THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
FAMILY RITUALS AND FAMILY FUNCTIONING
IN THE
REMARRIED FAMILY

by

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B.A., The University of Minnesota, 1986
A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in
THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
Department of Counselling Psychology

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
October, 1989
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Date 1 February 1990
This paper proposes that remarried families who have a higher level of family ritual observance will also have a higher level of family functioning. This hypothesis was tested in a study involving 60 individuals comprising 30 couples remarried over two years, and with a stepchild under 13 years of age. Each partner responded to a questionnaire composed of family functioning measures (FACES III-Adaptability and Cohesion subscales, Family Satisfaction Scale, Quality Marriage Index) family ritual measures (Family Traditions Index, Family Celebrations Scale, Family Time and Routines Index), and demographic information.

Data was examined using Correlation, Analysis of Variance, and Regression analysis. Results indicate that women experiencing a higher level of family routines also experience greater family satisfaction. Additionally, women who had counselling in the remarried family, report greater marital quality, and women who work outside the home report a higher level of adaptability. For men, a higher level of cohesion and family celebrations were found for men where the remarried family includes a child from the current marriage. These results suggest that awareness of family rituals present in remarried families and the effect of particular demographic variables can be useful information for both family therapists and the families themselves.
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    for love and support beyond measure
    and
    To Alex, my friend,
    who stayed as long as he could, and left with love
    and
    To Shuka, the gentle and joyful
    fleeting spirit
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The stepfamily or remarried family (Wald, 1981) has existed historically as a family configuration. At the turn of the century, the most common reason for remarriage was the death of the spouse. Today, with an almost thirty year increase in average life spans, changes in laws and expectations of marriage, and social acceptance of divorce, divorce rather than death of the spouse has become a far more common reason for remarriage. (McGoldrick, 1988).

In 1980 it was estimated that in the United States, one in three marriages ended in divorce (Stevens-Long, 1984), with 56% of these divorces involving children (McGoldrick, 1988). Of these divorced people, over 85% of the men and 75% of the women were expected to remarry, and of this remarried group, 64% of the men and 58% of the women were expected to redivorce. Projected estimates from the U.S. 1980 census are even less optimistic. McGoldrick (1988) estimates that 50% of marriages of those currently in their twenties will end in divorce, and by 1990, one in three children under the age of nineteen will have experienced parental separation.
Canadian statistics are slightly more encouraging. Although divorce rates have risen dramatically since 1921, in recent years, the divorce rate per 100,000 population has declined (McKie, Prentice, & Reed, 1983). The Family History Survey reports that in 1984, only 10% of ever-married males and 12% of ever-married females had been divorced (Burch, 1985).

But despite the apparent relative success of marriage in general in Canada, remarriages in which both spouses were previously married is less optimistic. Divorce: Law and the Family in Canada (McKie et al, 1983), states:

In all cases where at least one spouse was previously widowed or divorced, a disproportionately high percentage have duration of marriage of less than five years. However, variation exists within this group. In one of every three (33.9%) unions between a single female and a previously married male, breakup occurs before their fifth wedding anniversary, compared with 44.8% when both were previously married and 30.0% when just the wife was previously married. Only 19.6% of marriages where both spouses were single upon marriage have a duration of under five years. (p. 89)

These figures suggest that the difficulties of divorce and remarriage remains a daily reality for thousands of North Americans, including Canadians.
Various researchers have investigated the complexity of issues, relationship patterns, developmental tasks and situational stressors confronting remarried families. Other disciplines, notably anthropology and sociology, have addressed issues of families and kinship groups which are similar to the issues of the remarried family. In particular, Bossard and Boll (1950), systematically examined family rituals which they saw as the core of family culture.

Family functioning and family rituals have been linked in both family research and clinical practice, although the connections appear to be more intuitive and assumed than specifically delineated. In research, the emphasis has been on the characteristics of family rituals (Bossard & Boll, 1950), presence or absence of family rituals (Wolin & Bennett, 1984), and the ramifications of these ritual practices on the life of the family. Other researchers have included reference to family rituals in the context of a general theory of family stress (McCubbin & Thompson, 1987) and family paradigm (Reiss, 1981).

In clinical practice, ritual is used in several ways: reestablishing family rituals that have fallen into disuse (e.g. family dinner together) (Wolin & Bennett, 1984), creating new rituals intended to meet a particular identified need (e.g. bedtime rituals for parents and children) (Imber-Black, 1988), or a therapist-prescribed ritual designed to challenge a usual
mode of operation (e.g. prescribed daily criticism ritual for a conflict-avoidant family) (Selvini-Palazzoli, Boscolli, Cecchini, & Prata, 1978; van der Hart & Ebbers, 1981).

Although each of these uses of ritual vary in both purpose and definition, among them exists a common thread. In each case there is an assumption that the use of rituals will enhance and influence family functioning, whether spontaneously enacted, prescribed, or constructed in a therapeutic setting.

The observance of family ritual and its relationship to the functioning of the remarried family is the area of enquiry of this paper. The research problem is whether family functioning is less problematic and more satisfying in remarried families that have included a greater number of family rituals in their family life.

In particular, the following questions will be addressed:

1. Are remarried families who observe more family ritual events better functioning than remarried families who observe fewer ritual events?

2. Do remarried families with a higher number of family rituals have a higher level of family satisfaction than remarried families with a lower number of family rituals?
3. Do remarried families with a greater number of family rituals have a higher level of marital quality?

4. Do remarried families with a higher level of family rituals have greater emotional bonding (cohesion) between family members than remarried families with a lower level of family rituals?

5. Do remarried families with a higher level of family rituals have a lowered ability to change (adaptability) than remarried families with a lower level of family rituals?

If the hypothesis that remarried families with a greater number of family rituals are better functioning is supported by the data, there are several implications for therapy with remarried families. For example, therapists could look for evidence of functioning and lost family rituals in distressed remarried families and where appropriate, assist the family in negotiating new, modified, adapted, or re-established rituals into their family life. These rituals could be drawn from families of origin or the nuclear families, which would address the family's need for continuity and membership in a larger family system. The family could also be assisted in creating new rituals that will help in defining roles, expectations, and family identity.
The next three chapters constitute the literature review and theory section of this paper. The next chapter discusses problems and issues facing remarried families. The third chapter examines the theory of family functioning and how it relates to remarried families. The fourth chapter looks briefly at the definitions and function of ritual in the general culture, the definition and function of family ritual in the family culture, and proposes a linkage between remarried family issues, family functioning and family ritual observance.

The methodology chapter specifically restates the problem and proposes an empirical testing of the hypothesis. The final three chapters will report the results; discuss the findings, the limitations, and clinical implications of the study; and the final chapter addresses the conclusions.
CHAPTER TWO

Remarried Family Issues

Introduction

As noted in the first chapter, there has been an ongoing increase in the divorce rate in North America in the latter half of the twentieth century, with a parallel increase in remarriage, and with a considerable failure rate for these remarriages. Viewing the failure of remarriages from a systemic perspective involves an examination of the difficulties the family has in managing the systems that form or impinge on their lives and the resulting aspects of remarried family functioning.

Remarried families face a complex situation in which they must confront problems of living that are common to all families as well as a set of problems that are unique to their position as a remarried family, and are beyond the experience of the nuclear family. Issues faced by remarried families include varying family lifecycles; lack of legal, cultural, and social support; complex extended family systems; inclusion and other internal and external boundary issues; role definition; relationship rules; past history; loss and mourning.
From a sociological viewpoint, Cherlin (1978) hypothesized that remarriage is an incomplete institution; that social roles, functions and rules that govern the first marriage are missing in remarriage. Cherlin further suggests that the source of family unity for the modern family comes from its interpersonal relationships, but also observes that nuclear families are supported by social institutions that extend from political and legal systems to religion and language. He states that families base their behavior on social norms which result in habitualized behavior. It is this habitualized behavior that affects family unity by narrowing the available choices. By narrowing the choices, there are fewer choices, therefore fewer disagreements and correspondingly, greater family unity.

For the remarried family, the support of those social institutions that assists the nuclear family in achieving family unity is missing entirely or is inadequate to their needs. Society has yet to recognize the remarried family as a family type as valid as the nuclear family (Visher & Visher, 1982; Cherlin, 1979). This is manifested in family lifecycle, legal and social/cultural issues, boundaries, role definition, family membership, parent-child coalitions, mourning and family unity.

**Family Life Cycle**

The nuclear family moves through the family life cycle in a
somewhat orderly progression from marriage and its inherent adjustments of operating as a couple, followed by the progressive addition of children and the child-rearing years, to the launching years with the children leaving home, and readjustment to being a couple.

But, for the remarried family, the progression through the family life cycle proceeds on multiple levels simultaneously. The remarried family must negotiate a number of individual, marital, and family life cycles that are operating at different developmental stages at any one point in time. The needs and tasks at each of these life cycle stages may not be consistent with each other thus creating further conflict. Tasks for the remarried family, while resembling those of the nuclear family, are compounded because they must be dealt with concurrently rather than sequentially as in a nuclear family. For example, in addition to the task of establishing a spousal relationship, the couple must parent children of either or both partners and children born into the new marriage, as well as managing the extended families of all parents, both step and biological (Sager, et al., 1983).

Social and Cultural Issues

Numerous examples of the lack of institutional support for remarried families exist. These areas of missing support are
represented in the following three sections, which are illustrative of the difficulties encountered by remarried families.

Lack of Remarried Family Culture.

The absence of a distinct remarried culture, a structure and process between individuals, is further evidence of a lack of societal support. Bossard and Boll (1950) envisioned families as possessing their own distinct cultures. These researchers suggest that families, like other social institutions, have a structure and process of interaction between individuals. They note:

The family culture pattern covers the range of family living. It includes marriage and courtship procedures, sex mores, husband-wife relationships, divorce, disposition of child's earnings, family solidarity, responsibility towards aging parents, attitudes towards extramarital relationships, use of leisure time and many other matters (p.193).

For remarried families issues of family culture—identity, boundaries, hierarchies, role expectations, values, family structure, and family expectations—are particularly problematic. Society has not evolved a concept of remarried family culture for addressing these issues as it has for the nuclear family. Thus each remarried family must create their own family culture without the guidelines and patterns available
to the nuclear family. There are no institutionalized rituals, relationship patterns, or life paths for the remarried to use as a starting point from which they can choose to make idiosyncratic modifications or complete changes. A child's rhyme recalls the cultural expectation of marriage in "first comes love, then comes marriage, then comes Suzy with a baby carriage." Suzy does not get divorced, live as a single parent, remarry or become a stepmother to her spouse's children. The scenario of popular culture ignores this altogether frequent circumstance.

With no cultural norms for remarried family, families searching for a model of normal remarried functioning find that western culture has produced extremes; the cruel and wicked stepmother of fairy tales is the worst of all possibilities and the modern media standard for the stepfamily, the sitcom "The Brady Bunch," the unrealistic and unreachable best of all possibilities. Unfortunately both give the remarried family inappropriate and unrealistic expectations that can be difficult to resolve.

Lack of Legal Status.

Although one of the situations most common to remarriages is that of assuming a parental role to the children of the first marriage, stepparents are legally in a highly ambiguous position. While they may function as a parent in terms of emotional support, financial support, child care, discipline and
household tasks, they have no legal relationship to their stepchildren.

Stepparents who attempt to see to a child's emergency or nonemergency medical needs may find doctors and hospitals unwilling to accept the stepparent's authority without written permission from the biological parent (Visher & Visher, 1979; Cherlin, 1978). Schools may also be reluctant to release any information or school records to a stepparent without written permission from the biological parent (Wald, 1981).

A stepparent may also find that although they have been the child's parental figure for nearly the child's entire life, if the marriage breaks down, they have no legal grounds to seek custody or even access to the child except by private arrangement with the natural parent. This tenuous connection with the stepchild may cause the stepparent to refrain from a deep emotional connection to the child, thus depriving both of a more satisfactory relationship.

If the natural parent dies, the stepparent may find that any ongoing connection to the stepchild is at the option of the surviving legal relatives, who can legally choose to limit or eliminate access for the stepparent. The death of one parent could result in the child or children being removed from the home in which they grew up and sent to virtual strangers, thus
losing not one parent but both (Visher & Visher, 1979). Similarly, the stepchild does not have any legal right of inheritance from the stepparent unless specified in the stepparent's will (Wald, 1981).

Stepparent adoptions are frequently seen as a way to confirm the relationship between the stepparent and stepchild, as well as remedy some of the legal difficulties encountered by remarried families, but this too has its problems. In British Columbia, the non-custodial biological parent must relinquish all claims on the child before an adoption can take place. This action removes all rights and obligations that exist between parent and child, including inheritance and child support. Few parents are willing to agree to this complete termination of parental status, and the law does not provide any intermediate measures.

Lack of Consistent Terminology for Remarried Families.

That there is little guidance for the new rules of living that apply to the remarried family on a cultural or societal level (Cherlin, 1978; Visher & Visher, 1979; Wald, 1981) is exemplified by the lack of societal support in the area of language. There is no consensus on what to call this type of family relationship. Various researchers have grappled with this question with limited success. Visher & Visher (1979) argue that the step relationship and its accompanying terms
stepparent, stepmother, stepfather, stepchild, should be the term of choice because it is generally understood by the majority of the population and they find it preferable to newly created terms.

Other researchers argue that stepfamily and, particularly, the term stepchild and stepmother have strong negative connotations that can, despite a supposedly enlightened age, create unpleasant expectations for all parties (Sager, et al., 1983; Messinger, 1984). The term blended family is commonly used to describe the idea of combining different families. Others have supported the idea of reconstituted families to denote the integration of disparate parts into a family (Ransom, et al., 1979). Some researchers, disagreeing with all of the above have proposed the remarried family (Wald, 1981) as the optimal choice of a neutral term. Remarried family seems to have neither the negative connotation of stepfamily, the implied sacrifice of the unique identity of each composite part of blended family, or the fantasy of the "nuclear family made whole again" inherent in the term reconstituted family.

Remarried family, while avoiding many of the problems mentioned above, is not the ideal term either, and a number of problems remain. The terms remarried family, remarried father, and remarried mother, are unwieldy, and the terms remarried child and remarried children are at best semantic peculiarities.
In addition, although common in academic literature, the term is not well-known or immediately understood by the general public.

The complex family system that results from a remarriage also requires terminology that will encompass the family systems of the spouses as well as differentiate this new type of extended family system from that of the nuclear family. To address this need, Ahrons (1979) coined the term binuclear family which denotes a family system composed of two interrelated households (the two nuclei of the child's family of orientation) that together form a binuclear system. The two households may or may not have equal importance in the child's life experience, but the child has full membership in both.

Even within the remarried family the lack of consensus and guidance on terminology is apparent. One of the questions that families have to determine for themselves is the title the child will use to address the stepparent and describe other people in the remarried family. Some families use the same term for any person in the same parenting role, e.g. "Daddy". Others opt for a similar or different term for the nuclear father and the stepfather, e.g. "Daddy" and "Father," respectively. Still others choose to have the children address the new spouse by first name or allow the child to choose the name with which he or she is most comfortable. In describing the people in the new family, the child may describe the stepparent as a stepparent, a
parent or as the biological parent's spouse (e.g. "stepmother," "mother," or "my dad's wife"), and stepsiblings as stepbrothers and stepsisters or just as brothers and sisters. Adults may also use similar variations such as "my stepchild," "my child," or "my spouse's child."

Other name problems can occur concerning the last name the children will use. Some children view the remarried family as an embarrassing departure from the norm and use the new stepfather's last name in order to appear as a nuclear family. Other children are adamant that they use their legal last name. The question of loyalty to the parent or original family being stronger than the question of the remarried status of the family. Still other children do not appear to be unduly concerned about the issue and use either or both last names.

The reaction of the parents can vary as widely as the child's reaction. Some parents are threatened by the child's refusal to use the new last name, feeling the child is rejecting the new partner the parent has chosen. Other stepfathers are uncomfortable with a child that is not their own using their name, particularly if another child is born into the new marriage who is legally entitled to the father's last name. The terminology used within the remarried family is frequently a source of conflict and anxiety for all family members and reflects other unresolved issues in the binuclear family system.
Boundaries: Internal/External

These questions of family culture, legal rights, terminology relate to the issues of family membership, which in turn, is a question of internal and external boundaries. Boundaries, in the current usage, is the process of establishing "the rules defining who participates, and how" (Minuchen, 1974). Internal boundaries refer to boundaries established within the family between subsystems, and external boundaries refers to those boundaries that differentiate those within the family from those outside of the family. Clear and defined boundaries are seen as necessary for good family functioning. However, because of the complex family system resulting from remarriage, both internal and external boundaries are ambiguous, changeable and therefore frequent sources of difficulty for family members.

Negotiation of the complex structure of relationships produced by remarriage is one aspect of boundaries that affects the remarried family. As noted above, the binuclear family system consists of two interrelated households, maternal and paternal, each comprising part of a single binuclear family system (Ahrons, 1979). Included within this larger family system are subgroupings, subsystems, that may be grouped by generation (e.g. parents), by sex (e.g. mother and daughters), by nuclear family (e.g. biological parent and children), by role (e.g. biological father and stepfather) or by one household of
the binuclear family system. Other examples of subsytems in
the remarried family are the subsystems formed by the stepparent
and new stepsiblings; the ex-spouse and new partner; the
grandparents of all the children; or the extended families of
the clear couple and their new spouses. The subsystems
operating in the remarried family are not limited to two people
nor are they limited to those listed above but may consist of
any subgrouping with a common characteristic.

External Boundaries and Family Membership.

Families and therapists attempting to relate to these
subsystems quickly become aware that no rules are provided by
society to determine the structure or function of these
complicated relationships. There is no benchmark from which a
family can create their own version of family structure.
Families have the simultaneous problem and advantage of having
to create their own rules and structure to manage their system.
Even family membership can be a contentious issue as remarried
families are frequently unable to clearly identify or agree on
who is to be included as a family member.

Family membership is not determined by simply answering the
question "who lives in this house?" The stepchildren who visit
have their own bedrooms or live with either parent for varying
lengths of time may have full membership in both parent's
households with two different sets of rules, structures, and
expectations. Families create various ways of coping with these differences that present themselves repeatedly in everyday family life.

Each person may have a different family membership list. A child may include both nuclear parents, while each of the parents may exclude each other but include a new spouse. The stepparent may include children from the nuclear family and the stepchildren, while each of the groups of children may or may not include each other. Grandparents have a potentially problematic situation in determining the appropriate closeness and type of relationship they should have with a new spouse and his or her children; and whether the children should be treated the same as or differently than the other grandchildren. The issue of family membership is frequently an issue for transitional events such as graduations, weddings, and funerals.

Internal Boundaries and Distance and Intimacy.

Other issues regarding boundaries relate to the internal boundaries around various subsystems in the remarried family and appropriate and comfortable levels of distance and intimacy between individuals in the subsystems. Lack of clear intimacy boundaries, together with the nonbiological ties of the remarried family, increase the possibility of incest in the remarried family through the weakening of the incest taboo. Ahrons and Rodgers (1987) state that "the potential for sexual
feelings and possible abuse between nonblood parents and children as well as between adolescent stepsiblings, is high" (p.178).

The distance and intimacy between various subsystems in the remarried family is another issue of internal boundaries. For example, the level of permeability of the boundary around the mother and child subsystem affects the level of intimacy within that subsystem, as well as the level of intimacy between the mother and the rest of the family, the child and the rest of the family, or the two spouses (Rodgers and Conrad, 1986). That is, if the boundary around the mother and child is a rigid boundary, the stepfather will be prevented from sharing in the relationship. At the same time, the boundary between the mother and child may be very diffuse with the mother and child overinvolved with each other. As a result of this overinvolvement and isolation of the stepfather, the level of intimacy between the child and the stepfather, as well as between the mother and her new spouse, will be reduced with neither relationship able to progress beyond a superficial intimacy, while the child never learns to achieve autonomy from the mother.

**Shared History and Parent-Child Coalitions.**

Unlike the nuclear family in which the two adults have a history together prior to the addition of children, the
remarried parents not only do not have a lengthy history together, but at least one other member of the family shares experiences and memories with the parent that excludes the new partner (Wald, 1981). While the absence of a history of a shared time and space is a fact of life for remarried families, past family history can be used as a way of distancing the parent-children subsystem from the stepparent or of sharing the past with the new stepparent, depending on the intent of the person discussing the past and the attitude of the recipient of the information. Children may deliberately discuss memories of an event in which their father is included, knowing that the stepfather will feel excluded. A mother may reminisce with children about the nuclear family as a way to distance herself from her current partner. The stepparent may feel resentful or threatened by references to the shared history. Families may also share memories as a way of including new family members in the family.

