DIVORCE AFTER LONG-TERM MARRIAGE,
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AND
PARENT-ADULT CHILD RELATIONSHIPS

by

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Abstract
The purpose of this study was to answer the following questions: what are the effects of recent divorce after long-term marriage on the psychological well-being of parents and on parent-adult child relationships, and what are the effects of parent-adult child relationships on the psychological well-being of recently divorced parents? Analyses used prospective longitudinal data from two waves of the National Survey of Families and Households. The sample for the study consists of 1584 respondents who were married and living with their spouse at Time One; married at least nineteen years at time of final separation or mean time of final separation; were either continuously married at Times One and Two (the comparison group) or married at Time One and separated or divorced at Time Two; and who had at least one child nineteen years or older at the time of final separation or mean time of separation.

Study results show that divorce after long-term marriage had negative effects on self-reports of happiness, depression and parent-adult child contact; but reported levels of contact, support given and support received did not moderate the negative effects of divorce on parent's psychological well-being. A major finding of the study is that the effects of divorce on psychological well-being and parent-adult child relationships, and the effects of these relationships on postdivorce psychological well-being, were not significantly different for divorced mothers or divorced fathers. The results of the study were interpreted within the framework of identity theory, and implications of the research and suggestions for future research are also discussed.
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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my granddaughter Caitlin, born July 26, 1996.
Divorce in middle or later life is no longer the rare occurrence it once was. While the divorce rates for younger adults are stabilizing or declining slightly, divorce rates for older adults are increasing and are expected to continue to increase, including rates for couples ending long-term marriages (Berardo, 1982; Cooney, 1994; Goodman, 1993; Smyer & Hofland, 1982; Uhlenberg & Myers, 1981; Uhlenberg, Cooney, & Boyd, 1990; Weingarten, 1988). Cooney (1994, citing National Center for Health Statistics, 1991) noted that in 1988 approximately 20% of all divorces in the United States involved couples married fifteen years or longer. The rates are high in Canada also: Statistics Canada (1996) recently reported that in 1994 12.8% of all Canadian divorces involved couples married between fifteen and nineteen years, and 21.3% involved couples married twenty years or longer (Canada, 1996).

When couples divorce after a long-term marriage, reverberations are felt throughout the entire family system. However, despite repeated calls for more research in this area, the extant body of research literature remains small (Hennon, 1983; Hagestad, Smyer, & Stierman, 1984; Uhlenberg & Myers, 1981; for reviews see Brubaker, 1990; Kitson & Morgan, 1990). In their seminal three-generational study of the impact of divorce in middle age on family relationships, Hagestad, Smyer, and Stierman (1984) refer to the "young adult bias" in divorce research and this bias appears to be continuing, as the increased divorce rates noted above are being accompanied by growing research interest in the effects of divorce after long-term marriage on adult children's well-being and development. Although researchers are beginning to investigate how being divorced affects family
relationships when children are grown, much less attention is being given to how becoming divorced after a long-term marriage affects family relationships and how changes in family relationships may affect the parent's psychological adjustment to the divorce.

Parent-child relationships are, for most people, a primary kinship tie that remains of central significance throughout the life course (Barnett, Marshall, & Pleck, 1992; Eggebeen, 1992; Moss, Moss, & Moles, 1985; Rosenthal, 1987; Rossi & Rossi, 1990; Troll, 1982) and, overall, parent-adult child relationships in middle and later life are characterized by high levels of emotional closeness, contact and social support (Cicirelli, 1983; Mancini & Blieszner, 1989; Rossi & Rossi, 1990; Troll, 1982). Fortunately so, because the quality of these relationships has been found to have an effect on the psychological well-being of both generations (Levitt, Guacci, & Weber, 1992; Umberson, 1992). When thinking about a divorce by parents after a long-term marriage the question arises as to what the effects of the divorce on parent-adult child relationships might be, and how the parent-adult child relationship might affect the parent's psychological adjustment to the divorce. The idea behind this study is that the relationships between divorced parents and their adult children have the potential to significantly influence the divorce adjustment of the parent.

I. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to answer the following three questions: first, what are the effects of recent divorce after long-term marriage on the psychological well-being of older parents; second, what are the effects of recent parental divorce on parent-adult child relationships; and third, what are the effects of parent-adult child relationships on the psychological well-being of recently divorced parents? These questions are
examined using prospective longitudinal data from two waves of the National Survey on Families and Households (NSFH), a nationally representative data set developed by prominent family scholars in the United States specifically to address family issues.

It is frequently noted that there has been little empirical research on middle and later life divorce, and little theoretical development (Ahrons & Rodgers, 1987; Bengtson, Rosenthal, & Burton, 1990; Brubaker, 1990; Coleman & Ganong, 1993; Hennon, 1983; Lloyd & Zick, 1986). In this study, identity theory was used to provide a theoretical framework to guide the development of hypotheses and the interpretation of results, in conjunction with the existing literature.

Identity theory was chosen for three main reasons. One, in recent years identity theory has been used in studies to explain differences in parent-adult child relationships and the association between these relationships and the psychological well-being of both generations (Atkinson, 1989; Marks, 1995; Mutran & Reitzes, 1984; Roberts & Bengtson, 1993; Umberson, 1992). In these studies, the researchers have not attempted to measure the theoretical concepts directly, however the conceptual ideas have been used to provide a framework for the research and the findings. Two, the nature of parent-child relationships over the life course suggests that the parent role-identity is important to most parents and that the continuing presence of active, supportive parent-child relationships will have an impact on the parent's postdivorce psychological well-being. And three, identity theory is particularly relevant when examining gender differences in parent-adult child relationships because it provides theoretical links between the institutional, group (family) and individual levels of analysis; for example, it links social structural factors such as
marital status and normative expectations for behavior with the family interactions of individuals.

II. Some Definitions

A. Divorce

The study of "divorce" is actually the study of a process which extends from the time of irresolvable conflict and decision, through the physical separation, the legal process and final divorce decree, to the psychological and pragmatic adjustments of the postdivorce period. According to Chiriboga (1982), it is during the transitional period following separation that the major impact of divorce occurs for most people. Consequently many prominent researchers engaged in conducting large-scale longitudinal studies of divorce measure the timing of their studies from the date of the final separation before respondents filed for divorce, rather than from the time of the final divorce decree (e.g. Bloom and his colleagues - Bloom & Caldwell, 1981; Bloom & Clement, 1984; Bloom, Hodges, Kern, & McFaddin, 1985; Chiriboga and his colleagues - Chiriboga, 1982; Chiriboga, Catron and Associates, 1991; Chiriboga, Roberts, & Stein, 1989; Kitson and Holmes, 1992; Spanier & Thompson, 1984). The point at which the actual divorce decree was received is not generally noted (for an exception see Kitson & Holmes, 1992). As a result of this predominant perspective, researchers often use the term "divorced" to refer to persons engaged in the divorce process, or use the term "separated/divorced." In this study, the term "divorced" will be used to denote those respondents who separated or divorced between Wave I and Wave II of the data collection (a period of approximately five years).
B. Divorce After a Long-term Marriage

There has yet to develop a clearly-defined literature on mid- and later-life divorce. At present, information on the divorces of adults divorcing in mid- or later-life after a long-term marriage can be found in both studies of divorce in general and in studies of later life divorce in particular. For example, in some studies of divorce, the upper age range may include a few respondents in their forties or older (e.g. Kitson & Holmes, 1992; Spanier & Thompson, 1984; Wallerstein & Blakeslee, 1989), while in other studies, the lower age for adults designated as "older" will be 45 or 50 (e.g. Hammond & Muller, 1992; Kitson & Roach, 1989). Most of the information on divorce after a long-term marriage is subsumed by the generic title of "later life divorce."

There is, however, no consensus in the literature as to the definition of "later life divorce," with some researchers using chronological age and some using duration of marriage. There is little consistency in the choice of a chronological age marker for later life divorce; some researchers have used age 50 (e.g. Gander, 1991; Gander & Jorgensen, 1990; Hammond & Muller, 1992), some 55 (e.g. Barresi & Hunt, 1990), some 60 (e.g. Weingarten, 1988), and some 65 (e.g. Uhlenberg & Myers, 1981). When duration of marriage is specified, it is frequently used in combination with other criteria; for example, Gander and Jorgensen (1990) restricted their sample to respondents fifty years and older who had been married at least fifteen years, and Wright and Maxwell (1991) restricted their sample to respondents who had been divorced after nineteen or more years of marriage and had at least one child over the age of eighteen.

In this study, the criteria for sample selection was that respondents had to have been married at least nineteen years at time of separation and have at least one adult child nineteen years of age or older at time of
separation (or mean time of separation for the continuously married). The choice of nineteen years as a marker for long-term marriage is congruent with previous literature (e.g. Wright & Maxwell, 1991) and reflects the focus of the study on long-term relationships. The age of nineteen was chosen for adult children because of the legal connotations: by nineteen the "children" are legally "adults," parents no longer have legal responsibilities, and the parent-child relationship becomes more voluntary.

C. Psychological Adjustment

"Psychological adjustment" is defined in this study as "psychological well-being" (also referred to as "subjective well-being"; see Weingarten & Bryant, 1987), which can be simply defined as "contentment with oneself and life" (Spanier & Thompson, 1984). This concept is widely used as an outcome in studies of divorce, marriage and parenthood (Doherty, Su, & Needle, 1989; Gove & Shin, 1989; Gove, Style, & Hughes, 1990; McLanahan & Adams, 1987; Marks, 1995; Menaghan, 1989), although it is not unidimensional. Factor analyses by Bryant and Veroff (1984) have differentiated three basic dimensions: positive evaluations (e.g. happiness), negative evaluations (e.g. strain or psychological distress), and personal adequacy or competence (e.g. self-esteem). Therefore in this study, psychological adjustment was operationalized in terms of happiness, depression and self-esteem.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

The extant body of literature on parent-adult child relationships and later life divorce in general and divorce after a long-term marriage in particular is very small. The plan for this literature review, therefore, is to establish a context within which divorce after a long-term marriage and parent-adult child relationships can be better understood. In order to do this, the literature review has been divided into two major sections. The first section reviews the research literature on the effects of divorce on psychological well-being in general, gender differences, and how these effects may differ by age. The second section reviews the literature on the nature of parent-adult child relationships in general and how they can influence a parent's psychological well-being, how earlier life divorce affects parent-adult child relationships and psychological well-being, and finally, what we know about how a recent divorce affects parent-adult child relationships and psychological well-being. Although the literature review includes research conducted with younger respondents, the intent is not to compare younger and older respondents, but rather to lay out a pattern of existing research into which the present study will logically fit.

I. The Effects of Divorce on Psychological Well-Being

The effects of divorce on psychological well-being have been found to vary according to the dimension being measured (see for example, Gove, Hughes, & Style, 1983; Marks, 1995; Mastekaasa, 1994b). Consequently, although some researchers have used scales which measure overall psychological well-being (e.g. Gander, 1991; Gander & Jorgensen, 1990),
most researchers report findings for particular dimensions. The literature review which follows is organized around three commonly measured dimensions of psychological well-being which reflect the three basic dimensions discussed in Chapter One. These three dimensions are happiness, psychological distress and self-esteem.

A. Dimensions of Psychological Well-Being

1. Happiness

Cross-sectional studies comparing divorced respondents and respondents in intact marriages have shown that divorce has a negative effect on self-ratings of happiness (Connidis & McMullin, 1993; Gove & Shin, 1989; Gove et al., 1983; Hatch & Stull, 1987; Mastekaasa, 1994b; Marks, 1995).

Longitudinal studies have shown a changing pattern of psychological well-being over the course of the divorce process. Hetherington, Cox, and Cox (1978) interviewed respondents at two months postdivorce, one year later and two years later. They found divorced respondents to be significantly less happy at all three time points, but the difference to be smaller at Time 3. Chiriboga, Catron and associates (1991) report similar findings: at Time 1 (separated less than eight months) separated respondents were less happy than married respondents; at Time 2 (approximately three years later) separated/divorced respondents and married respondents were similar in happiness.

Similarly, Booth and Amato (1991) conducted a prospective longitudinal study in which all respondents were married at Time 1 (1980) and there were two groups of divorced persons: Group 1 consisted of persons who divorced between Time 1 (1980) and Time 2 (1983), and Group 2 consisted of persons who divorced between Time 2 and Time 3 (1988). The
results show the changing effects of marital distress and disruption over time. At Time 1, when both divorced groups are compared to the continuously-married group, respondents in Group 1 (who divorced between Time 1 and Time 2) were experiencing greater unhappiness than controls, while respondents in Group 2 (who divorced between Time 2 and Time 3) were experiencing similar levels of unhappiness. At Time 2, respondents in both divorce groups (recently divorced and soon-to-be divorced) were experiencing greater unhappiness than the continuously-married group. At Time 3, respondents in Group 1 were once again experiencing similar levels of unhappiness to the continuously-married group, while respondents in Group 2 were still experiencing higher levels of unhappiness.

2. Psychological Distress

Similar to the results for happiness, cross-sectional studies have shown that divorced respondents rate themselves higher on indicators of depression (i.e. higher levels of depression) than do married respondents (Kurdek, 1991; Marks, 1995; Mastekaasa, 1994b; Riessman & Gerstel, 1985).

Longitudinal studies also show divorced persons rating themselves as significantly more depressed than married persons. For example, Kitson and Holmes (1992) report results of a study conducted between 1974 and 1979, in which respondents were interviewed three times. Time 1 was at the time of filing for divorce (an average of one year postseparation); Time 2 was an average of eleven months postdivorce (an average of two years postseparation); Time 3 was an average of three years postdivorce (an average of four years postseparation). Results show that the separated/divorced respondents were experiencing higher
levels of depression and subjective distress than the married comparison group at all three time points.

It is not clear, however, whether persons who subsequently divorce are more depressed prior to the divorce than persons who are continuously married. Menaghan and Lieberman (1986) analyzed a longitudinal data set and confined their sample to persons married at Time 1 (1972) and still married to and living with the same spouse at Time 2 (1976; n=758); and those married at Time 1 but divorced at Time 2 (n=32). Results from this analysis showed those who stayed married and those who subsequently divorced to be similar in levels of depression at Time 1, but those who subsequently divorced to be higher in levels of depression at Time 2. Menaghan and Lieberman found, however, that when they added indicators of current economic problems, perceived deterioration in economic situation and perceived availability of personal support to their regression equation, the marital group differences in depression change became statistically nonsignificant.

In contrast to Menaghan and Lieberman (1986), Booth and Amato (1991) found that respondents who divorced between 1980 and 1983 reported higher levels of psychological distress in 1980 (predivorce) and in 1983 (postdivorce), but similar levels to the continuously married group in 1988. Respondents who divorced between 1983 and 1988, when compared with those who remained married, reported similar levels of psychological distress in 1980, higher levels in 1983 and similar levels in 1988. Thus Booth and Amato's study, in contrast to Menaghan and Lieberman's study, shows levels of psychological distress to be higher both before and after a divorce, but to dissipate with time. The difference between these studies may be partially explained by the small size of Menaghan and
Lieberman's sample, n=32 with only twelve men. Also, Doherty and colleagues (1989) note that the attrition rate in Menaghan and Lieberman's study was 58%.

Booth and Amato (1991) also analyzed the effect of time since divorce on happiness and psychological distress while controlling for predivorce levels of stress. Results of this analysis show no differences between the divorced group and nondivorced group after 25 months; this pattern held for both divorced respondents who remarried and those who did not.

3. Self-Esteem

The effects of divorce on self-esteem are less clear than those for happiness and psychological distress. While some cross-sectional studies have shown divorce to have little significant effect on self-esteem (Marks, 1995; Weingarten, 1985), some have shown negative effects. Umberson and Gove (1989) for example, found that everdivorced respondents rated themselves lower on self-esteem than married respondents.

Similar to cross-sectional studies, results from longitudinal studies are also mixed, with some showing negative effects of divorce on self-esteem and others indicating that self-esteem may follow a similar pattern to that of happiness and psychological distress, i.e. initial decline and subsequent recovery. For example, Doherty, Su, and Needle (1989), in their small prospective longitudinal study, found no differences in self-esteem between those who divorced and those who were continuously married, at either predivorce or postdivorce interviews (average twelve months and five months respectively). Chiriboga, Catron and associates (1991) also found that self-evaluations on most dimensions of the self-concept did not change significantly over the 3.5 years of
their study. They did find, however, that the divorce sample scored significantly higher than the married comparison group on negative self, vulnerable self, and mastery at Times 1 and 2 (both postdivorce), and interpreted this to mean that the divorce process may involve positive and negative changes in overall self-image.

In contrast, Kitson and Holmes (1992) found that newly separated respondents (average five months) rated themselves lower in self-esteem than married respondents, but that these differences disappeared by Times 2 and 3 (one and three years postdivorce respectively).

The results from all these studies suggest that the relative stability of self-esteem throughout the divorce process may be an artifact of measurement (i.e. gains and losses balance out), or may be an indication that self-esteem measures such as the widely-used Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1989) tap a more stable personality attribute rather than a dimension of psychological well-being.

B. Gender Differences

One of the most predominant themes in divorce research has been the exploration and explanation of gender differences in divorce adjustment and psychological well-being. In 1972 Jesse Bernard concluded that men and women experience "his" and "her" marriages. Since then, many divorce researchers have similarly concluded that when marriages break down, men and women also experience "his" and "her" divorces (Connidis & McMullin, 1993; Doherty et al., 1989; Kitson & Morgan, 1990; Price & McKenry, 1988; Seltzer & Brandreth, 1994; Wallerstein, 1986). Recent reviews of the research, however, have called the findings on gender differences "curiously mixed" (Kitson & Morgan, 1990, p. 916), "contradictory" (Price & McKenry, 1988, p. 61), and "inconclusive" (Raschke, 1987, p. 612).
While some studies have shown no gender differences in overall psychological well-being (Gander, 1991; Gove & Shin, 1989; Spanier & Thompson, 1984), the more general pattern is for women and men to differ across various dimensions of well-being.

1. Happiness

Chiriboga and his colleagues began conducting research on separation and divorce in the 1970s, and their conclusion is that women and men have different areas of vulnerability (Chiriboga, 1982; Chiriboga et al., 1978). In several early studies, they found separated/divorced men to be less happy than separated/divorced women; women were about average for the general population while men were about twice as unhappy as the general population (Chiriboga et al, 1978). Separated/divorced women, however, reported more psychological distress and emotional tension (Chiriboga, 1982). The researchers' often-cited conclusion is that separated/divorced men experience a lower overall sense of well-being than women, while women experience greater emotional turmoil than men (Chiriboga, 1982; Chiriboga et al., 1978).

Results from cross-sectional studies, such as those cited above by Chiriboga and colleagues (see also Hammond & Muller, 1992) suggest that separated/divorced men are less happy than separated/divorced women. When juxtaposed with research findings that married men are happier than married women (see Coombs, 1991 for a review), one implication is that divorce can have a negative effect on men's happiness. Cause-and-effect cannot be determined from cross-sectional studies, however, as the same men who are unhappy following a divorce may also have been unhappy before it.
Other studies have found no gender differences in self-reported happiness for separated/divorced men and women. Gove and Shin (1989) found no significant gender differences on any of the dimensions they measured: happiness, life satisfaction, home life satisfaction, self-esteem, psychological distress, feeling trapped, and meaninglessness. Booth and Amato (1991), in a longitudinal study, also found no differences in effects of separation/divorce by gender.

Other longitudinal studies have found that gender differences in happiness disappear over time. Chiriboga, Catron and associates (1991) found levels of reported happiness to change over time, with men significantly less happy than women at Time 1 (less than eight months postseparation), but no gender differences at Time 2 (approximately 3 years later). Bloom and his colleagues (1985) found that at Time 1 (an average of eight weeks postseparation) women reported increased happiness compared to a year previously, but that at Times 2, 3, 4 and 5 (six months later, 18 months later, 30 months later and 4 years later, respectively) there were no significant gender differences.

2. Psychological Distress

In social surveys, psychological distress is generally operationalized using self-report measures of depression and symptomatic psychological distress; measures on which women typically rate themselves higher (i.e. more distressed) than do men (Aneshensel et al., 1981; Connidis & McMullin, 1993; Kurdek, 1991; Riessman & Gerstel, 1985). Men, in contrast, have been found to have higher rates of psychiatric treatment, suicide, morbidity and mortality (see Riessman & Gerstel, 1985). Women, therefore, appear to experience more symptoms of mild to
moderate depression, while men may experience more symptoms of severe
depression (Chiriboga et al., 1991; Riessman & Gerstel, 1985).

Kitson and Morgan (1990) have suggested that, because the responses
of women to divorce have been studied more than the responses of men,
existing measures of psychological distress may be more appropriate for
women than for men and they recommend that new measures be developed that
are more sensitive to the reactions of men. Umberson and Williams
(1992), for example, have noted that violent behavior and alcohol and
drug abuse can be "functional equivalents" of depression and anxiety
(Horwitz & White, 1991) and that men are more likely to engage in these
behaviors than are women (Wingard, 1984). Although some recent studies
have included measures of adjustment thought to reflect more adequately
men's responses to separation and divorce (e.g. Cooney, Hutchinson, &
Leather, 1995; Thoits, 1992; Umberson & Williams, 1993), the standard
practice in divorce research is to rely on established self-report
measures of psychological distress.

Consequently, it is not surprising when studies using these self-
evaluative measures find separated/divorced women reporting higher levels
of depression than separated/divorced men (e.g. Chiriboga et al., 1978;
Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). What is interesting is when the results
differ from the expected pattern. Aneshensel, Frerichs, and Clark (1981)
for example, in their cross-sectional study, found the effect of divorce
on depression to be stronger for men than for women. They found married
women to be significantly more depressed than married men, but found no
significant differences between the depression scores of divorced women
and divorced men. This finding is accounted for by the considerably
higher depression scores of divorced men as compared to married men.
In their prospective longitudinal study, however, Menaghan and Lieberman (1986; see also Menaghan, 1985) found recently-divorced women and men to have higher levels of depression than continuously-married women and men, but found no gender differences in the divorced group either predivorce or postdivorce (controlling for current economic circumstances, perceived deterioration in standard of living, and currently available confidants).

