THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
ROLES, COPING STRATEGIES, AND THE ABILITY
TO COPE WITH CHANGES IN
MORALS, VALUES AND TECHNOLOGY

BY

VIVIAN B. PURA

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

Department of Family Studies

University of Manitoba
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Abstract

The first main purpose of this study was to determine the ability
of the elderly to adapt to changes in technology, and morals and
values. The second purpose was to determine which factors will
facilitate coping. Data was obtained from   a   sample   of 51
non-institutionalized elderly respondents (60 years or older) who are
currently living in Greater Victoria.

Although none of the four hypotheses were supported, there were
some interesting trends. A small association may be suggested between
the number of roles and the acceptance of morals and values. Contrary
to the hypotheses, the trend seems to indicate that people who are
high in roles are perhaps less able to adapt to changes in morals and
values than are those who have a few number of roles. Also, there
seems to be a slight trend with the number of coping strategies and
the ability to adapt to changes in morals and values. There was a
higher percentage of respondents who could adapt to the new morals
and values in the group who were high in the number of coping
strategies than low in coping strategies. Although they are not
significant, it appears that the number of roles and the number of
coping strategies have some influence on the ability to adapt to
changes in morals and values.

Also of interest is the fact that when compared with the number

of coping strategies, 78% of the respondents reported being unable to adapt to the changes in morals and values. It seems that adapting to changes in morals and values requires that one changes too many ingrained basic beliefs which may alter the basic personality structure, and as a result it seems that the respondents left their value systems intact.

Adapting to changes in technology does not require a change in one's basic beliefs, the way changes in morals and values do. Changes in technology usually require information about the product. Since it is easier to absorb new information than to change values and beliefs, the respondents were better able to adapt to the changes in technology than the changes in morals and values.

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<center>Introduction</center>

A great many changes have occured in the last one hundred years or so. Inventions such as the automobile have had far reaching consequences and have altered the course of history. Not only did the automobile provide a more rapid means of transportation; within the same time span the assembly line revolutionized the industrial sector by providing the means for goods to be mass-produced. Nor was technology the only change to have occurred. Numerous alterations in morals and values have also taken place. Three or four decades ago, for example, a stigma was attached to divorcees. As a result, of this stigma many had difficulty in finding a spouse. Within the last two decades this attitude has been radically altered. Currently, the attitude that divorce is an acceptable solution to an unsuccessful marriage is quite prevalant.

People who are now elderly have experienced many of these changes. They have seen the shift from the horse and buggy to the automobile as the primary means of transportation and the increasing commonality of the airplane. They have also witnessed the changes in morals and values. The world in which they grew up is considerably different from that in which they are growing old (Toffler, 1980).

With the increasing number of changes, the rate at which they have come about has accelerated. Such an increase in the rate of change demands a corresponding increase in the rate of adjustment. As a result, many people have difficulty in adapting to these changes. One must often learn about complex new products (such as

computers) in order to adapt, and shifts in values or the way one thinks are frequently required. Add to this the accelerating rate with which these changes are taking place, and it is apparent that some people will experience difficulty in coping. For these people, the world may be a frustrating and alienating place, one that overwhelms and even inhibits their ability to carry out many of their routine tasks.

For the purposes of this study, these changes were separated into two categories. The first are technological changes, which include things such as cars, rapid transit, airplanes, television, telephones, satellites, the increasing use of computers in every day life, banking machines, and code scanners in grocery stores. In addition, there have been corresponding changes in morals and values, which constitute the second category of changes. Each decade has seen a shift in morals and values. Over time, there has been an increase in the mobility of families causing an increase in the geographic isolation of nuclear families. Also, the standard of living has increased, especially since it is more acceptable for women to join the work force, and many of the jobs available are at higher levels than they were previously. In addition there have been shifts in morals. In the last few decades there has been an increase in the number of people living common law.

These changes may be regarded as stressors, which require some form of coping or adaptation. Coping responses may take any number of forms. For some, it means a change in the way they think, while others will try to change the situation. Some people respond to

change by not doing anything at all. These are all examples of coping strategies which may be employed to facilitate adaptation. A number of other factors may also play a part in coping. Age, sex, health, education, income, social class, locus of control, social support, identities, ego development, appraisal of events, desirability of events, and number of life events also have an effect on how people cope. The factors which were studied are identities and social support as well as the number of coping strategies employed.

A group of 51 elderly people (60 years or over) from the greater Victoria area were studied. Each respondent was given a questionnaire containing measures of the ability to adapt to technology, the ability to accept changes in morals and values as well as how many coping strategies are used, and the number of roles (social support and identities). The ability to adapt to changes in morals and values and technology was calculated and the number of coping strategies and roles were compared with them to determine their influence in coping.

Stress and Adaptation

Those currently 65 years or older were born before 1922, and have seen many changes in their lifetime, not only in terms of technology (Naisbitt, 1982), but in terms of morals, values and standards as well (Keniston, 1972). For some, these changes are stressors with which one must cope. Adapting to these changes may generate stress.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) define coping "as constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person" (p. 141).

Stressors may be categorized into two types: normative and non-normative events. Normative events are developmental changes which most people experience over the course of their lifetimes (McCubbin, Cauble, & Patterson, 1982). Examples of normative stressors include marriage, the "transition to parenthood, raising adolescent children, launching children and retirement" (McCubbin et al., 1982, p. xii).

Non-normative events are the second type of stressor. These stressors do not ordinarily occur and as a result are not anticipated (McCubbin et al., 1982). Although some changes in technology, morals, and values may be anticipated, they do not occur with the same regularity as normative events and will therefore be considered as non-normative.

Regardless of whether an event is normative or non-normative, if one feels stressed by it, then some adjustment must be made to cope

with it and reduce or eliminate the stress. It should be noted here that any particular event will not be stessful to all people, and that even if it is, it may be positive or negative (Meuller, 1980). For example, taking a trip is stressful. Some people do not like traveling and will therefore consider it to be a negative stressor. However, it is still stressful to those who enjoy taking trips since it is a change which requires adjustment. The first example creates some negative stress while the second results in positive stress since it is a desirable change. Thus the appraisal of the situation is important in terms of how one adapts.

Changes in Technology

Toffler (1980), concentrating on Europe and North America, explains that through history, three waves of change have drastically altered the way people live. The first wave was the agricultural revolution which lasted for thousands of years. The second wave or the industrial revolution began around 1750 and continued until approximately 1955. Ogburn and Nimkoff (1955) note that during the industrial revolution there was a large influx of people to the cities since the cities had the factories and machinery and thus the jobs. This resulted in a reduction in the role of the family as a social institution. The increased mobility separated people from friends and family resulting in an increase in the probability of divorce. Many of the most major changes occurred in the late 1800's and early and middle 1900's. As an example of how technology has

altered our way of life, Ogburn and Nimkoff (1955, p.25) explain how suburbs developed in response to technology. Such inventions as mass transit, cars, telephones, radio and television have made them possible. The industrial revolution also radically altered other aspects of life. Suddenly factories appeared across the country-side, producing such diverse goods such as the tractor, refrigerator, airplane and the typewriter (Toffler, 1980, p.22). Ogburn (1964, p.92) also notes that the world has seen extraordinary growth in the number of discoveries in applied science as evidenced by the growth in the number of patents. These in turn filter through to the general public in the form of new ideas and products.

Toffler (1980) believes that the third wave began after 1955. The third wave is marked by the advent of the computer and is "highly technological and anti-industrial" (Toffler, 1980, p. 10). He also points out that the third wave will bring with it

> a new way of life based on diversified, renewable energy sources; on methods of production that make most factory assembly lines obsolete; on new, non-nuclear families; on a novel institution that might be called the "electronic cottage"; and on radically changed schools and corporations of the future (Toffler, 1980, p. 10).

Many changes have already taken place. Computers are already well on the way to becoming household appliances (Hallblade & Mathews; 1980, p. 24-25). They are used in direct applications such as in banks, grocery stores, lodging and major transportation systems as well as in indirect applications which are far less visible. Some

of these include ground and air traffic control, industry, healthcare, and the tax system (Hallblade & Mathews, 1980). Each of these waves impacts on people and demands that they adjust. Ogburn (1922) has suggested that humans are naturally suited to a farming, or prior to that, a cave-dwelling lifestyle. Biologically speaking, humans have remained unchanged since the last ice age, and are suited to the conditions which existed prior to industrialization. Not only must the body adjust to sitting at a desk instead of hunting, but the mind must adapt to the overcrowding of cities as well as the lack of close kin networks (Ogburn, 1922, p.284-288).

The elderly of today grew up during the industrial revolution (the second wave). The transition from the second to third wave is not yet complete, and therefore they are feeling the effects of two waves which are at odds with one another. In the past ten years, computers have spread far and wide, having a large impact on people. Twenty years ago one rarely saw a computer, whereas now one can hardly make a transaction at the bank without a computer being used. Frankel (1972), comments that "nothing cuts more quickly or deeply into a society's way of doing things than changes in technology " (p. 158). Technology is very definitely changing the way our society does things.

In addition to technological change forcing adjustments, changes in morals and values have multiplied. These changes are also occurring at a very rapid rate leaving little time for adjustment. Time is required to adjust to new ideas and concepts, but with the accelerated rate at which they are occurring there is little time for

that.   This accelerated rate represents an unprecedented challenge for people to adapt (Toffler, 1970; Frankel, 1972).

Changes in Morals and Values

In addition to these rapid technological changes, significant changes in terms of morals and values have arisen. For example, when women began to enter the work force, men were not as favourably inclined to the idea as they are now (Ogburn & Nimkoff, 1955, p.184). Ogburn and Nimkoff (1955, p. 5-7) cite many other changes in the family which are indicative of changes in the values people hold. These include: the decrease in religious behavior, and in marriage and the family, the increase of individualism, divorce, and the number of wives in the work force. Goode (1968) also notes that in industrialized societies the fertility rate usually falls and that the divorce rate will be high. Also included is the increase in pre- and extramarital intercourse, now tempered with the threat of diseases such as AIDS and herpes.   Finally, they note that contraceptives are more widely used suggesting other changing values. People wish to have fewer children, but will invest more in them in terms of time, effort and emotional investment (Ogburn & Nimkoff, 1955, p.115). Wargon (1975) notes that "childbearing levels in Canada are now at the lowest point ever in this country" (p. 163). She also points out that more people are having families and that there has been an increase in the number of moderate-sized families and a decrease in very small and very large families.

Garrett (1982) points out that during the mid 1960's there was a "swift institutionalizing of values, norms and social behaviors generally opposed by the middle class family" (p. 50). He also notes that many of the ideas "introduced by the youth culture have found their way into adult life-styles and family practices" (p. 51). Many changes in values have taken place (Commager, 1972; Frankel 1976). During the 1960's and 1970's a movement towards individuality, autonomy, spontaneity, and equality boomed. Younger people began holding values quite different from their parents' values. Also, Frankel (1976) feels that a decrease in parental authority occurred due to "schools, the media, and most of all by the rapid changes in the quality of experience and intellectual, moral, and esthetic styles of an innovative industrial society" (p. 356). The degree of control which parents exercised over their children was diminished during that period.

