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“The Mirror Crack'd”: Women as Mothers and Wives in Paternally Incestuous Families

Mary deYoung
Western Michigan University

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"THE MIRROR CRACK'D": WOMEN AS MOTHERS AND WIVES
IN PATERNALLY INCESTUOUS FAMILIES

by

Mary deYoung

A Dissertation
Submitted to the
Faculty of The Graduate College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of Sociology

Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo, Michigan
December 1991
Women often are blamed for paternal incest. Although the notion of women's culpability is repeated so often in the literature that it has all the tranquility of an axiom, few studies have even used these women as subjects. This study sought to remedy that flaw by using as its subjects 20 women from paternally incestuous families. Each participated in an in-depth interview comprised of life history questions, and in a shorter follow-up interview.

The women reported a moderate degree of conflict between their roles as mother and wife. Their strategies for coping with that conflict were categorized according to the level of the role process at which they intervened, but the level of coping strategy was not significantly related to the duration of the paternal incest, although it was to its severity.

The women as wives varied in their traditionality as measured by a behavioral index. Traditionality was not significantly related to the duration or the severity of the paternal incest, nor to the preferred type of coping strategy. Analysis also showed that the women as wives had either a female-subordinate or a divided marital power type. No significant relationship was found between marital power type and the duration or the severity of the incest, although one was discovered between marital power type and coping strategy.

The women as mothers also varied in their protectiveness of their daughters upon the discovery or disclosure of the paternal incest. That degree of maternal power, in
turn, varied across the strategies for coping.

These findings contrasted with the conclusions that infuse the literature on paternal incest. The failure to show significant relationships between the women in their role as mother and as wife and the duration or the severity of the paternal incest called into question axioms about collusion and culpability. The findings also showed that these women could be placed along an empowerment continuum that defined not only their unique approaches to role-taking and role-making, but their efficacy in coping, and in exercising marital and maternal power.
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"The mirror crack'd": Women as mothers and wives in paternally incestuous families

deyoung, Mary, Ph.D.
Western Michigan University, 1991
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I would also like to thank the women whose life stories make up the substance of this dissertation. It is through their words that I came to a deeper and richer understanding of being a mother and wife in a paternally incestuous family.

Finally, my gratitude and love to my own parents, Kenneth and Doris, with thanks for a lifetime of love and laughter.

Mary deYoung
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The "Discovery" of Paternal Incest

Paternal Incest as a Contemporary Social Problem

If the sheer volume of textbooks, research monographs and journal articles is a measure of any discipline's interest in a topic, then incest is indeed a matter of noteworthy concern. And it is a particular type of incest, that which occurs between fathers and their daughters, that is of special and recent consideration to such disparate disciplines as sociology, criminology, psychology, law, social work, medicine and public health. So much of a concern has paternal incest become, in fact, that the last decade has witnessed not only the development of an extensive literature on the topic, but also the proliferation of treatment and prevention programs, and the creation of laws and policies for intervention.

These various disciplines' growing concern with paternal incest is shared by the public. Heightened media attention has brought this topic out of the murky and vaguely scintillating realm of erotica in which it once was mired, and into the living rooms of families across the country. Those originally hesitant and tentative grassroots efforts to teach sexual abuse prevention concepts to children have burgeoned into sophisticated programs that are being taught in schools, social organizations, churches and synagogues. Support and therapy groups for adults incestuously abused as children have sprung up in virtually every community, and those for the wives of incestuous men and
even for the men, themselves, are being sponsored by organizations as diverse as mental health centers, hospitals and criminal courts.

It has been a hectic decade. But it has been only a decade in which this intense interest and focus have been placed on paternal incest. And that raises an important and distinctly sociological question: Why and how did paternal incest so recently come to be "discovered" as a social problem deserving both scholarly examination and aggressive intervention?

The type of answer offered to that question is rooted in one or the other of dichotomous sociological models. The in esse model proposes that all social problems, paternal incest no exception, are "objective realities which generate collective behavior and political action" (Mauss, 1977, p. 602). In contrast, the in posse model asserts that social problems, such as paternal incest, are "essentially generated by collective and political processes" (Mauss, 1977, p. 602). Herein lies a problem: the first model can be used to adequately explicate why paternal incest recently was discovered as a social problem, but it cannot address how; the second model clarifies how, but not why. If viewed as discrete sociological models, then neither is truly explanatory.

Both the hows and whys of this recent "discovery" of paternal incest require explanation. In the past it has been rooted in so much myth, misinformation, and even humor, rhymes, jokes and riddles, as to have been dismissed as more folklore and fantasy than reality (Goodwin, 1988; Mulhern, 1990; Rush, 1980); now it is considered a prevalent and devastating form of child sexual abuse. This historical transition from cultural lacuna to social problem needs explanation.

The dialectical model of Troyer and Markle (1982) answers that need. Firmly rooted in the sociology of knowledge, this model is macroscopic in range, historical in context, and is conflict-oriented in its focus on the collective social definitions that arise from the clash and the competition between vested interests in a pluralistic society. It is
robust enough to take into account these inevitable conflicts that accompany historical
transition, and sensitive enough to appreciate the shifts in meanings, definitions and
knowledge that attend it. As such, it helps explain both the "how" and the "why" and,
in the midst of some interdisciplinary competition, reestablishes a sociological domain
for the study of paternal incest.

Dialectical Model

The dialectical model begins with the assumption that at any given point in his­
tory the definition and evaluation of a social condition represents the balance or accom­
modation of competing interests. This assumption requires at the outset, then, that a
historical marker be delineated, and in the specific case of paternal incest as the social
condition under consideration, that historical frame of reference is the early part of this
century.

Master Theorists as Claims-Makers

The choice of that marker is not arbitrary. In the 1920s and 1930s the incest
myths that were the most ancient artifacts of culture were being reinterpreted and revit­
alized by some of the master theorists of the social sciences, perhaps giving credence to
anthropologist White's (1948) droll observation that "incest must indeed be reckoned as
one of man's [sic] major interests in life" (p. 416). The contributions of three of these
masters will demonstrate their influence on early 20th century definitions and evalu­
ations of incest--interpretations that had to be challenged and deconstructed when pater­
nal incest was "discovered" as a social problem just a decade ago.

Emile Durkheim. In an 1898 publication, translated and republished in this
country in 1938, Durkheim attempted to set forth a sociological theory of the incest ta-
boo. His interest in the topic was piqued by the writings of Westermarck, an anthropologist whose extensive field work in Morocco had led to numerous publications on family, marriage and kinship.

Westermarck's explanation for the origin of the prohibition of incest, popularly known as the "aversion hypothesis," was widely quoted at the turn of the century. The hypothesis, itself, was rather ambiguously stated, but its implications were clear enough to set off a maelstrom of debate among the leading social scientists of that and of future generations. Westermarck (1894) asserted that:

Generally speaking, there is a remarkable absence of erotic feelings between persons living very closely together from childhood. Nay more, in this, as in many other cases, sexual indifference is combined with the positive feelings of aversion when the act is thought of. This I take to be the fundamental cause of the exogamous prohibitions. Persons who have been living closely together since childhood and as a rule near relatives. Hence their aversion to sexual relations with one another displays itself in custom and law as a prohibition of intercourse between near kin. (p. 80)

What this hypothesis left to assumption was more provocative than what it stated. First, by conjecturing that sexual selection is influenced by aversion as well as by preference, Westermarck assumed that incest is naturally avoided, rather than prohibited for moral, or for any other reasons. This suggests, in turn, that the seeking of a sexual partner outside of the family is a natural proclivity of some kind, perhaps even an instinct. Second, the hypothesis presumes that this natural aversion was converted in some way into custom and law, even though the aversion, itself, virtually argued against even the existence of the strong incestuous desires against which custom and law would have to defend.

Durkheim, with his theoretical orientation of functionalism, could not embrace that latter idea that a rigid and uncompromising prohibition of incest was necessary and functional when there were no incestuous desires to ban in the first place. But what he believed was the universal presence of an incest taboo required an explanation. To that
end, Durkheim proposed an alternative sociological interpretation that analyzed the functionality of the prohibition of incest by tracing it back to "a much more general religious institution, found at the basis of all primitive religions, and indeed, of all religions--namely, taboo" (Durkheim, 1938, pp. 69-70).

Durkheim speculated that primitive clan members believed that the spiritual essence of their totemic gods resided in the blood of fellow clan members, a belief that imparted a "sentiment of religious horror" (p. 76) to blood. Because females "pass a part of [their] lives in blood" (p. 89), that sentiment of horror naturally extended to them and, more particularly, to acts of intercourse with them. The totem, however, is only sacred to its followers so this prohibition against sexual acts applied exclusively to members of the same clan and resulted in rules prescribing exogamous, that is interclan marriages and proscribing endogamous, or intraclan marriages.

Over time, these rules contracted in scope from the clan to the family, theorized Durkheim, and were transformed with that constriction into specific prohibitions of incest. And while the original and primitive beliefs about totems and blood have long since disappeared, the sentiments and rules regarding incest have persisted in the form of mores and laws, and have become crucial elements of contemporary civilization and morality.

Sigmund Freud. Freud's interpretation of the prohibition of incest is at once sociological and psychoanalytic. The former explains both the origin of the taboo and the emotional and moral fervor with which it is upheld in every culture; the latter accounts for the centrality of the prohibition of incest to normal and pathological personality development. The two interpretations are interrelated in a unique and curious way.

Freud's (1950/1913) sociological interpretation was much in the tradition of
Durkheim, to whom he acknowledged an intellectual debt on the topic of incest. Like most of the master social theorists of his time, Freud accepted an evolutionary explanation of social organization and behavior. Thus, his search for the origin of the incest taboo took him to what he believed were the living examples of the earliest stages of human history, the Australian Aborigines.

Due to their geographic isolation, the Aborigines were liable to a greater temptation to engage in incest than were more sophisticated social groups, reasoned Freud. They therefore were compelled to create a complex social organization with rules, customs and a religion, all of which constrained them from acting upon their incestuous impulses, and protected them from their "horror of incest" (p. 6). Freud traced the etiology of that horror to an act of violence.

The earlier tribe, he conjectured, was patriarchal in nature and was ruled by a jealous and violent father who kept all of the females in the tribe for himself and then banished his sons so that they would pose no threat to his claim. After years of warfare between themselves, the sons united and together murdered their father, and "cannibal savages as they were, it goes without saying that they devoured their victim as well" (p. 142), thereby accomplishing with that act a complete identification with their violent and feared father.

Consumed with guilt, the sons revoked their deed by forbidding the killing of the totem of their tribe, in which their father's spirit resided. Out of shame, they rejected their own sisters and daughters whom they had hoped to reclaim as sexual partners by their murderous act, and sought women outside of the tribe. To do less than that, they realized, would create destructive competition between them and would destroy the power they had found in unity. Thus, Freud concluded, the prohibition of incest was the first cultural act. It set into motion the development of complex kinship and family systems, created religion in the form of totemism, and engendered the formulation of
fervently upheld rules and customs that restrained tribe members from acting upon their incestuous impulses.¹

It is at this point that Freud departed from an essentially sociological analysis of the incest taboo and went on to psychoanalyze the points of articulation between this alleged horror of incest among "these most miserable and backward of savages" (p. 1) and the mental life of neurotics. Based on his extensive experience with neurotic patients undergoing psychoanalysis, Freud concluded that incestuous desires were never extinguished within the intimacy of the nuclear family, as Westermarck had hypothesized. Rather, they intensify during childhood and persist throughout life as repressed desires. Much as the evolutionarily inferior savages were obsessed with incest, the neurotics as adults were reexperiencing the persistent incestuous desires left unresolved during the oedipal stage of their childhood development.

Freud’s analysis of the oedipal stage focused on the son’s incestuous longings for his mother, longings that for a neurotic had never been resolved through the process of identification with the father. The electra complex, the complementary developmental task for a daughter vis-a-vis her father, was given theoretical short shrift. But the neurotic patients who were undergoing psychoanalysis revealed childhood memories at odds with this theoretical focus: it was not the mother’s response to her son’s sexual desires that was most likely to result in incest, but the father’s sexual desire for his daughter. An alarming number of the adult women in psychoanalysis for neuroses alleged a childhood history of paternal incest.

This asymmetry in the observation of the incest taboo was disturbing to Freud. It led him to question the inviolability of the incest taboo and the stability of the cultural system of rules, customs and laws that was built upon it (Rush, 1980). It caused him to wonder whether his own feared father had incestuously abused his sisters who were showing symptoms of neuroses, and whether his feelings for his own daughter were
incestuous in nature (Herman, 1981). And it called into question the propriety of the patriarchal family structure which had developed earlier in that century, and which Freud upheld as the vanguard of civilization (Ward, 1985). Thus compelled to question culture, personal history and family, Freud posed a psychoanalytic interpretation of incest that resolved his turmoil, brought him back into favor with censorious colleagues, and posed no threat to the existing social order (Masson, 1985). He relegated his female patients' recollections of incestuous abuse by their fathers to fantasy and wish, to nothing more than reactions against the inferior status they shared with their mothers, and desires for elevation into the superior company of men.

Bronislaw Malinowski. In an obdurate and occasionally sarcastic manner, anthropologist Malinowski (1927) challenged Freud's psychoanalytic interpretation of incest with a description of the culture of the Trobriand Islanders. Because they traced descent matrilineally, the formal jural authority over a male child rested with his maternal uncle, rather than his father; and it was not his mother who was expressly forbidden to him as a sexual partner, but his sister. This cultural variation on the theme of identification and incestuous desires led Malinowski, in a single ethnographic stroke, to reject Freud's assertion that the oedipal complex was universal.

He also rejected Freud's sociological interpretation of the origin of the incest taboo and offered a different, more functionalist, allegory to account for it. He conjectured that the human family evolved from early animal forms of social organization, but was distinguished from those forms by its mating pattern and its distinctly human capacity for sentiment and culture. That capacity for sentiment allows the human family to invest emotional interest and love into family relationships and bonds, and to extend those bonds beyond the family, itself, thereby contributing to a larger social network.
It is into that network that the child must be socialized. And incest, argued Malinowski, renders socialization difficult, if not impossible, for it results in "the upsetting of age distinction, the mixing up of generations, the disorganization of sentiments, and the violent exchange of roles" (Malinowski, 1927, p. 271). That family disruption, in turn, would have rebounding effects to the larger social network and the cultural forms that characterize it. Thus, on every level of organization, from family, to society, to culture, incest would have chaotic effects. Its prohibition, concluded Malinowski, was a functional prerequisite of society.²

Although the topic of incest was incidental to the ambitious agendas of these and other social scientists, their interpretations of it made profound contributions to the intellectual climate surrounding what another equally eminent but later scholar, Talcott Parsons (1954), referred to as "the most serious impediment to social organization" (p. 115). These interpretations did give the topic of incest a discursive existence in an era in which most things sexual were never even made the subject of discussion, let alone analysis (Foucault, 1990). As interpretations, however, they were seriously flawed. It is these flaws, taken together, that provided the essence of the definition and evaluation of incest that prevailed for over a half century until they were confronted and corrected by contemporary scholars.

The first flaw is that these interpretations confused taboo with behavior. What were presented as discussions of incest were, in reality, discussions of its antithesis, the incest taboo. And it was the taboo in its most reified form that was the focus of discussion. The incest taboo was presented as universal, as a rite of passage, of sorts, through which every society is obliged to pass on its way to becoming a culture. This "rule of rules" (Foucault, 1990, p. 109) was thought to be the *sine qua non* of an orderly society, of stable families, and of morality.
The *reductio ad impossibile* nature of this argument is evident: if every society, from the most primitive to the most sophisticated, is characterized by some degree of stability and morality, then every society not only has an incest taboo, but a functioning incest taboo. The impossible conclusion that argument reduces to is that incest is extraordinarily rare in any given society.

And it is exactly that conclusion that became part of the early 20th century definition of incest. So rare was incest of any type thought to be, that only two of the four studies conducted between 1940 and 1965 on the prevalence of child sexual abuse in general even asked questions about the respondents' experiences with it. And those that did found extremely low rates that only substantiated the prevailing definition's assertion that incest is a rare phenomenon. A summary of the findings of these early prevalence studies is found in Table 1.

There is historical evidence that this aspect of the prevailing definition of incest affected the policies and practices of the over 500 preventive societies in this country during the early part of this century. Formed in the wake of a national child protection crusade that later would be judged as one of the most powerful and aggressive social movements in history (Gilfoyle, 1987), these organizations had as their mandate intervention on behalf of abused and neglected children.

But neither these societies nor the movement that spawned them were willing to extend what they proudly referred to as their "zealous daring" (American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 1876, p. 6) to cases of incest. In 1939 and in each of the previous sixty years of their existence, no more than 5% of any society's active caseload involved incest (Gordon, 1988). The number of complaints of incest, though, far exceeded the number of cases the societies pursued; most of these were dismissed out of hand as unsubstantiated, fallacious, or simply as unbelievable. Their virtual denial of the reality of incest resonated well with the intellectual climate of the time.
Table 1

Sexual Abuse of Female Children: Comparison of Early Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Number of Female Respondents</th>
<th>% Sexually Abused by Adult</th>
<th>% Sexually Abused by Family Member</th>
<th>% Sexually Abused by Father</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C. Landis (1940)</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinsey Pomeroy, Morton &amp; Gebhard (1953)</td>
<td>4441</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J. Landis (1956)</td>
<td>1028</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gagnon (1965)</td>
<td>1200</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The second flaw of these social science interpretations of incest is that they confused marriage with sex. The difference between them, so glaringly obvious to the typical teenager, as Fox (1983) observes, was lost to Durkheim, Freud, Malinowski and virtually every other social scientist of the era who continually conflated the two when considering the prohibition of incest.

Their confusion is rooted in the evolutionary thought of the time. Although none of these social scientists had come across a primitive group in which unbridled incest was common, each assumed that it was from such a group that living primitive groups evolved. The marker they believed differentiated one stage of evolution from another was the rule of exogamy that prohibited intrafamily marriages. That rule, in turn, was taken as synonymous with a prohibition of incest. The post hoc nature of...
this reasoning led to a failure to realize that a rule enforcing marriage outside of the family is not the same thing as a rule prohibiting sex within it.

Underlying this confusion is an inference that also had a direct implication for the prevailing definition of incest. It was assumed that the rule of exogamy was created to prohibit inbreeding, and because the incest taboo was confused with this rule, the inference emerged that incest, like inbreeding, was sexual intercourse with reproductive consequences. Anything less sexually intrusive than intercourse, although still generally and rather vaguely perceived as incest, was considered to be much less harmful in its effects. Kinsey (1953) and his associates make that assertion: "But these cases [of sexual intercourse] are in the minority, and the public should learn to distinguish such serious contacts from other adult contacts which are not likely to do the child any appreciable harm" (p. 53).

What further fueled the prevailing definition's assertion that incest, perhaps with the exception of sexual intercourse, is not particularly harmful was the Freudian assumption that daughters fantasized about it, wished for it, and even seduced their fathers into it. So hegemonic was this interpretation of incest that it not only placed a great deal of blame on the shoulders of daughters in those cases of paternal incest that were proved (deYoung, 1986a), but also led to the assumption that what is desired cannot be harmful. Therefore, the very first contributions to what is now an almost overwhelming body of literature on incest emphasized its relatively innocuous consequences (Bender & Blau, 1937; Bender & Grugett, 1952; Rascovsky & Rascovsky, 1950; Yorukaglu & Kemph, 1966).

The two essential components of the definition and evaluation of paternal incest that emerged in the early part of this century and that prevailed until just a decade ago, therefore, were that it was extraordinarily rare and, when it did occur, was rather benign in its effects. These two features of the definition virtually precluded that paternal

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incest would be defined as a social problem worthy of either scholarly examination or public intervention.

**Introduction of Strain**

The dialectical model further assumes that the increase or introduction of strain will lead to challenges of a prevailing definition. Strain, or social disharmony, may come from any one or more of a variety of different sources, including any discrepancies between contrasting goals or values, any clashes between technology and values, or between action and knowledge (Smelser, 1962). Quite regardless of its source, the effects of strain are always unsettling and inevitably spur different interest groups in society to challenge the viability, utility, and even the veracity of the prevailing definition of the social condition in question.

The prevailing definition of paternal incest as rare and essentially inconsequential persisted uncontested for nearly a half a century. But in the mid-1970s, with the rise of the women's movement in this country, that definition was seriously taken to task for the first time. As the women's movement focused the harsh light of scrutiny on the economic, social and personal dimensions of sexual oppression in this culture, many previously forbidden or ignored realities of life, such as wife beating, rape, and the sexual abuse of children, became legitimate and even important subjects for serious research by a new generation of scholars, most of them feminist (Breines & Gordon, 1983). And so did paternal incest. This most private of troubles was transformed into the most public of issues, and the appearance, legitimation and dissemination of the findings of this research produced enough unsettling strain to bring about a series of challenges to the prevailing definition of paternal incest.

Social analyses of a uniquely feminist nature resulted in those disconcerting findings. There are three distinct features of feminist analysis, according to Harding
(1987), and each of these produced findings that not only created strain, but also contributed to a redefinition of paternal incest. First, with the insistence that traditional social science has asked only the questions about social life that appear problematic from the standpoint of men, feminist research sought to generate its problematics from the perspective of women's experiences.

And it was women's experiences with paternal incest that constituted the first challenge to the prevailing definition. Beginning in the late 1970's, a stream of autobiographical accounts by women who attributed their courage in disclosing childhood histories of incest abuse to their own emerging feminism, flooded the popular press (Allen, 1980; Armstrong, 1978; Bass & Thornton, 1983; Brady, 1979; Fraser, 1987; Hill, 1985; McNaron & Morgan, 1982; Morris, 1982). While the primary intent of these accounts is more catharsis than analysis, they served to sensitize the wary public and skeptical scholars alike to the very reality of paternal incest and, more particularly, to its harm.

Concurrent with the appearance of these autobiographies were semi-popular works on incest that present the topic in a more scholarly fashion, demonstrating that the most basic fundamentals of social science analysis can be applied to it (Butler, 1978; Forward & Buck, 1978; Justice & Justice, 1979; Renvoize, 1982). Their focus is primarily, although not exclusively, on paternal incest, and while all of them consider the incest perpetrator as well as other nonparticipating family members, the bulk of their respective presentations consists of meticulously detailed accounts of the experiences of incestuously abused women. Although roundly criticized for their biased methods of data collection and their simplistic methods of data analysis (Finkelhor, 1986), these semipopular books nonetheless broke what Butler (1978) so aptly termed the "conspiracy of silence" (p. 7) about paternal incest.
The second unique feature of feminist analysis is that its research is designed for women, that is, it is sensitive to the wants and needs of women. Too often, asserts Harding (1987), traditional social science research has been for men and has been used to "pacify, control, exploit or manipulate women" (p. 8). That use of research is evident in the very prevailing definition of paternal incest. By asserting that it is both rare and inconsequential, early social scientists discouraged the type and quality of research that might prove contrary. And that, in turn, meant that the voices of incestuously abused women were effectively silenced.

Being sensitive to the wants and needs of women applies not only to the interpretations of research, but also to its design. Feminist researchers hypothesized that if early prevalence studies had been more receptively designed, they would have more accurately estimated the scope of paternal incest. Three major prevalence studies set out to test that hypothesis. Finkelhor's (1979) survey of a sizable sample of college students asked specific and carefully worded questions about childhood sexual abuse experiences, including incest. He found that 1.3% of the female respondents report having been incestuously abused by their fathers or stepfathers. This finding is three times higher than the prevalence rate determined by Kinsey et al. (1953), and while it was tempting to conclude that paternal incest had increased in prevalence over the quarter of a decade since the Kinsey et al. study was published, Finkelhor credited a more sensitive survey instrument and a considerably less skeptical attitude about paternal incest for the difference. While at first blush even the 1.3% prevalence rate still may appear to be insignificant, Finkelhor hastens to add that that figure would mean that one million women over the age of 18 have childhood histories of paternal incest, and that another approximately 16,000 females would be so abused each new year (p. 88).

Russell (1983), however, concludes that even that figure greatly underestimates the prevalence of paternal incest, and that if female respondents were personally inter-
viewed by a sensitized and trained interviewer, rather than asked to respond in writing to questions, they would be more comfortable in disclosing a childhood history of incest. With improved sampling techniques, she created a pool of over 900 female subjects and discovered that 4.5% of them report having been incestuously abused as children by their father or stepfather.

An even dramatically higher prevalence rate was uncovered with the further improved sampling and interviewing techniques of Wyatt (1985). Her multistage stratified probability sample had quotas to recruit comparable numbers of white and African-American women, each of whom participated in a several hours long, face-to-face interview with a well trained and racially matched female interviewer. A full 8.1% of the respondents disclosed childhood histories of paternal incest abuse.

Several factors account for the variation in the prevalence rates among these three recent studies. Each uses a slightly different definition of incest that either includes or excludes noncontact experiences such as receiving sexual propositions and witnessing genital exposure. The sample characteristics vary as well according to age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status and geographic region. Sampling instruments range from self-administered questionnaires to face-to-face interviews, with questions on sexual abuse constituting either part or all of the survey. A comparison of these and other factors of these three major and recent prevalence studies is found in Table 2.

Although there is no consensus among researchers as to the national prevalence of paternal incest, most agree that the recent major studies' corrections of the methodological flaws of previous studies have yielded more accurate findings. The conceptual flaws have been corrected as well. Says Finkelhor (1986):

Ten years ago most clinicians, policymakers, and social scientists doubted that people would be willing to report histories of sexual abuse to survey researchers. Since then it has become clear that people will not only report such histories, but also that they also will do so in large numbers. The discovery has made possible whole new research agendas. (p. 54)
## Table 2
Comparison of Methodology and Sample Characteristics of Three Major Prevalence Studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Finkelhor, 1979</th>
<th>Russell, 1983</th>
<th>Wyatt, 1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sampling Technique</strong></td>
<td>nonprobability sample</td>
<td>probability sample</td>
<td>multistage stratified probability sample</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instrument</strong></td>
<td>self-administered survey; completion time of 45 minutes</td>
<td>face-to-face interview; completion time of 1-3 hours</td>
<td>face-to-face interview; completion time of 3-8 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question Frame</strong></td>
<td>broad funnel type on all childhood sexual experiences</td>
<td>broad funnel type on all sexual abuse experiences</td>
<td>inverted funnel type on sexual history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Response Rate</strong></td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subject Characteristics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Number</td>
<td>796; 66% female</td>
<td>930 females</td>
<td>248 females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Ethnicity</td>
<td>&quot;majority&quot; white</td>
<td>67% white; 7% Hispanic; 10% African-American; 12% Asian; 4% other</td>
<td>50% white; 50% African-American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Age Range</td>
<td>17-74 years 75% &lt; 21 years</td>
<td>18-85 years</td>
<td>18-36 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--Education</td>
<td>all college undergrads</td>
<td>41% high school or less; 59% some college</td>
<td>47% high school or less; 53% some college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--SES</td>
<td>most middle class according to reports of parental income</td>
<td>all SES, using income measure</td>
<td>all SES, using Holingshead measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Geographic Area</strong></td>
<td>New England</td>
<td>San Francisco, CA</td>
<td>Los Angeles, CA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Finkelhor, 1979</th>
<th>Russell, 1983</th>
<th>Wyatt, 1985</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definition of Incest</strong></td>
<td>all contact and non-contact sexual experiences</td>
<td>all contact sexual abuse experiences</td>
<td>all contact and noncontact sexual abuse experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prevalence</strong></td>
<td>1.3% of female subjects</td>
<td>4.5% of subjects</td>
<td>8.1% of subjects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

And it is those new research agendas that began calling into question that part of the prevailing definition of paternal incest that describes it as rare. The new prevalence rate figures were also used to demand that paternal incest be "discovered" as a social problem worthy of collective response and political action. Russell (1986) insists on that point: "It is imperative that a problem of this magnitude in the United States be addressed, and it is urgent that more effective preventive strategies be developed and implemented" (p. 74).

Feminist analysis, sensitive as it is to the needs and wants of women, also led to challenges to the second element of the prevailing definition that described paternal incest as relatively harmless in its effects. The autobiographical, semipopular texts, and even the prevalence studies, major and minor, that questioned respondents on the experience of any deleterious effects of paternal incest, all uncovered information that was at odds with the predominant notion.