3. Self-Esteem

There do not appear to be any significant gender differences in self-esteem either predivorce or postdivorce (Doherty et al, 1989). In a longitudinal study, Kitson and Holmes (1992) found no gender differences in self-esteem at any of the three postseparation time points. Gove and Shin (1989) and Weingarten (1985) also found no significant effects of divorce on self-esteem ratings in their cross-sectional studies.

C. Summary

Overall, the research findings on the effects of divorce on happiness, depression and self-esteem are mixed. Cross-sectional research shows negative effects for happiness and depression, but mixed results for self-esteem (negative or no differences between married and divorced). Longitudinal research, however, indicates that the negative effects of divorce on ratings of happiness and depression generally attenuate with time.

Research findings on gender differences in divorce adjustment are also mixed. Cross-sectional research shows either men to report being less happy or no gender differences, women to report being more depressed or no gender differences, and no gender differences between men and women.
in self-esteem. Longitudinal studies show that initial gender differences in happiness dissipate with time, while Menaghan & Lieberman (1986) found no predivorce or postdivorce gender differences in ratings of depression. There also do not appear to be any gender differences over time in self-esteem.

How, then, might we characterize the effect of divorce on psychological well-being? It seems fairly clear that, for most people, divorce has at least short-term negative effects on self-ratings of happiness and depression and possibly on self-esteem, but that these negative effects may attenuate with time. Regarding gender differences in divorce adjustment, again it seems fairly clear that men report lower levels of happiness and women report higher levels of depression, but that these gender differences likely also attenuate over time. There appear to be no gender differences in self-esteem.

II. The Effects of Divorce After Long-Term Marriage on Psychological Well-Being

The prevailing assumption in the divorce literature has been that adjustment to divorce at older ages must be more difficult than adjustment to divorce at younger ages (Berardo, 1982; Price & McKenry, 1988; Raschke, 1987), but this assumption is beginning to be challenged (see Kitson & Morgan, 1990). The question becomes, then, what was the original assumption based on, and what resources might persons who have been married longer have that may have been overlooked thus far? One way to look at these issues is to use Bohannan's (1970) six-part conceptualization of the divorce process as an organizing framework. Bohannan (1970) identified six overlapping experiences of divorce (or six "divorces" as they are commonly known): the emotional, legal, economic,
community, psychic, and coparental. By looking at each of these "divorces," we can begin to differentiate areas of potential difficulty from areas of potential support.

According to Bohannan (1970), the emotional divorce is usually the first stage of the process and is centered around the problem of the deteriorating marriage. In Bohannan's perspective, a natural process in marriage is for the partners to grow in new directions but also to develop strong bonds of interdependence. If partners do not "grow together as they grow apart" (p. 30), they may begin to feel imprisoned by the marriage bonds rather than secure in them. As they grow apart, affection and trust can disappear.

It has often been noted that the emotional quality of marriages tends to change over time: in the early years there is more likely to be an intense, passionate quality to the relationship; as time goes on, it is likely that a more companionate quality begins to develop (see Brehm, 1985). For adults in short-term marriages, the emotional divorce may be quite difficult and tempestuous, while for adults in long-term marriages, the emotional divorce may be tempered both by the stage in the relationship and by the likelihood that emotions have mellowed over a longer period of time. Consequently the emotional divorce may be less difficult for adults after a long-term marriage than for adults after a short-term marriage.

The legal divorce refers to the legal aspects of the divorce. In North America, the legal system and the courts have the responsibility for the formal dissolution of marriages. Bohannan proposed his six "divorces" before the advent of "no-fault divorce," therefore the legal divorce as he discussed it is concerned primarily with legal grounds,
e.g. adultery, drunkenness, incompatibility. Although revised divorce
laws have removed or diminished some of the emphasis on finding legal
grounds, the legal divorce still entails some involvement with the legal
system and its adversarial perspective for all divorcing persons.

The legal divorce is closely connected to the economic divorce, as
the legal divorce includes such procedures as division of property and
other assets (e.g. pension plans, health insurance), perhaps alimony, and
in the case of minor children, custody, access and child support. One
advantage for parents of adult children is that the legal divorce will
not likely be complicated with issues of custody, access and child
support (exceptions could be for parents of chronically-ill or otherwise
dependent adult children).

The economic divorce deals with the reassignment of property and
the division of finances. In community property jurisdictions, assets
acquired after the marriage (except perhaps inheritances) are divided
equally between the former marital partners. Two of the major issues in
the economic divorce are child support and alimony (generally now called
"maintenance") which is set by the court based on one partner's need
(usually the wife's) and on the other partner's ability to pay. The
economic aspects of a divorce after a long-term marriage can be
particularly difficult for older women (the "displaced homemakers") who
have devoted their lives to homemaking with only brief, if any, entries
into the workforce (Morgan, 1991). Although older men also face the
division of family assets, they are more likely to be well-established in
careers and able to recoup their financial losses.

Younger divorced mothers with custody of young children also face
economic difficulties as many of them struggle to provide for their
families with little or no child support from the nonresidential fathers. Fathers who do fulfill their financial responsibilities to the divorced families may find themselves supporting two families if they remarry. Overall, the economic divorce can be the source of much conflict and stress in both short-term and long-term divorced families.

The community divorce refers to the adjustments required by divorced persons as friendships, extended family relationships, and other social network relationships change and perhaps end. Included in this divorce would be relationships with former in-laws and with grandchildren (Weingarten, 1988). The reshaping of these relationships can mean enormous upheaval for persons who are embedded in extensive social and family ties which have developed over many years.

Bohannan (1970) notes that just as people change communities when they marry, they also change communities when they divorce. Because divorce is not as common in mid- and later-life, these divorcing adults may lack the peer support that other adults may have when going through this transition. However, these older parents may turn to their adult children, children-in-law and grandchildren for support and continued life meaning (Ahrons & Rodgers, 1987; Weingarten, 1988).

The psychic divorce refers to the issues divorcing persons face as they re-establish (or perhaps, in the case of older women especially, establish) their individual autonomy. After separation and divorce, the psychic task is to become a whole, complete, autonomous individual after being part of a couple for a shorter or longer period of time. Bohannan (1970) viewed the psychic divorce as being the most difficult of the divorces, but also as having the potential to be the most constructive.
A crucial issue in the psychic divorce is to come to terms with the loss of the marital role identity of "spouse." The longer a couple has been married, the more deeply the identity of "spouse" has become ingrained in a person's self-concept. At the same time, when a couple have children, the identity of parent is also a significant part of the parent's self-concept, and the identity of parent also becomes more integral to the self-concept over time. Weingarten (1988) found in her study of Divorce-after-Sixty that one source of affirmation of identity for her respondents was their adult children and grandchildren.

The sixth divorce, and the one that Bohannan (1970) considered to be the most likely source of continuing pain, is the coparental divorce. While childless couples in conflict have the option of discontinuing all contact, couples with children have continuing parental responsibilities, and thus are faced with the task of renegotiating their parental roles while detaching from their marital roles. This can be a huge task for couples who were not able to resolve their conflicts while married (Peck, 1989; Wallerstein & Kelly, 1980). A complicating factor is that in the coparental divorce many of the unresolved issues of the other "divorces" get played out (Ahrons & Rodgers, 1987), and the contact required for a continuing parental relationship can be an ongoing reminder of the grievances associated with the divorce.

It is in the coparental divorce that a clear difference emerges between divorces involving minor children and divorces involving adult children. Parents of minor children may find their children to be a source of life meaning and support, but they are still faced with issues of custody, access, child support and coparenting (see Kitson, Babri, Roach, & Placidi, 1989; Pledge, 1992). Parents of adult children,
however, have had many years to build up strong and meaningful ties with their adult children and the strength of these ties may form a major part of their identity. When parents with grown children divorce, their adult children represent a potential resource unavailable to younger parents. Weingarten (1988) found that her respondents (primarily women) perceived the relationship with their children as critical to personal well-being. They identified the supportiveness of their children as being one of the most important factors influencing their adjustment.

Bohannan's conceptualization of divorce is useful because it captures the complexity of the divorce process, and also subdivides it into six dimensions that can be studied and analyzed independently (see Weingarten, 1988). By looking at each of the "divorces" separately, it can be seen that they can present different challenges for older and younger adults and for men and women. Congruent with the assumption that adjustment to divorce in later life would be extremely difficult (Berardo, 1982; Price & McKenry, 1988), the psychic and community divorces would likely be more difficult for adults ending a long-term marriage. However, the legal and economic divorces are likely difficult for divorcing persons of any age or life stage, and the emotional and coparental divorces would likely be less difficult for older adults and for parents of adult children. Bohannan's six "divorces," therefore, suggest that divorce at any age will initiate a series of psychological adjustments, and that these adjustments may be different for adults divorcing after a long-term marriage, but not necessarily more difficult.

Some of our knowledge about the effects of mid- or later-life divorce on psychological well-being can be gleaned from studies that compare younger and older respondents within one sample, or across
samples. The mixed results from these studies lend credence to the suggestion that many adults have the resources to effectively cope with a divorce after a long-term marriage (see Ahrons & Rodgers, 1987).

The purpose of this study is not to compare the postdivorce psychological well-being of older and younger adults. However, because the research literature on midlife and later life divorce is extremely limited, one goal of this literature review is to place the phenomenon of psychological adjustment to divorce after a long-term marriage within the context of psychological adjustment to divorce in general. Within this context, some studies have reported differences in postdivorce psychological well-being between younger and older respondents.

A. Dimensions of Psychological Well-Being

An attempt has been made to present the findings of the studies in this section in the same format as those in the previous section. However, because this body of literature is very small, results from studies reporting age differences and those reporting gender differences will be integrated for each of the three dimensions reviewed previously: happiness, psychological distress, and self-esteem.

1. Happiness

Research on the effects of later divorce on self-reports of happiness has yielded mixed results. Chiriboga (1982), Chiriboga, Roberts, and Stein (1978) and Bloom, White, and Asher (1979) found recently divorced older adults to be less happy than recently divorced younger adults; and Chiriboga and colleagues (1978) note that, although national surveys have indicated a small increase by age of people feeling not too happy (e.g. Bradburn, 1969; Bradburn & Caplovitz, 1965), older
divorced persons in their study reported levels of unhappiness considerably exceeding the national averages.

In contrast, Hammond and Muller (1992), using NSFH data, compared younger respondents (under 50 and currently separated or divorced) and older respondents (over 50, separated or divorced past the age of 50 and currently separated or divorced). Results show no significant differences between younger and older respondents for overall happiness. Similarly, Gander (1991) compared two samples of recently divorced persons: one sample being composed of persons under 50 and the second of persons 50 and over. Using the General Well-Being Scale (Fazio, 1977, cited in Gander, 1991), she found that the two groups did not differ in their overall scores of emotional well-being. On the categorical scores, however, where there were differences, the older persons scored higher. For example, the older group scored higher on good spirits, happiness, satisfaction and firm control.

Finally, Gove and Shin (1989), in a study of everdivorced adults, also used a composite measure of psychological well-being and found that older divorced adults reported higher levels of psychological well-being than did younger divorced adults, while on the dimension of happiness there were no significant differences by age.

With respect to gender differences, Connidis and McMullin (1992), in their sample of everdivorced respondents 55 and over, found the effects of divorce on avowed happiness to be negative and significant for men and nonsignificant for women. In addition, they found divorced men to be less happy than married men, but no corresponding differences for women. The findings from this study, therefore, show the effects of
divorce on avowed happiness to be stronger for older men than for older women.

Consistent with this finding, Hammond and Muller (1992) found older divorced women (50 and older) to report higher levels of happiness than older divorced men, and Chiriboga (1982) found in his study that 35% of the separated/divorced men in their 40s and 60% in their 50s+ reported being "not too happy," while the comparable figures for women were 25% and 50%.

2. Psychological Distress

Similar to the results for happiness, research on the effects of later divorce on self-reports of depression has also yielded mixed results. While two recent studies found that younger and older divorced respondents did not differ on self-ratings of depression (Gander, 1991; Kitson & Holmes, 1992), Roach and Kitson (1989) in their study of recently divorced and recently widowed women found that older divorced women reported greater psychological well-being (i.e. less depressive symptoms) than younger divorced women.

Similar to these results found by Roach and Kitson (1989), Gove and Shin (1989), in a study of everdivorced adults, found an inverse relationship between self-reports of psychological distress and age; older divorced adults in their study rated themselves as less distressed psychologically than younger divorced adults.

Longitudinal studies that report results for younger and older women suggest that older women may experience more depressive symptoms initially than younger women, but that they may also recover more quickly. Wallerstein and Kelly (1980), for example, found older women to be significantly more depressed than younger women at Time 1 (about six
months postseparation). However, by Time 2 (about 18 months postseparation), there were no significant differences in self-ratings of depression between younger women and older women.

Wallerstein and Kelly's (1980) finding is echoed by Chiriboga and colleagues (1991) who comment that the middle-aged women in their study were "doing better" (p. 281) than younger women by Time 2 (around three years postseparation; no statistics are given; measurement included happiness and depressive symptoms). The researchers suggest that this is "in part because the latter were often faced with the sometimes conflicting demands of raising children and reentering the world as a single person" (p. 281).

With respect to gender differences, Connidis and McMullin (1993) found the effects of divorce on self-reports of depression to be similar to the effects of divorce on avowed happiness; positive and significant for men (i.e. higher self-ratings of depression) and nonsignificant for women. While divorced men rated themselves as significantly more depressed than married men, divorced women did not rate themselves as more depressed than married women.

3. Self-Esteem

In general, there appear to be no differences in self-esteem between younger divorced adults and older divorced adults. Kitson and Holmes (1992) and Gove and Shin (1989) found no significant age differences in self-esteem ratings by their respondents. Chiriboga and colleagues (1991) found older separated/divorced persons to be higher in self-esteem than younger separated/divorced persons.
With respect to gender differences, Gove and Shin (1989) also found no significant gender differences in the effects of divorce on the self-esteem of younger and older respondents.

B. Summary

As noted in the introduction to this section, research findings on age differences in divorce adjustment are mixed. Earlier cross-sectional research shows more negative effects of divorce on older respondent's reports of happiness than on younger respondent's, while more recent studies show no differences or higher ratings for older respondents, and cross-sectional results for depression show either no age differences or older respondent's reporting lower levels of depression. Longitudinal studies indicate that older women may be initially more distressed than younger women, but that they recover more quickly. There do not appear to be any age differences in self-ratings of self-esteem. Regarding gender differences, the effects of divorce on happiness have been found to be stronger for older men than for older women, and may also be stronger for depression. Again there appear to be no gender differences in self-esteem.

III. Parent-Adult Child Relationships and Psychological Well-Being

A. Parent-Adult Child Relationships

One of the most profound changes that increased longevity is bringing to North American families is the extended period of time in which men and women are parents of adult children (Rossi & Rossi, 1990). Hagestad (1987) has noted that in most of the research on parents and children, "child" has been defined chronologically (hence "adult child") rather than as a family role that continues as long as there is a
surviving parent. The use of the rather awkward term, "adult child," is itself an indication of the newness of this evolving period in the lives of families (Hagestad, 1981). Apart from the marital bond, parent-child relationships for most people are their primary kinship ties (Rossi & Rossi, 1990), and throughout the life course the parent-child relationship remains of central significance to both parents and children (Barnett et al., 1992; Eggebeen, 1992; Rossi & Rossi, 1990; Troll, 1982). For most people the parent-adult child relationship is characterized by frequent interaction, affective closeness, satisfaction and low levels of conflict, plus high levels of social support and help exchange (Mancini & Blieszner, 1989; Rossi & Rossi, 1990; Troll, 1982).

Gender of both parent and child have been found to be key variables in parent-child relationships (Bengtson et al., 1990; Rossi & Rossi, 1990; Troll, 1989). Women have been called the family "kinkeepers," (Rosenthal, 1985) because of their role in maintaining family ties, and family "monitors" (Hagestad et al., 1984) because of their role in monitoring family relationships. Women are the connecting links in the extended family (Rossi & Rossi, 1991).

Rossi and Rossi (1990) argue that sociologists and psychologists have underestimated the strengths and abilities of women (particularly older women) by fusing the wife role and the mother role. They suggest that

This fusion of parent and spouse roles encourages the association of strength, reserve, and dominance with the family roles of men, and subordination, emotionality, and dependence with the family roles of women, yielding a functionally complementary balance between the expressive wife-mother and the instrumental husband-father. (p. 14).
However, as Rossi and Rossi continue, once the wife role is differentiated from the mother role, it seems clear that it is not as mothers but as wives that many women are dependent, timid, and submissive, while . . . as mothers women have to be and are active, productive, and strong. (p. 14).

Finally, Hagestad and Smyer (1982) concluded that "women display impressive strength in an area which seems to be the men's Achilles' heels: interpersonal bonds to family members, across generations" (p. 9).

Within families, the strongest intergenerational bonds have been found between mothers and their daughters (Rossi & Rossi, 1990; Rossi & Rossi, 1991; Troll, 1986). The salience of gender in family relations is shown clearly in the study by Rossi and Rossi (1990). Throughout their analyses they found ties among women to be stronger, more frequent, more reciprocal and less contingent on circumstances than those of men.

Overall, mothers have been found to have strong and stable relationships with both adult daughters and adult sons (Rossi & Rossi, 1990). The Rossis theorize that across the life course, women have a greater developmental stake in maintaining close relations with their parents, siblings, and adult children than men do, because of the much higher probability that they will need family help and support at some point and that others will need help from them, i.e. there is anticipated interdependency. From this perspective, the more intensive investment women make in parenting may pave the way for greater reciprocity in exchanges with children in midlife and a "payoff" (p. 458) in later life when women are widowed or otherwise find themselves in need.

In contrast to the strength of mother-child relationships, Rossi and Rossi (1990) note that one of their most striking findings is the vulnerability of father's relationships with their adult children. In
their roles as fathers, sons, and grandfathers, the men in Rossis' study were found to hold a more precarious position within the family than did the women in their roles as mothers, daughters and grandmothers. The Rossis comment that this conditional quality to men's family relationships can be seen in almost all the regression equations, with higher R square values in the equations dealing with men's relationships with parents and children than those dealing with women's relationships with parents and children, thus "emphasizing in a dramatic way the more contingent quality of men's ties to the family than women's" (p. 499).

B. Parent-Adult Child Relationships and Psychological Well-Being

Close, supportive relationships between parents and their adult children have been shown to have a positive effect on the psychological well-being of both generations. In an often-cited 1983 study of older parents, Quinn found health to be the strongest predictor of psychological well-being and quality of the parent-child relationship to be the next strongest predictor and in a 1992 three-generational study of Anglo/European and Latin American women, Levitt, Guacci, and Weber found relationship quality to be positively associated with well-being for each generation.

The link between parent-adult child relationships and parental well-being is perhaps most forcefully illustrated by a recent study conducted by Silverstein and Bengtson (1991). These researchers found that close parent-child relations increased survival time among parents who had experienced a social loss (death of a child, parent or spouse; divorce from a spouse: the measure was dichotomized into loss or no loss). Results showed this buffering effect to be stronger for the type of loss that was less likely to occur (e.g. death of a spouse compared to
death of a parent; their sample of divorced respondents was too small to analyze separately). Silverstein and Bengtson concluded that the mortal health risks associated with the stress of experiencing a significant social loss can be partially offset by close relationships with adult children. They suggest that the heightened feelings of security engendered by these relationships and the symbolic or instrumental interventions by adult children promote the well-being of parents. These results are also consistent with research which is showing a link between close relationships and immunological functioning (Kiecolt-Glaser, Fisher, Ogrocki, Stout, Speicher & Glaser, 1987; see also Kitson & Morgan, 1990). Silverstein and Bengtson concluded that it is the parents' perceptions of their relationships which are consequential for their well-being, regardless of whether or not the parents' perceptions are congruent with their children's perceptions. In coming to this conclusion they refer to the symbolic interactionist premise that situations experienced as real by individuals have real consequences (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1927).

In summary, research evidence shows that parent-child relationships are important to parents across the life course, and that these relationships can have a significant impact on psychological well-being. It also appears that parent-adult child relationships may become particularly salient in times of family crisis, such as when parent or child loses a spouse/partner through death or divorce.
IV. Divorce, Parent-Adult Child Relationships and Psychological Well-Being

A. Long-term Effects of Earlier Divorce on Parent-Adult Child Relationships and Parent’s Psychological Well-Being

Patterns of postdivorce parenting established when children are young appear to have long-term effects on parent-child relations: the few studies which have examined long-term effects of divorce on parent-adult child relationships have been showing negative effects for fathers and adult children, and nonsignificant (but generally slightly negative) effects for mothers and adult children. For example, fathers who were divorced report significantly less contact and less support exchange with their adult children than continuously-married fathers, but the reports of divorced mothers for contact and support exchange do not differ statistically from those of continuously-married mothers (Bulcroft & Bulcroft, 1991; Bumpass & Sweet, 1991; Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1990).

A recent study by Aquilino (1994a) from the adult child's perspective, which investigated the effect of custody arrangements on the relationships of young adults (19-34) with their parents, highlights the key role that custody arrangements have on parent-adult child relationships. Aquilino's study is noteworthy because it includes both custodial and noncustodial mothers and fathers. His results show, for example, that adult children whose mothers had custody reported little difference in relationship quality, geographic distance and contact with their mothers as compared to adult children in intact families, but reported lower relationship quality, less contact and greater geographic distance from their fathers. In contrast, adult children whose fathers
had custody reported little difference in distance and contact and higher relationship quality with their fathers as compared to adult children in intact families, but reported greater geographic distance, a trend to less contact, and no differences in relationship quality with their mothers. The differences in father-adult child quality and contact between father-custody families and mother-custody families were very large, and Aquilino notes that one of the most striking findings in this study is the enormous impact that custody has on fathers' long-term relations with their children following divorce.