Bellak (1974) states that previously held moral values are regarded as being obsolete, as well as the judgment of scientific and artistic values, with the result that the elderly are losing a function they previously held. They are unable to give direction to those younger than them because their experiences are no longer relevant (Bellak, 1974; Frankel, 1976; Keniston, 1972; McLain & Weigert, 1979; Pollak, 1980). It must be very frustrating for the elderly to find that much of their experience is no longer relevant and therefore ignored by the young.

In the past, the elderly were sought for their knowleadge and wisdom. Very little changed, making their experiences as relevant

for their children as for themselves. Today this is no longer true. Often the young people are more knowledgeable than their elders since many areas are so new (Ogburn, 1964, p. 49). With change occurring constantly, it is impossible to keep abreast of all of it.

The concept of cultural lag aids in explaining why change can be so disruptive. During periods of change efforts are made to adapt. Some of these efforts will result in effective adaptation while others will result in maladjustment. Additionally, change frequently does not occur at the same rate. Some parts of the culture adjust rapidly, others lag behind (Ogburn, 1964, p. 61). Ogburn (1922, p. 260) believed that this is due to society being heterogeneous. It divides itself into many classes and groups. Change may be required by only one group, yet, all of society is forced to change along with it. What is beneficial for one group, may be detrimental to another.

Many of these changes impact on the non-material culture as well as the material one. It may be particularly difficult to change the non-material culture since it occupies quite a strong position (Ogburn, 1922, p. 263-264). The values, morals, mores and some customs receive strong approval from the group and reflect their attitudes regarding right and wrong, (or even the existence of right or wrong), and the correct way of doing things. Since they are the accepted standards of the group, pressure is brought to bear to enforce conformity. Ogburn (1922) states that:

> These emotional values of group approval
> appear to be forces resisting change,
> perhaps partly because of habit,
> conditioned reflexes, social pressure,
> love of the past through forgetting the
> unpleasant, and perhaps the recognition

that these ways of doing things have
worked in the past (p. 263-264).

It may also be that, if they are changed the order and the
structure of the group may be threatened.

The impact of changing values goes beyond causing a loss of
control or the inability to guide younger generations. Some
researchers believe that the personality remains relatively stable
over the course of a lifespan (Gallagher, Thompson, & Peterson, 1982;
Loevinger & Wessler, 1970), and for the elderly, it is essential that
a sense of continuity in value systems be maintained, since it
appears to be part of the adaptive process (Lowenthal & Chiriboga,
1973). Changing values could be very disruptive to the personality
since one's reality is based upon them (Clark, 1967). In other
words, the way in which people view the world is based on the values
they possess. Clark (1967) notes that values "are the building
blocks, not only of self-esteem, but also of the very definition of
reality" (p.62). Values provide a yardstick for measuring worth.
They provide the criteria or standard for measurement of behavior,
modes of conduct (Horrocks & Jackson, 1972, p. 52), other people, or
the physical environment (Kaplan, 1983). More importantly, values
provide the criteria for one to judge his/her own behavior and to
evaluate the proximity to valued states and goals to determine one's
worth. Humans need to think of themselves positively (Kaplan, 1983).

According to Horrocks and Jackson (1972, p.70) the process of
socialization helps to instill values early in life and manifest
themselves in the attitudes expressed by the individual. At first

values are acquired through parents or guardians, but later this circle of influence will widen. In addition, books and other media will have an effect on the individual's values, thus influencing standards of behavior. The value system directs the roles one takes and therefore his/her identity (Horrocks & Jackson, 1972, p.77-78).

In all probability, conflict will result when the values of one person are not consistent with the values of another. For example, the values of a teenager's peers may contradict those of his/her parents. Resolution may come in the form of compromise or the individual may choose one side, thereby obtaining their approval and acceptance, but be rejected and disapproved of by the side which was not selected (Horrocks & Jackson, 1972, p.82).

Horrocks and Jackson (1972) note that "individual differences are evidence that some individuals become more flexible in applying their standards than are others" (p. 81). This flexibility could be quite beneficial to the elderly. Not only would they be able to relate to their peers, but they would be better able to relate to the younger generations. In turn, this will give a broader perspective of the world, ultimately increasing the probability of adaptation.

Adapting to a large scale reordering of the world may be very difficult, and it would appear that the elderly may not be able to completely change their value systems to accomodate all of the changes (Clark, 1967). This will have far reaching consequences because continuity in value systems aids the ability to adapt (Lowenthal & Chiriboga, 1973). The ability to adapt may then be diminished. One must adapt to the technological changes which have

taken place, as well as the changes in values and morals. For some this may appear to be a monumental task.

The world we experience is changing very rapidly, and people are constantly bombarded with the unfamiliar. "The unpredictability arising from novelty undermines (their) sense of reality' (Toffler, 1970, p. 347).

> The sense of reality of the self and of the world, depends upon whether external events are experienced as real, embedded in a familiar context. It depends upon the familiar and unobtrusive functioning of our world and upon our own familiarity with the physical self (Bellak, 1974, p. 52).

When the world cannot be experienced in a familiar context, one may become confused. Since identity and possibly even sanity are based upon this taken-for-granted nature of the world, any alterations in this structure are potentially damaging. The ability to adapt to these changes requires a redefinition of one's view of the world so that it will be congruent with the information received. If unable to adapt, then one must try to function with a view of the world which is obsolete. However, this view is not consistent with the way the world is in reality and it makes it increasingly difficult to experience the world in a familiar context. When this occurs, "the sense of reality of the self and of the world" (Bellak, 1974, p. 52) may not rest on a firm foundation, and the sense of reality may be lost. Keniston (1972), states that "technological change creates reactionary counterforces among those

whose skills, life-styles and values have been made obsolete" (p. 52).

For those who have difficulty in dealing with change the world is a very frightening place, especially since it is increasingly difficult to avoid or ignore these changes. This inability to cope is liable to cause feelings of frustration, despair, loss of control, helplessness and a general feeling of being overwhelmed and as Ogburn (1922, p.190) points out, change may cause feelings of fear and anxiety. In addition, Horrocks and Jackson (1972, p.125) note that in old age the question of self-esteem arises. The individual must cope with retirement, the death of friends, and decreasing physical ability as well as the change in the environment.

These changes may cause apathy, emotional withdrawal, disorientation, or distortion of reality (Toffler, 1970). It must be stressed that not everyone will be affected to such a degree by these changes. To some, these changes will be regarded as stressors, but to others they will not. The way a situation is appraised and the ability or inability to deal with it will determine whether or not they are considered stressors.

Impact of Life Events

Thoits (1983b) defines "life events or life changes ... as objective experiences that disrupt or threaten to disrupt an individual's usual activities, causing a substantial readjustment in that individual's behavior" (p.34). The results of a study by

Williams, Ware, and Donald (1981) suggest that when life event levels are high people tend to have poorer mental health.

Both normative and non-normative events are types of life events. As mentioned previously, not all events are negative, indeed, many are positive. Therefore, the appraisal of a situation is a key factor in whether or not one will define it as being stressful and to what degree (Chiriboga & Cutler, 1980; Horowitz & Wilner, 1980; Lazarus, 1966; and Lowenthal & Chiriboga, 1973). Folkman and Lazarus (1980) define appraisal as

> the cognitive process through which an event is evaluated with respect to what is at stake (primary appraisal) and what coping resources and options are available (secondary appraisal) (p. 223).

Appraisal of Events

Coping efforts are made as a result of a stressful appraisal. Folkman and Lazarus (1980) also believe that appraisal and coping efforts are part of an ongoing process whereby each continually influences the other. Therefore, the stressful appraisal as well as the coping efforts are continually being modified.

Holmes and Houston (1974) conducted a study and found that the appraisal of a situation influenced the degree of stress the subjects experienced. This is also related to how well people feel they are able to deal with the particular event. Those who feel capable of dealing with an event will experience less stress than those who do not feel capable of handling the situation.

Hinkle (1974, p.29) studied a group of people who had experienced numerous changes and had very little illness and noted that there were others who had suffered many illnesses and yet had not undergone as much change. He concluded "that those who had experienced the greater amount of illness had, in general, perceived their environment as more threatening, challenging, and demanding, and frustrating than the healthier people" (p.29). Thus, if one is not threatened by change and feels capable of dealing with it, one will experience less negative stress than one who does perceive change as threatening. Thomas (1951) summarizes this quite well by stating "if people define situations as real, they are real in their consequences" (p. 14).

Andrews, Tennant, Hewson and Vaillant (1978) believe that there are three factors which account for individual differences in the way people react and deal with stress. The first factor is the appraisal of the situation or the significance the event(s), which is influenced by prior experience in dealing with similar events. The second factor is comprised of the personality attributes; the ability to control (or the belief that one is controlling) one's life, self esteem, and anxiety proneness all influence abilities. Thirdly, coping strategies are utilized to help manage or eliminate the stress caused by the event(s).

In reviewing a number of studies, Thoits (1983b) concluded that the

        degree of change per se is not distress
        producing. Rather, change in combination

with other event qualities (eg.
undesirability, uncontrollability, time
clustering) appears to produce distress
(p.75)

Desirability of Events

Thoits (1983b) reviewed a number of studies on the desirability of events, and notes that as the number or severity of events increases, so does the probability that coping efforts will be overwhelmed. The results also indicated that as the number of undesirable events increased, the probability of being diagnosed as depressed, schizophrenic, or experiencing symptoms of psychological distress or psychopathological behaviors was higher than for the total number of events which have been experienced. In other words, psychological disturbance was not as highly correlated with the sum of the change as it was the sum of undesirable change (Thoits, 1983b). In addition, the results of a study by Norris and Murrell (1984) on older adults suggest that higher global stress was correlated with fewer resources and a greater number of undesirable events.

In a discussion by McFarlane, Norman, Streiner, Roy, and Scott (1980) they concluded that undesirable events are strongly associated with stress whereas desirable events are not; also, that the perception of being in control will influence the outcome. If one perceives that he/she is not in control the undesirable event(s) will have a greater impact. Additionally, the lack of control or anticipation of a desirable event will cause it to be more disruptive. Husaini and Neff's (1980) findings seem to agree with

this. As the number of undesirable and unpreventable events increasedrelative to the total number of events experienced, "the higher was the individual's level of psychiatric symptomatology" (p. 164).

The evaluation of the ability to control a situation will also affect coping. For example, experiencing an undesirable event in which one perceives that it is not possible to control that event may increase the probability of experiencing feelings of helplessness and hopelessness. These feelings may lead to psychological disturbance or more specifically, depressive symptoms (Thoits, 1983b).

McFarlane et al. (1980), also seem to believe that the inability to "influence undesirable events leads to a feeling of helplessness and discouragement or a state of giving up" (p. 232). It would appear that Husaini and Neff (1980) concur. If undesirable events which are uncontrollable are experienced and social support is lacking, higher levels of symptomatology may result (Husaini & Neff, 1980).

In regards to the number and timing of life events, Thoits, (1983b) comments that:

> The more exposure to life events in a
> given period, the greater the distress
> symptomology, the greater the likelihood
> of hospitalization for psychiatric
> disorder, and the greater the probability
> of psychopathological behavior (p.40).