In what very well may have been a rush to understand the effects of paternal incest, early studies generally were more interested in cataloging the wide range of symptoms and problems presumed to be caused by incest than in analyzing them. Their methods of data collection were as diverse as the symptoms they recorded and included retrospective reviews of hospital, mental health and court records (Brant &
Tisza, 1977); case studies of incestuously abused individuals with similar symptomatology (LaBarbera & Emmett, 1980); clinical assessments of small samples of incestuously abused individuals (Adams-Tucker, 1982); and reviews of the literature on psychological, medical and social sequelae (Henderson, 1972).

Derived as they were from such a wide variety of samples and from such diverse methods of data collection, the symptoms catalogued showed little consistency from one study to another (deYoung, 1986b). But the causal assumption underlying most of these studies was so consistent as to be resolute: paternal incest causes, in a manner unspecified, a wide range of both immediate and longterm deleterious effects.

The search for that presumed causal link introduced a rigor to the methodology of many of the studies that followed. In this categorization phase of research, the use of comparison and control groups, and the application of statistical procedures to partial out specific detrimental effects of paternal incest served to pare down what many researchers already were considering to be a clinically impossible array of symptoms. The results of this stage of research are interesting, even paradoxical: the causal links remained elusive, the number of sequelae attributed to paternal incest decreased, the impression of its harm burgeoned, and the need for a collective response and for political action seemed all the more exigent. Summit (1988) captures this contradiction:

The effects of undetected [sexual] abuse far outweigh the immediate trauma observed in child victims, and the recognized victims are such a small proportion of those actually victimized that we have only begun to appreciate the impact of sexual abuse on society as a whole. . . . In order to discover and ameliorate the pervasive impact of sexual abuse there is a need for research, training, specialized response systems, and an aggressive outreach to encourage prevention, discovery, disclosure, intervention, treatment and prosecution. (p. 39)

Recently, much of the research has moved into a modeling stage in which the causal links between paternal incest and the empirically determined immediate and longterm effects for victims are hypothesized and tested (Briere & Runtz, 1988; Browne & Finkelhor, 1986; Gomes-Schwartz, Horowitz, & Cardarelli, 1990). Such models also
are being constructed in an effort to understand the relationship between a variety of early psychological, familial and social variables and later incestuous behavior in adult males (Ballard et al., 1990; Williams & Finkelhor, 1988). While these methods hold more promise for a clear understanding, they also pose more threat for what was the prevailing definition of paternal incest. Quite regardless of design, the vast majority of studies conducted over this last decade demonstrate that there is a correlation, at the least, between a childhood history of paternal incest abuse and a host of deleterious psychological, medical and social effects. Those that to date have been empirically demonstrated can be found in Table 3.

Table 3
Empirically Verified Symptoms Expressed by Paternally Incestuously Abused Females at Different Developmental Stages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preschool</th>
<th>School-Aged</th>
<th>Adolescence</th>
<th>Adult</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>anxiety</td>
<td>anxiety</td>
<td>anxiety</td>
<td>anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>withdrawal</td>
<td>withdrawal</td>
<td>withdrawal</td>
<td>withdrawal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guilt</td>
<td>guilt</td>
<td>guilt</td>
<td>guilt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sleep problems</td>
<td>sleep problems</td>
<td>sleep problems</td>
<td>sleep problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sexualized behaviors</td>
<td>sexualized behaviors</td>
<td>sexualized behaviors</td>
<td>sexualized behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regression</td>
<td>drug abuse</td>
<td>phobias</td>
<td>phobias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hyperactivity</td>
<td>delinquency</td>
<td>phobias</td>
<td>phobias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>separation anxiety</td>
<td>phobias</td>
<td>phobias</td>
<td>phobias</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anxiety phobias</td>
<td>phobias</td>
<td>phobias</td>
<td>phobias</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The research on harm has established a clinical domain for the study of paternal incest, but the third unique feature of the feminist method is that it is inherently politi-
cal. It insists that the researcher be placed on the same critical plane as the subject matter, thereby opening the entire research process for scrutiny. And this mandate introduces a distinctly sociological domain for the study of paternal incest, for it requires that "class, race, culture, and gender assumptions, beliefs, and behaviors of the researcher her/himself must be placed within the frame of the picture that she/he attempts to paint" (Harding, 1987, p. 9).

The very idea that the early 20th century social science interpretations of paternal incest may have reflected more about the theorists who offered them than the topic they offered was first considered by feminist scholars. Once realized, the primary target of their particular and sustained attack was Sigmund Freud. While Freud's mythic rendering of the origin of the incest taboo may not have been appreciably different in quality from that of any other social scientist, his theory of the persistence of incestuous wishes and their fundamental role in personality development most certainly was. For it was this theory that extended what were basically anthropological musings into the realm of human life, most particularly, female life. By relegating the personal accounts of childhood histories of paternal incest abuse to the fantasies and wishes of females, and by blaming them for having seduced their unsuspecting fathers into sexual acts when the incest could be substantiated, Freud demonstrated the influences of culture and gender ideologies, in particular, on the development of theory (Herman, 1981; Masson, 1985; Rush, 1977, 1980).

The incest taboo myths of the other master social theorists similarly were deconstructed to reveal their inherent biases (Meiselman, 1978). And when that feminist frame of analysis was extended to include those researchers who published the early studies on paternal incest, those studies that informed the prevailing definition and described it as rare and inconsequential, the influences of culture, race, beliefs and gender ideologies are evident. In a scathing review of that literature, Ward (1985) concludes:
What we find through this avenue [of literature review] says more about methods of research and unconscious male supremacist perception than it does about the causality of Father-Daughter rape. It does, however, remove some of the cobwebs from the subject: by dismantling the theoretical superstructure which has been created to protect the Fathers we can see more clearly who they are. We will see that the psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists and criminologists have mostly been concerned to excuse the Fathers by establishing that they are not to blame for having raped their Daughters. (p. 121)

The net effect of the application of a uniquely feminist method to the study of paternal incest is that it produced new knowledge about its prevalence and harm: knowledge that was legitimated by both the new brand of research that was being conducted and by the experiences of many women, and disseminated through a growing body of empirical and case study research as well as anecdotal accounts. That new knowledge, in turn, produced strain. The extant definition of paternal incest as rare and as generally inconsequential that had prevailed for nearly half a century was being called into question for the first time.

Resource Mobilization

The dialectical model asserts that when the prevailing definition of any social condition is vulnerable due to the introduction or increase of strain, that development provides interest groups with an opportunity for claims-making activity. Feminists, soon joined by others who, perhaps, would not have identified themselves as feminists but who were equally concerned about the problem, organized and mobilized their resources in order to produce a new definition of paternal incest that describes it as prevalent, harmful and worthy of a collective response and political action.

Much of that claims-making activity is even now being played out in the public arena. Treatment programs are being developed, prevention and education programs are burgeoning, laws are being challenged and changed, children are being brought into courtrooms to give witness to their own victimization, and the media is reporting just
enough cases to sustain public and professional interest (Hechler, 1988). That claims-
making activity is reaching a nearly frenzied pace in the scholarly arena. The prolifera-
tion of research of all kinds from a variety of different disciplines with a concern with
paternal incest is remarkable, and renders the task of reviewing, organizing and annota-
ting these findings nearly impossible (Bagley, 1985; deYoung, 1985).

There are detractors. There are those for whom the old definition is more de-
scriptive and satisfying; those who liken this new scholarly, professional and public
concern with paternal incest to a "witchhunt mentality" or to "mass hysteria" (Sheridan,
1990; Spiegel, 1990). Groups such as VOCAL (Victims of Child Abuse Laws) are
springing up all over the country to counteract the claim that paternal incest, as one
form of child abuse, is prevalent and harmful and that discoveries and disclosures of it
are truthful and verifiable. But even the most ardent apologists are finding it difficult to
neutralize the sheer volume of multidisciplinary empirical and case study literature, or
the proliferation of new programs, policies and laws that support and inform this new
social definition of paternal incest.

New Definition

By 1980 or so, paternal incest was "discovered" as a social problem. It was re-
defined as prevalent, as harmful, and a wealth of information supporting those elements
of its new definition is continuing to accumulate. All of this scholarly and public dis-
course continues to center awareness, stimulate at times what appears to be almost fre-
netic activity, and spur considerable debate and controversy.

There is a problem, however. Because of the almost exclusive focus of re-
search and remediation on the prevalence of paternal incest and on its harm, gaps in
knowledge are becoming startlingly apparent. Researchers, professionals and lay-
people alike are beginning to feel that too often their most nagging questions are being
only unsatisfyingly answered, and that in regards to some of the most critical facets of paternal incest, little new really had been learned after all.

**The Woman Question**

Some of those unanswered questions, nagging if only for the sheer persistence of their asking, have to do with the "future agenda" (Driver & Droisen, 1989) of feminist research: women as wives and mothers in paternally incestuous families. It should be of no surprise that these women are a subject of considerable interest and inquiry. After all, with them may lie the potential for the prevention of the paternal incest in the first place, the protection from its continuation over time should it be initiated, and the palliation of its disorganizing and even traumatizing effects on their victimized daughters after its disclosure or discovery. And what is particularly curious about women as wives and mothers in paternally incestuous families is that those potentials apparently are rarely ever actualized.

Those old nagging questions as to why that seemingly is true and how that can happen remain unsatisfactorily answered at the present time. After a decade of discourse and activity, it is increasingly apparent that about this one particular and crucial person in the paternally incestuous family, little new really has been learned at all.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Accounting for Violations of the Incest Taboo

A Critical Look at Paternal Incest Research

The revitalization and reinterpretation of the incest taboo myths by some of the master social theorists during the early part of this century stimulated little research interest, at first, in incest as behavior. Perhaps that was due to the fact that their collective insistence that incest was rare and inconsequential conveyed what Needham (1983) would call "all of the tranquility of an axiom" (p. 1). But what is accepted as axiomatic may not be, for even an axiom may have exceptions. Violations of the incest taboo, therefore, eventually had to be explained.

The first attempts to do so were by European researchers who referred to themselves as sexologists and whose interest was in any sexual behavior that deviated from the norm. Some of their research, mostly case studies with a decidedly anthropological bent, were translated into English and published in this country in the *American Journal of Urology and Sexology* (Marcuse, 1923; Rohleder, 1917). American researchers, however, appeared slow to warm to the topic. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s a few articles appeared in print, a few more than that in the following two decades, and as the process of discovering incest as a social problem began in earnest in the mid-1970s, so finally did the process of subjecting it to research.

The most thorough and well designed of that research were those studies that challenged the then prevailing definition of paternal incest by demonstrating that it is
prevalent and harmful enough to be considered a social problem deserving a collective response and political action. But it is important to reemphasize that while that literature made a significant contribution to knowledge about this issue, it did not explain everything about paternal incest. It is to those studies that attempt to address what the prevalence and harm studies leave unanswered that attention must be turned.

The extant body of literature on incest in general, and paternal incest in particular, is nearly overwhelming, with most of it having been published over the last ten years. Its volume, however, should not be confused with accumulated wisdom. Schultz (1980) denounced most of it as repetitive, rhetorically manipulative, and as abounding in cliches and myths, and while that judgment certainly was premature when it was delivered, a decade later it has the sound of an appraisal.

A closer and more critical look at this body of literature is in order. First, while the subject of paternal incest is of interest to such diverse disciplines as sociology, criminology, law, psychology, social work, public health and medicine, it is marginal to the epistemological domain of each. As a result, no real theoretical orientation frames the analysis of collected data or informs the conclusions. The absence of theory often gives what research is done on this topic the appearance of being exploratory and the criticism of being imprecise and even superficial (Finkelhor, 1986). Second, while the literature of each of these marginally interested disciplines has been demonstrating over the last decade an increasing attention to paternal incest as a topic of concern, the research that has been published tends to be tightly discipline-bound (Finkelhor, 1984). Research findings, therefore, rarely are communicated to other concerned disciplines except in the form of general reviews of the literature that too often are uncritically and even unsystematically put together.

Third, there is little interdisciplinary borrowing of theories and concepts. Each of those disciplines with a peripheral interest in paternal incest, therefore, tends to tax
its own conceptual resources to the limit when it researches and discusses this topic. Upon finding them inadequate to really explain paternal incest, the discipline in question then may push the topic further towards its margins (deYoung, 1987). Fourth, the literature on paternal incest taken in toto tends to be characterized by "inadequate samples, simplistic research designs, conflicting definitions, and unsophisticated analyses" (Finkelhor, 1984, p. 12). The varying quality of this literature may reflect the tangential status of the topic within all of these diverse disciplines, and also may measure the haste with which each initially staked a claim for its study.

Fifth, most of the research conducted on paternal incest, quite regardless of the discipline that performs it, is conducted on the individual level of analysis, while systemic and structural levels too often are ignored. Friday (1988) warns that explanations that rest on only one level of analysis "have limited utility; while each proposition may possess an element of truth, the failure to recognize the role played by the other levels reduces the explanatory power" (p. 40). Sixth, disciplinary-based research on paternal incest has not always reached treatment, prevention and investigative professionals in the field, and the hands-on experiences of those professionals, in turn, have not always informed the disciplines (Kraizer, 1986). Without a clear articulation between research and intervention, theory and practice, the steady accumulation of knowledge on paternal incest further is impeded.

Finally, and for all of the reasons already discussed and more, the literature on paternal incest has not systematically analyzed the old assumptions and hegemonic ideologies that plague such sex- and gender-related topics (Russell, 1986). The uncritical acceptance of these notions, and what is too often their unreflective repetition from the literature of one discipline to that of another, too often gives them the blush of truth and keeps them from further and closer examination.
This appraisal of the paternal incest literature is also an appraisal of the literature on women as wives and mothers in paternally incestuous families. While the former may be considered a subtopic under the general rubric of incest or of child sexual abuse, and thus may be treated as a specific and self-contained topic in its own right, the same cannot be said of the latter. References to, explanations of, or more likely, descriptions of these wives and mothers are scattered throughout the literature. Only a very few studies to date have given anything more than just a cursory glance to these women. Ironically, however, even such passing glances have tended to provoke the harshest of criticisms, as Ward (1985) observes:

The lack of research specifically on mothers [in paternally incestuous families] is particularly significant given the pejorative nature of the statements made about them. In reading the literature it is obvious that many of these statements have become "self-evident truths" in the minds of many researchers. (p. 163)

The lack of accumulated knowledge about women as wives and mothers in paternally incestuous families should not be confused with a lack of interest. There have been many cursory glances at them in the literature over the years. In fact, a great deal of the studies published in, and even before, this past hectic decade has made reference, at the very least, to these women. Although this literature is often disciplinary-bound and is largely atheoretical in nature, it can be organized under such distinctly sociological concepts as role, power and interaction. This organizational scheme once again emphasizes the utility of a sociological domain for the analysis and explanation of some very critical facets of paternal incest.

Women's Roles in Paternally Incestuous Families

One of the most central, yet curiously ambiguous, concepts in sociology is that of role. It may refer to appropriate behavior, normatively expected behavior, or simply to overt behavior; it may describe any one of a number of different ascribed, achieved,
negotiated or situated statuses; and may include considerations of multiple sources of role expectations, varying subjective interpretations of those expectations, as well as the cultural and social contexts in which those expectations arise. The concept of role is difficult to define, even more difficult to operationalize, and is stubbornly resistant to the measurement of all of its subtle dimensions (Turner, 1986).

A review of the literature on the role of women as wives and mothers in paternally incestuous families, however, shows that the conceptual emphasis usually is placed on overt behavior, or role performance. The various expectations that are attached to the wife and the mother role, two roles that are not only heavily freighted with a variety of expectations but that also are highly idealized in this culture (Dally, 1982; deBeauvoir, 1952; Rich, 1986), typically are taken as self-evident and rarely are analyzed or evaluated. The women's subjective interpretations of these expectations similarly remain unexamined. In the paternal incest literature, then, this complex and ambiguous concept of role is reduced to its most observable and simple manifestations.

That reduction not only simplifies the process of observation and description, but it is also necessary for a conceptual model of collusion. There is an assumption, most often explicitly stated in the literature and so often repeated as to be a theme, that the inability or unwillingness of these women to adequately perform one or more expected role behaviors within their families creates the very conditions conducive to the incestuous victimization of their daughters. More simply stated, poor role performance of women as wives and mothers is judged in the literature as tantamount to their collusion in the incest.

There are three general categories of poor role performance that can be gleaned from the literature. References that illustrate each actually serve a dual purpose: they not only provide that passing glance at these women as wives and mothers in paternally
incestuous families, and therefore serve the purpose of description, but they also demonstrate that conceptual link between poor role performance and collusion.

**Failure to be a Consistently Satisfying Sexual Partner.** One resolute theme in the paternal incest literature is that these women are unable or unwilling to be consistently satisfying sexual partners to their husbands. That theme, in turn, implies a role expectation that is the obverse of that description: that women *should* be consistently satisfying sexual partners. That expectation has never been examined in any way in the literature, but is taken as axiomatic. It also is used as the first link in a conceptual model of collusion in the incest.

The allegedly poor role performance of these women in their sexual relations with their husbands often is on the level of description. In the paternal incest literature they variously have been portrayed as frigid (Cormier, Kennedy, & Sangowicz, 1962; Riemer, 1940); sexually rejecting (Cavallin, 1966; Justice & Justice, 1979); sexually unfaithful (Lukianowicz, 1972); sexually frustrating (Lustig, Dresser, Spellman, & Murray, 1966); and sexually unappealing (Molnar & Cameron, 1975; Walters, 1975).

As unflattering as these descriptions are, it is important to note that most of them come not from the women themselves, and therefore are not self-descriptions, but come from their victimized daughters, or even from their victimizing husbands. This raises interesting data collection questions: Are the daughters able to give accurate descriptions of their mothers' sexual behavior, and are the husbands willing to do so? Two brief examples from the literature will highlight these questions. On the basis of psychiatric interviews with two incestuously abused young girls, Sarles (1975) concludes that their mothers "promoted the incestuous relationship by abandoning or frustrating their husbands sexually" (p. 637). Sarles, however, had not interviewed the mothers, and it is unlikely that the young daughters were the source of that description.
Using incestuous husbands as informants is equally suspect. Weiner (1962) did so with a small sample of men under criminal indictment for incest and theorized, on the basis of their descriptions, that it was the alleged sexual frigidity of their wives that caused them to turn to their daughters for sexual gratification.

Many of these descriptions of the poor role performance of these women as sexual partners have become the kind of "self-evident truths" that Ward (1985) speaks of only because they are so often repeated. One of the primary vehicles for such repetition is the general literature review, a necessary and even critical tool for reducing and categorizing what has become an overwhelming body of multidisciplinary information on paternal incest (Cohen, 1983; Johnson, 1983; Wenck, 1983). It is interesting to speculate that perhaps that which passes for knowledge about women as wives in paternally incestuous families thereby passes into knowledge. One piece of evidence may be offered in support of that speculation. In a survey of social workers' impressions of the characteristics of individuals in paternally incestuous families, there is a greater consensus among respondents as to the traits that do not characterize women as wives—warmth and nurturance—than as to those that do (Selby, 1980).

There is a proposed link in the literature between this imputed poor role performance and collusion in the incest. Meiselman (1978) explains it:

Outright denial of sexual roles or the unsatisfactory relationship often resulting from a lack of sexual response leaves the husband without a socially acceptable sexual outlet. Various masculine "proving" behaviors may also be elicited in response to the element of sexual and personal rejection that would not be present if sexual relations were discontinued for more understandable reasons. (p. 125)

The implied model of collusion that Meiselman and many others describe in the literature is quite simple: the inability or unwillingness of these women to fulfill the role expectation of being consistently satisfying sexual partners creates the conditions conducive to, and the motivations for, the paternal incest. This model not only places
blame on women for the incest, but also precludes more complicating questions as to why frustrated and rejected husbands do not seek sexual gratification outside of their families. Extramarital affairs or liaisons with prostitutes, while not socially acceptable, certainly are more socially tolerated than paternal incest and are considerably less likely to result in criminal conviction or social stigma. That husbands, when their wives sexually frustrate or reject them, go to their own daughters for sexual gratification requires the direction of their wives. Thus the indictment of collusion.

This collusion often is depicted as deliberate in nature, as purposeful, and even as strategic. These statements from the literature make that assertion: "Mothers promote [italics added] the occurrence of incest by frustrating their husbands sexually" (Henderson, 1972, p. 307); "While rejecting their husbands sexually, mothers played conspicuous roles in directing [italics added] their husbands' sexual energies toward their daughters" (Lustig et al., 1966, p. 34); "The mother's frigidity is another way of bowing out of her role as wife and giving reason [italics added] to the husband to look elsewhere for sex" (Justice & Justice, 1979, p. 79); and "The mother takes an active role in transferring [italics added] the responsibility of gratifying the father's sexual needs to the daughter" (Burgess, Groth, Holmstrom, & Sgroi, 1978, p. 133).

This taken-for-granted model of collusion leads to the impression that paternal incest is nothing more than or different from any other sexually motivated act that, in the absence of sexual frustration, would not have occurred at all. While there is no question that there is a strong sexual component to paternal incest (Frude, 1982), the act itself, directed as it is against one's own daughter, shrouded as it is in secrecy, and in violation of a strongly supported and historically extended cultural taboo, most certainly satisfies other, more complex, social and psychological needs (Finkelhor & Araji, 1986; Panton, 1978; Williams & Finkelhor, 1988). The literature's model of collu-
sion diminishes, if not precludes, reasons to further explore the dynamics of paternal incest.

**Failure to Maintain a Presence in the Family.** Another resolute theme in the literature is that these women fail to maintain a presence in the family. Once again, the role expectation that is implied here is the obverse of the criticism: women *should* maintain a presence in the family. The clearest consequence of their failing to do so is the creation of opportunities for the paternal incest to occur. The report of the CIBA Foundation (1984, p. 94) illustrates this contention: "When a mother withdraws from her family, her child and husband may turn to one another for support, practical assistance, or comfort and the foundations of an incestuous relationship thus are laid."

Various reasons for the women's absence or withdrawal from their families are noted in the literature. Neither the reason for, nor the duration of the absence, however, is considered an important variable. Some studies, for example, note a significant rate of absence due to periodic or extended psychiatric institutionalization (Browning & Boatman, 1977; Eist & Mandel, 1968). In others, the occasional hospitalization of some of these women for chronic illnesses or for alcoholism is observed (Herman & Hirschman, 1977; Maisch, 1972; Meiselman, 1978). At times, this absence is described in the literature as emotional in nature, as a kind of withdrawal that severs the affective bond between the women, their husbands, and their daughters. While these women are physically present in their families, they are emotionally inaccessible (Brooks, 1983; Herman, 1981; Raphling, Carpenter, & Davis, 1967).

Curiously, each reason for absence or withdrawal is considered an indication of poor role performance. Again, there is an implication in the literature that these women are either unable or unwilling to fulfill that role, so what lingers as an allegation, more subtle than stated, is that only some theory of deviance or of pathology will explain...
why that is so. Although the etiology of that poor role performance is vague, its consequences are not. Absence from the family is thought to create the opportunities for the paternal incest to occur. When women do not play an abiding and vigilant role in their families, the literature suggests, men will seize the opportunity and initiate incest with their own daughters (Landis, 1956; Peters, 1976; Summit & Kryso, 1978).

With rare exceptions, studies that discuss absence also explain it as being tantamount to collusion in the incest. Absence, then, usually is described as a deliberate strategy on the parts of these women to create opportunities for their husbands to engage in incest with their daughters. The language of the literature is often vigorous on this point: "Maternal withdrawal of course brings the father and the daughter closer, encouraging [italics added] the emergence of a dangerous relationship" (Renvoize, 1982, p. 105); "Mothers give permission [italics added] for the paternal incest by being physically absent from the home" (Kaufman, Peck, & Tagiuri, 1954, p. 276); and "In some cases, women who seek employment for self-realization and/or additional income end up forcing [italics added] their daughters. . . to satisfy their fathers' emotional and sexual needs" (Mayer, 1983, p. 24).

There is often a link in the literature between absence from the family and role-reversal, with many studies pointing the necessity of daughters taking on the maternal role when their mothers are physically absent from their families (Forward & Buck, 1978; Gutheil & Avery, 1977; Meiselman, 1978). There also is evidence in the literature that role-reversal can occur in families in which the women are present. In these situations, the women are described as having reverted to a passive, dependent childlike role, for some reason, while their daughters are left to take on the familial responsibilities abandoned by their mothers. One of those duties is to satisfy their fathers' sexual needs. In a small sample of paternally incestuous families, Lustig et al. (1966) find that all of the daughters had become the "female authority in the households by age eight"
Kaufman et al. (1954) describe the daughters they interviewed from intact incestuous families as having taken on the "little mother" role in their families (p. 269).

But how does this role-reversal occur? The literature is not very explanatory on this point, but various case studies and case illustrations cited seem to suggest that role-reversal is a gradual process, occurring much in the manner of this case described by Magal and Winnick (1963):

Ever since the daughter was a little girl, her mother preferred her to all other children and put her to various tasks. . . . [The daughter] used to go marketing, she managed the money, took care of the smaller children. When she was twelve years old, she had to take care of the household and she alone could calm down her drunken father by talking to him kindly. She induced him to go to bed and sat by him all night. (p. 181)

If the literature is unclear as to how the process of role-reversal takes place, it is emphatic as to why. Just as the mother in the cited case study "put" her daughter to various tasks within the family, women as mothers are depicted in the paternal incest literature as being the originators of the role-reversal. And their purpose for doing so is to direct their husbands' sexual attention to their daughters. Assertions such as this abound in the literature: "In inviting [italics added] her daughter to take over her role, [the mother] is also suggesting [italics added] that the daughter also become her mate's sexual partner. . . . and the mother feels relief when her daughter substitutes for her" (Justice & Justice, 1979, pp. 78-79); "Mothers in these families were infantile persons pushing [italics added] their daughters prematurely into the mother role, including the incestuous relationship with their fathers" (Heims & Kaufman, 1963, p. 311); and the mothers "are permissive and encourage [italics added] in a passive-aggressive way the role reversal between themselves and their daughters. They are instrumental in offering [italics added] the daughter to the father as a buffer" (Gottlieb, 1980, p. 124).

Both absence and role-reversal, then, are not only indications of the poor role performance of women in their families, but are essential elements in the implicit model
of collusion. Both also lead to a perception of paternal incest as an opportunistic and sexually motivated act, a perception that then makes women largely, if not solely, responsible for its occurrence.

**Failure to Protect Their Daughters.** The third theme in the literature is that the women in paternally incestuous families have failed to fulfill the role expectation of acting as what Weinberg (1955) so descriptively refers to as "restraining agents." As such, they are expected to not only oppose the incest, but also to restrain their husbands from engaging in it in the first place or, failing that, to protect their daughters from its continuation.

What is being violated here, at least as implied by the literature, is more than just a role expectation of mothers but something so innate and even ferocious as to be called a "maternal instinct." That concept, in fact, has come under more than a little scrutiny from feminists in recent years (Chodorow, 1978; Whitbeck, 1983). Even those who would reject it as an idealized and inherently oppressive concept that ties women to children and thus to the home are willing to embrace the idea that there is a style of what Ruddick (1983) calls "maternal thinking" that acts in the interest of maintaining life and preserving it from harm, especially that life to which women, themselves, have given birth.

In a classic role theory study, Jones, Davis, and Gergen (1961) assert that when any actor's behavior departs from normative expectations there is a tendency to locate the cause of that departure in motivational forces peculiar to that actor. Why women would fail to act on role expectation, let alone on instinct or on thought, therefore, requires explanation. The literature, however, offers little explanation but it does engage in a great deal of speculation. Some studies point to the women's own childhood history of abuse, abandonment or neglect as having deprived them of the oppor-
tunities to learn from their own mothers how to perform this critical role (Browning & Boatman, 1977; Eist & Mandel, 1968; Meiselman, 1979). Others suggest that they surrender that role only when they realize that their power to perform it always will be contravened by their husbands' greater power to prevent them from performing it (Herman, 1981; Herman & Hirschman, 1977; McIntyre, 1981). And others still conclude that these women deliberately abandon their restraining agent role in order to be free to protect their own interests and pursue their own goals (Lukianowicz, 1972; Raphling et al., 1967).