Recent research from both the adult child's and the parent's perspectives, however, indicates that the effects of divorce on parent-child relationships vary by the timing of the divorce. Aquilino (1994a), for example in his study from the adult child's perspective, found the age of the child at separation from noncustodial parents to be positively related to relationship quality and contact and negatively related to geographic distance, i.e. the older the child was at the time of separation/divorce, the higher the relationship quality, the greater the contact, and the less the geographic distance between adult children and noncustodial parents.

Research conducted from the perspective of the divorced parent is showing a similar pattern of results. In several recent studies, earlier marital disruption has been found to have a negative effect on interaction with adult children (Bulcroft & Bulcroft, 1991; Bumpass & Sweet, 1991; Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1990; Crimmins & Ingegneri, 1990). Thus from the parent's perspective as well as from the adult child's, timing of the divorce appears to have a significant effect on parent-adult child relationships. This appears to be especially true for fathers, i.e. the
earlier in the family life cycle the separation and divorce occur, the
more negative the effects on subsequent father-child relations (Bulcroft

Aquilino (1994b) recently summed up the effects of earlier marital
disruption on parent-adult child relationships as follows:

parental separation and divorce result in less
instrumental and economic support exchange, less
emotional support exchange, lower parent-child
contact, greater geographic distance between parent
and children, and lower perceived relationship
quality with adult children. The family disruption
effects are stronger for fathers than for mothers . . .
(pp. 909, 910).

There has also been little research attention paid to the effect
that parent-adult child relationships may have on the psychological well-
being of parents who divorced earlier in life. In a recent study using
NSFH data, Marks (1995) examined the effects of marital status and
support exchange with adult children on psychological well-being
(happiness, depression, self-esteem). Regarding support exchanges, she
found that separated/divorced midlife fathers were significantly more
likely than fathers in first marriages to report neither giving nor
getting instrumental support during the past month (72.3% compared to
40.1%) and more likely to report neither giving nor getting emotional
support (61.5% to 48.3%). Separated/divorced mothers were also more
likely than mothers in first marriages to report neither giving nor
getting instrumental support (45.7% compared to 42.4%) and significantly
more likely to report neither giving nor getting emotional support (48.4%
to 38.8%). Overall, Marks found marital status to be a stronger predictor
of psychological well-being than support exchanges. However, for mothers
(overall), support exchanges with adult children had a greater effect on
self-esteem than did marital status.
Umberson (1992) also examined marital status, gender, contact and support. She found that divorced parents reported less frequent contact with children aged 16 and older, less social support from children, and more relationship strain and parental dissatisfaction, while mothers (overall) reported more contact, more social support from children and less parental dissatisfaction than fathers. Overall, she found that relationship strain and parental dissatisfaction were more strongly related to parent's psychological distress than were contact and social support. Contact with children, however, was more strongly related to well-being for divorced parents than for married parents (statistics are not given).

B. Recent Divorce, Parent-Adult Child Relationships and Psychological Well-Being

When parents of adult children divorce in midlife, both mothers and fathers have had many years to develop close relationships with their sons and daughters. Custody and its constraints are no longer an issue, and adult children have greater autonomy in determining the shape the parent-adult child relationship will take. Although recent research from the adult child's perspective is showing that divorce later in life may have similar effects on parent-child relationships to divorce earlier in life, research findings are mixed.

In Aquilino's 1994 cross-sectional study (1994b) using NSPH data, respondents were young adults 19-34 whose parents had divorced after the children were 18. Regression results show that the parents' divorce had a negative effect on parent-adult child relationships. Respondents with divorced parents reported significantly lower parent-child relationship quality than did respondents with nondivorced parents, significantly
lower contact, and greater geographic distance from divorced fathers but not from divorced mothers. These effects were stronger for father-child relationships than for mother-child relationships, and stronger for father-daughter than for father-son. With regard to support exchanges, Aquilino found that adult children reported no differences in the support they gave to their divorced parents, but sons reported receiving less support than sons in intact families (there were no significant differences for daughters).

In Cooney's 1994 cross-sectional study, respondents were young adults 18-23 whose parents had divorced within the previous fifteen months. Regression results show negative effects on father-child relations but not on mother-child relations. Respondents whose parents had divorced reported significantly less contact with their fathers than did respondents from intact families; and daughters, but not sons, reported significantly less intimacy with their fathers. There were no differences in contact and intimacy with mothers. Cooney also found that intimacy and interaction were more strongly correlated in divorced families than in intact families. She suggests this may indicate the family relationships become more voluntary after divorce.

The seminal work in the research area of midlife divorce and family relationships from the divorcing parent's perspective was conducted by Hagestad and her colleagues in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Respondents in the studies had been legally divorced for 12-18 months at the time of the interview. Gender differences are of particular interest in these studies. Hagestad and Smyer (1982) discuss patterns of divorcing in middle age in terms of "orderly" and "disorderly" divorces (p. 164). In orderly divorces, the marital dissolution follows the sequence found
in the process of getting married, i.e. the person experiences a psychological and interpersonal divorce prior to the legal one; in disorderly divorces, some or all of the relationship "ceasings" are left undone at the time of the divorce. Hagestad and Smyer classified 61/93 of the divorces as orderly, and found that between 40% and 50% of both men and women perceived that they had had total control over the divorce process; women were more likely to indicate partial control (i.e. they did not initiate the divorce, but they were in control of when and how the divorce would proceed), and a greater number of the men indicated no control. Women indicated being aware of marital problems before men, and were more likely to discuss these problems with their children (two-thirds of the women compared to one-quarter of the men). According to Hagestad and Smyer, divorce in "our" culture (presumably the dominant North American culture) involves the loss of a socially-valued role and the entry into a status which has few clear role definitions. Therefore, if there is order in the transition, it is because the person divorcing has created it, and if there is social support, it is because the person has sought it out. They conclude that middle-aged divorced men may be more financially secure than middle-aged divorced women, but that the women may be more able to take control of the divorce process, create lee-time for themselves, and seek out transitional support, particularly in situations where the divorce was not originally sought by them.

In 1984, Hagestad, Smyer & Stierman (1984) published a study based on the same data collection as Hagestad & Smyer (1982). Respondents in this study are described as being 43 men and 50 women who had been divorced between twelve and eighteen months previously when they were between the ages of 40 and 59, had been married at least sixteen years
(the average was 25), and had at least one child sixteen years or older. Major findings center around gender differences. In addition to the results reported in Hagestad and Smyer (1982), this study reports the following findings: (1) women were more likely to inform the children of the impending divorce, and were more likely to turn to children for support before and after the divorce; (2) nearly 25% of the mothers named a child as the person most helpful during the worst part of the divorce process, compared to 5% of the fathers; (3) 90% of the mothers said that relationships with their children remained unchanged or improved since the divorce, compared to 58% of the fathers; (4) more than one-third of the fathers reported that their relationship with at least one of their children had deteriorated (no figures are given for mothers); (5) one-third of the fathers reported that divorce had made them less effective as a parent, compared to 4% of mothers; and (6) 92% of mothers reported that their effectiveness as a parent was the same or improved (no figures are given for fathers). Hagestad, Smyer and Stierman conclude that for this cohort of women, time and energy invested in family relationships appears to pay off in times of crisis. These mothers seem to have an "unshakable faith in the strength of their ties with children" (p. 256); they expect to be able to count on their children, and in most cases their expectations are met.

Weingarten (1988) conducted a qualitative study of fifty-five women and eight men, most of whom (all but three men and three women) attended meetings of the support group Divorce-After-Sixty in Ann Arbor, Michigan during a four-year period. It is therefore likely that for most of the respondents the divorce was fairly recent (however, at least one of the respondents was involved in the ongoing coordination of the group). The
majority of the respondents perceived the supportiveness of their children to be one of the most important factors in their postdivorce adjustment; and some said that their relationships with their children were more positive after the breakup of their marriage. However, changes in relationships with children could still be perceived as problematic. When relationship strains were present, communication and the children's divided loyalties were mentioned as areas of difficulty. The general perception was that relationships with their children were critical to their personal well-being. Also, Weingarten found that respondents who focused on parental role satisfaction rather than loss of the spousal role generally perceived themselves to be less distressed than respondents who were still invested in the spousal role.

Several recent studies have examined the effects of divorce on support exchange between parents and their adult children. These studies show that older divorced mothers depend more on support from their adult children than do older divorced fathers. Hammond and Muller (1992), using NSFH data, compared younger respondents (under 50 and currently separated or divorced) and older respondents (over 50, separated or divorced past the age of 50 and currently separated or divorced). Looking at the older age group only, results show that the older women relied significantly more on children for emotional support during the divorce process than did the older men. In addition, older divorced women rated themselves significantly higher than older divorced men on indicators of being a parent, caring for children, and overall happiness. These results from Hammond and Muller's study suggest that older divorced women are more satisfied with their relationships with their children than are older
divorced men, and are happier and more satisfied with their postdivorce lives.

Wright and Maxwell (1991) examined the adult child's role as a provider of social support to recently divorced parents. Respondents were 78 men and 152 women who had been married 19 or more years and had at least one child over the age of 18; questions were asked about the geographically closest child. Results show that mothers were more likely than fathers to rank children as the most helpful source of support (46.2% compared to 18.3%). Fathers were less likely than mothers to seek support from their children and to receive it. They were also more likely to mention that at least one child had severed ties with them and consequently offered no support at all (no figures are given). Overall, mothers received more support than fathers in all four categories: socioemotional aid, services, advice, and financial aid.

The adult child's divided loyalties is a recurring theme in the research on later divorce, and can be seen from both the child's perspective and from the parent's perspective. Cooney and colleagues (1986), for example, found that 67% of her young adult respondents worried about loyalty conflicts, and that women more frequently identified fathers as the sole target of their anger. Booth and Amato (1994) found that coalitions were usually between daughters and mothers, and in a recent longitudinal study, Cooney and colleagues (Cooney, Hutchinson & Leather, 1995) found that daughters are more likely than sons to report being closer to one parent than to the other.

From the parent's perspective, Wright and Maxwell (1991) found "sidetaking" to be a significant predictor of total support given to parents, and also found that more fathers than mothers reported that
children had severed ties and therefore provided no support. Rossi and Rossi (1990) suggest that marital unhappiness causes a realignment of the bonds in the family, with sons and daughters more likely to remain close to the mother than to the father. In a clinical study which included both parents and adult children as respondents, Jones and Jones (1993) found that when an adult child identifies a parent at fault for the marital conflict, it is typically the father and in such cases, the parents usually divorce (these results are not reported by gender of children).

Following a divorce, there is evidence to suggest that relationships between parents and their adult children can influence the parent's psychological adjustment to the divorce. Two recent studies by Gander (1991) and Gander and Jorgensen (1990) indicate that the current "closeness" between older divorced parents and their adult-children may be the most significant predictor of the parent's psychological well-being and postdivorce adjustment. (Neither study provides information about how "closeness" was measured). In her 1991 study, Gander compared two samples of recently divorced persons: one sample being composed of persons under the age of 50, and the second of persons 50 and over who had been married at least fifteen years. Looking at the older respondents only, 40% of the older respondents reported that relationships with their children were "better" since the divorce, 45% that they were the "same," and 15% that they were "worse." Gander does not provide a breakdown of these figures by gender of parent or gender of child. Regression analyses show that degree of conflict during the divorce process and current family closeness predicted general well-being for the older respondents; only conflict after the divorce predicted general well-being for the younger respondents (all of whom were
custodial parents: 185 mothers, 21 fathers). The older respondents reported experiencing significantly less conflict after the divorce than the younger respondents. Gander also found that the older women and older men did not differ in their General Well-Being scores.

Gander and Jorgensen (1990) examined social support and postdivorce adjustment in a study which appears to have been based on the same data collection as Gander (1991). In this study, respondents (67 women and 44 men) are described as being divorced persons 50 years and older, separated up to 48 months, divorced within the past two years, married at least 15 years, with no more than two divorces. Approximately four-fifths of the respondents had been married once; the average length of marriage was 29.7 years. Information on whether or not all respondents are parents is not given. Gander and Jorgensen used both the General Well-Being Scale (GWB: Fazio, 1977, cited in Gander & Jorgensen, 1990), which assesses a respondent's subjective feelings of well-being and distress, and the Social Adjustment Scale of Self-Report (SAS-SR: Weissman & Paykel, 1974), which assesses role performance in six areas over a two-week period, to determine which social support variables are the best predictors of general well-being and postdivorce adjustment. Regression results show that, in order of significance, the four social support variables that best predict general well-being are: (1) frequency of contact with a friend for help with personal problems during the past month (negative association; i.e. more contacts for help, less well-being); (2) present closeness with children (positive association); (3) gender (nine women were depressed compared to four men); and (4) number of people in social support network in an emergency (positive association). The two social support variables that were found to be the
best predictors of postdivorce adjustment on the SAS-SR are: (1) present
closeness with children; and (2) satisfaction with number of friends
(both associations are positive). Based on these congruent findings,
Gander and Jorgensen conclude that the "closeness of older divorced
persons with their children is the factor which appears to be most
salient in its predictive power for both positive emotional well-being
and postdivorce adjustment" (p. 50).

C. Summary

The literature reviewed in this chapter has shown that, overall,
divorce has negative effects on psychological well-being, that these
effects may attenuate over time, and that they vary by gender and by age.
For those individuals who are parents, the patterns of postdivorce
parent-child interaction which are established when children are young
have been found to have long-term effects on parent-child relationships.

Recent studies of parent-adult child relationships from the
perspective of young adult children who experienced marital disruption
during their childhood are showing patterns similar to those found for
younger children, i.e. custody arrangements in childhood are found to
have significant effects on the relationships between parents and
children later in life, with the relationship with the nonresidential
father being most at risk.

We know very little about what happens to parent-adult child
relationships when parents divorce after a long-term marriage and custody
arrangements are no longer an issue. However, the few studies from the
perspective of young adult children whose parents had recently divorced
are showing a similar pattern to that found when parents divorced earlier
in life: father-child relationships appear to be more negatively affected than mother-child relationships.

Across the life course, parent-child relationships are important to both parents and children, and the quality and strength of these relationships is consequential to the psychological well-being of both generations. When parents divorce after a long-term marriage, both parents have had the child's lifetime to develop close and supportive relationships. In times of crisis, therefore, adult children represent an important potential resource for both parents. Rossi and Rossi (1990), however, have found much greater stability in mother-child relations across time and circumstance than in father-child relations. They suggest that women's greater investment in their relationships with their children pays off in later life when women are in need.

There has been very little empirical research from the parents' perspective which examines the effects of divorce after long-term marriage on parent-adult child relationships, and the subsequent effect of these relationships on the divorce adjustment of the parents. However, the indication is that the parent-adult child relationship influences the postdivorce psychological well-being of the parent, and that the quality and strength of these relationships varies by gender of parent. Research from the young adults' perspective indicates that they also vary by gender of child.
Chapter Three
Research Problem

I. Theoretical Perspective

In recent years there has been a renewed interest in using identity theory to explain differences in parent-adult child relationships and the association between these relationships and the psychological well-being of both generations (Atkinson, 1989; Marks, 1995; Mutran & Reitzes, 1984; Roberts & Bengtson, 1993; Umberson, 1992). The studies cited do not measure the concepts of the theory directly, but do use its conceptual ideas to provide a framework for their research and findings. For example, Umberson (1992; citing Mutran & Reitzes, 1984) refers to the influence of the social-structural context in which the family is embedded on parent-adult child relationships and their effect on the psychological well-being of both generations, and Marks (1995) suggests that the successful enactment of roles and identities will enhance psychological well-being through social esteem and intrinsic gratification.

The NSFH also does not allow for the direct measurement of identity theory concepts such as role-identities and their relative salience. The conceptual orientation provided by identity theory does, however, appear promising as a guiding perspective for work in this area. Consequently, although this study is not proposed as a test of identity theory, the theoretical perspective presented by the theory will be used in combination with the extant research literature to develop hypotheses and to explain study findings.
A. Theoretical Concepts

The main proponent of identity theory has been Sheldon Stryker (see Stryker, 1980; Stryker, 1981; Stryker, 1987; Stryker & Serpe, 1982) who adheres to a social structural version of symbolic interactionism. According to this perspective the "self", which is shaped through social interaction, guides and organizes behavior; social interaction in turn, however, is shaped and constrained by social structures which set the context for the interaction and hence influence who will interact with whom in what settings and with what resources.

Two social structures which are central in identity theory are "positions" and "roles." Stryker (1980, p. 54) defines "positions" as "relatively stable, morphological components of social structure," and "roles" as the "shared behavioral expectations [carried by] these positions." To clarify this with an example: there are universal social positions of wife and husband, but the roles of wife/husband are different in different contexts (e.g. cultures), i.e. the behavioral expectations are different. Identity theory seeks to explain only role-related behavior, not all social behavior (Stryker & Serpe, 1982).

According to Stryker (1981), the "self," being a reflection of a complex, differentiated yet organized society, must also be both differentiated and organized. He defines the "self" as a "structure of identities reflecting roles played in differentiated networks of interactions" (Stryker, 1987), and "identities" as "internalized positional designations that exist insofar as the person participates in structured role relationships" (Stryker, 1981, p. 23). Thus a person's "self" might
include such identities (or role-identities) as spouse, parent, paid worker, friend, neighbor.

Stryker postulates that identities are organized, or ranked, into salience hierarchies, with "salience" being defined as the "probability of the various identities being invoked in a given situation or over many situations" (1981, p. 24). The relative salience of various identities in a salience hierarchy is determined by the commitment a person has to specific identities, with commitment reflecting "interactional costs in the form of relationships foregone were the person no longer to hold the positions and play the roles underlying the identities" (Stryker, 1987, p. 91). The basic premise of Stryker's identity theory is that "commitment affects identity salience which, in turn, affects behavioral choices" (Stryker, 1981, p. 24). The idea is that if a person is highly committed to a role-identity, that role-identity is highly salient, and the person will be motivated to perform those behaviors which are congruent with personal and normative expectations for the performance of that particular role-identity.

B. Linking Social Structure, Role Relationships and Role-Identities

According to Stryker (1987), it is through commitment that the social structure enters into role relationships, as the constraints on role behavior and the choices available to individuals are influenced or shaped by sociocultural and socioeconomic variables such as age, gender, social class and power relations. These larger social structural systems, therefore, are an integral part of symbolic interactionist-based theorizing.
One of the strengths of identity theory is this link that it provides between the institutional, group and individual levels of analysis, i.e. the recognition that individual role-identities and family interaction patterns are shaped and constrained by the ideologics and opportunity structures which exist in a given society. In North America, for example, the "motherhood mandate" (mothers have primary responsibility for family work) and "fatherhood mandate" (fathers have primary responsibility for the financial support of their families) are reinforced by structural barriers to employment equity for women and structural constraints to family involvement for men (Cohen, 1987; Lewis & O'Brien, 1987; Kruk, 1992). Culturally dominant ideologies of "masculinity" and "femininity" also continue to constrain the role behaviors of fathers and mothers (Lewis & O'Brien, 1987). Consequently, while research on work and the family continues to show that mothers spend more time doing family and household work than fathers, current fatherhood research shows that most men value their roles as fathers highly and that their family roles impact their psychological well-being more than their work roles (e.g. Cohen, 1987; Pleck, 1985).

When discussing gender roles and gender role-identities within the context of family, researchers often refer to Gilligan's (1982) self-in-relation theory of morality (Cooney, 1994; Cooney et al., 1986; Scott & Alwin, 1989; Thoits, 1992). Gilligan (1982) contends that through socialization and experience men tend to develop a sense of identity and self as separate or independent in relation to others (leading to a morality based on equality and justice) and that women tend to develop a sense of identity and self as connected and interdependent (leading to a morality based on inclusion and equity). Consequently she concluded that
"Women not only define themselves in the context of relationship but also judge themselves in terms of their ability to care" (1982, p. 17). To the extent that men or women define themselves as interdependent in their relationships, their self-evaluations could be expected to be influenced by salient family relationships.

C. Linking Role Relationships, Role-Identities and Psychological Well-Being

Identity theory provides us with theoretical links between role-identities, role relationships and psychological well-being. Stryker originally hypothesized that "the greater the commitment, the higher the identity salience, the greater the impact of role performance on self-esteem will be" (1981, p 24). While Stryker himself has not developed his ideas of an association between identity salience and self-esteem or other dimensions of psychological well-being, other theorists have.

Roberts and Bengston (1993), for example, state that identity theory "views identity structures as interfaces between social experiences - such as parent-child relationships - and an individual's psychological well-being" (p. 263). They suggest that the self-concept incorporates both a self-definitional dimension (I am a father/mother) and a self-evaluative dimension (I am a good father/mother). They assert that this self-evaluative process is informed by a person's own evaluative beliefs (I believe I am a good mother/father) and by the appraisals received from others as role-identities are enacted (You are a good mom/dad). Positive self-evaluations develop when individuals believe that their role performance is appropriate and perceive that the relationships which sustain the role-identity reflect positive appraisals of their role performance (see Roberts & Bengtson, 1993).
The most thorough explanation of the link between role behaviors and psychological well-being from the perspective of identity theory has been developed by Peggy Thoits (1983, 1985, 1991, 1992). According to Thoits (see esp. 1983, 1991), the key to the relationship between the multiple self (the self being composed of multiple role-identities) and psychological well-being lies in identity enactment (1983).

Thoits (1985) proposes that role relationships and the associated role enactments can be psychologically beneficial in three main ways. First, role-identities provide individuals with a sense of existential security based in ongoing identity enactment: individuals know who they are in relation to others, know how to behave appropriately and, by being embedded in a system of reciprocal relationships, experience a sense of belonging which will have a positive effect on the individual's psychological well-being (or perhaps even more importantly, deficits in these areas will have a negative effect). Disruptions in a valued relationship, therefore, could be expected to have negative effects on an individual's psychological well-being.

