervene became the underlying

phenomena addressed in many subsequent studies (Aderman and Berkowitz, 1970; Clark and Word, 1972, 1974; Darley and Latane, 1968; Thornstein et al, 1968; Schwartz and Clausen, 1970; Schwartz and Gottlieb, 1980).

The operationalizing of the emergency situation in this body of research has at least as much diversity as the perspective-taking opportunities found in egocentrism studies.The bystander intervention paradigm is created to challenge the subject's ability to construct what the other is seeing, thinking or feeling, or an amalgamation of the three and thus, in a global sense is a role-taking opportunity. The helping opportunity has been created as available in the choice to return a found wallet (Hornstein et al, 1968) or to aid a variety of victims, including: an overheard seizuring seizure victim (Darley and Latane, 1968) (Schwartz and Clausen, 1970), woman falling from a chair with subsequent audible pain (Latane and Rodin, 1969), maintenance man falling from a ladder (Clark and Word, 1977), observed victim of collapse on the New York subway (Piliavin et al, 1969), possible recipient of electric shock (Clark and Word, 1974), target of calculator theft (Harrel and Goltz, 1980; Schwarz et al, 1980) or target of physical attack by a thief (Schwartz and Gottlieb, 1980).

Collectively, results from this work point to the continuing power of contextual features of the situation to influence whose

perspective the subject actually takes, that is, either that of

the self, the victim or other bystanders, or alternatively, what

the perspective of the self will become. Some of this research

has shown that presence of another person or a seemingly

unconcerned bystander inhibits response to the victim. Darley and

Latane refer to this psychological phenomena as "diffusion of

responsiblility." In other situations, presence of helping

models promotes aid for the victim. Generally, more ambiguity in

the context makes it less likely that the subject will claim

responsibility for action as solely his/her own. The less clear

it is that the victim is in danger, that other bystanders are

aware of the emergency, that others view helping as appropriate

or that they know that the subject is in a position to help, the

more difficult it becomes to predict that the bystander will

respond. Thus, the adult perspective-taker seems vulnerable to a

fixation on the point of view of the moment similar to that of

Piaget's young child and the dilemma of the moment becomes one of

resolving the competing salience of multiple cues.

This research suggests that the availability of a

multiplicity of perspectives itself creates a deficit: the

context of the moment remains powerfully salient. The

perspective-taken is remarkably labile and vulnerable to the

experience of social interaction, the particulars of the context.

Ford's primary criticism of egocentrism studies is that

researchers fail to establish what the child is attending to but nevertheless assume that inaccuracy implies egocentrism. Determining what is attended to is precisely the problem that bystander intervention studies have addressed. The deficit of a construct like egocentrism is tranformed in bystander intervention research, to a problem of determining how and why context remains salient as a precursor to action. The more available answer to the non-response of the 38 Kitty Genovese witnesses is that they were egocentric. The psychological process that the experience of the social emergency initiates is by no means understood. The data suggest,however, that the perspective-being-taken by the mature perspective-taker remains tied to the particulars of the social context.

The Deficit that Logic Imposes on Social Awareness

Robert Selman (1980) maintains that the growth of perspective-taking is apparent not only in the child's emergence from egocentrism, but in the development of the coordination of perspectives. The child is capable of understanding early on at age 5 or 6 that the other's perspective is different from that of the self. Coordination of perspectives of self and other, he suggests, is the psychological process that underlies increased understanding of the complexity and diversity of the self, social relationships and social processes. The five levels of

coordination of perspective-taking identified are found in Table
1.

Selman makes it very clear that his analysis of the
coordination of social perspectives is not the application of
cognitive structures to the social arena or the "logic of
recursive thinking ability applied to a social content area"
(1980, p. 34) but rather an examination of "structural shifts in
underlying social concepts of human nature." To truly understand
how the child constructs his social world, Selman holds, one must
examine those conceptions which are inherently social, i.e.
subjectivity of self and other persons, personality, relationship
formation and termination. He elaborates notions put forth by
Piaget and George Herbert Mead (1934) and claims, as Mead
suggests, that both social understanding and the sense of self
are the product of the human ability to coordinate perspectives.

Selman refers to Mead's "dialectical distinction between
the self as subject (the 'I' of the perspective taker) and the
self as object (the 'me' of the perspective being taken)" as the
source of the "integration" which makes "perspective taking truly
social and not simply the application of a developing reflexive
or recursive thinking ability to some arbitrary social content
area" (p. 34). Perspective taking is the result of both the
agency of the "I" acting upon the social world, and the social
world impinging upon the "me". The representation of "the

Table 9-1. *Developmental levels and stages of friendship.*

A. Developmental levels in the coordination of social perspectives (relation between perspectives of self and others)	B. Stages in reflective understanding of close dyadic friendships
Level 0. Egocentric or undifferentiated perspectives. Although the children can recognize the reality of subjective perspectives (e.g., thoughts and feelings) within the self and within others, because they do not clearly distinguish their own perspective from that of others, they do not recognize that another may interpret similarly perceived social experiences or courses of action differently from the way they do. Similarly, there is still some confusion between the subjective (or psychological) and objective (or physical) aspects of the social world, for example, between feelings and intentional acts, or between intentional and unintentional acts. (Roughly ages 3 to 7.)	*Stage 0: Momentary physicalistic playmates.* Conceptions of friendship relations are based on thinking which focuses upon propinquity and proximity (i.e., physicalistic parameters) to the exclusion of others. A close friend is someone who lives close by and with whom the self happens to be playing with at the moment. Friendship is more accurately playmateship. Issues such as jealousy or the intrusion of a third party into a play situation are constructed by the child at Stage 0 as specific fights over specific toys or space rather than as conflicts which involve personal feelings or interpersonal affection.
Level 1: Subjective or differentiated perspectives. The child understands that even under similarly perceived social circumstances the self and others' perspectives may be either the same or different from each other's. Similarly, the child realizes that the self and other may view similarly perceived actions as reflections of disparate or distinct individual reasons or motives. Of particular importance, the child at Level 1 is newly concerned with the uniqueness of the covert, psychological life of each person. (Roughly ages 4 to 9.)	*Stage 1: One-way assistance.* Friendship conceptions are one-way in the sense that a friend is seen as important because he or she performs specific activities that the self wants accomplished. In other words, one person's attitude is unreflectively set up as a standard, and the "friend's" actions must match the standard thus formulated. A close friend is someone who more than Stage 0 demographic credentials; a close friend is someone who is known better than other persons. "Knowing" means accurate knowledge of other's likes and dislikes.
Level 2: Self-reflective or reciprocal perspectives. Children are able to reflect on their own thoughts and feelings from another's perspective — to put themselves in the other's shoes and to see the self as subject to other. This new understanding of the relation between self and other's perspective allows children to consider their own conceptions and evaluations of others' thoughts and actions. In other words, children are able to take a second-person perspective, which leads to an awareness of a new form of reciprocity, a	*Stage 2: Fair-weather cooperation.* The advance of Stage 2 friendships over the previous stages is based on the new awareness of interpersonal perspectives as reciprocal. The two-way nature of friendships is exemplified by concerns for coordinating and approximating, through adjustment by both self and other, the specific likes and dislikes of self and other, rather than matching one person's actions to the other's fixed standard of expectation. The limitation of this Stage is the discontinuity of these reciprocal expectations. Friend-

The child as a friendship philosopher

Table 9-1 (*cont.*)

reciprocity of thought and feelings rather than a reciprocity of action. (Roughly ages 6 to 12.)	ship at Stage 2 is fair-weather — specific arguments are seen as severing the relationship, although both parties may still have affection for one another inside. The coordination of attitudes at the moment defines the relation. No underlying continuity is seen to exist that can maintain the relation during the period of conflict or adjustment.
Level 3: Third-person or mutual perspectives. The subject at Level 3, aware of the infinite regress potential of the chaining of reciprocal perspectives, moves to a qualitatively new level of coordination, an understanding of the person's ability to step outside of an interpersonal interaction and coordinate simultaneously the perspectives of each party in the interaction. This ability to take the third-person perspective leads to the awareness of the mutuality of human perspectives and hence of the self-other relationship. (Roughly ages 9 to 15.)	*Stage 3: Intimate and mutually shared relationships.* At Stage 3 there is the awareness of both a continuity of relation and affective bonding between close friends. The importance of friendship does not rest only upon the fact that the self is bored or lonely; at Stage 3, friendships are seen as a basic means of developing mutual intimacy and mutual support; friends share personal problems. The occurrence of conflicts between friends does not mean the suspension of the relationship, because the underlying continuity between partners is seen as a means of transcending fouls. Stage 3 conceptions derive from the overemphasis of the two-person clique and the possessiveness that arises out of the realization that close relations are difficult to form and to maintain.
Level 4: Societal or in-depth perspectives. The subject conceptualizes subjective perspectives of persons toward one another (mutuality) to exist not only on the plane of common expectations or awareness, but also simultaneously at multidimensional or deeper levels of communication. For example, perspectives between two persons can be shared on the level of superficial information, on the level of common interests, or on the level of deeper and unverbalized feelings. Also, perspectives among persons are seen as forming a network or system. These perspectives become generalized — e.g., into the concept of society's perspective or the legal or moral point of view. (Roughly age 12 to adulthood.)	*Stage 4: Autonomous interdependent friendships.* The interdependence that characterizes Stage 4 is the sense that a person accepts the other's need to establish relations with others and to grow through such experiences. Dependence reflects the awareness that friends must rely on each other for psychological support, to draw strength from each other, and to gain a sense of self-identification through identification with the other as a significant person whose relation to the self is distinct from those with whom one has less meaningful relations.

perspective-being-taken" in Selman's model is not clearly
articulated but he is unequivocal in his emphasis on the
dialectical nature of social development, the mutual influence of
perspective-taking and the perspective-being-taken in creating
social knowledge. He identifies two essential components of
social perspective taking as " 1) a relating-coordinating or
structural component and 2) a conceptual component that,
following Mead, focuses on the intensive qualities of persons or
selves" (p. 40).

    We can tentatively infer, in the absence of more
elaboration, that it is Selman's choice of content, i.e.
children's conceptions of subjective experience of self and other
and of relationship that captures this "perspective taken" piece
of Mead's dialectic. Alternatively, one might interpret Mead's
"perspective-taken" piece as a reference to the context of social
exchange, e.g. the configuration of self and other that emerges
as one interacts with the world. Selman, in defining Mead's
perspective-taken component as " the conceptual component that
focuses on the intensive qualities of persons", creates an
interpretation that extracts the experiential component of
social reality and reduces it to a product of thought. In this
scheme, then, awareness is a process of taking the perspective
of another, who, because s/he is a human being, has particular
qualities or features that must be attended to in order to fully

grasp the perspective.

We would like to suggest that that this definition of "the perspective-taken" does not capture the contribution of the experience of social reality, the real-life awareness of other people in the world who come to have some relationship or configuration to the self. By placing the stencil of the "coordination of perspectives" over the content of the child's thinking about the inherently social qualities of people, Selman does not solve the problem of including the experience of becoming social in a world filled with people. Rather, he remains very faithful to Piaget's conceptualization of influence and change; the power of the real moment to influence awareness is tied to the status or lability of cognitive strcuture.

An example of the difficulty of including the experience of being a person in a world full of people in Selman's paradigm is drawn from a field study which Stone and Selman (1982) conducted to examine the representation of perspective-taking in behavior. Selman and his colleagues (1981) have begun to address the integration of behavior and understanding in extending their study of the child's reflective meaning-making to the area of social cognition-in-action. This move in theory-making, Selman suggests, necessarily means that direct observations of children's behavior must be made to capture their understanding in its truly-interactional social manifestation. The model of

interpersonal competence he presents is an effort to more
precisely define the relationship between behavior, affect,
context _and_ level of interpersonal awareness (social perspective
coordination) as it occurs in social interaction. These four
components can be analysed in the strategies individuals use for
interpersonal negotiation, "the ways individuals deal with others
around consciously perceived differences in interests within a
social or interpersonal context, i.e., where companionship is a
valued commodity" (1981, p. 403).

There are two problems that persist with the interpersonal
negotiation strategy effort. The identification of affect,
behavior and self-other context as significant features of social
experience does not eliminate the need to determine how it _is_
that these dimensions effect the growth of "interpersonal
awareness" itself. These dimensions are seen as influential only
in their interaction with the child's level of perspective
taking. This doesn't address the question of _how_ affect and
context influence the quality of interpersonal _awareness_ that
emerges during childhood.

The second problem is captured in this example of "immature
perspective-taking in action" offered by Stone and Selman.
Including _the child's awareness of a configuration_ _between self_
and other and legitimizing it as an important interpersonal
"knowing" is extremely difficult in a scheme which searches for

the idea of relationship. A Level 1 perspective-taking child can only focus on two perspectives and does not conceptualize their unification as a third perspective, the idea of the relationship. The following behavioral episode is seen by Stone and Selman as an example of this level of understanding in action, "where the child does not consider the relationship between two disagreeing parties".

> When one girl cried because another had teased her, a
> third child advised the girl crying to just forget
> about it. Her strategy did not focus on the relation-
> ship (1982, p.15).

We would like to suggest that her strategy focused precisely on the relationship, her awareness of the configuration between selves that the world is made up of and recognition of the need to smooth ruffled feathers so as to get on with the business of experiencing relationship.

The child's valuation of companionship, which Selman makes implicit, is excluded as having a developmental influence in its own right. The assumption that the crying child was not soothed, was not aware of the response of the child or that a response that included mention of the idea of relationship would be a better indication of awareness of <u>self-otherness</u> is unwarranted. The description of the psychological process through which companionship or other people become valued (or salient features of the social universe)is the developmental process that social cognitive theory overlooks.

Qualifying Awareness. We will discuss Selman's Conceptions of Friendship hierarchy and examine the limitations on awareness of this realm of the social universe that he suggests immature perspective-taking creates.