Number of Life Events

Thoits (1983b) seems to presume that as the number of life

events increases, leaving little time for adjustment and recovery between each event, the probability that coping strategies will be overwhelmed should increase dramatically. When events are well spaced, there should be sufficient time to deal with each, thus reducing the threat. On reviewing a number of studies, Thoits (1983b) found that most events tended to cluster in the three to four week period prior to the appearance of depressive symptoms, schizophrenic symptoms, and suicide attempts. Also, clinically depressed female patients were found to have four times the number of severe events as compared to normal women (Thoits, 1983b).

Why then may persistent or severe life events lead to psychological problems? After reviewing a number of studies, Thoits (1983b) concludes that they may have an impact upon people since they may cause them to view themselves negatively. It is essential that human beings be able to maintain a positive self-regard, and a sense of worth in order to continue existence. Numerous or severe life events threaten one's self-esteem and feelings of being in control. If one's self-esteem and a sense of control are eroded sufficiently, anxiety or depression may result.

Appraisal is obviously an important factor in dealing with stress. There are however, many other variables which influence the way people cope.

Factors Affecting the Ability or Inability to Cope

A number of factors are believed to affect the ability or

inability to cope: these include age, sex, education, income, social class, health, cognitive functioning, social support, locus of control, number of coping strategies, number of identities, and ego development.

Palmore, Cleveland, Nowlin, Ramm, and Siegler (1979) and Guttmann (1978) found that people with more resources had less difficulty in adapting than those with fewer resources. In a study of the elderly, Guttmann's (1978) findings suggested that "those who were younger, better educated, had higher incomes and who perceived their own capabilities positively" (p. 465) were better able to cope. However, it is possible that people who cope well happen to have these characteristics because of their coping abilities.

Norris and Murrell (1984) separated their respondents into strong and weak resource categories. At low, moderate and high levels of undesirable events, strong resource people experienced less stress than weak resource people. As the number of undesirable events increased, the level of stress also rose for both groups. Contrary to the researchers' predictions, the two resource groups converged at a very high number of undesirable events, and the strong resource group experienced more stress than the low resource group. It would seem that at very high levels of undesirable events even strong resources can not help alleviate the stress. When the strong and weak resource groups were compared in terms of global stress and depression, it was found that at levels of little or no stress both the weak and strong resource groups experienced almost the same level of depression. As the amount of global stress increased however, the

level of depression for the weak resource group increased more rapidly than for the strong resource group. In general, resources appear to have many protective functions. The possession of strong resources seemed to help reduce global stress and was associated with low depression. Also, it appears that when stress is experienced by a person of such strong resources, the probability of experiencing hopelessness and despair is reduced.

Age

McCrae (1982) studied the relationship between age and coping in a sample of men and women ranging in ages from 24 to 91 years, and found that as age increased, the use of immature coping mechanisms (hostile reactions, escapist fantasy, assessing blame, self-blame and passivity) decreased, whereas mature mechanisms (substitution, restraint, rational action, and humor) remained constant. In general, the elderly tended not to use immature mechanisms as frequently as the younger groups. McCrae does caution however that the results may be biased due to the sample of elderly respondents whom tended to be in better physical and mental health than the general population.

In a study by Pearlin and Schooler (1978) it was concluded that younger people tended to use different coping strategies than older people, with a net result of older people being able to cope as well as younger people. These results do not support the contention that older people are unable to cope effectively or that they are particularly vulnerable.

Social Class

Kessler, Price and Wortman (1985) reviewed of a number of studies on social class differences to determine if social class is a factor in coping. They concluded that individuals occupying socially disadvantaged positions have a greater incidence of psychiatric disorder than those who are in more advantaged positions. Brown, Ni Bhrolchain, and Harris (1975) concur. The findings of a study by Husaini and Neff (1980) suggest that people in the lower income categories scored lower in terms of well-being and seemed to have higher levels of depressive symptomatology. Kessler et al. (1985) also reviewed some studies which suggest that lower class people do not have as many supportive social relationships and that they may possess personality characteristics "such as low self-esteem, fatalism, and intellectual inflexibility (Kessler et al., 1985, p.561), which make them more vulnerable to stress.

Pearlin and Schooler (1978) conducted a study and observed that those having better educations and higher incomes had less difficulty in dealing with marital and parental problems and were significantly better off in regards to dealing with economic and occupational problems. For example, they were able to attribute less value to monetary success. Those who are not very well off cannot afford this luxury. Pearlin and Schooler (1978) raise the question of whether those with greater education and income have better access to effective coping strategies as a result of their situation or if they attained their position because they had better coping skills initially. They found some support for the former theory.

Health

Health has also been identified as a factor affecting the ability to cope. Lieberman (1975) explains that in order to cope, an individual requires a certain level of cognitive functioning to appraise a situation and establish coping strategies. In addition, it has been suggested that people in good physical health are better able to cope than those in poor health (Fales, 1980; Havighurst, 1968; and Hoffman, 1981).

Sex

There is some controversy over whether or not sex affects the ability or inability to cope. Pearlin and Schooler (1978) found a marked difference in the way men and women cope.

> Men more often possess psychological attributes or employ responses that inhibit stressful outcomes of life-problems; and in two of the three instances where women more often employ a response it is likely to result not in less stress, but in more (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978, p.15).

They also point out that it is possible that this inability to cope effectively may be one of the underlying reasons for the greater incidence of women with psychological disturbances.

In their review, Kessler et al. (1985) noted that there is a two to one ratio between men and women in regards to the frequency of extreme levels of psychiatric distress reported. Further, they

conclude that women are more vulnerable to the effects of stressful events than are men. Some possible reasons for this include decreased access to social support, personality characteristics as well as Pearlin and Schooler's (1978) conclusion that women do not have as effective coping strategies as men. However, Kessler et al. (1985) are quick to point out that this does not hold true for all events. For example, it appears that widows are more capable of adjusting than widowers, and that women are just as competent, if not more so at adjusting to divorce as are men. Finally, men are more affected by financial difficulties than women (Kessler et al. 1985).

The results of a study by Folkman and Lazarus (1980) contradict the findings of Pearlin and Schooler (1978) and Kessler et al. (1985). They found very little difference in the way that men and women appraised events. Also, there was little support for the contention that women do not cope as effectively as men. Folkman and Lazarus (1980) conclude that "men did use more problem focused coping than women, but only at work and in situations (appraised as) requiring acceptance and more information" (p. 234). They also add that no sex differences in the use of emotion focused coping were found. Contrary to the conclusions of other researchers Folkman and Lazarus (1980) believe that males and females cope in much the same way.

Social Support

In reviewing a number of studies on bereavement, Gallagher et al. (1982), found that social support is a significant factor in

coping, especially in stressful circumstances. Connor, Powers, and Bultena (1979) further qualify this by stating that the degree of intimacy is also very important. A large number of acquaintences may not be nearly as beneficial as a few very close friends. It is the quality rather than the quantity which is determining factor in adaptation. Having a confidant(s) helps to buffer against stress.

In terms of the changes which have taken place, having a confidant or supportive social network may be beneficial since a confidant can act as an informant. He/she may help to expose the elderly person to these changes, explain what has happened and help the elderly person to understand and deal with what has happened.

Controllability of Events

Another factor which is beneficial is locus of control. Kobasa (1979) examined the ability to cope in executives and found that those who were able to cope successfully:

> are distinguished by their commitment to
> (or lack of alienation from) self,...and
> their internal (as opposed to external)
> locus of control (Kobasa, 1979, p. 8).

Locus of control refers to one's perception of being in control of a situation. Those who feel they have little control over a situation (external locus of control) believe in fate, luck or karma; in other words, things which are beyond their control. However, those with an internal locus of control perceive that they can influence events and that what happens is due to their own efforts,

and not chance.

After reviewing many studies, Thoits (1983b) came to the conclusion that uncontrollable events were more strongly correlated with psychological disturbances such as depression than were controllable events. Also, McFarlane, Allan, Norman, Streiner, Roy, and Scott (1980) concluded that if one had total control over an undesirable event, little or no stress would be experienced. If the person had no control over the event, then there was a very strong correlation with stress. In addition, in a study on locus of control, retirement and life satisfaction, O'Brien (1981, p.311) found that those with an external locus of control preferred more structured environments in contrast with those with an internal locus of control, who did not like the environment to be structured.

Number of Coping Strategies

The number of coping strategies that one has to draw on is also an important factor in adaptation. Michaelson, Michaelson, and Swenson (1982) found that people who used more coping strategies had a better understanding of the situation and were better able to deal with it because of a larger repertoire of strategies to choose from. Those having fewer strategies to choose from had more difficulty in understanding and dealing with the situation than did those with a larger number of coping stategies.

Number of Identities

The number of identities which one possesses may influence the

ability to cope. The results of a study by Thoits (1983a) indicate that as the number of identities increases, the probability of psychological distress decreases, and conversely, as the number of identities decreases, the probability of psychological distress increases. In general, acccumulation of identities is conducive to psychological well-being, whereas the loss or lack of identities detracts from it. In addition, the loss of one identity is not likely to be as significant for one with numerous identities as it is for one with few identities since there are many other identities to rely on.

Ego Development

Finally, the ability to cope is influenced by ego development. Swenson (1977) describes ego development as "the 'Master' personality trait, which describes the stages of development of the ego or self system and which organizes and integrates all other aspects of the personality" (p. 41).

Michaelson et al. (1982) found that those with high ego development were able to cope much better than those whose ego development was low. Low ego development persons were affected by the situation to a far greater degree than high ego development persons (Swenson, 1977). The people with high ego development were able to understand the situation more fully and were better equipped to deal with it.

All of the above factors influence the ability to cope to some degree. However, some factors are more significant or have greater

infuence on the ability to cope than others. For the purposes of this paper, three of these factors have been selected for further study and will now be explained in greater detail.

Relevant Factors

The three factors which are relevant to this study are the number of coping strategies, the number of identities, and the amount of social support or number of confidants one has.

Initially the level of ego development was included in the relevant factors. However, the measure for ego development proved unworkable and it was removed from the questionnaire. Since many aspects of the number of identities were similar to ego development the number of identities was substituted for the level of ego development.

Coping Strategies and Adaptation

The number of coping strategies that one possesses is an important factor in adaptation. Pearlin and Schooler (1978) point out that having a varied coping repertoire is essential for effective adaptation. There is no one coping strategy which will cover every situation and ensure successful coping. In their study, Pearlin and Schooler (1978) found that some strategies were suited for some situations while others were more suited to different situations. With a greater number of coping strategies a more suitable or appropriate strategy may be used for a particular problem, thereby

increasing the probability of adapting (Pearlin and Schooler, 1978).

Identities and Adaptation

The number of identities which one possesses also affects the ability to adapt. Starting at birth, a baby is given a number of identities (e.g. dependent child, member of a family, sibling) and as a result, the baby is expected to behave in certain ways. Kaplan (1983) believes that assigning these social identities to the child at an early age will also facilitate early instruction (whether it be formal or informal) and give the child the required resources and attributes to carry out the role expectations created by the social identities. He also states that due to faulty socialization, no individual will develop all of the experiences and abilities required by the environment. Behaviors and responses cannot be taught if the socializing agent(s) do not possess them. One cannot teach what one does not know. Thus,

> the adequacy of a person's resources is a
> direct function of his membership in
> social groupings that make available to
> the individual resources that are relevant
> to the approximation to valued states
> (Kaplan, 1983, p.224).