Second, implicit in identity theory is the idea that evaluations of role performance (by self and by others) will be based on normative expectations for behavior in a given role. For example, for most people the parent-adult child relationship is characterized by frequent interaction and high levels of support exchange (Mancini & Blieszner, 1989; Rossi & Rossi, 1990). Parents and adult children who are involved in positive, supportive relationships therefore would be likely to evaluate their role enactments positively (and to perceive that others are evaluating them positively) which, according to identity theory, would have
a positive effect on their psychological well-being (and conversely, negative evaluations would have a negative effect on well-being).

Third, successful role performances can bring not only social approval as role expectations are met, but also intrinsic gratification and a sense of competence and self-esteem. If, for example, a parent is motivated to perform supportive activities (e.g. instrumental or emotional support) and has the resources to carry out these activities, the successful enactment of these activities (i.e. congruence between expectations and behavior) would have a positive effect on psychological well-being.

Thus identity theory suggests avenues through which the parent-adult child relationship could influence the postdivorce psychological well-being of parents. When couples divorce after a long-term marriage, the parent role-identity and the parent-adult child relationship are likely highly salient components of the parent's identity. Following a divorce, the continuing parent-adult child relationship could function as an affirmation of the parent's established sense of identity and also as a source of security when the parent seeks to develop new role-identities. Positive reflected appraisals from the adult children could also be expected to enhance the psychological well-being of the parent.
II. Hypotheses

Based on identity theory and the literature, three major hypotheses were developed.

**Hypothesis 1: Divorce after a long-term marriage will have a negative effect on parent's psychological well-being.**

Previous research has shown that divorce has at least a short-term negative effect on psychological well-being as measured by happiness, depression and self-esteem. Longitudinal studies show that for most people, these negative effects attenuate with time (Booth & Amato, 1991; Chiriboga et al., 1991; Kitson & Holmes, 1992). The author has found no longitudinal studies of the effects of recent divorce after long-term marriage on psychological well-being.

There are theoretical reasons to expect negative effects of divorce on psychological well-being. When individuals divorce after a long-term marriage, they disrupt a role-identity (spouse) which has likely been a salient part of their self-concept and which is highly valued by society. Identity theory suggests that the loss of a highly salient role-identity and the interruption of a long-standing source of identity affirmation would have negative effects on an individual's psychological well-being. This expectation is supported by Bohannan's idea of the psychic divorce, which refers to the identity issues divorcing persons face as they re-establish (or establish) their individual autonomy. The longer people have been married, the more difficult it may be for them to shift their identities away from the role-identity of spouse.
Hypothesis 2: Divorce after a long-term marriage will have differential effects on mother-adult child relationships and father-adult child relationships.

Hypothesis 2a: Divorce after a long-term marriage will have a positive effect on mother-adult child relationships.

For women now in mid- or later-life, especially those who have devoted themselves primarily to homemaking, the mother role-identity and the mother-child relationship have likely been central to her sense of self. The primacy of these mother-child bonds is reflected in the strong and stable relationships most mothers have with their children throughout the life course (Rossi & Rossi, 1990).

Identity theory suggests that following a divorce after a long-term marriage, a mother would be motivated to perform those role behaviors which would maintain and enhance her relationships with her children. Research by Hagestad, Smyer and Stierman (1984) supports this expectation: 90% of the middle-aged mothers in their study reported unchanged or improved relationships with their children following a middle life divorce (compared to 58% of the fathers). Middle-aged mothers may also invest in the parent role-identity in compensation for the loss of the spouse role-identity (Gecas & Seff, 1990; Mutran & Reitzes, 1984). Again research supports this expectation: mothers who divorce later in life have been found to turn to their children for support (Hagestad et al., 1984; Hammond & Muller, 1992).

Adult children have also been found to respond to the mother’s need for help and support (Wright & Maxwell, 1991). The research literature suggests that adult children feel a responsibility towards their parents.
and, in the event of a divorce, feel a particular responsibility towards their mother (Bonkowski, 1989; Cooney, 1989; Cooney, Smyer, Hagestad & Klock, 1986; Wright & Maxwell, 1991). When a mother has invested heavily in her relationships with her children over the life course, their support and positive reflected appraisals could be expected to have a positive effect on her evaluation of the mother-adult child relationships.

**Subtest 2a: The positive effect of divorce on mother-adult child relationships will be greater for mother-daughter relationships than for mother-son relationships.**

There is some research evidence showing that the effects of divorce on parent-adult child relationships may be different for daughters and for sons (Aquilino, 1994b; Cooney, 1994; Rossi & Rossi, 1990). However, there has not been enough empirical research conducted from the parent's perspective on which to base hypotheses. In view of this, two subtests will be conducted to examine whether postdivorce parent-daughter and parent-son relationships differ.

Rossi and Rossi (1990), in particular, have stressed that the mother-daughter bond is the strongest of the four parent-child dyadic bonds. Cooney and her colleagues (1986), in a study of recent later life divorce from the young adult's perspective, found that 62% of the young women reported improved relationships with their mothers. The strength of child-parent bonds in general is shown by the figures for sons: 50% of the young men also reported improved relationships with their mother.

There is also research evidence showing that adult daughters are more likely to take sides in a divorce than are adult sons, and that when they do, they are more likely to take the mother's side (Cooney et al., 1986;
Cooney et al, 1995). Adult children may also perceive that the mother needs more care during and after the divorce than the father and, although both sons and daughters provide support for the mother, daughters provide more socioemotional support (Wright & Maxwell, 1991).

**Hypothesis 2b: Divorce after a long-term marriage will have a negative effect on father-adult child relationships.**

In general, men's family relationships have been found to be more vulnerable across time and circumstance than women's (see Rossi & Rossi, 1990). As noted above, when parents divorce after a long-term marriage, adult children may feel pressured to take sides and the research indicates that when this occurs the children are more likely to take the mother's side and that this realignment of family bonds may occur before the divorce (Jones & Jones, 1993; Rossi & Rossi, 1990). In addition, fathers are far more likely to report losing touch with at least one of their children than women are (Hagestad et al., 1984; Wright & Maxwell, 1991). These findings suggest that the mother and the adult children may form coalitions during a marriage break-up, and the father may find himself occupying a peripheral role in the family before a divorce occurs (Booth & Amato, 1991; Jones & Jones, 1993; Rossi & Rossi, 1990).

There are other ways in which the father may find himself at a disadvantage after a divorce. The geographical distance between divorced fathers and their adult children is greater than that between divorced mothers and their adult children (Aquilino, 1994b), and geographical distance has been found to be the most significant predictor of parent-adult child interaction and support (Rossi & Rossi, 1990). Also, during
the marriage the mothers may have facilitated the father-child interaction, and consequently following a divorce the father and children may have to develop new patterns of interaction. For example, mothers generally organize family rituals (e.g. birthdays, Christmas) and may continue to do so postdivorce. In a recent study of changes in family rituals after a "late-life" divorce from the adult child's perspective, Pett and her colleagues (Pett, Lang & Gander, 1992) found that when the respondents reported the loss of parent's involvement in family rituals, it was especially for fathers (225 fathers compared to 54 mothers).

Research from the adult child's perspective is showing divorce to have negative effects on adult children's evaluation of their relationships with their fathers (Aquilino, 1994b; Cooney, 1994). This research may be reflecting the difficulties adult children have in coping with conflicting allegiances to both parents (see Cooney et al., 1995). From the perspective of identity theory, these negative reflected appraisals from the adult children, whether temporary or long-term, could be expected to have a negative effect on the father's perception of the father-adult child relationship.

**Subtest 2b: The negative effect of divorce after long-term marriage on father-adult child relationships will be greater for father-daughter relationships than for father-son relationships.**

The extant literature indicates that the father-daughter relationship is most at risk following a divorce (Aquilino, 1994b; Booth & Amato, 1994; Cooney, 1994; Cooney et al., 1986; Rossi & Rossi, 1990). Studies by Aquilino (1994b) and Cooney (1994) from the adult child's perspective, for
example, show the negative effects of midlife divorce on parent-adult child relationships to be greater for the father-daughter relationship than for the father-son relationship. In addition, although both adult sons and adult daughters may experience conflicting loyalties to their parents during a midlife divorce, there is some indication that daughters may have greater difficulty remaining close to both parents (Cooney et al., 1986; Cooney et al., 1995). These negative reflected appraisals from daughters could be expected to negatively influence the father's evaluation of the father-daughter relationship.

From the perspective of identity theory, it could also be argued that fathers with a traditional sex role orientation would be more committed to the role-identity "father-of-a-son." It is possible that the potentially greater number of shared meanings in the same-sex parent-child relationship would facilitate greater father-son bonding (and conversely, mother-daughter bonding).

**Hypothesis 3:** Strong parent-adult child relationships will moderate the negative effects of divorce after long-term marriage on the psychological well-being of the parent.

"Strong" parent-adult child relationships will be operationalized in this study as high ratings of contact and support.

Several recent studies of midlife and later life divorce have indicated that relationships with adult children may play a key role in the divorce adjustment of older parents. Weingarten (1988), for example, found that the majority of her respondents perceived the supportiveness of their children to be one of the most important factors in their postdivorce
adjustment. Gander (1991) found current family closeness (undefined) to predict the postdivorce psychological well-being of her older respondents (age 50 and older), while Gander and Jorgensen (1990), in a related study based on the same sample (and also not defining closeness), found present closeness with children to predict both psychological well-being and social adjustment.

Identity theory suggests that strong parent-adult child relationships can be an alternate source of identity affirmation when the marital relationship is disrupted. Thoits, who in her 1992 study measured role-identity salience directly, found that her respondents rated the role-identities of parent and spouse the highest of seventeen possible roles, with parent being slightly higher than spouse (and much higher than lover). Referring back to her 1985 explanation of the link between role behaviors and psychological well-being, we would expect strong parent-adult child relationships to provide the parent with a continuing feeling of existential security (i.e. purpose and meaning in life), positive evaluations of role performance (from self and others), social approval, intrinsic gratification, and a sense of competence and self-esteem.

**Hypothesis 3a: The moderating effects of strong parent-adult child relationships on psychological well-being will be greater for women than for men.**

For the cohorts of women now in mid- or later-life particularly, the role-identity of mother and the mother-child relationship have likely been central components of self-identity. The commitment of mothers to these relationships is reflected in the strong, stable bonds most mothers have with their children across time and circumstance (see Rossi & Rossi, 1990).
Research shows that most women turn to their children for support when a long-term marriage breaks down, and that children respond to their mother's needs (Hagestad et al., 1984; Wright & Maxwell, 1991). Because of these expectations and normative patterns of behavior, the continuing presence of supportive mother-adult child relationships could be expected to have a substantial impact on the mother's postdivorce psychological well-being. Strong mother-adult child relationships could offset the negative effects of divorce or, conversely, poor relationships in addition to a marriage breakdown could be doubly distressing.

Gilligan's (1982) self-in-relation theory of morality also suggests that relationships may be more closely linked to psychological well-being for women than for men. Gilligan theorizes that some people (primarily men) come to define themselves and morality in terms of independence and separateness, and others (primarily women) come to define themselves and morality (i.e., right, wrong) in terms of interdependence and connection in relationships and consequently evaluate themselves by their ability to care. If this is the case, it could be argued that the parent-adult child relationship is likely to have a greater impact on the self-evaluations of women than of men.

The picture for fathers is different. Men's relationships with their families have been shown to be more precarious than women's, i.e., more contingent on circumstances such as marital discord or divorce (see Rossi & Rossi, 1990). In addition, studies are showing that older fathers are unlikely to confide in their children when a marriage breaks down or to turn to their children for support (Hagestad et al., 1984; Wright & Maxwell, 1991). In contrast, older fathers are more likely than older mothers to turn to parents for support (Hagestad et al., 1984). It may
also be that for fathers seeking support from grown children is contrary to their perceptions of the father role (see Hagestad et al, 1984; Wright & Maxwell, 1991).

Nevertheless, research from the adult child's perspective is showing that later divorce has a negative effect on the adult child's perception of the father-child relationship, and from the perspective of identity theory, these negative reflected appraisals could be expected to have a negative effect on the father's evaluations of the relationships and consequently on his psychological well-being. The hypothesis, therefore, is not that the parent-adult child relationship affects mothers' postdivorce psychological well-being and not fathers', but that the impact of the parent-adult child relationship on psychological well-being will be greater for mothers than for father. To date no research has addressed this issue.

III. Control Variables

When testing the hypotheses in the preceding section, a number of control variables were added to the regression equations to identify their potential as competing hypotheses and to reduce the chance of spurious associations between the independent and dependent variables. The control variables chosen for this study have been shown in previous research to influence both divorce adjustment and parent-child relationships. These control variables are income, assets, race, age of respondent, marital cohort, degree of social integration, and religiosity.

1. Income/Assets

Divorce rates, parent-child relationships and psychological well-being have all been found to vary with socioeconomic status (see Price & McKenry, 1988; Raschke, 1987). The variables chosen to control for SES in
this study are income and assets. Raschke (1987) noted that of the three components of SES (income, education, occupation) family income has the most significant influence on marital stability.

Assets are included in the proposed study because in midlife and later life, perceived financial security is likely to be significantly related to a person's psychological well-being (Berardo, 1982; see Kitson et al., 1989; Weingarten, 1988). For example, the ownership of a family residence is a considerable source of financial security, and it is more likely that the mother will remain in the house living with children than will the father. This potential financial resource would be missed if only income is evaluated (for home ownership see Uhlenberg et al., 1990).

Previous research has found a clear inverse relationship between income and other measures of socioeconomic status and divorce (see Booth et al., 1986; Price & McKenry, 1988; Raschke, 1987; White, 1990). The financial well-being of the parents has also been found to have an effect on parent-adult child relationships. Cooney and colleagues (1995), for example, found that at Time One (15 months postdivorce), the adult child's perception of the parent (mother or father) as a potential source of financial support showed a strong positive correlation with the adult child's intimacy rating for that parent. Income has also been shown to have an inverse relationship with psychological well-being; lower levels of depression are associated with higher levels of income (Gore & Mangione, 1983; Reskin & Coverman, 1985).

2. Race

The NSFH is an American data set, and the controls for race/ethnicity consequently had to be chosen within that context. The categories for race
included in the NSFH are as follows: White, Black, Hispanic (Mexican-American, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Other Hispanics) and Other (Native and Asian Americans).

Most of the American research which includes race as a variable compares Black Americans and White Americans. This research shows that the divorce rate is higher for Black Americans than for White Americans; among the reasons given for this difference is the greater representation of Black Americans in the lower SES groups, a factor also correlated with divorce (see Price & McKenry, 1988; Raschke, 1987). Differences in parent-adult child relationships have also been found between Black Americans and White Americans (Scott & Alwin, 1989; Lawton, Silverstein, & Bengtson, 1994; Umberson, 1992), and some of these differences are also associated with the context within which many Black Americans parent, e.g. lone-parent families and lack of employment opportunities for men. Psychological adjustment to divorce has been found to vary between Black Americans and White Americans, with White Americans reporting higher levels of depression (Menaghan & Lieberman, 1986).

3. Age of Respondent

Chronological age has been found to be correlated with divorce rates, parent-child relationships and psychological well-being. First, divorce statistics show that older people are much less likely to divorce than are younger persons (Booth et al., 1986; White, 1990). Second, the relationships that parents have with their children change throughout the life span. Bengtson and Kuypers (1971), for example, advanced the idea that parents have a "developmental [or generational] stake" in the parent-adult child relationship, i.e. they have a greater investment or emotional stake in the continuity of the relationship and will therefore be motivated to
minimize intergenerational tensions. This idea is supported by research which shows parents to rate the quality of parent-adult child relationships higher than the children do (e.g. Rossi & Rossi, 1990). Third, age is associated with psychological well-being. For example, in general age has been found to be negatively associated with self-ratings of happiness (Bradburn, 1969).

4. Marital Cohort

Individuals who marry during different historical periods are exposed to different cultural expectations and patterns of socialization. For example, individuals marrying when traditional gender roles were normative would likely have different expectations for marriage and the roles of wives/husbands and mothers/fathers than would individuals marrying when more contemporary gender roles are normative. The general expectation for people marrying earlier in this century was for the marriage to last until the death of one spouse, regardless of marital quality or personal satisfaction. Respondents who married with this expectation would be less likely to divorce, and if they did, the divorce would likely represent a greater adjustment for them than it would for respondents who married when this societal expectation was weaker.

5. Degree of Social Integration

The integration of individuals into social networks is correlated with the propensity to divorce, individual psychological well-being, and the nature of parent-child relationships. In this study, social integration, which can be defined as the "existence of social relationships" (Umberson & Gove, 1989, p. 443), includes the presence of active kinship and non-kinship ties. Overall, research has shown that
social integration retards divorce (Glenn & Shelton, 1985; see White, 1990). Also, supportive social networks can lessen the impact of stressful life events (see George, 1990), and social integration has been found to have a positive effect on postdivorce psychological well-being (Gander & Jorgensen, 1990; Kitson & Roach, 1989; see Raschke, 1987). In addition, the social-structural context within which relationships are embedded influences the nature of those relationships (Umberson, 1992); thus the degree of the family's integration into the community can be expected to influence the nature of the parent-child relationship (see Peterson & Rollins, 1987).

Another form of social integration which can be expected to influence the probability of divorce, through mechanisms such as social control, is the presence of other adults in the household. Also, following a divorce, the presence of another adult in the household has been found to be positively related to happiness and depression, i.e. greater happiness and less depression (Kurdek, 1991; Mastekaasa, 1994a).

6. Religiosity

Religiosity was measured by frequency of attendance at religious services. This variable has been found to be negatively related to divorce (Booth et al., 1986; see Raschke, 1987; White & Booth, 1991). There are also reasons to expect that religiosity would have an influence on parent-adult child relationships and psychological well-being (for a discussion of this topic, see Marciano, 1987). For example, most religions place a high value on family life and family relationships, and a high value on interpersonal relationships and individual peace of mind. Frequent church attendance also connotes an integration into a spiritual community which can enhance well-being. In general, religiosity has been found to be
negatively related to divorce, and when there is a divorce, to be positively related to divorce adjustment (see Price & McKenry, 1988). Religiosity was measured at Time One because in this study it was primarily considered to be a cultural variable which influences the context of the parent-child relationship.

IV. Methods

A. The Data Set and Sample

Data used in this study come from the National Survey of Families and Households, which was designed specifically to document the nature and variability of family life. The NSFH was developed in response to a request from the Center for Population Research of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) in the United States and has been funded by the same agency. From its outset the NSFH was designed to provide a data resource for the research community at large, and was developed in consultation with leading family scholars; the research team led by Larry Bumpass and James Sweet included representatives from the areas of family sociology, social demography, social psychology, and family economics, and consultants included such leading scholars as William Aquilino, Frank Furstenberg, Greer Litton Fox and Andrew Cherlin. The NSFH was designed to be longitudinal and the second wave of data became available in 1995. No comparable longitudinal Canadian data set exists.

The NSFH collected data by personal interview and self-administered questionnaire from a national, multistage probability sample of 13,017 respondents. One adult per household (age 19 or older) was randomly selected as the primary respondent (age 18 if married, or if there were no persons 19 and older in household; the latter for main sample only).
Individuals in the following subgroups were double sampled: one-parent and reconstituted families, cohabiters, minority families (Black Americans, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans), and recently married persons. In Wave I, there were 9,663 primary respondents in the main sample and 3,374 in the oversample. Analyses in the proposed study are based on longitudinal data from Wave I, collected between March 1987 and May 1988, and Wave II, collected between late 1992 and 1994. Detailed information about the NSFH can be found in Sweet, Bumpass and Call (1988).

The sample for this study consists of respondents chosen on the basis of four criteria. One, respondents must be currently married and living with their spouse at Time One. Two, they must have been married nineteen years or more at the time of final separation or, for the continuously-married respondents, at the mean time of separation (3.3 years from Time One). Three, they must have at least one biological or adopted child age nineteen or older at the time of final separation or, for the continuously-married, at the mean time of separation. Four, at Time Two respondents categorized as "married" must have been continuously married to the same partner; those categorized as "divorced" must be currently separated or divorced from their spouse at Time Two (i.e. without an intervening remarriage and divorce).

Based on the criteria noted above, the selected sample is composed of 1542 continuously married respondents (873 women; 669 men) and 42 separated/divorced respondents (23 women; 19 men). At Time One, the mean age of respondents in the full sample was 54.3 years (52.9 for women; 56.1 for men), with a range of 31-85. The mean age for respondents who remained married was 54.45 (53.03 for women; 56.3 for men) and for respondents who separated or divorced between Time One and Time Two, the mean age was 48.4
years (46.3 for women; 51.1 for men) with a range of 34-70. Also at Time
One, the mean length of marriage was 34.9 years for the full sample, 35.1
for the continuously married and 29.2 for those who separated or divorced.

Regarding race, the number of respondents coded as "nonwhite" in the
divorced group was considerably higher than in the full sample. 1327
respondents in the full sample were coded as "white" (83.8%) and 257 as
"nonwhite," (16.2%), while in the divorced sample, 25 were coded as "white"
(59.5%) and 17 as "nonwhite" (40.5%). This difference likely reflects, in
part, the higher divorce rates in the American Black population (White=25;
Black=11; Others=6).

Respondents in this study were selected from the full sample (main
plus oversample), and standard weighting procedures were followed. In
general, proportional weighting procedures assign values between zero and
one for categories over-represented in the full sample, and greater than
one for cases under-represented in the full sample. When the sample
weights are summed together, they are equal to the number of cases in the
full sample.