Before we begin our analysis, however, we point out that the sample used as the data base in the construction of a theory to address this piece of social development was largely composed of males. Out of 93 subjects, ranging in age from 3 to 34, 78 were males and 15 were females. Because earlier work (Jaquette, 1976) demonstrated no disparity between male and female perspective taking, Selman concluded that this disporportion didn't introduce any consistent bias. In subsequent research, he reports finding no sex differences (1980). In work which has followed, samples have been more representative of the sexual composition of society as a whole. The extent to which the traits of children's thought about friendship identified in Selman's scheme are compromised because of this exclusion is unclear. Gilligan's hypothesis, that the configuration of self and other remains more salient to females throughout the life cycle suggests that this exclusion in building a theory of awareness of relationship would have significant consequences. The example offered previously reveals that the girl's attention to relationship is not captured if one views her statement through a stencil of logic.

Conceptions of Close Friendship. Table 1 illustrates the relationship between the child's levels of coordination of social perspective and the stages of the child's awareness of friendship and describes the limitations in awareness which each level and stage imply for the child's understanding. (See Appendix A for more detailed description).

We will examine the extent to which a limitation in understanding forecloses awareness of the following features of the configuration of self and other or relationship: continuity, response, human vulnerability and engagement between self and other. The question we entertain here is this.

If the understanding of these dimensions is qualified by the child's social logic, does that mean that these parts of social experience are undermined:

- as features of the context of relationship which influence how we know the social world?

- as characteristics of the context of relationship which breed engagement?

If we are ultimately concerned with the development of the child's capacity to have relationships, to move through the different kinds of self-other configuration that the life cycle presents, then we must question what the contribution of the coordination of perspective-taking is to this capacity to successfully engage, to "gravitate" toward the other in a fashion

which creates self-otherness.

The categories we will examine are:
- continuity: the capacity to see relationships as enduring
- response: the capacity of the child to be aware of the impact of his/her actions on others or the impact of the other's action on the self
- human vulnerability: the capacity of the child to be aware of human vulnerability as a condition that precipitates human response and relationship
- engagement: the capacity of the child to be aware of any "whole body" involvement in relationship, i.e. a heart,mind, body unison brought to or a part of relationship,a felt-affective presence in relationship.

Continuity. In Selman's scheme, the coordination of social perspective functions as the container, the psychological fabric that makes the conceptual entity of "relationship" possible. Rather than viewing relationship, i.e. self-other involvement, as the container in which coordination of perspectives takes place, his interpretation of his data suggests that the child can only become aware of the psychological construct of relationship when s/he can coordinate two perspectives and hold onto the third conceptual entity, "the relationship" that this coordination of "ideas" makes.

The possibility of "continuity" in friendships does not emerge until the third level of perspective-taking "third-person or mutual perspectives," which is decsribed as attainable between the ages of 9 and 15. Friendships are not understood as

continuous, prior to this stage. Rather, their non-dependence dictates a fleeting, "two ships passing in the night" quality in the understanding of the configuration between self and other. Prior to this point, friendships are understood as non-continuous, difference between self and other precludes its formation. The Stage 0 child thinks friendships end when the friend goes home for supper. The Stage 1 child feels that one negative action on the friend's part finishes things. At Stage 2, called the "Fairweather Cooperation Stage", friendships stumble on "context-specific" conflicts of will. Children at this stage have difficulty seeing "friendship as a system which can transcend the immediate context of specific conflicts or cooperative ventures of each party". Relations are seen as both easily dissolved and "easily re-formulated when conflicts are forgiven and forgotten" (1977, p. 110). Thus before Stage 3, the child's awareness of the configuration between self and other is not recognized as a continuous feature of the experience of being a person among many people.

The ideas that the child can entertain at Stage 3 bring the child to grasp conceptually the notion of "relationship" as a product of the mutual contribution of two parties. The child sees friendship, the place of self and other, as surviving minor conflicts of will or difference and vulnerable to larger transgressions which undermine the "bond of trust," the

willingness of each to share. At this stage, friendships are
seen as eclipsing the "difference" between self and other which
foreclose the possibility of relationship earlier on and "the
sense one has is that friends are part of one another" (1977, p.
110).

At Stage 4 awareness of continuity includes the possibility
of a process of change, that people can become different and
still have continuity in friendship. Friendship is marked by its
capacity to sustain in spite of change, flexibility and growth,
or to sometimes be terminated because of these processes. It is
the Stage 4 awareness of in-depth perspectives that Selman
suggests creates a conception of continuity and dependence in the
configuration of self and other, a reliance on each other in the
face of human difference and vulnerability.

Response. Awareness of the power of human response to breed
relationship is limited in the pre-Stage 3 child because of the
inability of the child to be aware of reciprocity as anything
other than a barter system between two contributing parties.
People's actions in a relationship have an impact on each other.
Response of one person to another impacts, whether it is
reciprocated or not. Because the pre-Stage 3 child cannot grasp
the concept of reciprocity as mutual responsivity, his/her
awareness of the impact of response and the
relationship-generating power of human response is presumably

qualified.

If responsivity is not mutual then the contribution of response to the quality of relationship is limited because it is seen as either "one way" ("he does for me") or two-way ("she does for me, I do for her"). Prior to Stage 3 the contribution of the child's awareness of the other as responsive or of the self as responsive, to continuity in relationship or the creation of relationship is compromised in Selman's scheme because of the lack of Level 3 coordination of perspectives. Response is thus undermined as a breeder because it is not understood as continuously reciprocal.

It is only at Stage 3 that response of self and other are seen by Selman as contributing to a sense of mutuality (self/other-ness) in relationship.Prior to that impact is either uni-lateral or tied up in schemes of equal exchange. At Stage 4, a notion of friendships as an enduring self-other configuration that is a source of emotional and psychological support emerges because reciprocity is understood as an "edifice" that relationship creates.

Vulnerability. If the power of response to breed awareness of the configuration of self and other is delayed in Selman's hierarchy until Stage 3 attainment of "mutual reciprocity," what place does the child's awareness of vulnerability assume in the conception of friendship? How does the child's awareness of

"vulnerability" emerge and how does a lack of coordination of perspectives interfere with its importance as a precipitant of relationship?

Vulnerability, or "neediness" in the clinical vernacular, is both an objective and subjective human quality. In Selman's paradigm, the meaning of the other in relationship is qualified by the limitations of the child's understanding of the subjective experience of the other. In other words, a concept like "vulnerability" is not grasped as an enduring human condition until Stage 3. Prior to that time, the child does not have a conception of human personality as a stable ordering of a person's reactions, responses, characteristics. Before Stage 3, the other is not understood as an "enduring" recipient or agent in relationshiip, thus the contribution to the configuration of self and other that awareness of another's vulnerability creates is minimized because it is a fleeting experience. In order for vulnerability to precipitate relationship, Selman holds that the child must understand the subjective experience of the other that creates vulnerability and understand his/her own intentions in responding to it. To summarize, in Selman's scheme, if the child responds to the vulnerability of another, the level of the child's understanding of the subjective experience of the other qualifies the significance of that response as an index of the child's sense of self-otherness.

At Stage 1, the child's grasp of the idea of "vulnerability" as a human trait is tied to a particular context. A person is only vulnerable in particular situations. At Stage 2, the child conceptualizes people as capable of presenting themsleves in ways that do not really capture their underlying feelings of intentions. Thus, someone may act like they're not really hurt but really be hurt.

With Stage 3 comes an understanding of persons as stable personalities, who have unifying characteristics, traits and feelings that orchestrate or underlie their presentation of themselves to the world. Vulnerability, therefore, is no longer understood as a fleeting experience. The child can understand it as a cohesive entity. This means that an awareness of vulnerability can now enter into relationship, as a dimension of humaness that brings people together.

At Stage 4 this "psychologization" of vulnerability becomes even more sophisticated. These level conceptions make psychoanalytic and psychological theory possible. Thus, vulnerability can be fully embraced as an underlying human condition that breeds "autonomous interdependence" in relationships. Friendships are conceptualized as containers for vulnerability and neediness and thus are understood as fostering dependence.

Engagement. Our discussion of the role of continuity, response and vulnerability in Selman's hierarchy suggests that engagement, or felt-affective involvement between self and other is a late-appearing developmental acquisition. In its purely exeriential connotation, engagement, the felt-affective presence of self and other in relationship seems not to figure in how children conceptualize friendships. Rather the salience of continuity, response and vulnerability in relationship is subjugated to the meaning it acquires as it is funneled through the child's existing cognitive structure. The characteristics of these structures, as Selman has observed, reduce the power of these experiences to the deficits mandated by the meaning they assume when fit into the structures. If concepts like "dependence," "continuity" and "response" are not available for cognitive reflection until Stage 3 (beginning at early adolescence), does this mean that they do not influence awareness of the experience of relationship, the configuration of self and other prior to this time ?

Selman raises a very important question. Can young children have an enduring sense of the configuration of self-other ? Can young children be engaged in their relationships?

> If Cicero was correct in claiming that only an ideal
> and equal friendship is a true friendship, <u>we must</u>
> <u>then ask whether it makes sense to speak of close,</u>
> <u>personal relationships among children who have not yet</u>

achieved this highest level as "true" friendships.
Should we say that they have imperfect friendships? An
alternative approach is Piaget's epistemological
philosophy, which would have us examine the child's
understanding of friendship ontogenetically: in
other words, directly study the more primitive
conceptions of friendship manifested in growing
children, both as a road to understanding the
developmental psychology of intimate relationships and
as a means to understanding the philosophical concept
of friendship itself (1981, p. 243).

Problems of Making Theory

Selman's statement reveals two problems that theory-making

creates. Piaget has recognized that the theories we construct

may bring us to a point where we qualify the nature of the

child's experience in the service of allegiance to the tenets of

the theory. In order to keep the theory working, we begin to see

experience in a way which conforms to our own thinking. This

does not necessarily reflect the chracteristics of the phenomena

that we were originally interested in describing.

> The pyramid of knowledge no longer rests on its
> foundations but hangs by its vertex, an ideal point never
> reached and, more curious, constantly rising! In short,
> rather than envisaging human knowledge as a pyramid or
> building of some sort, we should think of it as a spiral
> the radius of whose turns increases as the spiral rises
> (1970, p. 34)

> We again stress our belief that there is a constant and
> dialectic interaction between affectivity and
> intelligence. Both are developed and transformed in
> interconnected ways as a function of the progressive
> organization of behavior, but one is not caused by the
> other. The psychologist artificially separates them for
> convenience of exposition. We must demonstrate that they
> are different in nature without, for all that,

dichotomizing behavior and refusing to recognize its
concrete unity. Moreover he must avoid making a "deus
ex machina" of motivation by invoking its action without
sufficient physiological facts. When maturation is made
a "cause," the problem is often only displaced.
Maturation is not, by itself, the cause of anything.   It
is limited to specifying the field of possibilities
belonging to a given level (1981, p. 25).

Piaget tells us that to define the vertex of a friendship

hierarchy as the attainment of ideal and equal friendship, is to

preclude and restrict the elements which are identified as

salient in the construction of the pyramid. If our eye is fixed

at the pinnacle of the scheme, we will have difficulty seeing all

there is to see in the observations we make and the spiral will

not be seen. What "ideal" means in Selman's hierarchy should be

clear from our discussion of the characteristics of his levels.

Ideal embraces the understanding of "concepts" of dependency,

response, continuity and engagement but their place as

psychological experiences in the spiral prior to adolescence and

adulthood is unclear. How they contribute to the development of

an awareness of the configuration of self and other prior to

their inclusion in logical understanding is not clear. Piaget's

second statement reminds us that maturation does not cause

anything. The notion that maturity will bring engagement in

relationship or a sense of continuity of the configuration of

self and other is not justified. Engagement in our social world

cannot be bred by maturation alone.

The Problem of Knowing and Feeling

If children's ideas do not reflect an understanding of continuity, response, vulnerability and engagement does this mean that these features of the context of relationship do not influence their awareness of their place among many other people? Does immature logic insulate them from true engagement in the interpersonal world ? We would like to suggest that it does not. Perspective-taking does not explain the psychological processes that the experience of social reality calls into play that allow the child to eclipse the limits of logic and therefore value companionship. This statement brings us to a discussion of the problem of including knowing, feeling and engagement in theories of social cognition.

You will remember at this point our earlier speculation that Sam's precocious awareness of his family relationship could be attributed to his feelings about them. What we were observing,we offered was Sam's usually steady logical perception being uplifted by the sudden descent of a large school of tiny fish, his feelings. Given the constraints imposed by social cognitive theory, this primitive explanation is the only conceptualization that legitimizes Sam's experience of the configuration of himself in relation to his family as an influence on what he knows about being a social person. The problem of including in theories of

social cognition the feelings generated by this experience of being a person among people has been persistent. The two year old who offers his security blanket to a peer who is in distress (Eisenberg, 1982) has been a continuing source of perplexity for developmental psychologists who in their interpretations of Piaget have held to the notion that egocentric immediacy and "consideration for others" are somehow antithetical (Hoffman, 1976).

Social cognitive psychologists have assumed that if the two year old cannot cognitively de-center, then a response to his peer based on "feeling" is also egocentric. The case for disregarding the interpersonal quality of the child's gesture is largely drawn from what is "known" about the egocentricity of young children. Ford's review of validation studies of egocentrism suggests that what is known about egocentrism does not unequivocally establish its existence. If the two year old is "moved" to respond to a peer, the task of the researcher is to document that the child has indeed differentiated self-generated cues from cues generated through "pure" observation of the other. Ford (1979) points out that this is an inherently elusive research task. "One cannot ever be sure that correct responses in affective role-taking studies are evidence of perspective-taking since there is no clear criterion for discriminating between the subject's attribution of their own responses to a situation and

actual inference of the emotional responses of another".

To question why "feeling" is not legitimized as a precipitant of social experience in social cognitive theory is to reveal two questionable assumptions on which the perspective-taking model is based.

The first assumption that we question is the notion that the awareness of the other reflected in the two year old's gesture is only valid if one can prove that the child is capable of using cognition to predict the experience of the other. There are two assumptions that are derived from this first one. The first is the notion that development makes us better predictors and therefore better responders. The second is that the subjective experience or state of the other is ultimately knowable and predictable, i.e. grown-ups can and do know what there is to be known about each other and respond accordingly. The latter is the state that the perspective-taking model suggests we come to. Clearly, development does not necessarily deliver us to this level of functioning. When the study of social development is transformed into an inquiry of epistemology, however, a confusion between the knowledge that development creates and the process of knowing that transpires as we experience social reality can emerge. The distinction between the knowledge that epistemology analyses and the knowing of reality that psychology attempts to address must be maintained if we are to include in our theories

the totality of the child's awareness. The inherently unpredictable nature of social reality is not a problem for development to solve. Rather it is a part of the reality that we experience. To exclude the two year old because of the child's cognitive inability to predict is to provide a solution to a problem of theory, but to fail to adequately include in theory the process of experiencing social reality.

