

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

THE ALTERNATIVE THEORIES OF CHILD ABUSE:
AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT

BY

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

OCTOBER, 1981

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
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To my Mother,

Who has always provided me with the love and
security denied to so many children.

To my Husband,

For his understanding and support.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	vii
Acknowledgements	x
List of Figures	xii
List of Tables	xiii
	Page
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	
VIOLENCE IN THE FAMILY	1
THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	5
DEFINING CHILD ABUSE	6
FOOTNOTES	15
CHAPTER 2 CHILD ABUSE: ALTERNATIVE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES	
INTRODUCTION	16
THE PSYCHOPATHOLOGY THEORY	17
THE SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY THEORY	25
THE SOCIAL SITUATIONAL THEORY	31
THE CULTURAL THEORY	37
CONCLUSION	42
FOOTNOTES	44
CHAPTER 3 REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	
INTRODUCTION	46
PSYCHOPATHOLOGY THEORY: THE RESEARCH EVIDENCE	48

Chapter 3	Page
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY THEORY: THE RESEARCH EVIDENCE	57
SOCIAL SITUATIONAL THEORY: THE RESEARCH EVIDENCE	62
CULTURAL THEORY: THE RESEARCH EVIDENCE	69
A SUMMATION OF THE METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS.	78
FOOTNOTES	82
CHAPTER 4 STUDYING CHILD ABUSE: THE RESEARCH DESIGN	
INTRODUCTION	84
THEORY AND HYPOTHESES	85
DATA COLLECTION	89
CONCEPTUALIZATION AND OPERATIONALIZATION.	92
SAMPLE	106
TYPE OF DATA ANALYSIS USED	109
FOOTNOTES	111
CHAPTER 5 WHO ARE THE ABUSIVE FAMILIES? THE DESCRIPTIVE DATA	
INTRODUCTION	113
SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE	113
A. PAST RESEARCH EVIDENCE	113
THE PARENT	114
THE CHILD	117
B. THE PRESENT STUDY	119
THE PARENTS	120
THE CHILDREN	127

Chapter 5	Page
FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES	131
SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTIVE DATA	146
FOOTNOTES	150
CHAPTER 6 UNDERSTANDING CHILD ABUSE: THE ANALYTICAL DATA	
INTRODUCTION	153
THE HYPOTHESES	154
PSYCHOPATHOLOGY THEORY	154
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY THEORY	160
SOCIAL SITUATIONAL THEORY	167
THE CULTURAL THEORY	180
EXPLAINED VARIATION	186
INDIVIDUAL REGRESSIONS	187
ANALYSIS OF TOTAL REGRESSION	196
FOOTNOTES	201
CHAPTER 7 A SUMMATION OF CHILD ABUSE: RECOMMENDA- TIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	
SUMMARY	204
DESCRIPTIVE CHARACTERISTICS	204
ANALYTICAL DATA	205
THE DIMENSIONS OF PHYSICAL CHILD ABUSE: RECOMMENDATIONS	206
IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	211
FOOTNOTES	215

APPENDICES	Page
APPENDIX A: THE CHILD ABUSE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE	216
APPENDIX B: INDEX CONSTRUCTION	241
APPENDIX C: DESCRIPTIVE TABLES PERTAINING TO CHAPTER 5	247
APPENDIX D: DESCRIPTIVE DATA CONCERNING CIRCUMSTANCES OF ABUSE INCIDENTS	258
APPENDIX E: GLOSSARY OF VARIABLE LABELS. .	264
APPENDIX F: CORRELATION MATRIX	267
APPENDIX G: THE MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS OF ALL FOUR THEORIES COMBINED	272
BIBLIOGRAPHY	275

ABSTRACT

This study is concerned with violence in the family, and more specifically, child abuse. There are primarily five goals: 1) to identify the alternative theories of child abuse; 2) to review the relevant literature and discern the major propositions of each of the theoretical models; 3) to weigh the explanatory power of each of these models of child abuse; 4) to note the methodological problems that occur in dealing with this sensitive issue; and 5) to make recommendations for future research.

Four alternative theories of child abuse are used to guide this analysis: the psychopathology theory, the social psychological theory, the social situational theory and the cultural theory. This study focuses on thirteen specific hypotheses derived from these theoretical models. The data for this research are gathered by interviewing the eight social workers from the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg, about their respective cases for the period from January 1st, 1980 to June 30th, 1980. Information is extracted from medical evaluations, police reports, parents' statements and so forth. Frequency distributions and cross tabulations are used to interpret the descriptive data, and multiple regression analysis is used to understand the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. The variation

along the dependent variable is measured in terms of frequency and severity of abuse.

The descriptive findings show that abusive parents characteristically believe in the necessity of physical punishment and believe that they "own" their child(ren); have experienced abusive treatment as a child, and have witnessed other types of familial violence; belong to the lower socioeconomic stratum, and deal with a variety of stressful situational problems; and finally, have some form of emotional disorder. The analytical data reveal that the cultural and social situational theories are most effective in explaining frequency and severity of abuse. Generally, there is a positive relationship between culturally determined permissive attitudes toward the use of physical force against children and frequency of abuse, and an inverse association between these beliefs and severity. Conversely, abuse resulting from situational stress appears to be less frequent and more severe. The social psychology model is the next most important determinant of frequency and severity of abuse, with the psychopathology theory explaining the least amount of variation. These theories are both partially supported in terms of frequency and severity of abuse.

To the extent that these findings can be generalized to all abusers, there are a number of recommendations that

can be made to alleviate this problem. Nevertheless, further empirically-based, scientific research is necessary for a complete understanding of the physical abuse of children, and its relationship with the other types of abuse.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are a number of people who have contributed to this thesis, and I consider myself very fortunate to have had their help, guidance, and advice in this endeavor. In particular, I would like to thank my thesis committee: Alex Segall, for his availability, tolerance, and critical comments, as my main advisor; Jay Goldstein, for his active participation in evaluating and editing the material; Skip Gryschuk, for his guidance and support in obtaining the data and designing the study; and Keith Sigmundson, my external examiner, for his insight and critical evaluation of the psychopathology theory, and other sections. Their patience and enthusiasm made this a more enjoyable experience for me.

My sincere thanks to Val, Kathy, Lloyd, Merle, Chris, Russ, Edith and Teresa, the social workers at the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg, for their time and their patience in answering the lengthy questionnaires. I am also indebted to Betty Schwartz, the Executive Supervisor of the Children's Aid Society, for approving the research project.

There are several other people at the University of Manitoba who are all due a heartfelt thanks. Wayne Taylor has provided significant guidance in all stages of the data analysis; Raymond Currie has shown a sincere interest in my academic career and always offered his encouragement; and

Karen Grant has been a friend and morale booster throughout our acquaintance. I also appreciate the hard work of Elaine Peters, who made such an excellent job of interpreting the revised passages and typing the final draft.

I owe my final and most important acknowledgement to my husband, Paul, and to my family, who made my research and writing tolerable and possible.

- R.L.L.W.

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES	Page
1. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MACROLEVEL VIOLENCE AND FAMILY AGGRESSION (STEINMETZ)	4
2. PSYCHOPATHOLOGY MODEL OF CHILD ABUSE	20

LIST OF TABLES

TABLES	Page
1. THE SEVERITY OF CASES ACCORDING TO SEX OF PERPETRATOR	121
2. AGE DISTRIBUTION OF PERPETRATORS AND THEIR SPOUSES	122
3. ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS IN THE SAMPLE AND OF THE CORRESPONDING WINNIPEG POPULATION (BASED ON 1971 CENSUS DATA)	123
4. THE AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE CHILDREN IN THIS SAMPLE	127
5. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AGE AND SEX OF THE CHILDREN IN THIS SAMPLE	129
6. THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE BY THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN EACH FAMILY	130
7. THE EDUCATIONAL LEVELS OF THE PARENTS IN THIS SAMPLE	136
8. OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF PARENTS	137
9. THE DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL FAMILY INCOME FOR THE SAMPLE AND THE MANITOBA POPULATION - 1979	138
10. SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS OF ABUSIVE FAMILIES	140
11. TOTAL NUMBER OF DEVIATIONS AND EXPERIENCES	144
12. CORRELATION AND BETA COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN PSYCHOPATHOLOGY VARIABLES AND SEVERITY AND FREQUENCY OF ABUSE	155
13. CORRELATION AND BETA COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES AND FREQUENCY AND SEVERITY OF ABUSE	162

TABLES	Page
14. CORRELATION AND BETA COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN SOCIAL SITUATIONAL VARIABLES AND SEVERITY AND FREQUENCY OF ABUSE	169
15. CORRELATION AND BETA COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN CULTURAL VARIABLES AND SEVERITY AND FREQUENCY OF ABUSE	181
16. MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS BETWEEN CULTURAL VARIABLES AND FREQUENCY AND SEVERITY OF ABUSE	188
17. MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS BETWEEN SOCIAL SITUATIONAL VARIABLES AND FREQUENCY AND SEVERITY OF ABUSE	190
18. MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS BETWEEN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES AND FREQUENCY AND SEVERITY OF ABUSE	192
19. MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS BETWEEN PSYCHO- PATHOLOGY VARIABLES AND FREQUENCY AND SEVERITY OF ABUSE	194
20. UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS OF EACH THEORY IN EXPLAINING FREQUENCY AND SEVERITY OF ABUSE	198

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

VIOLENCE IN THE FAMILY

Violence and aggression are aspects of human behavior that have always concerned psychologists and psychiatrists. With the apparently increasing levels of violence today, however, public awareness has expanded to include professionals, academics, and laymen alike. The rising official statistics and the wide media coverage directed toward such problems as child abuse, sport hooliganism, and political terrorism have resulted in more urgent demands for explanations and solutions to violent behavior. Indeed, reviewing the steadily growing body of printed material on this topic has become a rather formidable task. While the abundance of this literature indicates the efforts made by professionals and academics to come to terms with aggression and violence, it also reveals the many disagreements that have arisen between them. This controversy begins with the definition of violence, continues over the question of causation, and ends with a dispute over the most effective measures of dealing with violence in the individual and in society as a whole. An even more intense research effort is necessary if we are to resolve these arguments and come to a fuller understanding of violent behavior.

The major focus of this research is violence within the

family. Although it has been argued that violence within the family can be discussed under the more general heading of violent behavior (Goldstein, 1975), there are important reasons for treating these topics separately. First, all general theories need to be specified to apply to particular examples of the phenomena they attempt to explain. Allan argues that we need to know how well our current theories can explain the occurrence of violence in the family (Allan, 1978:44).

Second, while the family is viewed, typically, as a loving and secure place, it would, in fact, be hard to find a social group in which violence is more of an everyday occurrence than it is within the family.¹ In an in-depth interview of 80 families, Gelles reports that about 60 percent of the husbands and wives have used physical aggression on each other during a conflict (Gelles, 1972:48). Gil estimates that approximately two million incidents of child abuse occur each year (1971:639); and Wolfgang and Ferracuti report that family members make up the single largest category of homicide victims (1967). If extreme forms of violent behavior occur in the family with such frequency, less extreme violence may be very common indeed. We need to know what it is about the composition and dynamics of this group which make it so prone to violence.

Third, the family is a social group which possesses certain characteristics that differentiate it from many other

groups. For example, it is the primary socialization agent, responsible for transmitting and developing in the child, those attitudes and behaviors deemed important by society. More specifically, the family is the setting which establishes the emotional context and meaning of violence (Straus, 1978:45). Whatever the hereditary predispositions and the biological factors involved in a child's development, the patterns of the child's behavior are largely determined by his/her early life experiences. A study of violence in the family and the effects of this socialization experience may to a certain extent explain a wide variety of violent behavior in the family and in society as a whole.² Furthermore, the family is one of the very few groups to which society gives a legal mandate (and sometimes the obligation) to use physical force - as in the physical punishment of children. Yet, it is also expected to provide a place of love and security for its members. The conflicting role expectations of the parents need further investigation. Finally, as a social group, the family is differentiated from others in that there is a long-term and highly emotional commitment. The high level of violence that occurs in the family may indicate that aggressive behavior is tied to the intensity and frequency of the relationship involved (Singer, 1971:4). This association coupled with the difficulty of leaving the family (emotional and legal ties) indicates the importance in coming to a better understanding of family-related violence.

In addition to the uniqueness of the family as a social group, there is a fourth reason for treating familial violence as a separate issue. In a recent study involving the United States and Canada, Steinmetz notes an apparent relationship between rates of violent crime on a societal level, as measured by homicide, assault and battery, and rape, and violent acts between family members (1977:29-30). Canada, with considerably lower levels of a wide variety of violent behavior on a societal level, also tends to have lower levels of intrafamilial aggression. Steinmetz suggests that macro-level conditions that result in high crime rates (such as assault and battery, rape and homicide) may nourish a tolerance of the acceptance of violence, which in turn, detrimentally affects family functioning and results in familial aggression (see below):

Figure 1. Relationship between Macrolevel Violence and Family Aggression*

Macrolevel conditions	---	high crime rates	---	family
poverty		and an acceptance		aggression
inadequate housing		or tolerance of		
glorification of		violence		
violence				
acceptance of violence				

* Suzanne Steinmetz, 1977:30

Aggressive behavior within the family, in turn, legitimates the widespread use of violence, thus detrimentally affecting societal functioning. Therefore, to understand the nature of the relationship between violence in the family and societal violence, further investigation of these inter-related but separate issues is required.

THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The term "family violence" encompasses a wide range of behavior. It includes violence against children, violence between spouses, and violence between siblings. More recently, attention has also been focused upon violence against the elderly (parent) (Steinmetz, 1977:xvi). Although research has been conducted in each of these areas, our knowledge of them varies considerably. There is almost no research on abused elderly parents and the literature on sibling violence is quite scarce. Progress has been made more recently with the research into battered spouses but our understanding of the scope and dimensions of this problem is still limited. The most extensive research and the most developed explanations are found in the area of child abuse. Even here however, disagreement exists in regard to nearly every aspect of the phenomenon. The research on child abuse is thus at a stage of development particularly conducive to the type of investigation possible here. The available literature provides a number of alternative theories whose explana-

tory powers can be analyzed in a comprehensive study. In fact, several researchers in this area have suggested that our understanding of child abuse might benefit most from studies which concentrate on information already available on this topic (Lynch, 1978:270; Allan, 1978:69-70).

For purposes of this study then, the focus will be primarily on child abuse. The goals of this research are:

- 1) to identify the alternative theories of child abuse;
- 2) to review the relevant literature and discern the major propositions of each of the theoretical models;
- 3) to attempt, in this study, to weigh the explanatory power of each of these models of child abuse;
- 4) to note the methodological problems that occur in dealing with this sensitive issue; and
- 5) to recommend directions for further research.

There is one matter which must be discussed before proceeding however, and that is, the problem of defining child abuse.

DEFINING CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse is a socially defined phenomenon and as such, has no set or permanent boundaries. In the absence of any clear and accepted definition, different theoretical perspectives have resulted in a proliferation of diverse definitions,

ranging from conceptualization based on particular physical injuries to those based on a broad spectrum of abuse. Consequently, it is difficult to produce accurate statistical estimates of the scope of abuse and to determine the appropriate limits to the range of research on this topic.

The majority of the definitions, especially in the earlier studies, have been in terms of the physical injuries of the child. The definition used by Oppé is a typical example:

a battered baby is an infant who shows clinical or radiological evidence of injuries which are frequently multiple and involve mainly head, soft tissues, or the long bones and thoracic cage and which cannot be explained unequivocally by natural disease or simple accident (1968:45).

The list of injuries has been expanded to include bites, bruises, bleeding into and around the skull, mutilation, scalds and burns, and combinations of fractures of the arms, legs, skull, or ribs, and even then the list is not exhaustive.⁴

While these medical definitions describe some of the physical signs of abuse, they do not bring us any closer to an understanding of what, in essence, constitutes abuse. Moreover, they exclude other factors that are important to the identification process, such as:

changes in explanation given by the parents, delays in reporting the injury, parents' lack of curiosity and expressed anxiety about the cause of the accident, and the quality of the parent-child interaction (Allan, 1978:45).

The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children has formulated a definition which attempts to incorporate these other factors:

All children under four years of age, where the nature of the injury is not consistent with the account of how it has occurred, or other factors indicate that it was probably caused non-accidentally (1976 b).

The inclusion of the age limit reflects the opinion of many researchers in the area of child abuse that children under age 4 are most at risk of being abused and further, that a different type of abuse is involved when it begins at or after this age (Steele and Pollock, 1974:90). This age limit complicates data analysis however, as some studies are based on children of all ages and others only on that group under four.

In addition to the physical injuries of the child and the other identifying factors, some researchers argue that a satisfactory definition must include the motivation of the perpetrator. Peckham emphasizes that motivation is particu-

larly important from two aspects:

the adoption of preventive measures in children who have already experienced abuse and in the identification of groups of adults and children who are particularly at risk (Peckham, 1974:23).

Gil has incorporated this aspect into his definition in the following manner:

Physical abuse of children is the intentional non-accidental use of physical force, or intentional, non-accidental acts of omission, on the part of a parent or other caretaker interacting with a child in his care, aimed at hurting, injuring, or destroying that child (1970:6).

Although this definition is better from a theoretical point of view, it introduces a number of even more complex difficulties. First, as Gil points out himself, it may not always be possible to differentiate between intentional and accidental behavior. Even in those cases where "deliberate intent" is inferred, chance elements may also be present, making it very difficult to determine in a given incident, the exact role played by chance and that played by intentional behavior. On the other hand, unconscious motives may be involved in behavior which appears to be purely accidental. More recently, the trend has been to abandon such words as

"intentional" or "deliberate" as they appear to imply some premeditated plan. "Nonaccidental" is considered to describe best what is actually happening between the perpetrator and the child (Helfer, 1977:4).

Second, Gil has expanded the definition of abuse to include acts of "omission" or neglect. He feels that the relativity of personal and community standards and judgements would be avoided by including all acts of force and omission aimed at hurting or destroying a child, irrespective of the degree of seriousness and/or the outcome. However, a great deal of controversy concerning the definition of child abuse has arisen over this issue.

Some researchers combine neglect and abuse under one heading for the purposes of explanation and intervention. Makover (1966:33), for example, suggests that acts of omission differ from acts of abuse in degree rather than in kind, and studies the two phenomena as one issue. Giovannoni argues that while neglect and abuse may be usefully distinguished for the purpose of explanation there is no practical value in making the separation at the level of intervention (Giovannoni, 1971). Other researchers have made a clear distinction between the two phenomena at both a causal and a treatment level. Young favors this latter approach and treats the two separately. This may be misleading, however, as it often happens that severe abuse cases also include elements of neglect. Some authors have even attempted to dis-

tinguish three categories - neglect, abuse, and battering (Van Stolk, 1973:16,20 - 22,92; Renvoize, 1974). Van Stolk describes neglect as the insufficient care of a child, abuse as the fairly consistent, "soft-core" punishment routinely inflicted upon a child; and battering as the "hard-core", non-accidental infliction of injuries by a caretaker who cannot feel for the child. Since no attempts have been made to validate this typology, it is difficult to say whether the extra category is particularly useful.

The severity and frequency of the physical injuries have also been discussed in relation to defining the limits of the spectrum of abuse but here again there are difficulties. At the extreme violence end of the spectrum are cases of child murder or infanticide. The inclusion of these particular cases is left to the discretion of the researcher and therefore may, or may not, be part of any one study. Steele and Pollock exclude the acts of infanticide because they feel that a different form of behavior and a different type of motivation are involved (1974:90). Bakan, however, includes both abuse and infanticide in his discussion (1971), and indeed, it may be a mere matter of chance whether a child survives an attack or not.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, there is the difficulty of differentiating abuse - which is considered to be illegitimate and excessive violence towards children - from punishment which is considered legitimate. Allan argues that:

what is thought to be an acceptable level of violence depends on the parents' conception of their role, their own experience as children, their religious or moral beliefs, and the cultural environment of which they are a part (1978:46).

In our society, where the use of physical violence is accepted and practised as a legitimate method of child training by so many parents, it is often difficult to distinguish discipline from abuse. Moreover, the researcher's personal bias in regards to what constitutes "legitimate discipline", may affect the definition of abuse that he/she employs.⁵

Psychological stress and emotional abuse have also been discussed in the literature (Fontana, 1971:10). Helfer, in fact, has pointed out that the consequences of mental abuse can be just as serious as those resulting from physical injuries (1977:6). However, the near impossibility of detecting such parental practices where there are no visible physical scars, poses special problems for the researcher. Therefore, while references are occasionally made to psychological abuse in the literature, especially in conjunction with physical injuries, it is generally omitted both from definitions and from research.

Sexual attacks of a child in one's care comprise a final dimension of the abuse syndrome. De Courcy and De Courcy include these cases in their definition when reviewing abuse

incidents that go to court (1973). Generally however, sexual abuse is excluded from the definition and is only considered in research studies when physical injuries are also present. Gil explains that pure sexual attacks should be kept distinct because their motivation is quite different (1970:7). Perpetrators of sexual abuse are seeking primarily sexual self-gratification as opposed to child abusers who seem intent upon hurting the child. As the two phenomena are likely to differ in their dynamics, it appears to be more useful to study them separately.

Discussing the problems associated with defining child abuse reveals the complex nature of this phenomenon. The review of the alternative conceptualizations highlights the effect which different definitions will have on the scope and the results of any one study and emphasizes the difficulties in drawing general conclusions from studies which have used different conceptualizations of the problem (Allan, 1978: 47). Rather than attempting to develop one composite definition of child abuse, it appears useful to study specific aspects of this phenomenon separately. In this way, perhaps a clearer understanding of different types of child abuse can be gained and comparisons can be made between the etiologies of each.

As outlined more clearly in Chapter 4, the present study is interested in the physical abuse of children. While the review of the theory and research which follows includes a

number of diverse definitions, the literature has been geared toward this aspect of the more general problem of the maltreatment of children.⁶

FOOTNOTES

¹Conclusions of this nature have been made by a number of researchers in this area, based on national statistics, press surveys of family-related violence, and personal research (Gelles, 1972:19-21; Steinmetz and Straus, 1974:3-5; and Steinmetz, 1977:29).

²The literature discussing the importance of the family in the socialization process is abundant. See, for example, Goode (1964:chs.1-2); and Davis (1967:405-407). Defective socialization within the family, and elsewhere, has moreover, been correlated with various types of criminal behavior (Bandura and Walter, 1963; Hirschi, 1969; and Nettler, 1974:306-335). More specifically, Straus has discussed the effects of intrafamilial violence on the socialization experience and later behavior of the child in terms of his/her aggressiveness (1978:45). Mary Van Stolk has also contributed to this discussion (1973:83-84).

³The "glorification of violence" is a term used by Steinmetz to refer to the way the public glorifies legitimized force in folk heroes and in the media as exemplified by the success of police and private-eye shows on television and in the movies (1977:32).

⁴A more descriptive review of the injuries that have been included under the heading of child abuse can be found in Van Stolk (1973:14-17).

⁵An interesting illustration occurred during a child abuse trial in Colorado involving a man who had severely beaten and injured his children with a stick or wooden spoon. Ten of the first twelve people drawn out of a hat for jury duty were challenged and dismissed by the district attorney because they admitted that they too used sticks and belts to discipline their children (Steele, 1970:47).

⁶The "maltreatment of children" is a term used by Fontana to denote the entire spectrum of neglect and abuse, ranging from the deprivation of parental love to cases of battering resulting in death (1971:10).

CHAPTER 2

CHILD ABUSE: ALTERNATIVE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

Although there is presently a fair amount of literature available on the problem of child abuse, theoretical discussions are rare. The majority of studies are descriptive in nature and "start and finish with relatively untested commonsense assumptions" (Spinetta and Rigler, 1972:197). Little effort is made to review previous research with the aim of formulating and testing specific hypotheses and building theory.

Those authors who are concerned with the theoretical conceptualization of this phenomenon tend to borrow ideas considered relevant to child abuse from several major theoretical approaches, without really attempting to develop the various theoretical models from which the problem might be studied (Steinmetz, 1977:16; Allan, 1978:62-69).¹

From the review of the literature, there appear to be four major theoretical approaches that are useful in understanding this phenomenon. They are the psychopathology theory, the social psychology theory, the social situational theory, and the cultural theory.² The remainder of this chapter discusses each of these models individually, by first outlining

the major dimensions and then critically evaluating the problems inherent in each theoretical approach to child abuse.

THE PSYCHOPATHOLOGY THEORY

A great deal of the initial research on child abuse is based upon psychopathology theory. Indeed, it may be the most widely accepted explanation of child abuse today (Gelles, 1973:190). Psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, social workers, medical practitioners, and others, have all, to some extent, focused on the abusive parent to explain the etiology of this phenomenon. The model is based upon three primary assumptions, each forming an essential element of this theory:

- 1) the abusive parent is thought to have a psychological pathology or sickness which causes his/her violent behavior;
- 2) the disorder is apparently manifested in the parent-child relationship; and
- 3) the cause of the psychopathy is the parent's own childhood experience of abuse.³

Each of these assumptions is elaborated below.

The Child Abuser: A Psychopathic Portrait. There is a common theme that runs through the psychopathology literature that anyone who would abuse or kill his/her child is

sick (Gelles, 1973:191). This theme has become synonymous with a cause-and-effect relationship; that is, it is suggested that some form of psychopathology is the cause of the abusive behavior. The precise nature of the disorder, however, is not as clear and, in fact, includes a variety of behavior. Some researchers state that the child abuser is mentally ill (Coles, 1964) while others claim that the problem is located in a character or personality defect (Kempe et al., 1962). Moreover, a number of specific psychological characteristics have been associated with this defect, ranging from depression to sadism.⁴ Whatever the particular attribute, the authors articulating this model are in agreement that psychopathy is the cause of child abuse.

The Parent and Child: Revealing the Psychopathy. The second assumption of this model is that the disorder is manifested in the parent's relationships with his/her child. One form of this manifestation is essentially a "transference psychosis" (Galston, 1965:442). The parent attempts to cope with internal problems by means of externalization, utilizing a particular child as a partial personal representation. The victim is viewed by the parent not as the helpless child he/she really is, but as an organized, capable adult (Morris and Gould, 1963:298-9). The child is expected to meet his/her parent's complex and excessively demanding emotional needs rather than having his/her needs met by the parent. When

the child is unable to perform satisfactorily he/she is perceived as being disobedient and hostile, by the abusive individual. The parental distortion of reality thus allows the offender to project his/her own self-hatred onto the child, as the corresponding adult who he/she hates. As Steele and Pollock have pointed out, the abusive parent may even feel a "sense of righteousness" about his behavior (1974:96). The child is thought to be the cause of the parent's trouble and becomes a "hostility sponge" for the abusing adult (Wasserman, 1967:226).

Thus far then, the abusive parent has been identified as "sick", and this sickness has been shown to manifest itself as a transference and distortion of reality on the part of the parent. In this state, the immature, impulsive, dependent (etc.) individual lashes out at the source of his/her problems - the child. The final assumption of the psychopathological model attempts to explain the cause of the sickness.

The Cause of the Psychopathy. The primary explanation for the presence of the psychopathy is that the abusive parent has been raised in the same style which he/she recreates in raising his/her own children. The parent's own early childhood experience of abuse and abandonment creates psychological stress which produces certain psychopathic states. These states, in turn, cause abusive acts (Steele and Pollock,

1974:97-98). In this way, a life pattern of aggression and violence is established, explaining both the psychopathy and the abuse (Wasserman, 1967:225). The assumption is that the parent who is abused as a child will almost certainly pass this on to his/her own child.

The resulting psychopathological model is diagrammed by Gelles (1973:193):

Figure 2. Psychopathology Model of Child Abuse

EARLY CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCE	PSYCHOPATHIC STATES	
Abused	Personality	CHILD ABUSE
Emotionally abandoned - - - -	traits - - - -	
Psychologically abandoned	Character traits	
Physical punishment	Poor control	
	Neurological states	

Although this theory is perhaps the most popular approach to the problem of child abuse, it has been criticized by a number of researchers (Gil, 1970; Gelles, 1973; Elmer, 1977; and Allan, 1978). Some problems with this model are discussed in the following section.

Some Problems with the Psychopathological Model

An initial problem with the psychopathological approach is the inability to pinpoint the personality traits which

characterize the pathology. Gelles identifies at least 19 traits listed by different authors who support the psychopathological model, and reveals that agreement, by two or more authors, is reached for only four of the traits (1973: 194). Each remaining trait is mentioned by only one researcher, illustrating the lack of agreement concerning the makeup of the psychopathy.

In addition to the controversy between these researchers, many of them are clearly inconsistent and contradictory in their own writings. First, some authors blatantly contradict themselves by asserting that the child abuser is a psychopath, and at the same time, stating that the abusive individual is no different than a "random cross-section of the general population" who "would not seem much different than a group of people picked by stopping the first several dozen people who you would meet on a downtown street" (Steele and Pollock, 1974:92). Zalba (1971) and others (Steele and Pollock, 1974; Walters, 1975) have also noted that abusive parents do not fit easily into any one particular psychiatric category. Second, many of the authors advance the psychopathological theory as a unicausal explanation of the abuse syndrome, even in light of other equally important factors found in the research.

Steele and Pollock, for example, state that social, economic, and demographic factors are somewhat "irrelevant

to the actual act of child beating" (1974:94). Yet, they also note the predominance of social and economic difficulties which, by creating additional frustration and stress for the parents, contribute to behavior which might otherwise have remained dormant. They conveniently label these factors as "incidental enhancers" and claim that they are neither necessary nor sufficient causes of child abuse. Young, after taking great care to emphasize the psychopathology of the abusive parent to the exclusion of sociological explanations (1964:44), proceeds to describe the grim living conditions of the majority of the families:

In their economic and social framework then, these families are chiefly members of the lower economic group, limited in education, unskilled in occupation, given to frequent changes in jobs and periods of unemployment. They live to a considerable extent in sub-standard housing, overcrowded, dirty, in poor repair. When they live in the cities, they tend to congregate in the slums. They have large numbers of children with few material resources for their care...

Many of them are alcoholics, more are heavy drinkers (pg.74).

Although she accounts for a large majority of these findings

as a sampling bias (public child welfare agencies tend to get a heavy concentration of families from the lower socioeconomic strata), she concludes that individual environment in combination with social environment is one important element in the complex process which causes abusive families (pg.86). In addition to these situational factors, some authors have mentioned that the child may in certain circumstances contribute to his/her own abuse (Galdston, 1966:28; Milowe, 1966:29-30). Milowe reveals that some children are atypically difficult and irritating, and are, indeed, sometimes battered in sequential foster home placements where no other child has ever been abused. There are many other such contradictions in the literature, but those mentioned here suffice to make the point that researchers adhering to the psychopathological model are obtaining results not accounted for by their theory.

A related and even more pressing problem of this approach is also revealed in the research literature. Not all parents recall having a particularly unhappy childhood (Lukianowicz, 1971). In a study of fatal battered-baby cases, Smith found that ten men claimed "normal" homes and this was confirmed in six cases (1975). He concludes that these cases form an independent type of child abuse which needs to be contrasted with the more common ones in which aggression has its roots in childhood experiences.

In addition, not all children with abusive backgrounds grow up to be abusing parents. Gelles reveals that some battered children, as adults, do not use abusive child-rearing techniques, but participate in conjugal violence instead (1972). Harsh and rejecting childhood experiences have been quoted as significant factors in the etiology of several other kinds of criminal behavior as well, ranging from juvenile delinquency (Glueck and Glueck, 1950) to murder (Palmer, 1972:53). Moreover, it is quite plausible that some abused children grow up to be "average", everyday adults and parents exhibiting no violent tendencies. Allan argues that on the basis of the wide range of possible consequences, any theory which attempts to explain all child abuse on the basis of early life history must be incomplete (1978:67).

A final difficulty with the psychopathological theory concerns the quality of the research on which it is based. Although this problem is discussed again in the following look at the empirical evidence, it should be noted that much of the research does not meet even the minimal standards of evidence in social science (Gelles, 1973:191). There are two weaknesses especially relevant to the theory. First, few of the studies attempt to test any hypotheses concerning the phenomenon. The analyses of the abusive behavior are largely completed "ex post facto" and therefore, little analytic understanding of the genesis of the abuse is gained.

For example, Kempe, et al. have stated that abusive parents react with poorly controlled aggression (1962:18). Analyzed after the fact, it seems obvious that a parent who batters his/her child reacts with uncontrolled aggression. As Gelles points out, this type of analysis does not distinguish the behavior in question from the explanation (1973:194).

The second problem concerns the validity of the research evidence. While some of the findings are based on in-depth case studies, many more have resulted from relatively few questions pertaining to the parents' psychological well-being. "Psychopathology", however, has special connotations for the psychologist or psychiatrist, necessitating extensive analysis of the parent. Consequently, several researchers have claimed to find evidence of psychopathology based on invalid, or at least, insufficient indicators.

This theory then is deficient in a number of respects, including the fact that it ignores the possible sociological consequences of being abused as a child. One factor which may determine what form of adaptation a parent will use in handling family stress is his/her own childhood socialization. The social psychological theory presented in the next section considers this proposition.

THE SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY THEORY

The social psychological theory of child abuse is, to some extent, a response to a shortcoming in the psycho-

pathological model. It begins with the same assumption that the key factor in understanding child abuse is the perpetrator's own history of abuse as a child. However, while not denying the possible psychological consequences of this experience, the authors articulating the social psychological approach argue that there are important sociological consequences as well. Generally, the theory first argues that children who are exposed to aggressive models in their formative years and who see violence being used as a method of problem solving and as a major means of communication between people, are likely to internalize such patterns of behavior. Secondly, under similar conditions in later life, especially where the person is at a loss for what to do, he/she is likely to imitate his/her parents' behavior (Allan, 1978:64-65). This process is elaborated below.

A Role Model of Violence. The terms "modeling" and "social learning" refer to the age-old observation that human beings learn through imitation. Much of what we have been taught or trained to be is a result of what we have been shown. The role of a model in training a child has, moreover, been most thoroughly documented in the imitation of aggression (Bandura and Walters, 1959). Both nurturant and non-nurturant models have been used successfully in experiments using models to elicit imitative behaviors (Bandura and Huston, 1961).⁵ By applying these principles to the

models available in a violent home, it is possible to hypothesize how generations of abusive parents are produced.

The family more than any other social institution, is the primary mechanism for teaching norms and values. As such, this social group "serves as basic training for violence by exposing children to violence, by making them victims of violence, and by providing them with learning contexts for the commission of violent acts" (Gelles, 1972: 107). The children eventually inculcate normative and value systems that approve of the use of violence on family members in various situations. According to Straus' elaboration, the child develops these views through three important, but indirect, lessons that are learned each time a parent uses physical punishment (1978:45). First, although the child learns to do or not to do a certain behavior as intended, the child also learns to associate love and violence. As parents are usually the only ones to hit a child, the message is delivered that those who love the most, are also those who hit. Second, the use of force in training a child to avoid doing dangerous things, establishes the "moral rightness of hitting family members". Third, the child learns that when something is really important, it justifies the use of physical punishment. The mechanisms by which these observations and experiences are translated into violent actions as adults bring us to the second proposition.

The Effects of Violent Role Models on Later Behavior.

The initial rationale for positing that violent role models in the family have a deep and lasting effect on eventual violent behavior towards family members is that, in similar situations in later life, the individual employs the behavior he/she has learned in childhood. The individual is often unaware of alternative means of handling the problem. To quote Singer (1973:31):

In new situations where a child is at a loss for what to do he is likely to remember what he saw his parents do and behave accordingly, even to his own detriment. Indeed, adults when they become parents and are faced with the novelty of the role revert to the type behavior they saw their parents engage in when they were children sometimes against their current adult judgement.

Straus argues that the lessons learned by a child who receives physical punishment, become such a fundamental part of his/her personality and world view that they are imitated by the child in the treatment of his/her own children. He adds that this type of communication and behavior may be generalized to other social relationships that the child has (1978:45).

The importance of the role models provided in the family is, moreover, emphasized by the fact that in our society, there are no other institutions that teach how to be a "good" parent (with the minor exception of some parenting courses taught in schools and the community). Allan has pointed out that new parents are often ignorant of children's developmental capacities and tend to rely on expectations that their parents demanded of them (1978:53). Consequently, the cycle goes on, one generation passing their child-rearing techniques, to the next. Gelles argues that not only are the methods and instruments passed on but also the basic approval of interpersonal violence among family members and the accounting schemes to justify the behavior (1972:176-178).