Finally, the alleged failure of these women to act as restraining agents often is presented as proof of their masochism. The concept of female masochism has enjoyed a long and lively tenure in the psychoanalytic and psychological literatures and over the years has engendered more than a little controversy (Freud, 1924; Horney, 1939; Panken, 1973; Shainess, 1984). As a concept, it is difficult to comprehend, hard to define, and nearly impossible to measure, yet without attempting to do any of those things some studies nonetheless conclude that women in paternally incestuous families are masochistic, and that their failure to act as restraining agents is motivated by that masochism. Their needs to suffer, to be dominated and subjugated are met vicariously through the incestuous victimization of their daughters, and because those needs are being met, they do nothing to intervene in the incest, and everything to encourage its continuation (Cormier et al., 1962; Garrett & Wright, 1975; Lukianowicz, 1972; Meiselman, 1978; Weinberg, 1955).

Whatever the reasons proposed in the literature for the women's poor role performance as protectors of their daughters, their failure to act as restraining agents most often is considered a sufficient condition for the incest to be initiated in the first place and a necessary condition for it to be continued over time. Thus, it typically is presented as evidence of collusion. The false teleology of this argument even occasionally
traps feminists who generally are eager to relieve women of the blame for the incest that accompanies allegations of collusion, as this conclusion of Sgroi (1985) demonstrates:

Most mothers of incest victims have failed in their responsibility to maintain appropriate limits between themselves, their husband and their children. This is not to say that mothers must accept responsibility for their husbands' incestuous behavior. However, the women must acknowledge their own failure to prevent the incestuous behavior by contributing to and permitting the blurring of role boundaries among family members. (p. 199)

Less cautiously worded conclusions are typical of other studies that insist that the women's failure to act as restraining agents is evidence of their collusion in, and their blameworthiness for, the incest (Dietz & Craft, 1980; Machota, Pittman, & Flemenhaft, 1967; Server & Janze, 1982; Thorman, 1982). Often the image of these women as painted in the literature is of allies to incestuous fathers, as traitors to their daughters, as Justice and Justice (1979) insist: "If a showdown comes and she must choose between her husband and her daughter, she will choose her husband" (p. 98).

Poor role performance in any or all of these three roles—sexual partner, family figure, protector—is presented as tantamount to the women's collusion in the paternal incest. The frequency of the use of active verbs to denote the apparent strategy or intention of the women in failing to perform these expected roles indicates that another one of those "self-evident truths" of which Ward (1985) speaks is that these women know all along that the incest is occurring, their awareness not the stuff of prescience but a tacit acknowledgment of their own involvement in the creation of the conditions and the motivations that caused it in the first place. The failure of these women to admit their culpability, whether to their daughters or to their husbands, both of whom are more often the informants and the subjects of research than are the women, themselves, generally is interpreted as evidence of their denial.

Denial is almost as persistent a theme in the paternal incest literature as is collusion, and often is just as forcefully presented, as these examples from the literature il-
illustrate: "The mother's role always involves some degree of denial, usually a great deal" (Burgess et al., 1978, p. 133); "Although a number of mothers will deny that they know any sex was going on between the daughter and the father, most are aware on some level that they contributed to the conditions making incest possible" (Justice & Justice, 1979, p. 101); and "Mothers generally are unable to see their role in the incestuous relationship because denial has become their major psychological coping strategy" (Gottlieb, 1980, p. 125). So taken-for-granted is this issue of denial that in many incest treatment programs women must achieve the goals of working through their denial and of acknowledging their collusion in the incest before their families will be considered healthy and safe enough for treatment to be successfully terminated (Everson, Hunter, Runyon, Edelsohn, & Coulter, 1989; Hitchens, 1972; Koch & Jarvis, 1987; Landis & Wyre, 1984; Orten & Rich, 1988; Server & Janze, 1982; Taylor, 1984).

Collusion and responsibility, of course, are indistinguishable even if either or both are denied. In an attempt to both display and categorize the literature on collusion and responsibility, Salter (1988) develops a "spectrum of maternal involvement" in the incest (p. 55). Women who do not know about the incest but support their daughters after its disclosure or discovery is the category on the one end of the continuum, and on the other is the category of women who know about the incest and collude with their husbands in it. Between those extremes are categories of women who do not know and deny when confronted; women who do not know and side with their husbands when confronted; and women who know and do nothing to stop the incest.

This spectrum of involvement does not really represent the entire continuum upon which practically all empirical and observed instances will range. If it did, it would include one other category: women who know about the incest and then ally with their daughters to terminate it. In other words, there is no category on this spectrum for
those women who meet the expectations that the literature takes for granted are attached to their roles as wives and as mothers.

And cases of that kind of protective, assertive intervention indeed can be found in the literature. Weinberg (1955) quotes one woman who turned in her husband to the police after she learned of the incest, saying, "Disgrace! Shame! If he gets out of jail and I get my hands on him, I'll have to go to the electric chair. He has misused us enough!" (p. 190). In a case reported by Cormier et al. (1962), a woman insisted her husband enter psychotherapy when she began worrying that his unusually physical behavior with their daughter had sexual overtones. Russell (1986) details cases histories of two women who, after discovering the incest, allied with their daughters to terminate it. Two other cases are described in which the women, initially unaware that the incest was occurring, nonetheless realized that their daughters were experiencing some distress in their relationship with their fathers and, as a result, became more vigilant and protective, thus preventing the continuation of the incest. What distinguishes these women from others, how and why they intervened in the incest, and what resources they apparently were able to marshal to do so, have not been systematically examined in the literature.

At times, curiously, even those women whose role performance as wives and mothers is exactly as expected cannot escape pejorative comment, and even their protective, supportive behavior is interpreted as being motivated by some nefarious, self-serving needs. Justice and Justice (1979), for example, in describing a case in which a woman actively intervened in the incest and protected her daughter from further victimization, then attributed her behavior to a vengeful desire to retaliate against her husband "for some other grievance he has caused her" (p. 102). Henderson (1975) similarly impugns the motivations of those women whose role behavior is commensurate with expectations. He concludes that a woman's intervention into incest is more likely to be
"precipitated by anger over some other matter and is as much linked to that as to any expression of real objection to what is taking place between father and daughter" (p. 1536). Even preventive measures taken by women can be judged harshly in the literature. In a case in which a woman had discussed the nature of incest with her young daughter, Weiss, Rodgers, Darwin, and Dutton (1955) conclude that her warnings actually were "stimulating" to her daughter and ultimately led to her being incestuously abused by her father.

What must be noted here is the persistence of gender ideology. What Rush (1980) calls "that relentless tendency to blame women for men's sexual transgressions" (p. 194) is evident in so many of the references to women's collusion in the paternal incest. Perhaps it is more than just the persistence of gender ideology that must be noted. Perhaps it is its triumph. For only when an ideology becomes a "self-evident truth" (Ward, 1985) that is immune from question, challenge and examination can researchers comfortably come to anything like this conclusion found in the literature: "It is a misconception that mothers who are not aware of the child sexual abuse in the family have no responsibility for it" (James & Nasjleti, 1983, p. 1).

The theme of collusion is persistent in the literature and is linked to what the literature identifies as the poor performances of women in their roles as wives and as mothers. That link is purely hypothetical. The concept of collusion has never been operationalized nor subjected to a more empirical and dispassionate analysis until Faller (1988) did so in her study of 171 women from paternally incestuous families. After acknowledging the difficulty in operationalizing the concept of collusion, she teased out three variables as its measure: the strength of the woman's protectiveness of her daughter when made aware of the incest; the strength of her relationship with her incestuously abused daughter; and the strength of her dependency upon her husband. Faller finds that collusion as so measured varies most dramatically with the woman's
dependency upon her husband, but that the overall rate of collusion is greatly less than what previous studies have only assumed.

**Women’s Power in Paternally Incestuous Families**

Sociology long has been fascinated with power. It has been conceptualized in that discipline in terms of the exchange of rewards, as well as in terms of the access to resources and opportunities; explained in terms of influence, coercion, charisma, authority and legitimacy; and placed within the contexts of political arenas, ideologies, interpersonal relations, small and large groups and the social structure (Turner, 1986). Both these micro- and macro-considerations of power have generated a wealth of theoretical considerations and empirical findings.

And power, especially that possessed by or denied to women, is a topic of considerable interest to feminist scholars and others. That interest recently has been extended to particular women—those in paternally incestuous families. A review of that literature demonstrates that there are two dimensions on which power is conceptualized, both of which are compatible with more general sociological formulations of power.

**Structural Power.** If power is presented in terms of that which is granted by society to classes or groups of individuals on the basis of such variables as gender, age, race, religion or income, its structural dimension is being discussed. Although legitimized by the values and ideologies of the culture, this dimension of power is potentially exploitative and controlling because it also is inherently hierarchical. Therefore, its distribution throughout society is uneven; so uneven, in fact, that classes or groups of individuals can be described as possessing or having access to a comparative quantity of it.
In these terms, women have less structural power than men. Despite recent and rapid social structural and ideological changes that generally have been advantageous to women as a group, data still can be offered in support of this conclusion. For example, while women have moved into the work force in increasing numbers in recent years, they still tend to be concentrated in what are, and historically have been, women-dominated jobs, the median income of which is nearly $10,000/year less than that of their male counterparts employed in male-predominated jobs (Kain, 1990). Women's move into the labor force has not diminished family and particularly child-care responsibilities. Because the extended family in recent years often is no longer a source of assistance in those activities, women's participation in formalized social networks and their access to empowering social support systems outside of the family continues to dwindle (Polatnik, 1983). The status of women is lower than that of men, as well. When the economic, political, legal or education status of women is compared to that of men, its rating in each category as well as in the aggregate is significantly lower (Yllo, 1984). Finally, the values and ideologies about gender differences that are generated by social structural arrangements greatly favor males over females, in general, and even lend ideational support to male dominance, as well as to male violence directed against females (Gimenez, 1978, 1980).

To date, there have been no studies that have compared the structural power of women, in general, to that of women in paternally incestuous families, in particular. There is a rather persistent notion in this literature, however, that the latter are the "poor sisters" of the former, that is, that women in paternally incestuous families magnify the powerlessness of women in general. To that end, they often are described as helpless, powerless, subjugated and oppressed (Herman, 1981; Ward, 1985).

But what is the source of that alleged oppression? The focus in the literature here turns to the ideological component of structural power, rather than its other, more
substantive aspects. Therefore, there is a distinct concern with the concept of patriarchy. In recent feminist studies of paternal incest that term has become a kind of buzzword that is being used to stand for a whole host of ideologically related, but certainly conceptually distinct, terms such as male dominance, male privilege, male supremacy, father-right, and even sexism and male violence. The various ways patriarchy is used are illustrated by this reference to it in one prominent study in this literature: "In a male supremacist social structure, any 'idea' about violent and/or sexual practices against women is going to be automatically based on, and serve to reinforce, sexist principles" (Ward, 1985, p. 117).

Despite the conceptual confusion apparent in so many of these studies, their contribution to an understanding of paternal incest, in general, and to women in paternally incestuous families, is considerable. That contribution, just like the subject of structural power itself, is more conceptual than substantive, but it has methodological implications because it requires that the subject be approached and analyzed from structural and from systemic, rather than just individual, levels of analysis. This more thorough method not only holds the promise for an enhanced understanding of paternal incest and of women in paternally incestuous families, but also transcends the attributions of blame that characterize most of the studies, such as those on role performance, that analyze and present their findings only on the individual level. That multi-level approach to the subject of women in paternally incestuous families is illustrated by Glaser and Frosh (1988) in their reaction to the indictment of women for not protecting their daughters from incest:

The failure of mothers to protect their children is, at least in part, produced by some of the same conditions which give rise to the abuse itself. These include the dominance of men in families which is, in part, legitimized by an ideological stance that makes women and children into property. The common experience that women have of male violence and economic dependency that characterizes family life also militate against effective action being taken by mothers against abusive men. (p. 48)
Studies such as this do tend to mitigate the blame that is attributed to women. To the extent that they do, however, they do so largely by theoretical fiat. The entire issue of the relationship between paternal incest and structural power, from its substantive components of employment, social support, income and opportunities, to its legitimation by cultural ideologies and values, requires further and more careful examination. Analysis of the structural power held by, or denied to, women in paternally incestuous families may lead to an enhanced understanding of them as wives and mothers.

Systemic Power. Because structural power is a reflection of social stratification and, by definition, is less available to women than to men, a more revealing dimension of power can be thought of in terms of the acquisition of skills, status, and resources within the family (Komter, 1989). It is this type of power, known as systemic and occasionally as personal or as resource power, that has been of interest to scholars from a variety of different disciplines.

Systemic power is the most widely used conceptual framework for the study of family power. Over the years, a variety of controversial scales for its measurement has been developed (Blood & Wolfe, 1960; Olson & Rabunsky, 1972), and although it has been subjected to theoretical and methodological criticism (Kranichfeld, 1987; Safilios-Rothschild, 1976), it remains a popular way of conceptualizing and quantifying the power of any individual member of a family system.

There are several facets of systemic power that are of interest to those scholars studying paternal incest. The first compares that which is held by women with that held by their husbands, thus addressing the overlapping areas between systemic and structural power. These women variously have been described in the literature as being economically dependent on their husbands (Driver & Droisen, 1989; Groff, 1987;
Herman, 1981; Spencer, 1978); as having achieved less formal education (Finkelhor, 1979; Herman, 1981); and as having a less active social support system than their husbands, or as having no social support system outside of the family at all (Finkelhor, 1979; Orten & Rich, 1988; Russell, 1986). With no exception, each of the studies concludes that women in paternally incestuous families have considerably less of this facet of systemic power than do their husbands.

Another facet of systemic power that is of particular interest to researchers is the degree to which its possession and its exercise can effect changes in the family. Eager to relieve women of the blame for the incest that traditionally has been levied on them, a host of recent studies have focused on the women's powerlessness to prevent the incest or to successfully intervene once it has been initiated (deChesnay, Marshall, & Clements, 1988; McIntyre, 1981; Wattenberg, 1985; Westerlund, 1983). Many of these studies use variables that are hypothetically associated with this facet of systemic power in order to describe the origin and nature of this powerlessness. Women in paternally incestuous families, for example, frequently have more than the national average number of children, and therefore are burdened with excessive child care responsibilities that are assumed to diminish the exercise of power vis-a-vis their husbands (Herman, 1981; Lukianowicz, 1972; Tormes, 1968). Other studies find that significant percentages of their samples of women are being physically abused by their husbands, a finding that both explains and describes powerlessness (Browning & Boatman, 1977; deYoung, 1981; Herman, 1981; Riemer, 1940; Truesdell, MacNeil, & Deschner, 1986). And still others document high rates of alcoholism and/or drug abuse on the parts of husbands and theorize that women are rendered powerless to effect change in the face of spousal substance abuse (Berest, 1968; Cormier et al., 1962; Herman, 1981; Truesdell et al., 1986).
This research on the variables associated with systemic power, or more correctly, the lack of systemic power draws the conclusion that women simply may not be able to effect changes in their families, or to prevail in the face of resistance or conflict, due to the superior and more coercive power of their husbands. To that extent, they are powerless to prevent or to intervene in the incest. And if they are, they cannot be blamed for it, nor indicted for collusion in it. Given this insistence, it is not surprising that many of these conclusions are offered in defense against charges of women's culpability for the incest. Their vindicative nature is reflected in the words of some of these recent contributions: "Mothers who are strong, healthy and competent do not tolerate incest. But mothers who have been rendered unusually powerless within their families for whatever reason, often tolerate many forms of abuse, including the sexual abuse of their children" (Herman, 1981, p. 47); "The oppression [italics added] of wives is connected with the sexual victimization of their daughters" (Finkelhor, 1979, p. 126); and "What distinguishes (the mother) from others is that she seems to have been deprived [italics added] of self-fulfillment even within the family" (Tormes, 1968, p. 49). The choice of the passive voice in these conclusions imply that it is husbands who act to deprive their wives of this facet of systemic power.

The patriarchal ideology that infuses paternally incestuous families also deprives women of power. Recent research is focusing on this ideational facet of systemic power and hypothesizing, although not measuring, the degree to which all family members take for granted and act upon a belief system that insists upon the unquestioned power of men as husbands and as fathers. The goal of most of these studies is the generation of theory and testable hypotheses (Dominelli, 1989; Moscrip & Pike, 1988).

These very recent studies on structural and on systemic power, if taken collectively, paint a different image of the nature of paternal incest than that painted by role performance studies. Here, paternal incest no longer appears to be a sexually motivated
act carried out surreptitiously when the opportunity arises; rather, it is seen as an ex-

ploitative act, as a corruption of the power of men as husbands and fathers within their

own families. The image of women as wives and as mothers changes as well. No

longer depicted as machiavellian in their collusion, they now are presented as helpless

in the face of the greater power both of their husbands, and of men as a group.

Power, whether structural or systemic, is a tantalizing concept that holds prom-

ise for the development of theory. It also can be used as a variable for the empirical ex-

amination of various aspects of paternal incest. Feminist researchers, in particular,

generally agree that considerations of power are essential for any real explanation of

paternal incest in general, as well as for an understanding of women as wives and

mothers in paternally incestuous families.

Women's Interactions in Paternally Incestuous Families

Theories of interaction are nearly as old as sociology, and nearly as diverse as

the discipline itself. Yet there are distinct points of convergence among these various

sociological interaction theories. All conceptualize individuals as having the capacity to

create and use symbols, to invest those symbols with meaning, and to use them as the

basis of interpersonal communication. All emphasize the role-taking capacity of indi-

viduals, that ability to creatively imagine the attitudes, emotions and behavioral propen-

sities of others, and to respond to them. And all emphasize the influence of social and

cultural contexts on any interpersonal interaction (Turner, 1986).

Perhaps the most significant, and certainly the most intense, type of interaction

is dyadic. Despite its importance, however, it proves difficult to study (Boyd, 1989;

Huston & Robins, 1982). The interaction, itself, must be conceptualized at the level of

relationship, and must be analyzed in an inter-dyadic fashion so as provide information

about that relationship. A dyad, after all, "is more than a single individual or two times
a single individual. The 'more' is the pattern or relationship between two individuals" (Thompson & Walker, 1982, p. 891).

The mother-daughter dyad often is thought of as an exemplar of the "more" that arises during dyadic interaction. This intense, compelling and, some would insist, unique relationship (Chodorow, 1978; Herman, 1989; Hirsch, 1989) has been the stuff of story, fable and myth, and is generally recollected by both real-life mothers and daughters as the most nonpareil of all relationships they experience in a lifetime.

The mother-daughter dyad also is considered crucial for an understanding of pat­ternal incest. If it is a dyad of quality, the reasoning goes, it should be sufficient enough to prevent incest from occurring the first place, adequate enough to spur inter­vention in its continuation, and protective enough to be the source of the healing of the often traumatizing consequences of incest for abused daughters. A review of the patern­al incest literature, however, reveals that these complexities of the mother-daughter re­lationship usually are overlooked. That disregard, in turn, encourages the use of what often are unsophisticated methods of studying it, and leads to simple overgeneraliza­tions that, like role performance studies, tend to focus only, or largely, on blame. Thus, the opportunity to explore this "symbiotic net" (Herman, 1989, p. 209) between women and their daughters in paternally incestuous families has not yet been taken by scholars and researchers.

Most of the considerations of mother-daughter interaction in the literature are on the level of description. Most often, they are in unflattering terms. Adjectives such as "hostile," "rejecting," "conflictual," and "untrusting" are commonly used. These de­scriptions from studies tend to be consonant with those offered in literary works on pat­ernal incest (Froula, 1986), and autobiographical accounts penned by daughters who sometimes recollect their antagonist relationships with their mothers with more startling clarity and raw emotions than they do the incestuous abuse they experienced by their
fathers (Brady, 1979; Fraser, 1987). One of those accounts (Allen, 1980) written by an abused daughter about her mother, illustrates this contention:

> Sometimes her embraces were gentle, unhurried, immensely comforting and reassuring. At those times, I believed she might love me. But the majority of the time they were quick, too hard, too brief. Then I felt as if I hated her. I'd back out of the kitchen hissing under my breath, I hate you, I hate you. It didn't deter me from hoping that the next time I'd be able to go away whispering, I love you, I love you, I love you. (pp. 56-57)

Like most of the literary and autobiographical accounts of the mother-daughter relationship, studies in the paternal incest literature tend to focus on women as mothers as the source of this conflict. Once again, this alleged departure from the normative expectations that attend the role of mother requires explanation; once again, little of that is offered in the literature, but there is no dearth of speculation as to why these women would so severely compromise their bonds with their daughters. Studies point to their tendency to displace on their daughter their unresolved feelings of anger and bitterness toward their own mothers (Cohen, 1983; Eist & Mandel, 1968; Justice & Justice, 1979; Kaufman et al., 1954; Meiselman, 1978). Some studies indicate that the women's recapitulation of their own unresolved oedipal conflict is the origin of the problem (Gutheil & Avery, 1977; Rhinehart, 1961); others point by way of an explanation to the ungratified emotional needs and poor self-concept of the women (Goodwin, McCarthy, & DiVasto, 1981; Maisch, 1972); and still others locate the source of these women's problems in their latent homosexual feelings towards their own daughters (Lustig et al., 1966).

This focus on the women as mothers as the source of the problem encourages attributions of blame. In some studies, for example, that conflictual mother-daughter relationship is considered a sufficient reason for the incest to be initiated in the first place, and absolutely necessary for its continuation over time (Garrett & Wright, 1975; Herman, 1981; Taylor, 1984). There is little theory built upon that assertion, however,
so any explanation as to how and why the disturbance in that dyadic relationship leads to, and maintains the incest simply is not offered.

A harder line is taken in the assertions of other studies. Here, the conflict in the mother-daughter relationship is interpreted as a deliberate strategy on the part of women to push their daughters into a sexual relationship with their fathers. These references in the literature are unequivocal on this point: "The mother puts [italics added] her child in a vulnerable position, due to the recapitulation of her own oedipal concerns" (Gutheil & Avery, 1977, p. 107); "Mothers develop [italics added] a special, conflictual relationship with their daughters before the incest" (Kaufman et al., 1954, p. 269); "The mother's role in facilitating [italics added] the incestuous relationship involved both strong unconscious hostility toward the daughter and considerable dependence upon her" (Lustig et al., 1966, p. 34); and "The mother often has been rejected by her own mother, with which she had identified; she thereby may develop [italics added] a hostile attitude toward her female offspring and make [italics added] them targets for the sexual advances of the father" (Raphling et al., 1967, p. 505).

Another piece of evidence for the women's disturbance of their relationship with their daughters, whether intended or not, is their reaction to the incest when it is disclosed to them. If women as mothers respond inappropriately or inadequately, this post hoc reasoning goes, that must mean that their relationships with their daughters are conflictual and rejecting, and that, in turn, must mean that they knew about, and even encouraged the incest. Any number of studies support this reasoning. Some describe women who become angry with their daughters when the incest is disclosed, and then blame them for it (Brooks, 1983; Lustig et al., 1966; Machota et al., 1967); others cite cases of women who refuse to believe their daughters' disclosures (Anderson & Shafer, 1979; Forward & Buck, 1978); and others still, avoiding speculation about the women's emotional state, describe their behavioral reaction as weak, inappropriate, or
inadequate (Browning & Boatman, 1977; Meiselman, 1978). To fend off any suggestion that women feel and behave in these ways upon disclosure of the paternal incest only because they are shocked and stupefied, Kempe (1978) counters with an assumption taken for granted by most researchers: "Stories by mothers that they could not be more surprised can generally be discounted; we simply have not seen an innocent mother in cases of longstanding incest" (p. 385).

In their classic study of role behavior, Jones et al. (1961) assert that when behavior departs from normative expectations, the stimulus conditions eliciting the behavior must be taken into account before inferences can be made about personality. More simply stated, if the focus is placed on the behavior of women as mothers vis-a-vis their daughters, then the context of that behavior must be considered. And it is the paternally incestuous family that is the immediate context of the mother-daughter relationship. Recognizing that, and attributing importance to it, feminist researchers recently have begun reinterpreting the origin of this hostile and unsatisfying relationship, and they locate that origin in the control and manipulations of men as husbands and fathers, and in the cultural values and ideologies that support that control (Herman, 1981; McIntyre, 1981). The most emphatic statement of this emerging perspective is made by Ward (1985):

Because the mother rarely gives the daughter the sense of female strength for which she is searching, the daughter turns on the mother, unable to see, in her simple urgency, that the oppression comes from the much larger cause of male supremacist social structure which controls women (her mother included)... through the fear of rape and rape ideology which sanctions the father's right of access to females of any age. The infrastructure of masculinity and femininity causes father-daughter rape, by creating men who see other people as possession and objects and sex as the most masculine way of expressing that power of possession, and women who feel too alone to attempt to stop them. The agony of the mothers lies in their powerlessness to help the daughters from whom they have been separated and with whom they long to identify. (pp. 179-180)
Appreciating the immediate familial and the larger cultural context of the mother-daughter relationship is essential if women as mothers in paternally incestuous families are to be understood. Despite this conceptual improvement in some of this very recent literature, however, even these interaction studies continue to make the same crucial error committed by the earlier studies: in placing the focus on the women alone, they fail to differentiate between individual and relationship properties. This distinction is necessary for the study of interaction, particularly dyadic interaction. Individuals have values, needs, opinions, attitudes, behavioral propensities and life histories, but relationships have norms, rules, power and interaction patterns (Thompson & Walker, 1982). The assumption taken by the paternal incest literature that it is one individual person who alone and for whatever reasons causes and sustains the conflicts in a dyadic interaction is not only a conceptually faulty one, but is methodologically misleading in that it draws attention to that one individual and away from the relationship between the two of them.

This review of the paternal incest literature on the topic of mother-daughter interaction reveals an inadequately conceptualized theme, a general confusion between individual and relationship properties, and a methodological simplicity that cannot capture the complexities of this interaction. Yet the potential for a more sociological exploration of the mother-daughter dyad in paternally incestuous families remains very intriguing. The nature of that interaction, its role-taking features, the symbols it generates and uses, the influences on it by the family system and the social structure, and most particularly, its relationship to the paternal incest raise interesting and, as yet, unanswered questions.
**Conclusion**

Just as the reinterpretations of the incest taboo myths by some of the master social theorists during the early part of this century led to conclusions that had all the tranquility of an axiom, many of the findings about women as wives and mothers in paternally incestuous families have been just as tranquilly axiomatic. Whether this literature considers the roles of these women, their power, or their interaction with their daughters, the unruffled truism that emerges from it is that women are to blame for the incest.

Recent feminist scholars, refusing to be lulled by these tranquil axioms, nonetheless find themselves in the position of reacting to, and defending against them. Thus, their responses are often exercises in stigma disavowal (Schur, 1979), in rejecting the pejorative evaluations and attributions of blame being levied against women, and countering them with new, and different ways of interpreting old data and ideas. Yet, even in this often heated discourse over the issues of blame, collusion and culpability, little attention is being given to the women, themselves. About these particular and critical persons in paternally incestuous families, really little even now is being learned.

The poet Muriel Rukeyser (1968) once did her own revision of one of the great myths that continues to be central to so many contemporary interpretations of incest. She presents the Oedipus story, the paradigmatic fable of individual human development, with a different ending:

Long afterward, Oedipus, old and blinded, walked the roads. He smelled a familiar smell. It was the Sphinx. Oedipus said, "I want to ask you one question. Why didn't I recognize my mother?" "You gave the wrong answer," said the Sphinx. "When I asked, What walks on four legs in the morning, two at noon and three in the evening, you answered, Man. You didn't say anything about woman." "When you say Man," said Oedipus, "you include women too. Everyone knows that." She said, "That's what you think." (p. 3)
The voice of the Sphinx is unambiguously female, with a story and a subjectivity of her own. In refusing to be included under the rubric of "Man," she raises questions about her difference and uniqueness. This must be the approach to women as mothers and wives in paternally incestuous families. They deserve more than just passing glances. They are more than just background figures or markers of positions in family and society, more than just stereotypes and cultural icons. Their difference and uniqueness must be appreciated and, more than that, they need, finally, a voice of their own.
CHAPTER III

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Establishing a Sociological Domain

An Exercise in Deconstruction

If for the sake of fresh discourse alone, a thesis can be advanced that all of the scattered and frequently too brief references to women in paternally incestuous families collectively constitute a body of literature, then as such it must be deconstructed further, if only to expose its unanswered questions. Those questions will reveal themselves to be of a distinctly sociological nature, and when reconstructed into research questions, will be used to guide the inquiry of this dissertation.