The second assumption we question is the notion that development brings the eventual elimination of the "blurring" of the experience of self and other that makes the two year old's response immature. Social cognitive theory suggests that development improves this "blurring" because our cognitions effectively sort out the difference between self and other and establish the configuration of self and other in a more clearly differentiated way. We would like to suggest that this "blurring" between self and other is also part of the experience of social reality. As we interact with others, as we seek to establish resonance between self and other, the "sorting out" of whose experience informs our response is not a problem to be solved. Rather the presence of this condition is part of what makes reality social. If our developmental acquisitions eliminated this condition of reality, the character of our experience would radically change. In social cognition this "blurring" is cast as a developmental deficit, rather than an intrinsic condition that

emerges from the experience of being a person among other persons.

We would like to suggest that the conception of ontology, the experience of being, that informs social cognition is in part responsible for this transformation of an intrinsic quality of social experience into a developmental deficit.The reader will recall at this point Gilligan's criticism of the exclusion of the salience of the configuration of self and other from theories of psychological development. We noted the difficulty theory confronts in describing the trajectory of growth as evolving within the parameters of relationship, within the confines of a configuration of self and other. In Selman's paradigm, the "blurring" of self and other is cast as a developmental deficit because it creates an "egocentric" perspective. He charts the child's emergence out of this egocentric, insular state to a point where the child can be competently aware of the other because of the development of mature reasoning.

Selman's theory is a curious repetition of the tendency for psychology to exclude the salience of the configuration of self and other, as an influence on development, which Gilligan has identified. We characterize this repetition as curious because Selman's paradigm sets as its central concern the analysis of the development of inerpersonal awareness.The importance of the configuration of self and other is excluded in his scheme as an

influence on development because of the ontological assumption, the conception of the experience of being, that informs his theory.

The self whose growth is charted in Selman's hierarchy is the insular, separate, active agent who becomes, with development, better at being self-referenced, more capable of relying on self-generated cognitions because mature perspective-taking makes the other's experience salient. In his scheme, the presence of the other in the self-other configuration is generated by the refinement of will and its exercise through the expression and understanding of intentionality. Willfullness and self-volition are the metaphor in his paradigm for the ontological experience of the self as separate active agent in social experience.

Damon and Hart (1982) point out that Selman's paradigm is concerned with tracing the emergence of the "I" as willful, volitional and intentional. The gradual accrued appreciation of will, of both self and other, and availability of an understanding of will as influential in relationship and self understanding, lead the child to be aware of the other's place in relation to the self. However, the configuration of self and other remains knowable only through the enhancement of the differentiation of self and other: through the exercise of will and intention and its cognitive recognition. In effect, the

subjective experience of the self remains _separate_ throughout the life cycle. The insularity of the egocentric child becomes the separate cognitive self-referencing of the perspective-taking adult. We only become aware of the configuration of self and other because our independent wills cross paths. Cognition allows us to contemplate the intention behind the expressed will. In effect the configuration of self and other is a construction of thought: a product of thinking removed from the actual experience of the self as a person among people. The present is brought to bear upon itself in the form of cognitions about the will and intentions of self and other.

Social experience is more than a product of the inevitable clash of wills that arises as we acquire and exert our agency and autonomy. The moment of social exchange is more than a dilemma of sorting out the intentions of self and other. As we noted earlier, consideration or differentiation of intention or will is oftentimes secondary or nonessential to the experience of social reality. The moment of social exchange and its influence on awareness of the configuration of self and other is not always a product of the expression of human will.

There are two sources in the pychological literature which legitimize the absence of "willfulness" in social experience. Both these sources attempt to describe the "power of the moment" in social experience to engage. The first source is the

literature on mother-infant interaction and attachment. The second source is the work of Ellen Langer who has described the extent to which will or volition are absent in our confrontations with social reality, and, accordingly, the extent to which the power of context can engage us in our experience. She has specifically examined our cognitive resonance with information. We suggest that the psychological process she describes as active in influencing our awareness of information also is active in influencing our awareness of the configuration of self and other in social reality.

The Psychology of Engagement and the Salience of Response

We present here a problem posed earlier in this paper. As human beings, we come to gravitate toward other people. Other people become highly salient features of our surroundings. We become aware of a configuration between self and other. We acquire an awareness of ourselves as a person among people. This process of engagement with the social world does not happen merely because our willfulness brings us to a point where we experience conflict in interacting with others. People become salient in their own right, for reasons other than our recognition that their intentions may differ from our own. Our concern in this paper is to understand the psychological process that creates this salience. Our discussion of the mother-infant

interaction literature suggests that a central concern of infancy researchers has been to document the "playing out" of this salience between mothers and infants. Attachment observers suggest that the experience of close relationship, of eliciting and recieving response breeds a salience of the mother in the infant's eyes. The product of this salience is the phenomena of attachment. We suspect that the experience of close relationship, this salience of the other, influences how the concrete-operational child and adolescent know and understand their interpersonal worlds. We will refer to the psychological process which breeds this salience of the self in relation to the other as the process of engagement.

Perspective-taking is the process that social cognitive theory defines as generating new social logic or knowledge. Engagement is the psychological process that generates the salience of other people and therefore allows us to create new self-other configurations; to make relationships and refurbish old ones. Attachment is one product or representation of this process of engagement. By suggesting that attachment is but one representation of engagement we are arguing against a conception of attachment as a closed system, an absolute, set in place early on, that initiates a tendency for gravitation toward others that suffices for the duration of the life span. Rather we are suggesting that a psychological process, engagement, is

continuously invoked and recreates the salience of the self in relation to the other over and over again. The global manifestation of this process is the phenomena of human relationship and an awareness of a configuration between self and other. The re-invoking of this psychological process within a particular relationship is part of what regenerates relationship, i.e. makes old relationship seem new.

This awareness of the configuration between self and other that the process of engagement creates has been described in the attachment and mother-infant literature. Ellen Langer describes extensively the quality of our involvement with information. The psychological process that she describes as Mindfulness will be used as theory from which to draw an analogy to describe our involvement with other people, to begin to examine the psychological process of engagement which we suggest creates the salience of other people and therefore awareness of the "place" of the self in relation to the other.

The Engagement of Mothers and Babies: Attachment and Response.

The literature on mother-infant interaction and attachment is replete with examples of efforts to demonstrate how the child's experience of response influences the development of an awareness of the configuration of self and other. What is clear from this research is that the moment of interaction, the repartee between mother and infant that develops has a profound

impact on the child's social behavior. Bell and Ainsworth (1972) make this point in their longitudinal study of the relationship between infant crying and maternal response. They asked the question, "Is the amount a baby cries influenced by the degree of responsiveness by the mother to his/her crying?" The single most important factor associated, they report, with a decrease in frequency and duration of crying throughout the first year is the promptness with which a mother responds to cries. In their earlier study (1969), these researchers studied maternal and infant feeding behavior and found that mother's ability to recognize and respond to their infants' signals during feeding at 3 months influences the kind of attachment the child displays at 12 months. Determining direction of causality here, that it is the mother who is influencing the baby, or vice-versa, is less important to our point than recognizing that infancy researchers have conceptualized the social universe of the child as dependent on these moment-to-moment exchanges and marked by the child's sense of becoming a person among people.

Bowlby's conceptualization of attachment also recognizes the sense of engagement between self and other that emerges as a result of this experience of response. Infancy researchers do not attempt to differentiate what is known from what is felt nor do they attempt to determine whether the infant's gravitation toward the mother is informed by willful intention. Rather, the concern

is to capture the experience created by the context of close

relationship that generates an awareness of the configuration of

the interpersonal world . Awareness of this configuration then

influences how the child functions as a social being.

The features of the social experience of the child that

infancy researchers attempt to capture are precisely the

dimensions that social cognitive psychologists fail to address.

The assumption that the moment of interaction is significant only

in its power to change cognitive structure leads to an exclusion

of the moment of social interaction as an influence on the

child's "knowledge" of the placement of people in relation to the

self. Relationship is fundamentally, a sense of the

configuration between self and other. The infancy literature

makes it clear that the toddler can be aware of this

configuration, knows that s/he is a person among people. To

operationalize relationship as an "idea", a construct built on

the coordination of the contribution of each party is to fail to

recognize this self-other orientation as basic to the experience

of being social.

Ainsworth in her study of attachment asks the question,

"What are the features of the experience of close relationship

which generate the salience of the mother to the infant?"

She suggests that it is the experience of response which

precipitates this salience, which she calls attachment.

The child would not become attached through following or through smiling or through crying if nothing ever followed as a consequence of these activities- as a fairly stable and predictable consequence. But in the usual home environment, something usually does happen when he takes the social initiative. Someone responds to him. If the response is consistent enough, and particularly if it is of such a nature as to encourage him to repeat or continue his social advances or demands, he comes to have some confidence that he, though his own actions has some control over his world and the people in it. And he becomes attached to the person or persons over whom he feels he has some active control. Thus attachment grows through feedback in response to his behavior (1967, p.445).

To reformulate Ainsworth, our concern here is not to know

the "confidence" that the toddler comes to have. Rather, we seek

to understand the awareness of the configuration of self and

other acquired by the post-Oedipal child. The experience of close

relationship, of eliciting, being responded to and recieving has

an impact on the child's awareness of the social world. Our data

concerning children's conceptions of family demonstrate the

features and quality of that awareness. The psychological process

that relationship calls into play to create that awareness is not

well understood. We have described it as the process of

engagement. While the attachment literature recognizes the

process of engagement as an influence on attachment, there is an

absence in the psychological literature of theory which

explains how the process of engagement influences knowing,

particularly knowledge of the interpersonal world, the

configuration of self and other, during latency and adolescence.

To address this deficit, we turn to the work of Ellen

Langer. The quality of involvement that she has recognized as an

influence on our performance as knowers of information is

applicable to our search for theory which recognizes the process

of engagement as an influence on our awareness of persons. Langer

has focused on our cognitive involvement with informationn and

detail. We will use her theory as a base from which to draw an

analogy between our involvement with the information the world

presents and our involvement with the people we come into contact

with.

Langer's Mindful-Mindless Paradigm: Involvements with Information

Ellen Langer has examined the quality of our involvement

with the information that we confront as we experience social

reality (1978a, 1978b, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982). She suggests that

our intentionality and willfulness do not become the conduit

through which we funnel ourselves as we act upon the world.

Instead, her analysis of behavior suggests that oftentimes people

respond simply because they do, for no logical reason. We process

and respond to much of the information experience presents with

little or no premeditation. To process information with active

cognitive perusal, Langer says, is to be involved with our

surroundings in a different way. Langer holds that when

information presented by the environment is truly salient, the

quality of our involvement introduces the potential for it to be

used in novel ways. To be fully involved with information is to breed new information. This level of salience yields new uses of information and therefore novel thought.

The Creation of Salience. Like Piaget, Langer holds that we structure knowledge as we experience life. "Although life is continuous, the only way to experience it is to make it discontinuous" (1980, p.1). Learning, she says, is the process of creating these discontinuities, of making distinctions. Her mindlessness/mindfulness dichotomy refers to two states which characterize our involvement with our surroundings: the state in which we are making distinctions (mindfulness) and the state in which we are using made distinctions (mindlessness).

Unlike Piaget, Langer suggests that the structures or categories that evolve out of experience remain very available to the influence of the features of the context that we function within. She is fundamentally concerned with addressing the problem of how the present is brought to bear upon itself. According to Langer, the power of the present is brought to bear on our awareness in two ways: it can induce mindfulness or mindlessness. If it is brought to bear mindlessly, then, in effect, it is not brought to bear at all. The information we are recieving is being fit into previously made distinctions or categor ies. We are not using the information in novel ways, so the information, in and of itself, is not salient. We process it

mindlessly.

When we are mindful,however, information is, in and of itself salient. Mindfulness means that rather than fitting information into old categories, we are able to attend to it completely and use it to create new distinctions. If we are mindful, any single moment contains the potential for the creation of novelty. The world becomes a conditional rather than an absolute universe. It is this state of awareness that makes the development of new knowledge possible. To create new knowledge is not to attend to what is known but to see what there is to be known, to see what has been there all along in a different way.

> Mindlessness is formally defined as a state of reduced
> cognitive activity in which the individual processes
> cues from the environment in a relatively
> automatic manner without reference to potentially novel
> aspects of those cues. Mindfulness, on the other hand,
> is a state in which environmental cues are consciously
> manipulated and the individual is engaged in actively
> constructing his or her environment, actively forming
> new categories and making new distinctions (1982, p. 1).

The category making, or structuring that transpires as we move through life happens because of internal and external events. We structure ourselves through own activity and become structured by the surroundings that we move within which impose structure. Langer calls this internal structuring the process of creating "premature cognitive commitments". Structure emerges through the repeated involvement in the same activity over a period of time or through the provision of structuring by

external impositions; rules, guidelines, labels, already-made

distinctions, features of the world that are presented as

absolutes.

Langer has demonstrated the mindless/mindful phenomena in a

variety of experimental situations. The paradigm focuses on

presenting subjects with an opportunity to use information in

novel ways and then manipulating features of the context so the

information will be processed mindfully or mindlessly. Subjects

who returned memos that merely asked them to return the memo, who

read aloud familiar sentences with deliberate typographical

errors and maintain that there are no errors, who comply with a

request to use a Xerox machine when the solicitor has given no

reason for compliance all are behaving mindlessly in Langer's

scheme. In one experiment, subjects read aloud this sentence:

> Mary had a a little lamb.

Mindlessly they read it as it is ingrained in our awareness to be

read. They insisted there were no errors in the sentence.