Thus, the assumption is that children who have observed or who have been victims of child abuse are more likely to engage in this behavior as adults, than are children who have not observed or been victims of abuse. This proposition is based on the rationale that children imitate the behavior they have learned in their families. At the same time, the social psychological theory acknowledges that personality differences influence how we learn. Consequently, children may internalize their parents' values and attitudes to varying degrees and in various ways.

This model provides a sociological understanding of the

consequences of being abused as a child and thus, helps to explain why all abusive parents are not necessarily characterized by psychological disorders. Moreover, it accounts for personal differences that may disrupt the cycle of abuse from time to time. Nevertheless, it suffers from some of the same criticisms made about the psychopathology theory.

Some Problems with the Social Psychological Model

First, the social psychological theory of child abuse does not account for equally important situational variables, even in light of the abundance of research correlating social, economic, and demographic factors with this phenomenon.⁶ These variables are of particular importance in interpreting the effect of a role model on later behavior since situational factors have been known to affect the copying of a model (Nettler, 1974:319).

Second, although the model broadens the possible consequences of abuse as a child, it really does not explain why one child may later be involved in conjugal violence, another child in murder, another in parental abuse, and yet another in no violent behavior at all. Personality differences may account for these alternative outcomes to some extent, but situational variables could, again, play an important part.

A further problem noted in the psychopathological approach is that not all abusive parents have a history of abuse during their own childhood. As already suggested,

such cases may comprise an independent type of child abuse which needs to be contrasted with those traced back to abusive childhoods.

Finally, the social psychological theory also suffers from the lack of empirical research. There has been no effort to define the hypotheses and to test their explanatory power. If we are to begin to assess the validity of this model in comparison to the psychopathological interpretation, this type of analysis must be done.

The emphasis on childhood experiences of one kind or another as the fundamental factor in the etiology of violence, as discussed in the aforementioned theories, represents a fairly large body of opinion in the area of child abuse. However, not everyone shares this perspective. For example, Goldstein (1975) takes the view that early experiences only play a minor role in the causation of violent acts and that situational variables are much more important. This proposition is discussed in the following theory of child abuse.

THE SOCIAL SITUATIONAL THEORY

A good deal of the original research concerning child abuse was conducted by medical and psychiatric hospital staff, who were primarily interested in analyzing and treating the individual offender. As the awareness of this social problem

increased, other disciplines became involved and the scope of the research was extended. One of the primary concerns was, and is, the situational circumstances of the abusive family (Blumberg, 1964-65: 148-150; Gil, 1970:135; Gelles, 1974:195; and Steinmetz and Straus, 1974:17). The social situational theory approaches the problem of child abuse by examining the situational circumstances specific to these families. In particular, it considers the stressful problems specific to the family as well as the family's situation in relation to the social structure. Basically, there are two propositions:

- 1) violence is a response to particular stressful situational stimuli; and
- 2) certain families, largely by their situation in the social structure, suffer greater frustration and stress than other families (Gelles, 1972:188-189).

These assumptions are discussed in more detail below.

Violence as a Response to Stress. One of the most popular theoretical statements about the origins of aggressive behavior has been the frustration - aggression hypothesis of Dollard et al. (1939).⁷ Although there are a number of difficulties with this proposition, frustration has proved to be a useful theoretical construct in understanding child abuse. The social situational approach assumes that violence

is an adaptation or response to the frustration caused by situational stress, especially where there are no other accessible solutions (Gil, 1970; Gelles, 1972:185). Gelles further adds that violence is used in place of other resources when structural stress curtails the parent's ability to fulfill his/her role expectations (especially in terms of the father) (1972:185). This is in line with Goode's general proposition that violence is a resource used to achieve desired ends especially when other resources (such as money, respect, love, shared goals) are lacking or found to be insufficient (1971:25).

Three major sources of stress and frustration are identified in the family, in relation to the problem of child abuse. The first refers to stress which may result from the lack of resources associated with the parents (such as educational achievement, occupational status, and income level). The second source includes various situational problems in the family (such as marital difficulties, unwanted pregnancies, and so forth), and the third involves certain emotional, behavioral, or physical difficulties of the abused child. These stressful situations in various combinations may produce a great deal of frustration for parents.

Stress is Differentially Distributed. The second proposition argues that stress is differentially distributed in the social structure. Thus, one would expect child abuse

to be more common in the lower social stratum as these families are more likely to experience frustration due to situational difficulties. To quote Gelles (1972:188):

Those families that have less education, occupational status, and income are more likely to encounter stressful events and have stressful family relations than are families with higher education, occupational status, and income.

In addition, the ability to cope with stress is unevenly distributed. The families in the lower social stratum tend to have fewer resources (such as free-time, access to outside services, etc.) than other families. Consequently, families that encounter the most stress have the fewest resources to deal with it.

Norms and values that approve of violence and lead to a "subculture of violence" are thought to be traceable to the underlying social structure. If this theory is correct, violence between family members should occur whenever conditions (such as inadequate income, unemployment, large numbers of children, etc.) are found, irrespective of social class (O'Brien, 1971:65). Nevertheless, violence should be expected to occur more often in the lower class where stressful situations are more prevalent.

Consequently, socioeconomic factors have a dual relationship with stress. They provide a direct source of frustration in terms of lack of resources, and they contribute to stress, indirectly, in that parents with a lower socioeconomic status may be less able to deal effectively with other sources of frustration, than parents with a high status. This study acknowledges the dual effect of socioeconomic status, and expects, therefore, that child abuse is more likely to occur in the lower social stratum. However, the precise indirect effects of socioeconomic status (ie. the interrelationships between this variable, the other stress factors, and child abuse) are not examined.

The social situational approach offers an explanation for those cases of child abuse where the parents come from relatively happy homes and are not abused as children. Indeed, several of the authors who have attempted to develop typologies of abusing parents include a category for parents who seem to be reacting to environmental stresses rather than to internal stimuli (Boisvert, 1972; Scott, 1973; Weston, 1974). Taken as an individual approach to the problem of child abuse however, some essential difficulties are evident.

Some Problems with the Social Situational Theory

First, it appears quite obvious that stress is not a sufficient causal explanation of child abuse. It does not

explain why all families under similar situational and structural stress do not abuse their children. In order to develop a causal model of child abuse, the different adaptations to social conditions must be explained.

Second, it is not clear whether stress is a necessary factor in the etiology of child abuse. Parents in the upper classes, not suffering from any apparent situational stress (such as economic hardship, lack of respect from the rest of society, etc.), have also been found to abuse their children. Yet, Kempe maintains that some form of stressful, precipitating crisis is a necessary factor for abuse to occur (1971:92). Indeed, some of the other stressful problems, previously mentioned, may be operating; and perhaps what needs further investigation is the type(s) and/or degree of stress required.

A third problem with this model is that it dismisses the cultural effects leading to child abuse, on the grounds that norms and values approving of violence are traceable to the underlying social structure. It ignores the prevailing influence of the cultural acceptance of violence toward children in general, and the part that this tolerance plays in the etiology of child abuse.

In addition, there are several specific problems associated with the research on which this theory is based. First, the majority of studies concerning child abuse are

conducted on samples from public hospitals or welfare agencies. It is therefore likely that the lower classes, with less means of hiding their transgressions, will be over-represented. Many investigators, when reporting their findings, do not take this into account. Second, there is the difficulty of operationalizing "stress". As Allan points out:

What an individual regards as frustrating and how he responds to the experience will depend on cognitive and emotional variables which are related to his past experience and these are just the variables the hypothesis has difficulty in dealing with (1978:63).

These problems will need to be considered before we can properly interpret the social situational model.

There is one final theory of child abuse to be discussed before proceeding to a review of the research evidence. This last perspective focuses upon the cultural context within which child abuse occurs and may perhaps be the key in understanding the majority of violence against children in North America.

THE CULTURAL THEORY

The cultural theory "emphasizes the approval of violence in the value system of the society and the social norms which indicate when and under what circumstances violence is to be

used" (Goode, 1971:25). In relation to child abuse, the model proposes:

- 1) that cultural norms and values which approve of violence toward children are prevalent in our society as indicated by our general acceptance of violent child-rearing techniques; and
- 2) that the cultural sanctioning of physical punishment lays the groundwork for some parents to go beyond the accepted level of violence (Gil, 1970).

These propositions are elaborated below.

The Prevalence of Violent Child-Rearing Practices. The cultural theory argues that child abuse must be understood within the context of societal norms and values regarding violence toward children. Using this premise, Gil concludes that physical abuse of children appears to be endemic in American society since our cultural norms of child-rearing do not preclude the use of physical force toward children by their caretakers (1971b:205).

Radbill (1974) and others (Fontana, 1971; Bakan, 1971; and Gil, 1970) have conducted quite extensive historical reviews which reveal the many injuries that have been inflicted upon children by their parents and by society.⁸ Although with the passage of time, society's interest in and protec-

tion of the needs and rights of children have improved considerably, it appears that the sanctioning of violent child-rearing methods is still prevalent in North America today (Gil, 1971b:205). According to Gelles, the act of a parent hitting a child is so pervasive in our society that it is quite problematic to say that a parent who hits his/her child is being violent (1972:53).

Van Stolk explains that parents have been told, and believe that force and punishment are important adjuncts for maintaining our society and the North American way of life (1973:23). Children must be taught to "behave" and to this end, physical punishment is seen as a regrettable but nevertheless necessary method for dealing with them. Anything less than corporal punishment is thought to lead to uncontrollable children who eventually become juvenile delinquents (Van Stolk, 1973:32; Peckham, 1974:25-26; Straus, 1978:46). Consequently, physical punishment only becomes a problem if the parent "goes too far" or if the child does not "deserve" it.

The use of corporal punishment, moreover, is encouraged in indirect, and sometimes direct, ways by "professional experts" in child-rearing and education, by the media (including the newspaper, radio, television, etc.) and by our public institutions (such as the schools, child care facilities, and courts).⁹ Against this background of public sanction

of the use of violence against children, it should surprise no one that extreme incidents will occur from time to time in the course of "normal" child-rearing practices (Gil, 1971b: 206). This leads directly to the second proposition.

The Groundwork for Child Abuse. Advocates of the cultural model argue that society, by accepting physical punishment as the right and necessary concomitant of misbehavior, sets the stage for all kinds of atrocities (Gil, 1970;;Van Stolk, 1973). Child abuse is one end of a continuum starting with the legitimate exercise of parental authority. There is still no clear point along this continuum where the quantity and quality of physical punishment practiced becomes culturally and legally impermissible (Olmesdahl, 1978:253). Consequently, one would expect the majority of child abuse cases to involve caretakers who are "normal" individuals exercising their prerogative of disciplining a child whose behavior they find in need of correction. Steinmetz and Straus add another dimension to the significance of our cultural norms by arguing that "ordinary" punishment used in many American families, is abusive too (1974).

Thus, it has been argued that the culturally sanctioned and patterned use of physical force in child-rearing, constitutes the basic causal dimension of all violence against children in American and Canadian societies. Not only do our cultural norms regarding child-rearing lead to abuse in

some cases, but they also provide parents with a justification for their behavior. While this theory appears to provide a solid over-all framework for understanding child abuse, there are some clear problems in offering it as a unicausal model.

Some Problems with the Cultural Theory

First, the cultural model does not explain many specific aspects of child abuse, especially its differential incidence rates among different population segments (Gil, 1971b:206). Several additional causal dimensions must be included before the complex dynamics of child abuse can be interpreted. This is evident in the fact that the majority of people in our society do not abuse or batter their children in spite of our cultural norms.

Second, there is the difficulty of establishing the causal relationship. Thus far, investigators have analyzed the extent to which our society approves of physical punishment toward children and the extent to which child abuse has resulted from disciplinary measures. Cross-cultural studies are really needed in order to compare a society which does not approve of physical punishment with one which does, and to analyze the differential incidence of child abuse, if any.



CONCLUSION

As suggested by this review of alternative theoretical approaches, child abuse is a complex phenomenon. Indeed, several authors have concluded that it cannot be explained by any one particular theoretical approach (Gil, 1970; Gelles, 1973; Scott, 1973; Weston, 1974, and Steinmetz, 1977). Consequently, some researchers have suggested several theories and have developed typologies, delineating separate categories for parents who seem to be reacting to environmental stress and for parents who seem to be reacting to internal stimuli (Smith, 1973; Weston, 1974). Other researchers, while also providing typologies of child abuse, have attempted to combine several of the alternative perspectives and present a multi-causal theoretical framework. Gil, for example, combines the preceding four theoretical perspectives, with specific emphasis on the cultural theory (1970:135). Gelles, on the other hand, favors a theoretical approach which combines the social psychological and social situational models (1972:188-189).

As indicated in the introduction to this chapter, the alternative theoretical models have not, to any significant extent, been tested to analyze their explanatory powers in relation to child abuse. A certain theory, or theories, may provide more insight into the etiology of child abuse than others, or it may be that a multi-causal theoretical

framework is necessary to disentangle the causal elements involved. Kempe, for example, has suggested five factors which must all be present for abuse to occur (a psychological make-up which predisposes parents to batter their children; collusion on the part of the spouse; social isolation or the absence of an effective lifeline to which the parent can turn; real or attributed provocation from the child; and some kind of precipitating crisis) (1971:92). This type of approach to child abuse clearly requires the combination of alternative theoretical models. Further research, with the intent of delineating the various propositions and testing the explanatory power of each of the alternative theories outlined in this chapter, is needed. This study is geared toward this end, but first, the already existing research evidence generated by these four theories must be considered.

FOOTNOTES

¹For a fuller explanation of these theories, and how the researchers have applied them to the particular phenomenon of child abuse, see Steinmetz (1977:16-18) and Allan (1978: 62-69).

²Although these theories are derived from the literature it should be noted that their titles and definitions have, to some extent, been formulated by this author. The theoretical discussion concerning child abuse is still underdeveloped and therefore, other researchers may or may not agree with the outline presented here. Nevertheless, these four models are based on a careful review of the research and appear to cover the alternative approaches to the problem.

³These three assumptions are summarized by Gelles after his review of the psychopathology literature, in an attempt to outline the theory and document the deficiencies (1973: 191-193).

⁴The specific references to the psychopathological characteristics of abusing parents may be found in: Kempe, et al. 1962:18; Merrill, 1962; Young, 1964:44; Holter and Friedman, 1968; Bennie and Sclare, 1969:975-976; Terr, 1970; Zalba, 1971:60; Fontana, 1971:63-71; Steele and Pollock, 1974:95,113; Lynch, Steinberg, and Ounsted, 1975:127-129; Smith, 1975:198-201. These problems are elaborated in Chapter 3.

⁵The exact use of the term "nurturance" is defined by Bandura and Walters (1963:140). Generally, however, nurturant models include affectional demonstrativeness and warmth on the part of the parents, and non-nuturant models lack affection and warmth.

⁶The social and economic variables which have been found to be related to child abuse are most thoroughly documented in the review of the literature supporting the social situational theory (see Chapter 3). The demographic factors, both in terms of previous research and the present study, are discussed in Chapter 5.

⁷The frustration-aggression hypothesis has been so popular partly because of its simplicity and apparent generality and partly because it is more amenable to empirical testing than other theories (Allan, 1978:63). Nevertheless, the proposition has difficulty in dealing with the definition of frustration and in elaborating the conditions in which a specifically aggressive response is likely to occur.

⁸An historical account of child abuse and other related problems is discussed in detail in the review of the literature supporting the cultural theory (see pg.69-77).

⁹A more elaborate discussion of the evidence indicating the way in which these individuals and institutions encourage violent child-rearing practices is provided in the review of the literature supporting the cultural theory (see pg.69-77). These arguments were presented here to strengthen the theoretical proposition that cultural norms and values which support these practices are prevalent in our society.

CHAPTER 3

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

INTRODUCTION

The growing interest in child abuse in Canada and the United States is reflected in the literature of medicine, law, and social welfare, as well as in publications directed toward the general public. The articles and books on this aspect of familial violence alone, have become so numerous that several recent reviews of the literature have been geared to the specialized interests of physicians, lawyers, psychologists, and social workers (Gil, 1970:18). The awareness of child abuse as a social problem, however, took some time to materialize.

The first official case of child abuse dates back to 1874 in the United States. It involved a young girl by the name of Mary Ellen, whose inhumane treatment resulted in the early public outcry of shock and sympathy for the maltreated child (Fontana, 1971:9). A church worker learned that Mary Ellen was neglected and abused and consequently, attempted to have the child removed from her home. After being refused assistance by a number of protective agencies, the church worker finally appealed to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. This Society

took action against the parents, resulting in the child's subsequent removal. One year later, the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children was formed.

However, interest in this phenomenon did not really develop until the use of X-ray machines around the turn of the century. The objective evidence of strange bone anomalies which could not be explained by the medical histories of the children provoked physicians to investigate further. Nevertheless, more than forty years were to pass before studies were undertaken to determine the cause of these unexplained fractures.

John Caffey, a specialist in pediatric radiology, was perhaps the first medical author to draw attention to the fact that certain unexplainable injuries were traumatic in origin. His suspicions were supported by other radiologists, one of whom, F. N. Silverman, noted the possibility of parental carelessness. P. V. Woolley and W. A. Evans, and later Caffey, finally concluded that these injuries may have resulted from the intentional acts of parents. These and other medical authors all recommended the use of X-rays, detailed case histories, and descriptions of the circumstances surrounding the incidents as diagnostic tools for detecting child abuse (Gil, 1970:19).

Once roentgenologists and pediatricians had identified abuse inflicted by parents as a possible cause of serious physical injuries of children and had developed diagnostic

case-finding procedures, other professionals and academics (police, psychiatrists, social workers, and sociologists) became concerned about the implications of this phenomenon for their respective practices. A variety of research studies were conducted within different disciplines and diverse findings and theoretical formulations arose. As outlined in the previous chapter, four major theoretical models for the study of child abuse have become evident. This chapter outlines the major research supporting each of these theories and elaborates the specific weaknesses of each model.

PSYCHOPATHOLOGY THEORY: THE RESEARCH EVIDENCE

A great deal of research has concentrated on factors concerning individual pathology and a number of attempts have been made to specify the psychopathologic model of child abuse. In accordance with the theoretical propositions, the literature is divided, first, into the various personality and psychiatric abnormalities discovered in abusing parents; second, into the particular parent-child relationships found; and third, into the childhood histories of abusing parents.

The Psychopathic Characteristics of the Child Abuser. A survey of the literature on child abuse has revealed a perfect "goldmine of psychopathology" (Steele and Pollock, 1974:89). The majority of articles and books in this area invariably open by asserting that a parent who would inflict serious abuse on a child is in some manner sick. Identifying the

psychiatric labels which are specifically associated with this phenomenon, however, is another matter.

Schizophrenia and other types of psychopathy have been diagnosed in a number of studies. Kempe, et al. describe the abuser as the "psychopathological member of the family" (1962:22) and Kaufman finds that in its most extreme form, abusive behavior is associated with a type of schizophrenic process (1962:17-22). Other researchers (Chesser, 1952; Gibbens and Walker, 1956; Delsordo, 1963; Nurse, 1964; Makover, 1966; Zalba, 1967; Court and Okell, 1970; Terr, 1970; Smith, Hanson, and Noble, 1973; Ounsted, Oppenheimer and Lindsay, 1975) have also attributed these illnesses to the abusive parent but only in a small minority of cases.

More frequently, the problem has been located in a defect of the character structure (Kempe, et al., 1962:18; Cameron, Johnson, and Camps, 1966; Bennie and Sclare, 1969; Terr, 1970) which allows for the uncontrolled expression of aggression (Holter and Friedman, 1968). Impaired impulse control (Kaufman, 1962; Bennie and Sclare, 1969; Green, Gaines, and Sandgrund, 1974), emotionally immature personalities (De Francis, 1963; Fontana, 1973; Ounsted, Oppenheimer, and Lindsay, 1975), pervasive anger (Merrill, 1962; Makover, 1966; Nurse, 1964), and violent impulses (Feinstein, Paul and Esmiol, 1963) are all findings thought to be indicative of this kind of disorder. Steele and Pollock (1974:95) describe abusive parents as "immature, impulse ridden, dependent, egocentric, nar-

cissistic, and demanding".

Other abusing parents have been described as cold, rigid, and detached (Merrill, 1962; Young, 1964; NSPCC, 1976). In contrast to this, excessive anxiety (Kaufman, 1962; Lynch, Steinberg, and Ounsted, 1975), excessive guilt (Holter and Friedman, 1968), and "imbedded depression" (Reiner and Kaufman, 1959; Makover, 1966; Court and Okell, 1970) have also been found. Some abusive parents are further diagnosed as suffering from psychosomatic illnesses and having a perverse fascination with punishment of children (Young, 1964:44).

A link between sex and violence appears evident in the literature as well. Sado-masochism and other forms of sexual deviance have been associated with parents who abuse their children to displace aggression and sadism (Reiner and Kaufman, 1959; Makover, 1966; Steele and Pollock, 1974). Terr adds that some abusive parents fantasize that their children have extraordinary and completely unrealistic sexual powers (1970). One mother for example, perceived her young daughter as a dangerous rival to her husband's affections which thus provided both a motive and a rationalization for the abusive behavior which followed.

The evidence on intelligence levels in abusing parents is conflicting. Young (1964) found that 58 from an available sample of 110 were mentally retarded, and Smith (1975)

found that half his sample of battering mothers were on the borderline of subnormality or below, a highly significant result when compared with his control sample. Cameron, Johnson, and Camps (1966) state that 93% of the men and 70% of the women ranged from "low average" to "very low" IQ. Fontana argues that such low intelligence prevents parents from being able to cope with a crisis and so they become overwhelmed and retaliate with abuse (1973). In contrast to these findings, Steele and Pollock (1974) state that their parents' IQs range from 70 to 130 and therefore spread across the entire spectrum. Moreover, in the most recent NSPCC study (1976) parents had quite normal levels of intelligence although they scored lower on the verbal than on the performance tests. The results of these tests are consistent with a personality pattern which emphasizes withdrawal and depression as dominant features.

In summary, then, there is apparently a great deal of evidence of mental illness and personality disorders but there does not seem to be any consistent pattern among violent parents. Several authors have tried to develop typologies of child abusers based upon distinctive clusters of personality characteristics. Merrill, for example, was the first to attempt this, describing three clusters of personality characteristics which applied to either parent, and a fourth type concerning problems of the father only

(1962). They can be summarized as follows:

- 1) The habitually aggressive and hostile type.
- 2) The cold, rigid, compulsive type.
- 3) The strongly dependent and passive type.
- 4) The physically-disabled and unemployed type.

Other researchers have developed typologies based on the nature of the psychological problems and the parents' ability to control abusive behavior in the future (Zalba, 1967; Boisvert, 1972).¹ Whatever the particular psychodynamics involved, the point has been made that many authors diagnose mental abnormality as the cause of child abuse.

The Parent-Child Relationship. As specified in the theoretical elaboration of the psychopathological model, the disorder is manifested in the parent's relationship with the child. The main form of this manifestation is a "transference psychosis" and it has been diagnosed in a number of studies (Galdston, 1965; Kaufman, 1966; Wasserman, 1967).

In this state, the parent acts as the child, looking to his/her own child for love and comfort, and expecting that child to respond in an adult fashion. Morris and Gould (1963) have found this behavior to be typical of abusive parents and have called it "role reversal". They state that the parent views the child as his/her own absent parent who made excessive demands upon him (her) and continually frus-

trated his (her) dependency needs. The aggression which is intended for the parent is displaced onto the child when it fails to live up to the parent's expectations. This role reversal has also been observed by Kaufman (1966), Wasserman (1967), Scott (1973), Johnson and Morse (1968), Steele and Pollock (1974), Green, Gaines and Sandgrund (1974), and the NSPCC (1976).

Distorted perceptions of reality have been noted by other authors, in conjunction with this role reversal, especially in terms of the child's behavior and intentions (Galdston, 1966; Kaufman, 1966; Wasserman, 1967; Fontana, 1973; Scott, 1973; NSPCC, 1976). The child consequently becomes a "hostility sponge" for the parent (Kaufman, 1966; Wasserman, 1967).

Scott (1973) has also found evidence of a "reversed Medea" situation in which the child makes the father feel left out by appearing to prefer the mother. The NSPCC (1976) has noted that abusive mothers often attribute "behavior to their children unjustifiably, and misconstrue their children's moods, particularly misery, as temper".

The parent-child relationship as outlined here is also characterized by an adherence, on the part of the parent, to a pattern of child-rearing with premature and unrealistic demands for performance and obedience (Steele and Pollock, 1974; Court, 1974; Ounsted et al., 1975). Highly punitive

attitudes frequently accompany the demands for perfect behavior, and these parents often regard their harsh discipline as justified (Johnson and Morse, 1968; Fontana, 1973; Steele and Pollock, 1974).

The Childhood History of Abusing Parents. The most commonly revealed factor in the history of abusing parents, and the one which is regarded by advocates of the psychopathological approach as fundamental to the whole problem, is that these parents were themselves abused and neglected as children (Chesser, 1952; Feinstein et al., 1963; Nurse, 1966; Zalba, 1966; Wasserman, 1967; Johnson and Morse, 1968; Silver, Dublin, and Laurie, 1969; Bakan, 1971; Fontana, 1971; Steele and Pollock, 1974; Davoren, 1974; and the NSPCC, 1976). Ounsted et al. describe the chain of rejection and violence from generation to generation as the "hostile pedigree" (1975), and Oliver and Taylor (1971) have traced it back through five generations in one family.

This type of disruptive home with such violent abusive parents has been found to cause a variety of psychological disorders, such as schizophrenia (Kaufman, 1966); "imbedded depression" (Reiner and Kaufman, 1950; Court and Okell, 1970); low self-esteem (Court and Okell, 1970); and others (Steele and Pollock, 1974). These problems, in turn, affect the parent's "ability to mother" and the abusive pattern is

passed on.² In summary, then, abusive behavior is viewed as a manifestation of some personality or character disorder in a parent, which can be traced back to his/her handling as an infant.

The problems with this research evidence are two-fold. First, there is the question of how to interpret the existing findings and second, there is the quality of the research to consider.

In the former instance, the presence of contradictory results complicates the interpretation of the research evidence. Many researchers have reported finding little or no evidence of actual psychopathy on the part of abusive parents (Gil, 1970; Gelles, 1972); and others have found no history of abuse and/or neglect in these parents' backgrounds (Lukianowicz, 1971; Scott, 1973).

There is also some difficulty in interpreting retrospective studies which look to childhood experiences of violence and rejection as the fundamental factor underlying all abuse. As previously indicated, there are at least two alternative explanations for the high correlations between the aggressive behavior of parents and their children (psychopathological and social psychological models). Before the mediating mechanisms can be sorted out, a great many uncontrolled variables must be disentangled, and this

is almost impossible under experimental conditions. To quote Allan (1978:58):

...determining the effects of parental influences is so complex that it is highly unlikely that any etiological relationship can be established either by studying correlations or by simple experiments and they may at best be used to support clearly stated hypotheses.

The quality of the research presents a further problem for interpreting the conclusions based on the psychopathology theory. Some of the weaknesses are general and apply to all four theoretical models. Consequently, these are handled in a final summation at the end of this chapter. Of special significance to the psychopathological model of child abuse, however, is the validity of the operational definitions employed for "psychopathy". It has been a very common practise to look for the cause of the abusive behavior within the parent. Indeed, researchers have claimed to find a number of psychological and emotional problems characteristic of abusive parents, which have, in turn, been used as increasing evidence of the general psychopathy of these parents. Unfortunately, many of these findings have been based on studies which did not include the type of in-depth case analysis necessary to make a valid conclusion about the

"psychopathy" of the parent. Before we can analyze the basic propositions of the psychopathology theory, we must recognize the inherent assumptions of the approach and ensure that our operational definitions meet these requirements. Otherwise, we are limited in the extent to which we can test the actual theory.

There is one further problem which has special significance for the psychopathology theory. Many of the studies which support this model have used samples of abusing parents whose children required hospitalization. However, as Gil has pointed out such samples tend to represent the most serious cases of injury, where one might expect a higher incidence of psychological disorders among the parents (1970). In addition, many of these samples have been too small (ie. 10-25 cases) to make meaningful generalizations.

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY THEORY: THE RESEARCH EVIDENCE

As previously noted, social psychological theory also begins with the assumption that the key factor in the etiology of child abuse is the parents' own abuse and/or neglect as a child. The literature which supports this correlation has been well documented in the previous section, and need not be repeated here. However, a number of studies have shown that abusive behavior is not always the result of some defect in the character structure.

Some parents, who have been raised themselves on a "spare the rod and spoil the child" philosophy are simply repeating their own child-rearing patterns without any malicious intent (Singer, 1971; Gelles, 1972; Paulson et al., 1972; Van Stolk, 1973). Paulson et al. quote one parent, for example, as saying:

It may seem cruel to you, but as children this is the type of punishment we received, my wife and I, and we were just using the same type of punishment...

Other studies have shown that a variety of child-rearing patterns are passed from one generation to another, supporting the argument that these are learned techniques. Researchers studying abusive and neglectful parents have found that they have been raised in the same styles, respectively (Elmer et al., 1963; Young, 1964; Nurse, 1964). Steinmetz, using a random sample of families, reports that parents generally tend to use the same disciplining techniques with their children that they experienced and witnessed themselves. Moreover, the same methods of conflict-resolution tend to be used by other members of the family. Thus Steinmetz concludes that:

...the method spouses use to resolve marital conflicts is similar to that which they will use when interacting with siblings. If this pattern continues, it would be expected that the

methods sibs use to resolve conflicts within their family of orientation would be similar to that which they will use to resolve marital conflict when they marry or to that which they will use to discipline their children and to that which their children will use when interacting with siblings, thus continuing the cycle (pg.112).

Finally, there are a number of related studies concerning the general problem of violence, which reveal a high correlation between observation of and experience with violence as a child and approval of violence (Owens and Straus, 1973). A common factor throughout the research on murderers is that they have had a high level of physical brutality inflicted on them throughout childhood (Gillen, 1946:211; Guttmacher, 1960:61; Palmer, 1962:76; 1972:53; Tanay, 1969: 1252-1253). This correlation has also been found in relation to rape and assault and battery (Steinmetz, 1977:106). Leon's study of violent bandits in Columbia (1969) adds cross-cultural support to the relationship between violence received as a child and violence committed as an adult. The fathers of these bandits used brutal punishment in order to assert dominance over the family.

In summary then, the parent's attitudes and behavior

in terms of child-rearing are affected by his/her childhood history. The parent has learned what to expect of a child and how to discipline that child; in new situations or at times of crises, he/she is likely to remember these lessons and behave accordingly. De Lissovey (1973) adds that this process is aided, in part, by the parents' ignorance of children's basic developmental capacities. In a study of a random sample of 48 couples with young babies, he found that they possessed little knowledge of basic developmental norms (eg. when to expect the first words, the first step alone, when the infant should be toilet trained). Their expectations were largely a product of what they had been told by their parents thus continuing the cycle.

While the social psychology theory offers an alternative explanation for the way violence is passed from one generation to the next, the research is susceptible to similar criticisms as the literature based on psychopathology.

As previously discussed, there is some difficulty in interpreting the effects of an abusive background on a parent's child-rearing habits, due to the many uncontrolled variables which may be involved. While the research supporting the social psychology theory appears to offer as logical an explanation as the literature supporting the psychopathology theory, it is not based on well formulated hypotheses. The researchers make no attempt to define and

empirically test those hypotheses which might differentiate these two alternative interpretations. If we are to weigh the explanatory power of each of these theories, we must specify the indicators which will be used to interpret the effects of parental influences.

A second problem with this research is the existence of contradictory results. As already cited, some researchers have found no history of abuse or neglect in these parents' backgrounds (Lukianowicz, 1971; Scott, 1973). In fact, Smith claims that some abusive parents appear to come from relatively happy homes, where there is no indication of overt aggression (1975).

The quality of the research provides a final source of criticism of the social psychology literature. The lack of clearly stated hypotheses and precise operational definitions has already been discussed. In addition, the sampling procedures limit the utility of these findings. The researchers tend to rely on small samples of known abusers with no provisions for a control group. As abusive families are typically troubled with several problems, it becomes very difficult to discern the role that the parents' history plays in the abusive behavior, especially with no control group. The lack of a comparative group of non-abusive parents plagues the majority of studies.

SOCIAL SITUATIONAL THEORY: THE RESEARCH EVIDENCE

A review of the literature reveals that abusive families are often handicapped in several different ways simultaneously. Moreover, these difficulties appear to be more problematic for families situated in the lower social strata. These situational sources of stress can be divided into three sections which deal first, with problems relating to the parents; second, with variables within the family, and third, with some additional factors associated with the victim.

The Parents. The socioeconomic status of the parent has been shown to be a major factor in the etiology of child abuse. More specifically, there is a great deal of evidence that the working and lower classes are overrepresented among child abusers. Financial difficulties (Young, 1964:69; Galdston, 1965:441; Gil, 1970:112; Gelles, 1972:128-130; Elmer, 1977:11), limited education (Young, 1964:70; Galdston, 1965:441, Gil, 1970:110-111; Gelles, 1972:128-130; Elmer, 1977:11) and low occupational status (Young, 1964:70; Bennie and Sclare, 1969:976; Gil, 1970:110-111; Gelles, 1974:128-130; Elmer, 1977:11) have all been observed.³ Researchers have argued that the environmental stresses and strains associated with socioeconomic deprivation and discrimination precipitate the abusive behavior (Gil, 1970:139; Gelles, 1972:189). In addition, the families that are handicapped

in these ways have fewer alternatives for dealing with aggressive impulses toward their children, than families with higher education, income and occupational status. Gil argues further that there is the tendency toward more direct, less inhibited, expression and discharge of aggressive impulses, learned through lower-class socialization, which differ in this respect from middle-class mores and socialization (1970:139).

The Family Context. There are several situational factors, related to the socioeconomic status of the parents, which have also been observed as stress-producing variables in relation to child abuse. These include unemployment (Merrill, 1962; Young, 1964:89; Galdston, 1965:442; Gil, 1970:111; Ounsted et al., 1975, NSPCC, 1976b; Van Rees, 1978:336), poor housing and overcrowding (Young, 1964:69; Ounsted et al., 1975; Court, 1974:38; Smith, 1975; NSPCC, 1976; Van Rees, 1978:336), and dependency on welfare agencies (Young, 1964; Gil, 1970:112; Giovannoni, 1971; Oliver and Cox, 1973). Unemployment and low occupational status have been found to be of particular importance in understanding male offenders (Gelles, 1972:132; Elmer, 1977:11; Steinmetz, 1977:122). Apparently, the father tends to use violence as a means of retaining his authority position within the family when he lacks the necessary status and skills. Leon's cross-cultural study of violent bandits in Columbia provides further evidence for this argument (1969).

The fathers used brutal punishment in order to assert dominance over the family.

The quality of marital relations between abusive parents, a further source of frustration and stress, has been of interest to a number of authors, and the majority of studies seem to indicate that chronic difficulties and disharmony are extremely common (Young, 1964:72; Elmer, 1967; Holter and Friedman, 1968; Johnson and Morse, 1968; Bennie and Sclare, 1969:976; Gil, 1970:135; Terr, 1970; Zalba, 1971; Lukianowicz, 1971; Smith, 1975). There are several interpretations for the correlation between these difficulties and child abuse, ranging from the view that they are an overt symptom of an underlying disorder (Court, 1974) to that which regards them as central to the problem of abuse (Smith, 1975). Several authors argue that the frustrations generated by unsatisfactory marital relationships are displaced onto the child (Feinstein et al., 1963; Lukianowicz, 1971). The same mechanism is used to account for maternal violence where mothers who are battered by their husbands go on to abuse their children (Weston, 1974; Smith, 1975). Other authors have found parents who have extremely close, yet hostile relationships, using the child as a "scapegoat" to eliminate negative aspects of their partnership (Gibbens, 1972). The dominant-submissive pattern has also been observed among some of the parents where the passive partner collaborates with the dominant, abusive

parent by remaining unprotesting (Young, 1964; Terr, 1970; Scott, 1973). Finally, marital difficulties associated with alcohol have been found to lead to child abuse in some cases (Young, 1964:71; Gelles, 1972:77).