The experience of shared family history would appear to be one of the elements operating in parent-child coalitions in remarried families, a special type of internal boundary issue. In a recent study (Anderson & White, 1984), researchers examined parent-child coalitions in remarried families. A parent-child coalition occurs when the cross-generational subsystem between parent and child is stronger than the subsystem between the spouses. The resulting boundary around the parent-child
subsystem excludes the stepparent. The researchers found that both functional and dysfunctional stepfamilies had parent-child coalitions, which tended to lead to weaker emotional bonding between all members of the remarried family. However, the existence of coalitions did not automatically lead to dysfunction since coalitions existed in both functional and dysfunctional stepfamilies with the dysfunctional stepfamilies having stronger parent-child coalitions than the functional stepfamilies. In both cases, the bonds were between the biological parent and child.

A third finding from the study, related to boundaries, determined that functional remarried families used significantly fewer exclusion statements than dysfunctional remarried families and were, in fact, not significantly different from nuclear families on that variable. Statements excluding the stepparent appear to occur in dysfunctional stepfamilies, although there is no way of knowing whether the excluding statements contributed to the dysfunction or whether the dysfunction gave rise to the excluding statements.

Role Definition and Relationship Rules

Boundary issues are closely tied to role definition and relationship rules. Indeed, many of the issues for remarried families do not neatly fit into one category or another, but are
an amalgam of a number of dynamics in operation simultaneously. Questions of role expectations and definitions are present in the new remarried family along with questions of structure and hierarchy for the new family.

Because all models of family functioning are based on rules from the nuclear family, remarried families find that new role definitions must be created despite the lack of cultural or societal support or direction (Walker and Messinger, 1979; Wald, 1981). On their own, families must grapple with the questions concerning roles of family members. What is the role of each family member? How is this decided? What responsibilities are part of these roles and how is this determined? How do cultural and family myths influence roles (e.g. the "wicked stepmother" myth)? In addition to role definition, these question also raise issues of family structure, power structure, hierarchy, and family rules and expectations.

Individuals in the culture hold a concept of the "appropriate" relationship between a wife and her mother-in-law or between grandparents and grandchildren. But there is no socially prescribed relationship between an ex-wife and her ex-husband's mother or for the relationship between the parents of a newly remarried person and the new spouse's child. While individuals may struggle to make the above relationship conform to the idealized roles in nuclear families, there are no
comparable relationships in the nuclear family for the relationship between the ex-spouse and the new spouse or for the two new spouses or even for the ex-spouses although all four of these individuals will be involved to some degree in the child rearing of the children of the first marriage(s) and will likely have contact at some point depending on the age of the children involved.

The potential complexity and confusion of relationships in the binuclear family system is readily apparent in the term "Former Spouses's Current Partner's Former Spouse" (Ahrons & Rodgers, 1987). Research indicates that given a series of hypothetical situations, there was no agreement among remarried people concerning the appropriate level of interaction with other members of the binuclear family system (Goetting, 1978 cited by Cherlin, 1978), thus further thwarting any societal guidelines on the relationship between members of the binuclear family system.

The Wicked Stepmother and Other Role Conflicts.

In western culture, the archetype of the "wicked stepmother" continues to influence the expectations of the stepmother on conscious and subconscious levels. This view of stepmotherhood comes from centuries old fairy tales in which the children and their kind but defenseless father suffer at the hands of a heartless and unloving woman. Society's automatic, unconscious
acceptance of this myth is experienced by stepmothers who find their affectionate and caring interest in their step children viewed as unusual or even suspect (Wald 1981). Stepmothers report difficulty in escaping the label both with others and in their own evaluation of their stepparenting (Visher & Visher, 1988). The archetype of the poor and neglected and/or abused stepchild also comes from folklore. Even today a comment of feeling "like a stepchild" instantly conveys the sense of getting less than everyone else, or being ill-treated without cause.

Indeed, for various psychological, historical, and anthropological reasons, these characterizations strike a responsive chord in people and have survived over time despite the positive experience of many individuals in step relationships (Radomisli, 1981; Wald, 1981). The difficulty arises when an assumption is made that the archetype is the norm rather than an interesting characterization of one of a number of possible stepfamily relationships that have existed throughout history.

The problem for stepmothers is part of a larger problem in which the stepparent frequently finds it difficult to determine the appropriate role to adopt in relation to their spouse's children. The spouse may want a partner who will assume part of the responsibility for the children, particularly in the areas
of discipline, financial support and emotional support. At the same time, the stepparent may not be willing or able to meet these expectations. In addition, the child may resist the stepparent's attempts to act in a parental role with the well-known, "you can't tell me what to do, you're not my real dad/mom." The demands of the parental role, relating to children, ex-spouse, and others can leave little time alone for the new couple to nurture their own relationship. Role problems generate questions on a number of issues that must be answered by the remarried family, including hierarchy, decision-making and discipline: Who is in charge? How are decisions made? Who sets the rules and who enforces them?

**Conflict of Loyalty.**

The role of the stepparent can be confusing to the child, particularly when the nuclear parent is still alive. This is one of many areas in which the child feels divided loyalties. The child may think that to obey, accept, or even feel positively towards the stepparent is disloyal to the absent parent and supports their replacement. Biological parents may resent the presence of the stepparent in their parental role and may overtly or covertly seek to undermine the stepparent through the child. Stepparents may be uncertain about their role, rights, and responsibilities in their new family, particularly if these issues have not been explicitly discussed.
Modification of Parental Roles.

Ahrons and Rodgers (1987) note that for the biological parents, the task of separating and relinquishing their spousal roles while maintaining and modifying their parental roles can be very difficult. The addition of a new spouse can be very stressful for both adults and children when the new spouse steps into these roles.

Conflict can arise in a variety of areas. A lack of clarity between those tasks and responsibilities that belong to the spousal subsystem and those of the parental subsystem may reintroduce spousal conflict into the ex-couple's attempt to co-parent. For example, a couple still trying to assess blame for the marital breakdown could find their attempts to discuss co-parenting deteriorating into an angry replay of old marital arguments. Not only is this a conflict of roles, but of the boundaries between the now defunct spousal subsystem and the still active parental subsystem. These differences must be clarified for the remarried family to operate successfully in the binuclear family system.

Power and Decision-Making

As families grapple with the differences between rules and expectations for nuclear and remarried families, they are again struggling with the questions of family membership, boundaries
between the new family and the rest of the binuclear family system, transmission of beliefs and values to the next generation and the form of decision-making. The question of who makes the rules and who enforces them becomes intrinsic to role definition and hierarchy in the new family, as well as reflecting the values and beliefs of the parents. The parent often looks to the new spouse as another adult with whom to share the responsibilities of child-rearing, particularly in the areas of discipline and limit-setting. Parents who abdicate all or a major part of decision-making or discipline to their new spouses may find the children unwilling to accept the stepparent in that, or any, role.

There is confusion between the spousal subsystem and the parental subsystem. If the children feel that the new spouse has taken on an inappropriate parental role, they may deliberately oppose the spouse or attempt to involve their parent in a coalition against the new spouse in order to combat what the children perceive as an intrusion into their family.

The difficulty or ease with which the parent and children are able to adapt to a new situation in their family speaks to the state of the boundaries surrounding the family and family adaptability. A remarried family that accepts the new member(s) with disconcerting ease may have boundaries that are too permeable and do not allow for appropriate role definition and
expectations. Remarried families that block any access for the new members or even changes to the existing system may be too rigid. Remarried families with healthy boundaries will display both some resistance to the changes in the family system as well as the ability to flexibly accommodate new members.

Loss and Mourning

Most, if not all, members of the remarried family have experienced a major loss of a parent, a spouse, or the family and family life as a whole through divorce, or less frequently, through death. Both parent and child need to mourn their own loss in order to move forward with a sense of resolution and willingness to participate fully in the remarried family (Visher & Visher, 1976; Ransom, et al. 1979; Wald, 1981; Sager, et al., 1983). The need for both the parent and child to mourn may go unrecognized or unacknowledged if the parent is unable to relinquish the emotional bonds, even negative emotions such as anger, with the ex-spouse. The parent may be confused by the sadness aroused by the termination of the marriage and worry that they made a mistake in ending the marriage. Both adults and children may experience feelings of guilt, anger, and sadness in relation to the breakup of the first marriage which need to be resolved, in part, through grieving. By their example, the parent's process of grieving for the nuclear family helps facilitate the child's grieving process. If children are
not allowed or able to acknowledge and mourn their loss, they are likely to actively resist and undermine the functioning of the remarried family. Issues of loyalty to the nuclear family or to one or both of the parents may be exacerbated by an interrupted grieving process. Issues of loyalty conflict, exclusion, boundary confusion, family membership and coalitions are, in part, a result of an unresolved attachment to the nuclear family for both the children and the parent.

Family Unity

As previously stated, the complex structure of remarried families requires the negotiation of relationships and situations unknown in the nuclear family. Because of the remarried family's greater complexity and decreased rather than increased system of support from social institutions, Cherlin (1978) has hypothesized that choices for problem-solving in the remarried family are far more numerous and complex than in the nuclear family. An increased number of choices also increases the number of disagreements and configurations of dissenting family members. A remarried family, for instance, may have to consider the wishes of the other biological parent, spouse, children, grandparents, etc. in planning a birthday celebration for a child, instead of simply their own preference.

Cherlin sees family unity as necessary for the family to
continue to operate as a family. He does not define family
unity, but, by context, it appears to be very similar to the
concept of family functioning. In drawing a connection between
family unity and institutional support, the lack of
institutional support is seen as having direct consequences on
family unity. There is no suggested method, level of
integration, or socially appropriate routine for remarried
families to follow in either the routines of their daily lives,
or in nonroutine family events. This lack of institutional
direction engenders a chaotic approach to problem-solving,
resulting in the family being required to make too many
decisions from too great a range of options. Inevitably this
results in disagreements and a family system lacking in unity.
The effect of this lack of unity frequently can be on-going
conflict, misunderstandings, and poor remarried family
adjustment. Lack of unity leads, then, to inadequate family
functioning and the increased risk of marital breakdown. These
remarried families continue to live at a crisis level, with
little connection to the past or sense of control of the present
or future. They are not able to create new versions of family
unity which enhance the functioning of both parts of the
binuclear family system, and thus provide a more secure and
dependable child-rearing atmosphere.
Summary

The problems of remarried families discussed represent core issues for remarried family functioning. They include issues concerning boundaries, both internal and external, roles and rules in the family, power structure of the family, particularly in areas of discipline and decision-making, values and beliefs, parent-child coalitions, family history, mourning, and emotional bonding.

The literature in the following chapter does not specifically address remarried family functioning, but the core issues of remarried families, noted above, can be examined using the concepts developed for general family functioning, which is discussed in the following section.
CHAPTER THREE

Family Functioning

Many authors of family systems theory have addressed issues of family functioning—What is good family functioning? What elements comprise family functioning and how is family functioning to be assessed? Predictably, many different terminologies and methodologies have resulted from these endeavors.

Minuchen (1974) assesses the family via the family structure, looking at interactions, roles, and emotional distance between subsystems of the family; Haley (1976) and Madanes (1981) view the family in light of the purpose specific family problems play in family functioning using hierarchy, power, coalitions, and metaphorical communication. Satir's (1974) approach is grounded in communication theory, perceiving and interpreting verbal and non-verbal communication to understand the pattern of family interaction. Beavers (1981) and Olson, Sprenkle, and Russell (1979) both use a similar model, but differ in the construction of their scales. Beavers adopted a family functioning continuum from severely disturbed to optimal using the dimensions of adaptability and
centripetal/centrifugal family style. Olson (1979) uses the dimensions of Adaptability and Cohesion which are similar to the Beavers model, but uses a curvilinear model in which the extremes of both dimensions are perceived as problematic.

Despite the differences between these theorists, certain commonalities exist between the characteristics each sees as important to family functioning although terminology and relative importance varies. A sense of closeness between family members is addressed in some way in the various theories as is the communication style or skills. Physical and psychological boundaries between family members and between the family and the outside world are commonly described in the literature, as is the ability and/or willingness of the family to change or modify their patterns of interaction and power structure.

Olson's Circumplex Model of Family Functioning

Olson's Circumplex Model (Olson et al. 1983) was chosen as the basis for the following theoretical discussion of family functioning. Olson's model was selected because it includes a broad spectrum of concepts of family functioning within it's three dimensions of Cohesion, Adaptability and Communication. The dimensions and related concepts addressed in the Circumplex Model relate to clustering of over fifty concepts developed to describe family and marital dynamics that were conceptually
similar although defined in varying terminology (Olson et al., 1983).

In Olson's Circumplex Model, family functioning is assessed by evaluating the family on the three dimensions of Cohesion, Adaptability and Communication. Cohesion and Adaptability are seen as curvilinear dimensions with the mid-range of each dimension representing more viable family functioning and the extremes as problematic family functioning. The Communication dimension mediates the Cohesion and Adaptability dimensions. That is, Communication does not appear in the circumplex model, but is theorized as a third dimension that allows the individual or family to move along the Cohesion and Adaptability dimensions, to greater or lesser cohesion and/or adaptability in their family through the use of communication skills. Cohesion, adaptability, and communication are defined as follows:

**Cohesion**

Cohesion is defined as "the emotional bonding family members have with each other." Cohesion ranges from low to high with the low extreme termed Disengagement and the high extreme Enmeshment. Both are perceived to be more problematic and less functional than the mid-range of Separated and Connected.

Disengaged------[Separated------Connected]------Enmeshed
Extreme Range Functional Mid-range] Extreme Range

Enmeshment is extreme emotional bonding that results in a
lack of autonomy and a blurring of interpersonal boundaries between family members. At the opposite end is disengagement, an extreme lack of bonding between family members resulting in a high degree of autonomy, but a low degree of connectedness and loyalty between family members. The mid-range, separated and connected, represents a healthy cohesion in the family, allowing for both emotional interconnectedness and autonomy.

The Cohesion dimension is composed of a number of concepts that relate to the interplay of autonomy and closeness, emotional involvement and interpersonal connections between family members. Specifically, these are:

- Internal and External Boundaries
- Emotional Bonding and Affective Response
- Parent-Child Coalitions
- Marital Relationship (degree of emotional closeness)

Internal Boundaries are those boundaries which differentiate one family member from another. This concept contains the sub-concepts of time, space and decision-making as specific areas in which boundaries between family members are considered. For example, poor boundaries of space are indicated in families in which closed doors on bedrooms are not tolerated or in which individuals have no place that is safe from intrusion from other family members. Poor boundaries concerning time are indicated when a couple does not spend time together as
a couple due to the demands of jobs and children. Poor boundaries of decision-making are evident in couple who frequently countermand each other's decisions. Conflicts over internal boundaries occur in remarried families as time and space are frequently insufficient to the demands of the family, and decision-making has not been explicitly discussed.

External Boundaries are those which delineate between people within the family and those outside the family. External boundaries indicate whether the family's overall focus is directed mainly inside or outside the family. The sub-concepts of friends, interests, and recreation are three areas that can be pursued individually or shared with the family. For example, a disengaged family may not know each other's friends as each person sees their friends apart from the family. Mid-range families (Separated and Connected) may have individual friendships that are occasionally shared with the family. For the Enmeshed family, there will be few individual friendships for family members with most being family friends. In the remarried family, external boundaries may be a source of confusion due to disagreement about who is a family member, as well as which configuration of family members is to be included in activities.

Parent-Child Coalitions refer to the tendency in some families to form stronger cross-generational bonds than those
between parents or siblings. This tendency is generally seen as indicative of dysfunction in nuclear family systems in which a parent and child or children "gang-up" on or isolate the other parent (Minuchen, 1974). However, as noted in the previous section, unlike nuclear families, parent-child coalitions exist in functional stepfamilies, with stronger parent-child coalitions existing in dysfunctional stepfamilies (Anderson & White, 1985).

Emotional bonding and affective response indicate the closeness between family members, both through feelings of closeness and through positive emotional response to each other. A degree of emotional bonding is indicated when family members enjoy being together. For the remarried family, the emotional bonding exists initially between the spouses and the biological parent and children, although the remarried family may certainly achieve emotional bonding over time. Remarried couples frequently have difficulty because they expect instant love between all members of the remarried family, and feel they have failed if they do not love their stepchildren or the children do not love their new stepparent.

Other factors that effect the degree of cohesion exhibited by a family are: The family's place in the family life cycle (Olson, et al., 1983); the presence or absence of stressful events or crisis events in the family (Russell, 1979); cultural
or ethnic expectations of the family (Olson, et al., 1983).

Olson et al. (1983) state that a family's level of cohesion will vary over the family lifecycle, and families with younger children will experience greater cohesion than families with adolescents preparing to leave home. In times of stress, families may exhibit greater or lesser cohesion than they do normally, with the family coping with the increased stress by either "pulling together" more than usual or "falling apart" into autonomous units with no common purpose.

The remarried family may experience either or both of these situations. Remarried families with younger children may experience greater cohesion than those with adolescents, as suggested by the finding that stepmothers are more likely to have a good relationship with younger children, although age of the stepchild is not a factor for stepfather-stepchild relationships (Duberman, 1975). The multiple issues of remarried families and demands on them can produce stressful situations. A response to the situation that engenders a greater sense of family in the remarried family would likely increase cohesion, while a response that exacerbated existing problems would decrease cohesion.

Finally, families in various cultural and ethnic groups value a much higher level of cohesion in their families. The
critical factor in viewing these situations as non-problematic is that the cohesion level experienced by the family is one to which all family members agree. Thus the family with a religious, cultural, or ethnic background that values a very close family system with little autonomy would not be considered problematic unless family members disagreed with the existing level of cohesion. Similarly, remarried families who experienced differing levels of cohesion from nuclear families would not be considered problematic if all family members agreed with the existing level of cohesion. That is, if the family were lower in cohesion than nuclear families, this would not be problematic if all family members were in agreement with the level of cohesion.

Remarried families who are experiencing their family as being simultaneously at several different points of the family lifecycle are likely to find some variation in their level of cohesion. Variation in cohesion could also result from the stress engendered by the complex structure and demands of a remarried family. Within the remarried family, levels of cohesion are expected to be lower than those of the nuclear family due to the presence of parent-child coalitions in remarried families, the lower positive involvement between stepfathers and stepchildren, the many types of boundary issues in remarried families, and the addition, through remarriage, of a family member who lacks a common history with the rest of the
family. Extreme levels of cohesion would be expected in the disengaged range rather than the enmeshed range, indicating a less emotional bonding between the family members.

Adaptability

Adaptability is defined as the ability of a marital/family system to change its power structure, role relationships, and relationship rules in response to situational or developmental stress (Olson, et al., 1983). Concepts addressed within the Adaptability dimension are:

- Family roles
- Relationship rules
- Family power structure
- Negotiation style, discipline and control
- Feedback, positive and negative

These concepts relate to issues such as leadership; of who is in charge of the family and how do they operate. What are the unwritten guidelines for the family decision-making process, and who has a voice in the process? How is discipline handled in the family? How strongly does the family resist change, and how does change occur? Also these concepts prescribe ways for spouses, siblings, parents and children, nuclear and extended families to interact and the degree to which the family is able to accommodate change in these areas.
Similar to Cohesion, Adaptability is theorized to be a curvilinear dimension with the mid-range of *structured* and *flexible*, as more functional and less problematic than the extreme ranges of *chaotic* and *rigid*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chaotic</th>
<th>Flexible</th>
<th>Structured</th>
<th>Rigid</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Extreme Range</td>
<td>[Functional Mid-range]</td>
<td>Extreme Range</td>
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The chaotic family, with extreme adaptability, is highly flexible and changes its power structure, roles and rules too frequently for the family to function effectively. The chaotic family may appear to lack these structures due to their changeability. For example, a child in a chaotic family may not have a usual bedtime or mealtime and the rules may vary erratically—identical behavior may be severely punished one day and ignored the next. Members of a chaotic family may find their lives unpredictable and confusing. The chaotic remarried family may be unable to set and maintain consistent rules either in response to conflict or in an attempt to avoid conflict.

At the other end of the continuum, the rigid family is extremely resistant to change, therefore unable to make the necessary adjustments in their method of functioning to successfully meet new situations facing the family. Family rules tend to be more implicit than explicit, and therefore less easily negotiated. The rigid family, for example, will have difficulty changing their patterns of interactions as children become older. Parents may expect teenagers spend their leisure
time with the family rather than with peers because they are unable to recognize or accept the child's need for greater independence. In the remarried family, in attempting to act fairly, all children may be given the same bedtime without recognition of their differing ages.