> One cannot have the phenomenological experience of
> being mindless so we could not just ask our subjects
> about their state of mind. In essence, mindlessness is
> psychologically a non-event. When individuals mindfully
> consider their own mindlessness they are being mindful.
> And of course, when they are mindless, they are
> mindless. True, one cannot directly observe one's own
> mindlessness, and just as surely, one cannot directly
> observe another's since there is "nothing" to observe.
> On the other hand, indirect observation of mindlessness
> is possible. Behavior consistent with what the
> familiar structure visually represents indicates an
> absence of awareness of the novel details that we know
> are there to be seen and thus permits the inference

that the subject has not mindfully processed the
available information (1982, p. 5).

How does the environment induce mindfulness? How do we
induce mindfulness in ourselves? In a global sense, one becomes
mindful when exchange with our surroundings becomes more taxing,
either because of the idiosyncratic meaning that an event
acquires for us or because the event actually is idiosyncratic. A
disruption in a usually non-disruptive and non-ambiguous exchange
between self and outside world may provoke mindfulness. The
process of becoming mindful is similar to those conditions that
Piaget describes as accompanying structural change. "Mindfulness
is expected to occur only when:

1) significantly more effort is demanded by the situation

than was originally demanded,

2) when the external factors in the situation disrupt

initiation of the mindless sequence,

3) when external factors prevent the completion of the

behavior or

4) when negative or positive consequences are experienced

that are sufficiently discrepant with the consequences of

prior enactments of the same behavior" (1982, p. 5).

Novelty,conflict and ambiguity provoke change and what changes
is, not only the categories that inform our awareness but the
quality of our involvement with the information we confront.

Drawing an Analogy: Involvements with People

Our task in this paper is to contrast perspective-taking as the psychological process that precipitates understanding of relationship with the experience of close relationship as a precipitant of a psychogical process which shapes awareness of social reality.We use Langer's description of the psychogical process that interaction with the world of information invokes as a basis for describing the psychological process that the experience of relationship calls into play. We are specifically interested in understanding how it is that people, not information, become salient features of our surroundings. Through this salience we create an awareness of ourselves as a person among people. We develop an awareness of a configuration of self and other in reality.

The quality of involvement with the world of information that Langer calls mindfulness becomes in the interpersonal world, engagement; a state in which others are salient in their own right and awareness of the configuration of self and other is heightened. Langer says that when we are mindful of information we can use it in making distinctions. When we are engaged, we become aware of the configuration between self and other, relationships. To move through the world mindlessly is to rely on previously made distinctions. To be disengaged in the interpersonal world is to rely on previous configurations of self

and other or to be oblivious to the existence of a configuration between self and other, to be numb to an awareness of oneself as a person among people. To use Carol Gilligan's terminology, to be disengaged is to lack an awareness of a connection between self and other. Langer suggests that mindlessness is a psychological non-event. Similarly, to be disengaged is to be insulated from an awareness of a configuration between self and other, to not have available in one's consciousness a sense of connection between self and other. Other people are not salient because they are not available to one's awareness. They are not available because they are not salient.

Langer says that the reason why we make distinctions is because life is continuous and in order to experience it we break it into categories. We would like to suggest that one reason why people become salient, why we form this awareness of a configuration between self and other, is because we are born into a dependent condition. We begin life in a highly vulnerable state and our survival, literally, depends on the responses of other people. People become uniquely salient to us in part because of this early repartee that vulnerability initiates. But the process of interaction comes to have its own ability to invoke engagement. The structuring of information that Langer says evolves because of internal and external events also takes place in the social world. The structuring of information yields

categories; the structuring of the interpersonal realm yields self-other configuration or relationships.The structuring of information reflects the process of learning; the structuring of self and other reflects the process of socialization.

Langer notes that both mindless and mindful states of awareness serve a purpose in functioning: mindless states because they are effortless and allow us to process much information without expending any effort; mindful states because they breed new information, new knowledge, new ways of looking at things. Similarly, disengagement means not confronting old self-other configurations, being aware of the interpersonal world in the same old ways, thus creating a situation where we don't have to constantly renew our sense of self-other connection in order to be responded to or to respond to others. Response becomes automatic and effortless.

The function of engagement is to create new self-other configurations, new relationships. The human species needs to reconstruct this cycle of responsivity in order to continue. As children are born, someone needs to include that person in a self-other configuration and respond. If we were not capable of engagement, becoming aware of novel configurations between self and other, we would not breed new relationships. If others could not become salient to us and if, out of that salience, we could not create novel self-other configurations, the transformation of

relationship throughout the lifecycle would not be possible. In close relationship, the invocation of engagement breeds novelty. The reappearance of the process of engagement breeds enhancements of the configuration of self and other in close relationship.

In this view, human relationship, the awareness of the configuration of self and other is not a closed system. Our sense of connection, our awareness of the configuration of self and other, is not a fixed entity. Any single moment of interaction holds the possibility for novel or renewed awareness of our place in relation to another person.

This brings us to the question of what features of social experience invoke the process of engagement.What are the features of the context of close relationship that initiate this process of engagement? Langer holds that internal and external events structure. When what is internal and what is external conflict, when we are taxed by the demands of a situation, when external factors do not allow us to rely on prior distinctions, when using old categories no longer works, when ambiguity and unfamiliarity are experienced, we become mindful. We make novel interpretations, we create a different way of seeing things. If external structuring precludes ambiguity, we rely on prior distinctions.

Our application of the criteria of mindfulness to interactions between persons is limited here to the interactions

between persons in close relationship, in conditions of
dependency. Our larger concern is to seek theory which explains
and legitimizes the influence of the experience of close
relationship on social awareness, i.e. awareness of oneself as a
person among people. Our data specifically address children's
awareness in the context of family. Thus, we apply Langer's
paradigm to a specific social situation (but suspect that it is
applicable to other situations also).

The conditions that invoke the process of engagement in the
context of close relationship are created out of the phenomena of
human response; the experience of recieving response and needing
or eliciting response. Langer has identified the criteria for
mindfulness in terms of the constraints and features of the
exchange of information. We traffic here in human response. We
describe the criteria for engagement in terms of the features of
response.

Response in close relationship specifically addresses the
experience of vulnerability. The criteria that Langer describes
invoke ambiguity, i.e. situations where reliance on previous
distinctions doesn't work. Vulnerability, like the experience of
ambiguity in cognitive processing, comes and goes in subjective
awareness; it appears and recedes. Like the experience of
ambiguity in knowing, the experience of vulnrability necessarily
contains a tension, a need for resolution. Human response

addresses vulnerability: it temporarily resolves the tension. When we experience this internal transformation, from feeling vulnerability to non-vulnerability, because of the response of another person, the process of engagement comes into play and our sense of the configuration of self and other, our awareness of our place as a person among persons is manipulated, enhanced, reified. In other words, the subjective experience of being vulnerable and the social experience of response become entwined. When one becomes vulnerable the other becomes salient because of his/her response and this salience brings engagement, a sorting through, an enhancement of the configuration of self and other.

In Langer's paradigm, the sequence is this. Information creates ambiguity, which invokes mindful awareness, which yields new distinctions. The interpersonal sequence is this. One becomes subjectively vulnerable. Others are salient because they have responded in the past and continue to respond. This invokes engagement which yields or enhances the configuration of self and other; the sense of connection between self and other.

We would like to suggest that it is the renewal of the subjective experience of vulnerability that maintains the salience of other people as features of the surround, which in turn invokes the process of engagement, the sorting of the awareness of the configuration of self and other, the breeding of relationship. Variations in these external and internal

manifestations of experience may defuse or derail the process of engagement, i.e. keep one disengaged, in a position where self-other configurations are not re-shuffled or enhanced and we remain numb to our sense of ourselves as having a place among other people. Internally, if the experience of vulnerability isn't renewed, the experience of vulnerability obviously doesn't induce the process of engagement. Externally, if others do not respond to one's vulnerability, then the subjective experience of vulnerability doesn't make other people salient and the process of engagement doesn't come about. Rather, one is disengaged. If vulnerability is nothing new or the world is known as a non-responsive place, the process of engagement isn't invoked and one's sense of connection is not re-shuffled. Our sense of ourselves as a person among persons remains static.

We have been describing a psychological process that influences interpersonal awareness. The specific piece of interpersonal awareness effected is one's sense of the configuration between self and other. In describing the process of engagement, we suggest that response to human vulnerability is one salient experience of the social world which invokes this process. We suggest that these experiences are also salient parts of interpersonal awareness; this experience of human responsivity and engagement are available for reflection. Children acquire an awareness of the configuration of self and other. The experience

of response to vulnerability and the configuration of the self in relation to other that it invokes are knowable. These features are part of their understanding of what it is to be a person among people. The data we present on children's conceptions of family offer preliminary support for the significance of this kind of social knowing, the establishment and renewal of a sense of place in relation to other that emerges and is reconstructed as the child grows.

Children's Conceptions of Family

We discussed earlier the qualifications that social logic and the lack of coordination of single ideas impose on awareness of continuity, response, vulnerability and engagement. The collective import of these qualifications and foreclosures are that the experience of human relationship, the moment of human response is minimized as a contribution to social awareness. We have suggested that the experiences of being vulnerable and recieving response induce engagement, sense of the configuration between self and other. Our data on children's conceptions of family suggest that these experiences are part of social knowing and figure importantly in the child's construction of the social world. We are suggesting that socialization is, in the most literal sense, in part a process of constructing a sense of oneself as a person among people, establishing an awareness of

the configuration of self and other.

Our data offer preliminary for support this position, simply because the children we interviewed have a very solid awareness of their place in relation to other people. The data, we suggest:

> i) illustrate the salience to children's "knowing" of the experience of response to human vulnerability and its contribution to a sense of continuity in relationship,in the configuration of self and other
> ii) confront the notion that social awareness is a construction of "ideas" and that the status of these ideas qualify or undermine the experience of being in relationship. Logic does not constrain the knowing of oneself as a person among persons or awareness of a configuration between self and other. The present, we suggest, is a significant influence on social knowing in its own right, because the moment of social interaction carries the potential to invoke the process of engagement, which enhances and reifies the configuration of self and other.

The data we present reflects children's elaboration of what the impact on their social knowing is of the experience of being among other people, recieving response. This reflects a part of the process of becoming social, establishing one's place in relation to others, that social cognitive theory has not captured.

The Data

Method. Fourteen latency and adolescent children (4 males, 10 females) were interviewed at two time points using the author's Conception of Family interview separated by a mean time lapse of 29.4 months (range of Time1-Time 2 lapse = 22 to 32.5 months)

(See Appendix B for copy of interview). The interview uses
Piaget's methode-clinique to elicit patterns of understanding in
four areas: 1) continuity of family relationship and its
transformation 2) response within the family; its meaning and
significance, awareness of the impact of people's actions on each
other and on the self 3) vulnerability: the child's awareness of
vulnerability as a subjective experience that precipitates human
response 4) engagement: the nature of the involvement between the
child and his/her family, the child's sense of being a person
among persons. All interviews were tape recorded and later
transcribed by the author because of lack of external financial
support for this research. Interviews were conducted in
subjects' homes and lasted for approximately 1 - 1 1/2 hours.

Sample. The age of subjects at Time 1 ranged from 7 yrs.10 mos.
to 17 yrs.9 mos with a mean age of 12 yrs.1 mos. Time 2 age
ranged from 10 yrs.4 mos. to 19 yrs.11 mos. The breakdown of the
sample by age and sex at Time 1 and Time 2 is as follows:

Time 1 Age by Sex	Time 2 Age by Sex
Males: 2 - 7/8 y.o	Males: 2 - 10 y.o
2 - 16 y.o	2 - 18 y.o
Females: 4 - 8/9 y.o.	Females: 3 - 10/11 y.o.
4 - 10/11 y.o.	5 - 12/13 y.o.
2 - 13/17 y.o.	2 - 16/18 y.o.

All subjects are white. Twelve of the subjects are from
middle-class homes (Class II or III on the Hollingshead Scale);
the 2 adolescent males are from lower class homes (Class IV).

Eight of the subjects (4 pairs) are siblings. Eight of the

children live in intact families. At Time 1, the two adolescent

males lived in residential institutions. Time 1 and Time 2 age

and sex of siblings are (ages are rounded to whole numbers):

	Time 1	Time 2
Pair 1:	7 y.o. male, 10 y.o. fem.	10 y.o. male, 12 y.o. fem.
Pair 2:	8 y.o. male, 11 y.o. fem.	10 y.o. male, 13 y.o. fem.
Pair 3:	9 y.o. fem., 11 y.o. fem.	12 y.o. fem., 13 y.o. fem.
Pair 4:	8 y.o. fem., 11 y.o. fem.	11 y.o. fem., 13 y.o. fem.

Analysis. To expand our cross-sectional comparison groups, we

have used our Time 1/Time 2 data as an N of 28 interviews and

subdivided it into 4 age groups. The composition of our groups by

age and sex is as follows:

Group 1   N=6

7,8,9 year olds
4 girls/2 boys
mean age = 8.7   yrs
range = 7 yrs.10 mos-9 yrs.10mos.

Group 2   N=10

10,11,12 year olds
8 girls/2 boys
mean age = 11.0   yrs
range = 10yrs.2mos.-
12 yrs.5mos.

Group 3   N=5
13 year olds
5 girls
mean age = 13.4 yrs
range = 12yrs.9mos-13yrs.10mos.

Group 4   N=7
(Time1/Time2 combin)
4   Subjects
16-19 year olds
2 girls, 2 boys
mean age = 17.7   yrs.
range = 16yrs.-
19 yrs.11 mos.

Individuals are not represented twice in the 3 younger age

groups. In the 16 - 19 age group, 7 interviews with 4 subjects

are analysed. Obviously, this changes the nature of the variance

that we are examining; to compare the same child in two different

age groups means that we are reduce the variation; to compare

different children across age groups is to introduce more
heterogeneity. Our task, however, is to identify themes in the
four major categories of the experience of relationship that our
interview addresses. In the oldest age group, where Time 1 and
Time 2 interviews from 4 subjects are presented, we will make an
effort to discuss themes in terms of intra-individual transition.
This pilot study could be divided into 3 or 4 very small N
studies each with a different analytical focus. Our 4 sibling
pairs for instance who are roughly 2 1/2 - 3 years apart in age,
were given second interviews after approximately 2 1/2 years had
passed. The younger sibs are roughly the age at Time 2 of the
older sibs at Time 1. Furthermore, 2 pairs are sisters, 2 pairs
are brother and sister, thus controlling for family differences,
while presenting an opportunity to explore sex differences. We
have decided not to pursue that sub-analysis at this point
because the questions we have presented are somewhat broader.
The smaller sibling analysis could not be well conducted without
the base that we hope our N of 28 interview analysis will begin
to build.