There are a number of additional marital stresses that seem to be very common among mothers who abuse their children. Premarital conception, unwanted pregnancies, and youthful parenthood are all frequent features of the life history of these parents (Elmer, 1967; Bennie and Sclare, 1969; Gil, 1970; Smith, 1975). Smith found that 54% of the mothers in his sample gave birth to their first child before they were 20 years old and 40% of the mothers were under 20 years in a study done by Lynch (1975). These authors argue that early parenthood can be very stressful especially in view of the emotional immaturity of many of these couples.

Moreover, a number of studies have shown that an unplanned, unwanted, or resented pregnancy is a common source of frustration among mothers leading to abuse or even an attempted infanticide (Makover, 1966:34; Johnson and Morse, 1968; Lukianowicz, 1971; and NSPCC, 1976). The infant is an actual source of financial, emotional, and/or psychological stress and acceptance of the child may be conditional on its being a "good baby" and providing rewarding interactions for the parents (NSPCC, 1976).

The burdens of early and frequent pregnancies tie in

with the findings that the abused child is often the youngest (Bennie and Sclare, 1969:977) or the last of an already large family (Young, 1964:69; Gil, 1970:110; Steinmetz and Straus, 1974:65; NSPCC, 1976b). Bennie and Sclare (1969:977) have also noted that a number of these children are an "only child", which was unplanned and in some cases, illegitimate. Gil emphasizes that families in the lower socioeconomic bracket are more likely to experience frustration from these difficulties and to have fewer resources to deal with them.

Finally, a number of authors have observed that loneliness and isolation are frequent features of abusive families which tend to exacerbate an often already stressful situation (Morris and Gould, 1963; Young, 1964; Bakan, 1971; Steele and Pollock, 1974; Peckham, 1974; Court, 1974). The parents have few friends in the neighborhood, few social resources in the community to whom they could turn for help, and few contacts with their own parents or other relatives (Holter and Friedman, 1968; Gelles, 1972:134). Young (1964:108) adds that the nuclear family has encouraged this situation as the external restraints and supports of other relatives in the traditional extended family have been weakened. Consequently, the continued long periods of isolation with a young child may become too much, especially if there are any additional problems associated with the infant.

The Victim. Emotional and health problems on the part of the child have been identified in a number of instances. Steele and Pollock (1974) report cases where infants with some degree of congenital defect, provide a potent source of agitation for the parents, and thus precipitate their own abuse. These babies are often fussy, crying, and difficult to soothe, demanding a great deal more attention. Babies born prematurely cause similar problems and appear to be at particular risk (Elmer, 1967; Steele and Pollock, 1974; Peckham, 1974). Other physical abnormalities (Gil, 1970) and illnesses (Lynch, 1975; Ounsted et al., 1975) have been observed in relation to child abuse, which indicate that these parents often experience genuine problems.⁴

Emotional and behavioral problems that have been observed include excessive crying, whining, and clinging (Smith, 1975; NSPCC, 1976), exceptional irritability (Milowe, 1966) and intellectual and emotional pathology (Makover, 1966; Gil, 1970). These difficulties are extremely stressful and frustrating for the parent; indeed, nurses and social workers have confessed understanding why a parent might abuse "THAT CHILD". Follow-up reports have even indicated that some of these children get abused in sequential foster home placements where no other child has ever been battered (Milowe, 1966). These problems are obviously intensified in families which lack finances, social services,

and outside assistance from friends and relatives.

In summary, there are a variety of stressful events which appear to lead to child abuse. Moreover, certain families, largely because of their position in the social structure, are more likely to encounter these events and to have stressful family relations. As these families tend to have the fewest resources for dealing with their problems, violence becomes a more likely response.

Interpreting studies which have emphasized the various structural and situational stresses encountered by abusive parents poses some difficulty. In general, researchers have based their sample selection on hospital admissions' records or welfare-agency reports and these consistently show that abusing parents come from the lower socioeconomic stratum. However, in view of the reporting procedures, this is not surprising. Cases seldom come to the notice of these agencies through sources likely to have contact with the middle and upper classes. Whether environmental stresses are directly related to child abuse or are merely a function of the social class bias inherent in many samples is a crucial question which is not answered by most of the studies discussed. Smith (1975) weighted for social class differences in his statistical tests and found that income, unemployment, and household worries became insignificant. Other researchers have argued against doing this however,

and have treated these worries as part of the "diffuse problems" which families face (Lynch, Roberts, and Gordon, 1976). Similar problems occur when one considers the research on the characteristics of the abused child. Most researchers have depended upon the mother's description of her child's characteristics, and it is thus difficult to know what is a congenital problem and what is the sensitive response of an infant to its mother's treatment.

In addition, there is a fair amount of contradictory evidence which complicates the interpretation of these findings. First, several authors have observed abusive parents who come from the middle and upper classes and who appear relatively free of escapable environmental stresses (Young, 1964; Steele and Pollock, 1974). Second, there are many families in which economic hardship, unemployment, social isolation, and so forth, exist but the parents never resort to violence. Thus, the conclusions based on this literature must be interpreted with caution.

CULTURAL THEORY: THE RESEARCH EVIDENCE

The review of the literature presented thus far reveals that child abuse is a complex and varied phenomenon. Nevertheless, the culturally sanctioned and patterned use of physical force in child-rearing appears to constitute the basic causal dimension of all violence against children in

Canada and United States (Gil, 1971b:206). Testing this proposition is quite complex as it is concerned with the entire culture and requires cross-cultural analysis. Consequently, it is not nearly as well documented as the aforementioned models.⁵ Nevertheless, there are several relevant sources of information. First, there is a good deal of testimony regarding the cultural and legal sanctioning of physical violence toward children historically and presently. Second, there are also research findings which indicate how these cultural norms lead to some parents battering their children.

Radbill (1974) and others (Gil, 1970; Fontana, 1971; Bakan, 1971) have reviewed the historical use of physical punishment in child-rearing, and have revealed great injustices inflicted upon children. According to Radbill (1974):

Maltreatment of children has been justified for many centuries by the belief that severe physical punishment was necessary either to maintain discipline, to transmit educational ideas, to please certain gods, or to expel evil spirits.

The prerogative of teachers, as well as of parents, to whip children has been traced back five thousand years to the schools of Sumner (Kramer, 1956:11). Ancient philosophers in Greece and Rome beat their pupils repeatedly in order

to cure the "foolishness bound up in the heart of the child". All pictures of pedagogues in England and America, moreover, showed them armed with the birch (Radbill, 1974).

Parents were often given supreme authority over their children, to do with as they pleased. The "Patria Potestas", for example, gave a father the right to sell, mutilate, or even kill his offspring as far back as the reign of Numa Pompilius (about 700 B.C.). Although infanticide was not frequent in Rome, this law was invoked against children in infancy and later life (Bakan, 1971:31). Some of the great philosophers (Seneca, Plato, and Aristotle), moreover, maintained that the killing of defective children was a wise custom.

Although the accuracy of the Bible as a historical record may be debated among scholars, allusions to infanticide are numerous. Babies were killed for religious sacrifices, for political concerns, and for revenge (Bakan, 1971: 26-28). The many references to the killing of children in the Bible indicate, at the very least, that it was a problem that concerned the writers who composed the biblical record.

In colonial America, a 1646 law gave parents the right to put to death unruly children (Brenner, 1970:7). The Great Law enacted in Chester, Pennsylvania in 1682, stated that anyone who attacked or menaced "his or her" parents was to suffer six months' imprisonment at difficult work and to be

whipped publicly with 31 lashes on his or her back, well laid on (Frost, 1973:136). As late as 1873 female infanticide was permitted in China and as late as 1843, a child was wanted to put into the foundation of a new bridge in India (Bakan, 1971:30). According to Sumner, six-sevenths of the population in India practiced female infanticide prior to the present century (1906:318). There is a great deal more evidence of the many inflictions children suffered but these works are sufficient to indicate the extent to which cultural and legal norms and values permitted violence toward children.⁶

Western education gradually began to yield to the demands of exemplars of modern thought, both within and outside the educational system (Radbill, 1974). The interest in and protection of the needs and rights of children improved considerably, and physical violence against children eventually decreased. Nevertheless, the old dictum expressed in the Bible "spare the rod and spoil the child" still constitutes a widely accepted view today.

Van Stolk (1973) suggests that we need only look to the families of one's friends and neighbours, to the parent-child interactions at the playground and the shopping centre, or to our own families, to witness the widespread use and acceptance of physical punishment in our society. Gil's nationwide opinion survey provides further evidence

of this phenomena (1970). The large proportion of the adult population which responded positively to the items exploring both general and personal propensities to child abuse revealed that a certain measure of physical abuse of children tends to be condoned by American culture as a "normal" aspect of rearing children (p.58). It appears that several million children may be subjected every year to a wide range of physical abuse, although only several thousands suffer serious injury and only a few hundred die as a consequence. The survey also revealed that the majority of Americans show a rather tolerant attitude toward perpetrators of abuse, favoring treatment and supervision for them, in place of punishment (p.69).

Steinmetz's study revealed that 70% of the parents used physical punishment as a general mode of child-rearing and 96% used verbal aggression (1977:65). Moreover, these parents commented on how normal they considered such interactions as spanking or slapping a child and emphasized that all their friends and neighbours used similar methods (p.120). In Gelles' study of abusive families and their neighbours, 96% of the total sample reported that one or both parents had hit their children (1972:53).

The prevalent acceptance and use of these child-rearing methods are related to child abuse in two ways. First, some authors argue that any degree of physical punishment is

abusive (Gil, 1971b:205; Gelles, 1972:53; Steinmetz and Straus, 1974); and second, it appears that these milder forms of violence lead, at times, to more extreme incidents (Gil, 1971b:206; Steele and Pollock, 1974:90).

Steele and Pollock (1974:90) argue that the battered child is only the extreme form of what they call a "pattern or style of child-rearing quite prevalent in our culture". In their samples, there appeared to be an "unbroken spectrum of parental action toward children ranging from the breaking of bones and fracturing of skulls through severe bruising to severe spanking and on to milder 'reminder pats' on the bottom". Furthermore, many of the abusive parents felt quite justified in their behavior and felt that if children were to grow up to be "good" kids, they needed a strict, punitive upbringing.

A number of studies have observed that abusive parents frequently incorporate the philosophy of "Patria Potestas" and resent their authority being questioned (Young, 1964:102; De Courcy and De Courcy, 1973:9; Steele and Pollock, 1974:96; Steinmetz, 1977:121). Some perpetrators stated bluntly that their children were their "property" and they could do what they pleased with their own "property". According to Gil, the majority of child abuse incidents stem from parents who are exercising their prerogative of disciplining a child whose behavior they find in need of cor-

rection (1971:69).

The public sanction of the use of violence against children is encouraged in our society by a number of subtle, and not so subtle ways, by the legal system; by "professional experts" in child-rearing, education, and medicine; by the press, radio, and television; and by professional and popular publications (Gil, 1971b:205). In many cases of child abuse, for example, the parents are not even in conflict with any law. The family, along with the police and military, are the only remaining institutions with a legal mandate to use violence (Steinmetz and Straus, 1974).

Van Stolk (1973:80) demonstrates that the vestiges of the old Roman "Patria Potestas" can still be seen in Canadian, British, and American law. The law still refuses to recognize that parents are only caretakers of the new generation, not owners of the young (Chisholm, 1978:324-6). The legal controls that do exist regarding the interaction between parent and child are unclear, indecisive, and inconsistent (Young, 1964:20). There is no clear cut point where the quantity and quality of physical punishment becomes legally impermissible (Olmesdahl, 1978:253). Gil argues that children, consequently, are not protected by law against bodily harm in the same way as adults and do not enjoy "equal protection under the law" (1971b:206). The tragedy of this situation is evidenced by the many abused children

whose cases reach court, but who are returned to their parents only to be battered again and perhaps killed (De Courcy and De Courcy, 1973).

Steinmetz discusses the reluctance of other institutions (ie. medical, educational) to impose any restrictions on parents' use of power for fear that they would no longer be able to discharge their duties effectively (1977:35). Doctors, teachers, and social workers, are consequently reluctant to report parents when abuse is suspected or even confirmed (De Courcy and De Courcy, 1973:9-14). Moreover, children are subjected to a fair amount of abuse in the public domain. Schools, child care facilities, foster homes, correctional and other children's institutions, and even juvenile courts use a certain degree of physical punishment, not to mention emotional abuse (Gil, 1971b:206). In fact, a number of schools in the States which had abolished corporal punishment, are presently trying to reinstate the use of a paddle (Fieldler, 1980).

In addition, Lucien Beaulieu (1978) has written a thorough review of the impact of various forms of communication, especially television, in promoting, legitimizing and reinforcing violence in the home. The parent-child relationship is affected by both the direct and indirect messages imparted through the media.⁷

With a legally and culturally accepted way of life

which supports a certain degree of abuse toward children as right and proper, it is no wonder that extreme incidents will occur from time to time in the course of "normal" child-rearing practices. These findings make it easier to understand, within this cultural context, how a limited amount of additional stress might make all the difference to the safety of a young child.

Studies emphasizing the cultural approach to child abuse may be the most difficult to interpret. The findings are generally based on deductions from parents' rationalizations about their behavior. Cross-cultural studies are needed to test this theory adequately, and even then, it is impossible to control satisfactorily for the many other variables which influence the parents.

A second problem is that even with this predominant belief in physical punishment for children, the majority of parents do not abuse their offspring; at least, not in the narrow sense of the word. As the literature seems to indicate, a good many other variables are involved in extricating those factors causally related to child abuse.

As with all the research evidence reviewed so far, the cultural literature can also be criticized on the basis of the quality of the research. As these problems apply to the majority of the abuse studies, they are discussed together in the next section.

A SUMMATION OF THE METHODOLOGICAL PROBLEMS

There are several important methodological problems which affect the reliability and validity of the findings. Some of these criticisms have already been discussed as they applied to studies based on each of the specific theoretical models. In addition, however, there are some general issues which apply to the majority of research in the area of child abuse.

First, the problems of definition discussed earlier have led to great difficulties in interpreting results. They have been responsible for wide variations in the behavior that is analyzed and in the characteristics of research samples that are used. Several studies include neglect cases, although Giovannoni (1971) claims that they have a different etiology. Other studies include infanticide, although Court (1974) suggests that this may artificially increase the estimated proportion of aggressive psychopaths in abusive parents. It appears that clearer thinking in the definition of terms is necessary before consistency in results can be obtained. Allan (1978) suggests narrowing the range of the total violent population in research proposals to avoid complications.

Second, as previously indicated, child abuse research is almost continually plagued by sampling biases. Only a few British and American authors have attempted to improve

the quality of their research by the use of a control group in their sample. Conclusions are largely based on whatever characteristics are found to be associated with abusive parents. Moreover, the majority of samples have used hospital and agency records, which tend to be skewed towards the lower socio-economic levels. The families in these strata generally are more visible and less able to conceal their transgressions. Gil (1970) has also suggested that hospital samples represent only the most serious cases of injury. In addition, sample sizes are often too small to make meaningful generalizations.

These methodological problems are intensified by the fact that most researchers do not mention the reliability and validity of the information and results obtained. In a large number of retrospective studies, these measures are often difficult to obtain. In other studies, however, these issues are just ignored.

Data collection introduces a number of problems, particularly in retrospective studies where records may be incomplete and inaccurate. Moreover, authors frequently fail to define the variables involved, complicating the use of follow-up studies or cross-validation with other research to check the results. Allan (1978) has emphasized that this is a particular problem in studies searching for significant factors in early childhood. Such terms as "harsh upbringing" or "rejecting parents" are rarely defined, and so it is

impossible to determine, for example, what degree of abuse is likely to result in serious consequences.

Finally, child abuse is a very sensitive issue and consequently, the information obtained from the parents is potentially artifactual. Some parents simply refuse to participate in studies (Elmer, 1967; Smith, 1975), and others are reluctant to admit their part in the incident. They continue to conceal the whole truth even when abuse is confirmed. In addition, some researchers try to collect personal information before any real rapport with the abusive parent has been established. This approach is likely to limit the reliability and validity of the findings.

In conclusion, it appears that the quality of research in the area of child abuse still needs much improvement, if we are to discover which variables are directly related to abuse and which are artifactually related. As the literature indicates, some abusive parents have come from violent backgrounds and are repeating these patterns with their own children; other parents are seemingly living under highly stressful and disadvantaged conditions; and finally, some parents appear to be practising their legal right to discipline their child. As long as no attempt is made to weigh or order these factors so that their relative contribution can be assessed, we can only speculate about the significance of these variables. What is needed most at

this time is an improvement in the quality of the empirical research (Allan, 1978).

Nevertheless, the existing studies on child abuse do have value. They indicate that certain kinds of influences are quite frequently present and associated with the abusive behavior of parents. With improved methodological tools and clearly stated hypotheses the reliability and validity of the findings should increase, and theory building should become less problematic. This study attempts to deal with these issues.

FOOTNOTES

¹Several typologies have been developed for this problem, some dealing only with the psychological categories (Delsordo, 1963:25; Boisvert, 1972), and others including all the apparent types of abuse (Zalba, 1967:26; Gil, 1970:140-141). However, there are a number of problems with overlap and with disagreements about where to place a parent. Any new classification system must have its categories well founded on evidence, and clearly defined and validated before it can be considered for general use (Allan, 1978:50).

²"Lack of mothering" is a term used by Steele and Pollock to refer to either parent's inability to feel for the child (1974).

³Both Elmer (1977) and Gelles (1974) used control groups in their study to improve the reliability and validity of their results. The abusive parents, in comparison to the random parents (who were not known to any abusive agency and who showed no signs of being abusive) were of a lower socio-economic status.

⁴Lynch (1975) compared the abused children with their siblings and found statistically significant differences on the health factors. While the sibs were outstandingly healthy as infants, the abused group and their mothers were exceptionally ill during the first year of life. Although the sample size was fairly small, the results supported the stress hypothesis with a control group.

⁵A notable exception among the authors who only mention the significance of cultural norms briefly is David Gil. He has attempted to explore this theory in his research and has conducted a nationwide opinion survey concerning attitudes and values of violent child-rearing practices in the United States (see Gil, 1970).

⁶While the cultural norms and values regarding the rearing of children often sanctioned the use of violence, it is important to note that there were frequently protestors who criticized the use of these practices and urged greater leniency (Radbill, 1974).

⁷For an excellent review of the variety of ways in which television affects violence in the home, see Lucien Beaulieu, "Media, Violence and the Family: A Canadian View", in Family Violence, J. Ekelaar and S. Katz, eds., (Toronto, Canada: Butterworth and Co., 1978, pp.58-68).

CHAPTER 4

STUDYING CHILD ABUSE: THE RESEARCH DESIGN

INTRODUCTION

As the previous chapter indicates, the research on child abuse has become extensive. Although most of the studies have concentrated on the physical abuse of children, some have included physical neglect, emotional abuse and/or neglect, and sexual abuse. The various problems that arise from these diverse definitions have already been discussed. Briefly, however, it appears that these different types of child maltreatment may have different etiologies, accounting for some of the confusion in comparing results. Therefore, this study focuses upon only one specific type of child maltreatment - ie., the physical abuse of children. For the purposes of this research, child abuse is defined as:

the nonaccidental use of physical
force on the part of a parent or
parent substitute interacting with
a child in his/her care, which
hurts, injures, or destroys that child.

It has been suggested that the inclusion of those cases resulting in the death of a child may artifactually increase the percentage of aggressive psychopaths present in a sample of abusive parents (Court, 1974). However, the

argument may also be made that it is a mere matter of chance whether a child survives a particular attack or not. Any battered child faces the possibility of death--the parent only has to hit the child once too hard or once too often. Deleting these cases may result in an omission of some of the more severe incidents of child abuse, and bias the results in this fashion. Consequently, any such cases will be included in the present study of child abuse.

The problem of child abuse appears to be best understood within a multi-causal theoretical framework. The major propositions and more specific hypotheses derived from the theories used to guide the present research, are outlined in the next section.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

There are basically four alternative theoretical perspectives from which child abuse can be approached. It is possible that the different types of abuse previously discussed may each require its own theoretical formulation. The primary concern here, however, is to validate and assess the relative contribution of these models to an explanation of the physical abuse of children.¹ Briefly, to review the models, the central propositions of each theory are:

- 1) according to psychopathology theory:

- a) mental abnormality is the cause of the abusive behavior;

b) the disorder is manifested in the parent's relationships with the child; and

c) the cause of the psychopathy is the parent's own early childhood experience of abuse and/or rejection.

2) according to social psychology theory:

a) the cause of the abusive behavior is that the parent was raised in the same style which he/she is recreating in raising his/her own children; and

b) the parent repeats this child-rearing technique, not because of any psychological disorder, but because this is the only method the parent has learned.

3) according to social situational theory:

a) child abuse is a response to particular situational stimuli; and

b) certain families, largely by their location in the social structure, suffer greater frustration and stress, than other families.

4) according to the cultural theory:

a) cultural norms and values which approve of violence toward children are prevalent in our society as indicated by our general acceptance of violent child-rearing techniques; and

b) the cultural sanctioning of physical punishment lays the groundwork for some parents to go beyond the accepted level of violence (Gil, 1970).

The specific hypotheses to be examined in this study are outlined in the next section, according to the theory from which they are derived.

There are several hypotheses which can be formulated on the basis of psychopathology theory of child abuse. As already indicated, the nature of this study circumscribes the extent to which this model can be tested. In most cases, sufficient information was not available to assess conclusively the parent's psychopathic state. Consequently, the hypotheses tested are:

- 1) Parental mental disorder is directly related to child abuse.
- 2) Role reversal on the part of the parent(s) is directly related to child abuse.
- 3) Previous parental experience with abuse and/or neglect as children is directly related to child abuse.

Three hypotheses may be derived from the social psychology model:

- 1) Previous parental experience with abuse and/or neglect as children is directly

related to child abuse.²

- 2) Parental awareness of alternative child-rearing techniques is inversely related to child abuse.
- 3) Parental lack of knowledge of childrens' basic developmental capacities is directly related to child abuse.

Social situational theory provides several more hypotheses which focus upon the many stressful variables found to be related to child abuse:

- 1) Parents' socioeconomic status is inversely related to child abuse.
- 2) Parental stress associated with marital difficulties is directly related to child abuse.
- 3) Parental stress associated with problem-pregnancies is directly related to child abuse.
- 4) The extent of parental social contacts is inversely related to child abuse.
- 5) Parental stress associated with childrens' health and/or emotional problems is directly related to child abuse.

It should be noted that this approach does not assume that any one particular source of stress necessarily leads to child abuse. The argument is, rather, that mounting

stress on the parent due to life circumstances, leads to abuse. Certain types of stress, or combinations of stress, may be more highly correlated with abuse than others.

Finally, there is the cultural model. The extent to which this theory can be satisfactorily assessed is also limited, but generally the model suggests the following hypotheses:

- 1) Parental perception of physical punishment as an appropriate method of discipline is directly related to child abuse.
- 2) Parental self-perception as strict, authoritative disciplinarian is directly related to child abuse.
- 3) Parental perception of children as "property" is directly related to child abuse.

These hypotheses include a number of variables, each of which needs to be conceptually defined and operationalized. Before proceeding to this task, it appears useful to discuss the method of data collection used in this study.

DATA COLLECTION

Child abuse is a very sensitive topic and consequently it is difficult to get access to the names of abusive parents who have been reported through legal channels. Nevertheless, there is a social agency in Winnipeg, the

Children's Aid Society, which investigates every reported case of suspected abuse. Within this Society, there is a specific child abuse unit, involving one supervisor and at least six full-time social workers. In addition, this unit organizes regular meetings with other involved parties - ie., the police department, medical and psychiatric staff, and so forth. Information concerning each case is shared between these groups to facilitate accurate and current reports.

Each of these reports or files includes factual data about the family in general; a detailed diary of the agency's involvement in the case; the assigned social worker's assessment of the abuse incident; the medical and psychiatric evaluations of the parent(s) and child(ren); the police and court reports; and finally, the parent(s)' statement or explanation concerning the abuse incident(s). The information available in these files is quite sufficient for the purposes of this research.

While there are several ways to extract the relevant data from these abuse forms, a standard interview schedule was developed for use in this study (see Appendix A). Information was collected from the social workers at the Children's Aid Society about each of the cases to which they had been assigned. All of the interviews were conducted by the researcher, to make sure that the interview conditions were as similar as possible. In addition, the researcher attempted to ensure

that the respondents had the same understanding of the conceptual definitions and behavioral indicators.

There are several reasons for deciding to employ this particular interview procedure. First, the Children's Aid Society preferred this method. They were concerned about protecting the identity of their clients and felt that by using this method of data collection, anonymity would be fairly well guaranteed. This method was considered to be desirable from a second, more practical point of view as well. Many of the files were extremely lengthy, and it would have taken a great deal of time for a researcher to sift through the huge quantity of information. The social workers, however, generally knew exactly where to locate the relevant data; indeed, they were sometimes aware of information not even recorded in the written reports.³

Prior to conducting the actual study, two cases, taken from an earlier sampling period, were reviewed with all the social workers, in an attempt to detect any shortcomings or difficulties with the interview schedule. In addition to checking on the degree of consensus between the social workers, possible sources of confusion were identified, and revisions were made on that basis. Finally, the first six interviews of the actual study were used to detect any further problems in the interpretation of the revised schedule. As no additional difficulties arose, the study proceeded.

While precautions were taken to secure the greatest

degree of conformity possible between the social workers, there were still problems associated with the type of secondary data analysis employed here. The information in the child abuse files used in this study was obtained prior to this research design. Consequently, there were no controls to ensure that all the required data were collected for all cases or that the social workers' personal biases did not affect the parents' responses or their own interpretations. Moreover, the operationalization of the variables was limited to that used by the Children's Aid Society. In many instances the study relied upon the competence of the social workers to assess the presence (or absence) of a variable. However, each of the workers involved in this study have had considerable experience with abusive parents, and their expertise in recognizing relevant factors is generally acknowledged by other professionals in the area. In any event, precise conceptual and operational definitions of the variables were specified to facilitate reliable findings, and where possible, more than one source (ie. police reports, medical evaluations, parents' statements, and so forth) was used to measure any one item.

CONCEPTUALIZATION AND OPERATIONALIZATION

One of the more significant shortcomings of many of the past abuse studies is that the authors do not attempt to define clearly the terms they are using. Unless we know exactly

what these terms represent, we cannot gauge the full meaning of the findings. Moreover, studies cannot be replicated unless it is possible to use the same operational definitions. For the sake of clarity, each of the variables here is discussed separately, starting with the conceptual definition, continuing to the behavioral indicators, and finishing with the questions on the interview schedule.

Before proceeding to the first variable, however, there are two points which must be made in relation to this particular study. First, as noted earlier, the information in the child abuse files was obtained from several sources (ie. social worker, medical staff, police officer, parent, child). Any one of the sources, or in some cases a combination, were used in operationally defining a particular variable. Thus, for example, both the social worker's assessment and the parent's own statement were used as indicators of marital disharmony. Second, the actual schedule was divided into three parts, one concerning the parents, one identifying the circumstances of the abuse incident, and the last concentrating on the child(ren). The data were collected through a series of direct questions, in addition to a list of circumstances pertaining to the abuse incident. This list was used primarily as a further check on the presence of those items relevant to the four theories.

Several aspects of the dependent variable, child abuse, require clarification. First, the type of abuse explored in

this research, as previously mentioned, was limited to the physical maltreatment of children. In each case, the non-accidental use of physical force on the part of the parent or parent substitute resulted in the injury or death of a child. All of these cases of child abuse had been confirmed through the investigations of the Children's Aid Society.

Second, the term "parent substitute" is defined qualitatively by the nature of the relationship which existed between the child and the perpetrator at the time of the abusive incident. In other words, the perpetrator was living in the home and performing the role of a parent. These stipulations were imposed because the Children's Aid Society does not handle third-party abuse. (It is handled by the police department as assault.) Furthermore, this research is concerned specifically with parental abuse of children. Third-party assaults directed toward children may be an entirely different phenomenon, deserving of a separate investigation and analysis. The exact relationship between the perpetrator and the child was determined by question #2 of the interview schedule (see Appendix A for all references to the interview questions).

Finally, as it was not possible to include a control group in this study, the explanation of child abuse could not be approached by a comparison of abusing and non-abusing parents. In fact, due to the sampling procedure, child abuse is a characteristic present among all of the families included

in the study. Therefore, to explore variation in the dependent variable, child abuse was examined in terms of the frequency and severity of the maltreatment. Four indicators were used to measure the nature of the physical force employed: first, the type of injuries sustained in the abuse incident were measured by questions #23a and #24; second, the total number of injuries was recorded in question #23b; third, the seriousness of the abuse was indicated by questions #26 and #27; and finally, the frequency of the abuse was measured by questions #50 and #66.

Upon completion of the data collection, and subsequent to the initial analysis,⁴ type and number of injuries were combined with the seriousness of injuries to make an over-all index of severity. (For a detailed explanation of the construction of this index, see Appendix B.) This decision was justified on the grounds that the three indicators were highly intercorrelated. Moreover, the decision was also a practical one in that the testing of the hypotheses could be performed and presented more succinctly. The remaining item, frequency of abuse, was retained as a separate variable. The reason for this decision is that while severity and frequency are related, the association resembles a curvilinear relationship. The more serious abuse cases include both single incidents and incidents of repeated abuse. For the sake of clarity, it seemed useful to keep the two indicators separate. Therefore, for this analysis, two indicators, frequency and severity, are

used to measure degree of abuse.⁵

In the first set of hypotheses, there are three independent variables. The first, "mental disorder", was defined as any emotional or psychological deviance associated with the parent. Unlike many previous studies cited in the literature review, this definition excluded intellectual and behavioral problems in an attempt to clarify some of the confusion surrounding the measurement of this variable. In addition, this study acknowledged the limitations of the available data, and did not claim to have psychopathic assessments of the parents. Many researchers have combined psychological, intellectual, and behavioral forms of deviance under the general heading of psychopathy. As the scope of this study did not include in-depth case analyses of the parents, the research focused on identified psychological problems. At the same time, to avoid the difficulties involved in determining the seriousness or degree of the disorder, the existence of any such reported deviance was included, and the study examined only the presence or absence of the problem.

Two primary indicators were used to determine the presence or absence of this variable. The first was the psychiatric evaluation of the parent (questions #12a, 12b, 12c) and the second, was any previous experiences that the parent may have had with psychiatric counselling (question #13). As an additional check on the relevance of this variable, an item was included in the list of circumstances present

in the abuse incident: "any psychological or emotional deviation of perpetrator" (question #49). This indicator was determined on the basis of the psychiatric evaluation. Two further items were also included on the basis of a previous study completed by Gil (1970) which observed significant correlations between child abuse resulting from psychopathy and these factors. The first of these indicators, which are presumably related to parental mental disorder, was the Battered Child Syndrome. This encompasses the more severe form of physical abuse and was indicated by the medical evaluation of the child's injuries (question #48). The second factor was the rejection of a particular child for no apparent reason, which was determined on the basis of the social worker's assessment (question #44).

After reporting the descriptive data, and subsequent to the initial multiple regression analysis, emotional or psychological functioning (see question #12a) was combined with previous experiences with psychological counselling (#13) for an over-all index of psychological performance (this index was given the label "psypathy").⁶ The rationale for this decision was the high correlation between these two indicators. Circumstance 19, which was only moderately correlated with these two items, was left as a separate indicator of this variable (question #49).

The second independent variable for discussion is role reversal. This term refers to the parent acting as the

child, looking to his/her own child for love and comfort, and expecting that the child will respond in an adult fashion (Morris and Gould, 1963). Two indicators were used to determine the presence of this relationship: 1) the parent(s)' own complaint that the abused child fails to provide a rewarding relationship for them (question #35); and 2) the parent(s)' unrealistic demands and expectations of the child's abilities, as assessed by a psychiatrist and/or social worker (question #51).

The independent variable in the final hypothesis derived from psychopathological theory, is the parent(s)' own experiences of abuse and/or neglect as child(ren). As previously noted, however, this hypothesis is also used in social psychological theory. The same behavioral pattern is predicted in both cases but for different reasons. It is essential, therefore, to specify how these underlying reasons will be differentiated; but first, the variable needs to be specified. In general, it has been defined broadly to include any non-accidental acts of commission and/or omission on the part of a parent, or other caretaker, interacting with a child, in his/her care, which hurts, injures, or destroys that child (Gil, 1970). Two indicators were used to detect this factor. The first was the parent(s)' own report of having felt abused and/or neglected, either physically or emotionally as a child (question #16), and the second was the social worker's assessment of the presence of this item in the abuse

incident (question #42). One further indicator was included for the social psychological interpretation of this variable. As this theory emphasizes role modeling, it is also feasible that abusive parents witnessed other siblings being abused and learned this type of child-rearing through indirect modeling. Therefore, a question was included to determine other patterns of familial violence witnessed by these parents (question #18).

This variable was then interpreted on the basis of:

1) the findings of the other hypotheses derived from psychopathological and social psychological theories, and 2) the correlations between the relevant independent variables themselves. For example, the presence of a parent's past experience with abuse in combination with the parent's emotional deviance and involvement in "role reversal" favors a psychopathological interpretation. In addition, the correlations between these variables are investigated. Further support is provided by the presence of the Battered Baby Syndrome and rejection of a particular child. In contrast, the social psychological theory predicts, for example, that all of the children in a family are abused.

There are additional hypotheses derived from social psychological theory which together suggest that abusive behavior stems from the learning experiences of the parent(s). One of these hypotheses concerned the parent(s)' awareness of alternative child-rearing techniques (ie. the

fourth independent variable). It referred to any knowledge that the parent had of parent-child conflict-resolution methods, other than physical force (ie. discussion, compromise, threats, restriction of privileges). This variable was indicated by two questions. The first question concerned the parent(s)' self-reported knowledge of other child-rearing methods (question #29). The second question was included in the list of circumstances surrounding the abuse and asked whether the parent defended his/her behavior by claiming that they were just doing as their parents had done (question #32).

The final hypothesis derived from social psychological theory, concerned the parent(s)' knowledge of the child's basic developmental capacities. This variable refers to the parent(s)' awareness of when to expect the child's first words, first steps alone, toilet training, and so forth. One indicator was used to determine the level of the parent's knowledge about what to expect from his/her child (#54). This item was based on either the psychological evaluation, the social worker's assessment, or the parents' own conclusions.

Several hypotheses have been formulated on the basis of social situational theory, each of which depicts a stressful variable that has been related to child abuse in previous studies. One of these traits is socioeconomic status, which refers to the family's social class standing. Three indica-

tors were used as separate measures of this variable: income, educational level, and occupational status. Income refers to the total gross income for the family in the year in which the incident occurred (question #19). In addition, financial difficulties were also investigated with a question to determine if there was a dependence upon various forms of financial assistance (#20). The parents' educational levels were determined by question #8. Occupational status was based upon both the parents' type of job and regularity of employment. The parents' occupations were ranked according to Blishen and McRoberts revised SES index (1971) (question #10) and regularity was defined according to the parents' employment record at the time of, and during the year prior to, the abuse (question #9 and #11 respectively).

Subsequent to the initial multiple regression analysis, gross family income was combined with the perpetrator's educational level and occupational rank, for an over-all index of socioeconomic status.⁷ This decision was justified by the high correlations between these three indicators,⁸ and in addition, it made the presentation of the socioeconomic indicators more succinct. Equal weighting was given to each item. The related indicators, source of income and regularity of employment (measured in terms of present status and duration), were left as separate measures of socioeconomic status. These items were only moderately correlated with the socioeconomic index, and, in addition, unemployment

has been found to have special effects on familial violence.

The next stress variable concerns marital difficulties and was defined as any problems between the parents that are significant enough to disrupt the household. Two separate indicators were used: 1) the presence or absence of marital difficulties as reported by the parents in relation to the abuse incident (question #34), and 2) the assessment of significant marital disharmony as observed by the social worker (question #17). In addition, alcoholic intoxication has been related to marital difficulties resulting in abuse (Gil, 1970) and was, consequently, included here (question #52). If this condition is reported by either the police, the social worker, hospital staff, or the perpetrator himself (herself), it is considered present.