Because a subset of the full sample was selected in this study, an
additional step was necessary. First, the average case weight in the
subset was calculated and then used to standardize case weights before
using the weighting procedure. The variable "weight2," which was used to
weight the sample, was computed by dividing "mufinw93," the final weight
for the full sample at Time Two, by the average case weight in the subset
(1.493). By using this procedure, the sample in the study is
representative of the United States population because "mufinw93" corrects
for Time One and Time Two in terms of representativeness of the sample.
B. Dependent Variables

There are three sets of hypotheses in this study. For the first and third sets of hypotheses the dependent variable is psychological well-being; for the second set, parent-adult child relationships. (Appendix A contains a complete listing of questions used for the study variables).

1. Psychological Well-Being

The three dimensions of psychological well-being chosen for measurement in this study are happiness (positive affect), depression (negative affect or strain), and self-esteem (personal adequacy). Previous research has shown these dimensions to be factorially distinct (e.g. Bryant & Veroff, 1982).

a. Happiness

The concept of "happiness" can be measured in a variety of ways: two of the most widely-used in the divorce literature are (i) Bradburn's (1969) happiness scale, which measures positive affect, negative affect, and provides an affect balance calculated by subtracting negatives from positives; and (ii) the one-item "how are things" measure, which is considered to represent a respondent's overall, global evaluation of general happiness. One advantage of Bradburn's scale is that it is able to capture some of the multidimensionality of "happiness," but one disadvantage is that some of the items for negative affect overlap with items on depression scales such as the CES-D.

There is also a continuing debate in the psychological literature about whether "happiness" reflects the degree to which pleasant emotions outweigh unpleasant emotions, or whether "happiness" (and its two major components, positive and negative affect) are determined more by
personality than by situation (e.g. Eysenck, 1990). Eysenck (1990), for example, argues that happiness stems mainly from personality and that one's personality influences one's emotional reaction to life's events (i.e. personality influences emotional reactions which are then evaluated as happiness/unhappiness). The idea of happiness being determined (at least in part) by personality is supported by research showing that respondent's self-ratings of happiness are fairly stable over periods of 2-3 years (Eysenck, 1990). And although women are generally found to experience (or to report experiencing) more intense emotional states than men, women's and men's self-reports of global happiness have been found to be very similar (Bryant & Veroff, 1982; Bryant & Veroff, 1984; Eysenck, 1990). In addition, Eysenck points out that, although there likely is a social desirability bias in responses to happiness questions, respondent's self-ratings of happiness are usually reasonably close to the ratings of psychologists.

The NSFH uses the global one-item happiness measure, and the question which assesses happiness is as follows: "First, taking things all together, how would you say things are these days. Circle the number that best describes how you feel." Ratings are on a seven point scale ranging from 1 (very unhappy) to 7 (very happy).

Respondents in this study generally reported high levels of happiness with mean scores of 5.652 at Time One and 5.561 at Time Two (out of a possible range of 1-7). Because the distribution for this variable was skewed in a negative direction, the variable scores were reversed (1=7, 2=6, 3=5, 4=4, 5=3, 6=2, 7=1) and logged (skew of transformed scores at T1=.078; T2=.058). To facilitate interpretation of results, the variable
was relabelled unhappiness so that higher scores indicate higher levels of unhappiness.

Although logging scores transforms variables to meet the normality assumption and is correctly used to calculate significance scores, logged scores cannot be accurately compared to other scores that have not been logged. Therefore in this study, reported means are in the original metric for a particular variable, and the intention was that when regression equations were calculated for the purpose of comparing variables (e.g. interaction effects), logged scores would first be converted back to the original metric by calculating the anti-log (anti-log minus one if scores were calculated using the natural log plus one to correct for zero scores in the distribution). However, when analyses were run, none of the interaction terms reached significance.

b. Depression

In the NSFH, depression is measured by a twelve-item version of the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale (CES-D). Respondents were asked to indicate the number of days in the past week they might have felt depressed, fearful, lonely, sad and so on. Items are coded so that higher scores indicate higher depression. Cronbach's alphas for the depression scale were .93 at both Times One and Two.

Congruent with reported high levels of happiness, most respondents in the study reported low levels of depression. Mean scores for depression were 11.541 at Time One and 12.219 at Time Two (out of a possible range of 0-84). Because the distribution for this variable was skewed in a positive direction, scores were logged plus one, to adjust for the skew to 0 (skew of transformed scores; T1=.094; T2=.131).
c. Self-Esteem

The NSFH measures self-esteem with a modified (three-item) version of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1989). On a five-point Likert-type scale where "1" represented "strongly agree" and "5" represented "strongly disagree", respondents were asked to indicate if they agreed or disagreed with statements such as "I am able to do things as well as other people."

Respondents reported high levels of self-esteem with means of 12.195 at Time One and 11.993 at Time Two (out of a possible range of 3-15). The distribution for this variable was also skewed in a positive direction (skew at T1=1.199; T2=.851). Therefore the original variable was reconstructed by reversing and trichotomizing each of the items and then re-adding these items into a scale; the distribution for the resulting scale was approximately normal (skew at T1=.158; T2=.064).

Mean scores for the reconstructed scale were 6.402 at Time One and 6.265 at Time Two (out of a possible range of 3-9). Cronbach's alphas for the original items in the scale were .66 at Time One and .67 at Time Two, and for the recoded items, .70 at Time One and .69 at Time Two.

2. Parent-Adult Child Relationships

In the family literature, parent-adult child relationships are commonly examined from the perspective of Bengtson and colleagues' model of intergenerational solidarity (see Bengtson & Roberts, 1991; Bengtson et al., 1990; Rosenthal, 1987). The model proposes that there are six essential dimensions of parent-child relations: associational solidarity (frequency of interaction), affectional solidarity (subjective judgments concerning the quality of family interactions), consensual solidarity (agreement on values, beliefs), functional solidarity (helping and exchange
of resources), normative solidarity (commitment to norms of familism), and structural solidarity (opportunity structure reflected in number of family members, type, and geographic proximity). All six dimensions are rarely measured in one research project (for an exception see Rossi & Rossi, 1990).

The dimensions chosen to measure parent-adult child relationships in this study are associational and functional solidarity. These dimensions were chosen because of their relevance to identity theory and because of their use by other researchers in this area (e.g. Aquilino, 1994b; Booth & Amato, 1994; Bulcroft & Bulcroft, 1991; Cooney, 1994; White, 1992). Identity theory suggests that the continuing presence of active, positive parent-adult child relationships will have positive effects on the psychological well-being of parents.

The criteria for the selection of the adult children in this study are congruent with those for the parents which were outlined above. Specifically, the adult children must be the respondent's biological or adopted children, nineteen years of age or older at the time of final separation (or mean time of separation for the continuously-married respondents), and may be living either in or out of the respondent's household.

There are a number of methods that researchers can use to calculate scores for parent-adult child relationships: some of these are using maximum scores, average, total/aggregate, selection of the geographically closest child, random selection, oldest or youngest child, and designation of a specific child by the parent. The choice of method varies according to the research purpose of a study and any conceptual framework or theory used. For this study, the decision was made to calculate average scores,
and this decision was made primarily on theoretical grounds. As noted above, identity theory suggests that the parent-adult child relationships in which the parent role-identity is enacted will influence the parent's psychological well-being. Although it is possible that parent role-identity and its salience and influence on well-being are specific to "a" child rather than generally across children, the theory has not been developed enough thus far to make this assumption. Therefore, the choice was made to calculate average scores, which will give an indication of the parent's overall experience in the parental role (see Umberson, 1989a).

The original intention in this study was to use predivorce and postdivorce measures of parent-adult child relationships in a doubly multivariate repeated measures MANOVA, but the size of the sample precluded this method of analysis. Because the sample size at Time One was small, it was decided to select the sample based on children who were nineteen at the time of separation (or at the mean time of separation for the nondivorced) rather than nineteen at Time One. This decision meant that support could not be measured at Time One because these questions were asked only for children nineteen and older at that time (and, in addition, the support measures were changed between Time One and Time Two). Consequently, relationship measures are for Time Two only.

a. Contact

Wave Two of the NSFH includes two questions on contact for nonresidential children age nineteen or over. The first question is, "During the past 12 months, how often did you see (child)?"; and the second question is, "During the past 12 months, how often did you talk on the telephone or receive a letter from (child)?" Response categories range from "1 - not at all" to "6 - more than once a week."
For the purposes of this study, the variable of interest is whether or not there is a continuing relationship between the parent and the child; therefore, the mode of contact (visits, letters, phone calls) is less important than the existence of and frequency of such contact. Consequently, these two measures were combined into one contact measure, averaged over all sons and all daughters as noted previously. Because the rating categories are ordinal measures and therefore cannot be added, the mode of contact with the higher rating is used. Contact with coresidential children is coded at the maximum (6). Previous researchers have also combined contact in person, by phone and by mail into one measure (see Aquilino, 1994a, 1994b; Booth & Amato, 1994; Umberson, 1992). Aquilino uses NSFH data, but he does not describe the method he used to combine these measures.

Parents in this study were generally in frequent contact with their adult children. Only four respondents reported having no contact at all with any of their adult children, and with (6) being coded as maximum contact, the mean score for average contact is 5.2. Scores for response category (7), "some other frequency," were deleted from analyses because there is no way of telling whether these were meant to be some other higher or some other lower. The original distribution of scores showed a negative skew (1.273), so scores were squared to transform the shape of the distribution to more closely approximate a normal distribution (skew T2: .720).

b. Support

The interview schedule for Wave Two includes several questions about support given to and received from adult children. There are four questions about instrumental support that the respondent may have given to
a child in the last month: help with shopping, errands, or transportation; help with housework, yard work, car repairs, or other work around the house; help with child care while children were working; or help with child care at other times. In addition there is one question asking if the respondent had given a child advice, encouragement, moral or emotional support. If the respondent did provide these forms of support, a "yes" is recorded by household member number of the child. The questions for receiving support from children are identical except that no child care questions were asked.

Although parents in the study reported being in frequent contact with their adult children, they were generally not highly involved in giving them support in the response categories provided by the NSFH2. With a possible range of 0 to 5 (5 categories of support per child), the mean score for average support given is 1.099. The distribution of scores for this variable was also skewed in a positive direction (1.055), so scores were logged plus one to adjust for the skew to 0 (skew T2: .130).

Scores for average support received were lower than for average support given, with a mean scores of .676 out of a possible range of 0 to 3 (3 categories of support per child; the NSFH2 includes child care the parent gives but not child care the parent may receive). The distribution of scores for this variable was also skewed in a positive direction, and scores were also logged plus one (skew T2: .611).

The subtests in Hypothesis 2 predict that the effect of divorce on mother-child relationships will be greater for mother-daughters than for mother-sons and for father-daughters than for father-sons. As noted previously the scores for contact, support given and support received are average scores. Because the study uses average scores rather than the
score from one selected child, the subtests were analyzed by calculating the proportion of adult children who are female. The distribution for the "femcomp" measure was approximately normal (skew=.063).

C. Independent and Conditional Variables

The independent variable for the three sets of hypotheses is divorce, which is operationalized as a change in marital status between Time One and Time Two from currently married and living with spouse (coded 0) to currently separated or divorced from spouse at Time Two (i.e. no intervening marriage or divorce; coded 1).

Conditional variables for Hypothesis Two are gender of parent and gender of child (coded female=1; male=0). For Hypothesis Three, the three measures of the parent-adult child relationship were entered as conditional variables to test for the hypothesized moderating effect of the parent-adult child relationship on the parent's post-divorce psychological adjustment. In Hypothesis 3a, gender of parent is also a conditional variable because the effects were predicted to be greater for women than for men.

D. Control Variables

This is a study of the effects of a specific change in marital status (divorce after a long-term marriage) on parent-adult child relationships and consequently on parent's psychological well-being. The primary focus of the study is on comparing parent-adult child relationships and parent's psychological well-being for those parents who divorce and for those who remain married rather than on analyzing the process variables which contribute to changes in relationships and well-being over the divorce process. The control variables chosen, therefore, are those which are
applicable to both divorced and married respondents. As noted in the previous section, the variables used as controls in this study are income, assets, race, age of respondent, marital cohort, degree of social integration, and religiosity.

1. **Income/Assets**

Income is measured using an NSFH constructed measure of household income at Time One (essentially a measure of social class) and Time Two (capturing change).

As with income, an NSFH constructed measure of assets (including material assets, savings, and investments, minus debts) was used. Assets were also measured at Time One and Time Two.

The distributions for assets and household income were highly skewed (assets T1=16.523, T2=4.219; household income T1=6.46, T2=2.91), with mean scores for assets of $120,530.02 at Time One and $128,571.37 at Time Two, and mean scores for household income of $46,567.67 at Time One and $53,285.37 at Time Two. Logging did not bring the skew for these distributions down to a workable number, so these variables were transformed by trichotomizing. Assets were recoded as follows: Time One - (lo thru 42953=1) (43000 thru 94363=2) (95000 thru hi=3) and Time Two - (lo thru 42999=1) (43000 thru 94999=2) (95000 thru hi=3), with resulting skews of -.007 at Time One and -.194 at Time Two. Household income was recoded as follows: Time One - (lo thru 28349=1) (28350 thru 49450=2) (49451 thru hi=3) and Time Two (lo thru 30804=1) (30805 thru 58000=2) (58001 thru hi=3), with resulting skews of .00 at both times.
2. **Race**

Based on the sample numbers as reported above, race is treated as a dummy variable; nonwhite (0), white (having more respondents - 1).

3. **Age of Respondent**

Age was dichotomized into younger (31-49) and older (50-85) age groups. The age of 50 was chosen as the dividing line because respondents who were 50 and older in 1987-1988 belong to the pre-Baby Boom generations. 37.5% of the respondents were in the younger age group, and 62.5% were in the older age group.

4. **Marital Cohort**

The measure used for marital cohort in this study was "years married." When intercorrelations were calculated, intercorrelations between age of respondent and years married were high (.88794). Although this was not unexpected, it indicated that a choice had to be made between controlling for age and controlling for marital cohort. Because age is the more consistently-used measure for later divorce in the literature, the decision was made to use age of respondent as the control. However, in an attempt to capture some of the cohort effects, age was dichotomized (31-49, 50-85) and included as an interaction term in analyses.

5. **Degree of Social Integration**

Social integration was operationalized using the items in Question 16 of the self-administered questionnaire (SE-2). Question 16 asks how often respondents spend a social evening with relatives, neighbors, co-workers and/or friends, attend a social event at their church or synagogue [note: this question does not include mosques or other places of fellowship], go
to a bar or tavern, or participate in a group recreational activity such as bowling, golf, or square dancing. Response categories are "never (0), several times a year, about once a month, about once a week, several times a week (4)."

Although originally included as a control variable, participation in voluntary organizations was not included in the final analyses because the relevant questions were not equivalent at Time One and Time Two. At Time One respondents were asked to indicate which of seventeen organizations they participated in, and at Time Two they were asked to indicate which of three groupings of organizations they participated in. The combination of organizations in these questions precluded measurement of exactly which organizations the respondent was indicating.

Overall, respondents were not particularly involved in the social activities listed, with mean scores of 7.531 at Time One and 10.602 at Time Two (out of a possible range of 0-28). The distributions for this variable approached normality at .525 and .331.

The scores for other adults in the household were dichotomized into (0=no other adults) and (1=other adults excluding adult children). At Time One 1575 respondents (99.4%) reported another adult in the household, and 9 (.6%) reported no other adult in the household (respondents who were living apart from their spouse for reasons other than marital problems, e.g. military service, were included in the sample). At Time Two 1547 respondents (97.7%) reported at least one other adult in the household, and 37 reported none (2.3%).
6. **Religiosity**

The scores for religiosity (measured as church attendance) were widely distributed, ranging from 0 to 2555 times a year. To transform the distribution of scores for this variable into an approximately normal distribution, three outliers (520, 1144, 2555) were coded missing and the remaining scores were logged plus one (skew before transformations 15.514; after transformations -.432).

7. **Geographic Distance**

Geographic distance was added as a control because it has been found to be a significant predictor of support exchanges between parents and adult children (e.g. Rossi & Rossi, 1990). The relevant question in the Time Two interview asks parents how many miles away each nonresidential adult child lives, and these distances were summed and averaged across children. The geographic distance for adult children living in the household at Time Two was coded as 0.

The mean score for distance at Time Two was 363.0 miles, with a possible range of 0 to 9000 miles, and the distribution of scores was skewed in a positive direction (i.e. most parents and adult children live relatively close together). To approximate a normal distribution, the scores for this variable were logged (skew T2 before transformations 4.393; after transformations -.163).
E. Tests for Multicollinearity

A correlation matrix showed only age of respondent and years married to be highly correlated (.894) and, with years married dropped, the variables included in analyses met the assumption of independence. Tolerance statistics also indicated no problems with multicollinearity or singularity.
Chapter Four

Results

There were three sets of hypotheses in this study, each with three dependent variables. The first hypothesis predicted a negative effect of divorce after a long-term marriage on psychological well-being, measured as happiness (unhappiness), depression, and self-esteem. The second set of hypotheses predicted positive effects of divorce on mother-adult child relationships, measured as contact, support given and support received, and negative effects on father-adult child relationships. And the third set predicted that parent-adult child relationships would have a positive effect on postdivorce psychological well-being, and that this effect would be greater for mothers than for fathers.

To test these hypotheses, a series of hierarchical regression procedures were used. The exact nature of these procedures is discussed in respect to each hypothesis; however, the general pattern for the first and third set of hypotheses was as follows (in the second set divorce was entered first): the Time One score on the dependent variable was entered first in order to control for the effects of Time One on Time Two (thereby resulting in an analysis of change); then Divorce was added to calculate zero-order effects; next the complete set of controls were added to determine which of the controls were significant. In succeeding regressions only significant controls were entered, and the two- and three-way interaction terms were entered last to test for significant differences by gender, age and divorce. In hierarchical regression, effects are re-estimated at each step. Therefore in all steps after step 2 the divorce effect is net of all other variables in the model. When this effect (i.e. of
Hypothesis 1: Divorce after a long-term marriage will have a negative effect on parent's psychological well-being.

To test the first hypothesis, separate analyses were performed for unhappiness, depression and self-esteem. For each dependent variable, two series of regressions were run. In the first series, Time One psychological well-being and divorce were entered in the first step, and the complete set of controls in the second step. In the second series, Time One psychological well-being and divorce were entered in the first step, significant controls in the second, all two-way interactions with respondent's gender, divorce and age on the third, and the three-way interaction of respondent's gender, divorce and age in the fourth. For testing all hypotheses in the study, the $R^2$ change and its significance level were examined at each step to determine which regression model best fit the data. Interactions were only considered if the entire block added significantly to the variance explained.

The results of the final regression models testing the effect of divorce on psychological well-being are shown in Tables 2, 3 and 4 (Appendix B).

Because the scores for happiness were reversed, results will be present in terms of "unhappiness" in order to simplify interpretation. Regression results show Time One unhappiness to be the strongest predictor of Time Two unhappiness ($B=.305$, $p<=.001$), and that divorce had a positive
effect on the change in unhappiness between Time One and Time Two (B=.054, p<.05) with the divorced respondents reporting higher levels of unhappiness at Time Two than the continuously-married respondents.

There are also main effects for gender of parent (B=.080, p<.05) and Time Two social activities (B=-.055, p<.05), with gender of parent being positively related to change in unhappiness and social activities negatively related to change in unhappiness. Overall, women reported higher levels of unhappiness at Time Two than did men, while respondents who were more socially active at Time Two reported lower levels of unhappiness than those who were less socially active.

None of the interactions were significant, indicating that the effect of divorce on parent-adult child contact did not significantly differ for mothers or fathers, or for younger and older respondents. The adjusted \( R^2 \) statistic for the final model (\( R^2 = .118, p<.001 \)) shows that around 12% of the variance is accounted for in the model.

Becoming separated or divorced between Time One and Time Two also had a significantly positive effect on the change in depression between Time One and Time Two (B=.052, p<.05), with separated/divorced respondents reporting significantly higher levels of depression at Time Two than continuously-married respondents. As with unhappiness, Time One depression is the strongest predictor of Time Two depression (B=.414, p<.001). There are also main effects for gender of respondent (B=.090, p<.001) which was positively related to change in depression between Time One and Time Two, and household income at Time Two which was negatively related (B=-.118, p<.001). Overall, at Time Two women in the study reported higher levels of depression than did men and respondents with higher incomes reported lower levels.
Again, none of the interactions were significant, indicating that there were no significant differences in the effect divorce had on depression for fathers and mothers, or younger and older respondents. The adjusted $R^2$ statistic for the final model ($R^2 = .216, p<.001$) shows that around 22% of the variance is accounted for in the model.

Divorce showed no significant effect on the change in self-esteem between Time One and Time Two. As with the preceding analyses, Time One self-esteem is the strongest predictor of Time Two self-esteem ($B = .390, p<.001$), although there were main effects for both Time Two household income and for gender of respondent, with Time Two household income being positively related to change in self-esteem between Time One and Time Two ($B = .105, p<.001$) and gender of respondent being negatively related ($B = -.090, p<.001$). Respondents with higher income at Time Two reported higher levels of self-esteem and overall, women reported lower levels of self-esteem than men.

None of the interactions were significant, indicating again that the effects of divorce on self-esteem did not differ significantly for mothers and fathers, or for younger and older respondents. The adjusted $R^2$ statistic for the final model ($R^2 = .180, p<.001$) shows that around 18% of the variance is accounted for in the model.

In summary, the results support the hypothesis for the measures of happiness and depression, but not for self-esteem.
Hypothesis 2: Divorce after a long-term marriage will have differential effects on mother-adult child relationships and father-adult child relationships.

Hypothesis 2a: Divorce after a long-term marriage will have a positive effect on mother-adult child relationships.

Hypothesis 2b: Divorce after a long-term marriage will have a negative effect on father-adult child relationships.