Unit of Analysis. In our interview we have isolated questions
which address each of the 4 categories. The unit of analysis is
the question, a response, probe question, response (and so on)
until the configuration of the child's thinkng is made clear. It
is these discrete units that we will be comparing within and

across groups.

Results

       Children's awareness, i.e. articulated understanding of 4 dimensions of the experience of family relationship are analysed within each of the 4 age groups. These categories are:

Continuity: The child's understanding of the notion of continuity of family relationship, how new families are made, transformation in continuity in relationship, the of this configuration of self and other stability.

Response: The child's understanding of human response, awareness of the impact of people's actions on each other, on the self or on the other. This is not an investigation of the concept of how well children fathom the outcome of impact. We are concerned to examine how children understand the concept that people _have_ an impact on each other. This is not _reciprocity_. Response is the single isolated human gesture that one makes toward another person. We are interested to know how children understand this notion: relationship is, intrinsically, a phenomena that brings us to a point where we _rub elbows_. Reciprocity is to understand precisely how the elbows rub. Our concern is to examine the child's awareness

of the rub itself. Consideration of intentionality or motivation or an understanding of intentionality (will, volition) is not necessary to an awareness of response.

Vulnerability: The child's awareness of human vulnerability (neediness to use the clinical vernacular) either in the self or in the other. We view vulnerability as a human condition that precipitates response. Awareness of vulnerability simply means the child's recognition of the various forms of human hurt.

Engagement: Engagement refers to the child's awareness of involvement in relationship, his/her felt-presence as a person among people and the language used which evokes this sense of configuration between self and other.

Awareness of Continuity

Group 1 (7 yrs.10 mos. - 9 yrs.10 mos). We turn first to our youngest subjects who echo Sam's conviction that a family is always a family. (A note concerning our quotation of children's comments: If the first large-cap question is not repeated, it is the same as the one posed to the previous child).

8 y.o.Male
    WHEN YOU'RE 50 AND YOUR SISTER'S 53, WILL YOU STILL BE A
    FAMILY?
    No.
    HOW COME?
    Because we'll be grownups by then.

    HOW WILL THAT MAKE YOU NOT A FAMILY?
    We'll still be a family but we won't be with each other
    anymore.
    WHY WILL THAT MAKE YOU NOT A FAMILY ANYMORE?
    It'll still be a family, but we won't be at this house
    anymore with each other.

8yr.11mo.Fem
    WHY ARE YOU STILL A FAMILY?
    Because we're still a real family, but we don't live
    together. Because we're married or something, cause we
    were born together. We were a family when we grew up, when
    we were little, so we're still a family when we grow up.
    WHY DOES THAT MAKE YOU STILL A FAMILY?
    Well, your mother's still you still have the same mother.
    And he'll still be my brother and my little brother will
    still be my little brother. And then if he's bigger, and
    I'm big. And my mother is still my mother. No matter how
    old I am. Or I'm still his little sister, no matter how
    old I am.

Two unifying features of the nature of continuity here are the

certainty that organic ties are irreversible configurations

between self and other, connections and an absence of human

intentionality or volition as necessary to its construction.

8 yr.8 mo.Fem
    DOES A FAMILY EVER STOP BEING A FAMILY?
    No.
    HOW COME?
    Because if you had sons and daughters and then they had
    children and then they had children and then they had
    children it would go on for cenuries.
    WHEN A FAMILY GROWS UP AND THEY DON'T LIVE TOGETHER
    ANYMORE, ARE THEY STILL A FAMILY?
    Yeah.
    WHY?
    Because like they could go back and they're still relatives
    and this would be my sister and that would be my child and
    they're still a family, no matter what.

There is also a glim awareness that the marriage of one's parents

is an act of connection, a stepping into a chain of continuity.

The fact that adult intimacy, the marriage, is a concrete and observable feature of the child's daily life enters into awareness as a place where continuity is bred.Thus the needle of finding one's place in relation to others and relationship is rethreaded at its earliest phases with its own thread.

9 yr. 10m. fem.

> WHEN YOU'RE 50 AND YOU'RE SISTER'S 52, WILL YOU STILL BE A
> FAMILY?
> Yes. WHY? Because you're their daughters, and you can
> never break a family. Once you're a family, you're always
> gonna be a family.
> WHY IS THAT?
> Because you were once children, what belonged to them, well,
> half-belonged because you don't really belong to anybody.
> DO YOU THINK A FAMILY EVER STOPS BEING A FAMILY?
> No. It always stays a family.

This last child's parents are divorced. Her response to the next question confirms how resistant her sense of configuration is to a notion of mere "legal" undoing or undoing by human intention or choice.

> CAN YOU MAKE A NEW FAMILY?
> Yeah, a step-mother and stuff. But you can't make a
> real,real, family. A half family yes, but not a whole
> family.
> WHAT MAKES A REAL, REAL FAMILY A REAL, REAL FAMILY?
> If you have never been married before.
> HOW COME THE OTHER FAMILY IS ONLY HALF A FAMILY?
> I don't know.

Group 2 (10 yr. 4 mo. - 12 yr. 5 mo.) In this group the meaning of continuity broadens to include shared histories and experiences. Organic tie is a condition of life which creates a

self-other configuration. Families can contain human conflict,

difference and the ambiguity of imperfection and still be

families. The last child quoted in group 1, who at 9 yrs. 10 mos.

didn't know why "a real, real family" is if you've never been

married before has come to see continuity as also bred by human

response and care. At 12 yrs. 5 mos., she was asked:

> DOES A FAMILY EVER STOP BEING A FAMILY?
> They're always a family but not, they don't always have to
> be a close family.
> WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A CLOSE FAMILY?
> To live under the same roof.
> IS IT ONLY LIVING UNDER THE SAME ROOF?
> No, close by actually caring about their problems.
> WHAT DOES THAT DO FOR PEOPLE?
> Let's them know that there is a person who cares about them
> and let's them talk about their feelings and maybe they can
> find a solution.
> SO WHEN YOU GET MARRIED AND MAKE A FAMILY WHAT MAKES A REAL
> FAMILY?
> Well, you've got to have love. You usually will have love.
> WHY DO YOU HAVE TO HAVE LOVE?
> Because if you don't have love then you don't really care.
> What's the point of getting married if you don't love each
> other?

Love, she says, is the experience that brings people to re-enter

and reconstruct this web of continuity over and over again. Her

older sister, at age 11, knew that conflict does not undo.

> DOES A FAMILY EVER STOP BEING A FAMILY?
> I guess sort of and not really. Not really because you'll
> always be a family. You would always be, let's say your
> daughter or your brother. As long as you live, but I
> guess you could run away or sort of disown your parents
> or disown your CAN YOU DO THAT?
> Sort of. I guess you could. Just say, "I hate you. Get
> out of here",you know, but you'd still be your mother
> or daughter. WHY? Because they still had you and you
> had something in you, you know, a piece of you.

The reasons that a sense of relation between self and other exists for younger children still exist for this group. Thus, the experience of past relationship is not negated by the awareness of it in the present.

11 yr 4 mo. Fem.

>DOES A FAMILY STOP BEING A FAMILY? No even though they get divorced they're still a family cause they could sometimes get back together or the kids would still be a family because
>they could each go to 1 parent or the other parent. Those are the kids so that's still a family. WHEN YOU'RE 50 AND YOUR SISTER'S 52 WILL YOU STILL BE A FAMILY? Yeah. WHY? Because we're sisters. We're related. We'll probably talk to each other, visit each other, stuff like that.
>WHY DOES IT MAKE YOU STILL A FAMILY?
>Cause you still love each other and care about each other.

Sam, at age 10 years, 4 mos. sees the future in a more diverse and elaborate way. The particulars of the present that influence his sense of family fabric are those that we would expect a 10 year old boy to relish, but he still maintains that the thread of relationship carries on.

>WHEN YOU GROW UP AND YOU'RE 50 AND YOUR SISTER IS 53, WILL YOU STILL BE A FAMILY?
>We'll still be a family but we won't really get in each other's way and we'll forget about them more, much more because by then you'll probably have a family of your own. You'd get in touch with them once in awhile, like Christmas.
>YOU'D FORGET ABOUT THEM MUCH MORE?
>Yeah, I guess so. If you have a wife and a family and you have work. And other things. You don't play with them. But you won't forget them. They're still in your mind, but you still see them alot.
>HOW ARE THEY STILL IN YOUR MIND?
>You can remember things; like, one night if you have a kid and they ask you about your sister you can tell them about

the time that you had with your friends and what you did to
your older sister and stuff.

The sense of self-other configuration becomes a psychological
construcution as well as an organic, concrete one. The past that
created the configuration influences its status as a psychological
configuration.

11 y.o. Fem.

DOES A FAMILY EVER STOP BEING A FAMILY?
Yeah, when they're not really all a family cause they're all
in a bad mood and they're not all together.
WHEN THEY GROW UP AND DON'T LIVE TOGETHER ANYMORE, ARE THEY
THEN?
No. They would still, yeah, they would be a family but not
a living together family.
WHY WOULD THEY STILL BE?
Cause they would be. They lived together and they grew up
together and they would still be a family.

Group 3 (12 yrs. 9 mos - 13 yrs. 8 mos). Among these young
adolescents, who in this case are females, the language that is
used to describe continuity changes. The questions that during
latency elicit the language of organic ties and relation, "real
families," "belonging" now begin to bring responses using the
words bond and attachment. The awareness of a configuration of
self and other that Bowlby and Ainsworth recognize as "attachment"
thus becomes available to the adolescent for reflection. Latency
age children use different language than psychologists do in
refering to these social experiences and it takes until
adolescence for children to begin to use the terms that
psychologists most readily recognize.

Our 11 yr 4 mo. female, quoted at the end of the last section, articulates at 13 yr. 8 mos. the feeling component of "being together" that unifies or disrupts, that she previously described as "being in a bad mood".

> WHEN YOU'RE 50...WILL YOU STILL BE A FAMILY?
> Yeah, because she'll still be my sister and I'll still care about her and we'll have my parents.
> WHY DOES THAT MAKE YOU STILL A FAMILY?
> Cause you still care about each other, you still love each other.

13 yr. 8 mo. Fem.

> DOES A FAMILY EVER STOP BEING A FAMILY?
> Well you can never stop being bonded together and you might not love each other but you'd always have blood relations. And somewhere even when the people, when the parents and kids hate each other, they still love each other someplace. WHEN YOU SAY BONDED TOGETHER, WHAT DO YOU MEAN? They're the same blood relations and when they were born their parents brought them up. It's almost like having a dog. IN WHAT SENSE? You get your dog as a puppy and you bring it up and like if your dog had been somebody else's dog, she might have grown up totally different. In personality, they're related in some way.

This child, who at 11, suggested that saying, "I hate you, get out of here" still wouldn't undo the ties, now at 13, maintains that hating each other doesn't really undo love. One's whole person is influenced by being raised in a family. We should note here that the subjective experience of the dog, as volitional agent, his willingness to be influenced, is irrelevant to the development of the configuration or the feeling of the influence. Families bind beyond the realm of will or intention. It is something that just happens. These thirteen year olds continue to maintain that the

bond does not end. Indeed it is generalized to a story of two
hypothetical brohers who grew up together and didn't see each
other for ten years after one of them, at age 21, moved far away.
When asked if these two brothers would still be a family, a 12
year old female replied:

> Yes, of course they would. HOW WOULD IT BE DIFFERENT? They
> wouldn't see each other as much and they'd lose touch but
> they'd still be brothers.WOULD THEY STILL FEEL THEMSELVES
> AS BROTHERS? Yes, because they grew up together, why
> wouldn't they? CAN YOU MAKE A NEW FAMILY? The brother that
> went off to the West Coast finds some people that he really
> likes but it's not the same thing but you can still have the
> same feelings toward them. WAS IT DIFFERENT? You're
> not related and you don't feel that bond between you that's
> always going to be there. No matter what happens. CAN
> YOU TELL ME ABOUT THAT BOND? WHERE DOES IT COME FROM? Just
> being brother and sister. Or brother and brother. Or sister
> and sister. NO MATTER WHAT? In some families it might be
> stronger because the siblings might talk to each other more
> and some they fight a whole lot and never talk to each other
> but it's still there. WHAT MAKES IT STRONGER? If you
> understand the person more and become friends with them.

The quality of the configuration between family and that of the
one exists between friends is not the same. These experiences
cross paths in the life-cycle, when the person who was once a
friend becomes the person that one marries and the person with
whom a new family is made. How that transformation of the place
of self and other happens is discussed by this 13 yr. 4 mo.
female.

> WHEN YOU GROW UP AND GET MARRIED, HOW DO YOU GET TO BE
> A FAMILY FROM THERE? I think when you marry is different
> than when you have kids. WHY IS THAT DIFFERENT? Because
> when you marry generally you have to love someone to get
> married and you can't just get married with anyone and say
> "Oh this is my family." It's easier to define family when

there is a kid. WHY IS IT EASIER TO DEFINE? Because
they're related to each other and there is some kind of a
string between them. AND THE STRING BEING WHAT? Well,
just that part of the kid's blood is the parent's blood.
Both parents and theirs, it's nowhere that you're tied
yourself together, it's just a string that is there
anyway.   SO WHEN YOU GET MARRIED, IT'S MORE TYING THE
STRING TOGETHER, WHEN YOU HAVE A CHILD? It's more like
your decision to be part of a family. And when you have
children, the child comes from you, comes from the parents
and it's kind of like it's there. And when you have the
child it's yours and it's from you and it's there and it
didn't just optionally come and you can't say, "Well I'm
gonna decide whether I want you or not. TO THE CHILD? You can
decide whether you want it or not
but still, the child came from you and it's part of you.
And it's there.
SO BEFORE YOU HAVE A CHILD, WHAT IS IT THAT ISN'T THERE?
JUST HAVING THE CHILD MAKES IT DIFFERENT?
Well, the child being related to the parents makes it more,
a real, you're attached. The child is, is some way, a
part of the parents. But when you get married, neither
of them; the husband didn't come from the wife. They just
met and I guess, in some ways, in some families, children
can tie the parents more but I don't think it's necessarily
true. And I think that you can be a family without a child
too. BECAUSE? But the thing is when people talk about,
after they've gotten married you don't say, well, you could
say, my family's coming to dinner and that was your
sister-in-law but you don't say, oh, this is my family and
introduce your wife. COULD IT FEEL LIKE A
FAMILY? Yes, because I think when 2 people are really loving
and caring and when they get married, they kind of attach
themselves to each other.