The third variable, problem pregnancies, refers to any difficulties that the mother may have had with the pregnancy of the subsequently abused child. A number of specific problems in this area have been related to abuse, such as an unwanted child, a premature child, an illegitimate one, etc. These problems were indicated by the parent's own report (#40). Testing this hypothesis also involved determining whether other children in the family had been abused (#56), in addition to the problem child.

A fourth stressful factor refers to the social isolation of the abusive family. It was defined in relation to the number of outside contacts that the family has. One question

was included to determine the number of these contacts and who they are (ie. relatives, neighbours, social organizations, community agencies, friends, etc.) (#30). The importance of both the number of contacts and the type of contacts were analyzed. In addition, a second indicator was the parents' statement of feeling as if they had no one to whom they could turn for help prior to the abuse incident (#39). A further indicator in measuring this variable determined whether there were any persons (other than family members) living with the family (#21).

The final stress variable investigated in this study concerns any emotional, behavioral, or health problems which may be affecting the child.⁹ There were several indicators used: 1) the medical and psychiatric evaluations of the child were used to detect any health and/or emotional problems (aside from those caused by the abuse) from which the child was suffering (question #64); 2) any previous experiences that the child has had with hospitals, counselling, juvenile court, etc. (question #65); and 3) the parent's own complaint of the child's ailment which led to the abuse (question #41). In addition, one would expect that this child would be the only one abused in the family, and consequently, this factor was checked (see question #56).

A number of hypotheses have been derived from social situational theory, and it is important to recall that the model does not assume that any one particular source of stress

necessarily causes abuse. Rather, abuse is explained as the result of mounting stress (from one or several sources) and uncontrollable anger (resulting from the frustration). Consequently, these two additional indicators (ie. mounting stress on perpetrator due to life circumstances and inadequately controlled anger) were included in the list of circumstances surrounding the abuse incident (questions #45 and #33, respectively). The former factor was based on the social worker's assessment and the latter was determined by the psychiatric evaluation and/or the parent's explanation.

There are three hypotheses derived from cultural theory to be discussed. The first hypothesizes that abuse results from the parents' belief in the appropriateness of punitive child-rearing techniques. This variable refers to the parent(s)' perception that physical punishment is the proper and necessary method of child-rearing (ie. "spare the rod, spoil the child" philosophy). Two questions were used to measure this variable: 1) the social worker's assessment of the parent's attitude towards using physical punishment as the "right and proper" child-rearing method (question #43); and 2) the parent's own acknowledgement of what child-rearing methods he/she uses (question #28). This latter indicator was also assessed in relation to an earlier question concerning the parent's awareness of child-rearing techniques (see question #29). The significance of the parent(s)' sole use

of physical punishment is strengthened if the parents are aware of alternatives but choose not to use them. One more indicator was also included as an additional check. If the factor leading up to the abuse was the parent(s)' belief in the necessity of physical punishment, one would assume that the parent is responding to some specific or suspected act(s) of the child. This indicator, therefore, was included in the list of circumstances surrounding the abuse incident (see question #31) and was determined by the parent(s)' account of the situation.

The independent variable in the next hypothesis derived from cultural theory was parental self-perception as strict authoritarian. This characteristic refers to the parent who feels that every infraction, however minor, on the part of the child, needs punishment. Two indicators were used to measure this variable. First, according to Gil's study (1970), some parents define themselves as stern, authoritative disciplinarians, in explaining their abusive behavior; consequently, this self-definition was used here as one indicator (question #36). The second indicator was based upon Van Stolk's conclusions (1973) which emphasize the importance that strict, authoritative parents place on the child's obedience (see question #47). The social worker's assessment was used to determine this attitude.

The final variable to be discussed is the parent(s)'

feeling of ownership (ie. the old Roman philosophy of "Patria Potestas"). This factor was defined in terms of the parent(s)' belief that their child belongs to them and that they are free to treat the child however they may wish. This attitude was indicated by the parent(s)' surprise and resentment at being questioned about their child-rearing techniques (question #38).

The majority of the questions in the actual interview schedule have been explained in the preceding discussion, in relation to hypotheses and behavioral indicators. As noted in the review of the literature, several social characteristics of both the parent and child, while not causing abuse, have been found to be related to the phenomenon. As these factors may be important for a total understanding of child abuse they were included in the interview schedule. The questions concern the age, sex, ethnicity, and religious affiliation of both the parent (see questions #4, #2, #5, and #6, respectively) and the child (see questions #59, #60, #61, and #62, respectively). The basis of this information is the factual data recorded by the social workers during the interview with the parents.

SAMPLE

Child abuse poses special sampling problems because of its highly private nature. The behavior generally occurs in the privacy of the home, and in addition, parents attempt

to hide their transgressions because of anticipated societal disapproval. It is almost impossible to use a representative sample of the general population in such a study. First, the sample would have to be huge to even guarantee a modest representation of abusive families. Second, the return rate of a mail-out questionnaire, which is often used in reaching a larger population, is limited by the sensitive nature of this topic. Interviewing a sufficient number of families in such a study would involve a lot of money, time, and staff.

The majority of researchers dealing with child abuse seem not to have concerned themselves with the nature of the sample being studied. The investigators, typically, have based their conclusions on relatively small, unrepresentative samples in specialized settings such as children's hospitals, courts, psychiatric clinics, and children's protective services (Gil, 1970:34-35). Generalization from such samples to all cases of abuse is inappropriate.

The sample used in this study was drawn from the 151 active child abuse cases handled by the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg between January 1, 1980 and June 30, 1980. These cases were all screened in terms of the definition of child abuse employed in this study, and 36 cases or 23.8 percent of the total population were eliminated. These cases comprised primarily incidents of neglect (ie. failure to thrive) and sexual abuse. Other cases included false reports, accidents, and third-party assaults (ie. babysitter).¹⁰ However,

cases which involved sexual abuse or neglect, in conjunction with physical abuse, were included. Consequently, the sample studied consists of 115 abuse incidents, involving 115 families with one perpetrator in each, and 126 children.

The particular time period from January 1st to June 30th, 1980 was chosen to ensure that the sample included the most recent abuse cases available and consequently would yield the greatest amount of information. In addition, the majority of these cases were still "open" at the time that the interviews were conducted; and therefore, the social workers were able to phone or visit the families to obtain any missing data.

The sample was limited to six months to keep the study manageable. The actual interviewing was conducted between August 11th, 1980 and September 3rd, 1980 and each of the interviews took approximately thirty to sixty minutes to complete.

While this sample is an improvement over the type of sample used in many previous studies, there are still some limitations. First, there is no comparative group of non-abusive families and consequently, it is difficult to interpret the relevance of some of the findings. Second, the sample is representative only of the abusive families who have for some reason entered the legal reporting channels. As "nothing definite is yet known about the ratio of reported to unreported cases, nor concerning factors asso-

ciated with reporting and failure to report, it is impossible to draw reliable quantitative and qualitative inferences from reported to unreported incidents" (Gil, 1970:73). It is a common finding, for example, that lower class families are more likely to come to the attention of legal authorities. Thus, the sample, at the very least, may be biased toward the lower socioeconomic stratum. Finally, it is important to remember that this sample was limited to cases of physical abuse only. Consequently, the findings of this study are generalizable only to cases of legally reported, physical child abuse.

TYPE OF DATA ANALYSIS USED

There were primarily two stages to the data analysis. First, the descriptive data concerning the abusive parents, their spouses, the family structure, and the children were analyzed; in addition, the abuse incidents were reviewed in terms of those variables relevant to the theories of child abuse. The frequency and cumulative percentages were employed to present the data (ie. in terms of the distribution of cases for each variable) and where data were available, comparisons were made with the Winnipeg population. In addition, some bivariate analyses were done to examine various relationships between the social demographic characteristics and the other variables. These findings are discussed in Chapter 5.

The second concern was to test the hypothesized relationships between the various independent variables and the two indicators of the dependent variable, child abuse. The data were stored in a SPSS systems file and statistical manipulations were carried out to determine: 1) the correlations between the various indicators of the independent variables; and 2) the correlations between the independent variables and the frequency and severity of the abuse incidents. The statistical technique employed for this purpose is multiple regression analysis. It is particularly effective for analyzing the relationship between a dependent variable and a set of independent variables. Moreover, it is useful for evaluating the contribution of a specific variable or set of variables, while controlling for other confounding factors. Thus, the relative explanatory power of each of the theoretical models can be determined. The results of this stage of the data analysis are presented in Chapter 6.

FOOTNOTES

¹As previously noted, in-depth case analyses are necessary to test the psychopathology theory. In this study, however, only limited data concerning the psychological profiles were available. Consequently, the model is tested only to the extent that the cause of the abuse can be traced to mental deviance on the part of the parent.

²Psychopathology theory and social psychology theory share a common hypothesis. While they predict the same behavioral patterns, they do so for different underlying reasons. The important problem of differentiating between these reasons is discussed in the section concerning conceptualization and operationalization.

³When relying on information not in the files, there is some difficulty in testing the accuracy of the data vis-a-vis the facts in the reports. However, in the majority of cases, the social workers were simply clarifying material that was not fully outlined. In other instances, the workers would check on certain facts and add the information to their own files.

⁴The initial analysis consisted of frequency distributions for all variables and multiple regressions incorporating all the variables together, and then in groups according to the respective theories. Various combinations of indicators for several of the variables were computed and analyses were repeated.

⁵The descriptive data concerning the circumstances of the abuse incidents (ie. seriousness of injuries, type of injuries, manner inflicted, and so forth) are discussed in Appendix D.

⁶See Appendix B for a detailed explanation concerning the construction of this index.

⁷For a discussion concerning the formulation of this index, see Appendix B.

⁸The correlation between gross income and perpetrators' education was .40; the correlation between income and occupational status was .47; and between education and occupation, it was .44.

⁹The specific data pertaining to each of these problems were initially examined separately and then combined for the purposes of the subsequent analysis.

¹⁰Although the Children's Aid Society does not normally handle third-party assaults, at times, a child may be referred to the agency before the identity of the perpetrator has been established. On these occasions, a social worker is assigned to question the parents and a file is opened.

CHAPTER 5

WHO ARE THE ABUSIVE FAMILIES? THE DESCRIPTIVE DATA

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to identify and describe the characteristics of abusive families. The discussion is divided into four sections: the first reviews the social demographic characteristics of both the parents and children identified in past research; the second describes the characteristics of the parents and children included in the present study; the third describes the abusive families in terms of the variables relevant to the hypotheses; and in the fourth, the descriptive data are summarized. As previously indicated, the chapter also contains some statistical information pertaining to the Winnipeg population, included for the purposes of comparison.

SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILEA. Past Research Evidence

Various social characteristics of both the parent and child, including sex, age, race, and religion, have been identified by a number of researchers in the area of child abuse. Although there is still a great deal of disagreement concerning the relevance of these attributes, some patterns do seem to be emerging.

The Parent. First, the review of the literature indicates that the perpetrator is often female. Bennie and Sclare (1969) reveal that 70% of their sample were women, and Steele and Pollock report that the mother was the abuser in 50 out of 57 cases (1974:93). In a comparative sample, Gelles (1972) reports that the mothers were more physically aggressive in both the abusive and non-abusive groups, but more notably in the former. In her study of 57 randomly selected families, Steinmetz (1977) also found that mothers were much more likely to be involved than fathers in a variety of verbal and physical abuse. On an average, mothers employed these techniques 64% of the time and fathers 17% of the time. Vesterdahl, commenting on a Swedish government report, suggests that there is no doubt that the mothers play a predominant role, especially when psychological maltreatment and neglect are included (1979:290).

Contrary to these findings, Young (1964:48) claims that there is no indication that either sex has a monopoly on the abusive role. She further adds that the spouse almost always contributes either directly, or indirectly, by being aware of the problem and yet, doing nothing to prevent it. In Zalba's study (1971), the sexes were split 50-50 in terms of who was actually abusing, and in Gil's study, females were the abusers just slightly more often than males (51%: 48%) (1970:116).

Both Gil (1970) and Steinmetz (1977) suggest that any

differences between mothers and fathers that are found can be explained by the amount of contact between a parent and a child. In Gil's study, the majority of the households were headed by females. In homes headed by the fathers, the father was the abuser two-thirds of the time (1970:116).

Steinmetz reports that in the one family where the mother worked an evening shift (ie. 4:00 - 12:00 p.m.), 80% of the parent-child conflicts were father-child conflicts (1977:71).

Gelles, however, argues that the significance of the predominance of women cannot be disregarded, especially considering the culturally defined male-aggressive/female-passive roles in our society (1973:196). He suggests that there may be an aspect of the mother-child relationship producing stress and frustration which makes the mother more abusive-prone than the father. The child may threaten or interfere with the mother's identity and esteem more than he does the father's (excepting the father who cannot fill the provider role).

Galdston provides an example of this hypothesis with a woman who began to beat her ten-month old son after she had to quit work as a result of a pregnancy and her husband's desire to return to work (1965:442). It is the mother who through close contact with the child, experiences the frustration of trying to rear the child.

A second factor is the abusive parent's youthful age (Steele and Pollock, 1974; Smith, 1975). This variable has

been previously discussed in terms of the frequent emotional immaturity of these parents and the additional stress which this causes. There may, however, be an alternative explanation, differentiating younger parents who abuse their children, from older parents. Alternatively, Gil argues that he found no apparent relationship between the parent's age and the propensity for child abuse. This relationship appears to need further investigation.

A third variable concerns the ethnicity of the abusive parent. A number of American studies have shown that there seems to be no relationship between race and child abuse. Yet, Gil (1970) found that the injuries of Negro and Puerto Rican children were judged more serious, and burning and scalding were typically used by the Puerto Ricans more than any other groups. He argues that different ethnic groups may, because of differences in their history, experiences, and specific cultural traditions, hold different views of appropriate child-rearing practices (p.134). The documentation regarding the relationship between ethnicity and child abuse is scarce; yet, it may be useful to check on possible differences in future research.

Fourth, there are a number of findings concerning the religion of the abusive parent. Although no particular religion has been correlated with child abuse, several alternative relationships have been observed. Some authors

have found that abuse is more likely in families where one or both of the parents are agnostic, atheistic, or without any religion (Gelles, 1972:127). On the other hand, Vesterdahl (1978:294) and Steinmetz and Straus (1974:144) suggest that child abuse is sometimes related to an adherence to certain religious or other strong moral convictions where the parents believe in very severe methods of child-rearing to counteract the sinful habits of children. Finally, some researchers have observed that violence toward children is found in families where there is a religious difference between the parents (Bennie and Sclare, 1969:979; Gelles, 1972:150). The difference in religion contributes to arguments and conflicts which may be displaced onto the child. Thus, it appears that there are several alternative ways in which religion is related to child abuse. Further investigation is needed in this area as well, for some studies do not suggest any relationship between these variables (De Francis, 1963; Gil, 1970:107).

The Child. When violence occurs there is a strong tendency to concentrate all the attention on the offender, as indicated by the limited research on the victims of child abuse. Nevertheless, there is some indication that the age and sex of the child are related to this behavior.

The majority of studies indicate that a child is most vulnerable between the ages of three months and three years (Kempe et al., 1962; De Francis, 1963; Galdston, 1965;

Fontana, 1971:17; Steele and Pollock, 1974:90). Gelles (1973:197) has argued that this is because the infant, at this age, is not yet capable of much meaningful social interaction, and acts as a source of frustration for the parent. Steinmetz (1977:70) provides some support for this argument with her findings. Parents, in general, had more conflicts with younger children than adolescents and teenagers. They often felt unable to reason with very young children and resorted to physical punishment to "teach" them. Gelles also adds that the new infant may be viewed by the parents as an additional economic burden, and this may be related to the abuse (p.197).

Gil (1970), however, accounts for the age factor in child abuse by suggesting that younger children are more likely to be seriously injured when hit. They require hospitalization and thus come to the attention of researchers more readily. In his large-scale epidemiological survey, he found that 75% of the cases were over two years of age; almost 50% were over six years old; and nearly 20% of the cases were teenagers (p.105). Merrill (1962), reporting on a statewide study done in Massachusetts, recorded the median age as seven.

In addition to age, the sex of the victim may be very important. According to Peckham (1974), boys tend to be abused more often than girls. Weston reports that eighteen out of twenty-four abuse cases were male in his study (1974:

72). Gil qualifies this discussion on the basis of his findings by claiming that boys are most frequently abused when very young whereas the reverse is true in the older age group (1970:104). He suggests that changes in sex distribution of victims during different stages of childhood and adolescence seem to reflect culturally determined child-rearing attitudes. Girls are thought to be more conforming than boys throughout childhood and less in need of physical punishment. As they get older, parents get more anxious about their daughters' heterosexual relationships and increase their use of physical force as a means of control. With boys however, physical force is used throughout childhood to assure conformity. As they become adolescents and as their physical strength increases to match or even surpass their parents' strength, the use of physical force in disciplining boys tends to diminish.

In addition, some authors argue that the sex of the child may be an important factor in relation to which sex the parents were hoping their child would be. Steele and Pollock, for example, have found that some abusive parents view their child as "unsatisfying" or "uncooperative" simply for having been a boy instead of a girl, and vice versa (1974:115). They abuse this child who has proved to be such a disappointment.

B. The Present Study

How do the characteristics of the abusive families in-

cluded in the present study compare to this social demographic profile? The following section presents descriptive data statistics pertaining to the age, sex, religion, and ethnicity of the parents, and the age and sex of the children included in the study sample. In addition, other relevant characteristics such as family size and social structure are discussed.

The Parents

Identity of Perpetrator. More than half of the perpetrators, 56.5 percent, are male. This finding is noteworthy as the majority of preceding studies found women to be predominant. Moreover, the vast majority of the families in this study are headed by women. As the fathers or father substitutes have less contact time with the children, one might expect that they would comprise a smaller, rather than larger, percentage of the perpetrators. There is also some indication that the males abused the children slightly more often, although there is very little difference in terms of severity. Eighteen percent of the mothers, compared to 12.3 percent of the fathers, abused their child only once, while 62.0 percent of the female abusers, compared to 67.7 percent of the males, were involved in repeated abuse. Sixteen percent of the mothers and 15.4 percent of the fathers were abusive on occasion, and this item was unknown for 4.0 percent of the females and 4.6 percent of the males. Table 1 shows the distribution of the severity of cases according to the sex of the

perpetrator. Twenty-four percent of the females, compared to 27.7 percent of the males, committed serious or severe forms of abuse.

TABLE 1. THE SEVERITY OF CASES ACCORDING TO SEX OF PERPETRATOR^a

Severity	Female		Male	
	Percent	Cum. Percent	Percent	Cum. Percent
Mild	48.0	48.0	44.6	44.6
Medium	28.0	76.0	27.7	72.3
Serious	18.0	94.0	24.6	96.9
Severe	6.0	100.0	3.1	100.0
	<u>100.0</u>		<u>100.0</u>	
	(N=50)		(N=65)	

^a"Severity" refers to the composite index score. (See Appendix B for an explanation concerning the construction of this index and its categories.)

Further analysis of the perpetrator-child relationship shows that a total of 73.1 percent of the abusers in the sample were biological parents of the victim (40.9 percent of the abusers were biological mothers and 32.2 percent were biological fathers). In 0.9 percent of the cases, an adoptive mother was the perpetrator and in 1.7 percent of the cases, it was a mother substitute living in the home. In comparison, 6.1 percent of the abusers were adoptive fathers and 18.3 percent were father substitutes living in the home. As a greater number of these non-biologically related perpetrators were male, it may be that they constitute a high risk group.

Considering only biological parents, mothers constitute the larger percentage, and thus may be more likely than fathers to abuse their children.

Age of Parents. The age distribution of the parents or parent substitutes is shown in Table 2. The table is based on 115 perpetrators and 98 spouses since there was no mother or substitute living in two homes and no father or substitute in fifteen.¹

TABLE 2. AGE DISTRIBUTION OF PERPETRATORS AND THEIR SPOUSES

Age ^a	Perpetrators		Spouses	
	Percent	Cum. Percent	Percent	Cum. Percent
25 or under	21.6	21.6	23.2	23.2
26 to 30	30.6	52.3	28.4	51.6
31 to 35	19.8	72.1	22.1	73.7
36 to 40	18.0	90.1	11.6	85.3
41 to 45	8.1	98.2	7.4	92.6
46 to 50	0.9	99.1	3.2	95.8
51 to 55	0.0	99.1	4.2	100.0
56 to 60	0.0	99.1	0.0	100.0
61 to 65	0.9	100.0	0.0	100.0
	N=111		N=95	
Missing Cases	(4)		(3)	

^aAge has been rounded to the nearest birthdate.

This age distribution, like Gil's in 1970, contradicts the observation of many earlier studies which show that abusive parents tend to be quite young, in that the mean age of these parents is almost 32 years. The decline of abusers in the later years (ie. 46 years and over) is not unexpected

as parents are less likely to have children still living at home.

There is some evidence, however, that the younger parents are among the more severe abusers. Of the parents 25 years or younger, 46.4 percent committed serious or severe forms of abuse, compared to 26.4, the next largest percentage among the 26 to 30 year old age group (see Appendix C, Table 22). In fact, as age increases, the percentage of serious or severe abuse cases tends to decrease ($\gamma = .27$).²

Ethnicity. Table 3 illustrates the ethnic distribution of the parents in this sample as well as the corresponding percentage in the Winnipeg population (according to the 1971 Census).

TABLE 3. ETHNIC DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS IN THE SAMPLE AND OF THE CORRESPONDING WINNIPEG POPULATION (BASED ON 1971 CENSUS DATA)

Ethnicity	Perpetrators in Sample	Spouses in Sample	Winnipeg Population (1971 Census)
British Isles	40.0	30.6	40.8
Indian ^a	20.0	25.5	2.0
French	7.8	8.2	5.6
German	7.0	8.2	10.8
Ukrainian	5.2	5.4	13.5
Other European	6.1	8.2	19.3
Other	9.6	11.2	5.4
Unknown	4.3	3.1	2.7
	100.0 (N=115)	100.4 (N=98)	100.1 (N=246,270)

^a"Indian" in this sample refers to both Metis and Status Indians. In the Census, this category refers to native Indians. As there is no category for Metis, persons identifying themselves as such might report their ethnic group as "other".

In comparing the distribution of the perpetrators' ethnicity to that found in the Winnipeg population, the most notable finding is the overrepresentation of Indians among the sample of abusers. While only two percent of the Winnipeg population (according to the 1971 Census) are Indian, this ethnic group comprises 20 percent of the sample in this study.

Some of this overrepresentation seems to be a function of the discriminatory attitudes and practices of the various reporting agencies with respect to this minority group. In addition, many of these families are recipients of welfare or part of the lower socioeconomic stratum, and on that basis, are more likely to get caught in the formal machinery of social control. Nevertheless, this relatively large percentage of Indians may be indicative of some underlying factors associated with child abuse. It may be that these findings reflect a real, higher incidence among this ethnic group. Considering that these families have a higher incidence of economic hardship, fatherless homes, and large numbers of children, all factors which have been related to child abuse, it does not seem surprising that these parents are over-represented.³ Finally, it may be that different ethnic groups hold different child-rearing views because of their varying socio-cultural experiences. In support of this, it is noteworthy that the percentage of Indians who believed in the necessity of physical punishment, was

larger than the percentage of Euro-Canadians, within each category of socioeconomic status (see Table 21, Appendix C).

Religion. The most notable factor concerning the religious characteristics of the sample is the percentage of parents claiming to have no religious affiliation. Of the 108 cases for which information was reported, 62.0 percent claimed to have no religion. This is particularly noteworthy as only 5.5 percent of the Winnipeg population fall into this category, according to the 1971 Census. The overrepresentation found here may be a further indication of the general social isolation typical of so many of these families.

Of the remaining cases, 1.9 percent are Jewish (compared to 3.4 percent in the Winnipeg population); 15.7 percent are Catholic (compared to 31.8 percent); and 20.5 percent are Protestant and other non-Catholic Christians (in comparison to 52.7 percent). These data indicate that the relative proportions of the distribution found in the sample are similar to those found in the Winnipeg population.

Finally, it should be noted that only 10 percent of the sample indicated "strict adherence to religious beliefs". Thus these findings seem to support Gelles' contention (1972) that abuse is more likely to occur in families where one or both of the parents are agnostic, atheistic, or without any religion.

Family Structure. Almost fifteen percent (14.8) of

the families have no father or father substitute living in the home. In 50.4 percent of the cases, a biological father is living in the home, and a stepfather lives in 27 percent of the homes. An additional 7.8 percent of the fathers are adoptive. The child's own mother is absent in 1.7 percent of the cases and there is a stepmother or an adoptive mother living in 7.8 percent of the homes. The biological mother is present in 90.4 percent of the cases.

Almost four percent (3.6) of the mothers in this sample are single; 13.4 percent are separated, divorced, deserted, or widowed; 32.1 percent are living common-law; and 50.9 percent are married. Of the fathers or father substitutes living in the home, 5.1 percent are separated, divorced, deserted, or widowed; 37.4 percent are living common-law; and 57.6 percent are married.

Examining family structure separately for different ethnic groups⁴ reveals that 26.1 percent of Indian families, as compared to 13.2 percent of Euro-Canadian and 9.1 percent of other families, have no father or father substitute living in the home. The child's own father is present in 43.5 percent of the Indian homes, 48.7 percent of the Euro-Canadian, and 81.8 percent of the other homes.

Thirteen percent of Indian mothers are single as compared to 1.3 percent of Euro-Canadian, and 0 percent of other mothers. Almost 22 percent (21.7) of Indian mothers, 11.8 percent of Euro-Canadian and 9.1 percent of other mothers,

are separated, divorced, deserted, or widowed. Just over 65 percent of Indian mothers, as compared to 83 percent of Euro-Canadian and 91 percent of other mothers are living with a spouse.

Even though there is no comparative group of non-abusive families, the foregoing findings suggest an association between physical abuse of children and a family structure different than that of the normative nuclear family unit. Moreover, this relationship appears especially strong for Indian families.

The age and sex of the children are discussed in the next section. In addition, it appears useful to note the size of these families.

The Children

Age and Sex. Table 4 shows the age distribution of the children in this sample.

TABLE 4. THE AGE DISTRIBUTION OF THE CHILDREN IN THIS SAMPLE

Age Group	Frequency		
	Percent	"Less than" Cum. Percent	"More than" Cum. Percent
Under 1 year	10.3	10.3	99.9
1 to under 3 years	8.7	19.0	89.6
3 to under 5 years	15.1	34.1	80.9
5 to under 7 years	11.9	46.0	65.8
7 to under 9 years	24.6	70.6	53.9
9 to under 11 years	8.7	79.3	29.3
11 to under 13 years	7.1	86.4	20.6
13 years and over	13.5	99.9	13.5
	100.0		
Missing Cases	0	(N=126)	

These findings emphasize, even more so than Gil's in 1970, that the physical abuse of children is not limited to the very young. Over four-fifths of the children in this sample are three years of age and older, more than three-fifths are five and older, and at least one in every eight children is a teenager. The mean age for this sample is over five and one-half years.

Gil has suggested that the earlier findings that very young children are more likely to be abused may have resulted from the predominance of medical settings for the selection of cases. Younger children are more likely to get severely injured and therefore, require medical treatment. The findings here support this argument. More than sixty-two percent of children under three years of age (62.5) compared to 18.6 percent of children over this age, were classified as seriously or severely injured. It is not surprising, therefore, that samples selected from medical settings might have higher incidences of both younger, and more severely injured children.

Contrary to the findings of some earlier studies, which found males to predominate, just over half the children in this sample (50.8 percent) are female. However, Gil (1970) has pointed out that it may be necessary to analyze the sex distribution of different age groups of victims to get an accurate picture. He claims that physical force tends to be used more often to ensure conformity among males when

they are young, and among females as they become older and sexually mature. As boys get older and their physical strength increases, the use of physical force as a means of discipline decreases. Although the findings here are not as clear cut as those presented by Gil in 1970, Table 5 provides evidence of a similar pattern.

TABLE 5. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AGE AND SEX OF THE CHILDREN IN THIS SAMPLE

Child's Age	Child's Sex	
	Male	Female
Under one year	8.1	12.5
1 to under 3 years	9.7	7.8
3 to under 5 years	11.3	18.8
5 to under 7 years	22.6	1.6
7 to under 9 years	25.8	23.4
9 to under 11 years	4.8	12.5
11 to under 13 years	9.7	4.7
13 years and over	8.1	18.8
	<u>100.1</u>	<u>100.1</u>
	(N=62)	(N=64)
Missing Cases	-	-

Over three quarters (77.5 percent) of the male victims were under 9 years of age, compared to 64.1 percent of the female victims. Conversely, while only 22.6 percent of the males were 9 years and over, 35.9 percent of the females were in this category. This relationship is especially evident among the teen-age group. The fact that there is a greater percentage of females among the youngest age group, under one year, does not necessarily contradict Gil's interpretation of the importance of culturally determined child-rearing attitudes. At this early

age, it seems unlikely that parents make disciplinary distinctions on the basis of the sex of the child.

Size of Families. The distribution of this sample by the number of children in each family is shown in Table 6 together with figures for all families with children under 25 in Winnipeg in 1971.⁵

TABLE 6. THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE SAMPLE BY THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN EACH FAMILY

Number of Children	% of Sample				% of Winnipeg Families with Children under 25
	Total	Euro-Canadian Families	Indian Families	Other Families	
1	19.1	22.4	4.3	36.4	32.1
2	33.9	36.8	21.7	18.2	32.7
3 or 4	40.0	35.5	56.5	45.5	28.9
5 or more	7.0	5.2	17.3	0.0	6.3
	100.0	99.9	99.8	100.1	100.0
	N=115	N=76	N=23	N=11	N=87,745
Missing Cases	(0)		(5)		(0)

The table reveals that the proportion of families with three or more children is substantially higher for the abusive families as a whole than for all families in the Winnipeg population. In addition, among the different ethnic groups which comprise the sample, the proportion of larger families is notably higher among the Indians. Almost three out of every four Indian families, compared to 40.2 percent of Euro-Canadian and 45.5 percent of other families, have three or more children.⁶

FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES

Introduction

In addition to the contextual and social demographic characteristics discussed in the preceding section, there are a number of variables which have been causally related to child abuse. These factors comprise the independent variables in the hypotheses formulated to guide this investigation. The explanatory power of each of these variables and the respective theories from which they have been derived will be discussed in the next chapter. In terms of presenting more information about abusive families, it appears useful at this point to discuss the descriptive statistics regarding these particular family circumstances before analyzing their causal relationship to child abuse.

As previously indicated, there are three primary variables specified in the psychopathological theory of child abuse: the psychological functioning of the parents; role reversal between parent and child; and the parent's childhood experiences of abuse. The latter variable is shared by the social psychological model which, in addition, takes into account parents' knowledge of child-rearing techniques and children's basic developmental capabilities. The families are described in terms of these factors first and then, in turn, each of the other independent variables.

Past and Present Functioning of Parents. Several aspects

of the parents' experiences and functioning were investigated. Reports from all sources revealed that at the time of the abuse incident, 67 percent of all perpetrators were considered to deviate from normal functioning in at least one regard. More specifically 8.7 percent of the perpetrators have been judged deviant in intellectual functioning;⁷ 42.6 percent are thought to have some emotional problems (although these included a wide range of disorders) and 41.7 percent are considered deviant in behavioral functioning.⁸ Of the 77 cases involved, however, only 62.3 percent have been medically verified; reducing the overall percentage of perpetrators with at least one deviation, to 41.7.⁹ In terms of prior experiences, 6.1 percent of the perpetrators have been in a mental institution some time before the abuse, and an additional 22.6 percent have received some form of psychiatric treatment either as an inpatient, outpatient, or both. Of the 98 spouses, almost 41 percent have at least one mental or emotional problem. The corresponding rates are: intellectual deviance, 7.1 percent; emotional problems, 27.5 percent; and behavioral deviance, 25.5 percent.¹⁰ Only 65 percent of the spouses have had their deviations medically verified, reducing the total number of spouses with at least one substantiated deviation, to 26.5 percent. In terms of prior experiences, 3.1 percent have been incarcerated in a mental institution; and an additional 18.4 percent have received some form of psychiatric treatment.

Although no figures are available for a comparable sample of non-abusive families, these figures reveal a high level of mental and/or emotional disorder among the families in this study. This impression is supported by the overall rating on the item "any psychological or emotional deviation of perpetrator involved in abuse incident". This item applied to 39.1 percent of the cases. In addition, there were also notable percentages of the two factors presumably related to psychological problems on the part of the parent. "Resentment, rejection...of child for no apparent reason", and "battered child syndrome" were checked positively in 22.6 percent and 19.1 percent of the cases, respectively.

Parent-Child Relationship. Earlier studies have found that the emotional problems of the perpetrator are often expressed as role reversal with the child. The parent-child relationship in these families appears particularly affected by this situation. The two items used to measure this phenomenon are the parent's feeling that the child has failed to provide a rewarding relationship and the social worker's assessment that the parent makes unrealistic and excessive demands of the child. These factors were found in 41.7 percent and 57.4 percent of the cases, respectively.

History of Abuse. Many earlier studies have shown that the physical abuse of a child is not an isolated incident but a prevailing pattern of parent-child interaction that is passed from one generation to the next. As previously indi-

cated, both the psychopathological and social psychological theories maintain that a parent's abusive behavior is traceable to his/her own abuse as a child. The data here reveal that at least 73 percent of the perpetrators and 59.2 percent of their spouses have been victims of some form of abuse and/or neglect in their childhood. The corresponding item on the list of circumstances involved in the abuse incident, was checked in 59.1 percent of the cases. Since information on the abusers' childhood experiences is lacking for almost one-fifth of the sample, it may well be that the percentage of abusers with a history of victimization is even higher.

Violence Witnessed. In addition to being abused as children, many of these parents witnessed some form of familial violence in their childhood. At least 44.3 percent of the perpetrators and 32.7 percent of the spouses have observed this behavior, whether it be conjugal violence, abuse of another child by a parent or sibling, both, or other. These findings, then, appear to strengthen the impression that the physical abuse of children is a prevailing pattern of child-rearing, which may, in fact, be related to other forms of familial violence.

It is also known that prior to the most recent incident, 77.4 percent of the perpetrators and 35.7 percent of the spouses had been perpetrators of abuse; and in 49.5 percent¹¹ of the families, siblings of the currently abused child had been victims. Moreover, 5.0 percent of the children had also

been perpetrators of abuse.

Knowledge of Child-Rearing. The final two variables of the social psychological model attempt to measure the extent of the parents' knowledge of child-rearing techniques and child development. In regard to the first variable, parents' awareness of alternative child-rearing techniques, 17.4 percent of the sample were unaware of any means of discipline besides the use of physical force. An additional 13.1 percent knew of only one or two other methods and almost 68 percent were aware of three or more, although they may not be employed. Moreover, in the explanation of the abuse incident, 27 percent of the parents reported that they were repeating the same methods used on them as children. These findings, then, appear to agree with the argument made by social psychologists that child abuse is a learned response that occurs in a crisis situation when parents are at a loss for what to do. In addition, in terms of the second variable, 47.8 percent of these parents were considered to be ignorant of a child's basic developmental capacities. This may be indicative of parents who, unsure of what to expect from the child, become frustrated and resort to physical punishment.

The social situational model introduces a number of variables which affect family life in general, and may contribute to child abuse. The first factor to be discussed is the socioeconomic status of the parents.

Educational and Occupational Status of Parents. Table 7

shows the educational levels of the parents in this sample.

TABLE 7. THE EDUCATIONAL LEVELS OF THE PARENTS IN THIS SAMPLE

Years of Schooling	Percentage of Parents	
	Mothers or Mother Substitutes	Fathers or Father Substitutes
Less than 9 years	33.6	28.0
9 to under 12 years	43.4	47.0
High school graduate	11.5	8.0
Some college or university	6.2	4.0
University graduate	0.9	3.0
Education unknown	4.4	10.0
	100.0	100.0
	(N=113)	(N=100)

Generally, both the mothers and fathers have a low educational status. Seventy-five percent of the fathers, and 77 percent of the mothers have less than 12 years of schooling.