McCall and Simmons (1978) have a slightly different conception of role-identities. They believe that the role-identity is what the player imagines it as being. "More intuitively, such a role-identity is his imaginative view of himself as he likes to think of himself being and acting as an occupant of that position" (McCall & Simmons,

1978, p.67). Horrocks and Jackson (1972) state that:

> an identity is a self assumption of the
> situationally selected self reference
> meanings of the organism occurring at any
> point in time. An identity is how an
> individual defines himself when confronted
> by a given context and is called into
> being only when circumstances demand a
> self-action. In this sense, an identity is
> a self-hypothesis (p.58).

Further, Horrocks and Jackson (1972, p. 59) believe that a role is the manner in which one puts an identity into use. It is the behavioral manifestation of the self-hypothesis. Some of these identities may be aspiration identities. One may hold certain goals for him/herself in terms of what he/she may wish to be, which may not even be obtainable (Horrocks & Jackson, 1972, p.59).

This ideal view of the role-identity provides standards by which one can measure his/her behavior. When behavior is not consistent with the standards, the person may feel threatened or embarrassed or may choose to forget the incident and simply remember another which is more in keeping with one's own self view (McCall & Simmons, 1978, p.69).

McCall and Simmons (1978) also note that role-identities give meaning to behavior and everyday life, since they determine how the world is interpreted. "They largely determine our interpretation of the situations, events, and other people we encounter" (McCall & Simmons, 1978, p. 69-70) as well as past, present, and future events (Horrocks & Jackson, 1972, p.55). Horrocks and Jackson (1972, p.55)

believe that one's behavior is greatly influenced by the meanings one has created. These role-identities are idealized, however the people we interact with will either confirm or disconfirm our views, thus giving feedback on the accuracy of those interpretations. Therefore, a compromise can be achieved between what the person is really like and what the person would like to believe he/she is like.

Horrocks and Jackson (1972, p.88) agree with McCall and Simmons (1978) that through modeling and imitation a child receives feedback which aids in evaluating the performance. Horrocks and Jackson (1972, p.86) seem to believe that the feedback takes the form of acceptance or rejection of one's behavior by others. Other people are then involved in the reality testing of the identity. It follows then that the child will probably prefer those people who confirm the child's views about him/herself, and as a result will probably seek the approval of those people. Consequently, it appears that peer relationships are fundamental in the establishment of a stable set of identities (Horrocks & Jackson, 1972, p.88-91).

Each person is placed in a number of roles, for which there are behavioral expectations (Thoits, 1983a; Horrocks & Jackson, 1972, p. 59). These roles or social positions are meaningful to the person enacting them. Thoits (1983a) seems to believe that they help to define one's position relative to a particular relationship, and when he/she continues to take the same position and behaves as expected within this relationship, then he/she acquires an identity. Since the person has a number of relationships, he/she will also possess a number of social positions, therefore, he/she has a set of

identities.

Thoits (1983a) defines the self

> as a set of discrete identities – self
> definitions in terms of occupied social
> positions... Thus, if one knows who one
> is (in a social sense), then one knows how
> to behave. Role requirements give
> purpose, meaning, direction, and guidance
> to one's life. The greater the number of
> identities held, the stronger one's sense
> of meaningful, guided existence (p. 175).

Thoits (1983a) adds that the opposite is also true. If one does not know who one is (in a social sense), or if a valued identity is lost, then he/she will not know how to act. In consequence, a great deal of anxiety or depression may be experienced, or severely disorganized behavior may be exhibited. It is concluded that in general, the accumulation of identities should enhance psychological well-being, whereas identity loss or lack will be detrimental to it. It follows then, that people who are unmarried, unemployed, working in the home, retired, divorced, widowed, or live alone will in all probability have fewer identities and therefore, an increased probability of psychological disturbance (Thoits, 1983a).

Men usually have more roles than women since they are less likely to be widowed and are more likely to be working (Lowenthal and Haven, 1968). Lowenthal and Haven (1968) note that as age increases, this discrepancy becomes larger. At age 75 and above, 40 percent of men have three or more roles, whereas only 15 percent of women have three or more.

Thoits, (1983a) reviewed a number of studies and found that significant role losses, or the death of a spouse are occurrences which are more prevalent in the experience of psychiatric patients before the beginning of the illness than of the control population. Further, people were more likely to become psychologically disturbed with a greater number of life events experienced, particularly if they were undesirable life events.

These findings are similar to the results obtained by Lowenthal and Haven (1968). They suggest that social roles and high interaction are correlated with mental health, although they caution that their absence does not necessarily indicate poor mental health. Apparently social resources are less highly correlated with a satisfied state than social deficits are correlated with a depressed state (Lowenthal and Haven).

The self consists of many identities, some of which are more important than others. Horrocks and Jackson (1972) note that "those identities or concepts of highest significance in the self-process are most representative of values held tending to take precedence in an individual's actions" (p.76). These identities may be arranged in order of salience, with salience being defined as "the probability that a given identity will be invoked across a variety of situations" (Thoits, 1983a, p.176). The degree of commitment that one has to an identity determines its salience (McCall & Simmons, 1978, p.76, and Thoits, 1983a). "Commitment is a function of the number of affective importance, and multiplicity (or overlap) of network ties that are formed by the person enacting an identity" (Thoits, 1983a, p.176).

In other words, it is a reflection of cultural ranking of the subjective importance attached to the different identities; the amount of work invested in them, and the degree to which the identities are tied to one another (Thoits, 1983a).

Some identities are more salient than others and provide greater meaning to the individual. Because they have more meaning, they play a more crucial part in the structure or perception the individual has of him/herself. Horrocks and Jackson (1972, p. 97) comment that the loss of an identity or cluster of identities which are particularly meaningful to the individual will cause a great deal of self-disorientation since many of his/her self-meanings have been removed.

It also seems logical to assume that in general, the more salient identities one possesses, the less likely one is to be greatly affected by the loss of any single identity - over the longer term. Horrocks and Jackson (1972, p.102) state that the greater the number of identities one possesses, the better the chance for flexible adaptation. In addition, the fewer identities one has, the greater the probability of serious disruption occurring due to the loss of a single identity, since there is a greater chance of it being a salient identity and there is a dearth of other identities to take its place.

Identities may have a great deal of importance in regards to the elderly. Aging is often considered to be a time of loss. Some of these losses may include retirement, death of a spouse, death of friends, or a decline in health. If one has few identities then the

loss of one or more of them could be very traumatic, since they give meaning and purpose to life. When faced with a situation (especially if it is new or novel) in which one must adapt, the person will have much more difficulty because he/she does not have as many resources. On the other hand, one who has many identities will not be as distressed over the loss of one or more identities since there are other identities to rely on to help fill the gap. Thus, when faced with a new or novel situation, the person will be better able to adapt since a number of resources are still available.

Social Support and Adaptation

The third factor is social support. A number of researchers have found that a confidant or a supportive social network is essential in dealing with stress (Lin, Ensel, Simeone, & Kuo, 1977; Lowenthal & Haven, 1968; Meuller, 1980; Monroe, Imhoff, Wise, & Harris, 1983; Pearlin, Lieberman, Menaghan, & Mullan, 1981; Turner, 1981). Also, Haas-Hawkings (1978), and Gallagher, et al. (1982), found that adaptation was less difficult when the elderly person had someone to confide in. Williams, Ware and Donald (1981) found that at low, medium, and high levels of life events, those who had more social support experienced better mental health. However, Pearlin, et al. (1981) point out that simply having friends or family does not ensure that one will be the automatic beneficiary of support when it is needed. They suggest that:

the degree to which people can draw on
social relations for support depends on

> more than either the extensiveness of the
> relations or the frequency of interaction.
> Support comes when people's engagement
> with one another extends to a level of
> involvement and concern, not when they
> merely touch at the surface of each
> other's lives (Pearlin, et al., 1981, p.
> 340).

Connor, Powers, and Bultena (1979), also warn against the "more is better" assumption. It is not important how often or with how many one interacts, but rather the reason for getting together, under what circumstances and with what degree of intimacy. Lowenthal and Haven (1968) also seem to support this view. Their findings suggest that intimacy is a significant factor in maintaining a sense of well-being. They believe that the presence of a confidant acts as a buffer against other life strains. Brown, Ni Bhrolchain, and Harris (1975) also found that those rated as high in intimacy were much less likely to become disturbed than those who were low in intimacy.

For elderly people, it seems to be important to maintain close ties with one's friends and relatives since they help one to adjust as well as to buffer against stressful events (Chappell, 1981). In her study of elderly people (aged 65 and over) Chappell (1983) found that the subjects' families were comprised of peers as well as younger members. However, their friends were almost exclusively age peers. It would appear that these people do have intergenerational contact but the majority of contact is with age peers.

In terms of the changes in technology, morals and values, a confidant or supportive social network may be very beneficial by acting as a buffer and exposing the person to the changes "by

providing the information needed to reduce or eliminate drastic psychological or physical consequences of life change..."(Lin, et al., p. 109). This is particularly true if there are a number of younger people within the social network. In such a situation, a confidant can act as a shock absorber between the outside world, which is changing at an ever accelerating rate and the person who is trying to deal with the multitude of changes. They can assist the person understand the changes in a way that they can relate to and at a speed which they can deal with. In this way, a confidant may help a person feel more in tune with the world instead of being so alienated by it.

These three factors all affect the ability to cope and adapt to some degree . Some relevant studies are reviewed here to demonstrate the actual effects that they have on people.

Research on Relevant Factors

The literature on the number of coping strategies used seems to be virtually non-existent. Michaelson, et al. (1982) studied the number of coping strategies used in conjunction with the type of strategies utilized. Their findings suggest that those who were better able to cope, used more coping strategies and that a higher percentage of these strategies were cognitive, which enhanced their understanding of the problem. Pearlin and Schooler (1978) also studied coping strategies used by respondents. They interviewed a representative sample of 2300 people between the ages of 18 and 65

and concluded that no matter how good it may be, no single coping strategy is likely to be as effective as a number of strategies. Pearlin and Schooler (1978) also add that "the greater the scope and variety of the individual's coping repertoire, the more protection coping affords" (p.18). Indeed, they suggest that the best situation is to have a large number of coping strategies in addition to a great deal of resources rather than one or the other.

Pearlin and Schooler (1978) outlined three basic coping functions. In the first group were responses which would modify the situation. In doing so, the strain should be reduced or eliminated. They found however that in their interviews very few people mentioned this sort of strategy. The second type of coping function requires redefining the meaning of the problem. This may work by 1). "cognitively neutralizing" (p.6) the difficult or threatening situation so that it is no longer defined as threatening, or 2). control the meaning of the situation once it has occurred, but before one begins to experience stress (selective ignoring). This strategy was definitely the most commonly used. The third type of coping function involves responses which help to control the stress after it has occurred. This strategy does not modify the situation but merely helps one accept it. This may take a number of forms such as:

> denial, passive acceptance, withdrawal, an element of magical thinking, a hopefulness bordering on blind faith, and belief that avoidance of worry and tension is the same as problem solving (Pearlin and Schooler, 1978, p. 7).

The most effective type of coping strategy also depends on the situation. Pearlin and Schooler (1978) found that problems which arose with people with whom one has close interpersonal relationships are less likely to be stressful provided that the persons involved "remain committed to and involved in those relationships" (p.11). In terms of finances and work the opposite was found to be true. If people disengage themselves from the situation, stress is less likely to occur (Pearlin and Schooler, 1978).