The mid-range of Adaptability, **Structured** and **Flexible**, allows for a balanced flow between forces seeking to maintain the status quo (morphostasis) and those seeking change and growth (morphogensis). Families in this central area will have more explicit rules and fewer implicit rules, which allow for review and negotiated change. These families would, for example, review curfews and allowances as children get older, and make changes as necessary. A remarried family that holds family meetings to discuss rules and decisions for the family are making the family rules explicit and therefore negotiable, and therefore showing greater adaptability.

Family roles are learned and reinforced in the family. Children learn the role of the child by experience and the roles of spouse and parent by observation. These roles, too, may be perceived on the continuum of chaotic to rigid. For example, in a rigid family, only males may operate the lawnmower and only females, the washing machine. In chaotic families, no one is assigned or takes responsibility for the lawn or the laundry as part of their role, while in structured and flexible families
the roles are assigned, but may shift as necessary. Remarried families often experience the clash of two conflicting family systems over appropriate roles for each member of the family, family rules, and the power structure operating to decide, enforce, and negotiate these issues. The ability of the remarried family to respond to situational and developmental stress is reflected along the continuum of chaotic to rigid. The remarried family may attempt to "throw out" both of the family systems and attempt to create a new system for the family, resulting in a chaotic, confusing and unpredictable situation for all family members. The remarried family may also attempt to continue to function as it did prior to the remarriage with little adaptation to the family's changed circumstances.

Communication

Within the Circumplex Model, Communication is regarded as a facilitating dimension that allows individuals and families to move along the Cohesion and Adaptability dimensions. More balanced families are in the mid-range of both dimensions and have more positive communication skills than the families at the extremes. That is, families with good communication skills will be able to discuss their needs and work towards becoming more cohesive or more autonomous, as necessary.
Communication refers to the positive and negative communication skills that either enable or prevent family members from sharing their needs and preferences (Olson, et al., 1983). Concepts included in the communication dimension are clarity and expressive and receptive communication skills. Receptive skills are comprised of empathy, attentive listening and supportive comments. Expressive skills refer to the frequency of speaking for self, frequency of speaking for others, and intrusion or premature closure. Clarity is also considered as a communication skill and concerns the presence or absence of inconsistent or unclear verbal messages as well as incongruent verbal and non-verbal messages. Lack of these communication skills results in negative communication including criticism, double messages, and double-bind messages which minimize the ability of the family members to share opinions and needs.

Summary

As noted throughout this section, the problems experienced by remarried families can be related to the dimensions and concepts of family functioning. The core issues of identity, boundaries, role expectation, values, family structure and expectations are addressed by the concepts within each of the dimensions of the Circumplex Model.
CHAPTER FOUR

Ritual and the Remarried Family

Not all remarried families fall victim to the confusion inherent in their family situations. Some remarried families have been able to create a system in which the lack of institutional support has not overwhelmed them, and in which the family has managed to remain more unified. The mechanisms by which this occurs may vary. This study proposes that one of these mechanisms may be a more active ritual life in remarried families experiencing less problematic family functioning. Ritual in remarried families will be approached by looking first at the characteristics and functions of ritual in the culture and in the family.

Social/Cultural Ritual

Numerous authors from the areas of sociology, anthropology and philosophy have sought to define ritual. Bird (1980) defines ritual as "culturally transmitted symbolic codes which are stylized, regularly repeated, dramatically structured, authoritively transmitted and intrinsically valued." Mann
(1980) states "ritual is a symbolic transformation of beliefs, ideas, myths, ethics and experiences. It is a form of communication which explicitly or implicitly transfers cultural patterns from one person to another or from one group to another." In anthropology, ritual has been defined as "any formal actions following a set pattern which expresses through symbols a public or shared meaning." (Ambercrombie, Hill, & Turner, 1984).

Common elements of these definitions include a structured pattern, regular repetition of the procedure, communication among participants and shared symbolic content that raises the experience above the level of mere habitual behaviour. These elements also distinguish ritual from ritualistic neurotic behaviour and ritualism (Bird, 1980). Ritualistic neurotic behaviour is behavior that is performed by an individual, seemingly beyond his/her control or awareness and according to a private logic. Ritualism or empty habitual behavior is defined (Bird, 1980) as arbitrary procedures that are not intrinsically valued, do not fulfill their social or personal functions, that obscure rather than express human feelings, and lack a sense of dynamic energy. Bird cites Eric Erickson who differentiated "dead ritualism" from "live ritual". It is this "dead ritualism" which is occurring when a family finds itself "just going through the motions" of a ritual but "getting nothing out of it". For the family, it is not the procedure that is missing
but the symbolic meaning they attribute to it. For one family, attending church on Christmas Eve may be a treasured and unifying ritual, while for another family it may have become a meaningless yearly habit.

**Social Functions of Ritual.**

According to Bird (1980) the social functions of ritual for groups and for individuals are as follows:

1. Ritual identifies and maintains social and personal boundaries and identity. For example, the ritual of seating family and friends of the bride and groom separately for the wedding ceremony identifies and establishes the boundaries of family membership prior to the ceremony.

2. Ritual asserts and invokes particular norms, standards, and values; reaffirms personal standards and values. Celebrating a national holiday, such as Remembrance Day, evokes a sense of national pride and patriotism which is valued by the society.

3. Ritual fosters and invigorates attachments to social groups; fosters a sense of self apart from particular roles and involvements. Church members experience a sense of communality with their congregation and others
who embrace their religion. They see their role as one of an adherent to the principles of their religion.

4. Ritual serves as a means for augmenting a sense of communal power and status, and protecting the boundaries of the group. A trade union group singing their traditional song of common struggle and strength, "Solidarity Forever," creates a sense of communality and group power in the participants.

Mann (1980) sees ritual as a form of communication that explicitly or implicitly transfers cultural patterns from one group to another. Formal ritual connects actions and their meanings while informal ritual reflects changing values and beliefs. The vitality and continuity of a ritual can be maintained by allowing for flexibility in its performance to meet the demands of changed circumstance. For example, the celebration of Thanksgiving is maintained whether the family eats their dinner together at home or in a restaurant.

**Family Rituals**

**Definition of Family Ritual.**

The definition of family ritual adopted here consists of four characteristics. Family rituals are behaviours or activities (1) involving most or all members of the family which (2) occur episodically (3) have a symbolic meaning for family
members beyond the literal meaning of the experience and (4) are valued by the participants such that they would like the activity to be carried on in the future. Each of these characteristics is discussed below.

1. Family rituals involve most or all members of the family as at least participant-observers. A ritual such as a toast between newly married spouses could occur when they are alone, but when the children are present, they would be participant-observers and experience the ritual.

2. Family rituals occur episodically. Time between the ritual episodes is not set. A family could experience a dinner ritual on a daily basis, a vacation ritual on a yearly basis and the marriage of a child only once, but all have occurred on an episodic basis.

3. One of the most critical characteristics differentiating habit from ritual is the symbolic meaning attached to the ritual. Symbolism may be subtle, such as in the dinner ritual, in which the exchange of information and opinions supports and strengthens the family sense of bonding and identity, or symbolism may be very distinct, such as the children participating in the baptism ceremony of their new sibling to symbolize the new child
belonging to the family, not just the parents.

4. The value that the family attaches to the ritual and their desire for the ritual to continue in the future differentiates family rituals from harmful ritualism. A family practice of scapegoating a family member would not be defined as a ritual because it lacks formality and prescribed procedure. While scapegoating could operate as a patterned means for the family to displace their anxiety about the past or the future, it is unlikely the family would deliberately choose to value the activity. Nor would they be likely to consciously choose to continue it in the future, although it could involve most or all family members and occur episodically.

Functions of Family Ritual.

The relationship of family rituals to family culture (see definition p.13, above) is parallel to the relationship between societal rituals and the society in which it appears. Family rituals can perform the same functions in the family that rituals in a society perform for the society. Examples of family rituals in each of the four ritual functions described by Bird are as follows:

1. Social and Personal Boundaries: The ritual of a family
having a specific seating pattern for family members at
the dinner table recognizes an identity, and establishes
personal boundaries for each person at the table. e.g.
The father sitting at the head of the table.

2. Norms, Standards, and Values: A family attending the
yearly Peace March together are identifying family
values and standards through that activity.

3. Attachments to Social Groups; Fosters a Sense of Self:
Family rituals provide attachment to the family through
rituals such as a marriage (rite of passage) that
reaffirms family membership.

4. Sense of Communal Power and Status, and Protecting the
Boundaries of the Group: A family reunion enhances the
sense of family membership, recognizes roles within the
family and differentiates the family from the rest of
society through family stories, family history and a
common identity.

Family rituals constitute a part of the family culture as
"patterns of behavior of which the family is proud and its
members approve. It is a part of family life that the family
sees about itself that it likes and wants to continue" (Bossard
& Boll, 1950). Family rituals serve as a means to punctuate
family life by regulating and celebrating the large and small events. By addressing continuity, commonality, group identity, values, beliefs and boundaries through ritual, the issues of family and kinship groups noted above acquire a procedure to deal with these issues within the culture of the family.

**Observance of Family Rituals.**

Differences in the observance of rituals can vary substantially from family to family, as can the interaction and patterns of daily life. For instance, families can differ in their perception of the purpose of dinnertime. Families may regard it as simply a time to consume food alone or with others, a time to watch television, to communicate about the day, make plans, or simply to spend time together. Parents may disagree on the "right" way to celebrate Christmas or birthdays. Family traditions from the parent's family of orientation or procreation can either enhance a celebration or increase the disagreement depending on how the family chooses to view the differences.

Knowledge of culturally appropriate forms of celebration comes from a variety of sources, both internal and external to the family. Internally, family expectations of proper behavior for a particular holiday are learned from older members of the family. Families celebrate by replicating rituals that may have been established generations ago or by using rituals established
relatively recently, within the lifetime of at least some of the celebrants. Family rituals are built on these prescribed relationships and procedures. Traditions such as "Thanksgiving with the Family" are observed as expected, established and repetitive family rituals.

External to the family, children in western society learn throughout their lives how family life should proceed. As adults they know the expected roles of wife, husband, grandparents, in-laws, and children. Even when these roles and procedures are not performed in the prescribed manner, individuals in the society have learned what the roles "should" be. Similarly, children learn the pattern for culture-wide celebrations from the education system which punctuates the school year with observance of culture-wide events such as Christmas and traditional events such as birthday celebrations. Media contributes to the picture of appropriate holiday ritual in a variety of ways, from women's magazines with the annual holiday dinner pictorial and menu, to TV advertising for everything from turkeys to holiday telephone calls to absent family members. Not all families adhere to the stereotyped picture, but as a "pattern" it is available for additions, subtractions, idiosyncratic innovations, or total omission.
Ritual in the Remarried Family

Remarried families seeking to establish family rituals have a different starting point than the nuclear family. Cherlin's hypothesis of incomplete institutionalization (1978), mentioned previously, perceives remarried families as operating in a state of "anomie" or normlessness. As discussed above, they do not have the societal norms afforded to the families of the first marriage on which to base their ritual activities.

For the remarried family, ritual offers an opportunity to identify and address complex situations in such a way that the remarried family and the binuclear family system as a whole can gain stability and come to function in a more integrative way (Ahrons & Rodgers, 1987; Visher and Visher, 1988; Whiteside, 1988). The functions of ritual, as discussed above, can assist the remarried family in addressing problems which negatively interfere with family functioning.

1. By identifying and maintaining personal/social boundaries, ritual helps the remarried family with issues of internal and external boundaries, family membership, parent-child coalitions, and emotional bonding. For example, a ritualized time for the biological parent and children to be together without the stepparent, acknowledges the importance of that
subsystem to the remarried family, and avoids creating a negative connotation to the parent-child coalition.

2. Ritual helps the remarried family with issues of values and beliefs, family power structure, especially discipline and decision-making, family rules and expectations, and mourning by asserting and invoking norms, standards, and values. A remarried family ritual of family meetings identifies family values and power structure, and sets a procedure for problem-solving, and decision-making in the new family.

3. Rituals that foster and invigorate attachments to social groupings help the remarried family deal with issues of family membership, emotional bonding, and family roles. An example of this function is a dinner ritual in which all family members participate. The sense of membership in the remarried family is enhanced and an opportunity is provided to communicate with each other and to experience family roles.

4. Rituals that augment a sense of communal power and status assist the remarried family with issues of family membership, family history, parent-child coalitions, and internal and external boundaries. By the children attending and/or participating in the remarriage
A second source for family ritual is rituals previously engaged in with the families of the first marriage. While affording a link to the past, and probably, at first, appearing to be an attractive choice to the children, this approach may well be counterproductive until/unless all family members experience a high degree of comfort and security in the remarried family. While most rituals in the remarried family will contain an element of loss of the nuclear family, nuclear family rituals with new participants may exacerbate an already stressful situation. For the wife, painful memories or unresolved issues may resurface. For the child who misses his biological dad, the pain of loss and the anger over the conflict of loyalty generated due to the new spouse in an old role may combine to produce extreme emotional turmoil. For the new spouse, the sense of isolation from the shared history and emotional coalition of the parent and child may leave him feeling angry and rejected. All family members may experience confusion and difficulty differentiating the ritual role from the person.

A third source of family rituals for the remarried family would be innovations in both formal celebrations and family routines that proclaim "this is who we are as a family now." This category could include traditions revived from the families of orientation of the adults, or mutually agreed to variations of cultural celebrations such as Christmas in the mountains.
instead of in the city. Also available would be the creation of family activities that would rise above daily habits by their deliberate enactment and symbolic value. This could include rituals such as a regular special weekend breakfast prepared by the stepparent and the children. Or, a child's bedtime prayer including the stepparent in the special blessings reserved for family members. Both would symbolically include the stepparent as a family member, and define a unique role for the stepparent, different from the role of the biological parent, thus reducing the conflict of loyalty for the child.

**Summary**

The functions and characteristics of ritual in the culture are replicated in family ritual and serve similar functions within the family.

The addition of ritual to remarried family life is a means of limiting options, the function performed by institutionalization in a nuclear family. Rituals prescribe process and behavior for situations, reducing the available choices and thus reducing potential conflict and enhancing family unity and family functioning in the remarried family.

Remarried families who engage in family routines purposefully designed to strengthen the family as well as family
traditions, rites of passage and cultural celebrations such as Christmas, are actively, although indirectly, dealing with many of the issues confronting remarried families. Through rituals, roles for various family members are defined or redefined. The creation of a predictable, established event, be it the pattern of activity preceding a visit to the non-custodial spouse or the customary New Year's celebration, contributes to the security and unity of the family.

Remarried families establish continuity between their past and present by incorporating rituals from their families of orientation and procreation as well as creating new rituals that service their unique family structures. The remarried family is essentially attempting to both establish a new family culture as well as maintain important patterns and traditions from their families of origin and their nuclear families.

The proposed relationship between family ritual and family functioning for remarried families is described in the following section on hypotheses. For a diagram summarizing the hypotheses and proposed direction of each relationship, see Appendix 4.
Hypotheses

The amount of family ritual in the life of the remarried family as perceived by the remarried person and measured by the Family Celebrations Index, the Family Traditions Survey and the Family Time and Routines Index is positively related to the level of family functioning as measured by the Quality Marriage Index, FACES III, and the Family Satisfaction Scale.

Rationale: The functions of family ritual as discussed in the previous chapters, address the family functioning issues that are foremost for remarried families. By participating in family rituals that address such issues as family membership, roles, family rules, boundaries, family functioning is enhanced.

Hypothesis One

Remarried persons with a higher score on the Family Time and Routines Index will have (a) a higher score on the Quality Marriage Index; (b) a higher score on the Family Satisfaction Scale; (c) a higher mean score on FACES III - Cohesion subscale; (d) a lower mean score on FACES III - Adaptability subscale.

Rationale.
Family routines are one type of family ritual and should show that remarried families that engage in a high level of family routines will have a better functioning family and, because of the systemic aspect of family functioning, greater marital quality. In addition, family members will be more satisfied with their family because the family functions better. Stable and predictable routines will contribute to defined roles and internal boundaries, and inclusion among family members, increasing cohesion. But the family's ability to change or respond with flexibility to situations the family encounters will be decreased because prescribed routines do not allow sufficient latitude to create novel responses, thus lowering adaptability.

Hypothesis Two

Remarried persons with a higher score on the Family Traditions Scale will have (a) a higher score on the Quality Marriage Index; (b) a higher score on the Family Satisfaction Scale; (c) a higher mean score on FACES-III - Cohesion subscale; and (d) a lower mean score on the FACES III - Adaptability subscale.

Rationale.
Family traditions are one type of family ritual in which
activities are those that connect the past and the present and will likely be carried on by family members in the future. Remarried families that engage in a high level of family tradition should show better functioning, and because of the systemic aspect of family functioning, a high level of marital quality. Family members will feel more satisfied with their family because they feel positively about various aspects of their family and wish to continue into the future those activities that create and enhance these feelings. Family traditions, which link the past and future, provide a shared experience for family members that enhances the emotional bonding and boundaries around the family, creating greater cohesion between family members. However, family traditions that are carried from the past into the future reduce the remarried family's flexibility and ability to adapt to changes as traditions tend to maintain the status quo, thus reducing the family's adaptability.

Hypothesis Three

Remarried persons with a higher score on the Family Celebrations Index will have (a) a higher score on the Quality Marriage Index; (b) a higher score on the Family Satisfaction Scale; (c) a higher mean score on FACES III - Cohesion subscale; and (d) a lower mean score on FACES III - Adaptability subscale.

Rationale.

Family celebrations are one type of family ritual. Families that engage in a high level of family celebrations should show better functioning, and because of the systemic aspect of family functioning, a higher level of marital quality; will have greater family satisfaction because family members feel positively about various aspects of their family and wish to continue into the future activities that create and enhance these feelings. Due to their shared experiences that enhance the emotional bonding and boundaries around the family, the family will experience greater cohesion. Because family celebrations prescribe the behaviors and occasions observed by family members in the life of the family, the structured nature of these family celebrations, reduces the remarried family's flexibility and ability to adapt to changes because celebrations tend to maintain the status quo.
CHAPTER FIVE

Methodology

Definitions

The following terms will be used to define the hypothesis:

Remarried family: A two-parent, two-generation unit formed by the legal remarriage of two partners, one or both of whom have previously married, and have at least one biological or adopted child from the previous union, with the new family unit sharing a common domicile, and the child(ren) living with the remarried couple at least 50% of the time.

Child: The biological or adopted offspring, less than 13 years of age, of one of the remarried partners.

Legally married couple: A husband and wife who have gone through the legal ceremony of marriage, excluding couples who are regarded as married, by law, as a result of cohabitation (common-law marriage).

Family Rituals: Family rituals are behaviours or activities (1) involving most or all members of the family which (2) occur episodically (3) have a symbolic meaning for family members beyond the literal meaning of the experience and (4) are valued by the participants such that they would like the activity to be carried on in the future. These activities reflect traditions observed both on a cultural and idiosyncratic family level.

Family Traditions: A type of family ritual which the family has done in the past and would like to continue in the future, and which they value and/or respect.

Family Celebrations: A type of family ritual in which the family deliberately observes an event that is either a culture-wide event, such as Mother's Day, or an event specific to the individual family such as a birthday.

Family Routines: A type of family ritual in which habitual family behaviors possess a symbolic meaning beyond the literal meaning of the behavior. An activity such as a designated weekly "family night" not only orients the family towards spending time together, but also allows the family to experience a sense of togetherness as a family.
Design

The question of the relationship between family ritual and family functioning in remarried families will be addressed as a single group, ex post facto, descriptive study with a self-selected, non-probability sample. There is no experimental manipulation of the independent variable, but rather the variables have occurred in the natural setting of the remarried family and are being reported by the subjects. This research is attempting to determine the relationship, if any, between the dependent and independent variables. The observation of family rituals, even if logistically possible, would be ineffective as the presence of an observer would change the nature of the ritual being observed, as would any attempt to manipulate or impose the performance of family rituals at a particular time or place.

Within the design, the independent variable, family ritual, is measured by three separate but related measures. The dependent variable is also measured by three instruments, but for FACES III, two subscores representing the dimensions of cohesion and adaptability will be used. Four scores will therefore represent family functioning. In addition, a questionnaire regarding subjects' demographics will be used to describe the sample and provide control variables.
Many studies of remarried families do not contain control groups or other comparison groups, and use an ex post facto design and have only descriptive qualities. Although this type of design is scientifically weaker due to the absence of a comparison group, an appropriate comparison group for the remarried family can be difficult to define. Comparisons to nuclear families, although an ostensible choice, would not be appropriate because equivalent remarried and nuclear families would be difficult to determine. For example, neither the length of the marriage, the age of the children, nor the ages of the partners would provide an appropriate comparison group.