Prevailing Conception of the Subject Matter.

The process of deconstruction, that is, of the critical anatomization of how a subject is predominately presented within an existing body of literature, involves several tactics (Denzin, 1989). First, the prevailing conception of the subject in question must be recognized. That is simple enough when that subject is women in paternally incestuous families because the impression of them in the literature is "remarkably consistent and uniformly negative" (Salt, Myer, Coleman, & Sauzier, 1990, p. 112). But what is more complicated, and certainly more significant, is how that conception has been formed. The answer to that question reveals that it is largely, although not solely, the result of what is a consistent failure of virtually all of the studies in this body of literature to make an analytic distinction between these women as mothers, and as wives.
That distinction must be made on the level of role. In the body of literature, the notion of role is taken to be little more than the shared behavioral expectations attached to a social position. But even that rather sociologically unimaginative definition should suggest that the role of mother and the role of wife, although certainly related in some respects, also are generally different and are related to the family system and to the social structure in a variety of often diverse ways. In the body of literature on women in paternally incestuous families, however, those differences often are blurred or, more likely, ignored entirely.

The blurring of these roles is evident in this exemplar from the literature:
"Mothers in these families were infantile persons pushing their daughters prematurely into the mothering role [italics added] including incestuous relations with their father" (Heims & Kaufman, 1963, p. 311). The "mothering role" to which the authors refer traditionally is defined by expectations for the care, nurturance, protection and love of children. Sexual relations with one's spouse, however, is not an expectation of women as mothers, but women as wives. The authors' blurring of these two roles is typical of many of the studies that comprise this body of literature.

Most of the other studies, however, ignore completely the distinction between these two roles, thus precluding to some extent at least, a sociological analysis of the subject at hand. By disregarding the distinction, the boundaries between them are erased and what are two distinct social roles are then conceptually fused into one mother/wife role.

That is most startlingly evident in those studies that focus on maternal collusion in the incest. The very use of the term "maternal" to describe collusion suggests that the prevailing conception in the literature is that women in the role of mother behave conspiratorially. But a careful reading of those studies actually reveals that collusion is a behavior of women acting in that conflated role of mother/wife.
Consider this classic explanation of maternal collusion as an example: "While rejecting their husbands sexually, mothers played conspicuous roles in directing their husbands' sexual energies toward their daughters" (Lustig et al., 1966, p. 34). The implication here is clear only because the role distinction is not: the woman, as wife, fails to sexually satisfy her husband, and then as mother, also fails to protect her daughter by setting her up to incestuously abused. If this indeed were a descriptive scenario, then there are really two role behaviors here that have to be analyzed. Yet, because those two roles are conveniently conflated into one mother/wife role this study, which is typical of most in the literature, obviates the necessity of any further analysis with its implicit conclusion that poor behavior in one role is tantamount to poor behavior in the other.

That analytic distinction also is critical for any consideration of women's power, or lack of same, and its relationship to the paternal incest. Many of the recent feminist studies, for example, explain away the apparent failure of women to protect their daughters from incest by insisting that women are powerless vis-a-vis their husbands. In the words of Herman (1981):

She is extremely dependent upon and subservient to her husband...and the prospect of independent survival [is] quite impractical. Rather than provoke her husband's anger or risk his desertion, she will capitulate. If the price of maintaining the marriage includes the sexual sacrifice of her daughter, she raises no effective objections. (p. 49)

This description, typical of explanations of collusion in the recent feminist literature, intimates that powerlessness in the role of wife is the same as, or brings about, powerlessness in the role of mother. While that very well may be true, how and why that is the case needs to be analyzed and explained. And, both analysis and explanation require that the roles of mother and wife are separated as concepts.

Feminists often are critical of the concept of role because, among other things, it masks power differences (Stacey & Thorne, 1985; Thorne, 1980). Yet, if a distinction
is made between the role of mother and that of wife, power differences not only become apparent, but significant. In a stratified, androcentric society, the role of wife organizes the secondary status of women even while the role of mother empowers women within their private domain of family and home (Chafetz, 1990; Huber, 1990; Polatnick, 1983).

The separation of the roles of mother and wife offers more than just a challenge to the prevailing conception of women that is presented in the paternal incest literature. It also presents an opportunity to explore the questions unanswered, even unasked, about these women. For example, if each of these roles has its own attendant pressures that are potential sources of difficulty (Stephan & Stephan, 1990; Thomas & Biddle, 1966), do women in paternally incestuous families, like many other women, experience role overload? If every woman brings into the role of mother and the role of wife her own personality, biography and socialization experiences (Saks & Krupat, 1988), do some women in paternally incestuous families experience problems with personality-role fit? Are the expectations that append to each of these roles ambiguous (VanSell, Brief, & Schuler, 1981) and therefore open for interpretation by the women? Do they also perceive strains within each of these roles (Goode, 1960) or conflicts between them (Gross et. al, 1966), and if they do, is there a relationship between these strains and conflicts and the paternal incest? These, and other questions that arise when the roles of mother and wife are treated as separate concepts, are all of a distinctly sociological nature. Answers to them will reveal what women in paternally incestuous families not only have in common with each other, but what they share with other women as well.

Separating the roles is the first necessary step for sociological analysis; the second is to consider each role not as a static concept, but as a process. There are any number of theoretical and applied models of role as process that have been presented
over the years in the sociological literature (Hall, 1972; Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964; Levinson, 1959; Turner, 1962). For the purposes of this dissertation, however, role as process will be defined in terms of three levels: the structural, systemic and individual. Each level of the role process involves a unique orientation towards role expectations and demands, the roles in question, the self as a role-player, and others as role-senders; that is, each involves different role-taking and role-making processes.

Revealing the Theoretical Model of Human Action

The second task of deconstruction involves revealing the typical theoretical model of human action that is implied and used in the existing body of literature (Denzin, 1989). That is a task made rather difficult by the fact that many disparate disciplines have an interest in both the general topic of paternal incest and the more specific one of women in these families, and that there are many and varied theoretical assumptions that underlie the approaches to the topic. But if an infrastructural model of human action is common to most, if not all, of the studies, that model is decidedly positivist in nature.

A positivist model assumes that an "objective reality" can be captured by empirical methods of research; the more elusive concepts of subjectivity, meaning and interpretation, in a manner consistent with Wittgenstein's dictum (1922, p. 151), are "passed over in silence." Thus, how women in paternally incestuous families experience their immediate and their larger worlds, the meanings they derive from interpersonal interaction and from their culture, their sense of self, and so many other facets that are subjective in nature are consistently passed over in the literature. Two things are focused on instead: the personality traits of these women and their underlying psychodynamic processes (Groff, 1987; Scott & Stone, 1986; Shovelar, 1975), and the
more sociological "traits," such as inadequate education and economic dependency, and unequal power (Dominelli, 1989; Faller, 1988; Moscrip & Pike, 1988).

A positivist model also seeks causal explanations for any "objective reality." Causality is assumed to be linear in direction, thus there can be no causes without effects, and no effects without causes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The search for these causal paths, in fact, constitutes a significant proportion of so many of the studies, regardless of their underlying theoretical assumptions, that comprise the body of literature on women in paternally incestuous families. The personality traits, underlying psychodynamic processes as well as the sociological traits they are thought to share not only are used in the literature to describe them as women, but are posited as causal antecedents of their alleged collusion in the paternal incest, as well as of the conditions that are deemed to have created the motivation and the opportunity for the paternal incest, itself (Zuelzer & Reposa, 1983).

Inquiry is believed to be value-free in a positivist model; thus, it is thought to lead to "the one and only correct view that can be taken of [the subject], independent of the process or circumstances of viewing" (Kirk & Miller, 1986, p. 14). While such an ontological assertion is neither ardently made nor defended in the body of literature on women in paternally incestuous families, the fact remains that that "process of viewing" rarely is taken into consideration. Researcher brings preconceptions to the problem being studied, and thus cannot step outside of what Heidegger (1962) calls the hermeneutic circle of interpretation that surrounds both researcher and subject, thus rendering objective, value free inquiries impossible. The preconceptions especially about gender that are brought into many, if not most, of the studies on women in paternally incestuous families are so pervasive, so influential, and so unexamined that Wattenberg (1985) is forced to conclude that the entire body of literature is comprised of little more than "logical fallacies, built-in biases, and occasional sheer nonsense" (p. 205).
Exposing the Biases

That issue of gender preconceptions is important for the third task of deconstruction which involves the exposure of the biases that most obviously surround the existing body of literature (Denzin, 1989). Gender biases, as a matter of fact, do more than just surround the literature on women in paternally incestuous families—they infuse it. So infused is the literature that much of its organization, point of view and interpretation reflects an androcentric paradigm in which the gendering of human experience simply is overlooked. And this creates what Minnich (1982, p. 7) would call a "devastating conceptual error."

That conceptual error is evident, as an example, in the previously noted tendency in the literature for the role of mother and of wife to be conflated into one mother/wife role. With that conflation, the sociological notion of role is lost, and what remains is an image that embodies not only women's overt behavior, but also the "customs, traditions, conventions, beliefs, attitudes, mores, rules, laws, precepts, the host of other rational and nonrational norms and powerful symbolic components" (Bernard, 1974, p. vii) that embrace and imbue it.

This is a culturally and androcentrically constructed image of "femininity" that is epiphenomenal to the role of mother and to the role of wife. Femininity is an image seen through a cracked mirror: it reflects the idealization of women as well as their debasement (Chodorow & Contratto, 1982). So idealized, women are seen as totally responsible and blameworthy for all of the behaviors of everyone in the private domain of family and home; so debased, their strengths in the social role of mother are ignored, and their weaknesses in the social role of wife are emphasized (Brownmiller, 1984).

That devastating conceptual error also is apparent in the positivist model of human action that underlies most of the studies that comprise this body of literature. This
empirical, causal and value-free model is one in which gender does not count (Cook & Fonow, 1986; Farganis, 1986; Smith, 1974). But if gender is to count, if it is to be a factor, a variable, in the examination of women in paternally incestuous families, that "devastating conceptual error" must be corrected by focusing on the subjective, the biographical and the interactional. That approach is not only needed to address the distinctly sociological questions that remain unanswered in this body of literature on women as mothers and wives in paternally incestuous families, but also is consistent with what Mills (1959), a scholar no less eminent than the masters who revitalized and interpreted the incest taboo myths at the turn of the century, calls "the sociological imagination" (p. 7).

Deconstructing the Deconstruction

This exercise in deconstruction treats the body of literature on paternal incest as if it is largely homogeneous. That approach is purposeful, for it facilitates the exposure of some persistent and expressive themes that characterize the literature in toto. But if that deconstruction is deconstructed further, what is revealed are two ideal types, that is, two groups of studies, one that can be termed mainstream and the other feminist, that each tend toward a logical pattern but that stand in contrast to each other (Lopreato & Alston, 1970).

Based upon the theoretical assumptions of structural-functionalism (Parsons & Bales, 1955), mainstream scholarship on paternal incest envisions the nuclear family as one of the cogs that makes up the larger wheel of society. It is an essential cog, in fact, in that it contributes to society's maintenance and smooth operation through its functional imperatives of socializing its children into social values, and maintaining the emotional health of all of its members. For the family to perform these functional imperatives, all of its roles must be clearly defined and preserved. The marriage roles are es-
pecially crucial to these tasks. The woman, as wife, is believed to play an expressive, relational role in the family; she is the caretaker, the nurturer, the unifier of relations within the family system. As mother, she also must play a somewhat instrumental role in that she must guide and direct her children. The man, as husband and as father, plays an instrumental role by engaging in actions directed at controlling the environment outside of the family, and articulating the family system with that environment. The expectations that append to each role emanate from society and are considered immutable. These specialized roles are taken as separate, complementary, and equal. Therefore, among other things, they are bilateral—a change in one requires an equal but opposite change in the other in order to restore balance.

But what has all this to do with paternal incest? The etiology of paternal incest is explained in terms of the woman's unwillingness or inability to play her role correctly. Whether she fails to be a consistently satisfying sexual partner to her husband, or fails to maintain a physical or emotional presence in the family, or fails to act as a restraining agent, her husband is compelled to react in an equal but opposite fashion by initiating incest. Thus, she is ultimately to blame for the incest and, if it continues over time, must be considered collusive in it. That she knows that the incest has been initiated and is continuing is taken as axiomatic and, perhaps, is a reflection of what also is assumed to be her greater emotionality and intuitiveness, traits common to women in general, and consistent with the nature of women's expressive roles.

The theoretical assumptions that infuse feminist scholarship, in contrast, are diverse but are based in the conflict perspective. Their approach builds up to society by starting with women's experiences, and one of those experiences, common to virtually all women, is that of powerlessness vis-a-vis men. Feminists see that relational powerlessness as a microcosm of both family system and larger social structural arrangements and ideologies that maintain and reinforce androcentrism. They also see it as a source
of almost continual conflict between women and men, regardless of the role each sex is playing, unless the superior power of men is thoroughly legitimated by ideology, institutional arrangements, and/or the belief system of individual women.

It is that power difference, then, that becomes critical for an understanding of paternal incest. Because no gender roles can be considered either complementary or equal, men uniformly have superior power; because women cannot be their equal, they are inclined to treat them not just as something different from themselves, but as something less. That creates a feeling of entitlement. Thus, if a man wants to exercise his power in relation to his daughter, he can initiate incest. The woman, as mother and wife, will not stop him because she cannot--she simply lacks the power to do so. She is not blameworthy for the incest, therefore, nor can she truly be called collusive.

Quite obviously, the mainstream and the feminist literature on paternal incest and, more particularly, on women in paternally incestuous families, strain away from each other. They constitute logical and theoretically opposed extremes. The disputed claims between them invite inquiry and exploration.

Guiding Research Questions

A number of research questions will guide the inquiry of this dissertation. These are stated as questions, rather than as hypotheses derived from theory. In the light of the analysis of the data, each question will be reworked and then restated as a research hypothesis that can be used in future research.

The first research question gets to the core of what the deconstruction of the existing body of literature reveals: that there has been a consistent failure in both mainstream and recent feminist studies to make an analytic distinction between the role of mother and the role of wife. The subsequent research questions then treat these roles as separate concepts, and use each of them to explore some of the more pressing and rele-
vant disputations between these two theoretically opposed approaches to the topic at hand.

**Role Conflict**

The exercise in the deconstruction of the existing body of literature on women in paternally incestuous families demonstrates that the roles of mother and wife must be separated into distinct analytic concepts. Once that simple act of separation occurs, an assortment of sociological questions is revealed and presses for answers. One of the most interesting, and perhaps essential, of those questions has to do with role conflict. Here defined as a condition that occurs whenever the pressures of any one role are experienced as incompatible with the pressures of any other role the person is playing (Coverman, 1989), role conflict requires the exercise of individual agency for its resolution.

Some assumptions underlie this general sociological concept of role conflict. First, conflict may be perceived by role incumbents in the absence of evidence of its objective reality. The focus here must be on the perception of conflict (VanSell et al., 1981). Second, conflict may be legitimate in nature or illegitimate, that is, it may be perceived by the role incumbents as obligations to meet the expectations of those who have the right to hold them, or as pressures to meet the expectations of those who do not (VanSell et al., 1981). And third, role incumbents will engage in behaviors and/or intrapsychic strategies to resolve the perceived role conflict or, being unable to do so, to cope with it (Hall, 1972).

This notion of coping is important to this dissertation and requires elaboration. Coping is here defined as "efforts, both action-oriented and intrapsychic, to manage (i.e., master, tolerate, reduce, minimize) environmental and internal demands, and conflicts among them, which tax or exceed a person's resources" (Lazarus & Launier,
A focus on coping with role conflict serves to highlight crucial issues that for too long have been glossed over or ignored completely in the extant body of literature on women in paternally incestuous families.

First, the very notion of coping suggests the exercise of human agency, thereby providing a conceptual breath of life with which to vivify the cardboard image of these women that predominates in the literature. Second, because the coping strategy devised by each woman is likely to represent an enduring pattern of performance in her roles as mother and wife, any relationship of each strategy to various facets of the paternal incest can be explored. Third, any analysis of coping strategies requires an augmented conceptualization of role. In considering the role of mother and that of wife as a tri-leveled process, each level with its own unique way of taking and making roles, how coping strategies intervene in the role process at each level, and with what consequences, can be explored. That exploration is critical to building the type of integrated theory that Friday (1988) recommends, and that many scholars and practitioners in the field of paternal incest lament for its absence (deYoung, 1987; Finkelhor, 1984).

Taking all of this into consideration, the following guiding research question is proposed: What is the degree of the conflict women in paternally incestuous families perceive between their roles of mother and wife, and what strategies do they use to cope with it?

Traditionality

Once the roles of mother and wife are analytically separated, some of the disputed claims between mainstream and feminist scholars can be explored. One of those has do with power. But power, itself, is a broad category and requires specificity in definition. Kranichfeld (1987) suggests that one specific type of power is structural power,
perhaps best conceptualized in a manner consistent with the definition posed by Stinchcombe (1968): "Power is a capacity to get things done. Either resources (rights in things) or authority (rights in persons) increases the ability of a person to do what he [or she] decides to do" (p. 157).

For researchers interested in gender differences, definitions of structural power generally have been shaped by an abiding interest in the relative power of women and men in their roles as wives and husbands. Thus measurements of it usually are based on both their comparative acquisition of skills, resources and statuses outside of the family, and their relative authority. By this definition, however, women in general are powerless vis-a-vis men in general, and wives in specific are powerless vis-a-vis their husbands, so most research on structural power can only conclude by stating the obvious.

But there is another aspect of structural power that goes beyond the axiomatic and gets to the heart of a dispute between the mainstream and the recent feminist studies on women in paternally incestuous families. That aspect has to do with traditionality, defined here as the degree to which women in the role of wife express by their behavior and/or attitudes their commitment to the ideological and material means that maintain women's unequal power vis-a-vis men, that is, their commitment to androcentric hegemony.

The mainstream studies tend to describe women in paternally incestuous families as low in traditionality because they cannot or will not conform to the expectations and demands of their roles. The recent feminist studies, on the other hand, depict these women as highly traditional, as servilely devoted to the very conditions and ideas that keep women powerless in relationship to men, and wives powerless in relationship to their husbands. Their portrayal of these women also serves as a critique of both the structural arrangements that deprive women of power, and the invisible power of an-
androcentrism itself. Two essentially opposite and ardently held views: what is required is a careful examination of this disputed issue of traditionality.

Therefore, the second research question of this dissertation is: What is the degree of traditionality, that is, the behavioral commitment to androcentric hegemony, of women in paternally incestuous families?

Marital Power

The second type of power that Kranichfeld (1987) proposes is systemic power which has its locus squarely within the family system. For women, therefore, this type of power is attached to both their wife and their mother role.

Systemic power and the wife role will be considered first. A review of the literature shows a wealth of studies on the exercise of systemic power within the marriage dyad, most of which use the concepts and measurements devised by Blood and Wolfe (1960) in their groundbreaking research on wives and husbands. This study, undoubtedly one of the most widely quoted in the marriage literature, developed the "final say" test for determining marital power styles. By asking six questions as to who has the final say in various decision-making tasks, the authors determined what style of marital power characterizes the marriage relationship. On the basis of their own research, Blood and Wolfe reached the general conclusion that the spouse who is able to bring the most resources to bear in decisions has the most power, and that most of the couples they studied were in marriages characterized by what they termed "relative equalitarianism."

Recently, that very notion of "relative" equalitarianism has been questioned by feminist researchers (Bartky, 1990; Boss & Thorne, 1989). Insisting that true equalitarianism cannot be relative, and disputing Blood and Wolfe's contention that a moderate degree of male dominance in marriage is both equalitarian and "normal," these re-
searchers call into question the very concepts and measurements used in this and other studies of marital power styles. Their critique is multi-barbed. It is directed primarily against the use of the "final say" standard as the sole criterion for determining marital power on the basis that it masks real power differences between wives and husbands. It is also directed against the criterion that the only important "resources" that can be brought to bear in decision-making, like income and occupational prestige, are those that originate outside of the family, and thus are more available to husbands than to wives.

Marital power also is hotly debated within the body of the literature on paternal incest. Mainstream studies seem to reflect the basic assumptions offered by Blood and Wolfe (1960) about marriages in general, that is, they infer, if they do not state explicitly, that wives and husbands in paternally incestuous families have separate, but equal and complementary, power. Feminist studies challenge that notion. They insist that the marriages of couples in paternally incestuous families magnify the asymmetry of power between wives and husbands, in general, and that it is this profound imbalance of power that creates the conditions conducive to the incest.

Both of these approaches to the subject at hand, however, treat marital power solely in terms of its quantity or outcome, or how, in the words of Komter (1989, p. 191), the "power cake" is divided up. But a more subtle, interesting, and certainly more relevant, facet of power is its quality--the process of power that occurs between couples within the interpersonal context of their marriage or live-in relationship, and their family, and the legitimation of that power. Power processes take place when one person wants to, and feels entitled to, affect change in the other person; when one anticipates and plans for resistance to that change, and when that resistance is overcome. If the mainstream literature on paternal incest insists that women manipulate their husbands to initiate and continue the incest, and the feminist literature denies all of those...
assertions by insisting that even if they know the incest is occurring, women feel they have no right to intervene, or have no power to, the process and the legitimation of power clearly are contested issues. As such, any measure of marital power, or categorization of its styles, must also include some consideration of both.

For the purposes of this dissertation, then, marital power will be defined in a manner consistent with the definition offered by Kranichfeld (1987), as the ability of one spouse to change the behavior, affect and/or thoughts of the other spouse. This definition of marital power requires measures of outcome and process power, and of the degree of legitimation. Given that definition, the third research question of this dissertation is: For women in paternally incestuous families, what are the salient patterns in their exercise of marital power?

Maternal Power

Another facet of systemic power exists within women's role as mother (Komter, 1989; Kranichfeld, 1987). Perhaps no other role that women can assume is so idealized, reified and institutionalized as that of mother (Bloch, 1978; Dally, 1982; Rich, 1986). No other role is so invested with power, yet so regulated by custom, tradition and law (Bernard, 1974). And no other role, if performed inadequately or incompetently, is targeted for so much acrimony and blame.

It is that latter assertion, about the acrimony and blame, that also is a point of contention between the mainstream literature on women in paternally incestuous families, and the recent feminist literature. The former insists that only when women abuse their maternal power by surrendering their daughters to their husbands will incest be initiated, and that only when they fail to exercise it, will it continue. Thus, they are blameworthy. The latter asserts that these women have little or no maternal power anyway, and thus are blameless.
While this issue of maternal power is relevant and pressing, it must be approached cautiously. If it is simply defined as the ability of these women as mothers to protect their daughters from paternal incest, an irreconcilable tautology arises from the very use of a sample of women whose daughters indeed were incestuously abused. In order to avoid such a tautology, the conceptual focus must shift to the behavior of the women as mothers after the disclosure or the discovery of the paternal incest. To that end, maternal power will be defined in terms of the types of actions that women as mothers take to protect their daughters from further abuse once the paternal incest has been disclosed or discovered.

The few studies that have been the most systematically conducted on women's behavior as mothers following the discovery of the incest show that their support, protectiveness and belief in their daughters vary in ways that appear to be quite predictable (Everson et al., 1989; Faller, 1988; Hooper, 1989). The more economically and/or emotionally dependent these women are on their husbands, for example, the less protective their behavior and the less they are inclined to believe their daughters' allegations. Women whose daughters were incestuously abused by their biological fathers tend to be less supportive than those whose daughters were abused by stepfathers. Women who already are divorced or separated from their husbands at the time the incest is disclosed or discovered, and women to whom their husbands have confessed that they indeed had engaged in incest with their daughters, tend to be more protective and more believing.

These are particularly provocative patterns because they hint, if nothing more, that if the role of mother and that of wife are analytically separated, role conflict may be at the crux of differential responses to the disclosure or discovery of paternal incest. Further, they suggest that the strategies used to resolve role conflict may be related to the strategies used to protect their daughters from further incestuous abuse.
To further examine these ideas, this final research question is posed: For women in paternally incestuous families, is there a relationship between their strategy for coping with role conflict, and their actions vis-a-vis their daughters after the discovery or the disclosure of the paternal incest?

All of these research questions are designed to examine the distinctly sociological questions that are revealed when the body of literature on women as wives and mothers in paternally incestuous families is deconstructed, and when the contested issues between mainstream and feminist studies are revealed. While these initial questions are rather broadly stated, they will be progressively narrowed and focused during the research process, so that they can be transformed into research hypotheses that can serve as the bases for future research.

Building Theory

In the wake of the discovery of paternal incest as a social problem, an almost overwhelming number of studies has reported on its epidemiology and its consequences. Those epidemiological studies continue to establish prevalence rates, search for statistical patterns, and refine methodologies for data collection, but few of them also are concerned with the use, or the development of theory to explain any variations in these rates (Haugaard & Emery, 1989). The studies on the effects of paternal incest pose a different concern. Distinctly psychological in nature, most of them utilize a psychoanalytic or, more commonly, a psychodynamic theory of some kind to clarify their findings (Finkelhor, 1984). It is into the gap between prevalence and consequence, that very gap where the subject of women as mothers and wives in paternally incestuous families can be found, that little theory at all has been used to explain findings, and virtually none has been derived from findings.
It is that latter point regarding the derivation of theory from findings that deserves elaborated discussion. In the qualitative tradition, theory is inductively derived from the study of the subject matter it represents, so that "data collection, analysis and theory stand in reciprocal relationship with each other" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 23). A well constructed theory of that type, therefore, will meet four essential rules for judging the applicability of theory to the subject of inquiry: fit, understanding, generality and control.

First, such an inductively derived theory will fit the subject matter. If this theory is faithful to the everyday reality of women as wives and mothers in the private arena of paternally incestuous families, then it not only will be explanatory but also will provide a framework for action and intervention in the public arena.

That rule of fit makes a methodological demand that women in these families be used as the subjects of the research. That demand may sound so obvious that it requires no further discussion but, in fact, women in paternally incestuous families rarely have been the subjects of either the mainstream or the recent feminist studies that purport to describe their everyday behavior, or their reactions and responses to their discovery of the incest. The opportunity to focus on women who so often are viewed in the existing body of literature as either the "major culprit" or a "major victim" in the paternally incestuous family system (Herman, 1981, p. 36) has been largely missed. Only by seizing that opportunity will the subject matter fit the theory, and the theory fit the subject matter.

Second, an inductively derived theory will meet the rule of understanding, that is, it will be comprehensible and will make sense to researchers, subjects and practitioners alike. But that term "make sense" is a slippery one. It refers to much more than just a cognitive and affective resonance with assumptions repeated so often in the literature and in practice that they sound as if they are true; it refers to something different
than the uncritical acceptance or rejection of the gender ideologies that infuse literature and practice. To meet the rule of understanding, such a theory must represent the reality of the everyday experiences, thoughts and feelings of those who are the subjects of inquiry.

That rule of understanding makes a methodological demand as well, and that is that the women in paternally incestuous families who are the subjects of the inquiry of this research must represent their own lives. Some of those representations, undoubtedly, will be counternarratives because they will reveal that the women who offer them do not think, feel or act as they previously have been understood to by researchers and practitioners (Personal Narratives Group, 1989). Such counternarratives are important because they lead to the progressive redefinition and restatement of original research questions, and force researchers to constantly judge their understanding against the subjects' lived experiences.

Generality is the third rule for evaluating the applicability of a theory to the subject at hand. If the data upon which the theory is based are comprehensive, and the interpretations of the data are analytic, then the theory itself should be abstract and flexible enough to render it applicable to a variety of related contexts.