Folkman and Lazarus (1980) also found the type of coping used varied depending on the situation. Their findings suggest that problems in health were associated with emotion focused coping, whereas problems in work were associated with problem focused coping. Problem focused coping describes "cognitive problem-solving efforts and behavioral strategies for altering or managing the source of the problem" (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980, p. 224). Emotion focused coping includes "cognitive and behavioral efforts directed at reducing or managing emotional distress" (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980, p. 225).

The research on identities is also rather sparse. Thoits (1983) conducted a study on identities. The data from this study were from the New Haven community survey which was conducted by another set of researchers (Myers et al., 1971, 1974). Initially, the sample consisted of 1095 people selected at random from a community health center catchment area in greater New Haven. Not all respondents could or would be interviewed, therefore, in 1967 a total of 938 people were interviewed and two years later 720 people from the original sample were interviewed. Thoits' (1983a) sample was based on the data from

the remaining 720 people, which she states is very similar to the original cohort, with the exception of the under 30 years age group which dropped from 25% of the sample in 1967 to 19% in 1969. Other than this, Thoits (1983a) does not give any information on the sample. However, Myers et al. (1974) state that the sample "represents a cross section of the community's population and includes all ethnic, racial and socioeconomic groups."

Thoits (1983a) hypothesized that social identities provide meaning, purpose and behavioral guidance to life and "these qualities are essential for psychological well-being and organized, functional behavior" (p.183). The results from the study indicate that people with numerous identities reported significantly less psychological distress, and the more identities accumulated, the larger the decrease in distress. In addition, significant results were obtained which showed that a change in identity was inversely related to change in distress. Thoits (1983a) also tried to determine which of two theories would be supported. The first was the time and energy commitment proposition which suggests that isolated people (those who have few identities) will be more psychologically affected by identity gains or losses than people who are integrated (possess many identities). In other words, increases will be more beneficial and losses more detrimental to isolated than integrated persons.

The second theory is the network-embeddedness conception of commitment which suggests a change in one's identity will have a greater psychological impact on integrated rather than isolated people. This is due to the overlap and connections between

identities.   If an identity is lost, then the network will be affected because disruption occurs within all the other areas which the identity overlapped with.   The results support the latter argument.

Thoits (1983a) also examined four socio-demographic variables (age, sex, family income, and education).   The findings suggest that women show significantly higher levels of distress than men, and that distress is reduced significantly by age, family income, and education.   The results also indicate that people under 30 or over 60 tend to have the fewest identities; and identity gains are more frequent among people who are under 50 years, whereas identity losses are more common among persons over 50 years.

Finally, there have been a number of studies on the importance of social support and confidants on the coping process.   One of these was conducted by Monroe, et al. (1983) and tested the relationship between life events, social support and symptom specificity.   It was hypothesized that social support variables would be related to follow-up symptoms.   The sample used for this study consisted of 167 university students from introductory psychology classes of which 47 were male and 120 were female. Their findings suggest that social support does act as a moderating factor on the impact of life events.   Also, those who had a few close friends and who perceived events as being undesirable were more likely to exhibit diverse types of symptoms. Thus, it would appear that social support does play an important role in alleviating stress. Unfortunately, the results of this study are not generalizable due to the sample used, since it is

not representative of the population.

Turner (1981) designed a study in which he wished to determine "whether social support has important effects in its own right or is important wholly, or largely, as a buffer against unusual stress" (p.358). The sample used for this study was obtained from four distinct populations, however, none were representative of the general population. The findings of this study suggest that "there is a significant and substantial relationship" (p. 362) between social support and psychological well-being for all four populations. It also appears that social support has significant main effects and is an important factor in stressful circumstances.

Another study was conducted by Lowenthal and Haven (1968) on an aged population. This study was designed to analyze the relationship between interaction (intimacy) and adaptation. The parent sample included 600 persons aged sixty and over whom were drawn from census tracts in San Francisco. The respondents were interviewed at three intervals approximately a year apart. At the end of this time there were only 280 respondents remaining. As with the other studies the sample used in this experiment was not representative. The results indicated that "there is a clear and consistent relationship between social resources and good morale, and between social deprivation and low morale" (p. 24). Lowenthal and Haven (1968) also found that intimacy was significantly related to a subjective sense of well-being. Finally, their hypothesis that intimacy influences positive adaptation was confirmed.

Finally, Pearlin, et al., (1981) conducted a longitudinal study

on the stress process. The original sample for this study was comprised of 2,300 adults between the ages of 18 and 65, and was representative of the U.S. census-defined urbanized area of Chicago. After four years when the follow-up was conducted they had a total of 1,106 respondents. This rather large decrease in the number of respondents could drastically affect the results. Pearlin, et al. (1981) note that the attrition was to a small extent disproportionate among young, non-white males of limited income but do not give any further information on those who did not complete the study. They also state that the generalizability of the findings is decreased due to the select stressors that they studied.

One of the things which Pearlin et al. (1981) wished to determine was the role of mediators (coping and social supports) in the stress process. At the outset of the paper they noted that:

> Persistent role strains can confront people with dogged evidence of their own failures-or lack of success- and with inescapable proof of their inability to alter the unwanted circumstances of their lives. Under these conditions, people become vulnerable to the loss of self-esteem and to the erosion of mastery (Pearlin, et al., 1981, p. 340).

When the role of mediators was tested, it was found that coping did help to reduce stress and that social support was most important in helping to maintain a positive self-concept. Although social support could not alleviate the stress, it did help to protect the subjects from suffering a decline in self-esteem and mastery.

Although the concept of social support is not identical to the concept of identities, there are many areas of overlap. For example, it stands to reason that anyone with a large number of identities will also be fairly high in social support, since each identity will provide contact with at least one person, and some identities such as church member or a member of an organization should provide contact with quite a few individuals. McCall & Simmons (1978) note that people are rewarded "in the coin of social support of identities..." (p. 81). Conversely, one who has few identities will probably be correspondingly low in social support. A person who is lacking the identities of spouse, parent, friend, or organizational member will probably also be lacking in social support since the people who usually give a lot of social support are missing (spouse, child, friends). Social support and identities are two sides of the same coin, and as such are related in many ways. Since these two factors are so closely related, they will be combined. Instead of differentiating between social support and identities, they will be treated as one factor, called roles.

These two factors (number of coping strategies, number of roles) are not mutually exclusive. In many cases they combine to affect the ability to cope.

Relationship Between Factors

The ability to cope is affected by number of roles and the number of coping strategies that are available.

The number of coping strategies one has will also affect the ability to cope. A greater number of coping strategies available for use will increase the probability of being able to cope well. Also, those with a high number of roles should utilize a greater repertoire of coping strategies than those with few roles.

The possession or accumulation of a large number of roles should be beneficial in terms of adaptation. The more roles one possesses, the better one should know who one is and how to behave. "The greater the number of roles held, the stronger one's sense of meaningful, guided existence" (Thoits, 1983a, p. 175). Also, as Kaplan (1983) points out, one's resources are derived from membership in social groupings. These groupings help to provide the individual with the information required in order function well in society. Thus as the number of groups one has membership in increase, so do the chances of obtaining the required resources. Palmore et al. (1979) and Guttmann (1978) found that people with more resources had less difficulty in adapting than those with fewer resources. Those with more roles will in all probability have more resources and should therefore be better able to adapt. In addition, as the membership in groups increases, so does the probability of having a large support network. Lowenthal & Haven (1968) and Meuller (1980), found that a supportive social network was beneficial in adapting.

Other studies reviewed on roles and coping suggest that the number of roles plays an important part in the ability to cope. Having a number of roles, or a confidant may help to expose the elderly person to the changes in technology, morals, and values. The

confidant can explain or help familiarize the elderly person with the changes so that they are not so foreign. As Lin, et al. (1979), suggests, having a source of information may serve as a buffer and "reduce or eliminate drastic psychological or physical consequences of life changes" (p.109). Conversely, the presence of a confidant or a supportive social network may assist in maintaining a positive self-concept (Pearlin, et al., 1981) thus reducing the chance of losing control or of feeling overwhelmed.

These are the proposed relationships between the variables reviewed in this study. Following are the specific hypotheses which will be examined.

Hypotheses

1. The elderly with high ego development will report less difficulty in coping with the technology than those with low ego development.

2. The elderly with high ego development will report less difficulty in coping with the morals and values of today than those with low ego development.

3. The elderly with high ego development will have more coping strategies than those with low ego development.

4. The elderly who are high in measures of social support will have less difficulty in coping with the technology than those who are low in social support.

5. The elderly who are high in measures of social support will have less difficulty in coping with the morals and values of today than those who are low in social support.

6. Elderly people with a large number of identities (integrated) will have fewer problems in coping with the technology than those with few identities (isolated).

7. Elderly people with a large number of identities (integrated) will have fewer problems in coping with the morals and values of today than those with few identities (isolated).

Methodology

Sample

The sample used in this study consisted of 51 elderly respondents (people aged 60 years or older) who are currently living in Greater Victoria. Obtaining a sample posed a problem for a number of reasons, one of which was the lack of contacts in Victoria and the surrounding communities.

Many organizations did not want researchers. Some senior's activity centres approached already had a number of researchers conducting studies. The director of one activity centre pointed out that the seniors come to the centre to have fun and did not wish to answer questionnaires.

The sample was finally obtained through elderly volunteers at a senior's lodge (n=7), members of the Senior's Peer Counselling Course (n=15), members of the Victoria Gerontology Association (n=10), a senior's orchestra (n=9), and friends' parents (and their friends; n=10)).

At the time the research was conducted, none of the respondents were institutionalized; they were all living in the community. Thirty-six, (70%) percent of the subjects were female, and the remaining 15 subjects were male. The sample had a higher percentage of female respondents than is found in the general population. According to Statistics Canada (1981), for the 65 - 85 year age group there is a ratio of four women for every three men. For the 85 year and over age group this ratio changes to two females for every male.

The present sample includes the 60-64 years age bracket. Since the proportion of men is higher for younger age groups, this sample should have a higher proportion of men than is found in the 1980Statistics Canada census. This sample is not representative of similar age groups in the population.

The majority of respondents (39 of 51) fell into the 60 - 74 year age group while only twelve respondents were over seventy-five. The people in this sample appear to be well educated. A total of 39 (76%) respondents completed high school and of those 9 (17.6%) took some university training and 14 (27.5%) received one or more degrees. According to Statistics Canada (1981) less than half of the elderly have completed grade 9 and only 5% reported having a university certificate. As age increases, the percentage of elderly who have less than nine years schooling increases from 48% of people aged 65-74 to 61% of people aged 85 and over (Statistics Canada, 1981). It appears that the respondents in this sample are better educated than the respondents in the Statistics Canada survey. Relative to education, this sample is not representative of the elderly population.

Measures

The respondents were asked to complete a questionnaire consisting of five sections. The first section (Appendix A) was a measure of demographic variables. The next section (Appendix B) assessed the reported ability to cope with the changes in technology. As there were no existing measures this measure had to be constructed.