Subjects

Target Population

The target population consists of legally remarried couples who have been married two years or more; have at least one child less than 13 years of age, who is the biological or adopted child from either spouse's previous marriage, and who lives with the couple the majority of the time.

Rationale for Target Population.

By using only legally married couples, possible differences between couples in a common-law relationship and a legal
marriage are eliminated. Further, in a study in which family rituals in remarried families are examined, it is appropriate to include only remarried couples who have undergone the ritual of the marriage ceremony. In this study, the dividing point of a marriage over two years in length was based on the estimate that a remarried family requires at least two years to stabilize as a unit (Visher & Visher, 1979).

An age restriction for a child under 13 years was established because adolescent issues inherent in the "launching" phase could confound any perceived differences in family functioning in remarried families. In addition to resolving their issues of the remarried family, adolescents are also dealing with issues inherent in the launching stage of development. These changes at adolescence are reflected in differences in the scores of the family functioning instruments used in this study (Olson, et al., 1985), and would tend to be a confounding element in the measurements.

Sample Group

This study was conducted using a non-random, non-probability sample of couples from remarried families living in British Columbia. A total of 60 individuals (30 couples) comprised the sample group.
Unlike remarried family research in the United States where marriage records and previous marital status are available to the public, marriage records in British Columbia are confidential, except for the current marital status of a specific individual, i.e. B.C. Vital Statistics will tell a member of the public that John Jones is or is not married, but not whether this is his first marriage, nor to whom Mr. Jones is married. Therefore, no list exists of remarried individuals or couples from which to make a random selection. Subjects for the study are classified as an availability sample and were solicited through a number of sources: Newspaper advertisements in both daily newspapers as well as neighborhood newspapers with wide circulations; through community announcements on cable television; posters and flyers (see Appendix 2) in family service agencies, community centers, community schools, libraries, public markets, family drop-in centers, other family-oriented community organizations, and doctors and lawyers offices. Subjects also volunteered as a result of snowballing from other subjects. In addition, word-of-mouth advertising through the researcher's personal contacts and through the Counselling Psychology Department and its counselling center was used.
Procedure

Administration of Instruments

Both the remarried husband and wife were asked to individually and independently respond to a set of six measures, three of which measure the dependent variable, family functioning, and three the independent variable, family ritual. Each subject also completed a demographics sheet. All instructions to subjects were identical.

Data Collection.

Questionnaires and demographic data sheets were delivered to the subjects' homes (unless a subject preferred to have the questionnaires mailed) and the completed instruments picked up by the researcher at a prearranged time. This approach accelerated collection of data and reduced the possibility of lost data by by-passing the mail system. In addition, the personal contact with the researcher likely increased the subjects commitment to completing the questionnaire, resulting in a higher return rate.

To minimize any systematic bias in the data due to the proximity of data collection to society-wide cultural rituals (e.g. Christmas, Easter) all subjects were recruited prior to the administration of the questionnaire. All questionnaires
were administered within a ten week interval which did not contain a major holiday.

Subject Confidentiality.
Respondents were guaranteed confidentiality through the following means: All identifying information, e.g. names and addresses of subjects, will be destroyed upon completion of the study. Questionnaires are number-coded to match husbands and wives, but names of subjects did not appear on any of the instruments nor on the demographics sheet. All linkage between code numbers and names will be destroyed and names erased upon completion of the study. Coded data will be kept on computer disc and erased after three years. Actual questionnaires will be destroyed upon completion of the study. (See Appendix 3)

Description of Measures

Control Variables: Demographic Information

Information requested on the demographics section of the questionnaire comprised the control variables noted below. These variables have been shown (McKie et al., 1983; Albrecht, 1979; Lewis & Spanier, 1979) to have a possible effect on the measure of family functioning and/or marital quality, or are suggested by available statistical information on remarried families.
1. **Length of marriage.**

Length of marriage may have an effect on the dependent variables. Remarried families of less than two years have been excluded from the study as they are still in the formation process and may have not had sufficient time to clearly establish family rituals. As families live together over time, both higher levels of family ritual and family functioning may result. This may be particularly notable in remarriages over five years in duration because the highest marital breakdown rate occurs before five years (McKie et al., 1983) and the most problematic marriages will have ended early. Remarriages that have survived longer than five years are likely to be the better functioning marriages.

The sample was divided into two subgroups of those who had been married over five years and those married over two but less than five years. This two-group length of marriage variable is used as a control for significant differences between the two groups on the dependent variable.

2. **Presence of children.**

Albrecht (1979) found that the presence of children in remarried families was positively, but not strongly related to marital happiness. In reference to nuclear families, Lewis and Spanier (1979) propose that the more the household composition is perceived as optimal, the higher the marital quality. To
control for possible variations such as childless remarried couples or remarried couples without children from previous marriages, only couples with at least one child from either spouse's previous marriage living with the remarried couple are included. The total number of children and the configuration (i.e. from either parent's previous marriage or from the current marriage) are also identified.

3. Religious affiliation.

Because religious identification and activity have been shown to have a positive relationship with marital happiness (Albrecht, 1979), as well as the close tie between religious activities and family ritual, the use of religious affiliation and a statement of whether the subject considers himself or herself to be currently practicing their religion is included.

4. Gender.

Identification of subjects by gender is included to allow separate analysis of husbands' and wives' responses.

5. Occupation.

The general trend of greater marital satisfaction among white collar workers (Lewis & Spanier, 1979) was contradicted by Albrecht (1979) who found a slight trend for greater marital satisfaction among blue-collar workers in his study of remarried families.
6. Income.

Income levels may have an effect on family functioning, and will be used as a control variable to describe the sample.

7. Employment.

The situation in which one of the partners is not employed outside the home could influence the observance of family rituals due to the possible increase in time available to plan and prepare for family rituals. In addition, the level of employment may directly influence income level. Lewis and Spanier (1979) suggest that the greater the socioeconomic adequacy of the family, the greater the marital quality.

8. Education.

Lewis and Spanier (1979) suggest that, based on their synthesis of a number of studies, (Burr, 1973; Cutright, 1971; Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Bumpass & Sweet, 1972; Havighurst, et al., 1962; and Goode, 1956) the higher the educational level, the higher the marital quality.

Dependent Variable: Family Functioning

For this study, the dependent variable for family functioning is measured by FACES III (Olson et al., 1982), the Family Satisfaction Scale (Olson & Wilson, 1982), and the Quality Marriage Index (Norton, 1983).
1. FACES III.
(Olson, Portner, & Lavee, 1985)

FACES III is a twenty-item questionnaire that can be administered to an individual, couple, or family, and is designed to measure family functioning on the dimensions of cohesion and adaptability. Concepts related to the cohesion dimension include: emotional bonding, family boundaries, coalitions, time, space, family decision-making, and interest and recreation. Concepts related to the adaptability dimensions include assertiveness, leadership, discipline, negotiation, roles and rules.

Cohesion is defined as the emotional bonding between family members (McCubbin & Thompson, 1987). Of the four possible levels in the cohesion dimension—disengaged, separated, connected, and enmeshed—the middle two levels (mid-range), separated and connected, are seen as more functional while the two extremes, disengaged and enmeshed, are seen as more problematic (McCubbin & McCubbin, 1987).

Adaptability is defined as the ability of a marital or family system to change its rules, role relationships and relationship rules in response to developmental stress. There are also four levels of adaptability: rigid, structured, flexible and chaotic. Similar to the above dimension, the
middle two levels (mid-range), structured and flexible, are seen as more functional than the two extremes, rigid and chaotic.

(a) Scoring.

Each of the twenty statements in FACES III is rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from "(1) Almost Never" to "(5) Almost Always", indicating how frequently the described behavior occurs in the family. The total numerical value for the odd-numbered responses determines the cohesion score. The total for the even-numbered responses determines the adaptability score.

Although FACES III is a family functioning instrument, the scores are individual scores reflecting the individual's perception of the family. Olson et al. (1983) state that "research with self-report instruments has consistently demonstrated a lack of agreement between family members on a variety of scales with an average correlation being in the .40's" (p. 22). For FACES III, correlations between husband and wife is $r = 0.46$ for cohesion and $r = 0.33$ for adaptability (Olson et al., 1985). It is this lowered correlation that supports the use of individual scores in this study because combining husband and wife scores, particularly by averaging the scores, could remove potentially important differences in perceptions.

(b) Reliability and Validity
FACES III was developed to address the high correlation between Cohesion and Adaptability in FACES II ($r=.65$), and to develop empirically independent dimensions. The increased independence of the two dimensions was achieved through factor analysis of twenty items, ten for each dimension. Cohesion items loaded on Factor 1 and Adaptability items loaded on Factor 2, with high correlation between items in each factor and the total scale for that factor. For FACES III, the correlation between Cohesion and Adaptability was reduced to .03 (Olson et al., 1985).

In addition, FACES III shows low correlation between each of the dimensions and social desirability. For cohesion and social desirability, $r=.35$ and for adaptability and social desirability, $r=.00$. These low correlations support the idea that these measures are not simply measuring social desirability. Error in measurement is unlikely to be a result of a respondent trying to give a socially acceptable response.

Internal consistency (split-half reliability) is .77 for cohesion and .62 for adaptability, with a total $r=.68$. This suggests that the items are fairly homogeneous and that the halves of the test would tend to produce the same rank order. The correlations may have been lowered due to the several concepts that comprise each dimension and are reflected in the items.
As noted in Chapter 2, cohesion and adaptability each share similar concepts with other systemic family functioning theories in the areas of family bonding and change, which supports the content validity of the scale as being indicative of actually measuring each of the dimensions. These dimensions and their related concepts are of particular interest in the study of remarried families and rituals.

(c) There are no norms available for FACES III for remarried families. Instructions for FACES III ask the respondents to describe their family now, which automatically differentiates it from the previous nuclear family. Respondents determine which individuals they regard as in the family now, and answer in that context. Norms provided for FACES III are based on a national survey of 1,100 "normal" couples and families (2,692 individuals) by Olson et al. in 1983, and could be used for comparative purposes.

2. Family Satisfaction Scale
(Olson & Wilson, 1982)

The Family Satisfaction Scale is a 14-item scale that directly assesses satisfaction with the family from the perspective of the individual family member.

While the Family Satisfaction Scale contains subscales of
adaptability and cohesion, the developers state that the total score is the most reliable and valid measure; that family satisfaction is a unidimensional measure.

Olson et al. (1983) found that although there were a number of marital satisfaction measures, no measures of family satisfaction were available. The original method of measuring family satisfaction (using discrepancy score between the perceived and the ideal on two administrations of FACES II) has been replaced, due to social desirability distortion faction on the ideal measure, by the Family Satisfaction Scale.

Two qualifying hypotheses included in the measure of Family Satisfaction are particularly significant for the remarried family. First, Olson hypothesized that the family functioning will differ according to the location of the family on the family life cycle (Olson, Russell, & Sprenkle, 1983). Remarried families as a variation of family structure, can also be seen as having a family life cycle (Papernow, 1984; Carter & McGoldrick, 1980; Ransom, Schlesinger & Derdeyn, 1979), variations of which will also be expected to be reflected in their levels of cohesion, adaptability, and family satisfaction.

Second, that the family will function well as long as all family members indicate satisfaction with the family situation despite the possibility that the family may score in the extreme
ranges of the circumplex dimensions. It is less important where the family is located on the model in terms of their cohesion and adaptability scores than how they feel about their levels of adaptability and cohesion. This is particularly important in assessing remarried couples whose scores on family functioning measures may be dissimilar to nuclear families, but may be satisfactory to the remarried couple.

(a) Scoring.

The Family Satisfaction Scale consists of a series of 14 statements concerning how satisfied the respondent is with a particular aspect of family life. Each item is scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from (1) Dissatisfied to (5) Extremely Satisfied. The total score is obtained by summing the numbered response to each item. Olson et al. (1985) combined the husband's and wife's scores to obtain a mean score for the couple, due to the similarity of the scores. This procedure is reasonable only if the scores are very similar, otherwise potential differences between the perceptions of husband and wife are ignored and the purpose of using the Family Satisfaction Scale as an additional measure to further clarify the family functioning is defeated. Therefore, for this study, the scores of husband and wife will be considered separately.

(b) Reliability and Validity.

Subjects indicate their level of satisfaction with each item
on the scale. Each item represents an aspect of family functioning that is highly correlated with the total score. Content validity is supported by an examination of individual items that indicates an adequate representation of satisfaction with aspects of family functioning. Construct validity was obtained through factor analysis of a 28-item questionnaire in which each of the subconcepts of the cohesion and adaptability dimensions were represented by two items, of which one was chosen because of its high variance, high communality and high factor loading on the first factor. On the final instrument, every item loaded more than .50 on the first factor. High correlation between each item and the total score indicates that the family satisfaction scale is unidimensional.

Cronbach's Alpha for the total scale (the summed 14 items) is .92. This correlation indicates a high degree of internal consistency, that is, a high degree of similarity of responses to the items, which further supports the contention that this is a single factor being measured. The test-retest Pearson correlation coefficient, based on a five week interval, was .75 for the total score. This correlation indicates that the test remains stable over time and is able to produce a similar rank order of scores on a later administration of the test.

(c) The Family Satisfaction Scale was chosen because it is a unidimensional measure that is conceptually and theoretically
related to the dimensions on the Circumplex Model. In addition, the inclusion of a family satisfaction scale was deemed necessary to adequately convey a more complete picture of remarried family functioning, because remarried subjects might score in the more extreme ranges of adaptability and cohesion, as measured by FACES III, and still be satisfied with their current level of family functioning.

As with FACES III, norms are not available for remarried families, but norms for "normal" families obtained from the National Survey of Families Across the Family Life Cycle in January, 1982 are available for comparative purposes.

3. Quality Marriage Index

(Norton, 1983)

The Quality Marriage Index is a 6-item scale reflecting a unidimensional measure of the "goodness" of the marital relationship. The six items are highly correlated and "reflect an evaluative gestalt that both describes and commends the whole relationship" (Norton, 1983).

This type of index differs from instruments such as the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS) (Spanier, 1976) in which items reflect agreement or disagreement on a number of aspects of
marital life considered to be indicative of good marital adjustment. In contrast, items on the Quality Marriage Index evaluate the relationship as a whole and are highly interrelated.

Literature on the assessment of marital quality indicates that, currently, there are two general approaches to measuring what has variously been termed marital quality/satisfaction/adjustment. According to Bradbury and Fincham (1987), problems in measurement are a result, in part, of a lack of clarity and consensus concerning the construct being measured. These measures range from reports of specific behaviors occurring in marriage ("Do you kiss your mate?"\(^1\)) to evaluative inferences concerning the marriage as a whole ("Our marriage is strong"\(^2\)). Bradbury and Fincham contend that measures such as the DAS confound the description of marriage with its evaluation. Further, through the use of global, evaluative measures such as the Quality Marriage Index, interpretations are clearer because items are semantically similar, and items of marital quality do not overlap with items reflecting various dimensions that describe properties assumed to be indicative of marital quality. As an additional measure of family functioning, the Quality Marriage Index, a unidimensional measure of marital quality, is more useful because the possibility of overlap with

\(^1\) This item from the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (Spanier, 1976).
\(^2\) This item from the Quality Marriage Index (Norton, 1983).
items from the independent variable is eliminated.

(a) Scoring.

The first five items on the Quality Marriage Index are scored on a seven-point Likert-type scale, ranging from (1) Very Strong Disagreement to (7) Very Strong Agreement. The sixth item asks the respondents to indicate their degree of happiness in the marriage on a ten point scale from (1) Very Unhappy to (10) Perfectly Happy.

According to Donohue and Ryder (1982), most measures of marital quality are skewed, with a large majority of men and women reporting that they believe their marriage to be happier than the average marriage. Similarly, Quality Marriage Index raw scores are also skewed. Because the first five Quality Marriage Index items have a different measurement scale than the sixth item, the raw scores must be converted to standardized \((z)\) scores. The resulting distribution allows the comparison of the score of the individual respondents to the sample mean. If, for example, the sample mean is high, a low score may appear more extreme than if the mean of the sample group were lower. In that case, a low score would be more likely to fall closer to the average score (Norton, 1983).

(b) Reliability and Validity.

Norton (1983) states that for an evaluative index, three
criteria should be met. First, items should have similar semantic values; second, items should reflect the evaluative nature of the phenomenon; and third, the index should be restricted to a relatively small range of items that define a quality score so that interesting covariates that are not part of the index can be evaluated as dependent variables in light of the index.

For the Quality Marriage Index, descriptive words are similar in that they are evaluative and have qualities of preference and commendation, i.e., "strong" marriage suggests that this is both a preferential and positive aspect of the marriage (content validity). The Quality Marriage Index does not list or describe qualities that might be considered properties of a good marriage, such as areas of agreement or disagreement, but evaluates only on a global basis. By evaluating the quality of marriage as a unidimensional measure, the Quality Marriage Index provides a cleaner measure of marital quality that does not define marital quality through other variables considered to be possible constructs of marital quality such as sexual relationship, communication or similar goals, which can then be examined separately in relation to marital quality.

Validity was determined using twenty items (of 261 items on the Partner Communication Scale) that fit Norton's criteria.
Two types of analysis were used: (a) correlation coefficients among the twenty items, and (b) factor analysis. Seven items correlated highly and eight items loaded highly on factor one. Of these items, two were dropped because they did not meet the semantic criteria. Of the remaining six items, factor analysis showed a high loading on the same factor and low, <.40, on other factors with inter-item correlations ranging from .68 to .86, supporting the contention that the Quality Marriage Index is unidimensional.

The Quality Marriage Index taps another aspect of family functioning not specifically addressed by either FACES III or the Family Satisfaction Scale by looking at the experience of each partner, in a global sense, in relation to their marriage. The items particularly relate to the strength of the emotional bond and closeness, and as such, the sense of cohesion between the couple. As measure of family functioning, the use of the Quality Marriage Index implies a systemic view of family functioning. That is, that the quality of the marital relationship will affect the family functioning, and poor family functioning will have a deleterious effect on marital quality.

Independent Variable: Family Rituals

The independent variable for this study is family ritual
observance. Three instruments developed by the Family Stress, Coping, and Health Project at the University of Wisconsin-Madison as part of a cross-sectional study of nonclinical families focusing on Family Traditions, Family Celebrations and Family Time and Routines (McCubbin & Thompson, 1987) will be used to measure ritual observance. These three measures of family ritual were developed in association with each other and are interrelated in the purpose of capturing a picture of a family's ritual life. Although these are measurements of family rituals, they are individual measures representing the perception of the respondent.

These measures do not differentiate between culture-specific traditions and more family-specific celebrations. Rather, the authors conceptualize the differences between traditions, celebrations and family time and routines as traditions having continuity and value across time, celebrations as important to take time to observe in the present, and routines as stabilizing the family on a day-to-day basis and helping make it strong. Repetition, intentionality, and valuing the action for purposes apart from immediate results (e.g. "important to keeping the family together and strong") are specified. Both culturally specific celebrations such as Christmas, Thanksgiving, New Year's, as well as rituals whose observance is determined by the family are included in these family ritual measures. Examples of these family-determined rituals include birthday celebrations
Ritual practices unique to a specific family are present in cultural traditions. For example, a family ritual procedure for setting up the Christmas tree (a cultural aspect) the Sunday before Christmas, includes the father putting on the lights and the youngest child putting on the star at the top of the tree (an idiosyncratic family aspect). In rites of passage marking life transitions such as weddings, funerals, graduations, baptisms, etc. there is also a meld of cultural practice and family tradition. A bride may wear a piece of jewelry that is traditionally worn by brides in her family as she participates in the cultural rite of passage from the single state to the married state.

Families also develop family routines that are idiosyncratic to their family and transcend mere habits due to the value the family places on them. Because the meaning a family attaches to a ritual event can vary in depth and breadth, these measures do not attempt to explore the individual and unique purpose rituals perform for a family, but rather, they indicate that these purposes, whatever they may be, exist and are performed in specific areas of family life.

Examination of the family ritual measures supports their face validity. The measures contain items which are considered
family rituals in Western Society, with both culture-wide and family-specific examples. Because family ritual has rarely been addressed in research, these instruments represent the only available pencil and paper (as opposed to personal interviews) measures available for this variable.

Norms are not available for the family ritual measures, however, means and frequencies for a sample of 304 families could be compared to remarried families.