The occupational status of these parents corresponds to their low educational level. Thirty-eight, or 33.6 percent of the mothers and all of the fathers have been in the labor force prior to the abuse. Table 8 shows the distribution of occupational ranking for these parents, based on Blishen's Revised Socioeconomic Index for Occupations in Canada. Over three quarters of both the mothers and fathers have jobs in the lowest two categories and only a very small percentage of the parents are employed at a professional, technical, or managerial level (ie. Categories V, VI).

TABLE 8. OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF PARENTS

Occupational Status ^a	Percentage of Parents			
	Mothers or Mother Substitutes		Fathers or Father Substitutes	
	Percent	Cum. Percent	Percent	Cum. Percent
I	39.5	39.5	52.5	52.5
II	36.8	76.3	26.3	78.8
III	7.9	84.2	12.1	90.9
IV	7.9	92.1	6.1	97.0
V	7.9	100.0	1.0	98.0
VI	0.0	100.0	2.0	100.0
	100.0		100.0	
	(N=38)		(N=99)	
Missing Cases	(0)		(1)	

^aThese categories are based on Blishen's recommendations for class intervals. Category I has the lowest status and Category VI the highest.

Of the mothers in the labor force, only 52.6 percent have been employed for the entire 12 months preceding the abuse, and of the fathers, only 51.0 percent have been employed throughout the year. Forty-two percent of the mothers and 41.0 percent of the fathers have been unemployed for at least part of the year, and 8.0 percent of the fathers have been unemployed for the entire year.¹² In addition, at the time of the abuse incident, 20 percent of the fathers were unemployed, a rate three times greater than the metropolitan unemployment rate during the time period of the study.¹³

Family Income. The distribution of total family income for this sample is illustrated in Table 9, along with comparable data for the Manitoba population.¹⁴

TABLE 9. THE DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL FAMILY INCOME FOR THE SAMPLE AND THE MANITOBA POPULATION - 1979

Income in Dollars	Percent of Abusive Families	Percent of Families in Manitoba ^a
Under 4,000	7.0	4.3
4,000 to 5,999	9.6	4.2
6,000 to 7,999	11.3	5.5
8,000 to 9,999	20.0	6.1
10,000 to 11,999	7.0	5.3
12,000 to 13,999	13.0	5.4
14,000 to 15,999	13.9	5.6
16,000 to 17,999	5.2	6.0
18,000 to 19,999	3.5	6.8
20,000 to 21,999	5.2	6.2
22,000 to 24,999	1.7	9.6
25,000 to 29,999	.9	13.3
30,000 to 34,999	.9	9.6
35,000 and Over	.9	12.5
	100.1	100.4
	N=115	N=37,776 ^b

^aIncome Distributions by Size in Canada, 1979 (Published under Authority of Minister of Supply and Services, Canada, 1979, Cat. 13-207 Annual, May, 1981) pp.34-35.

^bThese percentages were based on a representative sample of the Manitoba population. For further information concerning the selection of this sample, see Income Distributions by Size in Canada, 1979.

The income levels of the abusive families are considerably lower than the incomes for the families in Manitoba as a whole (for example, 47.9 percent of the sample, compared to 20.1 percent of the Manitoba population, have incomes under \$10,000.00). The average family income in Manitoba is \$21,916.00 compared to only \$11,657.00 in the sample.¹⁵

Public Assistance Status. A further indicator of the low socioeconomic status of these families is the relatively

large number receiving some form of public assistance. At the time of the abuse incident, almost 36 percent were receiving public welfare, 6.1 percent were receiving other public assistance, and an additional 16.5 percent were collecting unemployment cheques. Just over nineteen percent of these families rely totally on public assistance; 40 percent receive partial assistance; and 40.9 percent receive none.

Analysis of the public assistance status of families from different ethnic groups reveals that 17.4 percent of Indian families, compared to 46.1 percent of Euro-Canadian families and 45.5 percent of other families receive no public assistance; and 43.5 percent of Indian families, compared to 14.5 percent of Euro-Canadian and none of other families, depend completely upon public assistance (see Table 24, Appendix C).

Socioeconomic Status. By way of summarizing the several socioeconomic indicators, a composite index was formulated for these families.¹⁶ Table 10 shows the distribution of socioeconomic levels for all families and then separately for Euro-Canadian, Indian, and other families in the sample.

The table reveals that the majority of these families, overall, belong to the lower socioeconomic strata (ie. 70 percent of the sample fall within the lower and working classes). It also shows that the proportion of poor families among Indians (56.5 percent) is approximately twice that of either the Euro-Canadian families (30.3 percent) or the other

TABLE 10. SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS OF ABUSIVE FAMILIES

Socioeconomic Status	Percent of Sample			
	All Families	Euro-Canadian	Indian	Other
Lower Class	35.5	30.3	56.5	27.3
Working Class	34.5	35.5	26.1	45.5
Lower-Middle Class	20.9	25.0	13.0	9.1
Upper-Middle Class	6.4	6.6	4.3	9.1
Upper Class	2.7	2.6	0.0	9.1
	N=115	N=76	N=23	N=11
Missing Cases	(0)		(5)	

families (27.3 percent). This is consistent with the data on employment duration and public assistance status.

It is important to note that lower socioeconomic status families may be overrepresented in this study as a result of the sampling procedure used. The lower and working class families are more likely to enter the legal reporting system, partly because of certain attitudes and practices of formal control agents with respect to poorer families and partly because of the ability of middle and upper class families to conceal their transgressions. Nevertheless, the possibility that these findings may reflect underlying factors associated with child abuse cannot be ignored. To the extent that child abuse is a response to situational stress and frustration, it is not surprising that the lower socioeconomic groups with fewer resources available, should resort to force more often. In fact, earlier studies have found a strong association between low socioeconomic status and the use of physical force

in disciplining children (Miller and Swanson, 1960; Gil, 1970). Gil also points out that poor and working-class families have been observed to release aggressive impulses more readily than middle-class families (p.127). Consequently, it may be that the overrepresentation of lower and working class families reflects a real, higher incidence of abuse, associated with the additional frustration and cultural milieu they experience.

In addition to socioeconomic deprivation there are several situational problems which have been found to be characteristic of these families. These include marital difficulties, problem pregnancies, social isolation, and difficulties with the child's functioning.

Marital Difficulties. Previous studies have shown that abusive families often have a high incidence of marital conflict, which is also associated with alcoholic intoxication on the part of the perpetrator. Of the families in this sample, 67.8 percent were having marital difficulties significant enough to disrupt the household. An additional 15.0 percent were single-parent homes, involving a separation, divorce, or desertion. Only 17.4 percent of the parents appeared to be living in relative harmony. Moreover, it is also known that at least 14.8 percent of the abuse incidents resulted directly from a conflict between the parents,¹⁷ and in 25.2 percent of the cases, the perpetrator was intoxicated with alcohol.

Problem Pregnancies. In 20.0 percent of the cases, the abused child was resented because of some problem associated with the pregnancy. These problems included difficult births (ie. Caesarean), unwanted or illegitimate children, and so forth.

Social Contacts. The majority of the families in this sample had only one or two contacts during the month prior to the abuse incident, and in most cases, these involved the public agencies with whom they are forced to deal (ie. welfare agency, Children's Aid Society, etc.) and relatives or friends whom they see sporadically. More specifically, 53.0 percent had had contact with a public agency; 73.9 percent had seen a relative or relatives; 74.8 percent had had contact with a friend; 20.9 percent had met with a neighbour; 13 percent had had some involvement with a community club or organization; 17.4 percent had had other contacts; and this item was unknown for 1.7 percent of the cases.

Of these families, one in every five had only one contact which was, in many cases, a public agency; one in every two had 2 contacts or less; and three in every four families had three contacts or less (see Table 25, Appendix C). It is also known that only 6.1 percent of these families had other adult family members living in the home, and only 5.2 percent had other non-family adults present. Consequently, this sample is comprised of nuclear family units, who generally have no more than 3 social contacts. In addition, social workers'

reports indicate that in 47 percent of the abuse incidents, "feelings of social isolation on the part of the parent(s); (ie. no one to turn to for help)", were present.

Past and Present Functioning of Children. Several aspects of the functioning of the abused children were investigated. The findings indicate that 40.5 percent of the children had deviations in behavioral functioning (ie. enuresis); 24.6 percent showed emotional problems; 9.5 percent had some form of physical impairment; and 9.5 percent of the children were deviant in terms of intellectual functioning.¹⁸

Turning to the experiences of the child, 15.0 percent of the children in this sample had been hospitalized for physical illness and 5.6 percent, for emotional problems. An additional 6.3 percent had received psychiatric counselling. Of the school-age children, 45.8 percent were in grades below their age level, and 2.4 percent had never attended school. At some point prior to the abuse, 22.2 percent had lived with foster families, and 6.3 percent had lived in a child care institution. One in every ten children had lived with different relatives at various times prior to the abuse.¹⁹

The distribution of the total number of deviations and experiences for the children in this sample are shown in Table 11. It is important to note that the majority of the children in the sample have been abused prior to this incident and consequently some of their problems may be a result

TABLE 11. TOTAL NUMBER OF DEVIATIONS AND EXPERIENCES

Number	Percent of Children	
	Total Deviations ^a	Total Experiences ^b
0	44.4	53.2
1	31.0	31.0
2	19.8	11.9
3	4.0	4.0
4	0.8	0.0
	100.0 (126)	100.0 (126)

^a"Deviations" here refer to either physical, emotional, intellectual, or behavioral problems.

^b"Experiences" refer to those items described in the preceding discussion (ie. hospitalization, involvement with foster homes or child care facilities, and so forth).

of previous maltreatment. At any rate, the items exploring the past and present functioning of the abused children suggest a level of mental and behavioral deviance greater than would be found in children selected randomly from the population at large. In addition, data from social workers reveal that "persistent health or emotional atypicality of child leading to abuse" was present in 31.3 percent of the cases.

The overall high rating on the majority of situational problems discussed here is matched by the ratings on the two items used to measure the general situation. "Mounting stress on perpetrator due to life circumstances" was present in 56.5 percent of the cases, and "inadequately controlled anger of perpetrator", in 79.1 percent.

The final variables to be discussed concern the parents' attitudes toward their children and the use of physical punishment. They include the parents' belief in the legitimacy and necessity of physical punishment, their self-perception as strict, authoritative disciplinarians; and the parents' feelings of ownership toward the child.

Attitudes Toward Physical Punishment. There is overwhelming evidence in this study that many of the parents favour the use of physical punishment as a child-rearing method and that, in fact, many of the incidents develop out of disciplinary action by parents in response to some perceived misconduct of the child. Nearly 85 percent of the cases involved "immediate or delayed response by perpetrator to specific or suspected acts of child", and nearly 61 percent reflected "the parents' belief in the necessity of physical punishment". Moreover, this type of child-rearing would seem to be the rule, rather than the exception, in many of the homes. Based on the social worker's knowledge of the family, almost 35 percent of the parents rely exclusively on physical force in disciplining their children; 26.1 percent have tried one or two other methods; and 36.5 percent have used three or more. Information on this item is missing for 2.6 percent of the cases. These findings are particularly important if the parents' awareness of alternative child-rearing methods is considered. While the mean number of techniques employed is 1.8, the average number of techniques known is 2.9. Con-

sequently, many parents are aware of alternative methods but do not use them (see Tables 26 and 27, Appendix B). It is important to keep in mind that the majority of families in this sample come from lower socioeconomic strata, who may rely on physical force to a greater extent than other classes.

Self-defined Strict Authoritarian. In addition to the fact that many of these parents believe in the legitimacy of physical punishment, some of them believe that any infraction, however minor, deserves such treatment. The item used to measure this variable, "self-definition of perpetrator as stern, authoritative disciplinarian", was checked in 33.9 percent of the cases. Moreover, the parents in the sample tend to place a heavy emphasis on the child's obedience as this factor was present in 57.4 percent of the incidents.

Parental Ownership. The final attitudinal variable refers to the parents' belief that they are free to do what they please with their own children. These parents were typically (51.3 percent) surprised and resentful at being questioned about their treatment of the child(ren).

SUMMARY OF DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Summary of Perpetrators and Children. This sample clearly shows that child abuse is not limited to any particular sex, age group, ethnic group, or religion. The overrepresentation of Indian perpetrators and parents with no religious affiliation may well be explained by other factors; (ie. socioeconomic deprivation, social isolation). There is

an equal percentage of boys and girls among the victims, and no evidence to suggest that this phenomenon is limited to only very young children. The data indicate that boys tend to be abused when they are young while girls are more often abused as they get older. Notable trends concerning family structure seem to be a high proportion of households headed by women, an even higher proportion of biological fathers not living in the home, and a larger than average family size.

Summary of Family Circumstances. The findings presented here indicate the multi-faceted nature of the problems affecting these families. The most dominant feature is the high proportion of parents (both perpetrators and spouses) who were victims of abuse and/or neglect as children. Almost one-half of the perpetrators and one-quarter of the spouses had some intellectual, emotional, or behavioral problem, some of which may be attributed to their earlier experiences. These problems were believed to be involved in at least one-third of the abuse cases and there was evidence of role reversal in a large number of the cases. It is important to note, however, that some of the indicators used here are quite crude, and the response to them may not be sufficiently valid.

Almost one-half of the perpetrators and one-third of the spouses also witnessed other forms of violence in their family of origin, and over one-quarter of the parents claimed to be

repeating the same child-rearing patterns used by their parents. A high proportion of these parents were aware of only physical force as a means of child-rearing, and an even higher proportion were ignorant of children's basic developmental capabilities.

Summarizing the characteristics of the families as reflected by indicators of educational achievement, occupational position and status, income and assistance status, reveals that families with a lower or working class background are overrepresented in this sample, especially among the Indian families. In addition, these families are characterized by a high proportion of marital difficulties, feelings of social isolation, child-related problems, and problem pregnancies on the part of the perpetrator, in that order. Mounting stress and inadequately controlled anger are present in over half of the abuse cases.

Finally, in terms of their general attitudes, the majority of parents reflect, perhaps in an extreme form, the culturally sanctioned view that it is appropriate to use physical force in raising children. The notable trends in this sample include an overwhelming belief in the need for physical punishment, a strong emphasis on the child's obedience, and a feeling of parental ownership toward children.

The high proportion of parents in each category suggests considerable overlap between various items. Nevertheless, careful analysis of the case files and detailed conversations

with the social workers, indicate that the physical abuse of children is not a uniform phenomenon with one set of causal factors but a multi-dimensional phenomenon. Even without a comparison group, it seemed evident that different factors, or sets of factors, were involved in different abuse incidents. Such a conceptualization suggests that all four major theoretical models, or combinations of them, may be necessary to understand the problem of child abuse. Up to this point, however, the accuracy of the hypotheses in explaining child abuse, and the relative importance of each theoretical model, have not been analyzed. Chapter 6 is directed toward this end.

FOOTNOTES

¹In addition to the seventeen absent spouses, there are three transient parent substitutes (two fathers, one mother) who, while not present in the home for this particular abuse incident, have been living there at previous times in the preceding year. Consequently, depending upon the nature of the question, there may be as many as three missing mothers or mother substitutes and as many as 17 missing fathers or father substitutes.

²As there are a relatively small number of cases in the last two age categories included in Table 22, any conclusions about them may be ambiguous. Nevertheless, there are sufficient cases in the first four age groups to note the negative correlation between age and severity of abuse. Note that the composite severity score is being used here.

³These conclusions are supported by this study. See Appendix C, Tables 28 and 23, 29, and 30, respectively.

⁴It should be noted that the various ethnicities have been grouped into three large categories - Euro-Canadian, Indian, and other. Euro-Canadian encompasses British Isles, French, German, Italian, Jewish, Netherlands, Polish, Slovak, and Ukrainian. The remaining ethnicities - Negro, West Indian, and other (ie. Chinese) - have been combined under the general heading of "other". There are two factors underlying this decision: first, the Indians are the only group which are significantly overrepresented in this sample and therefore it is useful to determine what, if any, special characteristics they have in relation to the other groups as a whole; and second, the majority of ethnic groups have only a small number of cases, making it difficult to interpret the findings. Collapsing the categories into fewer cells with larger numbers, allows us to make more meaningful comparisons (see Tables 29 and 31, and Tables 32 and 33).

⁵These figures are taken from the 1971 census, which defines children as sons and daughters under 25 years of age, who have never married and are living at home (1971 Census Tract Reports, "A" Series, p.1).

⁶While the Indian families do have more children and perhaps, therefore, additional stress, it should be noted that the number of children they have may be related to their lower socioeconomic status.

⁷Although intellectual deviance is included in this discussion for descriptive purposes, it was omitted from the narrower definition of psychological functioning used for the causal analysis in Chapter 6.

⁸Each of these statistics refer to a separate table and thus do not total to 100 percent (ie. 8.7 percent of the perpetrators were judged deviant in intellectual functioning; 91.3 percent were not).

⁹These figures reveal the importance of establishing the criteria for inclusion of information in this area. The percentage of cases which are reported to deviate from normal functioning is significantly reduced when you consider only those problems which have been medically verified.

¹⁰These statistics are also based on separate tables, and thus do not total 100 percent.

¹¹This figure is based on the 101 families who have more than one child living in the home.

¹²Information on this variable is unavailable for 5.3 percent of the mothers.

¹³The average unemployment rate for the six month period in which this study was conducted (January 1, 1980 to June 30, 1980) is 6.2 percent. (Statistics Canada, Labour Force Information, CS 71-001, 1980, January through June, p.15). Employment rates were even lower among the Indian fathers in the study (See Table 23, Appendix C).

¹⁴Recent information on family income for the Winnipeg population is unavailable; thus, it seemed more accurate to use corresponding data based on Manitoba.

¹⁵The average family income for the sample was calculated by multiplying the frequency of each category by its midpoint. The midpoint used for the low, open-ended category was 2,000, assuming the range to be from 0 to 4,000. As there was only one case which fell into the upper, open-ended category, the original data were examined to check on the exact interval to which it referred. The interval ranged from 35,000 to 39,999, and thus, 37,500 was used as the midpoint.

¹⁶This socioeconomic index refers to the one constructed for the multiple regression analysis. For a discussion of the formulation of this index and the class intervals used here, see Appendix B.

¹⁷In these cases the parents are initially arguing. A child may enter the scene at the wrong moment, or one parent may turn to a child to anger the other, and so forth. In one example, a mother began to abuse her children after her husband beat her. The frustration and anger that she felt for her husband was released upon the children.

¹⁸These percentages are each based on a separate table (ie. 40.5 percent were deviant in behavioral functioning; 59.5 were not). Consequently, they do not total 100 percent.

¹⁹These frequencies are also calculated on the basis of different tables, and therefore, do not total 100 percent.

CHAPTER 6

UNDERSTANDING CHILD ABUSE: THE ANALYTICAL DATA

INTRODUCTION

This chapter analyzes the utility of the four major theories of child abuse. Given that the sample consists only of abusers, the causal variables are assessed on the basis of their ability to explain the "degree" of abuse, measured in terms of frequency and severity.¹ It should be noted that the variables found to be significant in explaining the degree of abuse may not be the same as those causing the actual abuse incident.

Information concerning frequency and severity of abuse is available for 110 cases in the sample, and missing for the other five cases. The first section of this chapter attempts to determine the accuracy of the four theories by empirically testing each of the hypotheses; and the second, deals with the amount of variation explained by these theories singularly, and in combination. As previously specified, the method of analysis is multiple regression.²

To avoid unnecessary repetition in the presentation of the material, frequency and severity are discussed jointly whenever their relationships to an independent variable are similar. Distinctions are only made where the coefficients vary or where different variables are found to be significant.

THE HYPOTHESES

Psychopathology Theory

The first hypothesis formulated on the basis of psychopathology theory stated that parental mental or emotional disorder is directly related to child abuse. Generally, the evidence supports this hypothesis in terms of severity of abuse, but not in terms of frequency of abuse. Table 12 illustrates the correlation and beta coefficients between the psychopathology variables and frequency and severity of abuse.³

Both the beta and correlation coefficients reveal a moderate, positive association between the overall psychological index and severity of abuse (.168 and .171, respectively).⁴ The relationship between the second indicator, presence of emotional deviance on part of perpetrator involved in abuse incident and severity is somewhat more ambiguous to interpret, due to the very small, negative beta. However, the correlation coefficient reveals that this item interacts with other psychopathology variables to produce a weak, positive association ($r = .112$). Alternatively, the coefficients between both of these indices and frequency are approaching zero. The product-moment correlation and beta coefficient between the psychological index and frequency are .042 and $-.022$, respectively; and between the presence of a mental disorder in the abuse incident and

TABLE 12. CORRELATION AND BETA COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN PSYCHOPATHOLOGY VARIABLES AND SEVERITY AND FREQUENCY OF ABUSE

Variables	Severity			Frequency		
	Simple r	Beta	F Ratio	Simple r	Beta	F Ratio
Psychological index	.171	.168	2.177	.042	-.022	0.041
Presence of emotional disorder in abuse	.112	-.010	0.009	-.082	-.118	1.273
Resent child	.062	-.041	0.160	.297	.220	5.004 ^b
Battered child	.287	.274	7.283 ^a	.105	-.007	0.006
No rewarding relation with child	.065	-.009	0.009	.137	.071	0.551
Unrealistic demands	.026	-.034	0.114	.236	.165	2.975
Presence of perpetrator's abuse as child in incident	.152	.084	0.605	.256	.237	5.167 ^b
Parent's report of abusive background	.062	-.037	0.123	.048	-.068	0.450

^aSignificant at the .01 level.^bSignificant at the .05 level.

this dependent variable, they are $-.082$ and $-.118$, respectively.

As previously specified, two other factors have been found to be connected with psychological problems on the part of the abusive parent: the Battered Child Syndrome; and resentment or rejection of child by parent for no reason. These findings are supported in this study. The former factor is particularly associated with the item indicating presence of emotional problems in abuse incident ($r = .18$)⁵ and the latter is strongly associated with the over-all psychological index ($r = .17$). There is an even higher correlation between the two factors themselves ($r = .26$). In relation to understanding child abuse, however, the findings are contradictory.

The relationship between the Battered Child Syndrome and child abuse is very similar to that between psychological deviance and abuse. It, also, is positively correlated with severity ($b = .274$, at the .01 level of significance), while having virtually no relationship with frequency ($b = -.007$).⁶ It is interesting that when the effects of this variable interact with the effects of the other independent variables, its association with frequency increases and becomes positive ($r = .105$).

The relationship between resentment of child and degree of abuse is quite different. It has a significant, positive association with frequency ($b = .22$, at the .05 level of

significance) and virtually no relationship with severity ($b = -.041$). When the effects of this variable interact with the other variables, the former relationship strengthens ($r = .297$) and the latter association while still very weak, becomes positive ($r = .062$). Thus, while this variable provides some contradictory evidence, generally the first hypothesis is supported in terms of severity, but not in terms of frequency.

The second hypothesis in the psychopathology theory is that role reversal on the part of the parent(s) is directly related to child abuse. The assumption is that the psychological deviance of the parent is manifested in the form of role reversal, and the findings here would seem to support this proposition. There are two indicators of role reversal in this study, both of which are notably correlated with the parent's index score of psychological functioning. The correlation coefficient of the first indicator, a parent's complaint that the child fails to provide a rewarding relationship, is .27 and for the second indicator, unrealistic and excessive demands made upon the child, it is .24. These two indices are also moderately related to each other ($r = .12$).

In terms of understanding child abuse, the findings indicate that while there is indeed a positive association between role reversal and frequency, there is little relationship between this variable and severity. In the former case, the

beta coefficients for both indices are weak to moderate (.071 and .165), and the relationships strengthen in interaction with the other independent variables (the correlation coefficients equal .137 and .236). In the latter case, the beta coefficients are negative, but they are too close to zero for any meaningful interpretation (-.009 and -.034). Even when the effects of these indices interact with the effects of the other variables, the relationships, while becoming positive, remain too small to signify an association between role reversal and severity (the r 's are .065 and .026).

The final hypothesis derived from this theory is that previous parental experience with abuse and/or neglect as a child is directly related to child abuse.⁷ The two indicators which were used to measure this variable are the parent's own report of such a background and the social worker's assessment of the importance of this item in the abuse incident. There was a high correlation between these two indices ($r = .45$) which would seem to suggest that if, indeed, a parent had a history of maltreatment it is most likely that it would play a part in the parent's later child-rearing behavior. In terms of explaining the degree of abuse, the findings generally indicate positive relationships between the parent's abuse as a child and the frequency and severity of abuse, although they are not as strong as anticipated. Both the beta and correlation coefficients reveal that there is

a significant, positive association between the presence of an abusive background in this incident and frequency ($b = .237$; $r = .256$); and a weak, positive relationship between this item and severity ($b = .084$; $r = .152$). These findings, however, are not supported in terms of the other indicator, general report of abusive background on part of perpetrator. The beta coefficients for frequency and severity are $-.068$ and $-.037$, and the correlation coefficients are $.048$ and $.062$, respectively.

Finally, a comment is necessary concerning the utility of this final hypothesis for the psychopathological theory. As previously noted, the parent's own history of abuse and/or neglect is assumed to be the source of the parent's emotional problems which eventually lead to the abusive behavior exhibited toward their own children. There does not seem to be strong empirical support for this theoretical assumption however. The correlations between the two items measuring the perpetrator's past history of abuse and the psychological index are $.13$ and $.14$, and between these items and the presence of emotional problems in the abuse incident, they are $.07$ and $.12$. There are also weak to moderate correlations between these two indicators and resentment of child (the r 's equal $.16$ and $.04$, respectively) and the Battered Child Syndrome (the r 's equal $.27$ and $.16$, respectively).

Consequently, it appears that there are only weak to

moderate correlations supporting the underlying assumptions of the psychopathology theory. The accuracy of the hypotheses in determining degree of abuse, is conflicting. Many of the individual beta coefficients suggest weak, negative associations between psychopathology variables and both frequency and severity. Even though the corresponding correlation coefficients are largely positive, they too are often very weak. The associations that do support the hypotheses are based on weak to moderate coefficients. Thus, overall, the theory does not appear to be strongly supported.

Social Psychology Theory

The first hypothesis of this model is that previous parental experience with abuse and/or neglect as a child is directly related to child abuse. In contrast to the psychopathology interpretation, however, the assumption here is that abusive child-rearing is a learned behavior which is passed from one generation to the next. As the findings in this study provided only moderate support for the psychopathology theory, the social psychological explanation may be more accurate. The correlation coefficients between the social psychology variables and frequency and severity of abuse are similar to or stronger than those found between psychopathology variables and these items; and in addition, the correlations between the indicators of the social psychology

model offer firm support for this theory.

In terms of the first hypothesis, the two indices previously specified (general history of abusive background and presence of this item in abuse incident), in addition to a third index (has parent witnessed any other forms of violence in his/her family of origin) were used to measure parent's history of abuse. The coefficients between these items, as well as the other social psychological variables, and frequency and severity of abuse are illustrated in Table 13. Based on these findings, it appears that a parent's history of abuse has a similar relationship with degree of abuse, in terms of social psychology variables.

The most notable relationships were those between the presence of an abusive background on the part of the perpetrator in the present incident and frequency and severity of abuse. The beta coefficient in the former case (.22, significant at the .05 level) is almost identical to that found in the psychopathology data; and in the latter case, the beta coefficient is twice as large (.186 compared to .084, in the former theory).⁸

There is virtually no association between the parent's general report of an abusive background and degree of abuse, either in terms of frequency or severity (the betas equal $-.073$ and $-.041$, respectively). The relationship between witnessing other forms of violence and the degree of abuse

TABLE 13. CORRELATION AND BETA COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES AND FREQUENCY AND SEVERITY OF ABUSE

Variables	Severity			Frequency		
	Simple r	Beta	F Ratio	Simple r	Beta	F Ratio
Presence of perpetrator's abuse in incident	.152	.186	2.905	.256	.220	4.136 ^b
Parent's report of abusive background	.062	-.041	0.154	.048	-.073	0.498
Witnessed other violence in family	.056	-.067	0.468	-.076	-.117	1.450
Repeating own parents' methods	-.040	-.031	0.100	.265	.160	2.609
Other children in home ever abused	-.032	-.140	2.088	.261	.212	4.846 ^b
Awareness of other child-rearing techniques	-.287	-.278	8.167 ^a	.065	.083	0.749
Parent ignorant of child's capabilities	.234	.193	4.066 ^b	.033	.037	0.149

^aSignificant at .01 level.

^bSignificant at .05 level.

is also weak. There is a very small, negative association between this variable and severity ($b = -.067$), which becomes positive when its effects interact with the effects of other independent variables ($r = .056$). The relationship between witnessing other forms of family violence and frequency is a little more definite ($b = -.117$); moreover, this association remains negative in interaction with other variables ($r = -.076$). Although the coefficients are weak, these findings suggest that witnessing violence in childhood has a different effect than actually experiencing abuse as a child. Even though there are some slightly contradictory results, there appears to be more support for this hypothesis (ie. stronger relationship with severity) in terms of social psychology theory.

According to the second hypothesis, parental awareness of alternative child-rearing techniques is inversely related to child abuse. This variable was measured in two different ways. The first indicator was the social worker's assessment of the parent's knowledge of alternative child-rearing techniques. Strong negative correlations between this item and the degree of abuse were expected. The second indicator was the parent's own statement that he/she was resorting to methods used on him/her as a child. A positive relationship supports the hypothesis here.

In addition, a third item, presence of other children in

home who have been abused, was included on the premise that if this behavior is a learned, disciplinary response, all of the children should receive similar treatment. Consequently, there should be a positive relationship between number of children who have been abused and degree of abuse. Although the data are not consistent, generally the hypothesis is supported in terms of frequency of abuse but only partially supported in relation to severity. There is basically no relationship between the parent's total awareness of alternative child-rearing techniques and frequency ($b = .083$; $r = .065$). However, there are moderate, positive associations between both the parent's claim to be repeating the same methods used on him/her and other abused children in home, and frequency of abuse. The beta coefficient in the first relationship is .160 and in the second, it is .212, with a .05 level of significance. In interaction with other variables, both of these relationships increase, as indicated by the correlation coefficients (.265 and .261, respectively). These last two indicators, therefore, provide substantial support for this hypothesis in terms of frequency.

In relation to severity, the proposition is supported by only the first indicator, parent's total awareness of alternative child-rearing techniques. There is a moderately strong, negative association between this item and severity of abuse ($r = -.287$; $b = .278$, significant at the .01 level).

Thus, as awareness of alternative techniques decreases, severity increases. There is virtually no relationship between the parent's claim to be repeating methods used on him/her as a child and this dependent variable ($b = -.031$; $r = -.040$); and there is a weak, negative association between other children abused in home and severity ($b = -.140$; $r = -.032$). Overall, the evidence concerning frequency and severity of abuse, offers a fair degree of support for this hypothesis.

The final proposition in social psychology theory is that parental lack of knowledge of children's basic developmental capacities is directly related to child abuse. One indicator was used to measure this independent variable: the presence of this item in the list of circumstances surrounding the abuse incident. The data show that there is a positive relationship between the parent's ignorance of a child's capabilities and both frequency and severity. The former association is very weak ($b = .037$; $r = .033$) but in the latter case, there is a moderate relationship ($b = .193$) which is significant at the .05 level. Moreover, the effects of this variable increase in interaction with the effects of other independent variables ($r = .234$).

In addition to the fact that the hypotheses were largely substantiated, the data also support the basic assumptions of the social psychology theory. Each of these assumptions

is discussed separately. As already indicated, the major element of this theory is that the physical abuse of children is a learned child-rearing response which is passed from one generation to the next. There is a noteworthy correlation between the parents' history of abuse and their claim that they were repeating methods used on them as children. The correlation coefficient between the parents' general report of abuse and this claim was $.17^9$ and between the presence of an abusive background on the part of the parent in the abuse incident and this claim, it was $.34$. In addition, parents who have been raised with this type of discipline, presumably are unaware of effective alternate child-rearing methods. The correlation coefficients also support this assumption. There is a negative correlation of $-.15$ between the parents' general report of an abusive background and total number of child-rearing methods known, and of $-.07$ between the presence of this background in the current abuse incident and number of other methods known. The final assumption underlying the social psychology theory is that this learned behavior is applied to all the children in times of crisis, and may, in fact, be generalized to other intrafamilial relationships. There are two sets of evidence to support this proposition. First, in the parents' own background, there was a high correlation between those who had a history of abuse and/or neglect themselves and those

who witnessed other forms of violence in their family (.24). Second, there was also a moderately strong relationship between a perpetrator who had a history of abuse and families where other children had been abused. The correlation coefficient between the parent's general report of such a background and other abused children was .15. In those cases where a history of abuse on the part of the parent had been established in the abuse incident, the likelihood of other children being abused increased. The correlation coefficient was .21. In light of the correlations between these independent variables, especially between the parent's history of abuse and the parent's claim to be repeating the same methods used on him/her as a child, the data again seem to favor the social psychological interpretation of the role of an abusive background.

Social Situational Theory

The social situational theory explains child abuse in terms of various situational problems which produce frustration and stress for parents. Presumably the parent releases his/her frustration as anger against the child. There are five hypotheses previously specified to deal with these various stressful variables.

Before proceeding to them, however, there are two general factors to be discussed: mounting stress on perpetrator due to life circumstances and inadequately controlled anger.

These items were added to the list of circumstances surrounding the abuse incident, as an overall check of the assumptions in this theory. It is useful to note the associations between these two factors and frequency and severity of abuse before proceeding to the hypotheses. Moreover, as each separate hypothesis is discussed, the relationships between these two items and the specific stress-producing variable are analyzed to check the interpretation of this theory.

Table 14 shows the associations between the social situational variables and degree of abuse. While there is a moderate positive relationship between mounting stress and severity ($b = .205$; $r = .157$), there is an almost equal, negative association between this item and frequency ($b = -.193$; $r = -.244$). Thus, this assumption in social situational theory appears to hold true only in terms of severity. In relation to inadequately controlled anger, there are negative relationships with both frequency ($b = -.057$; $r = -.013$) and severity ($b = -.144$; $r = -.120$). The majority of these correlations, then, do not support the two major assumptions of this theory. The individual hypotheses are discussed next.

One of the major variables considered to be a source of stress related to abuse, is social and economic deprivation. Thus, the first hypothesis states that parents' socio-

TABLE 14. CORRELATION AND BETA COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN SOCIAL SITUATIONAL VARIABLES AND SEVERITY AND FREQUENCY OF ABUSE

Variables	Severity			Frequency		
	Simple r	Beta	F Ratio	Simple r	Beta	F Ratio
Mounting stress	.157	.205	3.750	-.244	-.193	3.190
Inadequately controlled anger	-.120	-.144	2.033	-.013	-.057	0.309
Socioeconomic index	-.074	-.081	0.468	.013	.136	1.248
Employment status	-.029	-.242	2.143 ^a	-.057	-.041	0.058
Employment duration	.049	.368	4.100 ^a	-.077	-.232	1.564
Reliance on public assistance	.082	.134	0.870	-.023	-.123	0.679
Marital difficulties	.113	.192	3.042	.005	.007	0.004
Abuse resulted from fight between parents	-.186	-.304	8.546 ^c	-.016	-.034	0.105 ^d
Alcoholic intoxication	.020	.057	0.292	.184	.242	5.027 ^d
Problem pregnancies	.144	.194	4.078 ^d	.017	-.008	0.006
Parents' total contacts	-.141	-.157	2.364	.160	.084	0.640
Feelings of social isolation	-.006	-.117	1.280	-.089	-.028	0.069
Other people in household	.014	-.066	0.491	-.034	-.005	0.003
Health/Emotional problems of child in incident ^a	.010	.060	0.266 ^d	.012	-.117	0.961
Child's total deviations ^b	-.087	-.249	4.113 ^d	.224	.230	3.361
Child's total experiences	-.024	.156	1.885	.234	.097	0.706

^a"Deviations" refer to medically verified intellectual, emotional, behavioral, and physical problems.

^b"Experiences" refer to hospitalization, foster care, institutionalization, and so forth. See question 65, Appendix A.

^cSignificant at the .01 level.

^dSignificant at the .05 level.

economic status is inversely related to child abuse. The primary indicator used to measure this variable was the socioeconomic index based on family income and the perpetrator's educational and occupational level (see Appendix B). In addition, as unemployment has been found to have special effects on familial violence, three further indicators were included: reliance on public assistance;¹⁰ employment status at time of abuse incident; and employment duration in the preceding year. Except for reliance on public assistance, strong negative associations are expected between each of these items and frequency and severity of abuse. A positive relationship is expected between reliance on public assistance and these two dependent variables.