Questions regarding technological innovations as computers and banking machines were included to try to determine whether or not the respondents are familiar with them. They were also asked whether they felt comfortable using some of the new products. A score of 1 was given for a reply which indicated adaptation to changes in technology, 0 for a response of "Don't know" and 0 for an answer which indicated an inability to adapt. Questions 1 and 2 and 6 were not included in the score since they did not determine the ability or inability to cope. The possible range of scores for this measure was 0 to 9. The ability or inability to adapt was then compared with the number of reported roles in order to test the fourth hypothesis.

Appendix C illustrates the measure for morals and values which comprised the third section of the questionnaire. As with the preceeding section of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked questions regarding how they felt about some of the changes in morals and values, such as living common-law, or premarital sex, as well as whether or not they believe the morals land values they hold are the same as the younger generations. This measure was scored in the same manner as the preceeding questionnaire with a possible range of scores from 0 to 5. Questions 1, 3, 4, and 9 were not included in the scoring since they either did not determine the ability or inability to cope with changes in morals and values, or the questions were later considered to be too subjective to be accurate, and therefore were not included. Since the social support and identities measure were combined, the fifth and seventh hypotheses were tested by comparing the number of reported roles with the ability to adapt

to changes in morals and values.

The fourth section of the questionnaire (Appendix D) measured the number of roles. The purpose was to establish the amount of social support received, both from friends and relatives and to determine the number of identities one possessed. Thoits (1983a) used the following social positions to assess the number of identities: spouse, parent, employee, student, organizational member, church member, neighbor and friend. For each category indicated, the respondent received a score of "1" giving a range of scores from 0 to 8. This seemed insufficient since the respondent may belong to more than one organization, or have more than one friend.

Questions 1 through 6 were used to determine the number of roles the person possessed. The respondents received a score of 0 if they were not married, had no children, were not working, did not belong to any organization, or go to church. A score of 1 was given if the respondent was married, had one or two children, was working, belonged to one or two organizations, goes to church or has less than twenty friends. A score of 2 was given to respondents who had three or more children, had more than twenty friends, or belonged to three or four organizations. Finally, a score of 3 was given to those who belonged to more than five organizations. Initially, questions 7 through 10 were included in the scoring. These questions were designed to determine how much social support a person received, and were scored by assigning weight according to how close the friend or relative was, as well as how often the respondent saw him or her. The scores were then summed to give a measure of social support.

However, many of the respondents did not answer the questions accurately, and many questions were left unanswered. Therefore these questions were eliminated from the scoring. The possible range of scores was from 0 to 10.

The Coping Inventory (Horowitz & Wilner, 1980) was used to establish the number of coping strategies used. This measure was scored by giving a score of 1 for each strategy selected, and adding the number of stategies used together. The possible range for this measure was 0 to 33. The number of coping stategies used were compared with the ability to adapt to the changes in technology and and the changes in morals and values to test the sixth and seventh hypotheses respectively.

Non-parametric measures were applied for testing all of the hypotheses. To employ parametric statistics the population must be normally distributed and measurement must at least be at the interval level. However, the distribution of this population was not known. In addition, the measures are at the ordinal level instead of at the interval level. Therefore, nonparametric statistics were deemed more appropriate.

Results

The type of the measures used in this study did not permit the use of parametric statistical tests. The non-parametric statistic chosen was the Median Test. This test is analagous to the parametric correlated samples t-test. The Median Test "is a procedure which can be used to test whether two or more independent samples (groups) differ in central tendency" (Huck, Cormier, & Bounds, 1974, p. 206).

Using this test, the probability of two groups having the same median may be determined. The median responses on each variable are calculated, and the groups are separated into two categories, those above, and those below the median. This is done for for both variables. The frequency of occurence is calculated, giving a table with four possible cells. In the first cell are those people who were above the median on both variables. In the second cell are those who were above the median on the first variable, and below it on the second variable. The third cell contains those who are below the median on the first variable and above the median on the second variable. Finally, the fourth cell contains those people who were below the median on both variables (Huck, Cormier, & Bounds, 1974).

The Chi-square distribution was used to compute the calculated value for the Median Test.

Table 1 lists the range, mean, median, mode and standard deviation for each variable.

Table I

Range, Mean, Median, Mode, and Standard Deviation by Variable

Variable	Range	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation
Roles	2-9	6.073	6	7	1.634
Coping Strategies	10-32	22.941	24	29	5.394
Technology	1-9	5.196	5	6	1.822
Morals and Values	0-5	2.353	3	3	.05224

Demographic Variables

The sample used for this study consisted of 36 (70.5%) women and 15 (29.4%) men.   The ages of the respondents range from the 60-64 year category through to the 90+ category.   The modal age range was the 70-74 year age range.

The following table illustrates the age breakdowns for men and women.

Table II

Breakdown of Age Categories by Sex

Age Category	Females N=36 (70.6%)		Males N=15 (29.4%)		Total	
60 - 64	6	(16.7%)	4	(26.7%)	10	(19.6%)
65 - 69	9	(25%)	3	(20%)	12	(23.5%)
70 - 74	10	(27.8%)	7	(46.7%)	17	(33.3%)
75 - 79	6	(16.7%)	1	(6.7%)	7	(13.7%)
80 - 84	3	(8.3%)			3	(5.9%)
85 - 89	1	(2.8%)			1	(1.96%)
90+	1	(2.8%)			1	(1.96%)
		(100.0%)		(100.0%)	51	(100%)

The education level of this sample seemed relatively high. A total of 39 (76.5%) respondents completed high school, and 14 (27.5%) of these received a university degree or an R.N and 9 (17.6%) respondents took some university training, but did not graduate. Only 12 (23.5%) respondents did not complete high school. When this is broken down by sex, 28 (77.8%) women and 11 (73.3%) men completed high school, and 9 (25%) women and 5 (33.3%) men completed a university degree. A total of 9 (25%) women took some university training, but did not graduate, and 8 (22.2%) women and 4 (26.7%) men did not complete high school.

When the occupations were broken down into the categories of white collar, blue collar, clerical, and no response, it was found

that 28 (54.9%) respondents fell into the category of white collar, 3 (5.9%) were in blue collar, and 7 (13.7%) were clerical workers. A total of 13 (25.5%) gave no response.

Hypotheses 1 - 7

The following hypotheses were eliminated from this study due to the serious problems with the ego development questionnaire.

1. The elderly with high ego development will report less difficulty in coping with the technology than those with low ego development.

2. The elderly with high ego development will report less difficulty in coping with the morals and values of today than those with low ego development.

3. The elderly with high ego development will have more coping strategies than those with low ego development.

After pre-testing the questionnaire, it was found that it took a great deal of time to complete. Secondly the scoring for the questionnaire was highly ambiguous. Originally, the sample used for this measure consisted of 543 girls and women with ages ranging from 11 years to over 50 years. However, the majority were very young. Sixty-one percent of the women in this study were thirty years of age or less (Loevinger & Wassler, 1970). Since it could not be scored with any consistency or reliability, and it was not used for elderly people or for men, it was deemed unsuitable, and therefore was removed.

Hypotheses 4 through 7 were not tested as stated since the measures of social support and identities were exceedingly similar and it seemed more appropriate to combine the two measures into one.

4. The elderly who are high in measures of social support will have less difficulty in coping with the technology than those who are low in social support.

5. The elderly who are high in measures of social support will have less difficulty in coping with the morals and values of today than those who are low in social support.

6. Elderly people with a large number of identities (integrated) will have fewer problems in coping with the technology than those with few identities (isolated).

7. Elderly people with a large number of identities (integrated) will have fewer problems in coping with the morals and values of today than those with few identities (isolated).

Accordingly, the two were merged, and the resulting measure of roles was tested with technology and morals and values in alternative hypotheses. In addition, coping strategies were tested with technology and morals and values in the following hypotheses.

1r. Elderly people with a large number of roles will have fewer problems in coping with the new technology than those with few roles.

2r. Elderly people with a large number of roles will have fewer problems in coping with the morals and values of today than those with few roles.

3r. The elderly with many coping strategies will have less difficulty in adapting to the changes in technology than those who have a low number of coping strategies.

4r. The elderly with many coping strategies will have less difficulty in coping with the morals and values of today than those have few coping strategies.

Roles

In the null form, the first hypothesis stated that elderly people with a large number of roles would have the same number of problems in coping with the technology as those with few roles. Table 3 illustrates that the Median Test of this hypothesis produced a chi-square score for this hypothesis of 0.0861 which was not significant (p= .7692).

Table III

Roles in Relation to Technology

	Roles	
Technology	Below Median	Above Median
Above Median	7	12
Below Median	8	14

$$x^2 = .0861$$
$$p = .7692$$

Non-Parametric Median Test

The null form of the second hypothesis stated that people with a large number of roles would have the same number of problems in

coping with the morals and values of today as those with few roles. Table 4 shows that the Median Test chi-square was 1.9331, which was also not significant (p=.1644).

Table IV

Roles in Relation to Morals and Values

| | Roles | |
Morals and Values	Below Median	Above Median
Above Median	6	4
Below Median	9	22

$$X^2 = 1.9331$$
$$p = .1644$$

Non-Parametric Median Test

Coping Strategies

The null form of the third hypothesis predicts that the elderly who are high in the number of coping strategies would have the same amount of difficulty in coping with technology as those who are low in coping strategies. Table 5 illustrates that the Median Test chi-square statistic was 0.0221 and was not significant (p=.8819).

Table V

Coping Strategies in Relation to Technology

Coping Strategies

Technology	Below Median	Above Median
Above Median	12	12
Below Median	14	13

$$X^2 = .0221$$
$$p = .8819$$

Non-Parametric Median Test

The null form of the last hypothesis stated that the elderly who are high in number of coping strategies would have the same amount of difficulty in coping with the morals and values of today when compared to those who are lower in number of coping strategies. The chi-square statistic was 2.0607 and was not significant (p=.1511).

Table VI

Coping Strategies in Relation to Morals and Values

Morals and Values	Coping Strategies	
	Below Median	Above Median
Above Median	3	8
Below Median	23	17

$$X^2 = 2.0607$$
$$p = .1511$$

Non-Parametric Median Test

Discussion

Initially, a measure for Ego Development, consisting of 36 was

included in the questionnaire. When the measure was pre-tested a number of problems were encountered. One major problem with the specific questionnaire was its length (approximately 1 hour). The respondents required a considerable length of time to answer it. Also, when trying to score the questionnaire, it became apparent that the scoring of the measure was rather ambiguous. For example, the first question was "Raising a family ..." The respondent was asked to complete the question. The respondent may complete the question with a comment such as "Raising a family is hard work." The scorer was then expected to judge the level of the response. However, since the scoring manual did not (could not) give examples of all possible responses, the scorer was often left guessing as to which category the respondent should be placed in relative to each question. Finally, the scoring procedures in addition to being ambiguous were very cumbersome.

The findings for hypotheses 1r and 2r comparing roles and technology, and roles and morals and values respectively, failed to reach significance. It appears that there is no relationship between roles and technology. Although it is not significant, a small association may be suggested between the number of roles and acceptance of morals and values. Contrary to the hypotheses, the trend seems to indicate that people who are high in roles are perhaps less able to adapt to changes in morals and values than are those who have a few number of roles. Perhaps people who have a large number of roles and have greater social support are more exposed to age peers who tend to try to maintain the status quo. Therefore, they

are more likely to have the same morals and values as they did when they were younger. Conversely, it may also be that those people who are low in number of roles do not have as much support from age peers, and may be more amenable to the changes that take place, especially if they are exposed to more outside influences such as television.