1. Family Time and Routines Index.
(McCubbin, McCubbin, and Thompson, 1986)

The Family Time and Routines Index assesses the activities and routines used by families on a daily basis and the value the families place on these actions. The Family Time and Routines Index is a 30 item scale consisting of 8 subscales: Parent-Child Togetherness; Couple Togetherness; Child Routines; Meal Togetherness; Family Time Togetherness; Family Chores Routine; Relatives Connection; and Family Management.

(a) Scoring.
Each of the thirty items is scored twice; first, on a four-point scale to measure the extent of the family's observance of these activities ("False", "Mostly False", "Mostly True" and "True"), and second, to indicate the importance or
value the family attaches to each activity ("Not", "Somewhat", and "Very") If the subject does not have the family members noted in the item, a "Not Applicable" response is used. Consistent with the definition of family ritual, that is that a habitual behavior has a symbolic value and is valued by the participants, a family routine will be considered a family ritual only if it is noted as "mostly true" or "true" and that it is "somewhat" or "very important."

(b) Reliability and Validity.

Overall internal reliability is .88 (Cronbach's Alpha). This indicates that the test items are homogeneous and the accuracy of the test is quite high. That is, subsets of the test will produce the same rank order.

Factor loadings are provided for each item in each of the eight factors (subscales), suggesting that there is an accurate reflection of the subscale by the factors. An examination of the items shows that for content validity, the family routines reflect a broad range of family activities, but that these activities may be more representative of middle-class values and a two-parent family configuration, which while appropriate to the current study, may render the instrument less useful overall.
2. Family Traditions Scale.
(McCubbin & Thompson, 1983)

The Family Traditions Scale addresses those events, activities and practices that the family has done in the past, are likely to continue to do and which the family values and respects.

The Family Traditions Scale consists of four subscales: Holidays, which measures the extent to which families maintain traditions around holidays; Family Transitions (marriage, ceremonies, rules, etc.); Religious Traditions (rules, locations, participants); and Special Events (reunions, unique family events, etc.).

McCubbin and Thompson (1987) state that while a lesser emphasis on traditions can be observed at the couple and adolescent launching stages of the family life cycle, the differences across stages is not statistically significant.

(a) Scoring.
Each item is scored by adding 1 for a "yes" response (indicating that the stated activity is a tradition in the family) and 0 for a "no" response. By adding the number of "yes" responses for each of the four subscales, the subscale scores can be determined. The total score is the sum of the
subscale scores.

(b) Reliability and Validity.

The overall internal reliability is .85 (Cronbach's Alpha). Validity is limited to a significant relationship of $r=.29$ between the Family Tradition Scale and the Family Celebrations Index, which is reasonable as they are both measuring family ritual albeit different aspects of it.

3. Family Celebrations Index.

(McCubbin & Thompson, 1983)

McCubbin and Thompson (1987) define celebrations as those special events that are marked by a family in a particular way. This includes events observed by the culture as a whole, such as Mother's Day, and events specific to a family such as birthdays. The Family Celebrations Index measures the degree to which the family is involved (taking time and effort to appreciate the situation or event) in the family process of celebrating special, traditional, and situational events.

(a) Scoring.

The nine items are scored on a Likert-type scale indicating how often this event is celebrated (e.g. 0=never to 3=always and 0=not applicable). The total Family Celebrations Index score is the sum of the numerical responses.
(b) Reliability and Validity.

The overall internal reliability for the Family Celebrations Index is .69 (Cronbach's Alpha), which suggests that the items are homogeneous and are fairly accurate in measuring family celebrations. Validity measures are provided as factor loadings on two factors and behaviors: Unique and Intra-family which describe the type of traditions that comprise the items. An examination of the items for face validity shows that the Family Celebrations Index has an adequate range into which a wide variety of family celebrations could be accurately categorized.
Analysis of Data

The overall design of the Family Traditions in Remarried Families project is a single group, ex post facto, survey study. Subjects were asked to report their perceptions of the functioning of their remarried family and their family rituals in questionnaire form which included a demographic information section.

The data were analyzed by computing the correlation coefficient between each of the linear family functioning scores (Quality Marriage Index and Family Satisfaction Scale) and the family ritual scores, and an Analysis of Variance between the scores of the curvilinear family functioning measures (Cohesion and Adaptability) and the family ritual scores.

Correlations were expected to be positive, with higher family functioning scores occurring with higher family ritual scores. Higher Cohesion mean scores were expected to occur with higher levels of family ritual scores, while a lower mean Adaptability score was expected to occur with higher levels of family ritual scores.

Table 2 shows a summary of the scoring and directionality of the measures.
Table 1

Scoring and Directionality of Dependent and Independent Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Range of Item Scores</th>
<th>Range of Possible Total Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEPENDENT VARIABLE: FAMILY FUNCTIONING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Quality Marriage Index</td>
<td>0-7 (questions 1-5)</td>
<td>Converted to z-scores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6 questions)</td>
<td>0-10 (question 6)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Family Satisfaction Scale</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>14-70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14 Questions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. FACES III</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>Adaptability: 10-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10 questions for each dimension)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cohesion: 10-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDEPENDENT VARIABLE: FAMILY RITUAL</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Family Celebrations Index</td>
<td>0-3, N/A</td>
<td>0-27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9 questions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Family Traditions Scale</td>
<td>0-1, N/A</td>
<td>0-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(20 questions)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Family Time and Routines</td>
<td>0-3 (observed)</td>
<td>0-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(observed)</td>
<td>0-2 (important)</td>
<td>0-64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note.** 0 is always low score for those items with 0 as a possible item score, for all other items, a low score is 1.

**Procedures**

A mechanism is not available to total the scores in each variable to produce a single family functioning score and a
single family ritual score. Therefore, using statistical procedures for each dependent measure, scores for each of the three independent measures were compared with the scores for each of the four dependent measures, which yielded a total of twelve statistical relationships.

**Data Transformation**

**Husband-Wife Scores.**

Data were collected from pairs of remarried spouses. While recognizing the value of family or dyadic scores over individual scores, the data were dealt with as individual scores. Although identified as family measures, the instruments are, in fact, individual measures of perception of the family member. Each administration of the measurements to a remarried couple yields two sets of measures: the perception of the wife and the perception of the husband. Using scores from remarried couples will reduce the subject to subject variability. Scores for males and females were considered separately. A husband's and wife's scores are not independent, thus the shared variance between the husband's and wife's scores could create a correlation that is more an artifact of this variance than actual correlation.

In the current literature, considerable attention has been directed to the treatment of husband-wife scores, with a variety
of systems proposed for combining individual scores into a single couple score, as well as arguments against any combination of scores due to the possible loss of information about the spouse's perceptions as well as other statistical and theoretical considerations (Thompson & Walker, 1982; Fisher, Kokes, Ransom, Phillips, & Rudd, 1985; Sigafoos & Reiss, 1985).

Thompson and Walker (1982) note that "for many family researchers the decision on whether or not to sum is post facto based on an examination of the similarity of partner reports. If the correlation between husbands and wives is high, a couple score is used. If the correlation is low, individual reports are used separately in further analysis" (p.899).

In Lavee, McCubbin, and Olson (1987), the nature of the information reported in the instrument determined whether it was used as individual scores or as a combined husband-wife score. Self-report measures, in which the subject reported attitudes towards self and spouse, were considered as separate scores for husbands and wives as each partner was reporting their own feelings. On the other hand, for measures that reported shared family behavior, the mean of the couples scores was used.

Using this system for dealing with husband and wife scores, the Quality Marriage Index and the Family Satisfaction Scale would yield separate husband and wife scores scores. Thus for
hypotheses involving these two measures, each of the measures of family ritual would be compared to an individual husband or wife score.

While this method is conceptually attractive and would result in both individual and combined scores for measures used in this study, Cronbach (1958) cautions against using both combined and individual scores in the same analysis, suggesting that the resulting correlation could be more an artifact of the procedure than a true correlation of the variables. With this caveat in mind, data were analyzed as individual male and female scores.

**Dependent Variables.**

Of the four dependent variables, all but the Quality Marriage Index are simple additive measures which produce a single summed score for each case. The Quality Marriage Index scores were transformed to standard scores prior to being added because the index contains two scales of different magnitudes. For the Quality Marriage Index and the Family Satisfaction Scale, a higher score indicates greater marital quality and greater family satisfaction, respectively. The other two family functioning scales, Cohesion and Adaptability, are curvilinear with better family functioning located in the mid-range rather than at either extreme.
Independent Variables.

Two of the three independent variables, Family Celebrations Index and Family Traditions Scale are also simple additive measures in which raw scores are summed to produce a single total score for each case. A higher total score indicates more observance of the specified family rituals.

The Family Time and Routines Index required a transformation of scores because each item consisted of a two-part response indicating whether the activity was performed by the family (scoring a possible 0 to 3), and whether the respondent felt it was important for keeping the family together and strong (scoring a possible 0 to 2). For the item to meet the definition of family ritual, a habit or routine would need to be observed episodically and have symbolic meaning beyond the literal meaning (e.g. eating together as valued beyond just intake of food) to be considered a family ritual. Thus, only those family routines which were rated as "mostly true" or "true" of the family and "somewhat" or "very" important were counted in the Family Time and Routines Index score. Some consideration was given to differential weighting of responses such as "somewhat important" and "very important", but was not done for two reasons. First, a numerical weight differential for "somewhat" and "very" would end up being an arbitrary and artificial designation that may or may not reflect reality or be statistically viable. Second, the issue under consideration was
simply whether or not the activity was performed and whether or not it had symbolic meaning for the respondent. Items that were considered to have symbolic meaning to the respondent, but were not performed by the family, or performed by the family, but not considered meaningful to the respondent, did not contribute to the total Family Routines score. The product of the performance of the activity (false=0 true=1) and the value of the activity (not important=0, important=1) were added to give a total Family Time and Routines Index score for each subject.

To facilitate the comparison of each family ritual score to the Adaptability and Cohesion scores, each of the family ritual measures were divided into two levels, high and low ritual observance, using the median as the dividing point and providing nearly equal numbers to each group. McCubbin and Thompson (1987), in their discussion of family typologies, divided Family Celebrations, Family Traditions, and Family Time and Routines each into high and low levels (p.41, p.43). Although they did not specify what statistic, mean or median, was used, graphs picture equal sized units for each level, suggesting the use of the median. In either case, this sample would not be greatly affected as there was little or no difference between the scores at the median and the mean for each measure.
Summary

The dependent variables, the Quality of Marriage Index and the Family Satisfaction Scale are correlated with the independent variables, Family Celebrations Index, Family Traditions Scale, and the Family Time and Routines Index. Analysis of Variance is used with the dependent variables Adaptability and Cohesion and the independent variables noted above. Control variables are used to control for possible influence on family functioning from factors other than family ritual.

The results of the statistical manipulation of the dependent and independent variables will be reported in the next chapter.
CHAPTER SIX

Results

The results chapter is divided into three sections. The first section reports the descriptive statistics of the sample group, the second section reports the statistical analysis of data as it relates the proposed hypotheses, and the third section deals with the description and statistical analysis of control variables.

Section One: Descriptive Statistics

Of thirty-four sets of questionnaires that were distributed, thirty were used in the analysis of data. Of the remaining four, one couple did not meet the definition of a remarried couple, one spouse refused to complete the questionnaire, and two sets of couple data were lost in the mail. Two couples were included in the study although their child from a previous marriage turned 13 years of age after the couples volunteered to answer the questionnaire and before the questionnaires were distributed.

The age of the subjects ranged from 27 years to 51 years
with a mean of 36.7 years. The average age of women in the sample was 35.8 (range of 28 years to 46 years), and the average age of men in the sample was 37.568 (range of 27 to 51 years). Unlike the general population of first marriages, in which 4.5% of wives are older than their husbands by three to ten years (McKie et al.), in twenty percent (20%) of the couples in this sample, the wives were older than their husbands by three to ten years. Of the couples in which the husband was older, the range of age difference was one to twenty years.

The length of the current marriage ranged from 1.8 years to seven years with a mean of 3.8 years. Eleven couples have been married five years or longer and eighteen couples have been married less than five years. A discrepancy between members of one couple regarding the length of their current marriage placed one squarely in the "less than five years" group and the other in the "over five years" group. Because the couple could not be contacted, each stated length of marriage remained as part of the data. Twenty-seven of the thirty couples (90%) lived together prior to marriage for an average of 1.99 years, with a range of 0.1 to 6.0 years. Thirty-five percent (35%) of the remarried couples have had family or marital counseling for an average of 7.3 sessions.

Eighteen (60%) of the remarried couples have had a child, and seven of the couples have had two children, which was the
maximum number of children born into these remarried families. The ages of these children ranged from 0.2 years to 5 years.

Twenty-two men and twenty-seven women, had been previously married. The length of the first marriage for this group ranged from 1.8 years to 19 years. The average marriage for the sample was 7.73 years. For the women, the average length of marriage was 7.68 years (range 2 years to 17 years) and similarly, for the men, the average length of the first marriage was 7.83 years with a range of 1.8 to 19 years. Three individuals had second marriages, which ranged in length from 0.7 years to 14 years, prior to their current marriage.

Of the twenty-seven women with children from a previous marriage, twenty-five have all of their children living with them, and two have some of the children living with them and some with their ex-spouse. Of the seventeen men with children from a previous marriage, six have all their children living with them and another four have some of their children living with them and some with their ex-spouse. Two men and one woman have adult children living on their own. Table 1 summarizes the living situation of the children of previous marriages from the parent's perspective. Age range for the children of the previous marriage is 7 years to 24 years.
Table 1
Living Situation, from Parents' Perspective, for Children of the Previous Marriage of Females and for Children of the Previous Marriage of Males.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent's Gender</th>
<th>Number with Children</th>
<th>Lives with all children</th>
<th>Lives with all children</th>
<th>Lives with no children</th>
<th>Has adult children on their own</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>27 of 30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>17 of 30</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subjects were predominantly raised Protestant (56.7%) and Catholic (31.7%), but only 23% of the total sample currently practice their religion. The sample was well educated, with over three-quarters of the total having some type of education beyond Grade 12. The occupational level of the group was also high with over 80% of the men and 39% of the women in professional or managerial positions. Almost one-third of the women stated they were homemakers or not employed. Overall, the income levels seemed to reflect the high occupational levels. The combined family incomes ranged from $20,000 to over $75,000 with a mean of $50,001 to $60,000 and formed a tri-modal distribution of $30,001-$40,000 (16.7%), $50,001-$60,000 (30%) and above $75,000 (23.3%).
Section Two: Analysis of Data

This section reports the mean and standard deviation for each of the dependent variables, describes the testing of the hypotheses posed in Chapter 3 and reports the results of the analysis of the data for males and females separately, both in statistical terms, and whether each hypothesis was supported or not supported. Data were divided by gender since husband and wife pairs are not independent. Results of the hypothesis testing are presented in three subsections consisting of each of the three hypotheses.

The research question being addressed is whether remarried families with a greater number of family rituals are better functioning than those remarried families with fewer family rituals. More specifically, do remarried families who score higher on family ritual measures also score higher on measures of family functioning? To answer this question, each of three family ritual measures was compared with each of four family functioning measures using either Pearson Correlations or Analysis of Variance as appropriate to the measures.

As stated in the previous chapter, four dependent variables were used in this study. The first variable, marital quality, was measured by the Quality Marriage Index. For this sample, the QMI was transformed from raw scores to Z scores. The mean
for females and males was, therefore, 0.00 and the standard deviations 5.34 and 5.12, respectively. The second variable, family satisfaction, measured by the Family Satisfaction Scale, had a mean for females of 46.60, and a standard deviation of 9.08. The mean for males was 46.79, standard deviation, 9.01. The third variable Adaptability and the fourth variable, Cohesion, were both measured by their respective subscales of FACES-III. The Adaptability mean for females was 26.00 with a standard deviation of 5.13; and for males, the mean was 26.57 with a standard deviation of 4.74. For Cohesion, the mean for females was 39.24, standard deviation, 5.98; and for males, the mean was 38.23, standard deviation, 5.72. This information is summarized in Table 3, below. A comparison of sample scores and norms is presented in Appendix 5.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality Marriage Index</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>5.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>5.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Satisfaction Scale</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>46.60</td>
<td>9.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>46.79</td>
<td>9.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>26.00</td>
<td>5.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>26.57</td>
<td>4.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohesion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>39.24</td>
<td>5.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>38.23</td>
<td>5.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. All scores are raw scores except the Quality Marriage Index which has been converted to standard (z) scores.
Hypothesis One proposes that taking the time and effort to appreciate and observe a greater number of family events is related to better family functioning in the remarried family. It states that remarried persons with a higher score on the Family Celebrations Index will have (a) a higher score on the Quality Marriage Index; and (b) a higher score on the Family Satisfaction Scale; (c) and that the mean of Adaptability will be significantly different for higher and lower levels of Family Celebrations Index scores; and (d) that the mean of Cohesion will be significantly different for higher and lower levels of Family Celebrations Index scores.

1(a) Family Celebrations and Quality Marriage Index.

The first part of Hypothesis One proposes that those who take time and effort to appreciate a greater number of family events will also have a higher evaluation of the quality of their marriage. Specifically, those individuals with a higher Family Celebrations Index score will also have a higher Quality Marriage Index Score.

This hypothesis was not supported for either females (r = .225, p < .231) or males (r = .133, p < .484). As shown in Column 1 of Table 4, there is no significant relationship between the Family Celebrations Index and the Quality Marriage Index.
Table 4

Correlation Between Family Functioning Measures and Family Ritual Measures for Females and Males

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
<th>Quality Marriage Index</th>
<th>Family Satisfaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>r</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females (n=30)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Celebrations</td>
<td>.225</td>
<td>.231</td>
<td>.299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Traditions</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>.821</td>
<td>.062</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Time &amp; Routines</td>
<td>.504*</td>
<td>.005*</td>
<td>.561*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males (n=30)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Celebrations</td>
<td>.133</td>
<td>.484</td>
<td>.262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Traditions</td>
<td>.131</td>
<td>.945</td>
<td>.075</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Time &amp; Routines</td>
<td>.291</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>.267</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05, two-tailed.

1(b) Family Celebrations and Family Satisfaction Scale.

The second part of Hypothesis One proposes that those who take time and effort to celebrate more family occasions, such as birthdays and anniversaries, are more satisfied with their family life. Specifically, individuals with a higher Family Celebrations Index score will also have a higher Family Satisfaction Score.
This hypothesis was not supported for either females, \( r = .299, p < .109 \), or males, \( r = .262, p < .170 \). As shown in Column 2 of Table 4, there is no significant relationship between the Family Celebrations Index and the Family Satisfaction Scale.

1(c) Family Celebrations and Adaptability.

The third part of Hypothesis One proposes that those who observe more family celebrations will have a more rigid family structure and therefore less flexibility to adapt to changes than those who observe fewer family celebrations. Specifically, the means of Adaptability for higher and lower levels of Family Celebrations scores will be significantly different, and the higher Family Celebration level will have a lower Adaptability mean.

This hypothesis was not supported for either females, \( F(1, 28) = 1.63, p < .215 \) or males, \( F(1, 29) = 2.66, p < .117 \). As indicated in Column 2 of Table 5, no significant relationship was indicated between family celebrations and ability to adapt to changes.
Table 5
Summary of Analysis of Variance for Females and Males: Adaptability by Family Celebrations, Family Traditions, and Family Time and Routines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>Prob. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Females (n=29)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Celebrations</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Traditions</td>
<td>5.22*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.032*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Time &amp; Routines</td>
<td>4.78*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.040*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Males (n=30)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Celebrations</td>
<td>2.661</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Traditions</td>
<td>3.435</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Time &amp; Routines</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.899</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05, two-tailed.

1(d) Family Celebrations and Cohesion.

The last part of Hypothesis One proposes that those who observe more family celebrations will have a greater sense of family closeness and bonding (Cohesion) than those who observe fewer family celebrations. Specifically, the mean of Cohesion for higher and lower levels of Family Celebrations scores will be significantly different, and the higher Family Celebration level will have a higher Cohesion mean.

This relationship was not supported for females, \( F(1,28)=0.496, p<.488 \). However, the hypothesis was supported for males, \( F(1,29)=4.720, p<.041 \). There seems to be a
difference in the way men and women regard family celebrations and family closeness, with a significant relationship between the two existing only for males. This finding is indicated in Table 6.