Overall, the findings basically support the hypothesis concerning socioeconomic status and child abuse, especially in terms of severity. There is a weak inverse relationship between the socioeconomic index and severity of abuse. Both the beta and correlation coefficients are about $-.08$. There is, however, a weak, positive association between this index and frequency of abuse ($b = .14$), which is suppressed when the effects of this variable interact with the effects of other independent variables ($r = .013$). The findings concerning the source of income are similar. There is a weak, direct relationship between reliance on public assistance and severity of abuse ($b = .134$; $r = .082$), and a weak, in-

verse relationship between this item and frequency ($b = -.123$). This latter association is reduced to almost zero ($r = -.023$) when the effects of this variable interact with other variables. In terms of the direct relationships between socioeconomic status and frequency and severity of abuse, these findings suggest that parents belonging to the lower socioeconomic strata may abuse their children more severely while parents in higher socioeconomic strata may abuse their children more often. These impressions must be presented with caution, however, because the coefficients are not large.

The relationships between employment status and frequency and severity of abuse are also consistent with these findings. There is a moderate, inverse association between employment status and severity ($b = -.242$), but virtually no relationship between this indicator and frequency ($b = -.041$; $r = -.057$). It should be noted that the former association is suppressed when the effects of this item interact with the effects of the other independent variables ($r = -.029$). In contrast, the findings concerning employment duration and degree of abuse reveal a strong, direct relationship between this item and severity, and a moderate, inverse association between employment duration and frequency. In the former case, the beta coefficient is .368, significant at the .05 level. The correlation coefficient indicates that this relationship is lost when the effects

of this variable interact with other variables ($r = .049$). In the latter case, the beta coefficient is $-.232$; an association which is also diminished when the effects of other independent variables are considered ($r = -.077$). In summary then, as employment duration decreases, frequency of abuse increases; thus supporting the hypothesis. The positive relationship between this item and severity does not support this hypothesis.

It should be noted that there are negative correlations between the socioeconomic indicators and mounting stress and inadequately controlled anger (see the matrix, Appendix F). As socioeconomic standing, employment duration and employment status decrease, and as reliance on public assistance increases, mounting stress and inadequately controlled anger increase. These data then support the interpretation put forth by social situational theory.

The second hypothesis is that parental stress associated with marital difficulties is directly related to child abuse. There are three indicators used to measure marital difficulties: evidence of marital disharmony significant enough to disrupt the household; abuse resulting from a fight between the parents; and intoxication on the part of the perpetrator. In terms of marital disharmony significant enough to disrupt the household, there is a direct, moderate relationship between this item and severity ($b = .192$; $r = .113$),

but virtually no relationship between this item and frequency ($b = .007$; $r = .005$). Intoxication on the part of the perpetrator, on the other hand, is moderately associated with frequency ($b = .242$, significant at the .05 level; $r = .184$), but not related to severity ($b = .057$; $r = .020$). It is noteworthy that there is also a moderately strong correlation between marital disharmony and intoxication ($r = .28$). Consequently, these two variables offer a fair degree of support for the hypothesis.

The remaining indicator, abuse resulting from fight between parents, is likewise highly correlated with both marital disharmony and intoxication (.30 and .29, respectively). However, this item, while having virtually no relationship with frequency ($b = -.034$; $r = -.016$), is inversely related to severity of abuse. There is a moderately strong, negative association ($b = -.304$) which is significant at the .01 level (the r equals $-.186$). Thus, it would seem that cases of abuse resulting from a conjugal argument, while not necessarily occurring more (or less) often, tend to be less severe.

It is interesting that there are weak correlations between the various indicators of marital difficulties and mounting stress. The correlations between marital disharmony and mounting stress, and intoxication and stress, are only .05 and .09, respectively. There is a somewhat stronger

association between abuse resulting from a conjugal fight and mounting stress ($r = .16$). Intoxication is most strongly correlated with inadequately controlled anger ($r = .19$), with only very weak associations existing between the remaining two indices and anger ($r = -.10$ and $.03$).

Overall, marital disharmony and intoxication contribute to the degree of abuse. However, in those cases where the abuse actually resulted from a fight between the parents, the abuse is less severe. Moreover, stress is most highly correlated with abuse which has resulted from a conjugal argument, and inadequately controlled anger with intoxication.

The third hypothesis in social situational theory is that parental stress associated with problem pregnancies is directly related to child abuse. The one indicator used to measure this item was the social worker's assessment of the presence of such problems in the abuse incident. In terms of degree of abuse, there is virtually no relationship between problem pregnancies and frequency ($b = -.008$; $r = .017$), but a moderate, positive association exists between this factor and severity. The beta coefficient is $.194$, significant at the $.05$ level, and the correlation coefficient is $.144$. Thus, it appears that problem pregnancies, while not affecting how often a child is abused, do affect the severity of the abuse.

There are relatively small correlations between a problem pregnancy and mounting stress and inadequately controlled anger (.06 and .08, respectively). However, it is noteworthy that there is a negative association between problem pregnancy and other children being abused in home (-.09). Conclusions based on such a weak coefficient must be tentative, but this finding, nevertheless, indicates that the source of the abuse is a situational problem surrounding the pregnancy of the child.

The fourth hypothesis is that the extent of parental social contacts is inversely related to child abuse. This variable was measured in two ways. First, the parents' total number of contacts in the preceding month was used as a general indicator of this variable. Second, two additional indices were included to determine the significance of this variable in the abuse incident. These include feelings of social isolation on the part of the perpetrator and the presence of any other people at time of abuse incident (see "people" in Appendix B to see how this latter variable was measured for the multiple regression analysis). In terms of frequency and severity of abuse, the findings are conflicting.

There is a very weak, positive association ($b = .084$; $r = .160$) between total contacts and frequency of abuse, and a slightly stronger, inverse relationship between this

item and severity ($b = -.157$; $r = -.141$). Thus as the number of social contacts decrease, severity tends to increase. There is essentially no relationship between the presence of people at time of abuse and either frequency ($b = -.005$; $r = -.034$) or severity ($b = -.066$; $r = .014$). The associations between feelings of social isolation on the part of the perpetrator and frequency and severity are not consistent with social situational theory. The beta coefficients and product-moment correlations in the first case, are $-.028$ and $-.089$, and in the latter case, they are $-.117$ and $-.006$. These findings indicate that as feelings of social isolation increase, frequency and severity of abuse decrease. Once again, however, the relationships are quite weak.

In light of the fact that the general relationship between number of contacts and severity, at least, is negative, one possible explanation for the conflicting data is that abusive parents may desire few contacts and not view themselves as socially isolated; thus, the negative correlations between the presence of these feelings on the part of the parent and frequency and severity. At the same time, this situation may still be contributing to the parents' stress and ultimately to the degree of abuse inflicted upon the children. There is some support for this argument in the correlations found between indicators of social isolation

and mounting stress on perpetrator. There is an inverse, relationship ($r = -.14$) between total number of contacts and mounting stress, and a positive association ($r = .36$) between presence of this circumstance in abuse incident and mounting stress on perpetrator. At any rate, the hypothesis is only partially supported in terms of severity, and receives no support in relation to frequency of abuse.

The final hypothesis derived from social situational theory concerns child-originated abuse. It states that parental stress associated with children's health and/or emotional problems is directly related to child abuse. After the initial analysis of the findings, it was decided to use the child's total number of deviations, whether they may be health, emotional, or behavioral, as one indicator. The total number of related experiences (ie. hospitalization, foster family care, institutionalization, and so forth) was used as a second indicator; and finally, the social worker's assessment of the presence of such problems in the abuse incident was used as a third indicator of child-originated abuse.

In general terms, there is a moderately strong, negative association between the child's total number of deviations and severity ($b = -.249$, significant at .05 level),¹¹ but a moderate, positive relationship between this item and frequency ($b = .230$; $r = .224$). Thus, it appears as the child's total number of deviations increase, frequency of abuse also

increases, but severity decreases. Alternatively, there is a moderate, positive relationship between the child's total number of experiences and severity ($b = .156$),¹² and a weaker, positive association between the indicator and frequency ($b = .097$). This latter relationship increases only when the effects of children's experiences interact with the other variables ($r = .234$). These coefficients suggest that as the child's total number of experiences increases, both frequency and severity also increase, especially in the latter case.

These findings are not that surprising in light of the fact that the first index, total deviations, measures problems affecting the child, while the second index measures not only experiences with hospitals and child care, but also with juvenile court and correctional institutions, etc. It may be that although the child's deviations are stressful and lead to frequent abuse, the parent does not wish to hurt the child for problems beyond his/her control. On the other hand, the parent may be somewhat harsher with a child who has gotten into legal difficulties or come to the attention of child care services. There is some support for this in that the correlation coefficient between inadequately controlled anger and child's total number of deviations is negative ($r = -.14$), whereas there is a positive correlation between this item and child's total number of

experiences ($r = .01$) (although the relationship is very weak).

The evidence concerning the parent's claim that the child's problems were involved in the abuse, conflicts with the preceding data. There is virtually no relationship between this claim and severity ($b = .060$; $r = .010$), and a weak, negative correlation between this item and frequency ($b = -.12$). It is possible that these findings may be a result of the previous two indices counter-balancing each other, as only one of these indices was positively related to either frequency or severity. Alternatively, it may be that the parents either do not recognize, or do not want to admit, the role of the child in the abuse. At any rate, there are very low correlations between these items and mounting stress, as well as inadequately controlled anger. If indeed, we are to understand the significance of the child's health and/or emotional problems, in terms of social situational theory, it would appear that other stressful factors must also be involved.

Overall, those variables most strongly correlated with mounting stress are socioeconomic status, employment duration and reliance on public assistance, social isolation, and abuse resulting from a fight between parents. Those items most strongly related to inadequately controlled anger are intoxication of perpetrator and employment duration. The

majority of the social situational indices, however, are positively related to both these variables.

The Cultural Theory

As discussed in earlier chapters, the cultural theory examines child abuse in terms of a broader perspective. It considers the extent to which the use of physical force against children is accepted and legitimized in our society, and how that is related to the problem of child abuse. Three hypotheses were specified in this regard, and are analysed here in relation to degree of abuse.

The first hypothesis states that parental perception of physical punishment as an appropriate method of discipline is directly related to child abuse. Three indices were specified in Chapter 4 and are all utilized here. The first two measure the parent's attitude and behavior in terms of child-rearing techniques, and include the parent's belief in the necessity of physical punishment and the total number of alternative child-rearing methods actually used by the parent. The remaining indicator is the immediate or delayed response by the perpetrator to specific or suspected act(s) of child.

Table 15 illustrates the associations between the indicators of the cultural theory and severity and frequency of abuse.

TABLE 15. CORRELATION AND BETA COEFFICIENTS BETWEEN CULTURAL VARIABLES AND SEVERITY AND FREQUENCY OF ABUSE

Variables	Severity			Frequency		
	Simple r	Beta	F Ratio	Simple r	Beta	F Ratio
Parent's belief in need of physical punishment	-.002	.033	0.097	.262	.107	0.945
Total number of alternative child-rearing methods used	-.350	-.187	4.005 ^b	.139	.160	2.703
Response to act(s) of child	-.323	-.234	6.903 ^a	.211	.180	3.778 ^b
Self-defined strict authoritarian	-.001	-.162	2.152	.313	.167	2.122
Parent emphasizes child's obedience	-.086	-.048	0.231	.147	-.039	0.136
Parent surprised at being questioned	.338	.335	10.608 ^a	.271	.230	4.627 ^b

^aSignificant at .01 level.^bSignificant at .05 level.

Basically, the findings show that the hypothesis is supported primarily in terms of frequency of abuse. There are positive associations between both the parent's belief in the need for physical punishment and frequency ($b = .107$), and the response to an act of the child and frequency of abuse ($b = .180$, significant at the .05 level). Both of these relationships increase when the effects of the independent variables interact with other variables (the correlation coefficients are .262 and .211). There is also a positive relationship between the total number of non-physical child-rearing methods used and frequency of abuse. However, the beta of .160 indicates that the more methods used by the parent, the more frequent the abuse. A possible explanation of this finding is that abusive parents may be inclined to use not only physical force repeatedly, but all forms of punishment.

Contrary to these data, there is essentially no relationship between the belief in the necessity of physical punishment and severity ($b = .003$; $r = -.002$), and a significant, negative association between the response to an act of the child and severity of abuse ($b = -.234$, significant at the .01 level; $r = -.323$). Consequently, it appears that if the abuse is a response to something that the child has done, it is less likely to be severe. The relationship between total methods used and severity, however, is also negative ($b = -.187$, significant at the .05 level; $r = -.350$); thus supporting the hypothesis. The fewer methods used by the

parent, the more severe the abuse.

These findings, on balance, seem consistent with the cultural theory as a whole. The assumption is that child abuse, in part, results from everyday physical punishment. It seems quite reasonable, therefore, that while one would expect this behavior to occur quite often, as the child needs discipline, one would not expect these cases to be among the more severe. These parents tend to use many forms of discipline, and believe in the necessity of physical punishment, but do not intend to seriously harm the child. It is noteworthy that there is a moderately strong correlation between the belief in the necessity of physical punishment and other abused children in home ($r = .28$). Presumably the same forms of discipline are being used with all the children in the home.

The second hypothesis of this theory is that parental self-perception as strict, authoritative disciplinarians is directly related to child abuse. The two indicators used to measure this variable were in the list of circumstances surrounding the abuse, and include self-defined authoritarian and parents' emphasis on child's obedience. The findings are similar to those in the first hypothesis. There is a moderate, positive relationship between self-defined authoritarian and frequency of abuse ($b = .167$) which strengthens in interaction with other variables ($r = .313$). However, this factor is nega-

tively correlated with severity ($b = -.162$; $r = -.001$). The evidence concerning the second factor is somewhat more ambiguous. As indicated by the beta coefficients, there is virtually no relationship between parent's emphasis on child's obedience, and either frequency or severity ($-.039$ and $-.048$, respectively). When the effects of this variable interact with the effects of the other independent variables, the former association becomes positive ($r = .147$) and the latter remains negative ($r = -.086$). Thus, it appears that an emphasis on obedience has a positive relationship with frequency, only in interaction with the other cultural variables, and a direct, negative effect on severity of abuse. This hypothesis, then, is partially supported, again in terms of the frequency of abuse.

It is also important to note that there are moderately strong correlations between these independent variables and other factors related to the underlying assumptions of this theory. First, there is a positive association of $.26$ between authoritative discipline and other children abused in home. This is consistent with the general assumption that this behavior is related to a disciplinary response that is applied to all the children. Second, the assumption concerning the relationship between the two indices of this variable is accurate. The correlation coefficient between authoritative discipline and emphasis on obedience

is .41. Third, one would assume that a belief in the necessity of physical punishment would be related to authoritative discipline, and in fact, the correlation is .49. A belief in the necessity of physical punishment is also related to an emphasis on child's obedience ($r = .49$).

The final hypothesis states that parental perception of children as "property" is directly related to child abuse. One indicator was employed to measure this variable and it referred to the perpetrator's surprise and resentment at being questioned about their dealings with their own children. It appears from the findings here that this variable is very important to our understanding of abuse. There are significantly large, positive correlations between this item and both frequency and severity (betas are .23, at the .05 level of significance and .34, at the .01 level of significance, respectively). Moreover, these associations increase in interaction with the other variables.

This factor is also highly correlated with the belief in the necessity of physical punishment ($r = .29$) and self-defined authoritarian ($r = .48$), with a more moderate relationship with emphasis on obedience ($r = .15$). As in the case of the other cultural variables, there is also a strong correlation between feelings of ownership and the presence of abused children in the home ($r = .24$). Overall, there is a good deal of support for the cultural theory, especially

in terms of frequency of abuse.

Thus far, the empirical support for each of the hypotheses has been discussed. The cultural theory is particularly substantiated in relation to frequency of abuse, and the social situational model, in terms of severity. The social psychology and psychopathology theories receive only partial support in terms of either frequency or severity.¹³ The relative ability of each of these models to explain the degree of child abuse, however, still needs to be determined.

EXPLAINED VARIATION

One of the main goals of this study is to weigh the relative explanatory power of each of the theories of child abuse, with the use of multiple regression analysis. The data from this study allow us to test the utility of each theory in explaining the observed variation in the frequency and severity of abuse. The task is handled in two parts. First, the amount of variation explained by each theoretical model separately is analyzed. This part discusses those variables which are statistically significant to each theory, as well as the significance level of each model for the population from which the sample was selected. Second, the total variation explained by all the theories together and the

unique contribution made by each model are analyzed. "Unique" in this context, refers to that amount of variation explained by any one theory, after all of the other theories have been entered into the equation.¹⁴ This measures the variation which can only be accounted for by the respective theory. This part identifies those variables in the total regression (ie. all four theories combined) which have statistically significant relationships with frequency and severity of abuse. The significance of the total regression for the population from which the sample was drawn is also discussed.

Individual Regressions

In order of importance, the cultural theory, and social situational theory are, individually, able to account for the greatest amount of variation, both in terms of frequency and severity. Following these two, overall, come the social psychology and psychopathology theories, in that order.

The results of the multiple regression analysis between the variables of the cultural theory and frequency and severity of abuse are shown in Table 16. Based on the multiple r^2 statistics, these variables are able to explain 20 percent ($r^2 = .20$) of the variation in frequency of abuse and 26 percent ($r^2 = .26$) of the variation in severity. Although these figures are among the highest in comparison to the other theories, it should still be pointed out that they are only moderately effective in explaining the variation in degree

TABLE 16. MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS BETWEEN CULTURAL VARIABLES AND FREQUENCY AND SEVERITY OF ABUSE

Variables	Frequency ^a		Severity ^a		
	Multiple R	R ²	Multiple R	R ²	
Parents belief in need of physical punishment	.262	.069	.002	.000	
Total methods of discipline used	.290	.084	.350	.123	
Response to act of child	.332	.110	.422	.178	
Self-defined strict authoritarian	.399	.159	.423	.179	
Parents emphasize child's obedience	.401	.161	.427	.182	
Parent surprised about questioned	.444	.197	5.09	.259	
a Significant at .01 level.					
		DF	F	DF	F
		6	4.216	6	5.988
		103		103	

of abuse.¹⁵ Nevertheless, it is important that the relationships between these independent variables and both frequency and severity are, overall, significant at the .01 level. With a df^1 equal to 6 and a df^2 equal to 103, the F ratio would have to be greater than or equal to 3.00.¹⁶ The F ratios for frequency and severity are 4.22 and 5.99, respectively. Based on the beta coefficients,¹⁷ the most significant determinants of frequency of abuse are "response to act of child" ($\beta = .18$; $F = 3.8$) and "parent surprised at being questioned" ($\beta = .23$; $F = 4.6$). In terms of severity, the variables are "total number of alternative child-rearing methods used" ($\beta = -.19$; $F = 4.0$); "response to act of child" ($\beta = -.24$; $F = 6.9$); and "parent surprised at being questioned" ($\beta = .34$; $F = 10.61$).

Table 17 presents the results of the multiple regression analysis between the variables of the social situational theory and frequency and severity of abuse. In comparison to the cultural theory, this model explains slightly more of the variation in frequency ($r^2 = .21$), but slightly less variation in severity ($r^2 = .24$). Thus, the social situational theory is, also, only moderately effective in explaining degree of abuse. Moreover, at the .05 level of significance, only one of the overall regressions is significant. With df^1 equal to 16 and df^2 equal to 93, the F ratio must be equal to or greater than 1.77. The F statistics here are 1.52 for frequency and 1.83 for severity. The most important

TABLE 17. MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS BETWEEN SOCIAL
SITUATIONAL VARIABLES AND FREQUENCY AND
SEVERITY OF ABUSE

Variables	Frequency		Severity ^a	
	Multiple R	R ²	Multiple R	R ²
Mounting stress	.244	.060	.157	.025
Inadequately controlled anger	.247	.061	.162	.026
Socioeconomic index	.320	.103	.162	.026
Perpetrator's employment status	.321	.103	.215	.046
Perpetrator's employment duration	.324	.105	.233	.054
Reliance on public assistance	.326	.106	.346	.119
Marital disharmony	.327	.107	.378	.143
Abuse resulting from fight between parents	.341	.116	.382	.146
Intoxication on part of perpetrator	.350	.123	.403	.162
Problem pregnancies	.361	.131	.409	.167
Total number of contacts	.389	.151	.432	.186
Feelings of social isolation	.389	.151	.445	.198
Other people living in home	.390	.152	.450	.203
Health or emotional problem of child in incident	.392	.154	.450	.203
Child's total number of deviations	.448	.201	.474	.224
Child's total number of experiences	.455	.207	.490	.240
^a Significant at .05 level.				
		DF F		DF F
		16 1.516		16 1.832
		93		93

determinant of frequency of abuse appears to be "intoxication of perpetrator", with a beta coefficient of .24.¹⁸ The F ratio is 5.01 and this is significant at the .05 level. In addition, "mounting stress" (beta = -.19; F = 3.19) and "child's total number of deviations" (beta = .23; F = 3.36) are quite important. In terms of severity, the variables that are statistically significant include: "abuse resulting from a fight between parents" (beta = -.30; F = 8.51); "resentment of child for problem pregnancy" (beta = .19; F = 4.1); "perpetrator's employment duration" (beta = .37; F = 4.1); and "child's total number of deviations" (beta = -.25; F = 4.1). "Mounting stress" is also an important factor for this dependent variable (beta = .21; F = 3.8).

The social psychology theory is, individually, next best able to explain the overall variation on degree of abuse. The results of the multiple regression are shown in Table 18. The multiple r^2 in terms of frequency is .17 and for severity of abuse, it is .15. As is evident, however, these variables are not very effective in explaining the variation either in relation to frequency or severity. Nevertheless, overall, the relationships between the independent variables and both frequency and severity of abuse are significant. The variation explained in terms of frequency is significant at the .01 level, and in relation to severity, it is significant at the .05 level.¹⁹ The most important determinants of

TABLE 18. MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS BETWEEN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES AND FREQUENCY AND SEVERITY OF ABUSE

Variables	Frequency ^a		Severity ^b	
	Multiple R	R ²	Multiple R	R ²
Presence of perpetrator's abuse in incident	.256	.065	.152	.023
Perpetrator's history of abuse	.266	.071	.152	.023
Perpetrator witnessed other violence	.297	.088	.154	.024
Perpetrator repeating own parents' methods	.349	.122	.182	.033
Other children in home abused	.399	.159	.189	.036
Parent's total awareness of alternative child-rearing techniques	.406	.165	.345	.119
Parent ignorant of child's capabilities	.407	.166	.391	.153
aSignificant at the .01 level.		DF	DF	
bSignificant at the .05 level.		7	7	
		102	102	
		F=2.90	F=2.62	

frequency in this theory are "evidence of parent's abuse as a child" ($\beta = .22$; $F = 4.14$) and "the presence of other children abused in home" ($\beta = .21$; $F = 4.85$).²⁰ For severity, they are "parent ignorant of child's capabilities" ($\beta = .19$; $F = 4.07$) and "the total number of alternative child-rearing methods known by parent" ($\beta = -.28$; $F = 8.17$).

Table 19 shows the results of the multiple regression analysis between the variables of the psychopathology theory and frequency and severity of abuse. This model accounts for the smallest amount of variation in severity of abuse ($r^2 = .11$) and ranks third (ahead of social psychology theory) in explaining frequency of abuse ($r^2 = .18$). These findings are somewhat surprising as previous studies have reported strong associations between the emotional or mental disorder of the parent and the degree of abuse, especially in terms of severity. While this evidence may cast some doubt on the relationship between psychopathology theory and severity of abuse, it is important to remember that this model is only being tested in a limited manner since the in-depth case analyses required for a complete test were not available. Nevertheless, in this study, the psychopathology theory was not very effective in explaining either frequency or severity of abuse. In addition, the overall relationship between the psychopathology variables and severity is not significant at the .05 level of significance. With df^1 equal to 8 and

TABLE 19. MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS BETWEEN PSYCHOPATHOLOGY VARIABLES AND FREQUENCY AND SEVERITY OF ABUSE

Variables	Frequency ^a		Severity	
	Multiple R	R ²	Multiple R	R ²
Psychological index	.042	.002	.171	.029
Emotional disorder on part of perpetrator in abuse incident	.123	.015	.175	.031
Resent child for no reason	.319	.102	.178	.032
Battered child syndrome	.323	.104	.327	.107
Child failed to provide rewarding relationship	.332	.110	.327	.107
Parent has unrealistic demands of child	.370	.137	.328	.108
Presence of perpetrator's abuse in incident	.419	.176	.334	.112
Perpetrator's history of abuse	.424	.180	.336	.113
^a Significant at the .01 level.				
		8	2.764	8
		101		101
				1.607

df^2 equal to 101, the F statistic must be equal to or greater than 2.03. The F ratio here is only 1.61. Alternatively, however, the overall relationship between these variables and frequency is significant at the .01 level. The F ratio is 2.76, just greater than the 2.70 needed.

The most significant determinants of frequency in this theory are "resentment of child for no apparent reason" (beta = .22; F = 5.0) and "evidence of parent's abuse as a child" (beta = .24; F = 5.17). In terms of severity, the single most significant determinant is, somewhat predictably, the "Battered Child Syndrome" (beta = .27; F = 7.28).

In terms of the individual multiple regressions presented here, then, several summary comments can be made. First, none of the theories on their own, are extremely effective in explaining frequency and severity of abuse. Second, the differences in the amount of variation explained by the four theories, are not that large. Nevertheless, the theories can be ranked in terms of their explanatory power. In the case of frequency of abuse, the social situational model explains the greatest amount of variation followed closely by the cultural theory, and then the psychopathology and social psychology models. In the case of severity of abuse, the cultural theory is most effective, followed by the social situational, social psychological, and psychopathological models, in that order. Thus far then, the explanatory power of each theory has been analyzed on the basis of separate multiple regressions. The

final part of this chapter combines the four theories into one multiple regression analysis, to determine the total amount of variation that can be explained,²¹ and the unique contribution made by each theory, to this total amount.

Analysis of Total Regression

Overall, the combined theoretical models are able to account effectively for much of the variation in both frequency and severity of abuse (see Tables 40 and 41, respectively, Appendix G). The total explained variation is 42 percent in regard to frequency of abuse and 58 percent in terms of severity of abuse. Moreover, both regressions are statistically significant. With df^1 equal to 35 and df^2 equal to 74, the F ratio, at the .05 significance level, must be equal to or greater than approximately 1.57. At the .01 significance level, it must be approximately 1.92 or greater. The F statistics in the combined regressions of frequency and severity here, are 1.55 and 2.90, respectively. Thus, the frequency regression is approaching significance at the .05 level, and the severity regression is significant at the .01 level.

The most important determinants of frequency in the overall regression, are "other abused children in home" ($\beta = .23$; $F = 3.9$) and "parent surprised about being questioned" ($\beta = .26$; $F = 3.6$). Both of these variables are approaching significance at the .05 level.²² There are a notably greater

number of significant determinants of severity. At the .01 level of significance, these include "abuse resulting from fight between parents" ($\beta = -.37$; $F = 14.13$); "response to act of child" ($\beta = -.26$; $F = 7.29$); and "parent surprised at being questioned" ($\beta = .46$; $F = 16.04$). In addition, the indicators, "feelings of social isolation" ($\beta = -.21$; $F = 4.63$); and "mounting stress" ($\beta = .23$; $F = 5.54$) are significant at the .05 level. Finally, the variable "parent ignorant of child's capabilities" ($\beta = .19$; $F = 3.88$) is approaching significance at the .05 level.²³

In comparing the relative contribution of each theory, it is useful to examine the variation which can be explained only by each theories' distinct set of hypotheses. As previously mentioned, this is done by forcing each theory into the equation last. The explained variation which can be accounted for by the other variables, will have already been entered into the regression. In addition to measuring the unique contribution of each theory, this analysis also sheds some light upon the relationship between being the victim of abuse as a child and abusing one's own children as an adult. The two indicators of this independent variable, were included with the psychopathology theory when this model was entered into the regression equation last, and they were combined with the social psychology model when this theory was entered last. In this way, we are able to determine the unique contribution of each theory when this variable is in-

cluded with each one respectively.

Table 20 shows the amount of variation explained by each theory after the variables of all the other models have been entered into the regression equation.

TABLE 20. UNIQUE CONTRIBUTIONS OF EACH THEORY IN EXPLAINING FREQUENCY AND SEVERITY OF ABUSE

Theory	Frequency		Severity	
	Multiple R	R ²	Multiple R	R ²
Total Variation Explained	.650	.422	.760	.578
Explained Variation before Psychopathology Theory	.615	.378	.747	.559
Unique Contribution		.044		.020
Explained Variation before Social Psychology Theory	.580	.337	.721	.519
Unique Contribution		.085		.059
Explained Variation before Social Situational Theory	.579	.335	.619	.383
Unique Contribution		.087		.195
Explained Variation before Cultural Theory	.602	.362	.634	.402
Unique Contribution		.059		.176
Total Variation Explained		.422		.578
-Total of Unique Contributions		-.275		-.450
=Variation explained by more than theory		.147		.128
	or	15%	or	13%

The most notable impression made by this table is that none of the theories are particularly effective in explaining either frequency or severity. The unique contributions of each model, especially in the case of frequency, are quite small, and added together, do not equal the total variation

explained. This indicates that 15 percent of the variation in terms of frequency and 13 percent in relation to severity, can be explained by more than one theory. Nevertheless, there is a gradation in the amounts of explained variation unique to the individual theories. Generally, the social situational model makes the largest contribution to our understanding of the frequency and severity of abuse, followed by the cultural and social psychology theories, and finally, with the psychopathology model explaining the least amount of variation.

More specifically, in regard to frequency of abuse, the amounts of variation which are explained uniquely by the respective theories, are quite similar. After the variables of all the other models have been entered, the social situational theory accounts for an additional 9 percent of the variation; the social psychology model is very close, with a singular contribution of 8 percent, followed by the cultural theory with 6 percent and finally the psychopathology model with 4 percent. In terms of severity of abuse, the individual contributions are somewhat more well-defined. The social situational theory again, makes the largest singular contribution of all the theories; that is, 20 percent of the variation is accounted for solely by social situational variables. The cultural theory is second, with 18 percent explained variation, followed by the social psychology and psychopathology models, with 6 percent and 2 percent, respectively.

The fact that the cultural and social situational models, as individual regressions, are able to explain the greatest amount of variation in frequency and severity of abuse, in combination with the finding that they also make the largest unique contributions in the total regression, indicates their importance in determining the degree of child abuse. Moreover, it appears that the social psychology theory is a more useful way of understanding the connection between being abused as a child and abusing one's own children as an adult. In comparison to psychopathology theory, this model is able to explain more variation in terms of the individual regressions and in addition, it also makes more of a unique contribution. A larger proportion of the variation explained by psychopathology theory is also accounted for by the other models. At any rate, it seems quite clear that the individual contributions of all four theories are needed to provide the most effective set of explanatory variables, at least in terms of frequency and severity of abuse.

FOOTNOTES

¹For a detailed explanation concerning the operationalization of these variables, see Chapter 4.

²As outlined in the section on data analysis, in Chapter 4, multiple regression is a particularly effective statistical tool for examining a dependent variable and several independent ones. Refer to this earlier discussion for a more detailed explanation.

³In the discussion concerning the hypotheses, both the correlation coefficient (simple r) and the beta coefficient (beta) are used. The correlation coefficient is the product-moment correlation between the observed values on the dependent variable and the values predicted by the weighted combination of independent variables. The beta or partial regression coefficient indicates how the dependent variable would regress on the independent variable after the effects of all of the other independent variables included in the analysis have been statistically eliminated (Mueller et al., 1977). Consequently, the two coefficients may vary, and in such cases, both are reported. Wherever the beta and correlation coefficients are similar, only the former is reported. It represents the direct relationship between the independent and dependent variables, and the F ratio is based on this coefficient. The F ratio indicates the degree of significance of the relationship for the population from which the sample was selected. This statistic may be significant at either the .05 or .01 level, and both of these significance levels are used, depending upon the individual relationships.

⁴For the purposes of this analysis, coefficients between .10 and .150 are generally considered to represent weak associations; .151 to .250 are considered to be moderate; .251 to .350 moderately strong; and finally, .351 and higher are considered to be strong associations. These decisions seem reasonable given the exploratory nature of this study.

⁵The associations between the independent variables refer to the correlation matrix (see Appendix F).

⁶Refer to Table 12 for all correlation and beta coefficients between psychopathology variables and frequency and severity of abuse.

⁷The reader will remember that this hypothesis is also stated in the social psychological model. The discussion of the relevant variables is repeated in that section and there is also a summary comment on the relative utility of this hypothesis for the respective theories.

⁸Since the correlation coefficient does not control for other variables, the effects of the independent variables are interacting with the effects of other variables in both the psychopathology and social psychology analyses. Therefore, the *r* statistics are identical in the two regressions and are not repeated here.

⁹For all references to correlation coefficients between independent variables, see Appendix F.

¹⁰For an explanation of how this variable was measured for the multiple regression analysis, see "income", Appendix B.

¹¹As indicated by the correlation coefficient (-.087), this relationship is suppressed when the effects of this variable interact with the effects of other independent variables.

¹²This relationship is also suppressed when this variable interacts with other independent variables.

¹³In terms of severity, the psychopathology theory is supported only in relation to the first hypothesis (ie. involves the variable "emotional disorder on part of perpetrator"). The remaining two hypotheses receive partial support in terms of frequency.

¹⁴The procedure used to determine the "unique" contribution of each theory was a forced multiple regression. Each theoretical set of hypotheses was forced into the regression equation last with the use of inclusion numbers. The amount of variation explained by the final theory represents the variation which was not accounted for by the preceding variables. Thus, this variation can only be explained by the specific variables in that theory.

¹⁵Considering that empirical research into the area of child abuse, especially in terms of degree of abuse, is still relatively at an exploratory stage, an r^2 between approximately .15 and .24 was judged as only slightly effective; an r^2 between .25 and .49 as moderately effective; and an r^2 of .50 or more, was judged to be quite effective.

¹⁶"DF" refers to the term "degrees of freedom", and its calculation is based on the number of values that are free to vary (see Mueller et al.; 1977:485-486, for an explanation concerning the formula). Basically, you determine the significance of the F ratio by using df^1 for the column number and df^2 for the row number, and comparing the F statistic to the value at this point in the table of χ^2 values.

¹⁷Refer to Table 15 for all references to beta coefficients for the cultural variables.

¹⁸Refer to Table 14 for all references to beta coefficients for the social situational variables.

¹⁹With df^1 equal to 7 and df^2 equal to 102, the F ratio would have to be equal to or greater than 2.85 at the .01 significance level and at least 2.1 at the .05 level of significance. The F ratio for the frequency regression is 2.90 and for severity, it is 2.62.

²⁰See Table 13 for the references to beta coefficients, involving social psychological variables.

²¹It should be noted that the two common indices of psychopathology and social psychology theory were entered into the regression only once. Otherwise, the overall multiple r^2 would have been artifactually inflated.

²²The F ratio required at the .05 level of significance is 3.97. See Table 40, Appendix G.

²³The F ratio required at the .05 level of significance is 3.97. See Table 41, Appendix G.

CHAPTER 7

A SUMMATION OF CHILD ABUSE: RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS
FOR FUTURE RESEARCHSUMMARY

There are basically two sets of data that have been reported in this study. The first set concerns the descriptive characteristics of abusive families in general, and the second concerns the data relating the independent variables and the dependent variable, measured in terms of frequency and severity of abuse. Based on these findings, certain conclusions may be drawn and recommendations made.

Descriptive Characteristics. The descriptive data indicate that parents who abuse their children may be characterized in several specific respects: the majority of the parents believe in the necessity of physical punishment in child-rearing, favor this method of discipline, and believe that they "own" their child(ren); they typically have experienced abusive, or at least harsh, treatment as children, at the hands of their own parents; they tend to belong to the lower socioeconomic stratum, and generally must deal with a variety of stressful situational problems; and finally, a smaller percentage have some form of emotional or mental disorder. Consequently, it appears that there are several

factors contributing to the physical abuse of children. Closer analysis of the individual cases suggests, moreover, that various items, or combinations of items, are present in different families. It seems, therefore, that child abuse is not a uniform behavior with one set of causal factors, but a multidimensional phenomenon which requires the rationale of all four theoretical models for a total understanding of the problem.