The interview is the primary method of data collection of those few studies in the existing body of literature that actually use women in paternally incestuous families as subjects (Salt et al., 1990). Only a small number of those studies, however, provide details as to what questions were asked of whom, and whether all questions were asked of every subject; fewer still explicate what rules, for lack of better term, were used for interpreting the data. Yet many of these same studies have contributed significantly to the predominante impression of these women as wives and as mothers. Interpretations that are much more analytic than these are methodologically demanded by the rule of generality.
There is a schism among qualitative researchers as to how much analytic interpretation there should be of collected data: some insist that there should be none and that the subjects, in essence, should speak for themselves; others are more concerned with accurate description than with analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1984). But for those qualitative researchers who are most interested in building theory, analytic interpretations are not only necessary, but they must be thorough, systematic and rigorous (Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Finally, an inductively derived theory will provide control with regard to action toward the subject matter. Because it is systematically derived from data, the theory may be used to inform and to guide public intervention into this private arena. With the proliferation of prevention, intervention and treatment programs for all members of paternally incestuous families, and with the development of civil and criminal procedures for redressing the aftermath of paternal incest, it is essential that theory guide practice. Without that guidance, this "grand social experiment," as Finkelhor (1986, p. 254) terms this past decade's almost frenetic remedial activity, may very well fail to produce its intended, and needed, results.
CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH DESIGN

The In-Depth Interview

The "Art of Sociological Sociability"

To access the logic of the courses of action taken by women as mothers and as wives in paternally incestuous families, and to assess the effects of systemic and structural constraints upon them, requires a research method that is both open enough for these women to represent their own lives, and structured enough for the researcher to obtain credible, transferable and dependable information. While these two methodological mandates may seem paradoxical, if not irreconcilable, there is a long and time-honored tradition in sociology of using the in-depth interview to achieve both.

Over thirty years ago in a special edition on "the science of the interview" in the American Journal of Sociology, Benney and Hughes (1956) extolled the value of the in-depth interview to sociologists:

The interview is more than a tool and an object of study. It is the art of sociological sociability, the game we play for the pleasure of savoring its subtleties. It is our flirtation with life, our eternal affair played hard and to win, but played with that detachment and amusement which give us, win or lose, the spirit to rise up and interview again and again. (p. 138)

Their point must not be lost in the poetry of that panegyric: the in-depth interview is one of the more powerful tools of sociological research in general, and of qualitative sociological research in specific. The in-depth interview has unique strengths as a methodological tool. It is an expedient way to garner large amounts of data within a relatively short period of time, and allows for immediate follow-up questions that may
be necessary for the purposes of clarification and enhanced understanding (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Because it allows interviewees to represent their own lives in their own words, it is able to capture the process of lived events, including critical points of change and transformation (Darroch & Silvers, 1982; Keen, 1977). And if sensitively designed and carried out, the in-depth interview is an ethical research tool. It conveys respect for the agency of the individual respondent, and appreciation for the systemic and structural pressures that impinge upon it (Berwyn, 1966).

The interview is not only the method of choice for the majority of studies in the existing body of literature on paternal incest, but often is touted as the only method by which the type of data needed to explain paternal incest can be collected (Haugaard & Emery, 1989; Russell, 1986; Wyatt, 1985). That arguable insistence aside, the in-depth interview has been, and continues to be, widely used by researchers from each of the many disciplines with an interest in paternal incest.

It is curious to note, however, that the same method that has served so well this area of study rarely has been used when the subjects are women in paternally incestuous families. Perhaps this fact reflects the quandary that Becker (1967) describes when he states that individuals who deviate from social expectations are subject to a "hierarchy of credibility," in which credibility and the right to be heard are differentially distributed. Women in paternally incestuous families may be caught in that quandary. If so, it would seem all the more important to extricate them from it by using the in-depth interview as the research method of choice.

The apparent reticence of researchers to use the in-depth interview with women from these families also may reflect one of the limitations of this method. By definition, the in-depth interview involves personal interaction, and that very process of engaging in this "conversation with a purpose" (Kahn & Cannell, 1957, p. 149) requires the cooperation of those being interviewed. When the subjects of such sociological
inquiry are those who deviate from social expectations, cooperation can be difficult to secure, and truthfulness in response may be difficult to assure. It is important to note, however, that these same concerns can be raised in relation to other types of research methods as well. The problem here may be less the method, per se, than the "deviant" nature of the subjects of the inquiry.

The in-depth interview, then, has had a long tenure in the discipline of sociology, and is the method of choice for the study of paternal incest. If carefully designed, it should prove an agile instrument with which to capture the experiences, feelings and thoughts of women as mothers and as wives in paternally incestuous families.

The in-depth interview, by definition, is structured in nature. The first step in its design is the least challenging and involves the construction of a set of demographic questions that can be completed by the women immediately prior to the interview itself. This simple questionnaire basically serves two purposes: it cues the researcher to some of the demographic variables that may influence the women's subsequent responses and disclosures during the interview, and it provides a format in which these variables may be displayed for the purpose of analysis. The demographic questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

The design of the in-depth interview poses more of a challenge and must incorporate two essential features. First, it must be open and flexible enough to allow the interviewees to tell their own stories in their own words (McCracken, 1988). Questions, then, must be phrased in as general and non-directive a manner as possible. These so-called "grand tour" questions encourage the interviewees to talk, while at the same time they do not over-specify the direction or the perspective of this talk (Spradley, 1979).

The flow of response, then, must be maintained through the use of planned prompts that assist the researcher in accounting for all of the formal characteristics of
the topic under discussion. These planned prompts might ask the interviewees to define a certain event, designate its key actors, interpret its particular meaning, discuss its significance, or evaluate its consequences. Each topical area within the in-depth interview potentially has a plethora of formal properties that had to be anticipated during the construction of the interview.

Although planned prompts lend structure to the in-depth interview, it is nonetheless necessary that testimony from interviewees be elicited in as nondirective and unobtrusive a manner as possible. That means that prompts are used only if the information sought is not freely given. It means something else as well, and that is that the researcher as interviewer must maintain a low profile, allowing the interviewees to tell their own stories, using their own words. One of the implications of this mandate is that the researcher must not engage in active listening, whereby the unspoken or even hidden meanings of responses are divined and then "reflected back" to the interviewee for confirmation or elaboration (Brenner, 1985). To do so is to risk capturing nothing more than the researcher's own logic, thereby introducing an inherently risky tautology to the interview, itself.

The second essential feature of the design of the in-depth interview is that it is structured enough to obtain information that is credible, transferable and dependable. Those terms are used deliberately as alternatives to the positivist/quantitative paradigm standards of internal validity, external validity and reliability. The matter at hand, of course, is more than simply one of semantics; instead, it evinces an insistence that qualitative research should not be judged by quantitative standards (Kirk & Miller, 1986). In qualitative research, for example, variables take shape during the course of research and then patterns of interrelationship between them are sought out, while in the quantitative tradition, variables are fixed from the start and the determination of the precise relationship between them is the goal of research. While qualitative research is designed
to elicit testimony that is often articulated with hesitancy, confusion and obfuscation, quantitative research usually seeks clear and unambiguous responses. Finally, qualitative research is interested in the subjective, that is, in interpretations, meanings and feelings, while quantitative research generally is not. Because the underlying assumptions of each type of research are different, standards for judging the quality of each must be different as well (McCracken, 1988).

Credibility, then, is one of the standards against which qualitative research can be evaluated. It refers to the extent to which the research is conducted in a manner that ensures that the topic of inquiry is accurately identified and described (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). An in-depth interview design that is comprehensive will sample the existing theoretical constructs on the topic, thereby increasing its credibility. To further assure that that standard will be met, questions asked in the in-depth interview must be clear and unambiguous, and must be asked in the same way they are written and in the same order each time they are asked; they must mean the same thing to all interviewees, and must be answerable within the context of the interview, itself (Yin, 1984).

The generalizability of qualitative findings is problematic by positivist standards. However, if the theoretical parameters of the research are clearly stated, then "those who design research studies within those same parameters can determine whether or not the cases described can be generalized. . .and transferred to other settings" (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 146). Thus, the standard of transferability can be met.

Qualitative research, in contrast to the positivist/quantitative paradigm, rests on the assumption that interpretation and understanding are always changing, therefore reliability, in the positivist sense of the term, is difficult to achieve with qualitative research, but dependability is not (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). If the in-depth interview is designed to be sensitive to critical points of change and transformation in the testimony
of interviewees, and to their increasingly refined understanding as they progress through the interview, it meets the standard of dependability (Kvale, 1983).

An important note must be inserted here. Some of the qualitative data that make up the substance of this dissertation can and will be quantified. The data from the in-depth interview, the follow-up interview and the demographic questionnaire will be coded and then subjected to statistical analysis. The quantification of some of this data serves three purposes, well accepted in the qualitative research tradition (Rossman & Wilson, 1985; Strauss, 1989): corroborating of findings by providing convergence, elaboration of findings by offering detail, and initiation of findings by highlighting areas for future research. It is believed that the combination of words and numbers that will be found in this dissertation will bring more richness and sagacity to the understanding of women as mothers and wives in paternally incestuous families than would be brought by either method alone.

All of these standards were taken into consideration in the design of the in-depth interview. Further, and in recognition of the fact that such a thorough interview by necessity would be lengthy, some "comfort factors" were built into it. All interviews were scheduled at the convenience of the women, and were held at the familiar, and easily accessible surroundings of the Center to which each woman had been referred. Because the interview was long, averaging two and one-quarter hours, each interviewee was given the option to stop the interview at any time and for any length of time if she so desired. The room in which the interviews took place was comfortable and private, and the interviews were never interrupted by outside people or by telephone calls. Confidentiality was guaranteed both verbally and in writing; the Statement of Confidentiality and Consent is found in Appendix B. Also, each woman was given $25.00 to cover transportation and/or child care expenses, and to pay for any inconvenience. Despite the controversy over the payment of human subjects who participate
in sociological research, a consistent recommendation made by researchers in the field of child sexual abuse is that subjects, whenever possible, be given a nominal stipend in recognition of expenses incurred and time offered (Finkelhor, 1984; Russell, 1983).

Comfort factors were built into the structure of the in-depth interview as well. The questions were ordered in such a way as to produce an even and comfortable flow of conversation, with those questions that probe more sensitive and personal areas embedded within the larger interview, and asked only after a significant amount of interaction already had occurred between the researcher and the interviewee (Lofland & Lofland, 1984). An audiotape was made of each interview so that the researcher would not have to distract interviewees by taking extensive notes, and so that these "conversations with a purpose" could be transcribed verbatim and in their entirety.

The original in-depth interview was then pretested on three women from paternally incestuous families who already had been in counseling at the Center for six months and who volunteered to go through the interview process. The interview format was amended in reaction to their responses to it, and their evaluation of it. The final in-depth interview format used with a sample of women in paternally incestuous families was approved by Western Michigan University's Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The confirmation of that approval is found in Appendix C. The final in-depth interview format is found in Appendix D.

After participating in the in-depth interview, all of the women later agreed to participate in a short follow-up interview, the format of which is found in Appendix D. For each woman, this interview occurred under the same conditions as was the in-depth interview, and was conducted exactly one week later. This follow-up interview lasted from ten to fifteen minutes, and consisted of questions that probed the women's perceptions of their role as mother and their role as wife or live-in companion, and that measured their satisfaction with each of those roles. This short interview was necessi-
tated by the fact that certain variables emerged during the course of the in-depth inter-
view that had to be consistently followed-up for each subject.

Data Site

The data site for this research study is a sexual abuse counseling center located
in a mid-sized city in western Michigan. The Center has been in existence for ten years
and was created by a consortium of academics, mental health clinicians, medical profes-
sionals, criminal justice professionals, and laypersons who worked together for over
two years to develop and find funding for this comprehensive treatment and prevention
program for incest, extrafamilial child molestation, and rape. Currently the Center is
staffed by eighteen master's level clinicians who are either social workers or psycholo-
gists, an education and prevention coordinator, an administrative assistant, secretarial
and bookkeeping support staff, and a program director. Several clinicians from the
community serve as consultants. The activities of the Center are overseen by its Ad-
visory Committee which, in turn, is responsible to the Board of Directors of the YWCA
which houses the Center and has administrative responsibility for it.

Although the Center treats all types of sexual abuse, its first, and currently its
largest, program is for the treatment of incestuous families. Approximately 150 such
families are referred each year to the Center, and 135 (90%) of them are those in which
the father, stepfather, or male live-in companion of the child's mother is alleged to have
sexually abused the female child. Because each of those role positions implies a cus-
todial and/or authority relationship with the female child, they collectively are labeled
paternal. The sexual abuse, then, is specified as paternal incest.

Each of these 135 paternally incestuous families reaches the Center by the same
referral route. When an allegation of paternal incest is made by a child or a family
member, or to any of the professionals who are legally mandated to report an allegation
made to them, or when such a professional suspects that paternal incest has, or is, occurring, a complaint will be filed with the Children's Protective Services Unit (CPS) of the county Department of Social Services. That agency, usually in cooperation with the appropriate local law enforcement agency, will then investigate the complaint within 48 hours of accepting it. If these two agencies are able to substantiate to their mutual and reasonable satisfaction that paternal incest indeed did occur, criminal charges may be filed against the alleged perpetrator, and a petition for wardship will be filed with the Juvenile Court of the county. That Court, upon accepting the petition, will immediately take wardship of the allegedly incestuously abused child.

Wardship allows the Juvenile Court to do three things. First, the Court will order the alleged perpetrator of the paternal incest to leave the home and maintain separate residence until which time the Court determines he may return. Such removal orders, directed as they are against those still protected by the presumption of innocence, are matters of some controversy, but to date have been upheld upon appeal. Any visits by the alleged perpetrator with the allegedly abused child, then, will be closely supervised by an agency designated by the Court to do so. Second, the Court will determine the placement of the child. If the child's mother is supportive of her, and shows an ability to protect her from further abuse of any kind, the child will remain in the home. If not, the child may be temporarily placed with relatives, with a foster family, or in a shelter for children. Third, the Court will mandate that the father, mother and daughter receive counseling at the Center.

These prerogatives of the county Juvenile Court in cases of alleged paternal incest account for the wide array of dynamics and circumstances of the women who enter the Center's program for the first time. Because the allegation of paternal incest has not yet been proved, in the legal sense of that term, some women doubt that it actually occurred, others are certain it did, and still others are equally as certain that it did not. The
women's responses to their daughters also vary, as do their relationships to them, especially if the girls have been removed from the home by Court order. And the women also may find themselves quite suddenly thrust into circumstances that are as unusual as they are unsettling. Not only must they deal with what well may be an uninvited and even unwanted intervention into their own lives, as well as into their families, but they also must cope with the removal of their husband or live-in companion from the family. For many of these women, that removal means that they must become sole caretaker and even sole provider for their children.

Given all of this, it certainly would not be an overstatement to conclude that upon entering the Center's program, the women are in a state of crisis. Not only are the substantive conditions of their lives as mothers and as wives going through changes, but their assumptive world is being severely challenged as well. At the moment they enter the Center as clients, their private troubles begin to connect with public responses.

Private troubles such as these are always biographical; public responses are always historical and structural. It is at the nexus of the two, where biography and history connect, that the sociological imagination can be best exercised (Mills, 1959). It is at the nexus of the two that the in-depth interview will be focused.

The Women

In order to create a sample of women for this research study, a verbal presentation outlining the purpose and design of this research was given to the clinical staff of the Center during one of their weekly staff meetings. At that time, each clinician also was given a short written description of the research that set forth the conditions for their clients' participation in it. That written statement also serves as the Statement of
Confidentiality and Consent that was reviewed with and signed by each woman before her participation in the in-depth interview.

Clinicians were asked to give this statement to women who had entered the Center's program between the months of January and March of 1990, and who were participating in the orientation sessions that precede their actual involvement in psychotherapy. These orientation sessions are used to explain what to new clients is often the confusing role of the Center vis-a-vis the Juvenile Court and the Circuit Court; to describe the individual, marriage, family and group counseling components of the Center's incest treatment program; and to further assess and evaluate the allegations of paternal incest. Women taking part in these orientation sessions who were interested in participating in this research were asked to either call this researcher for more information and to schedule an interview appointment, or to leave their first name and telephone number with the clinician assigned to them so that this researcher could contact them.

The months of January through March are typically low referral rate months for the Center. Thirty-three women from paternally incestuous families entered the program during those months and 25 (76%) of them expressed to this researcher an interest in participating in the study. The proportion of women, then, who were informed of the study and who declined to participate in it is 24%. Because of an ethical concern for the protection of these women, no pressure was put on them by clinicians or by this researcher to explain why they declined to participate, and no attempts were made by anyone to persuade them to change their mind.

The following criteria were used by this researcher for selecting women for this study. First, they could not yet be participating in psychotherapy. This criterion stems from a concern, well supported in the phenomenologically based literature, that psychotherapy acts as a kind of intervening variable between experiences as lived and experiences as described (Janoff-Bulman & Frieze, 1983; Schepple & Bart, 1983; Silver,
Boon, & Stone, 1983). Second, the women must come from families in which the last incident of paternal incest occurred within the previous six months. For a variety of reasons, there often are considerable lags between the initial CPS investigation, the Juvenile Court referral to the Center, and the Center's placement of the referral on its active caseload, so this specific criterion was required to increase the likelihood that the women would have a freshness and integrity to their memories when they were interviewed. Finally, and in recognition of the fact that the in-depth interview might produce disturbing memories and feelings, the women already must have been assigned to a clinician and must have ready access, if needed, to counseling with that clinician at the Center after they participate in the interview.

Because three of the women who expressed an interest in taking part in this research study already were engaged in psychotherapy at the Center, and one other had not yet been assigned a clinician, they were thanked for their interest but were not included in the sample. One other woman cancelled her scheduled in-depth interview appointment, stating that she feared retaliation from her husband if he were to discover that she disclosed anything to this researcher about their marital relationship or about the paternal incest. She, too, was thanked for her interest and also was excluded from the study. The final sample for this research study, then, consists of 20 women from paternally incestuous families.

**Daughters' Reported Experiences With Paternal Incest**

These 20 women are the biological mothers of 20 incestuously abused daughters who range in current age from 3 to 18 years, with a mean age of 9.4 years ($SD$ 4.17). All of the daughters have lived with their mothers since birth. Four (20%) of these daughters are handicapped: one, like her mother, is severely hearing impaired, and another has a mild form of cerebral palsy; one has attention deficit disorder
complicated by hyperactivity, learning disability and seizures, and the last of those four is severely mentally retarded.

A decade or so ago, before the discovery of paternal incest as a social problem, it was customary across the country to temporarily remove daughters from their families when they made an allegation of incest (Pickett & Maton, 1977). In more recent years that practice has been reevaluated and generally rejected in favor of a controversial procedure that, by court order, temporarily removes from the family the alleged perpetrator of the paternal incest instead (Pellegrin & Wagner, 1990). Data on the daughters of the women who comprise this research sample reflect that national trend. Only 2 (10%) of them were removed from their homes after the paternal incest was disclosed or discovered: one daughter was placed for two days in a shelter facility at her own request; the other was placed with her maternal grandparents for several days in order to afford her father, who had been ordered out of the home by the Court, time to find another place to stay.

The details presented by the women about their daughters' experiences with paternal incest reflect the understanding they had at the time of the in-depth interview. While these and other details will be elaborated upon in subsequent chapters of this dissertation, a brief overview is in order at this point.

Most of the daughters experienced a variety of incestuous acts over time. However, when the most intrusive act, on a continuum of severity that ranges from fondling/masturbation, to oral-genital contact, to digital or object penetration, to vaginal and/or rectal intercourse, is taken into consideration, 7 (35%) of the daughters told their mothers they had experienced fondling/masturbation, 3 (15%) reported oral-genital contact, 5 (25%) disclosed digital penetration, and 5 (25%) revealed they had experienced vaginal and/or rectal intercourse.
The reported duration of the paternal incest ranges from 1 to 108 months, with a mean reported duration of 28.55 months (SD 33.02). Few of the daughters have described concomitant violence. Three (15%) told about having been shoved, pushed or pinned down during the incestuous act(s), and 1 (5%) complained about having been slapped and punched. Despite the low rate of violence accompanying the incestuous acts(s), 10 (50%) of the daughters revealed that they had not immediately disclosed the paternal incest because of threats that had been levied against them, other family members, and even household pets. Ten (50%) of the daughters finally did disclose the paternal incest to their mothers; 10 (50%) told someone else who then told their mothers.

At the time of their participation in the in-depth interview, the women's understanding of their daughters' experiences with paternal incest had a quality that was as tenuous as it was epiphanic. All of the women report that the details they first learned of their daughters' incestuous abuse have changed significantly over the subsequent weeks or months. While that experience, in fact, is often described in the literature by studies that demonstrate that children are more likely to unravel the details of incestuous abuse slowly over time than to disclose them in toto and in one moment (Berliner & Conte, 1990; deYoung, 1991; Summit, 1983), for all of the women in this research sample an aura of uncertainty lingers.

The Women's Willingness and Capacity to Disclose

Despite that uncertainty as to the details of their daughters' experiences with paternal incest, each of those 20 women, fully apprised of the conditions of this research, consented to participate in the in-depth interview. After its completion, this researcher assessed that 17 (85%) of the women appeared to be very willing to respond to all questions. None of the women refused to answer a question, although all were given permission to do so, if they so chose. What resistance, for lack of a better term, was
noted was in the form of comments made by three (15%) of the women regarding the nature of some of the questions. These comments included such statements as: "That's a strange question," "Where did you come up with that question," and "No one's ever asked me that before." All three of the women, however, went on to freely answer the question. No single question emerged as more likely than any other to elicit that type of reaction.

The willingness to disclose is not synonymous with the capacity to disclose. None of the women expressed any difficulty in understanding any of the questions in the in-depth interview, but 5 (25%) of the women specifically stated that their memories were not clear on certain issues. It is interesting to note that for each of those women, the issue being questioned had to do with their own sexual abuse experiences during childhood or adolescence. Each of those five women state they had been sexually abused as children but simply were not clear on such specific details as the frequency and duration of the abusive experiences.

Current Demographic Data

The twenty women range in age from 26 to 40 years, with a mean age of 33.5 years (SD 5.10). Fifteen (75%) of the women are white, 3 (15%) are Latina, and the remaining 2 (10%) are African-American. English is a second language for one of the Latina women, but she expressed no difficulty in comprehension or communication during the in-depth interview. One other woman is severely hearing impaired, but with the assistance of a hearing aide and through her ability to read lips, was able to fully participate in the interview with no stated problems. All of the women completed the full interview; the mean duration of their participation in it was two and one-quarter hours.
Current Marital Status

Table 4 shows the current marital status of the women. It is important to note that because the Juvenile Court orders the alleged perpetrator out of the home when it accepts a petition on behalf on the incestuously abused child, many of the women who were married at the time the allegation was made now are separated, by court order, from their husbands. Although such separations indeed may be temporary, lasting only as long as the clinician assesses there is a continuing risk that the child may be reabused within the family setting, that Juvenile Court order accounts for the significant percentage of women who currently are separated.

Table 4
Current Marital Status of Interviewees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated Legally</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Current Employment Status

The employment status of the women similarly was likely to have gone through changes since the allegation of paternal incest. Because their husbands or companions were ordered out of the home, many women had to find jobs in order to help maintain
two residences until which the time the Center recommends to the Juvenile Court that the family be reunited. Other women, because of the traumatizing effects of the paternal incest on their daughters and on their family as a whole, quit their jobs or changed from full-time to part-time work in order to spend more time in the home. And others still, receiving no financial support from their estranged husbands or companions, and with no steady income with which to support their family, were forced to go on welfare. Seventeen (85%) of the women, in fact, report significant changes in their employment situation, and consequently in their income, following the allegation of paternal incest. Table 5 shows the current employment status of the women.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keeping House</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welfare</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Household Income

The total household income reported by the women certainly reflects any of these recent changes in their employment status. Although income data were sought for 1989, the year previous to the one in which the women entered the Center's program, it must be remembered that for all of the women there was a lag of one to six months...
between the time the allegation of paternal incest was made and they participated in the in-depth interview. Thus, such data on estimated total household income for the year 1989 are likely to reflect any of the noted changes in employment and marital status. Those data are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6
Estimated Total Household Income, 1989

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income, 1989</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$7,500</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$7,500-14,999</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000-24,999</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; $25,000</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Educational Achievement Level

The current level of educational achievement varies for these women. None is a college or university graduate, but 8 (40%) have some college education, with half of those women having enrolled in college after the paternal incest was disclosed in their family. Five (25%) of the women are high school graduates, and an additional 4 (20%) recently graduated from high school through an adult general education program. Finally, 3 (15%) of the women had dropped out of high school as adolescents and, to date, have not returned.

Social Relationships

Thirteen (65%) of the women report being currently estranged from their family
of origin, having few personal contacts with their parents and/or siblings. Each of those women is quite certain that family members know about the paternal incest, but their separation from them, in each case, actually predated by many years their having learned about the incest.

Ten (50%) of the women state that they have at least one close personal friend in whom they can and do confide, and with whom they engage in various activities. In each case the friend is female, knows about the paternal incest, and is supportive of the woman.

The social activities of the women are quite limited. Only 2 (10%) belong to any social organization or team, and in neither case does that group know about the paternal incest. Although 12 (60%) of the women are members of a church congregation, only two have discussed the paternal incest with anyone affiliated with their church. The remaining ten women express concerns that they will not be supported or understood by those affiliated with the church, and thus prefer not to discuss the matter.

Selected Biographical Data

Several features of the biographies of the women will be presented. Data relevant to their roles as wife or live-in companion, and as mother, will be presented in more detail in subsequent chapters of this dissertation.

Family of Origin

Urban settings throughout the country are the places of birth of 14 (70%) of the women; the remaining 6 (30%) were born in relatively isolated rural settings. Their families of origin tended to be quite large, with a mean of 5.9 siblings (SD 3.22). Fifteen (75%) of the women report they were raised in a lower class family environment. While few could estimate with confidence the total household income of their family of
origin, most disclosed such secondary indicators of lower socioeconomic class as long
periods of parental unemployment, low occupational prestige of the working parent(s),
and extended periods of welfare assistance, that would support their assessment.

The degree of religiosity of the families of origin varies considerably. Six
(30%) of the women state that their families were not religious, and 4 (20%) evaluate
their families as extremely religious while they were growing up. The remaining 10
(50%) women describe degrees of religiosity that fluctuated during their childhood and
adolescence.

Seven (35%) of the women had an alcoholic father, and each of them recollects
that the alcoholism, in many ways, was disruptive to the family as a whole. Other dis­
ruptions are reported as well. The parents of 10 (50%) of the women divorced during
the interviewee's childhood or adolescence, and all of those women describe a series of
stepfathers, stepsiblings and live-in companions to their custodial parent who became
part of their lives during the remaining years they lived at home. Long periods of sepa­
rations from their family of origin when they were children are reported by 5 (25%) of
the women. For one woman that experience was necessitated by the illness of her
mother, but for the remaining women the separation was tantamount to removal from
the family because of their conflicts with one or both of their parents. Four of those
women went to live with relatives, and one was committed to a psychiatric institution
and had subsequent placements in a group home and in multiple foster homes.

Eleven (55%) of the women witnessed physical violence between their parents
while they were growing up. Physical violence is defined by any one or more of the
following behaviors: slapping, hitting, punching, shoving, burning, cutting or shoot­
ing. In most of those cases, the father or stepfather was designated the perpetrator, but
two of the women judge their mothers as equally responsible for the initiation of the
violence. All of these women remember such violent incidents as being frequent, that
is, occurring one or more times a week. Seven of these 11 women also experienced
one or more of those forms of physical abuse at the hands of their parent(s). In all of
those cases, the abuse occurred during childhood and either tapered off in frequency or
stopped all together during adolescence.

**Sexual Abuse Experiences**

Physical abuse was not the only type of family abuse reported by the women.
Nine (45%) also were incestuously abused as children by a family member. For the
purposes of this research, incest is defined as any type of sexual activity with a relative
that occurred against the interviewee's will and without her consent. The mean age of
at the time the incest was initiated was 10.3 years ($SD$ 4.02). The reported incest
ranged in duration from one month to 156 months, with a mean duration of 39.5
months ($SD$ 49.27). Two of these women disclosed the incest to their mothers, each
of whom refused to believe the allegation; the remaining seven women told no one of
their abuse during the time of its occurrence. With the exception of three women, all
were incestuously abused by more than one relative, as Table 7 shows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number Incest Perpetrators</th>
<th>Fathers $n=3$</th>
<th>Stepfathers $n=2$</th>
<th>Brothers $n=4$</th>
<th>Grandfathers $n=2$</th>
<th>Cousins $n=8$</th>
<th>Uncles $n=5$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>99%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Sexual victimization during childhood and/or adolescence by a person or persons outside of the family is reported by 13 (65%) of the women. These acts ranged in severity from fondling to intercourse, and in duration from a single incident to many incidents over a period of two years. Four of the women were sexually abused by more than one person outside of their respective family. The mean age at which these sexually abusive acts occurred was 12.2 years ($SD \ 4.78$). Table 8 displays the perpetrators.