Problems

The lack of significant findings for the comparison of the number of roles and acceptance of technology and number of roles and acceptance of morals and values may be due to the measure of the number of roles employed. The categories may be too broad and fail to access the nature of a relationship. For example, a person may belong to a number of organizations, but not attend meetings or gatherings very frequently and, even when the person does, he/she may avoid contact with others. Thus, although the person would receive a high score in the number of roles, he/she does not utilize the potential for contact with others, and the roles are not really influential.

An additional problem with this questionnaire is that a fairly large number of respondents (10) did not state how many friends they had, thereby reducing the number of cases which could be used in the analysis. Due to the crudeness of the measure the number of roles the respondents had was not determined in a total of 10 cases. If the measure were more refined, a more accurate determination could be made of the number of roles the respondents possess.

The findings for hypotheses 3r and 4r, comparing the number of coping strategies and acceptance of technology, and the number of coping strategies and acceptance of morals and values respectively, also failed to reach significance. It appears that the number of coping strategies and the ability to adapt to changes in technology are in no way related. However, there does seem to be a slight trend with the number of coping strategies and the ability to adapt to changes in morals and values. There was a higher percentage of respondents who could adapt to the new morals and values in the group who were high in the number of coping strategies than low in coping strategies. Thirty-two percent of those with a high number of coping strategies were able to adapt to the new morals, while only 11.5% of the respondents who were low in the number of coping strategies were able to adapt (see Table 6). Although it is not significant, it appears that the number of coping strategies may have some influence on the ability to adapt to the changes in morals and values.

Also of interest is the fact that when compared with the number of coping strategies, 78% of the respondents reported being unable to adapt to the changes in morals and values. It seems that adapting to changes in morals and values requires that one change too many ingrained basic beliefs which may alter the basic personality structure, and as a result it seems that the respondents left their value systems intact.

Adapting to changes in technology does not require the same type of psychological changes as accepting new morals and values. In a sense, technology is value free as it does not require changes in the

individual's personality.   Dealing with changes in technology is in fact more of a learning process.   One must learn to set a digital watch, or to operate a VCR or a computer. Essentially all one needs is information on the product.

However, this is not true of adapting to changes in morals and values. One may have a great deal of information saying that morals and values have changed and that young people spend their money more readily, or that young people are more inclined to live together than people were in the past. Simply being aware of this or having all the information   does not mean that one agrees with what is happening. Inherent beliefs of right and wrong are involved, and if any changes are to take place, the belief system must agree with the changes in morals and values. If it does not, then the morals and values will not change.

Many older people grew up with the belief that some things cannot be changed, that some things are always right and others are always wrong. They believe in God, or in the nature of things and that these things will always be constants. For people such as this, some morals and values cannot be changed, they must remain the same.

Factors Affecting the Results

A number of factors may have had an impact on the findings (or the lack thereof) of this study.   As described earlier, the sample used was not representative of the population. The proportion of women to men was too high, and the level of education of this group was substantially higher than is found in the general population.

Another problem with the sample was its size. There were only 51 respondents in the study, which was relatively small, and ten respondents did not complete the questionnaire on roles, therefore their responses on this measure could not be used. A larger, more representative sample is required. Any significant results would then be generalizable for the elderly (60 years and over) population.

The major flaw in this study seems to lie in the crudeness of some of the measures. Unfortunately, there were no measures for acceptance of technology or acceptance of morals and values in the existing literature, therefore they had to be developed. These measures may not address all aspects of changes in acceptance of technology and morals and values or may use the wrong criteria for determining adaptation.

Thoits (1983a) had developed a measure of roles, however, it seemed very simplistic, and was altered. Even with the modifications, it still does not seem to access the data required. The categories seem too broad and do not give any information as to the nature of the roles or one's commitment to them. For example, two people may belong to the same organization. One person is not very involved and only goes to meetings or gatherings occasionally. The other person however, attends all meetings and gatherings as well as having administrative duties. As the roles measure stands, each would receive a score of "1" for membership in the organization. The nature of their respective relationships with the organization is scored. It is necessary to determine the salience of the roles, as well as their number. Perhaps if the respondents were asked to

specify each person, organization, etc., and state how important each one is to them a more useful measure would result.

The simplistic nature of the measure of roles causes some speculation as to the findings in Thoits (1983a) study. The questionnaire on roles does not attempt to determine whether the respondent has more than one friend or belong to more than one organization, or to order them in terms of salience. It seems that her findings would be more useful if the measure were to take these things into account.

The roles questionnaire also needed to be changed so that a higher percentage of respondents would answer the question on the number of friends they have. Perhaps if there were a number of categories giving a range of friends which could be checked off, a higher percentage of responses would be received. Many of those who did answer the question were not very specific as to the number of friends they have. For example many respondents stated that they have more than 30 or more than 40 friends, or that they had "many" friends. One respondent stated that he/she had a "legion" of friends. If a number of categories of friends were given (0 - 4, 5 - 9, 10 - 14, etc.) perhaps a more accurate measure would result.

The only measure which does not seem to require any changes is the Coping Inventory (Horowitz and Wilner, 1980) which was used to measure the number of Coping Strategies. The measure seems to be quite straightforward and covers a broad range of coping strategies. At the end a few blank spaces may be included so that the respondents could add strategies they have thought of which were not on the list.

Other Findings

Information about the respondents may also be gleaned by reviewing the manner in which the questionnaires were answered. Many trends become apparent when individual questions are examined. This information is more of a descriptive nature and the answers help to give more depth and understanding about the people who participated in the study. In this particular case, an examination of the answers of the elderly respondents to the questionnaires helps to give a better understanding of the attitudes and feelings towards the changes in technology and morals and values that have occured since their birth. In Appendix B, the questions which measured the respondent's ability to cope with changes in technology, question 3 states "I believe I have been able to adapt to the changes in technology." A total of 43 (84.3%) of the respondents agreed with this statement, while 7.8% (4) answered "Don't know" and a further 7.8% (4) respondents disagreed. When these results are broken down by gender one finds that 80% of males and 86% of females believed they have been able to adapt to the changes in technology. Also, more males than females answered "Don't know" (13.3% compared to 5.6%), while more females believed they were unable to adapt to the changes in technology than males (8.3% as opposed to 6.7%). Despite the fact that eighty-four percent of the men and women in this study believe they have been able to adapt to the changes in technology, a surprising number of respondents agreed with the statement "I often have trouble operating (using) certain products. Thirty-three

percent of the men in this study and 40% of the women agreed with this statement. It would seem that despite the fact that some of these respondents have difficulty in operating some of the products, they believe that they have been able to adapt to the changes in technology. This may seem contradictory, but in fact may be easily explained. Andrews, Tennant, Hewson and Vaillant (1978) believe that there are three factors accounting for individual differences in reacting and dealing with stress. The first factor is the appraisal, or the significance of the events, which is influenced by prior experience in dealing with similar events. Secondly, personality attributes, or the ability to control events influences coping. Finally, coping strategies help to ameliorate or eliminate stress. The respondents in this study who agreed that they have been able to adapt to the changes in technology, may not have defined or appraised the inability to operate all products easily as being threatening. Also, they may believe they are essentially in control and are confident that the problem may be worked out. Finally, they may possess effective coping strategies such as seeking help from friends. Thus, although the respondents occasionally had difficulty in operating products, on the whole, they perceive themselves as being able to adapt to the changes in technlology.

It is also possible that this question was misinterpreted due to the ambiguousness of the term "difficulty." "Difficulty" may be interpreted to mean that people did not understand how to use a product and had trouble operating it. It may also be that some respondents were unable to operate products because of physical

limitations. A person with arthritis may have difficulty in operating a banking machine because his/her hands are crippled, not because they did not understand how to use it.

Another unexpected finding which also suggests that the elderly believe they are essentially in control of the new technology, is the response to question 10 (Appendix B) which asks if they have used a personal computer, or if they have not, if they would like to learn to use one. A total of 70.6% of the respondents affirmed their use or desire to use a personal computer. A few people commented that they would like to use one properly, suggesting that perhaps they had tried to use a computer, but had not received adequate or proper instruction, leaving them confused as to what to do. Given good instruction, most seemed quite willinig to learn to use a computer. Only 29.4% answered that they had not or did not desire to use a personal computer. However, a few people who gave a negative response also commented that they had no need to learn to use a personal computer.

There were also a number of interesting findings in regards to the ability to adapt to changes in morals and values. In Appendix C, question 2 states "I am able to understand and relate to the young people of today." A total of 56.9% (29) respondents agreed with this, while 27.5% (14) people answered "Don't know," and the remaining 15.7% (8) disagreed with this statement. When broken down by gender, a sex differences emerges. Sixty-one percent (22) of women agreed that they can relate to the young people of today, while only 46.7% (7) of the men agreed. Also, 11.1% (4) of the women

disagreed, while 26.7% (4) men disagreed. The percentage of "Don't know" responses for the males and females was almost identical (26.7% and 27.8% respectively).

The number of women who believe they can relate to the young people of today is considerably higher than for the men. This may indicate a greater degree of flexibility on the part of women than for men, or it may be a reflection of the fact that women talk about their problems and feelings more and get to know people better than men do. Perhaps women are a little more accepting and non-judgemental, thereby allowing them to discuss sensitive subjects more easily than their males counterparts, even though they may not agree with the attitudes of the younger person.

It may also be that structural conditions facilitate the ability of women to relate to the young people of today. In the past, as well as today women have been the kin keepers, or the ones who maintain contact with the rest of the family (Shanas, 1979; Shanas, 1980). They are more likely to phone, send Christmas cards or to write letters than the males in the family, therefore they come in contact with more people of various ages. This improves their ability to deal with people.

The respondents in this study did not seem to hold the same morals and values as the younger generations. In response to the statement "The young people of today hold values which are different to the ones I hold" (question 4, Appendix C) 78.4% (40) of the respondents agreed. Slightly less than 10% (5) answered "Don't know" and 11.8% (6) disagreed with this statement. To the statement "The

morals I hold are the same as the morals which the younger generations hold (question 9, Appendix C) 62.7% (32) of the respondents disagreed, 7.8% (4) agreed, and a considerable portion (15 or 29.4%) answered "Don't know."

Having a different set of morals and values compared to the young people of today would seem to be stress producing, especially if one must deal with the young. However, Merton (1957) points out that this need not be so. "Each social status involves not a single associated role, but an array of roles" (p. 110). Therefore, for every social status there is a role-set. For example, one may hold the position of teacher. The role-set would include students, the principal, colleages, the superintendent, and professional organizations (Merton, 1957).

One characteristic of the role-set is that one is insulated from observation by members of the role-set. In other words, it is not very often that all members of a role-set will be present at once. "This fundamental fact allows for role-behavior which is at odds with the expectations of some in the role-set to proceed without undue stress" (Merton, 1957; p. 114). This fact may allow the elderly to get along with their peers, as well as to understand their children, or other young people, with little or no stress.