What is of particular interest here is the intersection of the

language of inevitability: the string being there anyway, the

child who is part of you whether you want it or not, and the

language of intentionality, volition, choice; deciding to get

married. The family is reconstructed by the integration of both,

one meets someone and loving forges the bond and choosing to get

married, to have children draws what was intentional into the

realm of the inevitable, the re-making of the string which
eventually "is there anyway."

Group 4 (16 yrs. 0 mos. - 19 yrs. 11 mos). In this group, 7
interviews of 4 adolescents will be discussed. The two males
interviewed have family backgrounds which differ dramatically from
those of all our other subjects. Our other subjects have
experienced human response to vulnerability in their families.
Family violence or neglect did not mark their experience. The two
adolescent males were, at Time 1 both students at a residential
school for "abandoned" youth. One left home because, after years
of physical abuse, he finally, at age 15, fought back. To
reproduce a quote from his Time 2 interview is not to digress: it
is to allow him to explain his difference in his own terms. At
19, when asked to describe his family, he said that "to put all of
us together, it's just pandemonium. My parents drink and when I
lived there it was just constant arguments." This led to a
question about physical abuse.

        DID THEY EVER PHYSICALLY ABUSE YOU?
        Oh yeah, constantly. It was a constant thing.
        AND YOU HAD BRUISES?
        Oh yeah, black eyes, split my head open numerous times.
        FROM WHEN YOU WERE HOW OLD?
        For as long as I can remember I was getting a beating for
        something.
        That I did wrong. And that was one of the reasons why I
        left. I would never, like when I had done something, wrong,
        my old man would come in in and start beating on me, I
        wouldn't fight back, I would just let him get his punchs in
        because he would always be drunk and he'd be screaming
        and I would just lay there and take my beating and then he'd
        get out and go to bed. He never really hurt me. Black eyes

hurt, but after a while it wouldn't hurt anymore. So, finally, like the last night I was there I fought back and just beat the shit out of him. That was it. I knew I couldn't stick around then, cause it would just be worse, so I said, "I've got to get out of here."
DID YOU EVER HAVE TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL BECAUSE OF YOUR BRUISES?
No, they never, I never went. My mother would always say, "You have to go to the hospital and get stitches" and I'd always say no. Like a few times, my old man hit me with a belt buckle, square on the side of the head, and split me open and another time, he was hitting me and grabbed my head and hit me against the wall, and caught like the corner like one of those things (hinge) on the frame and that split me open. But I never wanted to go to the hospital. I was afraid of questions. How did it happen, oh, my old man banged me off the head with a belt buckle.
AND THEN IT WOULD JUST HAPPEN AGAIN?
Yeah.

At our Time 1 interview, our second adolescent male described his

family.

Well, my parents split up a long time ago. When I was in 3rd or 4th grade.
HOW LONG HAVE YOU NOT LIVED AT HOME?
I was taken out at 13.
AND PLACED IN A FOSTER HOME?
No, I was put in a temporary placement holding until they found me another place. Program. From there I was put in a place in Milton. I was there for about 6 1/2 months. From there, they just let me go and I was living with some friends in Waltham, for a while. That's where I'm originally from. I stayed there for about a month. Then I came to one of these residential houses, but it burned down. So I moved out of there. And I didn't know what I was gonna do. I'd had enough of programs.
THAT WAS WHEN YOU WERE 14?
Yeah. I didn't know what I was going to do really. I was debating on where to go. What I was going to do. How I was going to keep going and try to support yourself and I didn't have too much to go on. I knew I had to finish school and everything. I was here and the guy who runs it said he'd let me stay at his place for a while so I stayed there and eventually, I've been staying there ever since.
HOW OLD ARE YOU NOW?
16.

Becoming socialized means acquiring an awareness of one's place among other people. The organic configuration of self and other that we are born into assures one meaning for the connection between self and other. With development, the experience of relationship may bring the renewal of the awareness of one's place in realtion to others. If one is not responded to, the sense of connection is undermined. The awareness of the organic tie has not been renewed or transformed and is labile. At 18 yrs. 10 mos. the first adolescent male says that organic ties are not enough to keep a family together. If a family does stop being a family, "I don't think it's because they get older or they change or they move. "

> WHAT DO YOU THINK IT IS, IF IT'S NOT PEOPLE GETTING OLD?
> It just depends on what goes on...like if they do something
> to you, it's very easy for you to get really mad at them
> and you even sometimes hate them. And you just drop ties
> with them. You just can't deal with them. Like that could
> very easily happen to us. To mine.
> WHY IS IT A FAMILY ANYWAY?
> I think for me personally it was just like the transition
> between living there and hating them and getting out of
> there and learning why. Everything was going on. It was
> just like a good time that it happened. I was 16 1/2.
> It was right in the middle of my adolescence. This was one
> of the things that I learned. I could understand why my
> parents were so screwy. They're alcoholics. I can
> understand that now. Why they did some of the things they
> did. Because they're sick. I can relate to that and being
> able to understand that, I forgive them for what happened.
> It's like it doesn't hurt anymore. So I can understand it.
> And I know why it happened. So it's like I can't hate them.

Our second adolescent at 18 yr. 5 mos.:

> Once you stop working amongst one another then you stop
> being a family.
> WHY IS THAT?
> My definition of a family is just, the group that's living

> together always bring in some kind of contact with one
> another and kind of trying to help one another out.
> Whereas if you're apart and never talk to people, then you're
> no longer a family because you're not trying to help one
> another out.

For these adolescents the configuration of self and other is

tenuous. Its transformation is not like that of the next two

adolescents whose experiences have contributed to a sense of

continuity, an ease in re-configuration of self and other.

For the adolescents who have experienced response , the small

particular acts of care, protection from vulnerability have made

the string and the string resides in their sense of themselves as

people among other people.

> 16 y.o. Fem.
> DOES A FAMILY EVER STOP BEING A FAMILY?
> Well I think that in a way, for me, a family is you
> live with them and you eat with them and you live in
> the same house with them and even when I do leave, they'll
> still be my family because they shared my growing up
> experiences. They know what happened to my in 5th grade
> and 1st grade and kindergarten and 9th grade and I think
> that in the respect that they're not living together and not
> not talking to each other every day, they're not a family
> but still he and his parents and his sisters and brothers
> share something that he won't share with anyone else.
> Because they know his background and in that sense, that
> is a family. WHAT DO YOU THINK A FAMILY LOSES IN THAT
> SITUATION? I think to give up your family in that way
> is losing a really important part of you. You lose
> having them there for you. And the trust and communication
> is obviously not there anymore for you. In a way you're
> giving up your past because you can't look back to your
> childhood without seeing your parents. So saying "I'm not
> going to talk to them anymore" is giving up a lot of you
> when you were little and I think that's an important part
> of being, is growing up. So you're giving that up. WHAT DOES
> THAT DO FOR PEOPLE TO GIVE UP YOUR PAST? Well it makes you
> obviously start completely over again. And if you're losing,
> well, you lose your childhood if you're losing everything
> like that and I think that childhood is a really

important part and probably by forgetting about your past
you forget about things that you've learned and experiences
you've been through and in a way, you have to grow up all
over again with different people around. But I think that
mostly a big part of you is sort of closed off when you
lose your past.

Although her experience is at the polar extreme of the two

males who precede her, this adolescent knows that the response,

the "being there for you", the particulars of context have woven a

web , a sense of her place in relation to others that is a part of

who she is, just as the violence and neglect of her two

predecessors and its weakening of the self-other configuration is

a part of who they are.

Response and Vulnerability. We will review children's awareness

of response and vulnerability together simply because in our

interviews, they were very often mentioned in the same breath.

Awareness of the condition of human vulnerability carries with it

the assumption that someone responds. In families, children become

aware of vulnerability through a sense of their own neediness,

through the rules that families make to protect each other from

harm, through the activity of care which they are the recipients

of, through their own efforts not to hurt others, and their

understanding that others are trying to care and protect them. In

the social cognitive literature, the child's attention to the

particulars of care or response is frequently reduced to the

larger category of "egocentrism". Our analysis suggests that the

salience of these aspects of context for children is bound up in

the contribution they make to the sense of self-other
configuration, one's awareness of a place in relation to others.
Their repetition breeds a sense of continuity of the
configuration, of family, the bond, the attachment. Our first
series of analysis suggests that children do experience family
relationship as continuous. The obvious question is: what is it
that families do for each other that makes for the sense of a
configuration? What is the experience of close relationship like?
Our two interview questions which address vulnerability and
response are:

Why do people need families?

What do you think a family should do for the people that are
in it?

Group 1 (7 yr. 10 mos. - 9 yrs. 10 mos).

8 yr. Male
WHY DO PEOPLE NEED FAMILIES? Because they need someone to
take care of them. HOW DOES A FAMILY DO THAT? They feed
them and they make lunch. I don't know what else. WHY
IS IT IMPORTANT THAT THEY GET TAKEN CARE OF? So they'll
get healthy. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF THEY DIDN'T GET TAKEN
CARE OF? They would starve.

Sam at 7 yrs. 10 mos.
For happiness and like when I grow up I want a family because
if I had a really big problem then I wouldn't have any body
to say it to. And to help me out but then if I did have a
family then I could help, help me out. WHY DO THEY NEED A
FAMILY FOR HAPPINESS? Because it's fun and if you don't
have somebody to love you and care for you and let's say,
if I just grew up by myself and let's say I broke my leg and
then there would be no one else to help me out and I just sort
of limped to the telephone or something and I'll just have to
wait for the ambulance to come.

9 yrs. 6 mo. Female

> So they can live or something.
> WHY DO THEY NEED THEM TO LIVE?
> Because if you didn't have a family then you probably wouldn't
> be here. WHY? WHAT DO YOU MEAN? If you didn't have a family
> and you were little or something you might not, and you didn't
> have a family, you probably wouldn't even be here. You
> wouldn't get attention and you might starve or something. Go
> hungry.

8 yrs. 8 mos. Female

> If you didn't have a family, they really wouldn't have a nice
> life. And it would be an ugly awful life.
> WHY?
> If they didn't have a family, they wouldn't be happy.
> Cause they would be bored a lot and there wouldn't be people
> to go places with and they would live alone in an apartment
> or something and it really wouldn't be happy. WHY WOULDN'T
> IT BE HAPPY?
> Because they wouldn't, there would be <u>no one to share your
> things with</u>. WHY IS IT NICE TO SHARE YOUR THINGS WITH PEOPLE?
> That's a way to know somebody likes you a lot.

In the language and imagery of the concrete-operational thinker,

these children reveal that it is the recognition of the condition

of human vulnerability, the salience to others of starvation or

broken legs and the presence of response that comprises family

experience. Given the condition of vulnerability that we are all

born into and never fully escape, what should family experience be

like?

8 yr. 11 mo. Female

Well, the first thing is you always have to be nice with
them, because if you're not, they can be mean, or not be nice
anymore to you and your family won't anymore be such a nice
family. WHAT HAPPENS IF IT ISN'T SUCH A NICE FAMILY? You
don't have a happy time and you'll grow a bad family yourself.
You might grow up to be mean and be mean to your chilren.
And they'll be mean to their children. And that might go on.
Like the children will be sad and they won't like their
parents that much.
WHAT'S THE VERY MOST IMPORTANT THING A FAMILY SHOULD DO FOR
THE PEOPLE IN IT? If somebody's in trouble, do everything
they can to save them. Like if there was a fire, the smoke
detectors is right up on my door and I should help my
broher, wake him up it it's night. I don't just leave him
there and get out by myself. WHY IS THAT IMPORTANT?
Because my mother loves him and I love him. And you have
to save his life. He can die with all the smoke or he's
too small to get out by himself. That's another thing.

In effect, families should respond, sister to brothers and mothers

and fathers to children. There is little consideration of

intention or motivation, rather the focus is on vulnerability and

response which breeds relationship.

8 yr. 8 mo. Female

They should help one another. WHY? They should do that
because if they didn't help one another, they wouldn't want
to go near them and they wouldn't want to share things with
them. WHAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING PEOPLE SHOULD DO FOR
EACH OTHER? Love each other. WHY IS THAT IMPORTANT? If
you didn't love each other, you wouldn't be a nice, happy
beautiful family. WHAT DO YOU MEAN WHEN YOU SAY LOVE? You
like each other a lot. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A REAL HAPPY FAMILY,
WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU? You would be a nice, gray feeling
inside your mind. It wouldn't be a nice feeling, though.
It would be a sad feeling because if you didn't love one
another, it would just be all blank and you wouldn't like
your life.

<u>8 yr. 11 mos. Female</u>

> In a good family, you like each other and you're not too
> mean. But sometimes, like don't perfect, if everybody's
> perfect in the family. Just perfect it wouldn't be such
> a good family either. Because you never do anything
> wrong. You never get to teach manners or anything. It's
> good to teach people something, sometimes.

Helping, cooperating, loving, being kind are all images of

response. Children know that they are vulnerable, that others

are vulnerable, that people are not perfect. The circle of

dependence produces a web of responsivity that they contribute to

and are tied to.The activity of care and the experience of

response are facts of daily life that collectively make a family

a family and as we have seen, a sense of one's place among

others as continuous. The intentions or motivations that lie

behind these actions are global and diffuse. They simply happen.

<u>Group 2 (10 yrs. 2 mos. - 11 yrs. 11 mos.).</u> Vulnerability and

dependence don't disappear with development. The reasons younger

children offer for needing a family are not negated as

development unfolds: they become more complex, the consequences

of their absence more frightening. If human will is the quality

of being that makes oppression a reality, then vulnerability is

the human condition that makes violence a possibility.