Table 8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perpetrator</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Older Friend/Acquaintance</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stranger</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person in Authority</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These data on sexual abuse experiences as children and/or adolescents require summation. Sixteen (80%) of the women report histories of sexual abuse; they also report a total of 49 different perpetrators, both inside and outside of their respective family. The sexually abusive acts range from fondling to vaginal and/or rectal intercourse, and two of the women report having been gang raped during their adolescence.

Social Factors

Some degree of social isolation during childhood and adolescence was reported by 18 (90%) of the women. Indicators of social isolation include such experiences as
having had few friends, having been the object of ridicule or scorn by peers, participating in few group, team or social activities, and having had few positive relationships with adults outside of the family.

Conclusion

Collectively, these 20 women from paternally incestuous families constitute a sample that is both convenient and purposive. Its convenience is a reflection of the fact that it was created at a single data site and from a larger number of women who were entering it; its purposefulness is a product of the selection requirement that all of the women in it share the one characteristic important to this research and that is they are from paternally incestuous families. Convenience and purposefulness, however, do not necessarily sum up to representativeness, and to the extent that is true, this sample shares that disadvantage with every other research sample created for the study of paterno incest.

That disadvantage is rooted in the fact that not every case of paternal incest is reported. Its hidden dimension, in fact, looms large and dark, and although it is virtually impossible to calculate that dimension with any accuracy, comparisons between incidence and prevalence rates, faulty as each measure is likely to be, lead researchers to conjecture that for every reported case of paternal incest, somewhere between 10 and 100 occur that are never reported (Finkelhor & Hotaling, 1983; Finkelhor, 1986).

Why is that so? Certainly part of the answer to that question is found in the nature of paternal incest as an act. Shrouded in secrecy and shame, it is not easily disclosed (Rimsza & Niggemann, 1982; Summit, 1983), and even when it is, such disclosure often is greeted with a skepticism and disbelief that are testimony to the fact that no "discovery" of a social problem will make believers out of everyone (Rosenfeld,
Nadelson, & Krieger, 1979). Disclosures like these do not become part of official records. Women from paternally incestuous families like these, then, cannot get referred to treatment programs from which research samples like this one are created.

Even the process of discovery is chancy. While many professions are mandated by law to report suspected cases of paternal incest, research consistently shows that professionals' compliance with this legal mandate is inconsistent at best, and virtually nonexistent at worst (James, Womack, & Strauss, 1978; Kalichman, Craig, & Follingstad, 1988, 1990). And even those discovered cases that are reported to Children's Protective Services or to law enforcement, as the law requires, may be incorrectly dismissed as unfounded at intake or upon initial investigation (Faller, 1985; Gray & Cosgrove, 1985). Cases like these may become part of some type of official record, but they most certainly are not referred to programs from which convenient and purposeful samples of women can be created.

The 20 women from the Center who comprise the sample of this research, then, have one remarkable thing in common: their private trouble of being a wife/live-in companion and mother in a paternally incestuous family is being subjected to public response. Their participation in that "art of sociological sociability" that is the in-depth interview will reveal what else they have in common, and what they may share with all women.
CHAPTER V

"THE LADY OF THE HOUSE"

Women in the Roles of Mother and Wife

And the lady of the house was seen only as she appeared in each room according to the nature of the lord of the room. None saw the whole of her, none but herself. For the light which she was was both her mirror and her body. None could tell the whole of her, none but herself.

A Living Picture of Women's Lives

The epigraph (Riding, 1935, p. 66) expresses themes that very well may be common to the experiences of most women: the construction of their gendered identity, their asymmetrical power relations with men, their encounters with the transformative nature of subjectivity. These themes are so powerful, so compellingly resonant with the experiences of most women, that they create a tableau vivant of a woman's life.

Yet to imagine that a single living picture is able to capture the reality of all women's lives is chimerical at best. Feminist sociologists recently have recognized that. Their original theoretical stance that emphasized the commonality of all women by virtue of gender alone is even now being expanded to embrace inquiries about the differences among women (Personal Narratives Group, 1989). Women, after all, come in different ages and races, and from different cultures and classes. Experiences divide
women as well. Thus separating out, for the purposes of inquiry, a group of women who share a singular circumstance is consistent with feminist sociology's emerging focus on "women's experiences," in the plural. It also distinguishes what Harding (1987, p. 7) opines in the "best feminist analysis" from the traditional.

It is, in fact, the experience of being a mother and a wife in a paternally incestuous family that separates the 20 women who comprise the sample of this research from most other women. But what makes their experiences truly unique can neither by analyzed nor really appreciated until the roles of mother and wife are reconceptualized in two important ways.

First, and as previously discussed, the slash must be dissolved in that conflated mother/wife image that prevails in the paternal incest literature so that the role of mother and that of wife can be separated and thus made analytically distinct. It is interesting to note that despite the predominance of that image, two of the women in this research sample are struck by the separation of these role in their own lives. And for both, just as for the "lady of the house" in the epigraph, a mirror provides the image for solipsistic reflection.

It's like I look in a mirror and what do I see? I either see this woman who's a wife, or I see this woman who's a mother. His wife, their mom. Two separate women, and sometimes I don't think either one is me.

The mirror I look into is cracked, you know what I mean? It's kind of like one side shows me as a mom, and the other side shows me as a wife.

These two women present a view of the mother and the wife role as central to their lives as women. Given the fact that the expectations that append to each of these roles are powerful, compelling, and deeply rooted within social structural arrangements and cultural ideologies (Bernard, 1974; Hochschild, 1989; Okin, 1989), that they share this view with most other women should be of no surprise.

Second, and as previously discussed, each role must be considered as a pro-
cess, composed of three levels, the structural, systemic, and individual, each with its own orientation towards expectations and demands, conceptualization of the role in question, view of the self as a role player, and view of specific role senders. Without this reconceptualization, the role of mother and that of wife remain as they have been so unsatisfactorily presented in the existing body of literature: static, idealized concepts, so charged with deterministic power as to preclude any consideration of the exercise of human agency within each role, or in the strategies to cope with any conflicts between them.

This reconceptualization, therefore, also is important for analysis. Considering each role as a process shifts the focus from the kind of simple evaluation of role performance in vacuo that prevails in the existing body of literature, to a more complex analysis of role-taking and role-making, as well as of the devisal of role performance within a corresponding social/cultural, interpersonal or intrapersonal context. An analysis of those contexts, each of which frames a "dynamic process through which the individual simultaneously shapes and is shaped by her environment" (Personal Narratives Group, 1989, p. 19), requires an interpretative strategy that not only is diachronic and synchronic, but is consistent with the goals of qualitative research.

**Research Question 1: Coping With Role Conflict**

The very notion that conflict might develop between the role of mother and the role of wife in the lives of most women has been embraced with almost revolutionary fervor over the last quarter of a century by the women's movement. That fervor, however, has not radiated to those women who share the singular circumstance of being a mother and a wife in a paternally incestuous family. With the exception of an rare and rather off-handed observation in some studies that these women tend to be "overwhelmed," "encumbered," or "oppressed" as wives and/or mothers (Finkelhor, 1979;
Herman, 1981; Tormes, 1968), the conflict they may experience between those roles simply has not been considered.

Role conflict is defined as a condition that is perceived whenever the pressures, that is, expectations of any one role are experienced as incompatible with the pressures of another role (Coverman, 1989). There is a decidedly subjective nature to role conflict: it is a matter of perception and may be experienced even in the absence of its objective reality; and it may arise from what variously are perceived as legitimate or illegitimate expectations. These subjective facets of role conflict are reflected in the musings of one woman in the research sample:

I keep wondering if being a good wife means I got to be a bad mom; or being a good mom means I got to be a lousy wife. I feel like I just can't help being bad at both, and that there's no way I can be good at both. At least there's no way I can figure out.

Being "good at both" is experienced as difficult for the twenty women in this research sample. During a short interview that was a follow-up to the more lengthy in-depth interview, each woman was asked to rate on a five-point scale ranging from "none" to a "great deal" the degree of conflict she experienced between her role as mother and her role as wife prior to the disclosure or the discovery of the paternal incest. The mean perceived conflict score for the twenty women was 3.5 (SD 1.19).

The simple act of separating the roles of mother and wife into two distinct analytic categories reveals the conflict that arises between them. But if some degree of conflict is inevitable when two roles are being played simultaneously, then to assert that women in paternally incestuous families experience that conflict would be little more than a statement of the obvious if left as a conclusion. As an introduction, however, it has far more analytic and theoretic potential for it grounds further and more revealing inquiry.
That inquiry, in turn, is further informed by a wealth of sociological research, much of it with women as subjects, that demonstrates that quite regardless of its perceived degree or origin, role conflict presses for resolution (Burris, 1991; Gray, 1983; Hochschild, 1989; Marks, 1977; Pleck, 1985). Some role conflict, it has been shown, is rather easily resolved by altering, ignoring or abandoning one or both of the conflicting roles. The roles of mother and wife, however, are not at all easily changed or discarded. Conflict, therefore, is likely to persist and to the extent that it does, strategies for coping with it must be concocted (Hall, 1972; Handel, 1979).

**Strategies for Coping With Role Conflict**

In regards to the women who are the subjects of this research, the analytic focus must turn to the strategies they have devised for coping with role conflict, and the contexts in which those strategies are played out. In considering the role of mother and that of wife as a tri-leveled process, each with its own unique orientation towards role expectations and demands, the roles in question, the self as role player, and the specific role-senders, coping strategies hypothetically can intervene in the role process at each of these three levels—the structural, systemic and the individual—and within the corresponding social/cultural, interpersonal, and intrapersonal contexts.

Using that model, each level of coping strategy was carefully defined, and the coping activities that were gleaned from a review of the relevant literature on role conflict were categorized according to the level of the role process at which they intervene. The categorization was done by this researcher and then independently by another sociologist whose on-going research on working mothers utilizes concepts and methods similar to those used in this dissertation, and who had been thoroughly apprised of the nature of this research. Inter-rater agreement on this task is 92%.
Structural Role Redefinition. Coping with perceived conflict on the structural level of the role process involves attempts to alter societal/culturally generated expectations for the role of mother and/or for the role of wife. Such attempts are behavioral, that is, active, but because each role is being considered in only its most abstract and ideological sense, direct communication, interaction or negotiation with specific role senders does not occur.

The primary goal of the activities that comprise this strategy is to alter the social definition and expectations associated with the roles of mother and wife; they, therefore, are played out in the social/cultural context. The range of activities subsumed under this strategy is narrow. The activities, and the rationale for their inclusion under this level of coping strategy, are as follows:

(la) Political action: In the broadest sense of that term, any active attempts to challenge, advocate for change, or alter the social definitions or the social expectations of the mother and/or the wife role, can be categorized as political action (Imber-Black, 1986; Trebilcot, 1983).

(lb) Eliminate role(s): This strategy involves the literal abandonment of the mother and/or the wife role. That abandonment is predicated upon the underlying evaluation that the roles, as structurally defined, are intolerable, and that they cannot, or should not, be revised or altered on a systemic or on an individual level.

Systemic Role Redefinition. Coping with perceived conflict on the systemic level involves action-oriented attempts to alter the expectations of specific role-senders within the family, that is, the children who are senders to the role of mother, and the husband or live-in companion who is the sender to the role of wife. Because these activities are based upon a conception of role in the most literal and personal sense of that term, communication, interaction and negotiation with specific role-senders is required
(Goode, 1960), thus the context for these strategies is interpersonal.

There is a whole range of activities that comprise this coping strategy. The primary goal of each is to reduce role conflict while at the same time maintaining both roles in ways that are tolerable, if not satisfying, to the self and to the systemic role senders. The specific activities, and the rationale for the inclusion of each under this level of coping strategy follows.

(Ila) Active problem-solving with systemic role senders: This activity consists of role negotiation or bargain (Goode, 1960; Handel, 1979) with systemic role senders in order to reach an agreement as to the redefinition of the expectations for the roles of mother and wife as they are performed within the family setting. Because the systemic role senders are directly involved in this activity, the resulting change, even if temporary, is mutually agreed upon and results in altered expectations by the systemic role senders.

(IIb) Seek role support from within the systemic role set: This activity involves engaging the systemic role senders to assist the woman in her role behaviors as mother and wife (Coverman, 1989). In this case, the expectations that append to those roles are not changed, but the woman receives support and assistance for role behaviors by family members.

(IIc) Eliminate role activities: Agreeing with one's systemic role senders upon a reduced set of behaviors to be performed within the role of mother and/or wife comprises this activity. The basic roles will be retained in this activity, but also will be systematically redefined (Hall, 1972).

(IId) Seek role support from outside the systemic role set: This activity entails the solicitation of support and assistance for role behaviors from individuals outside of the family (Hochschild, 1989). In most cases, this involves either a formal or a quasi-formal agreement, such as hiring a babysitter or contracting with another person or
company to assist with household tasks. Once again, the expectations that append to the roles of mother and wife are not challenged or altered in this activity, but particular role behaviors are supported by people, businesses and/or institutions outside of the family.

(IIe) Delegate role responsibilities: In this activity, the woman charges specific systemic role senders with the responsibility of carrying out certain role behaviors (Hartmann, 1981; Rapoport & Rapoport, 1969). What distinguishes this coping activity from that of active problem-solving with systemic role senders (IIa), and seeking support from within the systemic role set (IIb), is that delegation involves the exercise of some kind of power or authority vis-a-vis specific systemic role senders, and does not require their tacit agreement or consent.

(III) Integrate roles: This activity involves redesigning the roles of mother and wife so that they can be played simultaneously in whole or in part, but always in a mutually reinforcing manner (Marks, 1977). Again, role senders are made aware of this redefinition, so communication, interaction and even negotiation are necessary prerequisites.

Individual Role Redefinition. Coping with perceived conflict on the individual level involves intrapsychic activities that alter the woman's personal conception of her roles as mother and wife, and of her own behavior in those roles. The primary goal of these activities is to reduce the perceived degree of role conflict, but because all of these activities occur only perceptually, that is, intrapsychically, and thus require no direct communication, interaction or negotiation with role senders, their expectations will persist unchanged. The context for these strategies, then, is intrapersonal.

The activities that comprise this level of coping strategy, and the rationale for their inclusion, are as follows:
(IIIa) Overlook the demands of either one or both of the roles: This activity entails ignoring some of the expectations appending to the role of mother and/or wife. In this case, the woman is giving her individual definition of these roles greater importance than that of any role senders (Burris, 1991). Because this activity occurs on an intrapsychic, that is, perceptual level only, no communication with any role senders about this redefinition occurs, and it is that facet that distinguishes this activity from that of eliminating role activities (IIc).

(IIIb) Attitude change: This intrapsychic activity involves a change in attitude, or the development of a new attitude about the roles of mother and wife (Marks, 1977).

(IIIc) Rotate attention between roles: When the role of mother and that of wife are separated and partitioned in perception of the woman, she can then rotate attention between them (Goode, 1960). This activity is the opposite of role integration (IIIi), and is distinguished from active problem-solving with systemic role senders (IIa) by the fact that it occurs on a perceptual level only.

(IIId) Develop own interests: This activity involves developing one's self and one's own interests and then attaching greater weight to these self-sent expectations than to the expectations of others (VanSell et al., 1981).

(IIle) Rank roles and/or expectations into a hierarchy of obligation: This activity involves ranking the importance of the mother as opposed to the wife role, or establishing the priorities of role demands and then performing only the most important ones (Gray, 1983). This ranking is a perceptual process involving no negotiation with specific role senders. If a role were permanently abandoned as a result of this strategy, the activity would be more accurately described as the elimination of role (Ib); if expectations were ranked into a hierarchy through the process of active negotiation with specific role senders, the activity would be described as the elimination of role activities (IIc).
During the in-depth interview, some of the women in the research sample described activities that seemed to involve less active coping than a kind of defensive accommodation in regards to their roles as mother and wife. As a result of that observation, a fourth strategy for coping with role conflict is hypothesized, using a term coined by Hall (1972) in his study of the conflict arising between the multiple subidentities, that is, role identities of working mothers.

**Reactive Role Behavior.** Coping with perceived conflict on this level is both an accommodative and a defensive strategy geared towards dealing with the role of mother and that of wife in its personal and/or social sense. An implicit assumption underlies this strategy, and that is that all role expectations are immutable, thus behavior must be directed towards meeting each of them (Hall, 1972). By acting solely through role behavior, the woman engages in no concomitant attempts to change the structural or systemic definition of her roles. The primary goal of the activities that comprise this strategy is the satisfaction of all role-senders, but despite the fact that all of the activities devised for doing so are action-oriented, they involve no direct communication, interaction or negotiation with specific role-senders, thus the context of these activities remains intrapersonal. The expectations of those role-senders, then, will persist unchanged.

The activities subsumed under this coping strategy, and the rationale for including them are as follows:

(IVa) **Work harder to meet all role demands:** This activity necessitates a considerable expenditure of time and energy in order to meet all of the demands of all role senders. Here, role is conceptualized both at a personal and a social level, so no distinction is made between the demands made by specific role senders and the social/cultural expectations that append to the roles of mother and wife.
(IVb) No conscious activity: This is really no activity at all, but the lack of a conscious strategy for dealing with role conflict, with a decidedly passive and even helpless orientation towards the roles also will be termed reactive role behavior.

(IVc) Increase efficiency of role performances: This activity involves planning, scheduling and organizing in order to meet all of the demands associated with both the mother and wife role.

Activities for Coping With Role Conflict

To explore and illustrate these four levels at which coping strategies can intervene in the role process, each woman in the research sample was asked during the short follow-up interview to describe the primary way in which she dealt with the conflict, regardless of its degree or origin, that she perceived between her roles as mother and wife. Responses of the women first were categorized according to the level of the coping strategy, by this researcher and the previously mentioned colleague. A brief checklist served as a guide for this categorization task. Inter-rater agreement for this task is 90%.

Although coping strategies can intervene in the role process at any one of four different levels, none of the women in the research sample engaged in structural role redefinition. Four (20%) engaged in systemic role redefinition; 9 (45%) in individual role redefinition; and the remaining 7 (35%) in reactive role behavior.

After the responses were categorized according to strategy, they were further categorized according to the type of coping activity. Again, interview responses were analyzed by this researcher and then independently by the previously mentioned colleague. Inter-rater agreement for this task is 80%. Table 9 displays these reported activities.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Strategy</th>
<th>Coping Activity</th>
<th>&amp; n</th>
<th>Illustration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(I) Structural Role Redefinition = Social/Cultural Context</td>
<td>(Ia) Political action to alter social definitions of the role of mother and/or wife.</td>
<td>0% 0</td>
<td>——</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Ib) Eliminate either one of both of the roles.</td>
<td>0% 0</td>
<td>——</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(II) Systemic Role Redefinition = Interpersonal Context</td>
<td>(IIa) Active problem-solving with systemic role-senders; role negotiation.</td>
<td>20% 4</td>
<td>&quot;Well, I just had to negotiate with my husband and children. We'd have a family meeting and we'd discuss how they could ease the pressures on me as wife and mother.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(IIb) Seek role support within systemic role set.</td>
<td>0% 0</td>
<td>——</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(IIc) Eliminate role activities.</td>
<td>0% 0</td>
<td>——</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(II) Systemic Role Redefinition = Interpersonal Context</td>
<td>(IId) Seek role support outside of the systemic role set.</td>
<td>0% 0</td>
<td>——</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(IIe) Delegate responsibilities for either one or both roles</td>
<td>0% 0</td>
<td>——</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Strategy</td>
<td>Coping Activity</td>
<td>( &amp; )</td>
<td>( n )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(III) Integrate roles; increase overlap between roles so that each contributes to the other.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(IIIa) Overlook demands of either one or both roles.</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(IIIb) Attitude change: develop new attitude about either one or both of the roles.</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(IIIc) Rotate attention between roles; partition, separate roles.</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(IIIId) Develop own interests with demands that supersede those associated with the roles of mother and wife.</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(IIIe) Rank role expectations into a hierarchy of obligation.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(IV) Reactive Role Behavior = Intrapersonal Context</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| (IVa) Work harder to meet all role demands; do all that is expected. | 15% | 3 | | "I tried to please (my husband). I did everything he said. I tried to please my
Table 9--Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Strategy</th>
<th>Coping Activity</th>
<th>&amp;</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Illustration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(IVb)</td>
<td>No conscious strategy; passive and helpless orientation towards role demands and role senders.</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>&quot;Gave up. Couldn't do nothing right, so I gave up.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(IVc)</td>
<td>Increase efficiency of role performances; plan, schedule, organize to meet all role demands.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first research question of this dissertation asks: What is the degree of the conflict women in paternally incestuous families experience between their roles of mother and wife, and what strategies do they use to cope with it? As the previous analysis shows, the perceived conflict for the 20 women is moderately high, with a mean rating score of 3.5 (SD 1.19), on a scale of one to five. Qualitative analysis also demonstrates the three types of strategies, and the activities of each, that these women use to cope with perceived role conflict as well as the level in the role process at which each strategy intervenes.

A number of interesting and revealing things about strategies to cope with conflict are evident from a general review of Table 9. First, a total of 16 coping activities were selected from a review of the literature; the women in the sample, however, used less than half of them, and no woman describes having used a coping activity that had not been culled from the literature. This rather contracted range of coping activities perceived by the women as viable and available is an interesting finding with implications.
for future research. Second, a full 80% of the women engaged in either individual role redefinition or in reactive role behavior; none of the women in the sample engaged in any coping activities that are subsumed under the strategy of structural role redefinition. Finally, an assertion from the literature on women in paternally incestuous families that has "all the tranquility of an axiom" is that they initiate role reversals and force their daughters to assume familial responsibilities that include serving as a sexual partner for their fathers. The coping activity that best describes this process, and that falls under systemic role redefinition, is delegation of responsibility (IHe). None of the women in this sample describes having engaged in that activity. This finding does not dispute the notion of role reversal, per se, but suggests its occurrence is not an activity devised by the woman for coping with the conflict that arises between her role as mother and her role as wife.

Coping and Satisfaction

Nothing precludes a woman who is experiencing some degree of role conflict from also experiencing some satisfaction with how she is coping with that conflict. To assess the satisfaction level, each woman was asked during the follow-up interview to rate on a five-point scale, with one indicating "not at all" and five indicating "extremely," how satisfied she feels with the way in which she usually coped with the conflict she perceived between her roles as mother and wife prior to the disclosure or the discovery of the paternal incest. The mean satisfaction rating for the 20 woman is 2.7 (SD 1.21).

What is interesting, however, is the variation in the mean satisfaction rating according to the level of the role process at which coping is taking place. Women who cope by systemic role redefinition have a higher than average satisfaction rating of 3.5 (SD .816), although that mean is not significantly higher than the average (t = 1.96,
$df = 3$). In contrast, women who cope by individual role redefinition have a significantly lower ($t = -3.38, df = 8, p < .01$) mean satisfaction rating of 1.7 ($SD = 0.833$).

An unanticipated finding is that women who cope by reactive role behavior also have a slightly higher than average satisfaction rating with a mean of 2.9 ($SD = 0.756$), although this mean also does not approach statistical significance ($t = .699, df = 6$).

This strategy, characterized by defensiveness, accommodation and an external locus of control should be archly unsatisfying, but the fact that it is not may suggest that something more than a bivariate relationship exists between coping and satisfaction. This possibility will be explored again in a later section of this chapter.

**Efficacious Coping**

Table 9 and the subsequent discussion leave unanswered the question as to which is the most efficacious coping strategy. A brief discussion in response to that question will set the stage for a preliminary examination into the relationship between the women's coping strategies and the paternal incest.

Whether it occurs behaviorally or intrapsychically, coping is a complex act. A host of social psychological variables must be considered before an evaluation can be made of whether a particular coping strategy is any more or less efficacious than any other. Hall (1972) and Lazarus and Launier (1978), however, recommend that three very broad criteria may be used to assess the general efficacy of a coping strategy: its match to the context at which the conflict originates; its problem-solving potential; and its affect-altering potential.

Some assumptions will bridge those general findings to the specific subject under consideration. First, paternal incest contributes to the conflict the women in this research sample perceive between their roles of mother and wife, regardless of whether they actually knew that it was occurring. That assumption rests on findings as to its
impact on the family system: paternal incest, among many other things, blurs generational roles, creates secrecy and deceptive communication, and causes imbalances in power and influence. These and other impacts are thoroughly documented in the family-systems literature (Anderson & Shafer, 1979; Trepper & Barrett, 1989). Second, paternal incest occurs within the interpersonal context of the family system. Third, if the most efficacious coping strategy is one that is matched to the context in which the conflict arises, and has potential for both resolving the conflict by altering the actual expectations of specific role senders, and altering the feeling of pressure or distress that such conflict produces, then the coping strategy of systemic role redefinition (Type II) is the most efficacious for women in paternally incestuous families.

The other types of coping strategies are considerably less efficacious, by these evaluative criteria. Although much yet needs to be learned about structural role redefinition (Type I), this strategy's problem-solving and affect-altering potentials are low because it involves no direct interaction with role senders, and because it deals with the roles of mother and wife only in their most abstract form. The level of this strategy also does not match the interpersonal level at which the paternal incest occurs. Individual role redefinition (Type III) is a rather defensive strategy (Kroebber, 1963; Lazarus & Launier, 1978; Perloff, 1983; Rothbaum, Weisz, & Snyder, 1982). It requires no direct communication with role senders, thus it has limited problem-solving potential, and because the expectations of those role-senders then will persist unchanged, it has limited affect-altering potential. As an intrapersonal strategy, it does not match the interpersonal context of the paternal incest. The reactive role behavior strategy (Type IV) is the most defensive and accommodating of all (Abramson, Seligman, & Teasedale, 1987; Maier & Seligman, 1976). Because it is predicated upon an assumption that all role expectations are immutable and therefore must be met, it has virtually no
problem-solving or affect-altering potential. It, too, is an intrapersonal strategy that is not directed towards the interpersonal context at which the paternal incest occurs.

In the original discussion, the role process was presented as being composed of levels. Now a refined notion is beginning to emerge from the data and the discussion on efficacy, and that is that the process is actually smoother, more fluid, more like a continuum. That continuum begins with the least efficacious strategy of reactive role behavior, followed by the less efficacious strategy of individual role redefinition, and ends with most efficacious strategy of systemic role redefinition. Whether the integrity of this continuum will be maintained throughout this research as different variables are considered and measured against it will be a matter of continuing evaluation.

A number of conjectural statements introduce a more specific question for research. If each strategy varies in efficacy, if each defines a rather enduring and predictable way of role-taking and role-making, and if women, even in the vaguest sense of this term, by their attitudes, actions and reactions contribute to the paternal incest, then is there a relationship between the coping strategy and some measurable facets of the paternal incest? More specifically, it can be hypothesized that the duration and the severity of the paternal incest will be less in the families of those women who use the most efficacious systemic role redefinition strategy (Type II) for coping with the conflict between their roles as mother and wife, and more for those who use the least efficacious coping strategy, reactive role behavior (Type IV).

Duration of the paternal incest, measured in months, will be considered first. Table 10 displays the mean duration of the paternal incest, the standard deviation, and t-statistic for each type of coping strategy. T-statistics were calculated for the comparison of small samples.

None of the t-statistics reaches significance, although the pattern of findings is consistent with the hypothesis. Table 10 shows that for women who engaged in what
is hypothesized as the most efficacious coping strategy of systemic role redefinition (Type II), the mean duration of the incest is lower, although not significantly so, than the average duration for the sample. For women who engage in the least efficacious coping strategy of reactive role behavior (Type IV), the mean duration of the paternal incest is somewhat, but not significantly, higher than the average. It also should be noted that the two women in the sample whose sons were abused as well as their daughters, used reactive role behavior activities to cope with their perceived role conflict. This suggests that further research should focus on the relationship between the level of coping strategy and the incestuous victimization of multiple children from the same family.