Although eighty-four percent of the subjects believe they have been able to adapt to the changes in technology, the number of respondents who have modified their morals and values is considerably less. Seventy-eight percent believed that they held different values and 63% believed they held different morals than the young people of

today. Since values (and morals) are integral to one's personality, this is not surprising. As Clark (1967) noted, the personality is based on the values held. Therefore, if these are changed, they can threaten one's reality, or the way in which the world is viewed. Continuity of value systems is critical especially since it appears to be part of the adaptive process (Lowenthal & Chiriboga, 1973). Values "are the building blocks, not only of self-esteem, but also of the very definition of reality" (Clark, 1967, p. 62). Values also provide the yardstick for measuring worth, as well as the criteria or standard for measurement of behavior, and modes of conduct (Horrocks & Jackson, 1972, p. 52). An attempt to alter these morals and values would be an extremely difficult and in all probability a very dangerous task since one's reality is based on them. Since this is out of the question for the majority of people, they continue to hold morals and values which were established in the past.

However, since technological innovations are not as threatening to the identity and reality of the individual, they may be changed more readily. Thus, the majority of people in this study (84%) believe they have been able to adapt to the changes in technology, while the majority have not been able to adapt to the changes in morals (62.7%) and values (78.4%).

Some of the responses to questions were rather surprising. The percentage of people who either had or would like to learn to use a personal computer was quite high (70.6). Another surprise came when the respondents were asked to comment on the statement "I believe it is acceptable for people to live together, outside the bonds of

marriage" (question 8, Appendix C). A total of 51% (26) people agreed with this statement; 11.8% (6) answered "Don't know", and 37.3% (19) disagreed. When these results are broken down by sex we find that 53.3% of men believed that it is not acceptable for people disagreed. A considerably larger percentage of males disagreed with this than females. It seems that there may be a double standard and that men are less accepting of people living together than women. Alternatively, this difference may be somewhat illusory since many women (16.7%) answered "Don't know" while all of the male respondents either agreed or disagreed with the statement.

It may also be that this question was interpreted differently by the respondents. The question does not specify who is living together. One is left guessing as to whether the people living together are a couple of teenagers, or if they are two widowed adults. The question is rather ambiguous and the responses will have been affected according to the way in which the respondents interpreted it.

In general, it would seem that the respondents of this study were better able to adapt to the changes in technology than the changes in morals and values. Although some of the respondents were not completely familiar or comfortable with all of the technological innovation, on the whole, they seem to believe they have been able to adapt to the changes that have occured since their birth. However, they did not seem to adjust to the changes in morals and values as well as the technological changes. As mentioned earlier, this is to be expected since changes in morals and values may require changes in

the structure of the personlity, and is therefore   much more
threatening.   Nonetheless, a large portion of the respondents felt
that they were able to relate to and understand the young people of
today.   Even though the elderly respondents do not hold the same
beliefs as young people, many are still able to understand and accept
them.

Conclusion

Canada's population is rapidly aging, and the proportion of
elderly people is increasing considerably.   In addition, we are in a
period of extremely rapid changes in terms of technology as well as
to live together outside the bonds of marriage, while only 30.5% of
women in morals and values. These changes will impact upon all ages
of society,   however, some people will be able to cope more
effectively than others.

The elderly of today have already had to adapt to many changes
during   their lifetime, and despite the increasing · pace   of
technological change, most elderly feel they have been able to adapt
to the changes. Although most of the elderly have not changed their
morals and values it seems that many are still able to understand and
relate to the young people of today.   There is a fairly sizeable
portion who do not feel they can relate to the young people of
today.   Since it is difficult to changes one's morals and values,
future research may be aimed at identifying factors which help the
elderly to be able to understand, accept and relate to people with

different morals and values.

Despite the findings in this study, it still seems likely that the number of roles and number of coping strategies are important in adapting to changes. Future research may be aimed at refining this measures to determine their relationship to coping. Also, it seems likely that both the number of roles and the number of coping strategies would be essential in helping the elderly to understand and relate to the young people of today, in addition to learning to operate some of the new products on the market, such as computers and banking machines. It seems that some of the respondents would be more willing to try these things if they simply had someone who was patient, and would take the time to show them what to do.

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Appendix A

Measure of Demographic Variables

Instructions:

The following is a set of questions designed to find out more about you. Please indicate the appropriate category by placing a check mark ( ) in front of the answer.

e.g. _____ Yes
_____ No

1. Age:
   _____ 60 - 64   _____ 80 - 84
   _____ 65 - 69   _____ 85 - 89
   _____ 70 - 74   _____ 90 or over
   _____ 75 - 79

2. Sex:
   _____ Male
   _____ Female

3. Did you complete high school?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No - If you did not, what was the last grade you
                completed? _____

4. Did you complete university?
   _____ Yes   What degree(s) did you obtain? _____
   _____ No   How many years did you complete? _____

5. Have you worked outside of the home?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No - Please skip the remaining questions and go to
                                Section 2.

6. Are you retired?
   _____ Yes   In what year did you retire _____
   _____ No

7. What is or was your last title or position in work?

_____

Appendix B

Measure of the Impact of Technology

Instructions:

The purpose of the questions in this section is to determine your opinions on certain subjects. Please indicate your choice by placing a check mark ( ) in the blank space in front of the answer you have chosen.

1. There have been a great number of technological changes since I was born.

_____ Agree   _____ Don't Know   _____ Disagree

2. The rate of technological change has been increasing.

_____ Agree   _____ Don't Know   _____ Disagree

3. I believe I have been able to adapt to the changes in technology.

_____ Agree   _____ Don't Know   _____ Disagree

4. I have used the automated teller machine at my bank.

_____ Yes - I feel comfortable using the automated teller
machine.   _____ Yes
                _____ No

_____ No - If I were given the opportunity I would like to
learn to use the automated teller machine.
                _____ Yes
                _____ No

5. The fact that the rate of technological change has been increasing does not worry me.

_____ Agree   _____ Don't Know   _____ Disagree

6. I do not understand the theory behind the operation of a lot of todays products (e.g. digital watches, calculators).

_____ Agree   _____ Don't Know   _____ Disagree

7. I often have trouble operating (using) certain products.

_____Agree   _____ Don't Know   _____ Disagree

8. I sometimes feel overwhelmed because I do not know how products work.

_____ Agree　　　　_____ Don't Know　　　　_____ Disagree

9. The fact that the computer will be used even more in the future does not worry me.

_____ Agree　　　　_____ Don't Know　　　　_____ Disagree

10. I have used a personal computer.

_____ Yes - I feel comfortable using a personal computer.
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　_____ Yes
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　_____ No
_____ No - If I were given the opportunity, I would like to learn to use a personal computer.
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　_____ Yes
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　_____ No

Appendix C

Measure of the Impact of Morals and Values

Instructions:

As with the questions in the last section, the questions in this section are to find out what your opinions are on certain subjects. Please indicate your choice by placing a check mark ( ) in the space in front of the answer you have chosen.

1. The morals of people have changed since I was young.

_____ Agree   ___ Don't Know   _____ Disagree

2. I am able to understand and relate to the young people of today.

_____ Agree   _____ Don't Know   _____ Disagree

3. The spending practices of the younger generation are different from my own.

_____ Agree   _____ Don't Know   _____ Disagree

4. The young people of today hold values which are different from the ones I hold.

_____ Agree   _____ Don't Know   _____ Disagree

5. I do not feel there is anything wrong with premarital sex.

_____Agree   _____ Don't Know   _____ Disagree

6. Divorce is not an acceptable solution to an unsuccessful marriage.

_____ Agree   _____ Don't Know   _____ Disagree

7. Children should take their elderly parents into their own homes rather than send them to institutions.

_____ Agree   _____Don't Know   _____ Disagree

8. I believe that it is acceptable for people to live together, outside the bonds of marriage.

_____ Agree   _____ Don't Know   _____ Disagree

9. The morals I hold are the same as the morals which the younger generations hold.

_____ Agree   _____ Don't Know   _____ Disagree

Appendix D

Measure of Number of Roles

Instructions:

The purpose of this set of questions is to find out about your activities and friends. Please indicate your choice by placing a check mark ( ) in the space in front of the answer you have chosen or by filling in the blank where appropriate.

1. Are you married?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No

2. How many children do you have? _____

3. Are you working?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No

4. How many organizations, groups or teams do you belong to? _____

5. Do you go to church?
   _____ Yes
   _____ No

6. About how many friends do you have? _____

7. On average, how often do you visit with your friends(s)?

   _____ Two or more times per week
   _____ Once a week
   _____ One time every two weeks
   _____ Once a month
   _____ Less than once a month

8. About how many of these friends do you consider as being close friends)? _____

9. How often would you say you see this person(s) on average?

   _____ Two or more times per week
   _____ Once a week
   _____ One time every two weeks
   _____ Once a month
   _____ Less than once a month

10. How many relatives do you have that you feel close to?

   _____

11. How often would you say you see this person(s) on average?

_____ Two or more times per week
_____ Once a week
_____ One time every two weeks
_____ Once a month
_____ Less than once a month

Appendix E

Measure of Coping Strategies

Instructions:

Below is a list of ways that other people sometimes use to cope with events which they find stressful. Please try to picture a stressful event which you have experienced recently and then read each item on the list and decide whether it applies to you. If it does not, place a check mark ( ) in the box in the DOES NOT APPLY column. If the statement does apply, then place a check mark ( ) in the box in the DOES APPLY column. Please answer EACH item by placing a check mark ( ) in ONE of the boxes.

	DOES NOT APPLY	DOES APPLY

1. I tried to concentrate on other things in my life.

2. I tried to think through the meanings of the event for my life at present.

3. I tried to work out how the event related to my past.

4. I worked to revise my expectations for the future.

5. I tried to find a humorous or even tragicomic element in the event or life in general.

6. I tried to separate the rational from the irrational in my responses.

7. I tried to separate the possible from the unlikely consequences that occured to me.

8. I sought increased emotional support from others.

9. I tried to find new interests.

10. I tried to experience all my feelings and work them through.

11. I sometimes tried to experience feelings and at others tried to put them out of my mind.

12. I tried to put it out of my mind and just go on with my life.

13. I sought consolation in philosophy or religion.

14. I spent more time in nature, listening
to music, with art or writing.

15. I tried to devote myself to my work.

16. I tried to talk about it with others.

17. I tried to find people who had experienced the
same kind of event to see how they dealt with it.

18. I tried to figure out why the event
evoked the feelings it did.

19. I tried not to be bothered by conflicting
feelings in my reactions to the event.

20. I tried to develop an attitude toward the
event which would help me to deal with it.

21. I tried to clarify the choices I have in adjusting
my present life to the effects of the event.

22. I tried not to withdraw from other people.

23. I welcomed some time alone to think about
what had happened.

24. I tried to figure out the consequences of
behaving one way as opposed to another way.

25. I tried not to make any decisions about the future
until I was sure I was seeing things more clearly.

26. I tried to look at my present situation
as realistically as possible.

27. I thought about events from my past which
would help me to cope with the present.

28. I tried to find some other outlets, like
sports, cooking, or gardening, to relieve
some of the feelings I had.

29. I tried doing impulsive things that I had thought about before.

30. I tried to think about the positive things that have happened in my life and compare them with what has happened.

31. I tried to be more useful to others.

32. I looked for a person who could provide direction for me.

33. I tried to remind myself that what had happened could have been worse.