<u>Sam, 10 yrs. 4 mos.</u>

> WHY DO PEOPLE NEED FAMILIES? So they know that somebody
> cares about them and they won't just go out. Like children
> that are abused, they just think they are not loved, so they
> go away. So a family is important because you know somebody
> is caring over you and watching over you and they know they

really care what happens to you. WHY IS THAT IMPORTANT, DO
YOU THINK? Because you'll always have somebody to come to,
look forward to. They can stick up for you. They can help
you with problems.

10 yrs. 2 mos. Female

People need families, just someone who won't turn their back
on you. Someone who won't just suddenly kill you like the
rest of the world.

Vulnerability means "having a big, big problem. They'd talk
to you about. If they didn't you'd get depressed" (11 yr 4 mo.
Fem.); "needing a place to stay"; "being lonely or getting bored'
"needing somebody who is older to teach you things"; "needing
someone to take care of you"; "needing someone to love them.
People you know a lot, since you were a baby. If you don't know
anybody that much, you can't speak to people" (10 yr. 10 mos.
Fem).

Awareness of the configuration of self and other and its
affirmation through response breeds a sense of caring. Response
is justified not because of intention but because of care.
10 yr. 4 mo. male

They have to love each other. If they don't love each
they won't care about each other. They probably won't
care what happens. If they get in a big fight or if
they don't do their homework or if they went to the
park and missed dinner, they won't care...If people don't
care, they'd let them do whatever they wanted and when
they broke something, they'd get mad at them and punch them
because they didn't care. If you care, they're forgiveable.

The acceptance of human vulnerability that Sam speaks of also is
articulated as a tolerance of human inperfection; everybody not
being the same. It's ok "to get mad once in a while. WHY? You

have to get mad or you get sick of the person."

If there is no love in a family, then 11 and 12 year olds know lunch may get made anyway. They also know that even without love, the family may still be a family. "Even if I hated them, there would be a part of them in me." To feel like a family, "is somebody who is close to you and somebody you can depend on."

Group 3 (12 yrs 9 mos. - 13 yrs. 8 mos.)

Families are the juncture where power and dependence, inequality and vulnerability meet. There is always a shared perspective in family life, because children sit at the juncture of these two different dimensions. The case for fairness and the case for care cross paths: violence at its extreme is oppression. Among our young adolescents, there is an awareness that living in the crook of the elbow breeds more than a wish for power or a wish to take care of oneself. It creates an understanding of what it is like to live in a relationship, in dependence, where you can't always get what you want; but you do often times get what you need.

13 yrs. 10 mo. Female

> I would say you need a family mostly for the experience and
> protection. WHEN YOU SAY EXPERIENCE AND PROTECTION, WHAT DO
> YOU MEAN? A person in a family goes through certain
> experiences, just like arguments or doing things or going
> places and what it's like to do things in a family. And
> having to make decisions along with the family so you can't
> always do what you want and having to talk to them about it.
> WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO HAVE THAT EXPERIENCE? It might not
> necessarily be good but it's something which can really
> change your view altogether or everything even. Your

whole way of looking at things can change in some ways. Also
the way your family works, you can compare that to other
things around you and if you didn't have it to compare with,
you wouldn't know what a family is like and you would be
a different person.

13 yr. 8 mo. Female

Even if you're independent it's a really good feeling you can
go someplace...they're there if you ever need them. WHAT
DOES THAT DO FOR PEOPLE? It just makes you feel that you're
sort of wanted and I guess you're there.

13 yr. 4 mo. Female

Friends can't give you the help you need, necesarily, I
think. WHY? If you had brain damage or something with
your mind, you didn't feel you could tell your friends. I
think that your family comes in handy. Because they're
people that love you and they love you, and they're almost
always there for sure. Most friends are there to help.

Group 4 (16 yrs. - 19 yrs. 11 mos.). The idea that you need

somebody to take care of you that our 8-year old subject

expressed is not lost to our adolescent subjects. Our adolescent

males at 16, still feel that people need families, the needing is

of a different quality, but it exists in spite of the particulars

of their pasts. Our first adolescent male:

You just can't be born and start living. Somebody has to
show you what to do and how to do it and your family
is the one that usually does that up until some point when
you've just sort of got to go off on your own. Sometimes
it's earlier than it should be. If I had my choice, I'd
still be at home, but things would have to be different.
WHY WOULD YOU RATHER BE AT HOME? I think everybody deserves
to be home with their family.

16 yr. 5 mo. Male

I think it's good to have a place where people
care about you. WHY? Because otherwise you start to
feel that it's you yourself and that's all that matters

> when people really should think of them in terms of
> everyone else because you're a part of everyone else.
> And you have to be part of something whereas if you are
> a part of nothing, if you have no family, you might look
> at things differently, always trying to look out for
> yourself instead of other people. WHAT HAPPENS IF PEOPLE
> DON'T THINK OF OTHERS OR JUST LOOK OUT FOR THEMSELVES?
> You start to not care about a lot of things. Most likely
> you'll probably end up in trouble.

The configuration of self and other breeds a web of protection.

The activity of caring is the activity of response to human

vulnerability. To our adolescents, the spectre that non-care

raises is not starvation but violence. People need families, a

17-year old female said:

> So they can share. Families are people who care about
> one another. When you're pretty young you need a group
> of people or at least one person who care about you. That's
> what families are, they take care of each other and care
> about them. I think it's important. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?
> Cause if you didn't, I think people would feel lost. Cause
> nobody cares. People would get angry and mean and violent.

Our 8-year old girl's contention that families shouldn't be

perfect becomes, for these adolescents, the notion that response

can address the difference betweeen will and vulnerability, the

gap between what one wants and what one needs. Families should

tolerate the difference between these two and sustain in spite of

difference.

18 yr. 10 mo. Male

> WHAT SHOULD FAMILIES DO FOR THE PEOPLE IN THEM? The worst
> program they ever put on tv was "Father Knows Best." It's
> just like the perfect all-American family. I've never seen
> one. I don't know one family that doesn't have something

going on. There's always something. No one's perfect.
DO YOU LEARN THAT IN FAMILIES? Oh yeah. Especially if
you have a large family and you look around. Your sister's
a pill-popper. Your mother is an alchoholic. It's easy
to see. When you're younger, you don't see it. Everyone's
the same. As you grow up, you can see things. You're able
to distinguish things.

19 yr. 11 mo. Female

I think they should be sharing and be honest with each other,
yet know when people need space. To be miracle workers.
I know that families have problems and nothing is ever
perfect and there are always going to be arguments. It's
really hard to think of the perfect family. WHY IS THAT?
When I think of a perfect family, my vision is Cunningham's
on "Happy Days" and I know that's not so. Families have
hard times and children do things to disappoint their
parents and vice versa. But I think if families try to
treat everybody equally and acknowledge work done then the
family are basically honest and open with what is going on.
That's the best you can do.

18 yr. 5 mo. Male

You got to care about one another. If they're doing
something you don't particularly like, you've got to
remember that that's their own person and they can't
always do things the way you like them. WHY IS THAT
IMPORTANT? Cause if you have no understanding for
people, you may not like something; although you don't
like something it still can be alright.

Engagement

Remember at this point Langer's comment that
mindless states of awareness can never be directly observed. By
definition, mindlessness is psychologically a non-event. To
mindfully consider one's own mindlessness is to be mindful thus
mindlessness can only be indirectly observed. We would like to
suggest that a similar argument can be made concerning
disengagement in human relationships. We document children's

awareness of engagement in family relationship by listening to the language they use to describe their sense of the configuration of self and other, its continuity. Response and vulnerability are the human psychological events that breed engagement. Over time this configuration becomes fully available to the child's awareness, to reflect on as developmental propensities allow him/her to reflect. Children are fully aware of these experiences as contributing to their sense of place in relation to other people. Continuity is one outcome that engagement produces. Thus, we are not going to analyze the phenomenon of engagement as it appears in our interviews. We have already indirectly observed its presence in human relationship in the language of response, which is reflected in the activity of care; vulnerability, which care addresses ; and the sense of connection that children reflect when they describe their families.

Summary

Our focus in this paper has been to compare the concept of perspective-taking as the psychological process which creates knowledge of the interpersonal world with the experience of close relationship as a precipitant of psychological processes which influence how the child becomes socialized, how he acquires a social awareness. We have suggested that the limitations which

immaturity of logic is said to impose on understanding do not constrain the child's experience of relationship. Children come to know their place in relation to others and this knowing of the configuration between self and other eludes the limitations that social cognitive theory suggests that absence of "ideas" about relationship creates. By making the study of social growth an inquiry of epistemology, developmental psychology has confused the process of knowing oneself as a social being with the knowing that logical knowledge allows us to acquire. Confronting this paradox, we have turned to the work of Ellen Langer which attempts to describe the power of the contextual features of experience to influence awareness. We suggest that her description of Mindfulness as the psychological process which influences our involvement with information is applicable to our involvement with people. The experience of human response invokes engagement, an awareness of the configuration of self in relation to other. This awareness is not a construction of logic but a knowing tied to the experience of close relationship. While it is an awareness that is constructed from experience, it is a dimension of social reality that children can reflect on and use ideas to describe. The sense of connection that children acquire in becoming socialized is captured here in their conceptions of family.

This type of social awareness and the analogy we have drawn

from Langer's work to describe the psychological process that
creates it conceptualize the experience of self and other in the
social world as an open system. We suggest that feeling or
knowing oneself as a person in relation to others is continuously
renewed. We can discuss this renewal within the parameters of the
close intimate dyad or within the confines of oneself as a person
in relation to the universe of other persons. This is not to
suggest that the sense of permanence that a psychological concept
like attachment evokes is missing. The gravitation that the
process of engagement creates is toward the other. It doesn't
undo, rather it renews and offers the potential for creation of
new configurations, new connections.

Egocentrism in the social cognition literature has always
inferred a kind of "autism", an implication of non-availability,
an insularity in relationship that only the development of
perspective-taking can undo. Our children tell us that they do
not move through their lives this way; vulnerability and response
invoke presence, human experience creates a sense of
self-otherness that is couched in the activity of love and
sometimes violence and human pain, a truth this poet knows.

> I fell through a sky filled with hearts
> bursting them all, bursting my own,
> getting the bursting blood of love on me.

We carry our sense of a relation to others with us. Our

experiences as children are not insular. We are born into a configuration of self and other and it is through this relation that we begin to experience engagement.

Directons for Future Research

Piaget has told us that maturation does not cause anything. The salience of the experience of relationship, of living in dependence, as an influence on interpersonal awareness is influenced by these experiences, has received scant attention in the social cognitive literature.

To address this deficit, we will conduct a larger study using a sample in which both sexes are equally represented. Our purpose in that piece of work will be to investigate the "knowing of close relationship". We suggest that the process of engagement and the process of perspective-taking yield different kinds of knowing and therefore different kinds of social awareness. Perspective-taking yields logical knowledge; engagement yields a heightened awareness of the configuration of self and other. We suspect that the application of a stencil of logical understanding to children's conceptions of family would reveal the same limitations in "ideas" of relationship that Selman has described in his hierarchy of conceptions of friendship. We also suspect that one could analyse children's conceptions of friendship and reveal awareness of the configuration of self and other, engagement, that the focus on the point of view of the

moment does not compromise, that the absence of the idea of relationship as a concept does not undermine. We suspect that the tools which have been used to examine awareness are limited. To paraphrase Polanyi, we suspect that children know more than our theory has allowed us to hear.

A study which employs the perspective-taking stencil in looking at children's conceptions of family and a lens which captures the configuration of self and other would be useful in depicting more precisely the influence on children's conceptions of the knowing that the experience of being a person among persons initiates. Our contention that context influences awareness could also be demonstrated in an experimental paradigm in which the experimenter manipulates the context of self and other and then examines how the manipulation influences the knowing of the other. A comparison of the task of taking the perspective of a doll vs. taking the perspective of a real person in a role-taking task is an example of one experiment in which the configuration of self and other is manipulated. We could expand this paradigm to contrast what the child knows of the other when more dramatic manipulations are induced; evaluating another person in a face-to-face interview vs. evaluating a person by overhearing an interaction. To conduct these studies, our instrument , unit of analysis and analysis strategy need to be refined.

Both an analysis of children's articulated knowing and an analysis of the effect of a manipulation of context would begin to clarify the interplay between the logical ordering of thought and the "fluctuation" of thought in attending to the interpersonal world. Gilligan has suggested that the propensity for the imposition of a logical ordering through thought is more pervasive among men, while "fluidity" of thought allows women to attend to people. Gilligan attributes this gravitation toward context among women to Chodorow's observation that women are raised by women and thus never have to turn to "ideas" to remain who they are in the confines of the mother-child relationship. What has been lacking in Gilligan's argument is an explanation of the psychological process that creates this way of knowing our surround; why women are precocious perspective-takers, always thinking of others as they do. We suggest here that the process of knowing is not one of perspective-taking. We suggest that theory needs to move in the direction of describing the psychological process that keeps context salient, that recreates the salience of the other over and over again.

The fact that we do grow to become "a person among people" in the contex of family may figure importantly in initiating the salience of the configuration of self and other. Certainly the experience of deprivation and non-response yields difficulty in reconstructing a configuration of self and other that recreates

the experience of dependency. Attachment does become a closed

system in the aftermath of deprivation. The power of the moment

to engage is foreclosed.

At Time 2 we asked our subjects what they thought human

beings would be like as people if they were not raised in

families. Their responses, ironically, address those missing

pieces of developing social awareness that this pilot study has

begun to examine. At age 18, our adolescent male, who left home

at 13, gives us his intuitive sense of what that deficit might

be.

> IF PEOPLE WEREN'T RAISED IN FAMILIES, IF THEY WERE JUST
> BORN AND EARLY ON FLEW OFF, HOW WOULD THEY BE DIFFERENT
> AS PEOPLE? We probably just wouldn't get along. A lot of
> people don't. A lot of families break up. Cause you
> won't have had something inside you, just being able to,
> you won't have the experience of caring for somebody. If
> you don't care, you won't think of people caring for you.
> Caring makes you happy; it makes you sad if you don't like
> something that happened but that can be a good experience
> too, like growth or something. People just wouldn't be
> happy. Because they wouldn't be able to form attachments
> to people so they'd be like isolated. They won't, if they
> never cared for anybody, they probably never will and if
> can't do that, it's very unlikely that someone will be able
> to care for them if they're not being cared for. They just
> won't be able to form any kind of, they won't be able to
> make their own family. They'll just grow up isolated and
> they'll just miss out on being able to form attachments.