Table 6

Summary of Analysis of Variance for Females and Males: Cohesion by Family Celebrations, Family Traditions and Family Time and Routines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>Prob. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females (n=29)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Celebrations</td>
<td>0.496</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Traditions</td>
<td>2.139</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Time &amp; Routines</td>
<td>1.233</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males (n=30)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Celebrations</td>
<td>4.720*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.041*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Traditions</td>
<td>1.190</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.287</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Time &amp; Routines</td>
<td>0.442</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.513</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*\( p < .05 \), two-tailed.

Thus, for Hypothesis One, only in part (d) was a significant relationship between Family Celebrations and Cohesion found, and then only for males. No significant relationships were found for females. Overall, the hypothesis is only partially supported for males, but not for females.
(ii) Hypothesis Two

Hypothesis Two suggests that a greater observance of family traditions, those activities the family always does, has done in the past and is likely to do in the future, is related to better family functioning in the remarried family. Hypothesis Two states that remarried persons with a higher score on the Family Traditions Scale will have (a) a higher score on the Quality Marriage Index; and (b) a higher score on the Family Satisfaction Scale. Further, (c) the mean of Adaptability will be significantly different for higher and lower levels of Family Traditions Scale scores; and (d) the mean of Cohesion will be significantly different for higher and lower levels of scores on the Family Traditions Scale.

2(a) Family Traditions and Quality Marriage Index.

The first part of Hypothesis Two proposes that those who observe a greater number of family traditions will evaluate the quality of their marriage as higher than those who observe fewer family traditions. Specifically, those individuals with a higher score on the Family Traditions Index will also have a higher score on the Quality Marriage Index.

The hypothesis was not supported for either females ($r = .043$, $p < .821$) or males ($r = .131$, $p < .945$). As shown in Column 1 of Table 4, there is no significant relationship between the Family
Traditions Scale and the Quality Marriage Index.

2(b) Family Traditions and Family Satisfaction Scale.

The second part of Hypothesis Two proposes that those who observe more family traditions, which link the past, present and future, are more satisfied with their family life. Specifically, individuals with a higher Family Traditions Scale score will also have a higher Family Satisfaction Score.

The hypothesis was not supported for either females ($r=.062$, $p<.821$) or males ($r=.075$, $p<.699$). As shown in Column 2, Table 4, no significant relationship was found between the Family Traditions Scale and the Family Satisfaction Scale.

2(c) Family Traditions and Adaptability.

The third part of Hypothesis Two proposes that those who observe more family traditions will have less flexibility and therefore be less able to adapt to changes than those who observe fewer family celebrations. Specifically, the mean of Adaptability for higher and lower levels of Family Tradition Index scores will be significantly different, and the higher level of Family Traditions will have a lower Adaptability mean.

This hypothesis was not supported for males, $F(1,29)=3.435$, $p<.077$, or for females, $F(1,28)=5.22$, $p<.032$, despite a significant relationship for females between family traditions
and adaptability, as shown in Row 3 of Table 5 because the hypothesized directions of difference is not supported when cell means of this Analysis of Variance are examined. Cell means for higher and lower levels of family traditions indicate that for females, a greater ability to adapt is significantly related to a higher, not lower, level of family traditions. Thus the hypothesis is not supported.

2(d) Family Traditions and Cohesion.

The fourth part of Hypothesis Two proposes that those who observe more family traditions will have a greater sense of family closeness and bonding (Cohesion) than those who observe fewer family traditions. Specifically the mean of Cohesion for higher and lower levels of Family Tradition Index scores will be significantly different, and the higher Family Traditions level will have a higher Cohesion mean.

This relationship was not supported for females, $F(1,28) = 2.139$, $p < .158$, or males, $F(1,29) = 1.190$, $p < .287$. As indicated in Table 6, there appears to be no difference in a sense of family bonding for high and low levels of family traditions.

Therefore, for Hypothesis Two, only one significant relationship, 2(c), was found between the higher level of family traditions observance and greater adaptability, but only for females. Overall, for Hypothesis Two, the relationship between
family tradition and family functioning variables appears to not be supported for females.

(iii) Hypothesis Three

Hypothesis Three proposes that a greater observance of family routines that hold a particular meaning for the respondent, is related to better family functioning in the remarried family. Hypothesis Three states that remarried persons with a higher score on the Family Time and Routines Index will have (a) a higher score on the Quality Marriage Index; (b) a higher score on the Family Satisfaction Scale; (c) that the mean of Adaptability will be significantly different for higher and lower levels of Family Time and Routine Index scores; and (d) that the mean of Cohesion will be significantly different for higher and lower score levels on the Family Time and Routine Index.

3(a) Family Time and Routines and Quality Marriage Index.

The first part of Hypothesis Three proposes that those who observe a greater number of meaningful family routines will evaluate their marriage as being of a higher quality than those who observe fewer meaningful family routines. Specifically, those individuals with a higher score on the Family Time and Routines Index will also have a higher score on the Quality Marriage Index.
This hypothesis was supported for females, $r = .504$, $p < .005$, but not for males, $r = .291$, $p < .119$. Females observing a greater number of meaningful family routines also evaluate their marital relationship more positively. As shown in Column 1 of Table 4, there is a significant relationship between the Family Traditions Scale and the Quality Marriage Index for females, but not for males.

3(b) Family Time and Routines and Family Satisfaction Scale.

The second part of Hypothesis Three proposes that those who observe a greater number of meaningful family routines, are more satisfied with their family life. Specifically, individuals with a higher Family Time and Routines Index score will also have a higher Family Satisfaction Score.

This hypothesis was supported for females, $r = .561$, $p < .001$, but not for males, $r = .267$, $p < .162$. Females with more meaningful family routines feel more satisfied with their family life. As shown in Column 2 of Table 4, there is a significant relationship between the Family Time and Routines Index and the Family Satisfaction Scale for females, but not for males (Row 6 of Table 6).

3(c) Family Time and Routines and Adaptability.

The third part of Hypothesis Three proposes that those individuals who have a larger number of meaningful family
routines have less flexibility and are therefore less able to adapt to changes than those who observe fewer meaningful family routines. Specifically, there is a significant difference in the mean of Adaptability for higher and lower levels of Family Time and Routines Index scores with the higher level of Family Routines having a lower Adaptability mean.

This hypothesis was supported for females, $F(1,28)=4.78$, $p<.040$, but was not supported for males, $F(1,29)=.017$, $p<.899$. As indicated in Row 4 of Table 5, a significant relationship, for females, appears to exist between family traditions and ability to adapt to changes, but further examination of the cell means indicates that the hypothesized directions of difference is not supported. For females, a greater flexibility and ability to adapt to changes is significantly related to a higher rather than a lower level of meaningful family routines. Thus the hypothesis is not supported.

3(d) Family Time and Routines and Cohesion.

The last part of Hypothesis Three proposes that those who observe a greater number of meaningful family routines will have a greater sense of family closeness and bonding (Cohesion) than those who observe fewer family routines. Specifically the mean of Cohesion for higher and lower levels of Family Time and Routines Index scores will be significantly different, and a higher Family Routines level will have a higher Cohesion mean.
This relationship was not supported for females, $F(1,28)=1.233, p<.279$, or males, $F(1,29)=0.443, p<.513$. As indicated in Table 6, there appears to be no difference in a sense of family bonding for high and low levels of family routines.

Thus, for Hypothesis Three the relationship between meaningful family routines and and family functioning variables is supported for females on 3(a) Family Routines and Marital Quality, and 3(b) Family Routines and Family Satisfaction. A further significant relationship, albeit opposite to the hypothesized direction, was found for females on 3(c) between the higher level of Family Routines and a higher mean of Adaptability. There were no significant findings for males for Hypothesis Three, consequently, Hypothesis Three appears to be supported for females, but not for males.

Summary

At this point we might conclude the following: A greater number of significant relationships were found for females than for males: four for females and one for males. The single significant relationship for males was found on Hypothesis One, between Cohesion and the Family Celebrations Index. Males involved in taking the time and effort to observe various kinds of family events tend to feel greater emotional bonding to their family, and a more defined sense of family boundaries. For Hypothesis Two, only one significant relationship was found, for
females, between Adaptability and the Family Traditions Scale. Females who are involved in activities that the family values and respects and have done in the past and are likely to continue in the future, also have flexibility and are able to adapt to changes in role and rules as developmental needs require. The hypothesis predicted less adaptability rather than more, therefore the hypothesis is not supported. Hypothesis Three had three significant relationships, all for females, between the Quality Marriage Index and the Family Time and Routines Index; between the Family Satisfaction Scale and the Family Time and Routines Index; and between Adaptability and the Family Time and Routines Index. Females who had a greater number of meaningful and valued family routines also had a higher quality marriage, were more satisfied with their family life, and were more able to adapt to change in response to developmental needs. Therefore, Hypotheses One was partially supported for males, and Hypothesis Two was not supported for females because the significant result was not in the predicted direction. Hypothesis Three was supported for females, but not for males.

Section Three: Control Variables

Further examination of the significant relationships found in the previous section was undertaken to reduce the possibility
that the relationships between family ritual measures and family functioning measures were spurious, due to factors other than those specified in the hypotheses. Control variables were selected from the demographic data collected in the questionnaires, on the basis of previous research on the dependent variable, and in the case of dependent variables not assessed against these control variables in the literature, on the basis of logical extrapolation. The five control variables will be discussed, followed by the results of controlling for these variables.

Discussion of Control Variables

The first control variable tested was length of marriage. In research on nuclear families, length of marriage as a significant indicator of marital quality was reported by Nock (1979), but not supported by Anderson, Russell & Schumm (1983) while Rollins and Feldman (1970) found that marital satisfaction did not vary as much over the family life cycle for husbands as it did for wives. As noted in Chapter Four, various researchers have indicated that the remarried family requires at least two years (Visher & Visher, 1979) to five years (Mills, 1984) for the formation of the stepfamily to be accomplished. This time frame, together with the high marital termination rate for those remarried less than five years (see p. 10, Chapter 4), suggests that a longer marriage rather than any influence of family
routines, may lead to greater marital quality, particularly for females. Length of marriage, in years, was used in both the Analysis of Covariance and Regression equations.

A second control variable examined was the Presence of Children from the Current Marriage. Nuclear family research on marital quality and children, for obvious reasons, has not addressed this particular issue, concentrating instead on the number of children in the family as the important variable. Albrecht (1979), in his research on remarried families, found that males with children from the current marriage reported "greater comparative happiness" than males without children from the current marriage. But for females the results were the opposite, females without children from the current marriage reported greater marital happiness than females with children from the current marriage. Presence of a child from the current marriage could lower the marital quality score for females, and could decrease female adaptability as the mother affect a more traditional parental role than she might as a parent or stepparent with children from the previous marriage. Family satisfaction may be increased because the remarried family would fit the idealized nuclear format more closely. For men, particularly if they are stepfathers rather than biological fathers, the greater comparative happiness could be reflected in a greater sense of emotional bonding to the family. In both the Analysis of Covariance and Regression procedures discussed
below, Presence of a Child from the Current Marriage is coded 0 = no child of the current marriage and 1 = one or more children of the current marriage.

A third control variable is the Wife's Employment Status, divided into two types: wives who are employed outside the home, and wives who are not employed outside the home. Rapoport and Rapoport (1971) found that couples where both partners work report decreased marital quality. In addition, for remarried families, the multiple demands on time is one of the most frequently noted areas of difficulty (Wald, 1981). With one spouse having more available time to meet the demands of running a complex household, the result could be that more time is available to the couple for their own relationship, thus enhancing their marital quality. Greater family satisfaction may result from a smoother running household, and more time available for the needs of family members to be addressed. Without the demands of both family and job, the wife may feel more flexible and able to adapt to changes as necessary, rather than maintaining a less useful but efficient structure. Wife's Employment Status was coded as a dummy variable with 0 = not employed outside the home and 1 = employed outside the home for both Regression and Analysis of Covariance.

The practice of religion was the fourth control variable considered. Albrecht (1979) found that religious identification
and activity only weakly related to the degree of satisfaction with the present marriage. For this study, the possibility that religious practice could provide a more significant influence on marital quality rather than family routines or family traditions was considered. Religious practice could also affect the level of family satisfaction of either more or less family satisfaction. Religious practice of one spouse could cause conflict in the family, decreasing family satisfaction, or religious practice could enhance family satisfaction by offering a sense of spiritual assistance to the family. Religious practice, if an area of family agreement, could enhance Cohesion. Religious practice was expected to decrease or have no effect on Adaptability. Religious practice was coded as a dummy variable with 0 = not practicing religion and 1 = currently practicing religion.

The fifth control variable considered was the possible effect of family or marital counselling on marital quality, family satisfaction, and adaptability, for females and on cohesion for males. No research was found that looks at the relationship between counselling and these dependent variables in remarried families, but, the rationale of effect is as follows: Counselling is intended to increase the level of family functioning. Because this study consists of a non-clinical sample, couples who sought counselling may have had a lower quality of marriage, which, following counselling, has
been raised to equal to or greater than the norm for the group. Families who had received counselling would be more satisfied due to the changes that resulted from the counselling. Counselling could also effect Adaptability as families experience change in their family's situation and accept that change is normal in remarried families. Counselling may also effect Cohesion as resolution of family problems allow members to feel closer to each other. Counselling was coded as a dummy variable with 0 = received no counselling and 1 = received counselling.

Testing of Control Variables

Each of the hypotheses from Section Two with statistically significant findings were further tested using the control variables described above. Results for each of these hypotheses are reported below by Hypotheses One, Two and Three.

Results for hypothesis 1(d) showed that the mean of Cohesion for higher and lower levels of the Family Celebrations Index was significantly different for males. This finding was further tested with four control variables; Presence of a Child from the Current Marriage, Religious Practice, Counselling, and Length of Marriage using Analysis of Covariance. For males in the remarried family, the sense of family closeness is influenced by the presence of a child of the current marriage more than it is influenced by the observance of family events and celebrations.
Table 7 shows that the presence of a child accounted for a significant proportion of the variance of Cohesion, $F(1,1) = 6.050$, $p < .021$, compared to Family Celebrations, $F(1,1) = 3.593$, $p < .07$, which lost significance when the five control variables were used.

Table 7
Summary of Analysis of Covariance for Males: Cohesion by Family Celebrations with All Covariates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>Prob. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covariates:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of a Child (1,0)</td>
<td>6.050*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Practice (0,1)</td>
<td>3.194</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling (0,1)</td>
<td>0.509</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.483</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Marriage (years)</td>
<td>0.123</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variable:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Celebrations</td>
<td>5.018</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.070</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .05$, two-tailed.

Religious Practice, Counselling, and Length of Marriage were not significant, although Religious Practice approached significance, $F(1,29) = 3.194$, $p < .087$.

A further Analysis of Covariance with only Presence of a Child of the Current Marriage as a covariate resulted in an increase in the proportion of variance accounted for by the Presence of a Child $F(1,29) = 8.195$, $p < .008$. While the proportion of variance for Family Celebrations decreased somewhat, the significance rose slightly but remained non-significant,
\[ F(1,29)=3.925, \ p<.058. \] These results are shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Summary of Analysis of Covariance for Males: Cohesion by Family Celebrations with Covariate, Presence of a Child of the Current Marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>Prob. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covariates:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of a Child ( (0,1) )</td>
<td>8.195*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variable:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Celebrations</td>
<td>3.925</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.058</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05, two-tailed.

For Hypothesis 2(c) a significant difference was found between the means of Adaptability for females for high and low levels of Family Traditions observance. A further Analysis of Covariance was performed using all five control variables, noted above, as covariates. The relationship between Adaptability and Family Traditions appears to be spurious. When the Wife's Employment Status is controlled, the variance accounted for by Family Traditions could be due to chance.

As noted in Table 9, a significant relationship between Adaptability and Wife's Employment Status, \( F(1,29)=5.352, \ p<.031 \) and the significance of the relationship between Adaptability and Family Traditions disappeared, \( F(1,29)=1.219, \ p<.283. \)
Table 9
Summary of Analysis of Covariance for Females: Adaptability by Family Traditions and Family Time and Routines with All Covariates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>Prob. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covariates:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Marriage (yrs)</td>
<td>1.199</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of a Child (0,1)</td>
<td>0.080</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife's Employment (0,1)</td>
<td>5.352*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.031*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling (0,1)</td>
<td>1.014</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Practice (0,1)</td>
<td>0.248</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variables:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Traditions</td>
<td>1.219</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Time and Routines</td>
<td>2.647</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.119</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05, two-tailed.

A second Analysis of Covariance was run using the two covariates with the highest F ratio. Results shown in Table 10, indicate that the Wife's Employment Status appeared to have greater significance when only two covariates were used, F(1,29)=6.931, p < .15. Family Traditions remained nonsignificant. Wife's employment status accounted for 53% of the explained variance and 18.7% of the total variance of females' Adaptability.

Table 10
Summary of Analysis of Covariance for Females: Adaptability by Family Traditions and Family Time and Routines with Covariates, Length of Marriage, Employment Status of Wife

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>Prob. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Covariates:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Marriage (years)</td>
<td>1.133</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife's Employment (0,1)</td>
<td>6.931*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.015*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variables:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Traditions</td>
<td>2.134</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Time and Routines</td>
<td>2.114</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05, two-tailed.
For Hypothesis 3(a) a significant relationship was found between a greater number of meaningful Family Time and Routines and a higher evaluation of Marital Quality. This correlation was further tested using the five control variables, noted above, in a stepwise regression predicting Quality of Marriage. Four of the five variables used a dummy variable with 0 indicating the absence of the variable and 1 indicating the presence of the variable. The fifth variable, Length of Marriage, was in years.

Counselling was found to comprise a significant proportion of the variance of Marital Quality, $F(1,28)=4.881$, $p<.038$, while the four other control variables were not significant. The proportion of Marital Quality explained by Counselling reduced the proportion of variance accounted for by Family Time and Routines to a nonsignificant level, $F(1,28)=1.190$, $p<.287$. Thus the relationship between Family Time and Routines and Marital Quality appears to be spurious, but the relationship of Counselling and Marital Quality significant. Results of this regression equation are shown in Table 11.
Table 11
Regression Table for Females for Quality of Marriage on Family Time and Routines with All Control Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Partial Correlation</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Prob. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step One</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control Variables:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling (0,1)</td>
<td>.4261</td>
<td>4.881*</td>
<td>.038*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife's Employment (0,1)</td>
<td>-.0620</td>
<td>0.085</td>
<td>.773</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Marriage (years)</td>
<td>-.1090</td>
<td>0.264</td>
<td>.612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Practice (0,1)</td>
<td>-.0001</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>.999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Child (0,1)</td>
<td>-.0693</td>
<td>0.106</td>
<td>.748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step Two</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Variable:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Time and Routines</td>
<td>.2266</td>
<td>1.190</td>
<td>.287</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[
R^2 = .2529
\]
Change of \(R^2\) = .0404

*\(p<.05\), two-tailed.

A second stepwise Regression was computed using the same dependent and independent variables, but with the effect of Length of Marriage and Counselling, the two largest F scores in the first regression equation, controlled. Length of marriage remained nonsignificant, but the F score for Counselling increased, \(F(1,28)=5.902, \ p<.022\), as noted in Table 12. Those who have had marital or family counselling in the remarried family have a higher quality marriage.
Table 12

Regression Table for Females for Quality of Marriage on Family Time and Routines with Control Variables of Counselling, Length of Present Marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Partial Correlation</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Prob. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step One</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Variables:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling (0,1)</td>
<td>.4091</td>
<td>5.902*</td>
<td>.022*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Marriage (years)</td>
<td>-.1397</td>
<td>.517</td>
<td>.478</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step Two</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variable:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Time and Routines</td>
<td>.2599</td>
<td>1.883</td>
<td>.182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[
R^2 = .2629
\]

\[
\text{Change of } R^2 = .0534
\]

*p < .05, two-tailed.

Hypothesis 3(b) found that there was a significant correlation between Family Satisfaction and Family Time and Routines. Similar to 3(a) above, this relationship was further tested by running two stepwise regression procedures, first using all five control variables, and second, using only the two control variables from the first regression with the highest F scores, Wife's Employment Status and Counselling.

In the first regression procedure, the significant relationship between Family Satisfaction and Family Time and Routines was maintained, \( F(1,29) = 4.486, p < .046 \), and none of the control variables were found to have a significant proportion of the variance of Family Satisfaction. These results are shown in Table 13.
Table 13

Regression Table for Females for Family Satisfaction on Family Time and Routines with All Control Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Partial Correlation</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Prob. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step One</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Variables:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling (0,1)</td>
<td>.3341</td>
<td>2.276</td>
<td>.111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife's Employment (0,1)</td>
<td>.1769</td>
<td>0.711</td>
<td>.408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of Marriage (years)</td>
<td>.1223</td>
<td>0.334</td>
<td>.569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Practice (0,1)</td>
<td>-.1062</td>
<td>0.251</td>
<td>.621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presence of Child (0,1)</td>
<td>-.0715</td>
<td>0.113</td>
<td>.740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step Two</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variable:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Time and Routines</td>
<td>.4116</td>
<td>4.486*</td>
<td>.046</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ R^2 = .2920 \]

Change of \( R^2 = .1444 \)

*p<.05, two-tailed.