Separate analyses were performed for contact, average support given and average support received. For each dependent variable, three series of regressions were run. In the first series, divorce was entered in the first step and the complete set of controls in the second step. In the second series, Time Two depression was added to the set of significant controls, and the effects in the first series were re-estimated. Time Two depression was added to the regression after subsequent tests on Hypothesis 3 revealed a significant positive relationship between support received and Time Two depression which, as this is correlational data, could be indicating that higher levels of parental depression may stimulate greater involvement of children in the parent-adult child relationship. Because mothers reported higher levels of depression than fathers, the effects for depression could confound any gender differences in the effects of divorce on parent-adult child relationships, and so Time Two depression was added as a control for the second set of hypotheses. Finally, in the third series divorce was entered in the first step, significant controls plus the significant Time
Two depression measure in the second step, all two-way interactions between divorce, gender and age in the third, and the three-way interaction (divorce by gender of parent by age) on the fourth step.

The results of the regression models testing the effects of divorce on parent-adult child relationships are shown in Tables 5, 6 and 7 (Appendix B). These results show divorce to have a negative effect on Time Two average contact ($B = -0.056, p < 0.05$).

There are also main effects for Time One age ($B = -0.169, p < 0.001$), geographic distance ($B = -0.488, p < 0.001$), gender of parent ($B = 0.075, p < 0.01$), Time One household income ($B = 0.091, p < 0.001$), Time One assets ($B = 0.072, p < 0.01$), and Time Two depression ($B = 0.069, p < 0.001$). Overall, respondents who were older and those who lived farther away reported less contact; women and those respondents who had higher household income at Time One, higher assets at Time One and higher levels of depression at Time Two all had higher contact with their adult children than their counterparts in each category.

None of the interactions were significant, including divorce by gender of parent and divorce by age, indicating that the effects of divorce on change in contact did not differ for mothers or fathers, or for those respondents over or under fifty. In the final regression model, the adjusted $R^2$ statistic ($R^2 = 0.322, p < 0.001$) shows that around 32% of the variance is accounted for in this model.

Becoming separated or divorced had no significant effect on parent's reports of average support given to adult children. There were significant main effects for Time One age ($B = -0.113, p < 0.001$), geographic distance ($B = -0.136, p < 0.001$), gender of parent ($B = 0.108, p < 0.001$), Time One household income ($B = 0.154, p < 0.001$), Time Two assets ($B = 0.102, p < 0.001$), Time One social activities ($B = 0.091, p < 0.01$), and Time Two depression ($B = 0.083, p < 0.01$).
Overall, respondents who were older and those who lived farther away reported less support giving, and women and those respondents who had higher household income at Time One, higher assets at Time Two, more social activities at Time One, and higher levels of depression at Time Two reported giving more support to their adult children.

Again none of the interactions were significant, indicating that the effects of divorce on average support given did not differ for mothers and fathers, or for older and younger respondents. In the final regression model, the adjusted $R^2$ statistic ($R^2 = .114, p < .001$) shows that around 11% of the variance is accounted for in this model.

The results also show divorce to have no significant effect on the average support that parents reported receiving from their adult children. There were, however, main effects for age ($B = -.121, p < .001$), geographic distance ($B = -.108, p < .001$), gender of parent ($B = .123, p < .001$), and Time Two depression ($B = .122, p < .001$). Overall, older respondents and those who lived farther away received less support, and women and respondents who had higher levels of depression received more support. Again, none of the interaction terms were significant, indicating that there were no gender (of parent) differences in the effects of divorce on average support parents received from their adult children. The adjusted $R^2$ in the final model ($R^2 = .068, p < .001$) shows that the model accounts for around 7% of the variance.

In summary, the results showed only partial support for the second set of hypotheses. As predicted, divorce had a negative effect on father-adult child contact, but also on mother-adult child contact. There were no significant effects on either support given or support received.
Subtest 2a: The positive effect of divorce after a long-term marriage on mother-adult child relationships will be greater for mother-daughter relationships than for mother-son relationships.

Subtest 2b: The negative effect of divorce after a long-term marriage on father-adult child relationships will be greater for father-daughter relationships than for father-son relationships.

In these subtests, the variable "femcomp" was added to the regression equations to test whether a higher proportion of daughters among the divorced respondent's adult children made a significant difference in the reported levels of average contact, average support given, and average support received. Separate analyses were performed for the three dependent variables. For each dependent variable, two series of regressions were run. In the first series, divorce was entered in the first step, gender of parent and "femcomp" in the second, and significant controls (including Time Two depression) as a block on the third. In the second series, divorce was entered in the first step, gender of parent and "femcomp" on the second, significant controls on the third, all two-way interactions between divorce, gender of parent and "femcomp" on the fourth, and the three-way interaction (divorce by gender of parent by femcomp) on the fifth.

When the regression models for Hypotheses 2a and 2b were rerun with the addition of "femcomp," there was a main effect of "femcomp" for contact (B=.103, p<.001) and for support giving (B=.064, p=.05), but none for support received. Overall, respondents with a higher proportion of daughters in the composition of their families reported higher levels of
contact and of support giving. Again none of the interactions reached significance, indicating that the effects of divorce on parent-daughter and on parent-son relationships did not differ by gender of parent. The adjusted $R^2$ for the final contact model ($R^2 = .332$, $p<.001$) showed that the model accounted for around 33% of the variance; the adjusted $R^2$ for the final support given model ($R^2 = .117$, $p<.001$) showed that the model accounted for around 12% of the variance; and the adjusted $R^2$ for the final support received model ($R^2 = .068$, $p<.001$) showed that the model accounted for around 7% of the variance.

The nonsignificant interaction effects for divorce by gender by "femcomp" did not support the gender differences predicted in subtests 2a and 2b.

**Hypothesis 3: Strong parent-adult child relationships will moderate the negative effects of divorce after a long-term marriage on the psychological well-being of the parent.**

Separate analyses were performed for unhappiness, depression and self-esteem. For each dependent variable, three series of regressions were run. In the first series, Time One psychological well-being and divorce were entered in the first step, and the significant controls from Hypothesis One as a block in the second. In the second series, the three relationship measures of contact, support given, and support received were entered as a block in a third step. In the third series, Time One psychological well-being and divorce were entered in the first step, significant controls on the second, the three relationship measures on the third, and all two-way interactions between divorce and the relationship measures on the fourth.
In the analyses for unhappiness, the $R^2$ change was nonsignificant when the three relationship measures were added in a block, indicating that these measures of average contact, average support given and average support received did not have significant effects on the change in parent's levels of unhappiness between Time One and Time Two. There were main effects for gender of parent ($B=.076$, $p<.01$), Time One unhappiness ($B=.305$, $p<.001$), and Time Two social activities ($B=-.059$, $p<.05$), indicating that overall, women and those respondents who reported more unhappiness at Time One reported more unhappiness at Time Two, and those respondents who reported more social activities at Time Two reported less unhappiness.

When the interaction terms were added in a block, the $R^2$ change statistic was nonsignificant, indicating that the fit of the model was not improved by adding in the interaction terms. That is, parent-adult child relationships did not significantly moderate the negative effects of divorce on happiness. In the final model, the effect of divorce on unhappiness ($p=.07$) is reduced only slightly from that found in the analyses for Hypothesis 1 ($p<.05$). The adjusted $R^2$ ($R^2 =.117$, $p<.001$) indicates that the final model accounts for around 12% of the variance (similar to Hypothesis 1).

In the analyses for depression, the addition of the relationship measures in a block produced a significant $R^2$ change ($R^2 =.018$, $p<.001$), with support received showing a significant positive relationship with Time Two depression ($B=.120$, $p<.001$). Time One depression still showed a significant main effect ($B=.409$, $p<.001$), and the effect of divorce was reduced slightly (from $p<.05$ to $p=.051$). These results indicate that respondents who reported receiving more support from their children, those who were more depressed at Time One, and those who were divorced had higher levels of
depression at Time Two. There were also significant main effects for gender of parent (B=.070, p<.01) and Time Two household income (B=-.135, p<.001): women reported higher levels of depression and those respondents who reported higher household income at Time Two reported lower levels of depression.

Overall, divorced and continuously married parents who reported receiving more support reported higher levels of depression rather than lower levels. In addition, the measures of contact and support given did not moderate the negative effects of divorce on depression. In the final model for this test, the adjusted $R^2$ ($R^2 = .232$, $p<.001$) indicates that the model accounts for 23% of the variance (similar to Hypothesis 1). The results of the regression models testing for the effects of parent-adult child relationships on the parent's postdivorce psychological well-being can be found in Table 8 (Appendix B).

In the analyses for self-esteem, the three relationship measures and their interaction terms with divorce also failed to produce a significant $R^2$ change when entered in subsequent blocks to the regression, showing that these measures did not have a significant effect on change in self-esteem between Time One and Time Two. As in Hypothesis 1 there were significant positive main effects for Time One self-esteem (B=.390, $p<.001$) and Time Two household income (B=.105, $p<.001$), and significant negative main effects for gender of parent (B=-.096, $p<.01$). Overall, respondents with higher levels of self-esteem at Time One and those with high household income at Time Two reported higher self-esteem at Time Two, and women reported lower self-esteem.

Although the interactions terms were not significant, the magnitude of the nonsignificant results for the effect of divorce was, however, reduced
slightly (from p=.92 to p=.78). In the final model, the adjusted $R^2$ statistic ($R^2 = .180, p<.001$) shows that the model accounts for around 18% of the variance (similar to Hypothesis 1).

**Hypothesis 3a:** The moderating effects of strong parent-adult child relationships on psychological well-being will be greater for women than for men.

In the analyses for this hypothesis, the two-way interactions with gender of parent (i.e. gender of parent by relationship variables) and the other two-way interactions with divorce were entered as a block in the fourth step, and in the final step the three-way interactions (divorce by gender of parent by relationship variables) were entered. None of the interactions produced a significant change in the value of $R^2$ for any of the three measures of psychological well-being, indicating that the effect of parent-adult child relationships on the psychological well-being of divorced parents did not differ for mothers or for fathers. The results are therefore similar to the results for Hypotheses 1 and 3.

In the analyses for unhappiness there were positive main effects for gender of parent ($B=.076, p<.01$) and negative main effects for social activities at Time Two ($B=-.059, p<.05$), and the effect of divorce was reduced (between Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 3) to a trend ($p=.07$). The strongest predictor of Time Two unhappiness was Time One unhappiness ($B=.305, p<.001$). In the final model, the adjusted $R^2$ is .117 ($p<.001$), indicating that this model accounts for around 12% of the variance.

In the analyses for depression, the three relationship measures added as a block produced a significant $R^2$ change ($R^2 = .018, p<.001$), with average support received having a significant positive effect on levels of
depression (B=.120, p<.001). The results also show significant negative main effects for Time Two household income (B=-.135, p<.001), and positive main effects for gender of parent (B=-.070, p<.01), depression at Time One (B=.396, p<.001), and the effect of divorce is reduced slightly (to p=.051). In the final model for this analysis, the adjusted $R^2$ is .232 (p<.001), indicating that this model accounts for around 23% of the variance.

In the analyses for self-esteem there were negative main effects for gender of parent (B=-.296, p<.001), positive main effects for Time One self-esteem (B=.374, p<.001) and household income at Time Two (B=.198, p<.001), and divorce was not significant. In the final model for this analysis, the adjusted $R^2$ is .181 (p<.001), indicating that this model accounts for around 18% of the variance.

Consistent with the lack of gender interactions in any of the study results thus far, the interaction terms in the analyses for Hypothesis 3a also did not reach significance. The results of this study did not, therefore, support Hypothesis 3 or 3a; reported levels of contact, support given and support received did not moderate the negative effects of divorce on happiness, depression or self-esteem for mothers or fathers.
Chapter Five

Discussion

The purpose of this study has been to answer the following three questions about divorce: first, what are the effects of recent divorce after long-term marriage on the psychological well-being of parents; second, what are the effects of recent parental divorce on parent-adult child relationships; and third, what are the effects of parent-adult child relationships on the psychological well-being of recently divorced parents? Data for the study were taken from two waves of the National Survey on Families and Households, a nationally representative data set developed by prominent family scholars in the United States. The present study is, to the best knowledge of the author, the first prospective longitudinal study of divorce after long-term marriage.

Reviewers of the divorce literature repeatedly note that there has been little empirical research on middle and later life divorce, and little theoretical development (e.g. Coleman & Ganong, 1993; Lloyd & Zick, 1986). There has been even less empirical research that has specifically looked at divorces occurring after long-term marriages, or at the effects of these divorces on family relationships and on the parent's psychological well-being. Because of the dearth of research in this area, there are not clear theoretical frameworks to follow. For this study, identity theory was used to provide a theoretical framework to guide the development of hypotheses and the interpretation of results in conjunction with the existing literature.

Overall, the analyses in this study produced mixed results. The first hypothesis, that divorce would have negative effects on psychological well-being, was partially supported with divorce having the expected effects on change in happiness and depression between Time One
and Time Two, but no significant effects on change in self-esteem. The second set of hypotheses, that divorce would have positive effects on mother-child relationships and negative effects on father-child relationships, had some support with divorce having negative effects for father-child contact, but also for mother-child contact. There were, however, no significant effects of divorce on either support given or support received. And finally the third set of hypotheses, that strong parent-adult child relationships would moderate the negative effects of divorce on psychological well-being and that this moderating effect would be greater for mothers than for fathers, was not supported. The major findings of the study are that for these respondents divorce had negative effects on change in self-ratings of happiness and depression between Time One and Time Two, and negative effects on parent-adult child contact for both fathers and mothers. Perhaps one of the most striking findings of this study is the absence of gender interactions for any of the hypotheses.

I. Divorce After Long-Term Marriage and Psychological Well-Being

A. Happiness

In general, the results for happiness are congruent with previous cross-sectional research (Gove & Shin, 1989; Marks, 1995; Mastekaasa, 1994b) and previous longitudinal research (Booth & Amato, 1991; Chiriboga
et al, 1991; Hetherington et al, 1978) showing divorce to have a negative effect on self-ratings of happiness. Previous longitudinal research (e.g. Booth & Amato, 1991) has shown negative effects of divorce on self-reports of happiness to attenuate with time. For the majority of divorced respondents in this study, however, self-ratings of happiness are still lower an average (mean) of 2.6 years postseparation than the self-ratings of continuously-married respondents.

Results from previous studies have also been mixed regarding gender and age differences in the effects of divorce on happiness. Regarding gender, the results of this study are congruent with the cross-sectional research of Gove and Shin (1989) and the longitudinal research of Booth and Amato (1999) showing no gender differences. Regarding age, the results of this study are congruent with the cross-sectional research of Hammond and Muller (1992) and Gove and Shin (1989), but contrary to that of Chiriboga (1982) who found that recently divorced older respondents reported less happiness than recently divorced younger respondent.

B. Depression

In general the results for depression are also congruent with previous cross-sectional (Kurdek, 1991; Marks, 1995, Mastekaasa, 1994b, Riessman & Gerstel, 1985) and longitudinal research (Booth & Amato, 1991; Kitson & Holmes, 1992; Menaghan & Lieberman, 1986) showing divorce to have a negative effect on self-ratings of depression. Similar to happiness, previous longitudinal studies (e.g. Booth & Amato, 1991) have shown negative effects of divorce on self-reports of depression attenuate with time. The results of this study, however, show that for the majority of divorced respondents, negative effects are still being experienced an average of 2.6 years postseparation.
Results of previous research have been mixed regarding gender and age differences. Regarding gender, the results of this study are congruent with the cross-sectional research of Aneshenshel, Frericks and Clark (1981) and the longitudinal research of Booth and Amato (1991) and Menaghan and Lieberman (1986) which show no gender differences in the effects of divorce on depression. And regarding age, the results are congruent with the cross-sectional research of Gander (1991), but contrary to cross-sectional research that shows divorced older respondents reporting less depression than divorced younger respondents (Gove & Shin, 1989; Roach & Kitson, 1989). The finding of no age differences is also congruent with the longitudinal research of Kitson and Holmes (1992).

C. Self-Esteem

Unlike the results for happiness and depression, the results for self-esteem did not support the hypothesis. In previous empirical research the results for the effects of divorce on self-esteem have been mixed, and the findings of no divorce differences in this study are congruent with the cross-sectional studies of Marks (1995) and Weingarten (1985) and with the longitudinal studies of Doherty, Su and Needle (1989) and Chiriboga, Catron and associates (1991).

The findings of no significant gender differences are also congruent with the cross-sectional research of Gove and Shin (1989) and Weingarten (1985) and with the longitudinal research of Doherty, Su and Needle (1989) and Kitson and Holmes (1992). Similarly, the present findings regarding no age differences are congruent with the cross-sectional research of Gove and Shin (1989) and the longitudinal research of Kitson and Holmes (1992).

The nonsignificant results for the effects of divorce on self-esteem are contrary to the hypothesized prediction which was based in part on
Stryker's identity theory; the expectation was that the loss of the spouse role identity would have a negative effect on self-esteem. Because the spouse role identity is highly salient for most North Americans (e.g., Thoits, 1992), it was reasoned that the termination of this role identity after a long-term marriage would have negative effects on self-esteem. An alternative explanation for this unexpected result, however, may be found in research literature which is suggesting that people who divorce after a long-term marriage may take a long time reaching the decision to separate (Decker & Langelier, 1978; Hagestad et al., 1984; Melichar & Chiriboga, 1985). If this is the case, the spouse role identity for at least one partner may have become less salient. Consequently, negative effects for those more invested in the spouse role identity may be washed out by neutral (or positive) effects for those less invested in that role identity.

Perhaps, however, even for respondents highly invested in the spouse role identity, divorce can have both positive and negative effects on self-esteem. For example, Chiriboga and associates (1991), in their postdivorce longitudinal study, found that self-evaluations on most dimensions of self-concept did not change significantly over the 3.5 years of their study, but did find that the divorced group scored significantly higher than the married comparison group on negative self, vulnerable self, and mastery, which they interpreted as suggesting that the divorce process may involve both positive and negative changes in overall self-image.
II. Divorce After Long-Term Marriage and Parent-Adult Child Relationships

The second set of hypotheses in this study predicted that divorce after a long-term marriage would have differential effects on mother-adult child and father-adult child relationships, with effects being positive for mothers and negative for fathers. There was little support for these predictions; results showed negative effects for both father-child and mother-child contact and no significant effects for either support given or support received.

A. Contact

The measure of contact in this study was chosen in part to allow comparison with current research from the adult child's perspective, and the results of the study are congruent with the findings of Aquilino (1994b) that divorce has a significantly negative effect on contact for both mothers and fathers. No direct comparisons with previous research of the effects of divorce after long-term marriage on parent-adult child contact from the parent’s perspective are possible because I know of no such studies to date that have included a quantitative measure of contact.

Although the results of this study show divorce to have a negative effect on contact with adult children, there is no divorce by gender interaction, that is, the negative effects on contact are not significantly different for fathers than for mothers. Consequently these results do not reflect the strong mother-child bond which has been found in previous research on middle and later life divorce (Hagestad et al, 1984; Weingarten, 1988), but do support results from studies showing a decreasingly negative effect of divorce on father-child contact as the child's age at time of divorce increases (Bulcroft & Bulcroft, 1991;
Bumpass & Sweet, 1991; Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1990). Because the results of no significant differences between the effects of divorce on contact for mothers and fathers is supported by research from the adult child's perspective but is contrary to the theoretical expectations of this study, these results bear closer examination.

First it should be noted that previous research (e.g. Rossi & Rossi, 1990) has found high congruence between parents and children on objective indicators such as contact and fairly high congruence on parent-adult child relationships in general. It seems likely then, that if parents were biased in their reporting, they would report more contact than they were actually experiencing, just as parents tend to report higher levels of intergenerational relationship quality than children do (Rossi & Rossi, 1990). If this is the case, these analyses represent a conservative test of the hypothesis. Unfortunately in the NSFH data set, there is no way to verify the parents' and children's reports for the sample used in this study.

From the author's perspective, the most striking finding in this study is the absence of any significant divorce by gender of parent interactions for parent-adult child relationships or for the effects of these relationships on the parent's divorce adjustment. In previous studies of divorce after long-term marriage, fathers have been found to be much more likely than mothers to report deteriorating relationships or lost contact with at least one child (Hagestedt et al, 1984; Wright & Maxwell, 1991). The use of an average contact measure in this study, rather than the more commonly used maximum contact with any child, was an attempt to capture some of the troubled relationships reported by some fathers and also by some mothers (Weingarten, 1988). Consequently, the
finding of no significant differences in the effects of divorce on father-child and mother-child postdivorce contact may be suggesting that the sex differential in problematic postdivorce parent-child relationships is not as great as the two studies cited above appear to indicate.

The results showing no significant differences in the effects of divorce upon levels of contact for mothers and fathers are also congruent with the growing body of fatherhood research which is showing that the father role is highly salient to the majority of fathers, but that their involvement in that role is limited by structural, institutional and cultural constraints (e.g. Cohen, 1987; Kruk, 1993; Lewis & O'Brien, 1987; Pleck, 1985). It is interesting to speculate upon the possible changes in these constraints that may be occurring when parents divorce at later stages in the family life cycle. For example, fathers may be more secure in their jobs and careers and facing less occupational demands, while mothers may be returning to school or paid employment or increasing the number of hours worked, thus decreasing time available for mother-child contact. The study of women's career paths, although germane to this topic, is very complex and was, albeit reluctantly, not included in the present study. The important point here is that the negative effects of divorce on contact did not differ significantly for fathers and mothers, thus suggesting that the role identity of parent and the parent-adult child relationship was equally salient for the mothers and fathers in this sample.

The subtests for Hypothesis 2 predicted that the effects of divorce would be greater for the mother-daughter relationship (positive) and for the father-daughter relationship (negative). Although the variable "femcomp," proportion of daughters to sons, has a positive main effect on
contact, i.e. overall having more daughters was associated with having more contact, there was no divorce by gender of parent by "femcomp" interaction, indicating that having more daughters did not significantly influence the negative effects of divorce on parent-child contact for mothers or for fathers. Again, these results suggest that from the parent's perspective, the parent-child relationship is equally salient for divorced mothers and for divorced fathers, and for divorced parents of sons and divorced parents of daughters. As contact provides the opportunity for support exchanges and perhaps the building of close parent-child relationships (see Moss & Moss, 1992), the nonsignificant gender composition effects found in this study warrant further investigation with measures specific to individual daughters and sons rather than with an overall proportionate measure.