Table 10
Mean, Standard Deviation, t-Statistic for Duration of Paternal Incest by Coping Strategy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coping Strategy</th>
<th>Mean (28.5)</th>
<th>SD (33.02)</th>
<th>T-Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Systemic (Type II)</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>26.86</td>
<td>-.521</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual (Type III)</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>24.17</td>
<td>-.115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reactive (Type IV)</td>
<td>36.2</td>
<td>45.69</td>
<td>.409</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Statistical analysis, then, shows no significant relationship between the type of strategy to cope with the perceived conflict that arises between the roles of mother and wife, and the duration of the paternal incest. But is there a relationship between the type of strategy and its severity? For the purposes of this inquiry, severity is assessed along a continuum that begins with the less intrusive sexual acts of fondling and/or
masturbation, proceeds through the more intrusive acts of oral-genital contact and then digital or object penetration, and ends with the most intrusive acts of vaginal and/or rectal intercourse. This continuum is widely and well used in incest research (Finkelhor, 1984; Russell, 1986).

To expedite analysis, the four different acts of paternal incest are collapsed into two categories: the nonintrusive acts, which include fondling, masturbation and oral-genital contact; and the intrusive acts, which include digital or object penetration, and vaginal and/or rectal intercourse, and thus involve penetration by some means. The frequency of each by coping strategy type is reported in Table 11.

Table 11
Nonintrusive Versus Intrusive Incest Acts by Coping Strategy Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incest Acts</th>
<th>Coping Strategy Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Systemic (Type II)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n(%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonintrusive</td>
<td>4(100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrusive</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ x^2 (2, N = 20) = 6.28, \ p < .05 \]

As the analysis shows, there is a significant difference among the three types of coping strategies in terms of the severity of the paternal incest when severity is considered categorically. Specifically, coping by systemic role redefinition, previously assessed as the most efficacious strategy, is associated with significantly less intrusive
incestuous acts, while coping by the least efficacious strategy, that of reactive role behavior, is associated with the most intrusive incestuous acts.

The finding that coping by systemic role redefinition is somewhat, although not significantly, related to a lower than average duration of the incest, and significantly related to a lesser severity raises the possibility that even in the absence of knowing that the incest is occurring, women can have an effect on its process. The word "effect" is used here with purpose: it should be read to mean an influence, an impression, an impact; the word implies no causal model of the incest and attributes no blame for it. It merely suggests that those women whose conceptualization of their roles as mother and wife is personal, may have an impact, especially on the severity of the incest, through their continual interaction, communication and negotiation with specific role senders within the context of their family. It is premature to speculate at this point how and why that may be true, but the mere suggestion that it might be is provocative enough to be raised and examined again, as it will be throughout this chapter.

Coping and Socialization

Because so many of the women in this research sample describe during the in-depth interview childhoods characterized by chaos and abuse, a question arises as to the relationship between certain biographical facts and later coping strategies. To advance that inquiry, five salient biographical experiences shown to significantly interfere with early socialization and development processes if experienced before the age of 12 (Gomes-Schwartz et al., 1990) were chosen for analysis: incest abuse by a parent, physical abuse by a parent, separation from the family for a minimum of six continuous months, parental alcoholism or substance abuse; and parental domestic violence.

The number of women at each level of coping strategy who report any of these five biographical experiences was calculated. Cell counts were too small to conduct
statistical analysis, but a review of the data shows an interesting pattern: the seven women who cope by reactive role behavior account for a disproportionate number of these experiences as children; 4 (57%) were incestuously abused, 4 (57%) were physically abused, 3 (42%) experienced prolonged separations from their families, 3 (42%) had an alcoholic or substance abusing parent, and 3 (42%) witnessed domestic violence between their parents. Women who cope by individual role redefinition account for less of those childhood experiences; and women who cope by systemic role redefinition account for the least. In contrast to the women who cope by reactive role behavior, none of the four women who cope by systemic role redefinition was incestuously abused, none was physically abused, 1 (25%) experienced separation from her family, 1 (25%) had an alcoholic or substance abusing parent, and 1 (25%) witnessed domestic violence between her parents.

The pattern suggests that there is a relationship between these disruptive,unsettling, even traumatizing childhood experiences and later coping strategies. That relationship is the most obvious, or perhaps the most deeply embedded in theory, for the reactive role behavior strategy. Those disempowering and unpredictable experiences of childhood not only may have disrupted the normal process of development, but also may have disturbed the early and healthy development of the self (Fine, 1990; Putnam, 1990), thus setting off a chain of interpersonal and social experiences which reinforce feelings of helplessness and powerlessness (Rotter, 1975; Seligman, 1975). Those feelings, in turn, then become the core of the reactive role behavior coping strategy.

Summary

The introduction to this chapter insists that no single living picture is able to capture the reality of all women's lives, that differences between and among women must be considered, appreciated and analyzed. For the women in paternally incestuous
families who are the subjects of this research, those differences are revealed only when
the roles of mother and wife are separated with each then considered as a process.
Once that is accomplished, differences become evident.

The women vary in their orientation towards role expectations, specific role
senders, the self as a role player, and their definition of the situation vis-a-vis their roles
as mother and wife; they differ in the strategies they have devised for coping with role
conflict, and each strategy, in turn, varies in efficacy and in the satisfaction women
have with it. The mean duration of the paternal incest does not vary significantly across
the strategies, but its severity does, with less intrusive acts more associated with the
most efficacious strategy of systemic role redefinition, and more intrusive acts with the
least efficacious strategy of reactive role behavior.

Future Research

This discussion on the conflict women perceive between their roles as mother
and wife, the strategies they devise for coping with it, and the relationship of those
strategies to the duration and the severity of the paternal incest raises a number of
questions. The women in the research sample share with all women the experience of
playing many roles (Crosby, 1987; Tiedje, Wortman, & Downey, 1990). While con­siderable conflict is evident when the roles of mother and wife are separated into two
distinct analytic units, the compounding and complicating effects of the pressures from
other roles, such as employee, friend, or daughter yet need to be considered and an­alyzed.

Coping with role conflict is a subject that also deserves more inquiry and will
receive it throughout this chapter. By delineating strategies, or levels, of coping the in­ference is made that each represents a stable, predictable and enduring way of dealing
with conflict. In fact, that may not be the case. The possibility exists that coping is a
process, that the strategies that describe it change over time and in response to different types of conflicts or stressors and, perhaps, even change in patterned ways. This, too, requires more exploration, and will receive it throughout the course of this dissertation.

Research Question 2: Traditionality

Among feminist scholars of the last quarter of a century, there has been as much disagreement over the nature of the "woman question" as there has been about its solution. But all do agree that it is power that differentiates the experiences of women from those of men, and with that agreement they take issue with mainstream sociological theories that minimize, or even overlook, that difference. Traditional feminist scholarship has examined both the structural constraints on women's access to, and exercise of power, and the power of women's individual agency which is exercised in paradox to those constraints. However, if women make their own lives, to paraphrase Marx, under conditions not of their own choosing, then it is the interaction between structural constraints and individual agency that requires further examination.

That point of interaction will be located within the concept of traditionality. For the purposes of this dissertation, traditionality is defined as the behavioral commitment of women in the role of wife or live-in companion to androcentric hegemony, that is, to the ideological and material means that maintain women's unequal power vis-a-vis men. Traditionality should reveal something about the logic of individual courses of action and the effects of the structural constraints within which they evolve.

Traditionality Index

In the initial design of this research, the in-depth interview format contained a traditionality index consisting of a series of questions that would have measured attitudes about androcentric hegemony. It became startlingly evident, however, that
many of the women in this research sample had undergone recent and significant, even if evanescent, changes in their point of view on this topic before they participated in the in-depth interview. Upon the discovery or the disclosure of the paternal incest, their attendance at the mandatory orientation session at the Center that precedes their involvement in counseling, or their conversations with others about the incest, many of these women had become empowered.

These transformative experiences are noteworthy in and of themselves, and deserve some comment. Such paradigm shifts (Bartky, 1990), or challenges to one's assumptive world (Parkes, 1971), are what Denzin (1989) terms "epiphanies," those interactional moments that occur in problematic situations and that are remembered by the person, but are reconstructed and reinterpreted over the life cycle. The examples of the epiphanous statements made by the women in this research sample illustrate both the specific and the general position under consideration: the quick and dramatic change in the point of view about traditionality, and the interaction between structural constraints on power and the power of individual agency.

To be honest with you, my whole way of looking at men and women has really changed. I used to believe that a woman's place is in the home, and that the man is in charge. I used to believe that women should be dependent on men, that it is the natural way of things. I question all of that now. When my daughter told me about the incest, my way of looking at the world was turned on its ear.

Lately I've been thinking a lot about how society is doing a trip on us females, you know what I mean? Like the message is that we're stupid or something, and we're only good for sex and beating on. I used to believe all that crap. I thought that was all I was good for. Well, no more. No more. That's not fair and it's not right, and no woman should believe that crap.

I'm so angry. I really am. I'm angry at myself for living my life the way society, I guess, says I should. I'm angry that society tells me to live like that. I'm angry at the church for telling me that it's God's will that women should be this way: the perfect little wife, never questioning her husband, always obedient. And you know what else? I feel guilty for being angry. I feel guilty for even thinking about living my life different than I did before.
I got religion, honey. I changed in one minute flat when my daughter told me about the way my old man was fucking her. I think different, I act different. I got myself an attitude that won't quit. They can get rid of the whole damn lot of men, if you ask me. Put 'em on a boat and sink 'em. World would be a better place if us women had all the power.

Whether these and other epiphanous statements reflect real changes in attitude is questionable, but they certainly do illustrate dramatic, even if short-lived, shifts in point of view. Any attempt to measure attitudes about traditionality as it is so defined here risked measuring only these shifts and their concomitant emotional reactions; any attempt to measure attitudes about traditionality held before the incest was disclosed or discovered also risked picking up traces of these recent shifts in point of view. Therefore, it was determined that traditionality would be better defined in behavioral, rather than attitudinal terms, so that it could be measured by an index created from answers given to biographical questions asked on the demographic questionnaire and during the in-depth interview.

Actually, there is strong precedence for using this more behavioral definition and measurement of traditionality in incest research. Russell (1986) developed a short index for her massive study on the prevalence and dynamics of incest, and the final traditionality index constructed for the purposes of this dissertation is a slightly modified version of that. Following the suggestions of Yllo (1984) and Dutton (1988), the final index adds the frequency of the experience of domestic violence.

The index, found in Table 12, is composed of five behaviors that are part of, or related to, the wife or live-in companion role and that have been hypothesized by Russell (1986) as well as other researchers (Bahr, Chappell, & Leigh, 1983; Dutton, 1988; Helson & Picano, 1990; Yllo, 1984) to be correlated with women's traditionality: age at first marriage, number of children raised, victimization by domestic violence, adult employment history, and percent contribution to family income.
Table 12

Traditionality Index

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age at 1st Marriage</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 years or less</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-23 years</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24+ years, or never married</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Children Raised</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4+ children raised</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3 children raised</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 child raised</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Victim of Domestic Violence</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>frequently</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>occasionally</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adult Employment History</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>never worked outside home</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worked less than half of adult life</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worked half + of adult life</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>% Contribution to Family Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0 to 24%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 to 50%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>over 50%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some of these items, however, do require some clarification. Because a few of
the women in the research sample had children who were given up for adoption shortly
after birth, or who were taken from them and placed with relatives or in foster care, the
item in the index inquiring about children was revised to ask how many were raised, as
opposed to borne. Domestic violence, for the purposes of this index, is defined as the
physical and/or sexual abuse of the woman by her husband or live-in companion.
Physical abuse refers to actual acts of violence such as slapping, hitting, punching,
kicking, burning, stabbing, as opposed to threatened acts of violence. Sexual abuse
was narrowly defined in terms of any sexual act perpetrated by physical force against
the will of the woman.

Judgment had to be exercised as to whether include as an item the achieved edu­
cational level of the woman. While its inclusion in other traditionality indices is based
upon a sound assumption that there is an inverse relationship between women's com­
mitment to androcentric hegemony and achieved educational level, that logic was
judged to be faulty in regard to this sample of 20 women. Because part of the in-depth
interview inquired about education, the responses of the women to those questions
could be reviewed carefully. The impression they left was that the achieved educational
level of most of those women who either had dropped out of high school or had not
pursued a higher education after graduating, had less to do with any notion of, or com­
mitment to, traditionality than with pressing family issues and circumstances, such as
the death of a parent or a family economic crisis, that interfered with their continuing
education.

The second research question of this dissertation asks: What is the degree of
traditionality, that is, of behavioral commitment to androcentric hegemony, among
women in paternally incestuous families? Scores on the traditionality index hypothet­
ically can range from 0 (low traditionality) to 10 (high traditionality). For this sample,
the scores actually range from 1 to 9, and the mean traditionality score for the 20 wom­
en is 5.2 ($SD \ 2.21$).

A mean of 5.2 is an unassuming score, midpoint between the theoretical ex­
tremes of the mainstream literature that asserts that it is the lack of traditionality of
women that contributes to the paternal incest, and of the recent feminist literature that
insists that it is the slavish devotion of women to it that is more of a problem. For the
purposes of this research, however, other variations between those extremes can be ex­
plored.
The scores can be dichotomized into levels of traditionality: low (scores 1-3), medium (scores 4-6), and high (scores 7-9). Five (25%) of the women in the research sample had low, 10 (50%) had medium, and the remaining 5 (25%) had high traditionality scores. Now, in the manner of qualitative research, a more narrow research question can be asked about the relationship between the level of traditionality and the duration of the paternal incest. Table 13 shows the mean duration of each level, the standard deviation, and the t-statistic.

Table 13
Mean, Standard Deviation, t-Statistic for Duration of Paternal Incest by Traditionality Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditionality Level</th>
<th>Mean (28.5)</th>
<th>SD (33.02)</th>
<th>T-Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>47.20</td>
<td>.139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>18.76</td>
<td>-1.504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>42.05</td>
<td>.271</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows no significant differences between levels of traditionality and the mean duration of the paternal incest. It should be noted, however, that the mean duration is somewhat higher than the average of the total sample for low and for high traditionality women, and somewhat lower than the average for medium traditionality women. These findings suggest an interesting, but not statistically significant, curvilinear pattern between traditionality and duration of the paternal incest.

What about the relationship of traditionality to the severity of the paternal incest? If the types of incest once again are dichotomized into non-intrusive, that is, the less severe types of fondling or masturbation and oral-genital contact, and intrusive, or the
more severe types of digital or object penetration, and vaginal and/or rectal intercourse, the findings are not significant \( x^2 = 3.6, df = 2 \). Table 14 displays the data. The findings, in their extremes, show that medium traditionality is somewhat related to less severe acts of paternal incest, while both low and high traditionality are somewhat related to more severe acts of paternal incest, suggesting another curvilinear pattern.

Table 14
Nonintrusive Versus Intrusive Incest Acts by Traditionality Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traditionality Level</th>
<th>Incest Acts</th>
<th>Low ( N(%) )</th>
<th>Medium ( N(%) )</th>
<th>High ( N(%) )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nonintrusive</td>
<td></td>
<td>2(40%)</td>
<td>7(70%)</td>
<td>1(20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrusive</td>
<td></td>
<td>3(60%)</td>
<td>3(30%)</td>
<td>4(80%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Traditionality and Coping**

It would be reasonable to inquire at this point about the relationship between traditionality and coping strategies. The mean traditionality score for the 20 women in this research sample is 5.2 (\(SD 2.21\)). The mean traditionality score for women who engaged in systemic role redefinition (Type II), individual role redefinition (Type III), or reactive role behavior (Type IV) coping strategies all cluster so tightly around that mean as to be indistinguishable. The t-test for the differences between means shows that none is significantly different than the average.

**Summary**

The failure to find any significant relationship between traditionality and the
duration or the severity of the paternal incest does not preclude the very real possibility that the index is not as strong a measure of traditionality as originally thought. The index, composed of rough behavioral items, is based upon underlying assumptions that lend plausibility to the assertion that it measures antecedent individual differences in commitment to androcentric hegemony. What is clear, however, is that like most others of its kind, the index used here simply is not sensitive to individual differences within role patterns, or to those attitudes held in contradiction to the behaviors measured. It actually may measure more the artifacts of particular and peculiar life circumstances rather than any real commitment to androcentric hegemony. Also, the items may be imbricated in such a way that a true score is difficult to obtain.

Curiously, other researchers who have used versions of this index, almost always with unenlightening, if not disappointing results, have not raised any questions about their sensitivity. Such indices continue to be widely used. And the concept of traditionality is still often used in the literature to describe women in paternally incestuous families, and even to explain their role, for lack of better term, in it.

Holding in abeyance for a moment these very real criticisms about the sensitivity of the index, and the concept of traditionality, itself, some comment must be made about the findings here. Although not statistically significant, they do show patterns that would appear to support both the assertion by mainstream scholars that low traditionality is related to the paternal incest, and by recent feminist scholars that high traditionality is. But as intriguing as this pattern of findings is, it really should not be construed as lending support to either one or both positions.

That caveat is offered because a very close look at the literature of both shows that each has a different conceptualization of traditionality, and each of those differs from the one used in this dissertation. Mainstream scholars tend to define low traditionality, for example, in terms of women's inability or unwillingness to adequately
perform what are taken to be immutable role demands; feminist scholars, on the other hand, define high traditionality in terms of an attitudinal or ideological commitment to androcentric hegemony. Because the present research took a different course in the light of the epiphanous statements made by so many of the women during the in-depth interview, and thus defines traditionality in terms of a behavioral commitment to androcentric hegemony, the findings here really cannot support either of those conclusions. This, in combination with the concerns shared about the sensitivity of the measure, caution against the kind of sweeping generalizations that are made in the literature about traditionality, and calls for a closer and more critical look at what that concept means, and how it can be measured.

**Future Research**

The refinement of a traditionality scale certainly would benefit future research. As women's roles and the concomitant attitudes and feelings about them continue to change in the face of a rather unyielding social structure, a sensitive measure of traditionality would serve as a barometer, of sorts, to gauge the pressure between change and resistance.

And if that sensitive measure of traditionality is needed to understand women, it is also needed to understand the differences between women. Clearly, some women are more inclined than others to uncritically accept and even maintain the social structural arrangements and cultural ideologies that disempower them. How women are divided on this issue of commitment to androcentric hegemony and, even more critically, what divides them, should prove a fascinating area for further research. And even more specifically, how women from paternally incestuous families are divided on this issue, and what divides them, must be explored.
The notion of empowerment, that notion that was expressed in the epiphanous statements of some of the women and that forced a change in the definition of traditionality used in this research, is equally fascinating. Much of the life history literature on women's lives gives eloquent and insightful examples of their empowerment (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Personal Narratives Group, 1989), but a theory of empowerment as yet has not been developed. Surely any such theory, or model, by necessity would have to begin with women's consciousness of their inequality, their educational and labor market experiences, the historical conditions that prevailed when their social and political attitudes were formed, and their family situation (Davis & Robinson, 1991). But even explicating these necessary conditions does not really address how empowerment occurs and what happens when it does; neither does it address how well the experiences of women in paternally incestuous families fit with that model.

The empowerment of some of the women in the research sample was illustrated by their epiphanous statements. If such statements can be considered expressions of the awareness of inequality, then an examination of epiphanies in and of themselves may reveal something of the underlying model of empowerment. Denzin (1989) defines four forms. The major epiphany results from an interactional moment so intense, so critical, as to rupture the person's assumptive world. As a turning point experience, its impact is both immediate and longterm, and will result in changes in attitude and behavior. Less dramatic in its impact is the cumulative epiphany that results from a threshold reaction, of some kind, to interactional events that have been ongoing for a period of time. The illuminative epiphany ensues from minor, yet symbolically significant, interactional moments. Its impact is likely to be short-lived. The relived epiphany, on the other hand, has a delayed impact. While it results from major or minor
interactional moments, its meaning only is given later and in retrospection, but it also will result in sometimes dramatic changes in attitude and behavior.

The epiphanies of some of the 20 women in the research sample illustrate their awareness of their inequality, and hint at the processes and the consequences of empowerment. And while the very notions of epiphanies and empowerment may seem insubstantial, they are framed within both historical and political contexts in which gender matters -- contexts in which gendered identity and experiences are constructed and interpreted, and from which they derive their meaning.

Research Question 3: Marital Power

The past decade or so has witnessed a nostalgic yearning for traditional marriage and the conventional family values it is declared to embrace. The keening for its apparent demise has been heard in virtually every arena of life, from the social, to the religious, to the political. All of this was, and is, certainly more than just bald sentimentality--it is also a bold counterclaim to feminist assertions that the traditional marriage relationship is inherently unequal, and that that very inequality is the source not only of women's oppression as wives, but of their own and their children's victimization.

The battleline has been drawn and each opposing camp is able to rally its own armamentorium of facts, theories and speculations to support its claims. While the battle wages on a social level, there is a quieter skirmish going on within the existing body of literature on paternal incest. It certainly is not by coincidence that this body of literature would be a microcosm, of sorts, of this larger debate. After all, the nature of traditional marriage is close to the theoretical cutting edge of how mainstream and feminist studies view the etiology of paternal incest. The former, emphasizing separate but equal and complementary marriage roles, postulates that paternal incest occurs when one spouse,
the wife, withdraws from or inadequately performs some aspects of her expressive role, and then uses her considerable marital power to manipulate her husband to commit incest with their daughter. The latter, in contrast, condemns marriage roles as so inherently unequal as to grant one spouse, the husband, the entitlement to incestuously abuse his daughter if he chooses, while at the same time renders the wife so powerless that she can do nothing to intervene.

These two opposing positions are argued in extreme, admittedly, but only to make the point that the contested claim between them is where the focus of analysis must be sharpened. That analysis first must clarify this disputed issue of marital power. To that end, the third research question of this dissertation asks: for women in paternally incestuous families, what are the salient patterns in their exercise of marital power?

Curiously, for all of the research that has been conducted on marital power since the pioneering study by Blood and Wolfe (1960), few researchers have even defined the term. For the purposes of this dissertation, however, marital power will be defined in the manner suggested by Kranichfeld (1987), as the ability of a spouse to change the behavior, affect and/or thoughts of the other spouse.

**Measurement of Marital Power**

The marital power type of women as wives in paternally incestuous families was measured by responses to six questions that were dispersed through two sections of the in-depth interview, so as to not create a distinct response bias. Those six questions are:

1. In all of the major decisions you have had to make, who generally has the final say?

2. Who wants to change the behavior, feelings or thoughts of the other person
the most?

3. Who tries to change the behavior, feelings or thoughts of the other person the most?

4. In general, which one of you has to overcome the most resistance in order to change the other person's behavior, feelings or thoughts?

5. In all of the major arguments you have had, who generally has the final say?

6. In your opinion, who should have more power in a marriage or live-in relationship?

Questions 1 and 5 are the kind of variation recommended by Blumstein and Schwartz (1983) of the "final say" type of question used in traditional marital power studies. These two questions get at the outcome of marital power, and thus probe for its relative quantity. Questions 2, 3 and 4, in contrast, get at the process of power and incorporate the possibility of both change and resistance to change (Komter, 1989; Kranichfeld, 1987). Three elements are distinguished in these three questions: the desire for change, the attempt to change, and the anticipation of meeting resistance to any such attempt to effect change. Finally, question 6 probes the legitimation of power, and of the ideology that supports it.

Questions, of course, have been raised about the validity and reliability of marriage relationship data that are obtained from only one spouse. Since it certainly has been found to be true that each spouse can say one thing but behave quite differently, and that each spouse can present an often very different portrait of the marriage relationship (Olson & Rabunsky, 1972; Safilios-Rothschild, 1969), these criticisms are well taken. Other researchers, however, present a cautiously contrary view which seems relevant to the study of marital power in paternally incestuous families. They state that data on relationship properties that are obtained from a single respondent should be considered individual constructions of the relationships in question, and that
these constructions are appropriate representations for research that emphasizes the subjective and builds from the experiences of individuals. As long as conclusions are not generalized to the other partner or to some objective reality, this can be a suitable approach to collecting data on marital power (Huston & Robins, 1982; Thompson & Walker, 1982).

**Marital Power Types**

The pattern of responses to these six questions was used to categorize each woman's marital power type: wife-subordinate, wife-dominant, equalitarian, and divided. The term "wife subordinate" instead of husband-dominant, is purposeful. It is used to be consistent with the previously mentioned dictate that any analysis must reflect only the perspective of the responding woman and must not be generalized beyond that.

The difference between the latter two categories, equalitarian and divided, require clarification. The former refers to a type of marital power that is equal in the sense that it is exercised by both partners, so that the process of the power, its outcome, and its legitimation do not favor one partner over the other. The latter refers to a type of marital power that is equal only in the sense that its process, outcome and legitimation are divided between the partners.

The typing of marital power is consistent with the formula developed by Coleman and Straus (1986). First, responses to the six questions were scored in the following manner: wife only (1 point), wife more than husband (2 points), wife and husband equally (3 points), husband more than wife (4 points), and husband only (5 points). The terms "wife" and "husband" are used here for convenience, even though three (15%) of the women were cohabitating with their companion at the time the paternal incest was occurring. Because each of them had been in that relationship for a considerable period of time, one of them for over a decade, and because these women con-
stitute a small proportion of the sample, they were asked the same questions and were not separated out for analytic purposes.

After the response to each of the six questions was scored for each woman, the scores were summed and then transformed to a 0-100 scale to indicate the percentage of the maximum score of 30. This scale constitutes the Power Index. Low scores, that is those below 33%, indicate a wife-dominant pattern of power in the marriage or live-in relationship, while high scores over 66% indicate a wife-subordinate pattern. The Shared Power Index was then computed. This index is comprised of the sum of the number of responses for each woman that were scored with a 3 to indicate "wife and husband equally." This Index has a range of 0 to 6, and the summed score was also transformed to a 0-100 percentage scale.

The Power Index and the Shared Power Index were then cross-classified to produce the marital power types. The following formulae were used: A score of 66 or more on the Shared Power Index constitutes equalitarian marital power type; a score of 65 or less on the Shared Power Index and a score of 33 or less on the Power Index constitutes female-dominant marital power type; a score of 65 of less on the Shared Power Index, and a score of 66 or more on the Power Index constitute female-subordinate marital power type; and a score of 65 or less on the Shared Power Index, and a score between 34 and 65 on the Power Index constitute divided marital power type.

**Marital Power Types of Women in Paternally Incestuous Families**

Data analysis reveals that 9 (45%) of the women could be classified as having a female-subordinate marital power type, and 11 (55%) of the women as having a divided marital power type. The dysfunctional nature of the paternally incestuous family certainly diminishes the likelihood that any equalitarian marital power type
would be found in this sample, but the complete absence of any female-dominant type is somewhat unexpected.

And so is the disproportionate number of the divided marital power type. This finding seems, at first blush, to support mainstream theoretical assumptions about separate, complementary and equal marital power, and to counter feminist theoretical assumptions that male-dominance or, in the terms of this dissertation, female-subordination, is the rule in these marriages, rather than the exception.

The disproportionate number of women who have been categorized as having a divided marital power type may demonstrate that feminist scholars actually share with mainstream scholars a one-dimensional view of marital power. Rooted in a Weberian tradition that defines power as the ability of enforcing one's will even against resistance in order to achieve some desired end (Weber, 1947), their mutual focus has been on the quantity of power, as measured by the traditionally used standard of which person has the "final say." Thus, their shared assumption is that marital power is exercised in an overt, observable conflict over relevant issues.

When process power questions are added to the measurement, power takes on a two-dimensional view (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962; Komter, 1989). Now non-decisions, that is, wanting to effect change, trying to, and anticipating and meeting any resistance to change, become important. These processes neither necessarily manifest themselves in overt behavior, nor attach to relevant relationship issues only. And when a legitimation question is added to the scheme, power becomes three-dimensional by the inclusion of a form of ideological power that, by altering beliefs and preferences, may prevent someone from having any desire to exercise any kind of power at all.

When all three aspects of power are factored in to a measurement, they produce an unexpectedly large number of women with a divided marital power type. This finding certainly argues against the absolutist notion of the marital power of women in
paternally incestuous families that is so prevalent, especially in the recent feminist litera-
ture. And the finding that nearly half of the women have the female-subordinate marital
type just as strongly argues against the absolutist notion of the mainstream litera-
ture that women have equal, but separate marital power.