Analytical Data. On the basis of the multiple regression analysis, three summary comments can be made. First, in terms of frequency and severity of abuse, each of the four theoretical models, makes an individual contribution to an understanding of child abuse.

Second, although the differences are not large, there is support for the argument that the cultural and social situational theories are particularly effective in explaining the frequency and severity of abuse. Generally, there is a positive relationship between culturally determined permissive attitudes toward the use of physical force against children and frequency of abuse, and an inverse association between these beliefs and severity. Conversely, abuse resulting from situational stress appears to be less frequent and more severe. The social psychology theory is the next most important determinant of frequency and severity of abuse, with the psychopathology model explaining the least amount of variation.

Both of these theories are partially supported in terms of frequency and severity of abuse. Most notably, however, a parent's previous experience with abuse and/or neglect as a child is positively related to both frequency and severity; and in addition, emotional or mental disorder on the part of the parent appears to be related to only severity of abuse.

Finally, it is important to note that half of the variation in terms of frequency and severity of abuse, has yet to be explained. As many previous studies have claimed child abuse to be a major maimer and killer of children, it seems essential, that along with determining the etiology of child abuse, researchers also examine those factors influencing degree of abuse.

Based on the preceding summary comments, there appear to be several key dimensions to an understanding of child abuse. These dimensions are highlighted in the next section, and specific recommendations for each problem are provided. In the last section, implications for future research are discussed.

THE DIMENSIONS OF PHYSICAL CHILD ABUSE: RECOMMENDATIONS

If the measures aimed at the prevention and gradual elimination of child abuse are ever to be effective, they must be directed at the causal level. The findings presented

here seem quite conducive to such intervention. There appear to be four basic dimensions to the physical abuse of children, and to the extent that these findings can be generalized to all abusers, several recommendations can be made in terms of reducing the incidence of child abuse:

1. Culturally permissive attitudes toward the use of physical force against children appear to be a basic dimension of child abuse, both in terms of etiology and frequency of abuse. Consequently, increased efforts aimed at gradually changing these attitudes are an essential measure. Gil advocated this same position over ten years ago (1970) and since then there have been some changes, especially in terms of mandatory reporting of suspected abuse incidents.¹ Nevertheless, permissive attitudes toward the use of physical discipline remain pervasive in our society.

Gil argues that violent child-rearing may be related to the degree of culturally unacceptable violence that exists among adults and various groups in society. He says that "violence against children in rearing them may be a functional aspect of socialization into a highly competitive and often violent society, one that puts a premium on the uninhibited pursuit of self-interest and that does not put into practice the philosophy of human cooperativeness..." (1973:142). If Gil is correct, the elimination of child abuse is, to some extent, dependent upon changes in 'social philosophy

of the family. It is quite likely that some abusive behavior can be avoided if greater attention is paid to these problems. One major factor involves socioeconomic deprivation. There appear to be several ways in which such deprivation is related to the etiology and degree of abuse. First, in some cases, there is a direct relationship between the frustration associated with the lack of these resources (ie. income, education, occupational status) and violence as a form of displaced aggression. Second, parents with a low socioeconomic status are often unable to get away from child-rearing responsibilities, and thus tensions between the parents and children do not dissipate. Third, parents in the lower socioeconomic strata are less able to handle other situational sources of stress, than parents in the higher strata. Finally, as previously mentioned, there is some evidence correlating lower socioeconomic strata with a subcultural approval of the use of physical punishment. A key element in decreasing child abuse thus involves reducing the rate of poverty.

In addition, more attention needs to be paid to the high-risk situational problems that have been identified in studies such as this one. Problem pregnancies, children with physical and/or emotional disorders, marital difficulties, and so forth, might be used as possible indicators of potentially abusive families, which require more intensive follow-up procedures by various social agencies. Obste-

and social reality' toward less competition and aggression, and more co-operation and mutual concern. What is needed therefore are changes in almost every aspect of human interaction.

While this task certainly sounds formidable, there are several concrete steps that might be taken to change our attitudes toward child-rearing, at least. First, the use of physical force against children must be eliminated as a legitimate means of interaction in the home and elsewhere (ie. schools, child-care facilities, correctional institutions, and so forth). Continued legal prohibitions against this behavior and systematic educational efforts aimed at changing this child-rearing philosophy, can be used for this purpose. The mass media might also be used in this regard. Second, other more constructive methods of interaction need to be developed and implemented in all institutions dealing with children. Courses in the school curricula, as well as other available parenting classes, might be directed more specifically to the problem of child abuse, and to the availability of non-violent child-rearing methods. Gradual changes brought about by these steps may go a long way towards altering parent-child interaction.

2. A second dimension of the physical abuse of children encompasses a variety of situational stress factors associated with the parents, the children, and the context

tricians, hospital staff, marriage counsellors, pediatricians, and other related professionals need to be sensitive to these signs, and responsible for making referrals if necessary.

Finally, the expansion of community-based social services might alleviate a number of the problems associated with abusive parents and the degree of abuse. Baby-sitting services, day-care facilities, food cooperatives, and so forth, are just some of the possibilities.

3. The cyclical nature of the physical abuse of children comprises the third dimension. As indicated in the summary, the majority of the parents in this study have been victims of abuse and/or neglect in their own childhood, and this factor is an important determinant of both frequency and severity of abuse. In addition, many of the parents have witnessed other forms of familial violence as children, and the majority have been abusive before. A few of the children are already displaying similar behavior.

The changes recommended in terms of the pervasive cultural acceptance of the use of physical force against children, should also be useful in breaking the prevailing cyclical nature of abusive behavior. Presumably, if physical punishment is replaced by other more constructive methods of child-rearing, parents may begin to question their own acceptance of such behavior. In addition, however, this

dimension emphasizes the necessity of dealing with all forms of familial violence. If indeed there are inter-relationships between the different types of violence in the family, any effective solution must be directed to each problem simultaneously.²

4. The final dimension concerns emotional or mental disorders on the part of the parents, which are allowed expression as violence against the child. In such cases, perhaps the best recommendation that can be made is for quick and effective intervention programs. Removal of a child from the home may be necessary, but available services should be oriented towards diagnosing the extent of the problem, assessing the best course of action for all the members involved, and initiating treatment for the parent, where required.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

If there is a genuine interest in combating the problem of child abuse, further empirical research on this topic is necessary. Several guidelines or recommendations can be made on the basis of this study. First, it is essential to approach the study of child abuse, and more generally, of familial violence, with clearly formulated theoretical propositions. Only in this way will we be able to test alternative explanations of child abuse and develop substantiated

conclusions that can be agreed upon, and then used for purposes of prevention, detection, and intervention. In this regard, the four theoretical models used in this study appear to be useful in understanding child abuse, and provide a good basis for approaching the problem.

Second, in relation to these theories, the psychopathology and cultural models, in particular, require more detailed analysis than was possible in this study. In the former case, in-depth case analyses of the parents' psychological functioning are required. As it may be impossible to obtain this information from existing child abuse files, it may be necessary to design an on-going study where the researcher has some control over what initial questions are asked of the parents, what examinations they must have, and so forth. This type of study also alleviates many of the other problems associated with secondary data analysis (ie. missing information, inadequate measurements, etc.). In the latter case, cross-cultural studies between societies which hold different attitudes toward child-rearing, are needed to clarify the effect that these attitudes have on the incidence of child abuse.

Third, the findings in this study are generalizable only to the physical abuse of children. While it is important to distinguish between the different types of abuse (ie.

neglect, sexual abuse, physical abuse, and so forth), it seems useful, at this point, to include all such types in future studies. In this way, the applicability of the theories used here, to all cases of child abuse, can be tested. In addition, the causal factors of the different types of abuse can be compared and some conclusions may be reached concerning the motivations of each. Such an analysis might also shed some light on the confusion surrounding the definition of child abuse. If indeed, there are essential differences between various types of abuse, the findings for each can be reported separately; thus eliminating the conflicting evidence which may result from a combined definition of child abuse.

The final recommendation concerns the sample. In this study, only known child abusers have been included, and therefore the theories have only been tested in terms of frequency and severity of abuse. As the relationship between the etiology of abuse and the degree of abuse is not known, we cannot guarantee that the same factors are relevant in both instances. Consequently, it seems essential to include some form of control group of non-abusers, in order to determine those variables that are important to the etiology of child abuse. It seems possible to gain the cooperation of a certain number of families to serve this purpose. As previously indicated, some researchers have

included control groups based on next-door neighbours, children in the hospital for reasons other than abuse, and so forth (Gelles, 1972; Elmer, 1977).

In conclusion, then, child abuse is a multi-faceted problem. Improvements can be made in this area, by implementing the recommendations that have been made on the basis of this, and other, studies. However, a clear understanding of the problem is central to eliminating child abuse, and toward this end, further empirically-based, scientific research is necessary.

FOOTNOTES

¹Sweden has made it illegal to use physical force against children, in an attempt to take a stand against this form of child-rearing.

²If, as Gil (1973) suggests, there is also a relationship between violence in the family and violence at the societal level, it may also be necessary to include the various types of societal violence in any solution to eliminate familial violence.

APPENDIX A:
THE CHILD ABUSE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

APPENDIX A

Study Case No. _____ (1-3)

Winnipeg Survey of Child Abuse

Interview Schedule

Instructions: A separate schedule is to be completed on each abused child. If more than one child in a family has been abused, the questions concerning the parents, PART A, should be completed on only one child. On the schedules of the remaining abused children simply write in the space provided below the identification number of the one child from whom the questions in PART A have been answered.

Identification Number: 5 6 7

(NOTE: Column 4 has been left on each card to denote the card number)

PART A: THE PARENTS

1. Is the identity of the perpetrator(s) in the current incident:

Neither known nor suspected	1 (8)
Suspected	2
Established by court procedures	3
Established by other than court procedures	4

If "neither known nor suspected" ("1" above); skip to question 3.

2. What is the relationship of the perpetrator(s) to abused child?

	Perpetrator #1	Perpetrator #2
Biological mother living with child	1 (9)	1 (10)
Adoptive mother living with child	2	2
Mother-substitute living with child	3	3
Biological father living with child	4	4
Adoptive father living with child	5	5
Father-substitute living with child	6	6

Other, specify

_____	7	7
Relationship Unknown	9	9

3. Have parent(s) and/or substitute(s) been perpetrators of abuse prior to incident?

	Mother or Substitute	Father or Substitute
None living in home	0 (11)	0 (12)
Yes	1	1
No	2	2
Unknown	9	9

- 4 Birthdate and age of parent(s) and/or parent substitute(s):

Mother or Substitute

If no such female living in family, circle 00

Birthdate: Month 13 14 Day 15 16 Year 17 18

Age (at last birthdate): 19 20 Years

If unknown, circle 99

Father or Substitute

If no such male living in family, circle 00

Birthdate: Month 21 22 Day 23 24 Year 25 26

Age (at last birthdate): 27 28 Years

If unknown, circle 99

5. What is the ethnic background of parent(s) and/or parent substitute(s)?

	Mother or Substitute	Father or Substitute
None living in family	00 (29-30)	00 (31-32)
British Isles (includes English, Irish, Scottish, and Welsh)	01	01
French	02	02
Austrian	03	03
Chinese	04	04
Czech	05	05
Finnish	06	06
German	07	07
Hungarian	08	08
Italian	09	09
Japanese	10	10
Jewish	11	11
Native Indian	12	12
Métis Indian	13	13
Negro	14	14
Netherlands	15	15
Polish	16	16
Russian	17	17
Scandinavian (includes Danish, Icelandic, Norwegian and Swedish)	18	18

Slovak	19	19
Ukrainian	20	20
West Indian	21	21
Other; please specify :	22	22

Unknown	99	99
---------	----	----

6. Religious affiliation of parent(s) and/or substitute(s):

	Mother or Substitute	Father or Substitute
None living in family	0 (33)	0 (34)
Roman Catholic	1	1
Christian, other than Roman Catholic	2	2
Jewish	3	3
Other; specify: _____	4	4
Unknown	9	9

7. Marital status of parent(s) and or substitute(s) prior to incident:

	Mother or Substitute	Father or Substitute
None living in family	0 (35)	0 (36)
Single, never married	1	1
Separated, divorced, deserted or widowed	2	2
Living with spouse, married	3	3

Living with spouse,

unmarried	4	4
-----------	---	---

Unknown	9	9
---------	---	---

8. Highest level of education completed by parent(s) and/or substitute(s) prior to abuse incident:

	Mother or Substitute	Father or Substitute
None living in family	0 (37)	0 (38)
Never attended school	1	1
Less than 9 grades	2	2
9 to under 12 grades	3	3
High school graduate	4	4
Some college or technical school	5	5
College graduate	6	6
Master's degree	7	7
Doctoral degree	8	8
Unknown	9	9

9. Employment status prior to incident:

	Mother or Substitute	Father or Substitute
None living in family	0 (39)	0 (40)
Unemployed, but available for work	1	1
Temporarily disabled	2	2
Permanently disabled	3	3
Retired	4	4

Student	5	5
Housekeeping only (own home)	6	6
Employed part-time (under 35 hours weekly)	7	7
Employed full-time (35 hours per week or over)	8	8
Unknown	9	9

10. Customary occupation, including self-employment:

Mother or Substitute

Specify and describe in detail: _____

(41-44).

If no such female living in family, circle 00

If unknown, circle 99

Father or Substitute

Specify and describe in detail: _____

(45-48).

If no such male living in family, circle 00

If unknown, circle 99

11. Total duration of full or part-time gainful employment
(including self-employment) of parent(s) and/or substi-
tute(s) during 12 months prior to incident:

	Mother or Substitute	Father or Substitute
None living in family	0 (49)	0 (50)

Unemployed entire 12 mos.	1	1
Less than 3 months	2	2
3 to under 6 months	3	3
Student	4	4
Housekeeping only (own home)	5	5
6 to under 9 months	6	6
9 to under 12 months	7	7
Employed entire 12 months	8	8
Unknown	9	9

12. a) Do the parents have any noticeable deviations from the following areas of normal functioning? (Circle all that apply):

	Mother or Substitute	Father or Substitute
None living in family	0 (51-56)	0 (57-62)
Intellectual	1	1
Emotional or Psychological	2	2
Social or Behavioral	3	3
None of the above deviations	4	4
No assessment	9	9
Please specify the deviation(s)	<hr/>	

12. b) Have these been verified medically?

Mother Yes 1 No 2 Unknown 9 (63)

Father Yes 1 No 2 Unknown 9 (64)

c) Total number of deviations 65 Mother 66 Father

13. Have parents/substitutes had any of the following experiences prior to abuse incident? (Circle all that apply):

	Mother or Substitute	Father or Substitute
None living in family	0 (67-72)	0 (73-78)
Incarceration in mental institution	1	1
Psychiatric treatment, in- patient service	2	2
Psychiatric treatment, out- patient service	3	3
None of the above	4	4
Unknown	9	9
Total number of experiences:	<u>79</u> Mother or Substitute	<u>80</u> Father or Substitute

14. Have the parents any physical disabilities or health problems?

	Mother or Substitute	Father or Substitute
None living in family	0 (2/5)	0 (6)
Yes	1	1
No	2	2
Unknown	9	9
Please specify:	<hr/>	

If "no" above, skip to question 16.

15. Have these deviations been verified medically?

	Mother or Substitute	Father or Substitute
None living in family	0 (7)	0 (8)
Yes	1	1
No	2	2

16. Have parent(s) and/or substitute(s) been victims of abuse and/or neglect as children?

	Yes	No	Unknown
Mother or Substitute	1	2	9 (9)

If yes, please specify: _____
 _____ (10)

If no such female living in family, circle 0

	Yes	No	Unknown
Father or Substitute	1	2	9 (11)

If yes, please specify: _____
 _____ (12)

If no such male living in home, circle 0

17. Do parent(s) or substitute(s) have any marital difficulties (as assessed during your contact with parents)?

Yes	1	(13)
No	2	
Unknown	9	

If yes, please specify: _____

18. Have parent(s) reported being a witness to any violence in their family of orientation? (ie. other children abused, conjugal violence)?

	Mother	Father
None in home	0	0
Yes	1 (14)	1 (15)
No	2	2
Unknown	9	9

19. Gross income for the family for the year in which incident occurred:

Under 4,000	01	(16-17)
4,000 to 5,999	02	
6,000 to 7,999	03	
8,000 to 9,999	04	
10,000 to 11,999	05	
12,000 to 13,999	06	
14,000 to 15,999	07	
16,000 to 17,999	08	
18,000 to 19,999	09	
20,000 to 21,999	10	
22,000 to 23,999	11	
24,000 to 25,999	12	
26,000 to 27,999	13	
28,000 to 29,999	14	
30,000 to 31,999	15	
32,000 to 33,999	16	

34,000 to 35,999	17
36,000 to 37,999	18
38,000 to 39,999	19
40,000 to over	20
Unknown	21

20. Sources of this income (Circle all that apply):

Employment of family members	01	(18-27)
Other members of household	02	
Relatives outside household	03	
Public welfare	04	
Other public assistance	05	
Social Security	06	
Canada Pension Allowance	07	
Unemployment compensation	08	
Other; specify: _____	09	
Unknown	99	

21. Number of persons regularly living in home prior to abuse incident:

Specify Number: 28 29

22. Identity of persons regularly living in home prior to incident: (Circle all that apply).

Mother or mother-substitute	1	(30-35)
Father or father-substitute	2	
Other family members 18 years of age or older	3	
Other family members under 18 years of age	4	

Non-family members 18 or over 5

Non-family members under 18	6
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PART B: CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING ABUSE INCIDENT

23. Types of injuries sustained in present incident:

(Circle all that apply):

None	01	(36-51)
------	----	---------

Bruises, Welts 02

Sprains, dislocations 03

Malnutrition 04

Freezing 05

Burns, scalding 06

Abrasions, contusions,

lacerations 07

Wounds, cuts, punctures 08

Internal injuries 09

Dismemberment	10
---------------	----

Bone fracture(s) other than

skull	11
-------	----

Skull fracture	12
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Subdural hemorrhage or

hematoma 13

Brain damage 14

Other, specify: 15

Unknown 99

Specify total number of injuries:

52

53

24. Have these injuries been verified medically?

Yes	1	(54)
No	2	
Unknown	9	

25. By what manner were these injuries inflicted?

(Circle all that apply):

Beating with hands	01	(55-67)
Beating with instruments	02	
Kicking	03	
Strangling or suffocating	04	
Drowning	05	
Shooting	06	
Stabbing or slashing	07	
Burning or scalding	08	
Poisoning	09	
Deliberate neglect or exposure	10	
Locking in or tying	11	
Other; specify: _____	12	
Unknown	99	

26. Seriousness of these injuries?

Not serious	1	(68)
Serious, no permanent damage	2	
Serious, permanent damage	3	
Fatal	4	
Unknown	9	

27 Has the degree of seriousness been verified medically?

Yes	1
No	2
Unknown	9

28. Have other methods of discipline been used on the child, according to the parents' dialogue. (Circle all that apply):

Discussion	1	(70-75)
Compromise	2	
Restriction of privileges	3	
Threats	4	
Other; please specify: _____	5	
Unknown	9	

Specify total number used: 76

29. Do the parents appear to be aware of alternative child-rearing techniques? (Circle all that apply):

Discussion	1	(3/5 - 10)
Compromise	2	
Restriction of privileges	3	
Threats	4	
Other; please specify: _____	5	
Unknown	9	

Specify total number of known methods: 11

30. Social contacts of family during month prior to abuse incident: (Circle all that apply):

Services in office or client's

home (excluding homemaker service) 1 (12-18)

Homemaker service 2

Contacts with relatives 3

Contacts with friends 4

Contacts with neighbours 5

Involvement with neighbourhood

clubs and/or organizations 6

Other; specify: _____ 7

Unknown 9

Specify total number of contact sources: _____(19)

- A. According to the parent(s)' own statements, were the following elements present, absent, or unknown:

<u>ELEMENT</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>UNKNOWN</u>
31. Immediate or delayed response by perpetrator to specific or suspected act(s) of child	1	2	9 (20)
32. Perpetrator repeating own parents' methods of child-rearing	1	2	9 (21)
33. Inadequately controlled anger of perpetrator (consider psychiatric evaluation as well).	1	2	9 (22)

	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>UNKNOWN</u>
34. Abuse developing out of quarrel between parents and/or parent- substitutes	1	2	9 (23)
35. Child's failure to provide a re- warding relationship for parent	1	2	9 (24)
36. Self-definition of perpetrator as stern, authoritative disciplinarian	1	2	9 (25)
37. Adherence to a strict, religious upbringing	1	2	9 (26)
38. Surprise and resentment of perpe- trator for being questioned about child-rearing methods. (ie. belief of parental "ownership")	1	2	9 (27)
39. Feelings of social isolation (ie. no one to turn to for help)	1	2	9 (28)

B. According to your (ie. social worker's) assessment of the parent and of the abuse incident, were any of the following elements involved in this incident:

<u>ELEMENT</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>UNKNOWN</u>
40. Resentment, rejection of child by perpetrator due to unwanted preg- nancy, illegitimate birth, or other problem pregnancy	1	2	9 (29)

	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>UNKNOWN</u>
41. Persistent health or emotional atypicality of child leading to abuse	1	2	9 (30)
42. Evidence of perpetrator's own abuse as a child	1	2	9 (31)
43. The parent's belief in the necessity of physical punishment	1	2	9 (32)
44. Resentment, rejection, etc. by perpetrator of child for no apparent reason	1	2	9 (33)
45. Mounting stress on perpetrator due to life circumstances	1	2	9 (34)
46. Sexual abuse also involved	1	2	9 (35)
47. Parent(s)' emphasis on the child's obedience	1	2	9 (36)

C. According to either the medical or psychiatric evaluations, were any of the following items involved in the abuse incident?

<u>ELEMENT</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>UNKNOWN</u>
48. "Battered Baby Syndrome" (involving repeated battering, multiple fractures in various stages of healing, emotional apathy regarding child's injuries, etc.)	1	2	9 (37)

	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>UNKNOWN</u>
49. Any psychological or emotional deviation of perpetrator	1	2	9 (38)
50. Repeated abuse of child by perpetrator. (consider C.A.S. files as well)	1	2	9 (39)
51. Unrealistic and excessive demands of child by perpetrator (either in the social worker's assessment or the psychiatrist's)	1	2	9 (40)

D. According to any available records you have concerning the abuse incident (ie. police, social worker, hospital, parent), were any of the following items involved?

<u>ELEMENT</u>	<u>PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT</u>	<u>UNKNOWN</u>
52. Alcoholic intoxication of perpetrator	1	2	9 (41)
53. Drug abuse of perpetrator	1	2	9 (42)
54. Ignorance of child's basic developmental capacities (ie. first steps, first words, toilet training)	1	2	9 (43)
55. What is the specific relationship to abused child of parent(s) and/or parent-substitute(s) with whom this child has been regularly living prior to incident?			

	Mother or Substitute	Father or Substitute
None living in family	0 (44)	0 (45)

Natural parent	1	1
Adoptive parent	2	2
Step-parent (legal or non-legal)	3	3
Foster parent	4	4
Other relative	5	5
Not related	6	6
Relationship unknown	9	9

56. Have other children in the family (other than child described in this schedule) previously been involved in incidents of abuse?

	Yes	No	Does not Apply	Unknown
As victim	1	2	8	9 (46)
As perpetrator	1	2	8	9 (47)

57. Have other children in the family (other than child described in the schedule) been abused in the current incident?

1 2 8 9 (48)

58. Is there anything that you (ie. social worker) wish to add in connection with the circumstances surrounding the abuse:

PART C: THE CHILD

59. Birthdate and Age:

Birthdate: Month 49 50 Day 51 52 Year 53 54

Unknown 99

Age (at time of incident): 55 56 Yrs. and 57 58 Mos.

Unknown 99

60. Sex:

Male 1

Female 2

Unknown 9

61. Ethnic background of child?

British Isles (includes English, Irish,

Scottish, and Welsh) 01 (60-61)

French 02

Austrian 03

Chinese 04

Czech 05

Finnish 06

German 07

Hungarian 08

Italian 09

Japanese 10

Jewish 11

Native Indian 12

Métis Indian 13

Negro 14

Netherlands 15

Polish 16

Russian	17
Scandinavian (includes Danish, Icelandic, Norwegian and Swedish)	18
Slovak	19
Ukrainian	20
West Indian	21
Other; please specify: _____	22
Unknown	99

62. Religious background:

Roman Catholic	1 (62)
Christian, other than Roman Catholic	2
Jewish	3
Other; specify: _____	4
Unknown	9

63. School and Employment Status Prior to Incident?

Under school age	01 (63-64)
Of school age, never attended school	02
Grade appropriate for age	03
Grade below age level, or in class for retarded	04
Advanced grade placement	05
Did not complete high school, unemployed	06

Did not complete high school,
employed 07
Completed high school, unemployed 08
Completed high school, employed 09
Completed high school, entered
college 10
Other; specify: _____ 11
Unknown 99

64. Prior to the abuse incident, did the child have any
health and/or emotional problems? (Circle all that apply):

Physical 1 (65-68)
Emotional 2
Intellectual 3
Social Behavioral 4

If none of the above, circle 0

If unknown, circle 9

Specify total number of problems: _____
69

Briefly describe problems: _____

65. Had the child had any of the following experiences prior
to abuse incident: (Circle all that apply):

Hospitalization for physical illness 1 (70-77)
Hospitalization for mental illness 2
Psychiatric counselling 3

Juvenile court (except traffic)	4
Correctional institution	5
Foster family care	6
Child care institution	7
Other; please specify: _____	8

If none of the above, circle 0

Specify total number of above experiences: 78

66. Has child been involved in incidents of abuse prior to this incident?

Yes	1	(79)
No	2	
Unknown	9	

NOTE: For the purposes of the multiple regression analysis, a number of the value labels, involving the codes "1" for yes and "2" for no, had to be recoded to be consistent with the hypothesized relationships.

APPENDIX B :
INDEX CONSTRUCTION

INDEX CONSTRUCTION

1. Severity

Three indicators were used to compute the composite index score, severity: type of injury, total number of injuries, and seriousness of injuries according to medical reports. The type of injury was rated according to severity with the assistance of a scale used by the Children's Aid Society. Bruises, welts; sprains, dislocations; malnutrition; and no injuries were given a score of 1. Freezing; burns, scalding; abrasions, contusions, lacerations; wounds, cuts, punctures; and internal injuries were given a score of 2. The remaining injuries were given a score of 3. The seriousness of the injuries for the particular child was already rated according to not serious (1); serious - no permanent damage (2); and serious - permanent damage (3). There were no fatalities in this sample. As only two cases had more than three injuries, the exact number of injuries was used for the final indicator.

The final range of scores was from 2 to 11. Scores 2 and 3 were combined for the first category "mild"; scores 4 and 5 comprised the category "medium"; scores 6 and 7 comprised "serious"; and scores 8 through 11, "severe".

2. The Psychological Index ("Psypathy")

The psychological index was simply constructed by com-

binning the presence (or absence) of psychological deviance with the perpetrator's total number of experiences with psychiatric counselling (ie. question 13, see Appendix A). The presence of psychological deviance was given a score of two (absence of such deviance equalled 0). The range of scores was from 0 to 5.

3. Socioeconomic Index

The three indicators used to compute the socioeconomic index were the family's total income and the perpetrator's educational level and occupational status. Each of these items were given equal weight. In the initial analysis, each occupation was given a score based on Blishen's Socioeconomic Index. These scores were then divided into six class intervals, on his recommendation. For the purposes of the index, the lowest category was given a score of 1; the highest a score of 6. As the position of "housewife" in one's own home (there were no "househusbands" in this sample) was not included in Blishen's Occupational Ranking, it became problematic to include these perpetrators in the sample. Therefore, the decision was made to use the husband's occupational status for any family where the abuser was a "housewife". The educational level of the perpetrator was initially divided into eight categories, ranging from "no school" (1) to "doctoral degree" (8). As the highest score for any abuser in this sample was "college graduate" (6), the last

three categories, "college graduate", "master's degree", and "doctoral degree" were collapsed into one category and given the rank of 6. Finally, total family income was initially divided into 20 class intervals, ranging from "under \$4,000" to \$40,000 and over" (see interview schedule, Appendix A). These categories were collapsed into six, on the basis of the clusters which were found in the distribution of this variable. These categories were then analyzed to ensure that logically, they seemed reasonable. The resulting class intervals were: under \$4,000 to 7,999 (1); \$8,000 to 13,999 (2); \$14,000 to 19,999 (3); \$20,000 to 25,999 (4); \$26,000 to 31,999 (5); \$32,000 and over (6). The three scores were then added together.

The final range of scores was from 3 to 18. Scores 3 through 5 were combined for the category "lower socioeconomic status"; scores 6 and 7 were combined for "working class"; scores 8 through 10 were combined for "lower-middle"; scores 11 through 14 for "upper-middle"; and scores 15 through 18 were combined for "upper class". These categories were also based on clusters which were present in the distribution, and logical deduction.

4. Income

For the purposes of the multiple regression analysis, the various sources of income (see question #20, Appendix A) were combined into an index of "income". Three categories were formulated: no public assistance (1); partial public

assistance (2); and total public assistance (3). There was also an unknown category (9). In the first category, sources of income included only employment of family members, other members of household, social security, or Canada Pension Allowance. In the second category, at least one of the above sources of income had to be present, in conjunction with at least one of the remaining sources: relatives outside household, public welfare, other public assistance, unemployment compensation, and other (ie. loans). While funds from members outside the household are not strictly public assistance, for the purposes of this analysis, they are viewed as a form of assistance. The final category includes only the following sources of income: relatives outside household, public welfare, other public assistance, unemployment compensation, and other sources.

5. People

For the purposes of the multiple regression analysis, a composite index score of persons living in the household was formulated, on the basis of question 22 (see Appendix A). Four categories were constructed: no other persons besides mother, father and abused child (1); other children present (2); other family members 18 years and over present (3); and other non-family members 18 years and older present (4).

There is suppose to be an inverse relationship between

other people present in the home and degree of abuse. The categories are arranged in terms of the company in which they would be increasingly less likely to abuse their children.

APPENDIX C:
DESCRIPTIVE TABLES PERTAINING TO
CHAPTER 5

TABLE 21. THE PERCENTAGE WHO BELIEVE IN THE NECESSITY OF
PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT, ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY
AND SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

Socioeconomic Status	Percentage Who Believe		
	Perpetrator's Ethnicity		
	Euro-Canadian	Indian	Other Ethnicities
Lower Class	73.9 (23)	76.9 (13)	66.7 (3)
Working Class	48.1 (27)	60.0 (5)	75.0 (4)
Lower-Middle Class	42.1 (19)	100.0 (3)	100.0 (1)
Upper-Middle Class	40.0 (5)	100.0 (1)	100.0 (1)
Upper Class	100.0 (2)	- (0)	100.0 (1)

TABLE 23. THE DISTRIBUTION OF FATHER'S EMPLOYMENT DURATION ACCORDING TO PARENT'S ETHNICITY

Father's Employment Duration	Parent's Ethnicity		
	Euro-Canadian	Indian	Other Ethnicities
None in home	11.8	26.1	0.0
Employed all 12 mos.	50.0	21.7	45.5
Employed 9 to under 12	5.3	8.7	0.0
Employed 6 to under 9	10.5	8.7	36.4
Employed 3 to under 6	14.5	4.3	9.1
Employed under 3 mos.	2.6	13.0	9.1
Unemployed all 12 mos.	5.3	17.4	0.0
	100.0	100.0	100.0
	(N=76)	(N=23)	(N=11)
Missing Cases 5			

TABLE 24. SOURCE OF INCOME ACCORDING TO PERPETRATOR'S ETHNICITY

Income Source	Perpetrator's Ethnicity			
	All Perpetrators	Euro-Canadian	Indian	Other Ethnicities
No public assistance	40.9	46.1	17.4	45.5
Part public assistance	40.0	39.5	39.1	54.5
Complete public assistance	19.1	14.5	43.5	0.0
	100.0	100.6	100.0	100.0
	(N=110)	(N=76)	(N=23)	(N=11)
Missing Cases 5				

TABLE 25. THE DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL CONTACTS OF FAMILY
IN MONTH PRIOR TO ABUSE

Number of Contacts	Frequency		
	Relative Frequency	Adjusted Frequency	Cum. Frequency
None	0.9	0.9	0.9
1	17.4	17.7	18.6
2	31.3	31.9	50.4
3	27.0	27.4	77.9
4	17.4	17.7	95.6
5	3.5	3.5	99.1
6	0.9	0.9	100.0
Unknown	1.7	Missing	
	100.0 (N=115)	100.0 (N=113)	
Mean 2.575	Std. Error 0.109		
	Std. Dev. 1.156		

TABLE 26. THE DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS' TOTAL AWARENESS OF
ALTERNATIVE CHILD-REARING METHODS (EXCLUDING
PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT)

Number of Methods Known	Frequency		
	Relative Frequency	Adjusted Frequency	Cum. Frequency
None	17.4	17.7	17.7
1	7.0	7.1	24.8
2	6.1	6.2	31.0
3	7.8	8.0	38.9
4	53.0	54.0	92.9
5 or more	7.0	7.1	100.0
Unknown	1.7	Missing	
	100.0 (N=115)	100.0 (N=113)	
Mean 2.947	Std. Error 0.157		
	Std. Dev. 1.668		

TABLE 27. THE DISTRIBUTION OF PARENTS' TOTAL USE OF
ALTERNATIVE CHILD-REARING METHODS (EX-
CLUDING PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT)

Number of Methods Used	Frequency		
	Relative Frequency	Adjusted Frequency	Cum. Frequency
None	34.8	35.7	35.7
1	13.9	14.3	50.0
2	12.2	12.5	62.5
3	13.9	14.3	76.8
4	20.0	20.5	97.3
5 or more	2.6	2.7	100.0
Unknown	2.6	Missing	
	100.0 (N=115)	100.0 (N=112)	
Mean 1.777	Std. Error 0.157		
	Std. Dev. 1.659		

TABLE 28. SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS ACCORDING TO PARENT'S
ETHNICITY

Socioeconomic Status	Ethnicity		
	Euro- Canadian	Indian	Other Ethnicities
Lower class	30.3	56.5	27.3
Working class	35.5	26.1	45.5
Lower-middle class	25.0	13.0	9.1
Upper-middle class	6.6	4.3	9.1
Upper class	2.6	0.0	9.1
	100.0 (N=76)	99.9 (N=23)	100.0 (N=11)
Missing Cases 5			

TABLE 29. THE DISTRIBUTION OF FATHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS
ACCORDING TO PARENT'S ETHNICITY (GROUPED DATA)

Father-Child Relationship	Parent's Ethnicity		
	Euro- Canadian	Indian	Other Ethnicities
None in home	13.2	26.1	9.1
Natural parent	48.7	43.5	81.8
Adoptive parent	9.2	0.0	9.1
Step-parent	28.9	26.1	0.0
No relation	0.0	4.3	0.0
	100.0	100.0	100.0
	(N=76)	(N=23)	(N=11)
Missing Cases 5			

TABLE 30. THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN ACCORDING TO PARENTS'
ETHNICITY

Number of Children	Parent's Ethnicity		
	Euro- Canadian	Indian	Other Ethnicities
1	22.4	4.3	36.4
2	36.8	21.7	18.2
3	26.3	39.1	18.2
4	9.2	17.4	27.3
5	3.9	4.3	0.0
7	1.3	13.0	0.0
	99.9	99.8	100.0
	(N=76)	(N=23)	(N=11)
Missing Cases 5			

TABLE 31. THE DISTRIBUTION OF FATHER-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS ACCORDING TO PARENT'S ETHNICITY (UNGROUPED DATA)

Father-Child Relationship	British Isles	French	German	Jewish	Indian	Negro
None in home	8.7	22.2	25.0	33.3	26.1	0.0
Natural parent	50.0	33.3	37.5	66.7	43.5	0.0
Adoptive parent	8.7	11.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0
Step-parent	32.6	33.3	37.5	0.0	26.1	0.0
No relation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.3	0.0
	100.0 (N=46)	99.9 (N=9)	100.0 (N=8)	100.0 (N=3)	100.0 (N=23)	100.0 (N=1)

Father-Child Relationship	Nether-lands	Polish	Slovak	Ukrainian	West Indian	Other
None in home	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	11.1
Natural parent	100.0	0.0	0.0	83.3	100.0	88.9
Adoptive parent	0.0	50.0	0.0	16.7	0.0	0.0
Step-parent	0.0	50.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
No relation	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	100.0 (N=1)	100.0 (N=2)	100.0 (N=1)	100.0 (N=6)	100.0 (N=1)	100.0 (N=9)

Missing Cases 5

TABLE 32. THE DISTRIBUTION OF MOTHER'S MARITAL STATUS ACCORDING TO PARENT'S ETHNICITY (UNGROUPEO DATA)

Mother's Marital Status	Parent's Ethnicity						
	British Isles	French	German	Jewish	Indian	Negro	
None in home	4.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Single, never married	0.0	11.1	0.0	0.0	13.0	0.0	
Separated, divorced, deserted	8.7	11.1	25.0	33.3	21.7	0.0	
Living with spouse, married	43.5	55.6	50.0	0.0	34.8	100.0	
Living with spouse, unmarried	43.5	22.2	25.0	66.7	30.4	0.0	
	100.0 (N=46)	100.0 (N=9)	100.0 (N=8)	100.0 (N=3)	100.0 (N=23)	100.0 (N=1)	

Mother's Marital Status	Nether-lands					
	Polish	Slovak	Unkrainian	West Indian	Other	
None in home	0.0	0.0	16.7	0.0	0.0	
Single, never married	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	
Separated, divorced, deserted	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	11.1	
Living with spouse, married	100.0	0.0	66.7	100.0	88.9	
Living with spouse, unmarried	0.0	0.0	16.7	0.0	0.0	
	100.0 (N=1)	100.0 (N=1)	100.1 (N=6)	100.0 (N=1)	100.0 (N=9)	

Missing Cases 5

TABLE 33. THE DISTRIBUTION OF MOTHER'S MARITAL STATUS
ACCORDING TO PARENT'S ETHNICITY (GROUPED DATA)

Mother's Marital Status	Parent's Ethnicity		
	Euro- Canadian	Indian	Other Ethnicities
None in home	3.9	0.0	0.0
Single, never married	1.3	13.0	0.0
Separated, divorced, deserted	11.8	21.7	9.1
Live with spouse, married	47.4	34.8	90.9
Live with spouse, unmarried	35.5	30.4	0.0
	99.9 (N=76)	99.9 (N=23)	100.0 (N=11)
Missing Cases 5			

TABLE 34. THE DISTRIBUTION OF SEVERITY OF CASES ACCORDING
TO THE CHILD'S GENDER

Severity	Child's Gender	
	Male	Female
Mild	46.8	40.6
Medium	33.9	25.0
Serious	14.5	31.3
Severe	4.8	3.1
	100.0 (N=62)	100.0 (N=64)

TABLE 35. THE DISTRIBUTION OF FREQUENCY OF CASES
ACCORDING TO THE CHILD'S GENDER

Frequency	Child's Gender	
	Male	Female
Only Once	10.0	18.0
Sometimes	16.7	13.1
Repeated Abuse	<u>73.3</u>	<u>68.9</u>
	100.0 (N=60)	100.0 (N=61)
Missing Cases	(2)	(3)

APPENDIX D :
DESCRIPTIVE DATA CONCERNING CIRCUMSTANCES
OF ABUSE INCIDENTS

Abuse Incidents

Number of Children Involved. A total of 126 abused children were involved in the study sample. The proportion of incidents involving one or more children is shown in Table 36. The vast majority of abuse incidents involved only one child.