A second regression equation was run controlling for Counselling and Wife's Employment Status. The amount of variance in Family Satisfaction explained by Counselling and Wife's Employment Status increased somewhat but, in neither case did it reach significance. These results, in Table 14, show that the significant relationship between Family Satisfaction and Family Time and Routines has increased slightly, and 16.4% of the variance in Family Satisfaction is accounted for in this second equation.
Table 14

Regression Table for Family Satisfaction on Family Time and Routines with Control Variables of Counselling, Length of Present Marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Partial Correlation</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Prob. of F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step One</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Variables:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselling (0,1)</td>
<td>.3100</td>
<td>2.765</td>
<td>.108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife's Employment (0,1)</td>
<td>.1557</td>
<td>.646</td>
<td>.429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step Two</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variable:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Time and Routines</td>
<td>.4291</td>
<td>4.479*</td>
<td>.023</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ R^2 = .2748 \]

Change of \( R^2 \) = .1637

*p<.05, two-tailed.

The final hypothesis to be tested is 3(c), which found that females with a higher level of Family Time and Routines also had a higher mean of Adaptability. Females who observed more meaningful family routines were also more able to adapt to change. This relationship was tested to see if it was spurious using Analysis of Covariance with two groups of control variables as covariates, all five control variables in the first group, and in the second, the two covariates in the first group with the largest F ratios.

The relationship between Adaptability for females and Family Time and Routines is spurious, with more variability accounted for by Wife's Employment Status. Wives who are employed outside the home are more able to adapt to changes as necessary than wives who are not employed outside the home.
In the first Analysis of Covariance, Wife's Employment Status was found to account for a significant proportion of the variance of Adaptability, $F(1,28)=5.352$, $p<.031$, and the proportion of the variance explained by Family Time and Routines was reduced to a nonsignificant level. These results are shown in Table 8.

The second Analysis of Covariance used Length of Marriage and Wife's Employment Status as covariates. In this instance, the $F$ score increased, and the probability of $F$ decreased for Wife's Employment Status, $F(1,28)=6.931$, $p<.015$. Length of Marriage and Family Time and Routines remained nonsignificant, as indicated in Table 9.

**Summary of Findings**

To summarize the results of testing for the effect of control variables on the significant results noted in Section Two:

The wife's employment outside the home had greater impact on her ability to be flexible and adapt to changes than did the observance of family traditions or meaningful family routines. The relationship between females' Adaptability and Family Traditions and females' Adaptability and Family Time and Routines were both spurious with the significant proportion of variance Adaptability accounted for by the Wife's Employment
Status.

A greater proportion of the variability of marital quality was explained by having had family or marital counselling in the remarried family than by the observance of meaningful family routines. Those individuals who had family or marital counselling also evaluated their marital quality higher. The correlation between Quality of Marriage, for females, and Family Time and Routines was, therefore, found to be spurious when controlled for the effect of Counselling.

Males who have a child of the current marriage experience a greater sense of family closeness, and have a tendency towards a higher level of Family Celebrations. A significant proportion of Cohesion was accounted for by the Presence of a Child of the Current Marriage rather than the observance of a higher level of Family Celebrations, although there was a definite tendency towards significance for Family Celebrations in this Analysis of Covariance. Thus the initial relationship between Family Celebrations and Cohesion for males is no longer significant.

The only significant correlation which was unaffected by any of the control variables, is between Family Satisfaction for females and Family Time and Routines. Women who have a greater number of meaningful family routines are also more satisfied with their families.
The primary aim of this study was to test whether remarried families who observe a greater number of family rituals also experience better family functioning. Previously it was suggested that issues found to be particularly problematic to remarried families—those of internal and external boundaries, definition of family roles, family rules, power structure and discipline, loss and mourning—are also issues that find expression and resolution in the functions of family ritual. Theory suggests that family rituals assist in creating and maintaining a family culture and family identity (Bossard & Boll, 1950) in which the remarried family issues are given a structure and pattern. It also suggests that rituals contribute to a family's sense of common purpose and enhance the stability of the family (Wolin & Bennett, 1984).

To test the hypothesis, three measures of family ritual, the independent variable, (Family Celebrations Index, Family Traditions Scale, Family Time and Routines Index) were each compared with four measures of family functioning (Quality Marriage Index, Family Satisfaction Scale, FACES III —
Adaptability and Cohesion subscales). A difference between the number of significant findings for males and females was noted, four for females and one for males. When controlled for various demographic variables, the number of significant relationships between the dependent and independent variables dropped to one for females, between Family Time and Routines and Family Satisfaction. The relationship, for males, between Family Celebrations and Cohesion was very close to significance, and will be discussed as a strong trend. In addition, several significant relationships between control variables and dependent variables will be discussed.

**Summary of Theory**

Cherlin (1979) hypothesized that remarried families lack the normative institutions provided by society to the nuclear family. These institutions create family unity by narrowing the range of behavior choices, thus reducing the number of disagreements and resulting in greater family unity. The remarried family, Cherlin suggests, operates from a state of anomie (normlessness) due to the lack of institutionalization. The current study suggests that those remarried families who have incorporated a greater number of family rituals into their life have employed a similar process for achieving greater family unity (and therefore better family functioning) by creating and adapting structures and prescribed behaviors to replace the missing societal norms.
General Trends in Results

In looking at the results, two distinct trends are noted. First, the lack of significant findings for some categories of family rituals, and second, the greater number of significant results for females.

Number of Significant Results.

Regarding the first issue, there is a lack of significant results for Family Traditions, and, to a lesser degree, Family Celebrations. The question is whether this is due to difficulties in the data or the theory. To reject the theory solely on the basis of results from a small \( n \) is not reasonable both because a larger \( n \) may have produced a greater number of significant results, and because there were significant results for some types of family rituals. Thus it is necessary to look at the measures for those types of rituals which did not get significant results, the Family Traditions Scale and Family Celebrations Index, and determine whether they are valid indicators for this study, or if the theory requires modification.

Looking first at the question of valid indicators, in light of the description of the sample, and from an examination of the Family Tradition Scale there is a question of whether some of the
items contribute to an adequate, representative picture of Family Traditions. Of the twenty Family Traditions items, at least seven could be classified as religious or quasi-religious [e.g. regarding traditions around changes, "Who is involved in ceremony? (i.e. same minister)"]. The subjects in this sample were not particularly religiously active. Therefore, most of the total scores for the subjects in this sample would automatically be lowered by at least one-third of the total possible points, and the between-groups variance reduced. While it is reasonable to say that subjects who are active in their religious practice will have more religious family rituals, it is not reasonable to assume that those subjects who are not religious do not have as many family rituals, on the whole, or that religious family rituals constitute as large a portion of family traditions in reality as suggested by the Family Traditions Scale.

In addition, both the response patterns for the Family Traditions Scale and Family Celebrations Index indicate some items are worded in such a way that subjects are very likely to give the same answer, which results in items that do not discriminate well, or at all. For example, for the item "Gift-giving and sharing around holidays is a tradition in our family," all sixty subjects answered "Yes".

The second possibility more directly concerns whether the theory requires modification or rejection in relation to Family
Tradition and Family Celebration types of family rituals. The Family Traditions Scale contains items that refer to activities of more culturally-normative types of rituals than family-idiosyncratic types of rituals, and the Family Celebrations Index contains a mixture of both idiosyncratic and normative family ritual items.

One important underlying component of normative family rituals that is present for the remarried family is the loss of the nuclear family, relationships, and family life. Both family traditions and some family celebrations are more likely to have a historically-determined structure, and carry with them this loss component. Family routines, which are usually the creation of the participants, have fewer emotional ties to the past.

The issues of family membership and family boundaries are more problematic in Family Traditions and Celebrations than in Family Routines, and issues such as loyalty to the nuclear family are invoked less frequently in Family Routines than in Family Traditions or Celebrations, due in part to this loss component. For example, in the nuclear family, Family Traditions are important events for reaffirming family roles, family membership, external boundaries, family values and beliefs. But for the remarried family, these same events are more complex and can cause conflict with the ex-spouse, confusion and tension over family roles and expectations, power struggles between family
members, and loyalty conflicts for the child. Despite these potential problems, the normative aspect and perceived importance of family rituals drives the remarried family to modify or adapt the rituals to allow continued observance. These changes to the traditions and celebrations are not reflected in the items of the two measures. For example, the family is unlikely to have a family tradition for the role the children take in the marriage ceremony of their parent, or for the role of the stepmother of the bride. Nor would remarried families have traditions of who is invited to the second wedding, who presides at the second wedding, etc.

Therefore, it would appear that the lack of significant results for Family Traditions and Family Celebrations is due to the nature of the items: a high number of religious items for a relatively nonreligious sample; and items that do not capture the innovations made by remarried families in order to comfortably maintain observance of family traditions and celebrations.

**Greater Number of Significant Results for Women.**

The second trend concerned the greater number of significant results for women than men. In this study, overall, men appeared to be less affected by family rituals of any type than were women. One possible reason for this may be the composition of the remarried family in the sample. In this sample, 90% of the women had all or some of their children living with them while
only 20% of the men had all or some of their children living with them, thus the more prevalent family type would be the stepfather family.

Even in remarried families with children of both parents, the wife is likely to have more influence on the punctuation of family life through ritual events. Reiss and Oliveri (1983) reported that in the shaping of the nuclear family's identity, the family is likely to come to feel more like the mother's family than the father's. In addition, Sweetser (1963) reported that major family rituals such as dinner time practices were more similar to the mother's than the father's family of origin. As a remarried family with more family history shared between the mother and children than between the partners, the female orientation of family rituals is likely to be intensified with the mother structuring more of the family celebrations, traditions, and especially daily routines as well as simply being more aware of the rituals because they involve her biological children. The stepfather, because the children are not his biological children, may have less input into the determination of family rituals, and some of the family traditions may well predate his involvement in the family.
Significant Findings for Independent Variables

The single significant relationship between an independent and dependent measure is discussed below. Initial significant findings that subsequently showed greater influence by control variables is discussed in the next section.

Family Time and Routines and Family Satisfaction for Women.

In this sample, remarried women (for men, the trend was also present, but not significant) who have, or create, and intentionally observe more meaningful family routines are more satisfied with their family life, in a global sense, although they still may have some areas of specific difficulties. It will be recalled that Family Satisfaction relates to how close to its ideal mode of operation the family actually achieves, and Family Time and Routines relates to the number of meaningful activities and routines the family observes on a regular basis. Family routines create a level of family behavior with which members feel content and in agreement. The daily activities that families find important to keeping their family together and strong provide a pattern to the daily life, and a structure for building the kind of family life they want. The positive impact of these family routines has more influence on an overall feeling of family satisfaction, for women, than more culturally-prescribed family traditions or celebrations such as yearly holidays, birthdays, or weddings.
Olson et al. (1983), states that Family Satisfaction is a unidimensional measure of the individual's agreement with their family's mode of operation, and that higher Family Satisfaction is related to better family functioning. Results from the present remarriage study suggest that remarried women with a greater number of meaningful family routines are happier and more content with their family life, regardless of whether they perceive their family life as similar or different from other families. They are satisfied with how their family works, and a large component of that satisfaction resides in a greater number of family routines.

McCubbin and McCubbin (1987) indicate the importance of family ritual over the family life cycle. When viewed from the perspective of the remarried family, the relative importance of traditions, celebrations, and routines may all seem to vary when the couple is at the beginning of the family life cycle of the new marriage while their children from the previous and new marriages are simultaneously at other stages of the family life cycle. According to McCubbin and McCubbin (1987) Family Celebrations are at their highest level at the couple stage; Family Traditions are at their highest level during the pre-school and schoolage stage; while Family Time and Routines tend to be important throughout the lifecycle, except for the adolescent/launching stage. The selected target group was intended to minimize the impact of adolescence by specifying that
the family have at least one nonadolescent child. That Family Routines was significant suggests that the impact of adolescents in the sample was minimized.

**Significant Findings for Control Variables**

The inclusion of the effect of control variables on the dependent variables brought some interesting and unexpected results.

**Family Celebrations, Presence of a Child of the Current Marriage, and Cohesion, for Males.**

For males, in addition to the relationship, between Family Celebrations and Cohesion, there is a significant relationship between Cohesion and Presence of a Child of the Current Marriage. Family Celebrations, those events that the family takes the time and effort to observe, involve culture-wide events such as Thanksgiving, culturally-prescribed family events such as birthday celebrations, or celebrations idiosyncratic to the family such as the celebration of a promotion or good report card. The relationship between Family Celebrations and Cohesion became nonsignificance (p=.058) when controlled for Presence of a Child of the Current Marriage, which accounted for more of the variance of Cohesion than did Family Celebrations. This result suggests that these fathers felt an increased sense of family bonding when the family constellation included a child of the current union.
Looking first at the the relationship between Family Celebrations and Cohesion, which, although not technically significant, is still worth examining. As noted above, a remarried family in this sample is more likely to contain biological mother and a stepfather. The situation of the male joining the family constellation of a mother and child or children is likely to produce issues relating to boundaries, particularly parent-child coalitions, and family membership (Anderson & White, 1984; Visher & Visher, 1988; Sager et al., 1983). The man may feel less emotionally bonded to the family and less than a full family member in the face of the internal boundaries around the mother-child subsystem. Family celebrations may affect these boundaries, and thus Cohesion, by incorporating an event which all family members take time and effort to celebrate, thus increasing the sense of shared experience and allowing each family member a role in the event. As an active participant in the celebration, the male's role and membership in the remarried family is validated, and because family celebrations tend to occur fairly often, the feeling of communality these shared events engenders is frequently reinforced.

Secondly, the significant impact of a child of the current marriage on males' cohesion also fits this scenario well. Upon the birth of a baby into the remarried family, the boundaries around parents and children are realigned as the stepfather becomes a biological father to at least one child in the family.
Celebrations that previously helped the male to maintain an emotional connection to the remarried family take on an added dimension as the boundaries around the remarried family now clearly include the male. His increased observance of family celebrations, concomitant with an increased sense of family bonding, may be due to a greater awareness of the existing family celebrations as well as his participation in the creation of new celebrations involving the new child.

Quality of Marriage and Counselling, for Women.

The initial results for the third hypothesis indicated that there was a significant relationship between Family Time and Routines and Quality of Marriage, for women. When controlled for Counselling and Length of Marriage, the significance of Family Time and Routines disappeared, but Counselling was found to be significant and Length of Marriage, not significant, for Quality of Marriage, for women.

The connection to Family Time and Routines would not seem to be entirely spurious, but could be related to the counselling process. As part of the counselling process, the family might create new family activities and behaviors (rituals) that would be performed on a frequent basis as a way of introducing both structure and a unifying activity to the remarried family. For example, a remarried couple in marital counselling may be
encouraged to spend time together regularly to help nurture the marital relationship. The couple may find this activity beneficial and build it into their family life as a ritual that allows them time together because they feel it helps keep their marriage and, therefore their family, together and strong.

Remarried women who have had marital or family counselling in the remarriage evaluated their marital quality as higher than remarried women who have not had counselling. That this effect was seen for women but not for men may be because women are more likely to seek counselling or because the woman was more dissatisfied with the marital quality in the first place, as noted in the following finding by Rollins and Feldman (1970) of less marital satisfaction for woman in the childrearing years:

In general, husbands seem to be much less affected by stage of the family life cycle in their subjective evaluations of marital quality than are wives... However, the wives have a substantial decrease in general marital satisfaction and a high level of negative feeling from marital interaction during the childbearing and childrearing phases, until the children leave home. (pp. 26,27)

The remarried families represented by this sample, are experiencing various stages of the family lifecycle simultaneously, but all are involved in the childrearing stages during which women find the least marital satisfaction.
Although not significant, Family Satisfaction showed a tendency towards a similar relationship with Counselling for women, which may have been achieved with a larger n. Olson et al. (1985) suggest that "while it may be more difficult to observe change in cohesion and adaptability resulting from treatment programs, family satisfaction might be more sensitive to treatment change."(p. 13). Family Satisfaction appears to reflect a global view of the family that is also affected by the family having had counselling, but to a lesser degree than for marital quality.

Both the Quality Marriage Index and Family Satisfaction Scale are unidimensional measures, and as such are able to register an overall positive increase, whereas other measures that look at multiple aspects or dimensions perceived to contribute to marital or family happiness, may not register any change unless that particular aspect is dealt with in counselling. Thus both measures are sensitive to the "goodness" of the marital or family relationships in a global sense.

**Adaptability and Wife's Employment Status, for Women.**

For the second and third hypotheses, the proportion of the variance of Adaptability accounted for by Family Traditions and Family Time and Routines was reduced to a nonsignificant level when Wife's Employment Status was controlled. Remarried women who are employed outside the home have a higher level of
Adaptability than remarried women who are not employed outside the home. Mothers working outside the home, whether nuclear or remarried, have had to create a new, more viable way of being a parent and partner than the traditional role accorded a mother at home. Because of the increased complexity of remarried families, both in time demands and unique and complicated relationships, there are even more demands and less available time to meet those demands. By allowing greater flexibility in her approach to the family's roles, tasks and structure, the remarried woman is better able to ensure more of the needs and demands of the remarried family are met. For the remarried woman not employed outside the home, similar demands still exist, but she has more time available to meet these demands and is, therefore, more likely to take a more traditional approach than to opt for a more novel approach to meeting family needs. For example, because of time constraints, a remarried woman not employed outside the home is more likely to be involved in organizing a family reunion than is the employed remarried woman who may choose to share the responsibilities and tasks for the event with other relatives, spouse, and children.

Summary

Results of this study indicate that remarried women are more affected by family rituals than remarried men. This may be because women have a greater influence on family ritual forms and
observance, and/or because more of the women in this study had biological children living with them than did the men. It was not feasible to statistically control for which parent had biological children in the family because the sample contained too few men whose children lived with them.

The lack of significant results for Family Traditions and Family Celebrations may be related to the failure of the measures to adequately reflect the remarried family's experience of modifying and adapting normative family rituals to fit their unique situations.

Meaningful Family Routines that were, by definition, more idiosyncratic to each family and constructed by the family to punctuate their life in symbolic ways, appear to be related to women's Family Satisfaction. As suggested by Olson (1983) greater family satisfaction means the family is in agreement with the way it operates. This agreement may lead to better family functioning and thus greater family unity.

For men, a sense of Cohesion appears most strongly associated with having a child from the current union, although, participation in a greater number of family celebrations does seem to have some importance. In both cases it could be that through realignment of family boundaries, the male is drawn closer to the family and his family membership more solidly established.
For the remarried woman, the experience of counselling may have a significant positive impact on her evaluation of the quality of her marriage, and to a lesser degree, on her satisfaction with her family.

Remarried women employed outside the home showed greater adaptability than their at-home counterparts, although both fell within the functional range for Adaptability for this sample. Greater adaptability indicates that, in particular, employed remarried women have accepted that "Change is Normal" (Visher and Visher, 1988) and desired results can be attained by having a flexible approach to situations in the remarried family.

Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Further Research

The following three general areas of limitation are evident:

(1) The use of a nonrandom sample;
(2) the use of individual scores;
(3) the use of specific measurement instruments.

Each area is discussed below, and where appropriate, recommendations for further research are made.

(1) Use of Non-random Sample.

As with any study in which the sample is a volunteer sample,
there are questions that result from the use of a nonrandomly selected subjects. The first question concerns the generalizability of the results. This sample, although not random, came from a wide variety of sources, thus avoiding sampling bias from a single source (e.g. a clinic or church group). While overgeneralization of results should be avoided, some cautious inference to a population that possesses the same characteristics as the sample group might be possible. (see p. 65 for description of the target group)

The second question concerns the assumptions for the type of statistical analyses used. Both Analysis of Variance and Correlation assume that the sample is randomly selected and normally distributed. Examination of the frequencies for each measurement found that all had nearly normal distributions except the Quality Marriage Index, which was positively skewed. This normality supported the use of these procedures despite the lack of random selection. However, again, due to the non-random selection, overgeneralization should be avoided.

(2) Use of Individual Scores.