B. Support Given

Being separated or divorced at Time Two did not have a significant effect on the levels of average support given to adult children reported by fathers and mothers in this sample. Contrary to expectations, mothers did not appear to increase their levels of support giving in response to the termination of the spousal role relationship nor did father's involvement in support giving decrease after separation or divorce. Although overall mothers reported giving more support than fathers, the effects of divorce on support giving were not significantly different for mothers and fathers (i.e. there was no divorce by gender of parent interaction). As with contact, there was also no divorce by age interaction, indicating that effects of divorce on support given did not differ significantly for younger and older respondents.
Although previous studies have examined support giving from the adult child's perspective and from the everdivorced parent's perspective (i.e. parents who have ever been divorced), there is little information on support giving from parents who have recently separated or divorced after a long-term marriage. Aquilino, in his 1994 study from the adult child's perspective, found that his respondents reported receiving significantly less support from divorced parents than from continuously-married parents. In his study, however, divorce is not necessarily recent (0-15 years) and support measures (NSFH) do not distinguish support from mothers from support from fathers. The study by Hagestad, Smyer and Stierman (1984), however, did find that 90% of mothers and 58% of fathers said that relationships with their children had remained the same or improved. The results from the present study suggest that on average the support-giving dimension of the parent-adult child relationship appears to have remained the same.

The absence of gender differences in postdivorce support giving suggests that when parents divorce after a long-term marriage, fathers (as well as mothers) may have been able to build up relationships with their children that are strong enough to make the transition from intact family to divorced family. Perhaps, as has been suggested by Kruk (1993) for divorced fathers of younger children, some of the fathers who divorced after a long-term marriage were able to establish new patterns of interaction and develop closer relationships with their children than they were able to do during what may have been a long-term unhappy marriage.

Again, as was found for contact, although "femcomp" had a significant main effect on support giving, the gender composition of the adult children had no significant influence on the effects of divorce on
the levels of support giving reported by parents. So, although overall mothers report giving more support and parents with daughters or a higher proportion of daughters report giving more support, divorced parents with daughters or a higher proportion of daughters do not report giving significantly more support than divorced parents of sons or those with a higher proportion of sons. This suggests that it is the parent role identity that is salient for married and divorced individuals, and that parents will perform those behaviors that are normatively expected of them whether they are parents of daughters or parents of sons.

C. Support Received

The results for average support received are similar to those for average support given: overall mothers reported receiving more support than fathers; divorce had no significant influence on the effect of divorce on levels of support received reported by fathers and mothers; and there was no divorce by gender interaction or divorce by age interaction. This is congruent with Aquilino's (1994b) study from the adult child's perspective that his respondents reported no significant differences in levels of support given to divorced or continuously married parents.

These findings, however, are contrary to the study by Wright and Maxwell (1991) which examined the support that parents who were recently divorced after a long-term marriage reported receiving from their adult children. In their study, divorced mothers reported receiving more help than divorced fathers in all four categories: socioemotional aid, services, advice, and financial aid. The discrepancy in these results may be explained by the difference in the selection of the adult child. While the present study used an average support measure encompassing all children, the Wright and Maxwell study used a support measure for the
geographically closest child to keep the questionnaire "reasonably short" and on the "assumption that children who lived nearby would have the greatest opportunity for providing daily support" (Wright & Maxwell, 1991, pp. 28, 29). It may be that this decision by Wright and Maxwell underestimated the amount of socioemotional aid (respect, encouragement, affection) and advice exchange between father and adult children who may live farther apart.

The explanations for the findings of no significant differences in the effects of divorce after long-term marriage on support received are similar to those for the other two parent-child relationship measures, contact and support given. However, the explanations differ in that while the measure of support given reflects the parent's current investment in the relationship, the measure of support received reflects the adult child's response and perhaps the parent's past investment.

The finding of nonsignificant differences in the effects of divorce on reported levels of support received by divorced mothers and divorced fathers may be a reflection of the strong parent-child relationships that both fathers and mothers were able to develop over the years with their children. When interpreting these results, however, it is well to keep in mind that overall the parents in this sample reported receiving low levels of support and 46% reported receiving none. If there are no significant differences in support received by married or divorced parents, it may be an indication that adult children have difficulty responding to the possibly increased need for support of their divorced parents, perhaps because of loyalty conflicts.

In the analyses for support received, there was once again no divorce by gender composition of children interaction, indicating that the
proportion of daughters to sons does not have a significant influence on the effects of divorce on support received from adult children, although the main effect shows that overall parents with more daughters received more support than parents with more sons.

III. Divorce After Long-Term Marriage, Parent-Adult Child Relationships and Psychological Well-Being

The prediction that strong parent-adult child relationships would moderate the negative effects of divorce after long-term marriage on parent's psychological well-being was not supported. Parent-adult child relationships, as measured by levels of contact, support given and support received, had no significant effect on Time Two happiness or self-esteem, and support received had a positive (rather than negative) effect on self-reports of depression (i.e. greater support received, greater depression). Contrary to expectations, there were no divorce by gender of parent by relationship interactions, indicating that the influence of parent-adult child relationships on postdivorce psychological well-being did not differ significantly for mothers and fathers.

Although it was expected that investment in parent-adult child relationships would be beneficial for divorced parents, these results suggest that the situation may be more complex. Previous research from the perspective of identity theory has found that the parent role identity is salient to both married and divorced individuals (Thoits, 1992), and it was suggested earlier in this study that continued contact with and support from adult children could function as an affirmation of the parent's established sense of identity and therefore have a positive influence on postdivorce psychological well-being.
Other research with younger divorced mothers, however, has found that close-knit networks were helpful for divorced mothers who wished to maintain their existing identities, but loose-knit networks helpful for those wished to establish new identities (McLanahan, Wedemeyer & Adelberg, 1981). It may be therefore that high levels of investment in the parent role identity could have mixed results for parents who have divorced after a long-term marriage. On the one hand, as identity theory suggests, the successful enactment of the parent role identity may have positive effects on psychological well-being; on the other hand, continued investment in the parent role identity may also be a continued reminder of difficulties in the marital role relationship and the (perhaps continuing) attachment to the former spouse, and therefore have negative effects on psychological well-being.

When I was contemplating what some of the alternate explanations for the nonsignificant results in the analyses of Hypotheses 3 and 3a might be, I realized that an underlying assumption of the study was that social support from adult children would be beneficial for divorced parent's psychological well-being. Once this assumption was uncovered, flaws in the reasoning immediately became apparent. For one thing, the ambiguity in the measure of emotional support, "advice, encouragement, moral or emotional support," took on greater importance. For in addition to potentially confusing the respondent with an array of not-necessarily equivalent options, the word "advice" itself is open to interpretation; advice can be welcome or not, positive or not, perceived as supportive or not. And this led me to the consideration of the nature of postdivorce negotiations in the parent-adult child relationship.
Family research has shown that over the life course, the normative situation is for support to flow down the generational lines until parents are very old, and even then reciprocity in some form is preferred (e.g., see Rossi & Rossi, 1990). Although we have little knowledge as yet of support exchanges following divorce after a long-term marriage, evidence from other sources (e.g. Mancini & Blieszner, 1989) suggests that reciprocity is a key element to consider when examining the effects of support exchanges on psychological well-being. In this study, support given and support received were kept separate, following Mutran & Reitzes (1984). It may be, however, that a ratio measure such as that suggested by Mangen (1987) of help given to help received would be a better measure of the strength of the parent-adult child relationship.

Another issue lies in the fact that parent-adult child relationships are not always positive, and that relationship strains can have a strongly negative effect on psychological well-being (Rook, 1984; Umberson, 1992). So it may be that support exchanges are occurring, but that they are somehow unsatisfactory in their psychological consequences.

Take, for example, a divorced parent who is motivated to invest in the parent role identity and the parent-adult child relationship out of a sense of obligation and a need to preserve identity, and who finds his or her efforts not appreciated by the children. This could happen if a child is angry at the parent for divorcing and needs some distance to sort things out. This response from the child could negate any psychological benefits that the increases in support giving may otherwise have produced. Without some form of open communication, neither parent nor child would be able to express their reasons for their actions and reactions.
Support received could also create difficulties. A parent, for example, may perceive help as inappropriate, may not want to receive support from adult children, or may find it difficult to be in a position of having to accept support from children and therefore find the experience depressing rather than supporting (as the results suggest may be happening). The adult children, on the other hand, may not know how to support a parent who divorces in mid- or later-life, may not want to (for whatever reason), or may find the situation so stressful (especially if caught in the middle) that they are unable to give their parents much support at all. Parents who perceive that their children are not responding appropriately or as expected to their needs may become even more depressed.

A divorce at any stage of the family life cycle requires a renegotiation of roles and role relationships for parents and for children, and this negotiation process is perhaps even more critical when parents and their adult children renegotiate their relationships. Younger children, for example, cannot choose to "opt out" of a family, but older children can; and while there are legal and societal sanctions holding parents of younger children to their parental responsibilities, the expectations for families with adult children are far more amorphous. Results from clinical research particularly is showing, however, that parents and adult children adjust better if families can be restructured in a way that facilitates the child's interactions with both parents and allows special occasions, such as weddings, to be celebrated with a minimum of conflict (Campbell, 1995; Goodman, 1993; Pett et al, 1992). As empirical research on divorce after long-term marriage is only beginning in family studies, our knowledge about the forms postdivorce families with
adult children take or how families successfully negotiate role and role relationship changes is largely speculative. Such research is needed, however, both to further our theoretical and empirical knowledge about the divorcing process and postdivorce family relationships and to ensure that our attempts to help divorcing families is based on a secure foundation of scientific knowledge.

IV. Strengths and Limitations

This study was designed to advance our knowledge of divorce after a long-term marriage, parent-adult child relationships, and the influence of the parent-adult child relationship on parents' divorce adjustment. Like all empirical research, the study has both limitations and strengths.

A. Limitations

The decision of whether or not to use secondary data requires a researcher to carefully balance advantages and disadvantages. For this study the decision was that the advantage of having access to a well-respected survey with a large, nationally representative sample of respondents outweighed the potential limitations. According to Menaghan (1985), the scarcity of prospective longitudinal data is the most important obstacle to advances in research about divorce and its effects on psychological well-being.

When using secondary data, however, researchers are always faced with constructing valid measures from other researchers' questions, and this study was no exception. For example, the NSFH dropped the Time Two measure of parent-adult child relationship quality and the questions for support exchanges with adult children were changed from Time One to Time Two. Consequently, there are no measures of relationship quality in the
study nor is there longitudinal data for the parent-adult child relationship.

The number of respondents who separated or divorced between Time One and Time Two and who met the criteria for sample selection in this study also turned out to be quite small: 42 (23 women and 19 men). Therefore, although the original NSFH sample was large and representative, and the sample size in this study is comparable to those in previous studies by Menaghan and Lieberman (1986; N=32) and Doherty and colleagues (1989; N=42), caution is still warranted in the interpretation of results.

There are also no controls in the study for employment status, and it is acknowledged that the worker role identity could be highly salient for these respondents, particularly following a divorce, and could represent an alternative role for identity investment. A measure of hours worked was constructed for Time One, but constructing a comparable measure for Time Two turned out to be problematic because the data for Time Two has not been adequately cleaned at this time.

The inclusion of a comparison group of continuously-married respondents has been noted as a strength of the study; however, this focus on comparisons between married and divorced respondents meant that the controls included in the study had to be relevant to both groups, and that variables relevant only to the divorcing group could not be part of the study. Some of the potentially important variables which therefore had to be omitted include who initiated the separation and who initiated divorce proceedings (not necessarily the same person), length of time between separation and divorce and between divorce and the interview, the mode of dispute resolution the couple has chosen (e.g. divorce counselling, litigation, mediation), and changes in their social networks (kinship and
friendship). Also, because the scores for the parent-adult child relationship were averaged across children, it was not possible to include characteristics of the adult children, such as parental status (i.e., whether or not respondents had grandchildren).

And finally, the results of this study may be limited in their generalizability from a representative sample of the United States population to the Canadian population. One example of a difference that could create potential limitations can be found in the cultural/racial composition of each population. In the United States the primary "nonwhite" racial group is composed of Afro-Americans, whose divorce patterns have been found to vary from those of the "white" racial group and also from "nonwhite" racial and cultural groups ("white" and "nonwhite" being terminologies used in the research literature).

B. Strengths

The data for this study come from the National Survey of Families and Households, a national survey which collected data from a multistage, randomly-selected probability sample of 13,017 respondents. One benefit of the well-planned nature of the study plus the carefully selected sample is the increased generalizability of study results. Another is that the NSFH was planned and carried out by foremost scholars and researchers specifically to examine family issues which increases the validity of the results. Also, the NSFH was designed to be a longitudinal survey, and data for this study come from the first two waves collected in 1987-1988 and 1992-1994. The study is, to the best of my knowledge, the first study of divorce after long-term marriage to use prospective longitudinal data.

Literature reviews consistently note the lack of theoretical development in research on mid- and later-life divorce (see Lloyd & Zick,
1986). In response to this limitation in the research, this study has used identity theory to provide a theoretical framework to guide the development of hypotheses and the interpretation of results in conjunction with the existing literature.

The study has also extended our knowledge of divorce after long-term marriage and parent-adult child relationships by using multiple indicators of both parent-adult child relationships and psychological well-being, and by including a comparison group of parents who have been continuously married. The study was also designed to compare the effects of divorce on parent-child relationships and psychological well-being for both mothers and fathers, as information from fathers who divorce in mid- and later-life is particularly lacking in the research literature (e.g. Cooney & Uhlenberg, 1990; Price & McKenry, 1988).

In addition, the study has examined the effects of recent divorce after long-term marriage on parent-adult child relationships from the parent's perspective. The "young adult bias" mentioned by Hagestad and her colleagues (1984) appears to be continuing, with divorce in mid- and later-life being studied from the adult child's perspective with the emphasis on the adult child's developmental and adjustment difficulties. This study was designed, in part, to complement recent studies of divorce and parent-adult child relationships from the adult child's perspective by using similar measures (contact, support given, support received) from the parent's perspective, thus allowing comparisons between the adult child's and the parent's points of view (see for example, Aquilino, 1994b). The focus of the study, however, has been on the effects of divorce and parent-adult child relationships on parent's psychological well-being.
C. Implications

The results of this study have implications for the field of family studies, for theoretical development in the area of divorce after long-term marriage, and for family practitioners and family-related social policy.

a. Family Studies

The implications of this study for the field of family studies are two-fold. First, research is greatly needed on the phenomenon of divorce after a long-term marriage and its effects on family relationships. While this study has focused on parent-adult child relationships, other family relationships are also affected. For example, aside from the research of Hagestad and her colleagues (1984), we know virtually nothing about the effects of divorce after long-term marriage on the parents of the divorcing individuals, nor how the parent's response may hinder or facilitate the divorce adjustment of parents and their adult children. In addition, the assumption that mothers of grown children are more invested in parent-child relationships than fathers needs to be re-examined, as does the assumption that being a parent is as central to identity when the children are grown as it is during the child-raising years when the children are young (see Eisenhandler, 1992).

Second, family studies textbooks and courses need to include information on divorce after long-term marriage and a recognition that some students will be experiencing this transition. Also, more information from the growing body of fatherhood research could be integrated into family studies textbooks and courses. For example, in the area of work and family, integration of current fatherhood research would draw attention to structural and cultural constraints that shape the role
involvement of both mothers and fathers, particularly when children are very young.

b. Theoretical Development

Identity theory was used in this study partly because of the links it provides between the institutional, family and individual levels of analysis, which allows researchers to include considerations of structural and cultural constraints upon fathers and mothers in their interpretations. For example, a major finding in this study was the absence of any gender differences in the results for any of the analyses, and this was interpreted as suggesting that the constraints on and opportunities available to women and men may be different for individuals who divorce after long-term marriage than they are for those who divorce earlier. One implication of this is that generalizations of results from studies of divorce earlier in the family life cycle to divorce later in the family life cycle warrant caution.

A second implication is that gender or age differences which may be found in future studies will likely need to be explained by reference to factors exogenous to parent-adult child relationships, as well as to relationship dynamics endogenous to these relationships. It may be that identity theory will prove most useful in future research if it is combined with another theory, as Mutran and Reitzes (1984) have done with exchange theory. Identity theory could, for example, be combined with social support, social network, family mediation or economic theories to expand our knowledge of how parent-adult child relationships and parent's psychological well-being are influenced by divorce after long-term marriage.
c. Family Practitioners

This study also has implications for family practitioners. Family life educators, for example, can provide information for parents who are divorcing after long-term marriages and for adult children whose parents are divorcing by developing workshops in community settings, such as those offered by Family Services. These workshops could include suggestions on how to renegotiate parent-adult child relationships during and after a divorce.

Social workers can also assist families who are in transition during divorce after long-term marriage. For example, they can organize support groups both for divorcing parents and for adult children who are experiencing the divorce of their parents. In their clinical practice, social workers can also help facilitate communication between parents and adult children when difficulties in postdivorce family functioning occur (see Bonkowski, 1989).

Family therapists, as Campbell (1995) has suggested, may need to take a less structured view of family development (perhaps by working within a developmental family systems framework). Therapists working with clients who are divorcing after long-term marriages also need to attend to the postdivorce parenting of their clients, and to help parents understand and cope with changes in parenting in constructive ways that recognize both their own needs and those of their adult children.

And finally, family mediators as well need to be sensitive to potential difficulties in the parent-adult child relationship when working with clients who are divorcing after a long-term marriage. One implication of this research is that mediators may find a
multigenerational model of divorce mediation to be useful when adult children are involved.

d. Family-related social policy

There are also implications for social policy. The focus of governmental and societal interest has long been on the effects of divorce on minor children and on the non-involvement of many noncustodial fathers (the latter primarily for economic reasons). However, there is also a need for attention to be paid to the needs of divorcing families with grown children. For example, social workers and counsellors who work in agencies that are funded by the government need to be trained in dealing with the issues unique to this group, and to recognize the developmental issues of adult children and their parents. Outreach programs may also be necessary to reach men, who in general, do not seek out counselling for family difficulties (e.g. Kruk, 1993).

There may also be implications for government policy on family caregiving. Although this study found no significant differences in the levels of support that continuously-married and divorced respondents reported, in one way this finding is disquieting, as the expectation was that adult children would increase their levels of support to divorced parents. It may be, of course, that the parents did not need or did not want support from their children by the time of the postdivorce interview. However, it may also be that the adult children were not responding to increased needs of their parents, for a variety of reasons. Because of fiscal restraints, government policy is strongly emphasizing the role of children as caregivers to aging parents, and one question that arises from this study is how divorce after long-term marriage will influence the
response of adult children to the increased needs of their parents for support later in life.

V. Conclusion

Although the rates of divorce after long-term marriage have been increasing, research into this phenomenon is only beginning. This study has contributed to our knowledge of divorce after long-term marriage by examining divorce effects on parent's psychological well-being and parent-adult child relationships, and the subsequent effect of the parent-child relationships on the parent's divorce adjustment. Results show that these effects vary according to the dimension being measured, with divorce having negative effects on self-ratings of happiness, depression and parent-child contact, but no significant effects on self-esteem, support given or support received. Also, contrary to expectations, the dimensions of parent-adult child relationships measured in the study did not moderate the negative effects of divorce on either happiness or depression for either mothers or fathers.

The results of this study suggest several avenues of investigation that future research could follow. One of these is to broaden the measurement of parent-adult child relationships to include measures of affectional solidarity. Researchers basing their studies on the family solidarity model frequently use a ten-item scale for affectional solidarity that asks parents to rate the understanding, trust, fairness, respect and affection they perceive a particular child has for them and that they have for the child. For example, "How well do you feel this child understands you?" followed later in the interview by "How well do you understand him or her?" (Silverstein & Bengtson, 1991; see also Roberts & Bengtson, 1990). The qualities of the parent-adult child
relationship measured in the intergenerational affectional solidarity scale may prove to have more of an effect on the parent's postdivorce psychological well-being than the social support measures used in the present study.

Perhaps one of the most interesting findings in this study was the complete absence of gender differences for any of the hypotheses. For these respondents, divorce did not have a more negative effect on parent-adult child relationships for fathers than for mothers, and the effects of those relationships on divorce adjustment was not significantly different for mothers or fathers. One of the ideas underlying this study was that adult children are a potential resource for parents divorcing after a long-term marriage and, although the measures used did not confirm this, the results suggest that the father-adult child relationship may be stronger than previous research has indicated. Another avenue of research suggested by this study, therefore, is a closer examination of the dynamics of parent-adult child relationships during the parent's divorce, with particular attention paid to father-adult child relationships.

Contrary to prevailing assumptions in the literature that adjustment to divorce at older ages must be more difficult than adjustment to divorce at younger ages (Berardo, 1982; Price & Mckenry, 1988; Raschke, 1987), this study showed no significant age differences between respondents younger than fifty and those older than fifty for any of the hypotheses tested for divorce by age interactions. These results, therefore, support Kitson's (e.g., Kitson & Morgan, 1990) contention that the negative assumptions in the divorce literature need to be re-examined. As was done in this study, researchers could use Bohannan's (1970) six-part conceptualization of divorce as a framework when considering how divorces
after long-term marriage when children are grown may differ from divorces earlier in life when children are young.