TABLE 36. PROPORTION OF INCIDENTS INVOLVING ONE OR MORE CHILDREN

<u>Number of Children Per Incident</u>	<u>Proportion of Child Incidents</u>
1	90.4
2	7.8
3	1.7
Total	99.9 (N=115)

Type of Injuries. The types of injuries sustained by the children in this sample are shown in Table 37. Of these children, 72.2 percent received one type of injury; 21.4 sustained two types; 3.2 percent received three; and 1.6 percent four or more. The remaining 1.6 percent sustained no apparent physical injuries. The reliability of the diagnoses is quite good, as the injuries have been medically verified in 79.4 percent of the cases.

The injuries were considered "not serious" (according to the medical evaluations) for exactly half of the children.

TABLE 37. TYPES OF INJURIES SUSTAINED BY CHILDREN
IN CURRENT ABUSE INCIDENT

Injury	Percent of Children ^a
Bruises, welts	91.3
Abrasions, contusions, lacerations	7.1
Wounds, cuts, punctures	3.2
Freezing, exposure	0.8
Burns, scalding	4.8
Bone fractures (excluding skull)	12.7
Skull fracture	3.2
Subdural hemorrhage or hematoma	1.6
Brain damage	1.6
Other injuries	6.3
No apparent injuries	1.6

^aThe percentages in this table do not add up to 100 because several children sustained more than one injury. N=126

They were rated "serious - no permanent damage expected" in 44.4 percent of the cases, and "serious - permanent damage" in 5.6 percent. The degree of seriousness was medically verified in 80.2 percent of the cases, although it is important to remember that these ratings consider only the physical aspects of the injury. Little is known about the emotional damage resulting from the abuse. Nevertheless, it is noteworthy that of these children, 94.4 percent were expected to have no lasting physical injury, and 50 percent were not seriously injured at all. Moreover, there were no fatalities in this sample, although the Children's Aid Society has handled such cases. Although there is no wish to

minimize the effects of abuse on children, these findings, like Gil's in 1970, question the validity of some earlier conclusions which hold that physical abuse is a major cause of maiming and death of children.

In terms of the frequency of victimization the findings show that over 68 percent of the children were abused repeatedly; 14.3 percent were abused sporadically; and in 13.5 percent of the cases, the incident was believed to be the first. Information on this factor is missing for 4.0 percent of the children. Several associational trends were revealed concerning the severity (ie. index score) and frequency of the abuse and the social demographic data. The relationship between severity of injury and age of child has previously been mentioned. A greater percentage of children under 3 years had serious injuries. In addition, it appears that a larger percentage of the cases involving children under 3 years were first offences. The injury was presumed to be the first for 36.4 percent of children under 3 years (and the majority of these cases were infants, under 1 year), as compared to 9.1 percent of children three years and over. These findings seem reasonable in that very young children may be injured and require medical attention after only one abuse incident while older children may be able to endure several such incidents before coming to the attention of the authorities. The data concerning the victim's sex indicate

that while girls were abused more severely than boys, there was very little difference in terms of frequency. Almost 35 percent of the girls, compared to 19.3 percent of the boys, received serious or severe injuries; and 90.0 percent of the boys, compared to 82.0 percent of the girls, had been abused prior to this incident (see Tables 34 and 35, Appendix C).

The relationship between age of abuser and severity of abuse has already been discussed. Parents and other perpetrators age 25 and under were more likely than older parents to inflict serious injuries. However, they were also likely to abuse children less frequently; 34.6 percent of parents age 25 and under had abused only once, compared to 9.6 percent of parents over 25 years. As previously noted, there is some evidence to suggest that males were slightly more severe and repetitive in their abuse; and finally, there appears to be no clear relationship between the perpetrator's ethnicity and frequency and severity of abuse.

The manner in which the injuries were inflicted is shown in Table 38. In this sample, the perpetrators were most likely to use their hands or instruments.

TABLE 38. MANNER BY WHICH INJURIES WERE INFLICTED

Manner of Infliction	Percent ^a
Beating with hands	50.0
Beating with instruments	53.2
Kicking	2.4
Strangling or suffocating	1.6
Stabbing or slashing	0.8
Burning or scalding	5.6
Deliberate neglect or exposure	0.8
Other manner	6.3
Manner unknown	0.8

^aPercentages do not add up to 100 because several children were abused in more than one way. N = 126

APPENDIX E :
GLOSSARY OF VARIABLE LABELS

GLOSSARY

- Awaretot. Parents' total awareness of discipline.
- Chtotdv. Child's total deviations.
- Chtotexp. Child's total experiences.
- Circum 1. Response to act of child.
- Circum 2. Perpetrator repeating own parents' methods.
- Circum 3. Inadequately controlled anger on part of perpetrator.
- Circum 4. Abuse resulting from fight between parents.
- Circum 5. Child failed to provide parent with a rewarding relationship.
- Circum 6. Self-defined authoritative disciplinarian.
- Circum 7. Religious beliefs involved in abuse.
- Circum 8. Parent surprised at being questioned about child-rearing methods.
- Circum 9. Feelings of social isolation.
- Circum 10. Resent child due to problem pregnancy.
- Circum 11. Health or emotional problem of child.
- Circum 12. Evidence of parents abuse as child in this incident.
- Circum 13. Parents' belief in need of physical punishment.
- Circum 14. Resent child for no apparent reason.
- Circum 15. Mounting stress involved in abuse.
- Circum 16. Sexual abuse involved.
- Circum 17. Parent emphasized child's obedience.
- Circum 18. Battered Child Syndrome.

- Circum 19. Emotional or psychological deviance of parent involved in abuse.
- Circum 21. Parent has unrealistic demands of child.
- Circum 22. Alcoholic intoxication of perpetrator present in abuse.
- Circum 23. Drug abuse on part of perpetrator involved in abuse incident.
- Circum 24. Parent ignorant of child's capabilities.
- Contatot. Parents' total number of contacts.
- Family of Origin. The parent's own family where he/she was born.
- Income. Reliance on public assistance.
- Maridiff. Marital problems prior to abuse.
- Othchvic. Other children have been abused previously.
- Pempldur. Perpetrator's employment duration.
- Pempls. Perpetrator's employment status.
- People. Any other people living in home.
- PPhysdv. Perpetrator's physical deviations.
- Psypathy. Perpetrator's Index Score based on psychiatric evaluation at time of abuse and previous psychiatric counselling.
- Pvictim. Perpetrator's history of abuse and/or rejection as a child.
- Pwitvio. Has perpetrator witnessed any other forms of violence in home.
- Ses. Socioeconomic index based on gross income, educational level, and occupational ranking.
- Usetotal. Total number of alternative child-rearing methods used.

APPENDIX F :
CORRELATION MATRIX

TABLE 39. CORRELATION MATRIX

Page 1 out of 4

	CIRCUM2	OTHCHVIC	AWARETOT	CIRCUM24	CIRCUM15	SES	CIRCUM3	CIRCUM22	MARIDIFF
PSYPATHY	-0.15722	0.03652	0.10442	0.06306	0.05809	-0.02279	-0.16536	-0.01214	-0.04578
CIRCUM19	-0.00829	0.06414	-0.14696	-0.04569	0.19240	-0.03059	0.08542	0.07034	0.09091
CIRCUM14	0.03272	0.21402	0.04114	0.23581	-0.13160	0.15497	0.12597	0.10516	-0.08979
CIRCUM18	0.22071	-0.24487	-0.14631	0.21246	0.02773	-0.06515	0.09141	0.05208	0.27337
CIRCUM5	-0.00486	-0.09034	0.11505	0.11649	0.00100	-0.05732	-0.00403	-0.14910	-0.11517
CIRCUM21	0.01492	-0.01255	0.08394	0.27798	-0.15479	0.06147	0.03341	0.12194	-0.04816
CIRCUM12	0.34189	0.20516	-0.07076	0.10409	0.04479	-0.11196	-0.10938	0.21362	0.17688
PWICTIM	0.17110	0.14870	-0.15191	0.09972	0.11290	-0.24277	-0.08864	0.10933	0.03114
PWITVIO	0.02727	0.04247	-0.19343	0.21055	0.04913	-0.30167	-0.16745	0.09151	0.01616
CIRCUM2	1.00000	0.19269	0.08764	-0.06485	-0.01005	0.09161	0.17609	0.14790	0.19158
OTHCHVIC	0.19269	1.00000	-0.19967	0.15464	-0.04225	-0.06902	-0.09686	0.15799	0.10903
AWARETOT	0.08764	-0.19967	1.00000	-0.21057	-0.14521	0.18001	0.09898	-0.08321	-0.07775
CIRCUM24	-0.06485	0.15464	-0.21057	1.00000	0.10768	-0.27182	0.03688	0.14842	0.07700
CIRCUM15	-0.01005	-0.04225	0.14521	0.10768	1.00000	-0.20956	0.13025	0.08883	0.05034
SES	0.09161	-0.06902	0.18001	0.10768	-0.20956	1.00000	0.03274	-0.25071	0.02693
CIRCUM3	0.17609	-0.09686	0.09898	0.03688	0.13025	0.03274	1.00000	0.19159	-0.10462
CIRCUM22	0.14790	0.15799	-0.08321	0.14842	0.08883	-0.25071	0.19159	1.00000	0.27620
MARIDIFF	0.19158	0.10903	-0.07775	0.07700	0.05034	0.02693	-0.10462	0.27620	1.00000
CIRCUM4	-0.12121	0.10325	-0.08105	0.02031	0.15781	-0.01425	0.02594	0.29200	0.29533
CIRCUM10	-0.08974	-0.09011	-0.17249	0.00923	0.06159	-0.05083	0.07742	0.02645	0.03810
PEMPLS	0.07668	0.05688	-0.03946	-0.04745	-0.11178	0.37246	-0.10706	0.00792	0.34044
PEMPLDUR	0.03331	0.01537	0.03422	0.07850	-0.15196	0.51549	-0.19037	-0.08858	0.23832
INCOME	0.06478	-0.05356	0.06527	0.07724	0.17697	-0.49944	0.05693	0.06947	-0.13940
CONATOT	0.05913	0.09171	0.21094	0.06949	-0.14355	-0.18237	-0.00478	0.1641	0.09307
CIRCUM9	-0.17417	0.00994	-0.05042	0.15844	0.36096	-0.12030	-0.09586	0.04300	-0.07853
PEOPLE	0.04512	-0.07944	0.05327	0.02771	0.07392	0.03668	0.05344	0.03397	0.01498
CIRCUM11	-0.01030	-0.30360	0.12546	-0.06059	0.03552	0.10474	-0.07193	-0.09925	-0.23166
CHTOTDV	0.01379	-0.13325	0.22802	0.00580	-0.05864	-0.00353	-0.13586	-0.06369	-0.11222
CHTOTEXP	0.00931	0.08307	0.19478	0.05347	-0.08130	-0.06535	0.00470	0.04725	-0.18989
CIRCUM13	0.32733	0.28431	0.04839	0.13760	-0.20098	-0.01284	0.08086	0.18656	0.24273
USETOTAL	0.08311	-0.29290	0.60039	-0.24688	-0.12184	0.20633	0.07324	-0.03918	-0.16414
CIRCUM1	0.20292	0.00027	0.20976	0.07420	-0.05920	0.00845	0.06393	0.01765	-0.21353
CIRCUM6	0.28581	0.25708	0.09480	0.14377	-0.19890	0.10505	0.22772	0.22505	0.21386
CIRCUM17	0.14380	0.06807	0.17527	0.02606	-0.10864	0.04229	0.05357	-0.04769	-0.07636
CIRCUM8	0.19789	0.24266	-0.16771	0.08758	-0.08665	0.10230	0.00445	0.09260	0.10524
FREQUENC	0.26593	0.26103	0.06536	0.03266	-0.24432	0.01275	-0.01318	0.18415	0.00477
SEVERITY	-0.04048	-0.03156	-0.28710	0.23350	0.15676	-0.07410	-0.12003	0.01969	0.11339

(con't.)

	PSYPATHY	CIRCUM19	CIRCUM14	CIRCUM18	CIRCUM5	CIRCUM21	CIRCUM12	PVIC1M	PWITVIO
PSYPATHY	1.00000	0.48161	0.18253	0.07554	0.26869	0.24155	0.13357	0.13843	0.04818
CIRCUM19	0.48161	1.00000	0.08657	0.17293	0.17311	0.05323	0.06959	0.11977	0.01997
CIRCUM14	0.18253	0.08657	1.00000	0.26027	0.23575	0.24756	0.16059	0.04155	0.04239
CIRCUM18	0.07554	0.17293	0.26027	1.00000	0.13978	0.08656	0.26991	0.16231	-0.02010
CIRCUM5	0.26869	0.17311	0.23575	0.13978	1.00000	0.11665	0.12637	0.11849	0.02449
CIRCUM21	0.24155	0.05323	0.24756	0.08656	0.11665	1.00000	0.10798	0.06795	-0.05794
CIRCUM12	0.13357	0.06959	0.16059	0.26991	0.12637	0.10798	1.00000	0.44784	0.23941
PVIC1M	0.13843	0.11977	0.04155	0.16231	0.11849	0.06795	0.44784	1.00000	0.23457
PWITVIO	0.04818	0.01997	0.04239	-0.02010	0.02449	-0.05794	0.23941	0.23457	1.00000
OTHCHVIC	-0.15722	-0.00829	0.03272	0.22071	-0.00486	0.01492	0.34189	0.17110	0.02727
AWARETOT	0.03652	0.06414	0.21402	0.24487	-0.09034	-0.01255	0.20516	0.14870	0.04247
CIRCUM24	0.10442	-0.14696	0.04114	-0.14631	0.11505	0.08394	-0.07076	-0.15191	-0.19343
CIRCUM25	0.06306	-0.04569	0.23581	0.21246	0.11649	0.27798	-0.10409	0.09972	0.21055
CIRCUM15	0.05809	0.19240	-0.13160	0.02773	0.00100	-0.15479	0.04479	0.11290	0.04913
SES	-0.02279	-0.03059	0.15497	-0.06515	0.05732	-0.06147	-0.11196	-0.24277	-0.30167
CIRCUM3	-0.16536	0.08542	0.12597	0.09141	-0.00403	0.03341	-0.10938	-0.08864	-0.16745
CIRCUM22	-0.01214	0.07034	0.10516	0.05208	-0.14910	0.12194	0.21362	0.10933	0.09151
MARIDIFF	-0.04578	0.09091	-0.08979	0.27337	-0.11517	-0.04816	0.17688	0.03114	0.01616
CIRCUM4	-0.03962	-0.01348	-0.08674	-0.07472	-0.09516	-0.01016	0.04053	0.03143	-0.00325
CIRCUM10	-0.00186	-0.02764	-0.00337	0.11015	0.14025	0.17152	0.06032	0.03481	-0.00464
PEMPLS	-0.02675	-0.04642	-0.00522	-0.00368	-0.07509	-0.04613	-0.13316	-0.12793	-0.11626
PEMPLDUR	-0.09435	-0.12704	-0.06351	0.05776	-0.01501	-0.16235	-0.08975	-0.13280	-0.20700
INCOME	0.01893	0.00827	-0.07504	-0.01158	-0.04144	0.07855	0.11263	0.13489	0.31861
CONATOT	-0.04460	-0.01235	0.01333	0.09715	0.00906	0.24475	-0.02929	-0.07218	-0.07633
CIRCUM9	0.27007	0.14224	0.13489	0.04844	0.07567	0.09929	-0.00567	0.08623	0.23007
PEOPLE	-0.02012	-0.02026	0.03747	-0.06243	0.08381	0.03034	-0.02247	0.00381	-0.01697
CIRCUM11	-0.00308	-0.08516	-0.11518	-0.10771	0.22475	-0.04130	-0.08271	-0.07238	0.07373
CHTOTDV	0.02336	-0.03018	0.15482	-0.05705	0.25340	0.09447	0.14559	0.10961	0.07244
CHTOTEXP	0.19831	-0.01618	0.36197	0.10111	0.29807	0.10985	0.13389	0.05596	0.10028
CIRCUM13	-0.12113	-0.11763	0.18383	0.24022	-0.09701	0.37963	0.16484	-0.05450	-0.00136
USETOTAL	-0.10206	-0.24207	0.00777	-0.22760	0.10830	-0.07944	-0.06012	-0.16899	-0.07445
CIRCUM1	-0.07942	-0.15807	0.07744	-0.11315	-0.03293	0.08153	0.07030	0.09979	0.08585
CIRCUM6	0.05825	0.01107	0.39353	0.23619	-0.12237	0.36676	0.27658	0.07367	-0.03174
CIRCUM17	0.12931	-0.06945	0.21136	-0.00763	-0.01160	0.46597	-0.03975	-0.05443	-0.02047
CIRCUM8	0.28611	0.23961	0.27985	0.26714	0.03818	0.34445	0.36756	0.22981	0.06827
FREOUENC	0.04184	-0.08165	0.29713	0.10516	0.13701	0.23635	0.25583	0.04839	-0.07604
SEVERITY	0.17146	0.11248	0.06165	0.28710	0.06504	0.02554	0.15219	0.06216	0.05575

(con't.)

	CIRCUM4	CIRCUM10	PEMPLS	PEMPLDUP	INCOME	CONTATOT	CIRCUM9	PEOPLE	CIRCUM11
PSYPATHY	-0.03962	-0.00186	-0.02675	-0.09435	0.01893	-0.04460	0.27007	-0.02012	-0.00308
CIRCUM19	-0.01348	-0.02764	-0.04642	-0.12704	0.00827	-0.01235	0.14224	-0.02026	-0.08516
CIRCUM14	-0.08674	-0.00337	-0.00522	-0.06351	-0.07504	0.01333	0.13489	-0.03747	-0.01518
CIRCUM18	-0.07472	0.11015	-0.00368	0.05776	-0.01158	0.09715	0.04844	-0.06243	-0.10771
CIRCUM5	-0.09516	0.14025	-0.07509	-0.01501	-0.04144	0.00906	0.07567	0.08381	0.22475
CIRCUM21	-0.01016	0.17152	-0.04613	-0.16235	0.07855	0.24475	0.09929	0.03034	-0.04130
CIRCUM12	0.04053	0.06032	-0.13316	-0.08975	0.11263	-0.02929	0.00567	-0.02247	-0.08271
PVITIM	0.03143	0.03481	-0.12793	-0.13280	0.13489	-0.07218	0.08623	0.00381	-0.07238
PWITVIO	-0.00325	-0.04464	-0.11626	-0.20700	0.31861	-0.07633	0.23007	-0.01697	0.07373
CIRCUM2	-0.12121	-0.08974	0.07668	0.03331	0.06478	0.05913	-0.17417	0.04512	-0.01030
OTHCHVIC	0.10325	-0.09011	0.05688	0.01537	-0.05356	0.09171	0.00994	-0.07944	-0.30360
AWARETOT	-0.08105	-0.17249	-0.03946	0.03422	0.06527	0.21094	-0.05042	0.05327	0.12546
CIRCUM24	0.02031	0.00923	-0.04745	-0.07850	0.07724	0.06949	0.15844	0.02771	-0.06059
CIRCUM15	0.15781	0.06159	-0.11178	-0.15196	0.17697	-0.14355	0.36096	0.07392	0.03552
SES	-0.01425	-0.05083	0.37246	0.15149	-0.49944	-0.18237	-0.12030	0.03668	0.10474
CIRCUM3	0.02594	0.07742	-0.10706	-0.19037	0.05693	-0.00478	0.09586	0.05344	-0.07193
CIRCUM22	0.29200	0.02645	0.00792	0.08858	0.06947	0.01641	0.04300	0.03397	-0.09925
MARIDIFF	0.29533	0.03810	0.34044	0.23832	-0.13940	0.09307	-0.07853	0.01498	-0.23166
CIRCUM4	1.00000	0.06930	0.11410	0.02292	-0.12021	0.04002	-0.07123	-0.08323	0.01314
PEMPLS	0.06930	1.00000	0.03662	-0.05212	-0.05782	-0.05624	-0.06896	0.17801	0.08856
PEMPLDUP	0.02292	0.03662	1.00000	0.78282	-0.67533	-0.10325	-0.06368	-0.02170	-0.13807
INCOME	-0.12021	-0.05782	0.78282	1.00000	-0.72044	-0.07159	-0.11322	0.00655	0.01068
CIRCUM9	0.04002	-0.05624	-0.06368	0.72044	1.00000	0.12662	0.12406	0.00772	-0.03353
CONTATOT	-0.05782	-0.05624	-0.06368	-0.07159	0.00000	-0.19464	0.19464	-0.05614	-0.13544
CIRCUM9	-0.07123	-0.06896	-0.02170	-0.13807	0.00655	-0.01888	1.00000	-0.01888	-0.06076
PEOPLE	0.01314	0.08856	-0.02170	0.13807	-0.03353	-0.05614	-0.01888	1.00000	0.08337
CIRCUM11	-0.12296	0.13036	-0.02294	0.01068	-0.03353	-0.13544	-0.06076	0.08337	1.00000
CHTOTDV	-0.01388	0.09422	-0.04646	0.07763	-0.06118	0.11116	0.00975	-0.00464	0.51047
CHTOTEXP	0.03673	-0.03007	0.09505	-0.11277	-0.00582	0.18175	0.01095	-0.09754	0.30888
CIRCUM13	-0.04840	-0.07014	-0.04898	0.06663	-0.06479	0.17466	-0.14661	-0.06961	-0.04942
USETOTAL	-0.16750	-0.18713	-0.20925	-0.21987	0.17237	-0.02195	-0.07841	-0.01508	0.28030
CIRCUM1	-0.02542	0.03684	0.14760	0.04064	-0.11365	0.11034	-0.08512	0.03366	-0.14582
CIRCUM17	-0.24080	-0.00199	0.06305	-0.10310	0.08715	0.23866	-0.05695	0.10564	-0.02755
CIRCUM8	0.03585	0.17894	0.21065	0.05141	-0.11650	-0.10458	0.07415	-0.03952	-0.22608
FREQUENC	-0.01610	0.01666	-0.05739	-0.07709	-0.02262	0.15087	-0.08850	-0.03364	0.01218
SEVERITY	-0.18594	0.14417	-0.02935	0.04915	0.08170	-0.14088	-0.00587	0.01374	0.00918

(con't.)

	CHTOTDV	CHTOTEXP	CIRCUM13	USRTOTAL	CIRCUM1	CIRCUM6	CIRCUM17	CIRCUM8	FREQUENC	SEVERITY
PSYPATHY	0.02336	0.19831	-0.12113	-0.10206	-0.07942	0.05825	0.12931	0.28611	0.04184	0.17146
CIRCUM19	-0.03018	-0.01618	-0.11763	-0.02420	-0.15807	0.01107	-0.06945	0.23961	-0.08165	0.11248
CIRCUM14	0.15482	0.36197	0.18383	0.00777	0.07744	0.39353	0.21136	0.27985	0.29713	0.06165
CIRCUM18	-0.05705	0.10111	0.24022	-0.02276	-0.11315	0.23619	-0.00763	0.26714	0.10516	0.28710
CIRCUM5	0.25340	0.29807	-0.09701	0.10830	-0.03293	-0.12237	-0.01160	0.33818	0.13701	0.06504
CIRCUM21	0.09447	0.10985	0.37963	-0.07944	0.08153	0.36676	0.46597	0.34445	0.23635	0.02554
CIRCUM12	0.14559	0.12389	0.16484	-0.06012	0.07030	0.27658	-0.03975	0.36756	0.25583	0.15219
PWICTIM	-0.10961	0.05596	-0.05450	-0.16899	0.09979	0.07367	-0.05443	0.22981	0.04839	0.06216
PWITVIO	0.07244	0.10028	-0.00136	-0.07445	0.08585	-0.03174	-0.02047	0.06827	-0.07604	0.05575
CIRCUM2	0.01379	0.00931	0.32733	0.08311	0.20292	0.28581	0.14389	0.19788	0.26503	-0.04048
OTHCHVIC	-0.13325	0.08307	0.28431	-0.29290	0.00027	0.25708	0.06807	0.24266	0.26103	-0.03156
AWARETOT	0.22802	0.19478	0.04839	0.60039	0.20976	0.09480	0.17527	-0.16771	0.06536	-0.28710
CIRCUM24	0.00580	0.05347	0.13760	-0.24688	0.07420	0.14377	0.02606	0.08758	0.03266	0.23350
CIRCUM15	-0.05864	-0.08130	-0.20098	-0.12184	-0.05920	-0.19890	-0.10864	-0.08665	-0.24432	0.15676
SES	-0.00353	-0.06535	-0.01284	0.20633	0.00845	0.10505	0.04220	0.10230	0.01275	-0.07410
CIRCUM3	-0.13586	0.00470	0.08086	0.07324	0.06393	0.22772	0.03357	0.00445	-0.01318	-0.12003
CIRCUM22	-0.06369	0.04725	0.18656	-0.03918	0.11765	0.22505	-0.04760	0.09260	0.18415	0.01968
MARIDIFF	-0.11222	-0.18989	0.24273	-0.16414	-0.21353	0.21386	-0.07636	0.10524	0.00477	0.11339
CIRCUM4	-0.12296	-0.01388	0.03673	-0.04840	-0.16750	-0.02542	0.24080	0.03585	-0.01610	-0.18594
CIRCUM10	0.13036	0.09422	-0.03007	-0.07014	-0.18713	0.03684	-0.00199	0.17894	0.01666	0.14417
PEMPLS	-0.02294	-0.04646	0.09505	-0.04898	-0.20925	0.14760	0.06305	0.21065	-0.05739	-0.02935
PEMPLDUR	0.07763	-0.10025	-0.11277	0.00663	-0.21987	0.04064	-0.10010	0.95141	-0.07708	0.04915
INCOME	-0.06118	-0.00582	0.07503	-0.06479	0.17237	-0.11365	0.08715	-0.11650	-0.02262	0.08170
CONSTATOT	0.11116	0.18175	0.17466	0.13845	-0.02195	0.11034	0.23865	-0.10458	0.15987	-0.14088
CIRCUM9	0.00975	0.01095	-0.14661	-0.07841	0.04553	-0.08512	-0.05695	0.07415	-0.08850	-0.00587
PEOPLE	-0.00464	-0.09754	-0.06961	-0.01508	0.09488	0.03366	0.10564	-0.03952	-0.03364	0.01374
CIRCUM11	0.51047	0.30888	-0.04942	0.28030	0.12085	-0.14582	-0.02755	-0.22608	0.01218	0.00918
CHTOTDV	1.00000	0.50213	0.12221	0.23271	0.17452	0.11974	0.12363	-0.05127	0.22449	-0.08737
CHTOTEXP	0.50213	1.00000	0.11198	0.19290	0.15785	0.25335	0.16254	0.05653	0.23418	-0.02417
CIRCUM13	0.12221	0.11198	1.00000	0.05547	0.07794	0.49006	0.48909	0.29147	0.26179	-0.00234
USRTOTAL	0.23271	0.19290	0.05547	1.00000	0.28439	-0.03791	0.07827	-0.29954	0.13863	-0.34973
CIRCUM1	0.17452	0.15785	0.07794	0.28439	1.00000	0.01677	0.09772	-0.09525	0.21064	-0.32347
CIRCUM6	0.11974	0.25335	0.49006	-0.03791	0.01677	1.00000	0.41161	0.47997	0.31257	-0.00137
CIRCUM17	0.12363	0.16254	0.48909	0.07727	0.09772	0.41161	1.00000	0.15027	0.14741	-0.08591
CIRCUM8	-0.05127	0.05653	0.29147	-0.29954	-0.09525	0.47997	0.15027	1.00000	0.27118	0.33819
FREQUENC	0.22449	0.23418	0.26179	0.13863	0.21064	0.31257	0.14741	0.27118	1.00000	0.01445
SEVERITY	-0.08737	-0.02417	-0.00234	-0.34973	-0.32347	-0.00137	-0.08591	0.33819	0.01445	1.00000

APPENDIX G :
THE MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS
OF ALL FOUR THEORIES COMBINED

TABLE 40. MULTIPLE CORRELATION ANALYSIS BETWEEN FOUR THEORETICAL MODELS COMBINED AND FREQUENCY OF ABUSE

SUMMARY TABLE					
VARIABLE	MULTIPLE R	R SQUARE	SIMPLIF P	BETA	F
PERPS PSYCH DEV AND EXPS	0.04184	0.00175	0.04184	0.04684	0.132
EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL DV OF PARENT	0.12346	0.01524	-0.08165	-0.17862	2.115
RESENT CHILD FOR NO REASON	0.31911	0.10183	0.29713	0.12065	0.936
BATTERED BABY SYNDROME	0.32279	0.10419	0.10516	-0.00820	0.004
CHILD FAILED TO PROVIDE REWARDING RELATP	0.33184	0.11011	0.13701	0.13639	1.454
PARENT HAS UNREALISTIC DEMANDS OF CHILD	0.36992	0.13684	0.23635	0.09450	0.481
EVIDENCE OF PARENTS ABUSE AS CHILD	0.41945	0.17593	0.25583	0.01006	0.022
PERPETRATOR HISTOPY OF ABUSE	0.42378	0.17959	0.04839	-0.05790	0.271
HAS PERPS WITNESSED ANY VIOLENCE	0.44075	0.19426	-0.07604	-0.17727	2.448
PERPETRATOR REPEATING CWN PARENTS METHOD	0.48298	0.23327	0.26503	0.15120	1.609
OTHER CHILDREN WITH PREVIOUS ABUSE	0.51776	0.26807	0.26103	0.23218	3.883
PARENTS TOTAL AWARENESS OF DISCIPLINE	0.51776	0.26807	0.06536	-0.18174	1.801
PARENTINGNORANT OF CHILDS CAPABILITIES	0.52336	0.27391	0.03266	-0.06769	0.355
MOUNTING STRESS	0.54365	0.29556	-0.02432	-0.15080	1.689
GROSSING PEDUC POCPP	0.55426	0.30721	0.01275	-0.05536	0.150
INADEQUATELY CONTROLLED ANGER	0.55457	0.30755	-0.01318	-0.04268	0.129
ALCOHOLIC INTOXICATION OF PERPETRATOR	0.56509	0.31932	0.18415	0.14040	1.532
MARITAL PROBLEMS PRIOR TO ABUSE	0.56586	0.32020	0.00477	0.06839	0.270
ABUSE RESULTING FROM FIGHT BET PARENTS	0.56604	0.32040	-0.01610	0.00152	0.000
RESENT CHILD DUE TO PROBLEM PREGNANCY	0.56606	0.32042	0.01666	-0.06255	0.315
PERPETRATORS EMPLOY STATUS	0.57088	0.32590	-0.05739	-0.02808	0.020
PERPETRATORS EMPLOYMENT DUPATION	0.57185	0.32702	-0.07708	-0.14038	0.399
RELIANCE ON PUBLIC ASSISTANCE	0.57592	0.33168	-0.02262	-0.00457	0.001
TOTAL NUMBER OF CONTACTS	0.57991	0.33630	0.15987	0.07921	0.466
FEELINGS OF SOCIAL ISOLATION	0.58003	0.33644	-0.08850	-0.02567	0.050
ANY OTHER PEOPLE LIVING IN HOME	0.58121	0.33781	-0.03364	-0.02362	0.058
HEALTH OR EMOTIONAL PROBLEM OF CHILD	0.58766	0.34535	0.01218	0.03211	0.056
CHILDS TOTAL DEVIATIONS	0.60188	0.36226	0.22440	0.20680	2.040
CHILDS TOTAL EXPERIENCES	0.60212	0.36254	0.23418	-0.05493	0.171
PARENTS BELIEF IN NEED OF PYS PUNISH	0.60345	0.36415	0.26179	-0.13947	0.864
TOTAL METHODS OF DISCIPLINE USED	0.61588	0.37930	0.13863	0.22060	2.411
RESPONSE TO ACT OF CHILD	0.62064	0.38510	0.21064	0.11074	0.972
SELF DEFINE AUTHORITARIAN	0.62674	0.39281	0.31257	0.06052	0.169
PARENT EMPHASIZES CHILDS OREDIENCE	0.62772	0.39404	0.14741	-0.01745	0.017
PARENT SURPRISE ABOUT PFING QUESTIONFD	0.64959	0.42197	0.27110	0.25626	3.576
MULTIPLE R	0.64959				
R SQUARE	0.42197				
ADJUSTED R SQUARE	0.14858				
STANDARD ERROR	0.68043				
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE					
REGRESSION	35.	SUM OF SQUARES	MEAN SQUARE	F	
RESIDUAL	74.	25,61143	0.71461	1,54347	
		34,26130	0.46289		

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