A second area of limitations relates to the use of individual scores rather than couple or family scores. The difficulties inherent in combining individual scores to represent a couple or family score is discussed on pages 94 and 95. However, as a consequence of avoiding these pitfalls, results of this study can
be generalized only to groups of individuals (e.g. remarried women and men) and not to couples or families, and as such, do not represent the remarriage experience for couples or all family members. Future research using couple or family measures would provide a more complete view of the remarried family experience than is afforded by this study.

(3) Use of Specific Measurement Instruments.

A third area of limitations concerned the measurement instruments and whether measurements more sensitive to the remarried family may have produced more significant results. This is a particularly relevant question since several studies have pointed out that remarried families do not operate the same way as nuclear families and that family theory requires some adjustments in light of these differences (Crosbie-Burnett, 1984; Albrecht, 1984; Anderson & White, 1986). This is actually two questions, the first concerning whether the measurements used were valid indicators of family ritual in remarried families, and second, concerning the use of family measurements in remarriage studies in general.

In answer to the first question, results indicating a relationship between a high level of family routines and greater family satisfaction, for women, is a substantive finding. There exists a definite connection for remarried women between their meaningful daily routines and how they feel about their family,
that was not found for family traditions or family celebrations, thus tapping an element of family rituals that is unique for remarried families.

It may also be that these measurements do not capture the modifications and adaptations made to normative family rituals to enable the family to continue observance in some manner despite the addition of the binuclear family system and the influence of family history. It may be that the manner of observance is as important to the remarried family as the fact of observance. Regardless, even if this speculation were true, the significance of family routines for remarried women would not be undermined or contradicted. Future research investigating the process of observance of family traditions using more qualitative means would assist in understanding the possible meanings these types of rituals hold for remarried families, as well as the effect of particular types of modifications.

Concerning the second question, the lack of remarried family measurement instruments is not just a limitation of this study, but of the area of remarriage in family research as a whole. The existence of differences between remarried and nuclear families is still a topic at the forefront of remarriage research. Further articulation of, and measurement of variations in remarried families will be an area for future investigators.
More practically, research to produce norms for remarried families for established family functioning measures is needed to enable researchers to better understand the meaning and implications of the differences they discover. In the area of family ritual, further research on the variations of family rituals employed by remarried families as well as the source of these rituals will be useful for understanding and assisting remarried families more fully.

It is important that future research proceed from a position of respect for the remarried family as a valid and functional form of family with differences that are unique and not as a substandard version of the nuclear family.

Clinical Implications

An important therapeutic implication of this study is the apparent value of marital or family counselling on the wife's marital and family satisfaction. Remarried couples frequently comment that they had no idea what they were getting into by remarrying, and that the problems commonly faced by remarried families were unexpected and have taken a serious toll on the marital and family relationships. They are reluctant to seek counselling, perhaps because they feel it signals another marital failure. Papernow (1984) suggests "the education of the stepfamily members about normal stepfamily development is a
powerful therapeutic tool in itself." Counselling, as an effective means to achieving marital and perhaps family satisfaction, could be emphasized to remarried families for education and early intervention rather than a last desperate effort to save the marriage. Through counselling, remarried families can begin to understand the structure and process of remarriage, and use this knowledge as a basis for further therapeutic intervention.

One type of intervention suggested by the results of this study is assisting the remarried family in their observance of family rituals. In particular, the creation of symbolic family routines and family celebrations that help the remarried family define itself in a positive manner. In addition, building on increased family functioning gained from creating new rituals that consolidate the remarried family, the family can be assisted in approaching the observance of traditional family events such as holidays and rites of passage with more innovative alternatives. With flexibility, the potentially problematic events can be celebrated and enjoyed by the whole binuclear family in ways that enhance and do not diminish the remarried family.
CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion

Family ritual has long been seen as constituting a part of family culture as "patterns of behavior of which the family is proud and its members approve," (Bossard & Boll, 1950), and assisting in establishing family identity and strengthening family bonding. The functions of ritual in families are analogous to the issues faced by remarried families in areas such as boundaries, family membership, roles, rules, power structure and values. The observance of family rituals was hypothesized as a link to good remarried family functioning for the remarried family.

Of the results generated by this study, meaningful family routines (daily, or weekly ritual events that are idiosyncratic to the family) appeared to be related to family satisfaction for remarried women. The relationship between normative traditions and celebrations did not appear to be effectively measured because the instruments may not have reflected the modifications made by remarried families to enable them to continue to observe
these events. Men and women seemed to experience the influence of family rituals differently, with each responding to a different type of ritual. For remarried women who observed a higher level of meaningful family routines greater family satisfaction was also reported. For men, in addition to having a child from the current marriage, family celebrations (spontaneous or regular events that serve to punctuate important family occurrences) were related to greater cohesion with the family.

Factors other than family rituals were found to be relevant to good family functioning in some instances. Women who have had marital or family counselling perceived themselves to have higher marital quality, and, to a lesser degree, higher family satisfaction. Remarried women working outside the home were found to operate with greater adaptability, changing their approach to the roles, relationships and rules of the family to fit the needs of the situation.

As remarried families continue to represent a large proportion of the family types in North America, the need for a better understanding of the issues and challenges faced by these families will continue to grow. Family rituals can assist the remarried family in moving from its state of anomie to a state of good family functioning. In addition, through research on
remarriage, counselling for remarried couples and families, and dissemination of information about remarriage to the public, a variety of realistic and innovative ways for remarried families to interact with each other and the rest of society can evolve which allows the remarried family to take pride in itself and its wealth of family relationships.
REFERENCE LIST


Appendix 1
Items below are similar, but focus on slightly different aspects of your relationship with your spouse. Please read each item and circle your answer according to the scale provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES! = Very Strong Agreement</th>
<th>NO! = Very Strong Disagreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES = Strong Agreement</td>
<td>NO = Strong Disagreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yes = agreement</td>
<td>no = disagreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>? = neither agreement nor disagreement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. We have a good marriage. | NO! NO no ? yes YES YES! |
2. My relationship with my partner is very stable. | NO! NO no ? yes YES YES! |
3. Our marriage is strong. | NO! NO no ? yes YES YES! |
4. My relationship with my partner makes me happy. | NO! NO no ? yes YES YES! |
5. I really feel like part of a team with my partner. | NO! NO no ? yes YES YES! |

On the scale below, indicate the point which best describes the degree of happiness, everything considered, in your marriage. The middle point, "Happy" represents the degree of happiness which most people get from marriage. The scale gradually increases on the right side for those few who experience extreme joy in marriage and decreases on the left side for those who are extremely unhappy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Unhappy</th>
<th>Happy</th>
<th>Perfectly Happy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5
Please use the following scale to describe your family on each of the items listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Almost Never</td>
<td>Once in a While</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>Almost Always</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please describe your family now:

1. Family members ask each other for help.
2. In solving problems, the children's suggestions are followed.
3. We approve of each other's friends.
4. Children have a say in their discipline.
5. We like to do things with just our immediate family.
6. Different persons act as leaders in our family.
7. Family members feel closer to other family members than to people outside the family.
8. Our family changes its way of handling tasks.
9. Family members like to spend free time with each other.
10. Parent(s) and children discuss punishment together.
11. Family members feel very close to each other.
12. The children make the decisions in our family.
13. When our family gets together for activities, everybody is present.
14. Rules change in our family.
15. We can easily think of things to do together as a family.
16. We shift household responsibilities from person to person.
17. Family members consult other family members on their decisions.
18. It is hard to identify the leader(s) in our family.
19. Family togetherness is very important.
20. It is hard to tell who does which household chores.
Please use the following scale to describe your feelings about your family at present.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dissatisfied</td>
<td>Somewhat Dissatisfied</td>
<td>Generally Satisfied</td>
<td>Very Satisfied</td>
<td>Extremely Satisfied</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU:**

___ 1. With how close you feel to the rest of your family?

___ 2. With your ability to say what you want in your family?

___ 3. With your family's ability to try new things?

___ 4. With how often parents make decisions in your family?

___ 5. With how much father and mother argue with each other?

___ 6. With how fair the criticism is in your family?

___ 7. With the amount of time you spend with your family?

___ 8. With the way you talk together to solve family problems?

___ 9. With your freedom to be alone when you want to?

___ 10. With how strictly you stay with who does what chores in your family?

___ 11. With your family's acceptance of your friends?

___ 12. With how clear it is what your family expects of you?

___ 13. With how often you make decisions as a family rather than individually?

___ 14. With the number of fun things your family does together?
Please read each special event/occasion and decide how often your family **celebrates** (takes time and effort to appreciate the event/special situation) on these occasions. Please circle the appropriate answer: Never (0), Seldom (1), Often (2), or Always (3). Please respond to all items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>We celebrate these special moments:</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Seldom</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>N/A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Friend’s special events</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>no friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Children’s birthday(s)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>no children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Relative birthdays/anniversaries</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>no relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Spouse’s birthdays</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>no spouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Religious occasions (holy days, etc.)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Yearly major holidays (New Years, Thanksgiving)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Occasions (i.e. Valentine’ Day, Mother’s Day)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Special changes and events (i.e. graduation, promotion)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>none to celebrate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Special surprises and successes (i.e. good report card, passed a test)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>none to celebrate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In our family we may have traditions. TRADITIONS are those things we do as a family...things such as decorating a tree at Christmas, which we always do, which we have done in the past, which we are likely to continue to do, and which we value and/or respect.

Which of the following apply to your family? Please circle Yes (Y) or No (N) for each item. Please respond to every statement.

This is a tradition in our family.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRADITIONS AROUND HOLIDAYS</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>YES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Decoration (House, Room, Table, Tree, etc)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Gift Giving and Sharing</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Place of Gathering (i.e. Grandparents’ home, etc.)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Special Rules and Duties for Everyone to Follow</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Special Activities (i.e. Going Caroling)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. People to Include (i.e. Special Friends/Relatives)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TRADITIONS AROUND CHANGES (i.e. Marriage, Death, etc.)</th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>YES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Where Ceremony is Held (i.e. Same Church, etc.)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Who is Involved in Ceremony (i.e. Same Minister)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Type of Ceremony (i.e. Religious, Private, etc.)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Type of Rules to follow (i.e. Passing down of Heirlooms, Reception after Wedding/Funeral, etc)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Special Experiences (i.e. Songs, Dances, Foods, etc.)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Special Rituals (i.e. choose names planting of a tree, having special flowers, etc.)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This is a tradition in our family.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NO</th>
<th>YES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13. Who leads the Service</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. How Children participate in Service</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 15. Special Rules to Follow  
  (i.e. Fasting, etc) | N | Y |
| 16. Special Location (i.e. Church, Park, in the home, etc.) | N | Y |
| 17. Which members participate | N | Y |
| 18. Location of the Family Event | N | Y |
| 19. Experiences at the Event (i.e. Food, Music, etc.) | N | Y |
| 20. Activities at the Family Event  
  (i.e. baseball, etc.) | N | Y |
First, read the following statements and decide to what extent each of the ROUTINES listed below is false or true about your family. Please circle the number (0, 1, 2, 3) which best describes your family experiences: (False (0), Mostly False (1), Mostly True (2), True (3)).

Second, determine the importance of each routine to keeping your family together and strong. (Not Important (NI), Somewhat Important (SI), Very Important (VI). Please circle the letters (NI, SI, or VI) which best expresses how important the routines are to your family. If you do not have children, relatives, teenagers, etc., please circle NA = Not Applicable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ROUTINE</th>
<th>False</th>
<th>Mostly False</th>
<th>Mostly True</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>Important to the Family</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Workday and Leisure Time Routines:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Parent(s) have some time each day for just talking to the children.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Working parent has a regular play time with the children after coming home from work.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Working parent takes care of the children some time every day.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Non-working parent and children do something together outside the home almost every day (walking, shopping etc.)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### How important to keeping the Family Together and Strong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Family has a quiet time each evening when everyone talks or plays quietly.</th>
<th>Family goes some place special together each week.</th>
<th>Family has a certain family time each week when they do things together at home.</th>
<th>Parent(s) read or tell stories to the children almost every day.</th>
<th>Each child has some time each for playing alone.</th>
<th>Children/Teens play with friends daily.</th>
<th>Parent(s)’ Routines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
<td>VI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
<td>VI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
<td>VI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
<td>VI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
<td>VI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
<td>VI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent(s)’ Routines</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Parents have a certain hobby or sport they do together regularly.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Parents have time with each other quite often.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Parents go out together one or more times a week</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
14. Parents often spend time with teenagers for private talks.

Family Bedtime Routines

15. Children have special things they do or ask for each night at bedtime (e.g. story, goodnight kiss, hug)

16. Children go to bed at the same time almost every night.

Family Meals

17. Family eats at about the same time each night.

18. Whole family eats one meal together daily.

Extended Family Routines

19. At least one parent talks to his or her parent regularly.

20. Family has regular visits with the relatives.

21. Children/Teens spend time with grandparent(s) quite often.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>False</th>
<th>Mostly</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How important to keeping the Family Together and Strong

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Important to the Family</th>
<th>Not Applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat</td>
<td>Very</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NI</td>
<td>SI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. We talk with/ write to relatives usually once a week.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Family checks in or out with each other when someone comes or leaves home.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Working parent(s) comes home from work at the same time each day.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Family has certain things they almost always do to greet each other at the end of the day.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. We express caring and affection for each other daily.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Parent(s) have certain things they almost always do each time the children get out of line.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Parents discuss new rules for children and teenagers with them quite often.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Chores</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Children do regular household chores.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Mothers do regular household chores.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. Fathers do regular household chores.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Teenagers do regular household chores.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FAMILY TRADITIONS IN REMARRIED FAMILIES PROJECT

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

There is a separate demographic form for each spouse. Please ensure you have each filled out a form.

1. Age ____________

2. Sex: Female____ Male____

3. Sex and age of your children in the family and with which parent they live:

   **Children of this marriage:**
   Age | Sex  
   ----|------
   _____|_____
   _____|_____
   _____|_____

   **Your children from your previous marriage:**
   Who does child live with the majority of the time:
   Age | Sex | Self | Ex-Spouse | Other(specify) 
   ----|-----|------|-----------|-------------
   _____|_____|_____  |           |             
   _____|_____|_____  |           |             
   _____|_____|_____  |           |             

3. Your highest level of education attained:
   ____ Grade 10 or less
   ____ Grade 12
   ____ Post Secondary Training
   ____ University Graduate
   ____ Post Graduate Work

4. Your type of Occupation:
   ____ Professional and Executive
   ____ Managerial and Supervisory
   ____ Clerical, Sales, Service
   ____ Manual
   ____ Farm Labourer
   ____ Homemaker
   ____ Not employed
5. Total Yearly Combined Family Income:
   - Under $20,000
   - $20,001 to $30,000
   - $30,001 to $40,000
   - $40,001 to $50,000
   - $50,001 to $60,000
   - $60,001 to $75,000
   - Above $75,001

6. In which of the following groups would you be placed?
   - (1) Francophone
   - (2) Chinese
   - (3) Japanese
   - (4) Native Indian
   - (5) East Indian
   - (6) Eastern European
   - (7) Greek
   - (8) British
   - (9) Italian
   - (10) German
   - (11) American
   - (12) Other.

7. In which religious group were you raised?
   - (1) None
   - (2) Roman Catholic
   - (3) Jewish
   - (4) Protestant
   - (5) Other, please specify

   Are you currently practicing your religion?
   - Yes  No

8. Length of your first marriage from wedding to final separation (in years):

9. Length of time between final separation from your first spouse and remarriage to your current spouse (in years):

10. Length of your present marriage (in years):

11. If applicable, length of time you lived together prior to legally marrying (in years):

12. Has this family received marital or family counselling since remarriage?  Yes  No
    If yes, how many sessions?  ________
Appendix 2
Appendix 4
Hypotheses and Proposed Direction of Relationship Between Independent and Dependent Variables

**HYPOTHESIS ONE:**

- QUALITY MARRIAGE INDEX
  - F: +
  - M: +

- FAMILY SATISFACTION SCALE
  - F: +
  - M: +

- ADAPTABILITY
  - F: -
  - M: -

- COHESION
  - F: +
  - M: +

**HYPOTHESIS TWO:**

- QUALITY MARRIAGE INDEX
  - F: +
  - M: +

- FAMILY SATISFACTION SCALE
  - F: +
  - M: +

- ADAPTABILITY
  - F: -
  - M: -

- COHESION
  - F: +
  - M: +

**HYPOTHESIS THREE:**

- QUALITY MARRIAGE INDEX
  - F: +
  - M: +

- FAMILY SATISFACTION SCALE
  - F: +
  - M: +

- ADAPTABILITY
  - F: -
  - M: -

- COHESION
  - F: +
  - M: +
Initial Resulting Significance and Direction of Relationships Between Independent and Dependent Variables

HYPOTHESIS ONE:

FAMILY CELEBRATIONS INDEX

QUALITY MARRIAGE INDEX
 F: ø
 M: ø

FAMILY SATISFACTION SCALE
 F: ø
 M: ø

ADAPTABILITY
 F: ø
 M: ø

COHESION
 F: ø
 M: +

HYPOTHESIS TWO:

FAMILY TRADITIONS SCALE

QUALITY MARRIAGE INDEX
 F: ø
 M: ø

FAMILY SATISFACTION SCALE
 F: ø
 M: ø

ADAPTABILITY
 F: +
 M: ø

COHESION
 F: ø
 M: ø

HYPOTHESIS THREE:

FAMILY TIME AND ROUTINES INDEX

QUALITY MARRIAGE INDEX
 F: +
 M: ø

FAMILY SATISFACTION SCALE
 F: +
 M: ø

ADAPTABILITY
 F: +
 M: ø

COHESION
 F: ø
 M: ø
Significant Results Using Control Variables

**HYPOTHESIS ONE:**

FAMILY CELEBRATIONS \(\rightarrow\) COHESION \(\rightarrow\) M: +

INDEX

PRESENCE OF A CHILD OF THE CURRENT MARRIAGE

**HYPOTHESIS TWO:**

FAMILY TRADITIONS \(\rightarrow\) ADAPTABILITY \(\rightarrow\) F: +

SCALE

WIFE'S EMPLOYMENT STATUS

**HYPOTHESIS THREE:**

QUALITY MARRIAGE \(\rightarrow\) F: +

INDEX

COUNSELLING

FAMILY TIME AND ROUTINES INDEX

FAMILY SATISFACTION SCALE

WIFE'S EMPLOYMENT STATUS

ADAPTABILITY \(\rightarrow\) F: +

--- = Initial Results

_________________ = Results Using Control Variables
Appendix 5
## Comparison of Sample Scores and Norms or Comparative Scores for Dependent and Independent Measures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEPENDENT MEASURES</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Quality Marriage Index</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Sample:</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>24.74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Females:</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>20.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Males:</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>24.74</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norm:^a</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Family Satisfaction Scale</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Sample:</td>
<td>46.67</td>
<td>8.97</td>
<td>40.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Females:</td>
<td>46.60</td>
<td>9.08</td>
<td>40.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Males:</td>
<td>46.79</td>
<td>9.01</td>
<td>35.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norm:^b</td>
<td>47.00</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<td><strong>Adaptability</strong></td>
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<td>Total for Sample:</td>
<td>26.28</td>
<td>4.90</td>
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<td>Females:</td>
<td>26.00</td>
<td>5.13</td>
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<td>Males:</td>
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<td>18.00</td>
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<td>Norm:^b</td>
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<td><strong>Cohesion</strong></td>
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<td>Total for Sample:</td>
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<td>Females:</td>
<td>39.24</td>
<td>5.98</td>
<td>23.00</td>
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<td>Males:</td>
<td>38.23</td>
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<td>20.00</td>
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<td>Norm:^b</td>
<td>39.80</td>
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<td><strong>INDEPENDENT MEASURES</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Family Celebrations</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Total for Sample:</td>
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<td>3.65</td>
<td>15.00</td>
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<td>Females:</td>
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<td>14.00</td>
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<td>Comparative Score:^c</td>
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<td>3.10</td>
<td>19.00</td>
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<td><strong>Family Traditions</strong></td>
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<td>Total for Sample:</td>
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<td>4.35</td>
<td>17.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Males:</td>
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<td>Comparative Score:^c</td>
<td>26.33</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>19.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

^a Norms for the Quality Marriage Index were not available.

^b Norms for these measures are based on a group of 1,026 couples (scores for husbands and wives were combined). Some statistics are not available.

^c Norms for these measures were not available. Comparative scores are based on 304 families.

^d There is no comparative score for this measure because different methods were used to score the measure.

Note. All scores are raw scores except the Quality Marriage Index which has been converted to standard (z) scores.