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A. <u>Summary Descriptions of Close Friendship Stages</u>

<u>Stage 0: Close friendships as momentary physicalistic interactions</u>. The physicalistic social thinking of the young child is characterized first by the failure to recognize or differentiate the psychological from the physicalistic qualities or attributes of people and their relations and second the inability to define friendship beyond the momentary or repeated incidents of interaction between two persons who come together to play. For example, reflections upon how to go about making a friend tend to emphasize the physicalistic reality of proximity and propinquity at the expense of or by ignorance of psychological considerations. Similarly the qualities of a person who is seen to make a good friend are attributes such as closeness of physical appearance and of functional activity. (What kind of person makes a good friend? "Boys play with boys, trucks play with trucks, dogs play with dogs." Why does that make them good friends? "Because they do the same things.") Also common at Stage 0 is the admiration of a person as a friend for his/her observably valued physical attributes such as fast runners or strong players. This physicalistic orientation also pervades conceptions of intimacy and trust. It is difficult for the child reasoning at Stage 0 to differentiate degrees of friendship, for good acts are friendly, badly perceived acts are not. Hence friendship relations themselves are not perceived along a continuum except on a naively physicalistic and literal basis such as "close friends live closer (near) by." Trust, to the extent that the concept is familiar to young children, appears to be accommodated to this nonsubjective orientation. Trust is limited to a definition equivalent to faith in physical capability, e.g., the belief that to trust a friend is to know he is capable of playing with one's toys without accidentally breaking them. Not until the next stage are the persons' motives or intentions considered. (Who is your best friend? "Eric." Do you trust him? "Yes." What does it mean to trust Eric? "If I give him a toy I know he won't break it." How do you know? "He isn't strong enough.")

The momentary quality of friendships is highlighted at Stage 0 around issues of jealousy and intrusion-exclusion. Jealousy is not interpersonally oriented in the sense of a concern for the losing of a friend's affection or attention. Rather, jealousy is directed to the loss of toys or space; at least, this is how such experiences are verbalized once reflected upon at this early stage.

Strategies for resolving conflicts between two playmates tend to rest on the same simplistic reliance on physical force or movement. These solutions, even if the child believes them when posed under hypothetical conditions, certainly do not cover the whole array of conflict resolving strategies available in the behavioral repertoire of the average 4-6 year old. (If you and your friend are each trying to play with the same toy, how do you decide who gets it? "Punch her." or "Just go play with something else.")

Finally, because friendships are physicalistic, momentary, or both, physical battles ("when he hits you") or physical qualities ("I don't like her voice") are seen as both the cause and the justification for playmate separation at Stage 0.

<u>Stage 1: Close friendship as one-way assistance</u>. The underlying organizational developments at Stage 1 in interpersonal awareness are 1) the new awareness of the functions of motives, thoughts and feelings, internal psychological phenomena which serve to direct or influence external or observable social actions of persons, and 2) the new understanding that these "psychological" perspectives of self and other need to be seen as separate and independent, i.e., differentiated. However, the child is still not capable of clearly understanding the reciprocal relationship between these viewpoints. Hence his/her interpersonal conceptions tend to be one-way, i.e., focused only on one person at a time, and on that person's subjective perspective in the social relationship.

Thus, a friend is seen as important because he/she does specific overt activities which the self wants done ("you need a friend because you want to play some games and you have to get someone who will play the way you want him to"). To make a friend requires attention to "inner likes or dislikes," one has to know what a person likes as an activity in order to be his friend; conversely, a good friend to the self is someone who knows what the self likes to do and will do it with the self. In other words, one person's interests or attitude is set up as a fixed standard, and for the friendship to form, the other person must "tune in to the standard thus formulated." However, it is not until the next stage that the child is able to take a somewhat more relativistic perspective and to see that each party has a set of likes or dislikes that need to be coordinated, and that friendship is not just the accommodation of one person's behavior to the other's will.

Intimacy and closeness in a friendship now rest on more than simple demographic credentials (lives close by), close friendships are rank ordered on the basis of how closely each friend matches the self's interests, e.g., "a closest friend is the one who knows which games you like to play the best." This one-way conception is also applied to the issue of trust; although trust is now recognized as more than confidence in another's capabilities, i.e., as faith in a person's motives and intentions, a trusting relationship is still one in which one party, the friend, has good intentions or motives toward the self. Still missing is the perceived sense of reciprocity. The causes of conflicts are also seen as located in unilateral activities; one person acts in such a way as to cause a problem for the other. The resolution of these conflicts is also one way, the actor needs to undo or negate the negative action and restore the partner to a more comfortable state of psychological attitude. (What causes fights between friends? "If he calls you a name or something like that." How can you get to be friends again? "Make him take it back; make him say he was lying.") The basic issue in restoring the peace is whether or not the name caller takes back his barb; whether he means it when he takes it back is not considered relevant at Stage 1. Finally, the Stage 1 reasoner is cognizant of the fact that friendships can break up on the basis of unilateral decisions as well as on the basis of physicalistic confrontations. One person can decide on his/her own that a friend no longer "does what I want him to do," and so decides to singlehandedly terminate the relationship ("You get tired of playing her games, the ones she likes so you tell her not to be your friend anymore").

Stage 2: Close friendships as fairweather cooperation. With the ability to see the reciprocal relation between interpersonal perspectives, i.e., each person is seen as capable of taking into account the other's perspectives on the self's motives, thoughts and feelings, the resulting underlying conception of friendship relations focuses on a "context-specific" (fairweather) reciprocity, i.e., an awareness of the necessity for a "meeting of minds," albeit this meeting of perspectives is only seen as necessary around specific incidents or issues rather than as the underlying system upon which the relationship is structured. The basic limitation of this level is that the subject still sees the basic purpose of reciprocal awareness as the servicing of the self's interest, rather than the service of mutual concerns.

Friendships are viewed as important at Stage 2, not just because the self wants others to do things for him/her, but because the self needs companionship, needs to be liked. Hence we see a more interpersonal orientation. There is a dim but growing recognition that persons need relations for the social interaction itself, rather than for only the sake of getting what one wants (Stage 1) or to allow the self to simply play a game (Stage 0). Making friends requires the coordination of context specific likes and dislikes rather than the matching of one person's likes and dislikes to the fixed standard of the other. A good person to make friends with is one who reveals his inner or true feelings about things to you rather than one who fronts or presents a fake image.

Intimacy and sharing is more truly reciprocal at this stage than at Stages 0 or 1, each party finding out what the other likes to do. The fairweather aspect of close friendship once again is the orientation to the benefits for the self rather than for the relationship itself. Trust also becomes a reciprocal relation in thought as well as in deed. It implies that a friend is someone to whom one can reveal inner thoughts (e.g., secrets) which will be safely stored away, not to be revealed to outsiders.

In concepts of jealousy and exclusion we see the same interpersonal concern that we saw in the need for friends. Jealousy is not just the self feeling sad because an event or activity was missed, or because the self did not get to do something the self wanted to do, it is recognized at Stage 2, that one feels bad because a friend actively chooses someone else to spend time with over the self.

Because conflicts are more clearly seen as between parties rather than simply caused by one party and effecting the other, resolutions of conflicts must be generated which are satisfactory to each participant. It is not enough, as at Stage 1, to negate an action to undo a conflict, at Stage 2 each party must make sure that the other person really means it if he apologizes, i.e., that underlying intent is in accordance with the overt expression of a desire to resolve the conflict. Just as the child at Stage 2 can recognize the need to mean what one says, he also recognizes that persons sometimes don't mean what they say, particularly if they are angry at that moment.

A final but dominant feature of Stage 2 friendship concepts is the difficulty subjects at this level have in seeing friendship as a system which can transcend the immediate context specific conflicts or cooperative ventures of each party. When dyads are in disagreement, they are not "friends," but just as these relations are easily dissolved, so they are easily reformulated when conflicts are forgiven or forgotten.

Stage 3: Close friendships as intimate-mutual sharing. At this stage the individual can abstractly stand outside the friendship relationship (at Stage 2, the individual could stand outside the self, but not the relation itself) and view it as an ongoing and stable system. Hence the major focus or orientation is on the relationship itself, rather than on each individual separately. This leads to a general shift in orientation from a Stage 2 view of friendship as reciprocal coordination with other for the self's interest to a Stage 3 notion of collaboration for mutual interest and sharing (Sullivan, 1953). The primary function of friendship at Stage 3 is a general mutual support that is upheld over a period of time (as opposed to lower stage concerns for immediate activity or the serving of the self's immediate boredom or loneliness). In thinking about the process by which persons make friends, although at Stage 3 the subject is aware of the phenomenon of "hitting it off" right away, in general good friendships are seen as developing over a period of time in which the parties get to go through mutual experiences, get to discover each other's "personality" and traits, and become familiar with each other's complimentary as well as common interests.

Closeness within a friendship at Stage 3 is seen in the degree to which two persons share intimate personal concerns and the effort they make to maintain the relationship. Trust is a major force in the vocabulary of subjects reasoning at this stage; it signifies that each party is willing to share these intimate thoughts and feelings with his/her partner, thoughts and feelings which are not shared with less intimate friends or acquaintances.

The sense one has at Stage 3 is that friends are part of one another. As Sullivan noted, each party gains a personal satisfaction from the awards and accolades that are gained by the other. The intensity of the felt "in-group of two" which characterizes Stage 3 conceptions of friendship is also felt in the subject's reasoning about issues such as jealousy and exclusion. Relationships of closeness are perceived in a particularly possessive perspective. Aware of the amount of effort and interest involved in the formation of a close friendship, the subject is also aware that good friends try to hang on to their relation, that they do not readily allow others to intrude for fear of losing the relationship altogether.

For the first time, conflicts between friends can be viewed somewhat abstractly which in turn leads the subject at this stage to realize that a particular conflict adequately worked through can strengthen the relationship. Talking things out is seen as a common strategy for conflict resolution at Stage 3.

Finally, at this stage, the subject more clearly differentiates between the kinds of conflicts which are relatively minor and which the relationship itself serves to help ameliorate, and the types of conflicts which threaten the very foundation of the relationship itself. The latter types of conflicts are usually those which break the bond of trust established over a period of time by the two friends; for example, when a personal confidence is exploited or not taken in a serious or personal manner. ("A lot of times you will tell a friend some real private thing, something about your girlfriend or how you feel about somebody. If he goes out and asks that girl out, then you just can't trust him anymore, and you really can't be very good friends.")

Stage 4: Close friendships as autonomous interdependence. At Stage 4 the subject sees persons in a psychological sense as having complex and sometimes conflicting needs, each of which can be met by a different kind of relationship (close intimate relations, business relations, casual acquaintances, etc.). The ideal or close friendship relation is seen at Stage 4 as being in a constant process of formation and transformation. Friendships are seen as open relational systems available to change, flexibility, and growth in the same way that persons are available to such development. At Stage 4, the function of a close friendship (as differentiated qualitatively from a casual or superficial relation) is to provide the self with a sense of personal identity through interpersonal relations. At this stage, the subject is aware that one tends to define oneself through the company one keeps. Similarly, the process of making a friend is seen as a series of "stages" of coming to know one another, stages which have a striking parallel to the ontogenetic developmental sequence described in this manual. ("At first you really are just feeling each other out. Then you build up a certain amount of trust. Then there comes a time when the relationship is really a commitment between the two of you.") The concept of the ideal friend is not seen as some absolute but rather as a person whose personality is compatible with one's own, i.e., a good friend is a relative concept, relative to the relationship itself.

Trust in a friendship is the new awareness that persons have complex and multivariated needs and that in a good friendship each partner helps the other, and allows the other to develop independent relations. Each individual's needs for both dependency and for autonomy are recognized in the friendship and the mutual meeting of those individual needs is seen as basic to trust ("trust is the ability to let go as well as to hang on"). Truly close friendships perform a unique and qualitatively distinct function. They attend to the deeper psychological needs of each other.

Jealousy is also seen at some distance at Stage 4. While not denying the reality of the sometimes painful feelings of jealousy, it is also seen as an admiration of the ability of persons to form relationships and to help them grow. There is less the sense of possessiveness as at Stage 3, and more the sense of the positive appreciation of admired relationships.

At Stage 4 the individual makes a further distinction between interpersonal conflicts and intrapsychological conflicts. He/she is aware that intrapsychological problems, e.g., "problems with authority" can effect interpersonal relations. Conflicts are resolved through mutual attempts at insight and self reflection ("You have to have some insight into your own behavior if you really want to get along with other people").

A major new conception of the factors which cause the termination of friendships includes the possibility that people grow out of relationships, i.e., that as people develop their interests change, and this may lead to the negation of old relationships and to formulation of new ones.

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Conception of the Family Interview

1. Can you tell me about your family?

    Who's in it? What's it like?

2. What do you like best about your family?

    Why is that nice?

3. What do you like least about your family?

    Why is that important?

4. Why do people need families?

    Why is that important?

5. What should families do for the people in them?

    Why is that important?

    What's the most important thing?

    Why is that?

6. What would be the best kind of family to have?

    Why is that best?

  If you wanted to change your family and make it like that, how

    could it be changed?

7. Does a family ever stop being a family?

    When you're 50 and your sister's 53 will you still be a family?

    How come?

8. How do you make a new family?

    How can you tell it's a family?

9. Is there anything people <u>have</u> to do to make a family a family?

10. Say you met someone from another planet, and you said, "Well we live here on this planet and we have these things called families," and they said, "What are they?", what would you tell them?

11. What are some of the rules in your family?

   Are they the same for everyone?

12. How did they get to be the rules?

13. Do you need rules in a family? Why do you need rules?

14. If you wanted to change the rules, how would they get changed?

15. What would be the best way to change the rules?

   Why is that?

16. What would be the worst way? Why is that bad?

Questions for Picture A and B. In both pictures the father has just given the mother a present.

1. How do you think this little boy/little girl feels?

2. Why is he happy/sad?

3. Does this help the family?

4. How does it help it?

5. Is it important that things like this happen? Why?

6. Do kids ever do things that hurt/help a family like this?

7. What kinds of things?

8. Why does it hurt/help?

9. What could the family do to make it better?

10. Why would that help?