While research, media and policy attention remains fixed on the causes and effects of divorce in younger families, the number of couples who are divorcing after long-term marriages is quietly increasing. As Ahrons and Rodgers (1987) speculate theoretically and Hagestad and her colleagues have shown in a three-generational study, the ripple effects (Hagestad, 1981) of divorce after long-term marriage spread up and down the family lineage, with relationship changes in all family dyads. From grandchildren to great-grandparents, family members must cope with the counter-transitions (Riley & Waring, 1976) brought about by the (perhaps unexpected and unwanted) divorce of the parents in the middle of the family chain. Just at the stage in the family life cycle when family traditions are passed on to adult children who are establishing families of their own, the identity of a family is irrevocably altered, leaving grandchildren, adult children, parents, grandparents, and perhaps great-grandparents with the tasks of creating a new family identity while at the same time retaining the history and legacy of the old to pass on to future generations. When considered in these terms, the increasing rates of divorce after long-term marriage may change the shape of North American families as much as, or even more than, divorce in earlier life has done. This is the perspective from which the present study was planned, and it is hoped that the results of the study both advance our scientific knowledge of divorce after long-term marriage and, in doing so, also contribute to the development of effective interventions to help parents and their adult children adjust to the divorce.


Riessman, C. K., & Gerstel, N. (1985). Marital dissolution and health: Do males or females have greater risk? *Social Science and Medicine, 20*(6), 627-635.


Appendix A

Research Questions
Appendix A

Research Questions

A. Psychological Well-being

1. Happiness

At Time One the question is from the self-administered questionnaire, SE-2: Q.1.

[The lead-in to this section is: Next are some questions about how you see yourself and your life.]

First, taking things all together, how would you say things are these days. Circle the number that best describes how you feel.

At Time Two the question is SE-2: MT201.

Next are some questions about how you see yourself and your life.

First taking things all together, how would you say things are these days?

Ratings for both questions are on a seven point scale, ranging from 1 (very unhappy) to 7 (very happy).

2. Depression

The questions at Time One are from the self-administered questionnaire, SE-2: Q.2.

Next is a list of the ways you might have felt or behaved during the past week. Circle your answer to each question.

Response categories under the heading "Number of days in past week" are "none, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7."

On how many days during the past week did you:

a. feel bothered by things that usually don't bother you?

b. not feel like eating; your appetite was poor?

c. feel that you could not shake off the blues even with help from your family or friends?
d. have trouble keeping your mind on what you were doing?
e. feel depressed?
f. feel that everything you did was an effort?
g. feel fearful?
h. sleep restlessly?
i. talk less than usual?
j. feel lonely?
k. feel sad?
l. feel you could not get going?

The questions for depression at Time Two, also from SE-2, are identical (except that the instruction about circling is omitted) and are presented in the same order (MT205A-MT205L).

3. Self-esteem

Self-esteem is measured by three items in the self-administered questionnaire. At Time One the items are as follows:
(SE-13. Q's 59b, 60e, 60m respectively)

[The lead-in for the questions is as follows: Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.]

I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.

On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

I am able to do things as well as other people

Response ratings are (1) strongly agree, (2) agree, (3) neither agree nor disagree, (4) disagree, and (5) strongly disagree.

At Time Two the actual items are identical to those at Time One (SE-2. Q's MT210I, MT210A, MT210F).
B. Parent-Adult Child Relationships

1. Time Two Contact

Questions on contact are contained in Module C and are asked for all the respondent's children who are living elsewhere, including those away at college and in the military. Q.MC10P01-MC10P14.

During the past 12 months, how often did you see (child)?

During the past 12 months, how often did you talk on the telephone or receive a letter from (child)?

Response categories for both questions are "not at all (01), about once a year (02), several times a year (03), 1 to 3 times a month (04), about once a week (05), more than once a week (06), some other frequency (07)."

2. Time Two Support

Questions on support are included in Module G.

The qualifying question for respondents was as follows:
Q.MG1.

Next we are interested in help and support that you may have given to your children (or your wife/husband/partner's children) age 19 and older. This includes: [Roster of children's names generated by computer]. Include only help that you, yourself gave, but not help that other members of your family may have given.
Q.MG2P01-MG2P06

Which of your children (or your wife/husband/partner's children) age 19 and older have you given help with shopping, errands, or transportation in the last month?
Q.MG4P01-MG4P06
Which of your children (or your wife/husband/partner's children) age 19 and older have you given help with housework, yard work, car repairs, or other work around the house in the last month?

Q.MG6P01-MG6P06
Which of your children (or your wife/husband/partner's children) age 19 and older have you given advice, encouragement, moral or emotional support in the last month?

Q.MG8P01-MG8P06
Which of your children (or your wife/husband/partner's children) age 19 and older have you helped with child care while they were working?

Q.MG10P01-MG10P06
Which of your children (or you wife/husband/partner's children) age 19 and older have you helped with child care at times other than when they were working?

Q.MG13P01-MG13P06
From which of your children (or your wife/husband/partner's children) age 19 and older have you received help with shopping, errands, or transportation during the last month?

Q.MG15P01-MG15P06
From which of your children (or your wife/husband/partner's children) age 19 and older have you received help with housework, yard work, car repairs, or other work around the house in the last month?
Q.MG17P01-MG17P06

From which of your children (or your wife/husband/partner's children age 19 and older have you received advice, encouragement, moral or emotional support in the last month?

C. Control Variables

1. Income/Assets

Questions on income, assets and debts are contained in the interview codebook and responses were facilitated by the use of cards listing the categories.

Household income was measured by a variable which the NSFH has constructed of household income from all sources.

At Time One assets and debts are measured by the following questions:

Q.661.

Do you (or your husband/wife) own (a TO d BELOW)?

Q.662.

How much do you think your (ASSET TYPE) would sell for now?

Q.663.

How much, if anything, do you (or your husband/wife) owe on your (ASSET TYPE)? (IF R ISN'T SURE, ASK FOR THE BEST ESTIMATE).

[Respondents are also asked if they personally own the asset].

a. your own home? (if home is part of a farm, include below in business or farm).

b. other real estate?

c. a business or farm?

d. motor vehicles, including cars, trucks, campers, boats, and other recreational vehicles?
Q.664.

What is the approximate total value of your (and your husband's/wife's) savings, including savings accounts, savings bonds, IRAs, money market shares, and CD's? Just tell me the letter from this card.

Response categories are (A) None, 01; (B) $1 to $1,499, 02; (C) $1,500 to $2,999, 03; (D) $3,000 to $4,999, 04; (E) $5,000 to $9,999, 05; (F) $10,000 to $19,000, 06; (G) $20,000 to $49,999, 07; (H) $50,000 to $99,999, 08; and (I) $100,000 or more, 09.

Q.665.

And what is the approximate total value of your (and your husband's/wife's) investments, including stocks, bonds, shares in mutual funds, or other investments? Tell me the letter from this card.

Response categories are the same as for Q664 above.

Q.666.

Next I will read a list of things that people often owe money on. Tell me if you (and your husband/wife/partner) owe money for: (ASK Q.667 FOR EACH YES)

Q.667.

How much do you (and your husband/wife/partner) owe on your (DEBT TYPE)?

a. credit card or charge accounts that you're paying off gradually.

b. installment loans for major purchases, such as furniture or appliances, but other than auto loans.

c. educational loans.
c. educational loans.

d. personal loans from banks and other businesses, other than mortgage or auto loans.

e. personal loans from friends or relatives.

f. other bills you've owed for more than two months.

g. home improvement loans.

At Time Two assets and debts are measured by the following questions:

MQ85.

How much do you think your home would sell for now?

5,000 $5,000 or less

5,001-9,999

10,000-24,999

25,000-49,999

50,000-74,999

75,000-99,999

100,000-149,999

150,000-999,998

999,999 $999,999 or more

99999997 Refused

9999998 Don't know

9999999 Inapplicable/no answer

Other

MQ91A.

How much do you think this other real estate would sell for now?

1-9999

Remaining categories the same as MQ85.
MQ91B.

How much do you think this business or farm would sell for now?

0 Nothing

Remaining categories the same as MQ85.

MQ91C.

How much do you think these vehicles [cars, trucks, campers, boats, other recreational vehicles] would sell for now?

Response categories the same as MQ91B.

MQ86.

How much, if anything, do you (or your wife/or your husband) owe on your home?

0 (owe nothing)

Remaining response categories the same as MQ85.

MQ92A.

How much, if anything, do you (or your wife/or your husband) owe on your other real estate?

Response categories the same as MQ86.

MQ92B.

How much, if anything, do you (or your wife/or your husband) owe on your business or farm?

Response categories the same as MQ86.

MQ92C.

How much, if anything, do you (or your wife/or your husband) owe on these vehicles?

Response categories the same as MQ86.
MQ93.

What is the approximate total value of your (and your wife's/and your husband's) savings, including savings accounts, savings bonds, IRAs, money market funds, and CDs?

00 None
01 $1 to $1,499
02 $1,500 to $2,999
03 $3,000 to $4,999
04 $5,000 to $9,999
05 $10,000 to $19,999
06 $20,000 to $49,999
07 $50,000 to $99,999
08 #100,000 or more
97 Refused
98 Don't know
99 Inapplicable/no answer

Other

MQ94.

In addition to these savings, what is the approximate total value of your (and your wife's/and your husband's) other investments, including stocks, bonds, shares in mutual funds, or other investments?

Response categories the same as MQ93 except for the addition of the following:

90 R said investments were reported above.
MQ95A.

Next I will read a list of things that people often owe money on. How much, if anything, do you (and your wife/and your husband) owe on credit cards or charge accounts that you are paying off gradually? If you almost always pay off your credit card balance each month, answer "0".

0 Nothing
1-199
200-499
500-999
1000-1999
2000-4999
5000-9999
10000-99998
99999 $99,999 or more
999997 Refused
999998 Don't know
999999 Inapplicable/no answer
Other

MQ95B.

How much, if anything, do you (and your wife/and your husband) owe on installment loans for major purchases, such as furniture or appliances, but other than auto loans? Response categories the same as MQ95A.

MQ95C.

How much, if anything, do you (and your wife/and your husband) owe on educational loans? Response categories the same as MQ95A.
MQ95D.

How much, if anything, do you (and your wife/and your husband) owe on personal loans from banks and other businesses, other than mortgage or auto loans you have already told me about?
Response categories the same as MQ95A.

MQ95E.

How much, if anything, do you (and your wife/and your husband) owe on personal loans from friends or relatives, other than those you have already told me about?
Response categories the same as MQ95A.

MQ95F.

How much, if anything, do you (and your wife/and your husband) owe on home improvement loans, other than those you have already told me about?
Response categories the same as MQ95A.

MQ95G.

How much, if anything, do you (and your wife/and your husband) owe on other bills you've owed for more than two months?
Response categories the same as MQ95A.

MQ95H.

How much, if anything, do you (and your wife/and your husband) owe on any other debts that we have not mentioned?
Response categories the same as MQ95A.
2. **Race**

Question is from the interview codebook at Time One.

Q.484.

Which of the groups on this card best describes you? Just tell me the number.

Response categories are "Black 01; White - not of Hispanic origin 02; Mexican American, Chicano, Mexicano 03; Puerto Rican 04; Cuban 05; Other Hispanic 06; American Indian 07; Asian 08; Other (specify:) 09."

3. **Age of Respondent**

Question is from the interview codebook at Time One.

Q.485.

What is your date of birth?

Response categories are "month, day, year."

4. **Marital cohort**

Q.MI30

Next we want to find out about any changes in your marital status since NSFH1. At that time you were married to (spouse’s name). Are you still married (and living with/to) (him/her)?

1  Yes
2  No
6  R says they were married to someone else
7  Refused
9  Inapplicable/no answer

Other
Q.MI35

Next we want to find out about any changes in your marital status since NSFH1. At that time you were married to (spouse’s name). Did your marriage end in:

1. divorce
2. separation with no divorce, or
3. widowhood
4. married continuously since NSFH1
5. R says not married at NSFH1
6. Inapplicable/no answer

Other

Q.MI38

In what month and year did you and (spouse’s name) stop living together?

Date coded in century months

1045 - 1140
9997 Refused
9998 Don’t know
9999 Inapplicable/no answer

Other
5. **Degree of Social Integration**

Questions at Time One are from the self-administered questionnaire, SE-2: Q.16 & Q.17).

Q.16.

About how often do you do the following things... 

**HOW OFTEN DO YOU:**

a. Spend a social evening with:
   - relatives?
   - a neighbor?
   - people you work with?
   - friends who live outside your neighborhood?

b. Attend a social event at your church or synagogue?

c. Go to a bar or tavern?

d. Participate in a group recreational activity such as bowling, golf, square dancing, etc.?

Response categories are "never, several times a year, about once a month, about once a week, several times a week."

Q.17.

Here is a list of various kinds of organizations. How often, if at all, do you participate in each type of organization?

a. fraternal groups

b. service clubs

c. veterans' groups

d. political groups

e. labor unions

f. sports groups

g. youth groups
h. school related groups
i. hobby or garden clubs
j. school fraternities or sororities
k. nationality groups
l. farm organizations
m. literary, art, study, or discussion groups
n. professional or academic societies
o. church-affiliated groups

Response categories are "never, several times a year, about once a month, about once a week, several times a week."

At Time Two the comparable question to Time One Q.17 is SE-18: MT1806A1-MT1806D. The wording of the items and the order of presentation is identical to Time One except that MT1806A1 is worded as follows:

[About how often do you] "Get together socially with: [relatives, a neighbor . . .]."

Data for the variable "presence of other adults in the household" was taken from the household roster in the interview codebook.

Q.1.
I've recorded (NAMES FROM SCREENING ROSTER) as members of this household.

(IF NOT OBVIOUS, ASK:) Is (PERSON) male or female?

The form for the FULL-TIME HOUSEHOLD ROSTER includes the following columns: "Column 1 - First Name; Column 2 - Age: Column 3 - Marital Status (Married, Separated, Divorced, Widowed, Never Married); Column 4 - Sex [Male, Female]; Column 5 - Relationship, Code."
Q.2.
Tell me how each person on this list is related to you. Choose your answer from these categories. (HAND R CARD #1. WRITE IN THE RELATIONSHIP AND ENTER THE LETTER CODE IN COL.5. IF CODE B [LOVER/PARTNER] IS GIVEN TO PERSON OF OPPOSITE SEX, CIRCLE "COHABITING" ON LINE 2 OF BOOKMARK)

6. Religiosity

Question is from the interview codebook at Time One.

Q.492.

How often do you attend religious services?

Response categories are "_____ (# times) per day, week, month, year -or- never."
7. Time Two Geographic Distance

The question on geographic distance is included in Module C and was asked for all the respondent’s children living elsewhere, including those away at college and in the military.

Q.MC9P01-MC9P14.

Approximately how many miles from here does (he/she) live?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0000</td>
<td>Less than one mile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0001-0004</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>0005-0009</td>
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<td>0010-0018</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>0019-0024</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0025-0099</td>
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<td>0100-0199</td>
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<td>0200-0499</td>
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<td>0500-0999</td>
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<td>1000-1999</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-9000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9997</td>
<td>Refused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9998</td>
<td>Don’t know where (he/she) lives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9999</td>
<td>Inapplicable/no answer.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Appendix B

Tables
Table 1

Means/Proportions and Standard Deviations for Study Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>means/proportions</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Variables</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Divorce (divorce)</td>
<td>.027</td>
<td>.161</td>
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<td>Gender parent (female)</td>
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<td>.496</td>
<td>1584</td>
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<tr>
<td>Femcomp</td>
<td>.478</td>
<td>.330</td>
<td>1584</td>
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<td><strong>Dependent Variables</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Unhappiness T1 (logged)</td>
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<td>.561</td>
<td>1412</td>
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<td>Unhappiness T2 (logged)</td>
<td>.746</td>
<td>.549</td>
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<td>Depression T1 (logged)</td>
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<td>1.204</td>
<td>1561</td>
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<td>Depression T2 (logged)</td>
<td>1.961</td>
<td>1.185</td>
<td>1533</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-esteem T1 (logged)</td>
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<td>Self-esteem T2</td>
<td>6.265</td>
<td>1.576</td>
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<td>Contact (squared)</td>
<td>27.841</td>
<td>7.782</td>
<td>1568</td>
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<td>Support given (logged)</td>
<td>.623</td>
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<td>Support received (logged)</td>
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<td>Age (31-49=0; 50-85=1)</td>
<td>.625</td>
<td>.484</td>
<td>1584</td>
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<tr>
<td>Race (White)</td>
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<td>.369</td>
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<td>1215</td>
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<td>.819</td>
<td>1571</td>
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<td>3.831</td>
<td>1494</td>
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<td>4.941</td>
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<td>.075</td>
<td>1584</td>
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<td>Other adults in household T2</td>
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<td>.151</td>
<td>1584</td>
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<td>Religiosity T1 (logged)</td>
<td>2.812</td>
<td>1.739</td>
<td>1552</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic distance T2 (logged)</td>
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<td>2.346</td>
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Table 2
Hierarchical OLS Estimates for the Effects of Divorce on Unhappiness
(Understandardized Coefficients in Parentheses)

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</thead>
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<td></td>
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<td>(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1 unhappiness</td>
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<td>.305***</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.309)</td>
<td>(.294)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>.055*</td>
<td>.054*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.196)</td>
<td>(.193)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of parent</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.080**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(.085)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income T1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income T2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets T1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>AssetsT2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social activities T1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social activities T2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-.055*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>(-.006)</td>
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<td>Other adults in household T2</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity T1</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographic distance T2</td>
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<tr>
<td>R²</td>
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<td>1172</td>
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* p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
### Table 3

Hierarchical OLS Estimates for the Effects of Divorce on Depression

(Understandardized Coefficients in Parentheses)

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<th>Step 2</th>
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<td></td>
<td>beta</td>
<td>beta</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1 depression</td>
<td>.438***</td>
<td>.414***</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.424)</td>
<td>(.401)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>.061**</td>
<td>.052*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.466)</td>
<td>(.396)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of parent</td>
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<td>.090***</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(.209)</td>
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<td>-.118***</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>(-.168)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household income T2</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Assets T1</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assets T2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social activities T1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social activities T2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other adults in household T1</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>Other adults in household T2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religiosity T1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic distance T2</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.198</td>
<td>.219</td>
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*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
Table 4

Hierarchical OLS Estimates for the Effects of Divorce on Self-Esteem
(Understandardized Coefficients in Parentheses)

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<th>Step 2</th>
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<td></td>
<td>beta</td>
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<td>beta</td>
<td>(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1 self-esteem</td>
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<td>(.388)</td>
<td>.390***</td>
<td>(.375)</td>
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<td>Divorce</td>
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<td>(-.066)</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>(.023)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>Gender of parent</td>
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<td>(-.277)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income T1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household income T2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.105***</td>
<td>(.198)</td>
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<tr>
<td>social activities T1</td>
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<td>Social activities T2</td>
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<td>Other adults in household T1</td>
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<td>Other adults in household T2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religiosity T1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographic distance T2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

R^2                   | .163   | .182                  |
Number of cases        | 1456   | 1456                  |

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
Table 5

Hierarchical OLS Estimates for the Effects of Divorce on Contact
(Understandardized Coefficients in Parentheses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Step 1 beta</th>
<th>Step 2 beta</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>-.028</td>
<td>-.056*</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-1.466)</td>
<td>(-2.997)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(-2.683)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender of parent</td>
<td>.075**</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1.172)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income T1</td>
<td>.091***</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.876)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income T2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets T1</td>
<td>.072**</td>
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<td>(.687)</td>
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<td>Assets T2</td>
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<td>Social activities T1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social activities T2</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other adults in household T1</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other adults in household T2</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity T1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographic distance T2</td>
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<td>(-1.630)</td>
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<tr>
<td>T2 unhappiness</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>T2 depression</td>
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<td>(.474)</td>
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<td>T2 self-esteem</td>
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p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
Table 6

Hierarchical OLS Estimates for the Effects of Divorce on Support Given
(Understandardized Coefficients in Parentheses)

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<th>Step 2 beta (b)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>-.029 (.095)</td>
<td>-.037 (-.123)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<td>-.113*** (.113)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.108** (.106)</td>
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<td>Gender of parent</td>
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<td>.154*** (.093)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household income T1</td>
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<td>.102*** (.060)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household income T2</td>
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<td>.091** (.012)</td>
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<td>Assets T1</td>
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<td>Assets T2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social activities T1</td>
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<td>Social activities T2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other adults in household T1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other adults in household T2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religiosity T1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic distance T2</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.136*** (-.029)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 unhappiness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 depression</td>
<td>.083** (.035)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 self-esteem</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of cases</td>
<td>1105</td>
<td>1105</td>
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*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
Table 7
Hierarchical OLS Estimates for the Effects of Divorce on Support Received
(Understandardized Coefficients in Parentheses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Step 1 beta (b)</th>
<th>Step 2 beta (b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>.013 (.039)</td>
<td>-.007 (-.021)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-.121*** (.112)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of parent</td>
<td>.123*** (.109)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income T1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income T2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets T1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets T2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social activities T1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social activities T2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other adults in household T1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other adults in household T2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religiosity T1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic distance T2</td>
<td>-.108*** (.020)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 unhappiness</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 depression</td>
<td>.122*** (.046)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 self-esteem</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.071</td>
</tr>
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<td>Number of cases</td>
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*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001
Table 8

Hierarchical OLS Estimates for the Effects of Divorce and Parent-Adult Child Relationships on Depression

(Understandardized Coefficients in Parentheses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1</th>
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<th>Step 3</th>
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<tr>
<td>beta</td>
<td>beta</td>
<td>beta</td>
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<tr>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1 depression</td>
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<td>.484***</td>
<td>.409***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Divorce</td>
<td>.058*</td>
<td>.048*</td>
<td>.046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.424)</td>
<td>(.401)</td>
<td>(.396)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.442)</td>
<td>(.372)</td>
<td>(.350)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender of parent</td>
<td>.093***</td>
<td>.070**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(.216)</td>
<td>(.162)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income T1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household income T2</td>
<td>-.116***</td>
<td>.135***</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(-.166)</td>
<td>(-.192)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets T1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assets T2</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social activities T2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other adults in household T1</td>
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<td>Geographic distance T2</td>
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<td>Support received</td>
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<td>.218</td>
<td>.236</td>
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<td>Number of cases</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001