At the same time, this finding is difficult to interpret. If marital power were
correlationalized only in terms of outcome, that is, in a one-dimensional fashion, the di-
vided marital power style simply would mean that responsibilities for decisions are di-
vided, with the wife and husband each having a final say for different decisions. If this
arrangement is based upon agreement, the divided marital power type describes a rela-
tively equal and reciprocal relationship (Margolin, Fernandez, Talovic, & Onorato,
1983; Walsh, 1989). But marital power is defined in a three-dimensional fashion in
this dissertation, and that complicates interpretation.

A review of the scores achieved by each of the women who are classified as
having the divided marital power type shed some light on this dilemma. The division
of their marital power actually occurs in a very patterned fashion: the women tend to
describe process power as being in their domain, and outcome power as being in their
husbands' domain. Thus, these women want more to produce change, try more often
to bring it about, and anticipate the most resistance in doing so, but their husbands
more often have the final say in decisions and in arguments.

Because outcome power is much more valued in this culture, much more as-
associated with gains in resources, prestige and authority (Walsh, 1989), this finding
suggests that power is definitely divided in this marital power type, but not necessarily
equally or reciprocally. Therefore, women with the divided marital power type have
more power than women with the female-subordinate type, but only in relative terms.
Although the asymmetry of the marital relationships is less obvious and dramatic, the
divided marital power type still describes an asymmetrical power arrangement.

The relationship of marital power type to the duration of the paternal incest must be explored. The mean duration of the paternal incest and the standard deviations for the two marital power types are shown in Table 15. Neither duration mean is significantly different than the mean duration of 28.5 months for the total sample of 20 women. The t-test score for the difference between these means is not significant at .866.

Table 15
Mean, Standard Deviation, and t-Statistic for Duration of Paternal Incest by Marital Power Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Power Type</th>
<th>Mean (28.5)</th>
<th>SD (33.02)</th>
<th>T-Statistic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female-Subordinate</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>43.83</td>
<td>.458</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divided</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>21.25</td>
<td>-.870</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While the marital power types are not significantly related to the duration of the incest, are they related to its severity? When the severity of the paternal incest is dichotomized into nonintrusive and intrusive acts no significant differences are found between the severity and the marital power types ($\chi^2 = 0.00, df = 1$). Table 16 displays what is an interesting similarity in the relative proportions of incest acts of the two types of marital power.

**Legitimation of Marital Power.** One of the questions in this measurement of marital power types inquires as to who, in the woman's opinion, *should* have more power in a marriage or live-in relationship. This single question goes beyond quantity and process notions of power and taps at an ideological commitment to androcentric hegemony, by inquiring as to the perceived legitimacy of marital power.
Table 16
Nonintrusive Versus Intrusive Incest Acts
by Marital Power Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Power Type</th>
<th>Incest Acts</th>
<th>Female-Subordinate N(%)</th>
<th>Divided N(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nonintrusive</td>
<td>4(44%)</td>
<td>6(54%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrusive</td>
<td>5(56%)</td>
<td>5(46%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The women's responses to this question are interesting. One (5%) of the women believe that the woman should have all of the power, and 3 (15%) more believe that the woman should have most of the power in a marital or live-in relationship. All four of these women are categorized as having the divided marital power type. Six (30%) of the women maintain that marital power should be distributed equally between the woman and her husband or live-in companion; all of these women also are categorized as having the divided marital power type. It is interesting to note that all of the previously discussed epiphanous statements about traditionality, power and gender relations were offered by these 10 women.

While none of the women believes that the husband or live-in companion should have all of the marital power, 10 (50%) maintain that he should have most of the power. With the exception of one of those women, all are categorized as having the female-subordinate marital power type. This would seem to suggest that this type of marital power is quite highly legitimated. But how that male power is sanctioned by the women is perhaps more interesting than the fact that it is.

A content analysis was performed on the interview responses to the single question regarding who should have more power in a marriage or live-in relationship. The...
intention was to classify responses according to the level of the role process at which they originate, thus gleaning some insight as to how these 10 women are oriented towards the roles of wife and husband, and what type of expectations they perceive as the most compelling. All 10 responses, however, can be classified as reflecting structural/ideological/cultural notions and arrangements that sanction superior male power in a marriage or live-in relationship. The legitimating responses of these 10 women, in fact, are so repetitive as to theme, that Table 17 displays only a few examples.

Some interesting observations and questions emerge from these data. First, the sample of responses shown in Table 17 demonstrates that male power in marriage is rather strongly legitimated by the five women whose responses were presented; their responses, in fact, are typical of those made by the other five women as well. The ideological commitment of all 10 of these women to male superiority in a marriage or live-in relationship stands in contrast to their relatively low behavioral commitment as measured by the traditionality index.

These 10 women, in fact, have a mean score on that index of 5.5, just a fraction above the mean score of 5.2 for the total sample. While it may be tempting to argue that a female-subordinate marital power type ipso facto predicts the legitimation of male power in marriage, the weight of evidence from a variety of perspectives shows that power can be coercively exercised without ever being legitimated (Bachrach & Baratz, 1962; Komter, 1989; Lukes, 1974).

Second, in an earlier discussion the possibility was raised that the role process is really a continuum of efficacy along which the coping strategies are placed. But can it also be considered a continuum of marital power? It now seems appropriate to advance an inquiry as to whether marital power types vary across coping strategies.
Table 17
Examples of Responses Legitimating Male Superiority in Marriage or Live-In Relationship by Conceptual Level of Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conceptual Level of Response</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Illustration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Structural                   | 100% | 10 | "Well, I'm a Christian and I believe the Bible is the word of God. And the Bible says that men are superior and that their wives are supposed to be their help-mates. But wives are supposed to have some power too. If they didn't, they couldn't help their husbands or raise their children. So husbands should have most of the power, in my opinion."

"That's the way it's always been, right? So I figure it must be the natural way for husbands to have more power than their wife. It's not natural they have all the power, but definitely they should have more of it."

"They make the most money, at least mine does. That gives them right to have more power in a marriage, but it don't give them right to have all the power."

"I was raised that way. That's what I saw in my family. My dad had more power than my mother, and I think she taught me that that was the way it is supposed to be."

Table 18 shows that they do. Specifically, women who cope by reactive role behavior, the least efficacious strategy, are significantly more likely to have the least powerful female-subordinate marital power type. In contrast, women who cope by systemic role redefinition, the most efficacious strategy, are significantly more likely to
have the more powerful divided marital power type. The finding lends some support to
not only to the notion of a continuum, but also to the notion that coping strategies vary
not only in efficacy but in marital power along that continuum.

Table 18
Coping Strategy by Marital Power Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Power Type</th>
<th>Systemic (Type II)</th>
<th>Individual (Type III)</th>
<th>Reactive (Type IV)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female-Subordinate</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
<td>3(33%)</td>
<td>6(86%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divided</td>
<td>4(100%)</td>
<td>6(67%)</td>
<td>1(14%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 (2, N = 20) = 8.4, p = <.05$

Third, the legitimating responses of these 10 women stand in contrast to their
reported marital or live-in relationship experiences. All 10 of the women disclose emo­
tional, physical and/or sexual abuse by their husband or live-in companion; and three of
them report having witnessed their husbands' physical violence against their children.
As children themselves, six also had witnessed their fathers' physical violence against
their mothers and/or siblings. Yet, it is apparent from their legitimating responses that a
balance of power in a marriage or relationship that favors the husband, in their percep­
tion, is neither a source of, nor a contributing factor to, the violence they have experi­
enced as wives, or witnessed as children.

Fourth, the responses also suggest that these 10 women do not see a relation­
ship of any kind between the power imbalance of their marital or live-in relationship,
and the paternal incest. It is hypothesized that their legitimation of male superiority pre­
cludes the mere consideration of this possibility. This raises an interesting question,
however, as to how these women do explain the incest and whether their explanations
do differ in any patterned way from the 10 women who did not legitimate superior male
power. In an effort to address that question, a content analysis was conducted on re-
sponses to this question from the in-depth interview: Why do you think the incest hap-
pened? That single question gets at the women's theories or operating assumptions as
to the etiology of the paternal incest, and because such accounts are situated, that is,
nested according to status (Mead, 1938; Mills, 1940; Scott & Lyman 1968) they may
reveal something about the women's perception of their own power vis-a-vis their hus-
bond or live-in companion, and its relationship, if any, to the incest.

A review of the responses, however, abruptly precludes the necessity of any
further analysis. When the responses of the 20 women to the question of why the in-
cest happened were reviewed for any references to power, or a power imbalance in
their marital or live-in relationship as an etiologic factor in the incest, only one (5%) of
the women was found to locate the cause of the incest within marital power dynamics.
In her words:

I think (the incest) happened because I wasn't strong enough as a wife. I didn't
have the guts to stand up to him. He would degrade me, just knocking down
my self-confidence and my self esteem kept getting lower. When stuff started
happening, I didn't stop him. I think that when I let him take an inch in our
marriage, he took a mile and then raped our daughter.

The fact that only one woman explained the paternal incest by any reference to
the role of wife or live-in companion may help explain why so few women changed
significantly in that role post incest. Simply stated: few saw any reason to do so.

Finally, the earnest legitimation of superior male power in a marriage or live-in
relationship offered by half of the women in this sample brings to mind an observation
on the invisible power of hegemony once made by Lukes (1974):

Is it not the supreme and most insidious exercise of power to prevent people, to
whatever degree, from having grievances by shaping their perceptions, cogni-
tions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing
order of things, either because they can see or imagine no alternative to it, or be-
cause they see it as natural and unchangeable, or because they value it as divine-
ly ordained and beneficial? (p. 24)

That "insidious exercise of power," of which Lukes writes creates epistemic
disempowerment—it deprives some women in paternally incestuous families, in this
case, from knowing, in fact from even imagining, that there are alternatives to the bal-
ance and configuration of power they currently have as wives or live-in companions. It
also very well may interfere with their perceiving and testing their own hypotheses
about the role of husband in particular, as well as about any relationship between mari-
tal power and the paternal incest.

Role Redefinition

If the role process is a continuum, as it has been proposed, then it is perfectly
plausible to assume that women can move along that continuum in either direction, that
they could redefine their roles, in response to some new conflict. Certainly the disclo-
sure or the discovery of paternal incest would be that stimulus. Among many other
things, it would raise questions about the typical strategy in which the women cope
with role conflict, challenge the way that women conceptualize their roles as wife and
mother, alter their view of their husbands and daughters as role-senders, and cause
them to reexamine the expectations that append to both roles. Thus, it is reasonable to
conjecture that in the wake of the paternal incest, women would redefine their role of
wife or live-in companion.

To advance this inquiry, each woman was asked during the in-depth interview
whether she has changed significantly in that role since the disclosure or the discovery
of the incest. The question itself is stated somewhat broadly, but purposely so. As
asked, it can be taken as a query about behavior change in that role, or perceptual
change about that role. In fact, the responses to the question are interesting, and
varied, and certainly require a closer look.

The previously described role process continuum was used for the analysis of the responses, now with the role of wife or live-in companion as the unit of analysis. Prior discussion indicates that activities occurring on the systemic level are the most efficacious and are based in more marital power than activities occurring on the individual level, and than those activities subsumed under the rubric of reactive role behavior. Thus, it is assumed that any reported changes in the role of wife or live-in companion that stay on the systemic level, or move up to the systemic level, are the most efficacious and empowering changes that can be made in the wake of the disclosure or the discovery of the paternal incest.

Some guidelines for categorizing responses must be articulated. In the manner consistent with the previous discussion on role conflict, changes that occur on the structural level of the wife role process are defined as behavioral, that is, active attempts to confront or alter social/cultural/ideological notions about gender, marriage, and power. Because the role of wife or live-in companion is being considered in only its most abstract sense, however, direct communication, interaction or negotiation with the husband or live-in companion does not occur. Those changes that occur on the systemic level are behavioral in nature and, because they are carried out in direct relationship to the husband, require personal communication, interaction, and negotiation with him. Once again, these changes are hypothesized to be the most efficacious and empowering. And those changes on the individual level are intrapsychic and involve changes in the woman's individual conception of her role as wife; no direct communication, interaction or negotiation with her husband occurs. Content analysis immediately showed that, just as with the analysis of coping strategies, reactive role behavior had to be added to this conceptual scheme. It is here defined as changes that occur solely in role behavior, but without direct communication interaction or negotiation with the husband.
or live-in companion.

Only 6 (30%) of the women describe any change in the role of wife or live-in companion upon the disclosure or discovery of the paternal incest. The types of changes, the levels of the role process at which they occur and their corresponding contexts, are presented in Table 19.

Six of the women report they have made changes in their role as wife or live-in companion post incest. The women who previously were categorized as coping with role conflict by individual role redefinition activities account for 4 (67%) of that total. This finding may be related to the lower level of satisfaction they have with their usual activities for coping. Half of them redefined their role on the same point on the role process continuum at which they cope with conflict; they changed activities, but not strategies, and therefore did not move along the continuum. The other half redefined their role by moving up to the systemic level. If this continuum is one of efficacy and marital power, then only these latter two women made changes in the wake of the incest in the direction of efficacy and empowerment.

The women who were categorized as coping by reactive role behavior account for the remaining 33% of the total of six and both of them describe changes in activities, not strategies, and thus stayed on the same level of the role process. Curiously, none of the women whose role conflict coping occurs on the systemic level reports changes in her role as wife or live-in companion post incest.

It also is interesting to note that two-thirds of the women reporting significant changes in the role of wife or live-in companion are classified as having the divided marital power type. As it may be recalled, these women also are less inclined to legitimate male superiority in a marriage or live-in relationship. These findings would seem to suggest that these women feel more able to affect changes in their role than do the women who are in a subordinate relationship.
Table 19
Changes in Role of Wife or Live-In Companion
Post Incest for 6 Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level Change Activity</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Illustration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structural Role Redefinition = Social/Cultural Context</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systemic Role Redefinition = Interpersonal Context</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;I have more rights now than I ever had before, more rights because I took them, I took what should've been mine in the first place. I don't take no shit no more, none at all; I don't wait on him hand and foot no more. I don't let him get away with murder no more. I got rights; he's dealing on my terms.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redefine role of wife or live-in companion by exclusive reference to addressing the balance of power in the relationship</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;I talked with him about how things are going to change between us. We worked it out. He's going to be much more open and honest and, yes, he's going to start accounting for his behavior and his whereabouts from now on. And I'm going to be more assertive as his wife and ask that he meet my needs and respond to my feelings.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 19--Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level Change</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Illustration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Role Redefinition = Intrapersonal Context</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Redefine role of wife or live-in companion by ranking behaviors into a hierarchy of obligation | 17%      | 1   | "It's obvious I can't trust no more. So I got to be doing things different now. My number one and top priority is going to be keeping an eye on him, watching him, his behavior, his feelings, his drinking, especially his damn drinking."
| Redefine role of wife or live-in companion by changing attitude | 17%      | 1   | "I thought I was a good wife, that being a good wife was important. But now I see I was completely wrong about that. If you are a loving and obedient wife, he'll step all over you, really, and your daughter. My feelings about being a wife are completely turned around from where they used to be."
| **Reactive Role Behavior = Intrapersonal Context** |          |     |    |              |
| Work harder to meet all demands in role of wife or live-in companion | 33%      | 2   | "I guess I didn't fill his needs. I mean, I didn't satisfy him, otherwise he wouldn't have had sex with my daughter. We think he's going to do some jail time...but when he gets out, I want try to do better." |

Brief mention has to be made of the 14 women who report no significant changes in their role as wife or live-in companion after the disclosure or the discovery of the...
paternal incest. While they constitute a much larger than expected proportion of the total research sample, few of them offer any explanation for their negative response to the question. Their answer simply is no, they have not changed in their role as wife or live-in companion after the disclosure or the discovery of the incest. Because none of them sees any kind of relationship between that role and the incest, they apparently see no reason to change. In the words of one of those women:

> No, there have been no changes in that role. And why should there be? This is not my problem; it had nothing to do with me. I was a good wife, the best I could be. He's responsible for his own behavior. The incest had absolutely nothing to do with what kind of wife I was, what kind of wife I am, so why should I change?

**Summary**

The findings on marital power presented here lend more support to feminist theoretical assumptions about marital power, or at least to the essence of those assumptions once the hyperboles are stripped away. Slightly over half of the women have a divided marital power type in which process power, similar to expressive power, is in their domain, and outcome power, similar to instrumental power, is in their husbands' domain. Although this describes more marital power for women than feminists assume, it is neither reciprocal to, nor equal with the greater power of husbands. Thus, the divided marital power type is still an asymmetrical power pattern. The remaining women have a female-subordinate marital power type. For them, the asymmetry of power is dramatic, and these women come closest to the prototype of the powerless, hapless wives that so often presented in the feminist literature.

Both mainstream and feminist scholars insist that in some way marital power, or the lack of it, is related to the incest, but no significant statistical relationship to either its duration or severity is found in this research. Only a small proportion of the women in this research sample reported changes of any kind in their role as wife post incest,
and a smaller number still reported changes in the direction of efficacy and empowerment.

**Future Research**

Any appeal for the development of a more sensitive conceptualization and measure of marital power would be little more than a resounding of appeals made by sociologists for decades. But what might distinguish it from others is that it is made in response to the fact that in the study of paternal incest it is this very topic of marital power that sharply divides mainstream and feminist scholars.

**Research Question 4: Coping and Maternal Power Post Incest**

The word "mother" is one of the oldest in the language. But the word "motherhood," referring to the qualities or character of a mother, was not coined until the late 16th century and did not come into popular usage until nearly three hundred years later (Dally, 1982). From the beginning of human history there have been mothers, but motherhood had to be invented. Thus the very concept certainly refers to more than just the biological process of reproduction. It refers, in fact, to much more. As a social construction, motherhood is built from "customs, traditions, conventions, beliefs, attitudes, mores, rules, laws, precepts, and a host of other rational and non-rational norms which deal with the care and rearing of children" (Bernard, 1974, p. vii).

One of those norms, arguably both rational and non-rational, is the very foundation upon which the concept of motherhood has been socially constructed--maternal power. Idealized and rhapsodized by most, debased and vilified by some, its image too is seen through a cracked mirror. Historically its mere possession was thought to elevate women over the culture's hegemony (Bloch, 1978; Chodorow & Contratto, 1982); more recently it is believed to bury women under it (Allen, 1983; Gimenez, 1980).
While some uneasy compromises are being struck between these two extremes (O'Brien, 1978; Ruddick, 1983), maternal power remains the *sine qua non* of motherhood.

And it is the pivot around which controversy turns in the body of literature on paternal incest. To indict women as mothers, like mainstream scholars do, for not protecting and supporting and believing their daughters is to suggest that something at least akin to maternal power has been compromised. To insist that there is such a thing as maternal collusion is to believe in maternal power; to deny maternal collusion, as recent feminist scholars do, is to call into question its strength, efficacy and, perhaps, its very existence. It certainly would not be an exaggeration to claim that maternal power is at the center of the storm of controversy in the paternal incest literature.

The fourth and final research question of this dissertation asks: For women in paternally incestuous families, is there a relationship between their strategy for coping with role conflict, and their actions vis-a-vis their daughters after the discovery or the disclosure of the paternal incest? As research questions go this one is quite straightforward, but a rather great deal of groundwork needs to be done before it can be directly addressed.

**Definition of Maternal Power**

The definition of maternal power poses some problems. If it is defined in its most simple terms as the ability of women as mothers to protect their daughters from paternal incest, an irreconcilable tautology arises from the very use of a sample of women whose daughters indeed were incestuously abused. Thus, for the purposes of this dissertation, maternal power is defined as overt actions that women as mothers take to protect their daughters from further abuse *after* the paternal incest has been disclosed or discovered. These actions will be placed in a hierarchy of efficacy, and then subjected to evaluation.
Disclosure or Discovery

Any examination of women's exercise of maternal power must begin with a consideration of how they come to know that their daughters have been incestuously victimized. While the very choice of the phrase "come to know" hints at a particular explanatory bias, it also is ingenuous enough to require that any analysis start at the beginning.

Each woman in the research sample was asked during the in-depth interview whether she knew that her daughter was being incestuously abused but did nothing to stop it. Two (10%) of the women answered in the affirmative. While these two, who had knowledge of the incest and yet did nothing to intervene in it or to stop it, may be typical of women in paternally incestuous families as far as the body of literature on paternal incest is concerned, they certainly are atypical of the women in this research sample.

Their accounts serve as counter-narratives that are interesting in that they reveal something about women who do not think, feel or act as they are "supposed to," and informative in that they expose something about the expectations being violated. Table 20 contrasts the two counter-narratives, and compares the two women on variables that have been discussed in this dissertation.

These two women knew the paternal incest was occurring and did nothing to intervene in it. Collusive certainly would not be a wholly inappropriate adjective to describe them. Although they share some things in common, they share even more with the other women in the sample. The most critical question, therefore, concerns what distinguishes both of these obviously collusive women from the remaining women in the sample.
Table 20
Counter-Narratives of 2 Women Who Knew the Incest Was Occurring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Counter-narrative #1</th>
<th>Counter-narrative #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Awareness?</strong></td>
<td>&quot;I was suspicious because of the way he touched her and kissed her; it just wasn't normal. Then she told me after two years, I think, and I said, &quot;What do you think I should do?&quot;, and she didn't know, so I just didn't do nothing for a year and then he comes to me and asks do I want to join in--my husband, my daughter and me.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intervention?</strong></td>
<td>&quot;What was I supposed to do? I was working every day, he was home with her, how could I guarantee he'd stop fucking her? There was nothing I could do.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Discovery?</strong></td>
<td>&quot;No, I didn't do nothing to stop it. I was always afraid of what he would do to me. I knew how violent he could get. He planned it, controlled it, controlled us. I felt like I was being pressured into silence.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Played Role?</strong></td>
<td>&quot;She got pregnant from it and she was afraid to tell me, so she told my husband's daughter, she's my daughter's stepsister who lives with my husband's ex-wife. He abused her too when she was a little girl, so she got real upset when my daughter told her, and I guess she called the cops, or maybe her mother did, I don't know.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duration</strong></td>
<td>96 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Severity</strong></td>
<td>Digital penetration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>108 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intercourse</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 20--Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coping Strategy</th>
<th>Counter-narrative #1</th>
<th>Counter-narrative #2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traditionally</td>
<td>Individual role redefinition</td>
<td>Reactive role behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>2 (low)</td>
<td>3 (low)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital Power</td>
<td>Divided</td>
<td>Female-subordinate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None of the variables of this dissertation discriminates these collusive women from the others. But a review of the transcripts of their in-depth interviews reveals one factor that these two women share with each other, but not with the other women: as children they both had been severely punished by their own mothers for disclosing to them that they were being incestuously abused by their fathers. One woman reports that her mother viciously beat her and then sent her to live with her grandmother where she remained for six months before being allowed to return home. The other reports that her mother locked her out of the house, calling her a "whore and a jezebel," thus forcing her at the age of eight to live alone on the streets of her urban community for several weeks before a police officer came across her and took her home. Both were reabused by their fathers upon their return to their family. As horrifying as these recollections are, it is unlikely that punishment of young girls for the disclosure of incestuous abuse is either a necessary or a sufficient reason to explain their later collusive behavior as mothers. Certainly this is an area that requires more research, and that very requirement also warns against resting upon the tranquil axiom that most women as mothers play collusive roles in paternal incest.
The 18 remaining women will be the focus of further analysis. Eight (44%) of these women learned about the incest directly from their victimized daughters; 10 (56%) learned about it from others, who include family members, family friends, school counselors, law enforcement officers and Protective Service workers. Whether the incest was disclosed or discovered has a significant relationship to the women's initial belief or disbelief of the allegation, as Table 21 shows. Women whose daughters directly disclosed the incest were significantly more likely to immediately believe the accusation than were the women who discovered the incest through a third party.

Table 21
Belief or Disbelief of the Initial Allegation by Source

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Daughter</th>
<th>Other Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Believed</td>
<td>7(87%)</td>
<td>4(40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disbelieved</td>
<td>1(13%)</td>
<td>6(60%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ x^2 (1, N = 18) = 4.46, p < .05 \]

No significant differences, however, are found between the offending parent's relationship to the daughter, that is, biological father, stepfather or live-in guardian, and the woman's initial belief of the incest allegation \( (x^2 = .335, df = 2) \). Each woman was asked during the in-depth interview to describe her relationship with her daughter prior to learning of the incest. When responses were analyzed for content and then coded as either positive, that is, loving, supportive and caring, or problematic, that is, conflict-ridden, hostile or rejecting, no significant differences are found between the relationship the women had with their daughters prior to the discovery or disclosure of the
incest and their initial belief that the incest indeed had occurred ($x^2 = .980, df = 1$).

Several things cannot be determined from the data, however. The effect of the alleged severity of the sexual abuse on the women's willingness to believe that the incest had occurred cannot be analyzed because most of the women who were told by their daughters were told with euphemisms such as, "He was messing with me," or "He was playing around with me," and thus initially were not apprised of specific sexual acts. Also, most of the women who discovered the incest through a third party also were told with euphemisms of a different, more clinical, kind such as "sexual abuse," "molestation," "rape," and "incest," rather than with specific sexual acts. Duration poses a similar problem. Most women heard from their daughters that the incest had been going on for an unquantifiable period of "a while," "a few times," or "forever"; those who heard about the incest from a third party usually were not told a period of duration. Finally, all of the husbands or live-in companions, with the exception of one, initially denied the incest. Their denial probably was made easier by the vagueness of the initial allegation made against them. But because most did deny, no relationship could be determined between their response to the allegation, and the women's belief or disbelief of it.

The initial affective reactions of these 18 women to the paternal incest stand in stark, even dramatic, contrast to the reactions described in both the mainstream and the recent feminist literature. There, they most often are depicted as sangfroid responses of coolness, even indifference, or as vituperative harangues of innocent daughters for their alleged role in the incest. The self-descriptors of the women in this research sample, however, are not consistent with these extremes. Each was asked during the in-depth interview to recollect her first emotional reaction to the disclosure or the discovery of the paternal incest. A content analysis was done on responses by noting and counting...
each affect-descriptive word in each response. The words used by the women, and the frequency with which each was used, are found in Table 22.

There may be one compelling reason for the discrepancy between the portrayals of women's reactions in the body of literature on paternal incest, and the responses of the women in this sample. Both mainstream and feminist scholars tend to rely on secondhand accounts of reactions offered retrospectively usually by daughters who now, as adults, are in treatment or, in the case of some of the mainstream studies, by husbands who are incarcerated. Using the women, themselves, as describers and interpreters of their own affective reactions should not be a novel approach, but in this body of literature it is exactly that.

### Table 22

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Frequency of use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Shocked&quot;</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Angry,&quot; &quot;Furious,&quot; &quot;Enraged&quot;</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Overwhelmed&quot;</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Numb,&quot; &quot;Dumbstruck&quot;</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Hysterical,&quot; &quot;Panic-stricken&quot;</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Hurt&quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Sick,&quot; &quot;Disgusted&quot;</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Sad,&quot; &quot;Grief-stricken&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Frightened,&quot; &quot;Terrified&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Anxious,&quot; &quot;Anxiety-ridden&quot;</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frequency counts add to more than 20 because some women used multiple affect-descriptive words in response.

### Actions Post Discovery or Disclosure

The discovery or the disclosure of the paternal incest transforms private troubles into public responses. The first actions that result from that transformation are both
important to understand and critical to evaluate. Therefore, each of the women was asked during the in-depth interview to describe her first action or behavior, as opposed to feeling, upon the disclosure or the discovery of the paternal incest. The two women who knew that the incest was occurring were asked to describe their first action when the police or Protective Services contacted them. Data analysis now will be based on the full sample of 20 women.

Using an operating assumption that the husbands or live-in companions had a continuing arousal pattern in relationship to the daughters, and that they would continue the incestuous abuse if given the opportunity, the described actions of the women then were coded according to the level at which they provided protection for the daughters. Only those actions occurring within a time frame of the first hour after disclosure or discovery were coded, but some judgment had to be exercised in order to place actions within that time frame. The following evaluation criteria then were used in this coding task:

1. High Protective: the woman behaviorally responds to the disclosure or discovery by removing her husband or live-in companion from the home; calling the police or Children's Protective Services; and/or bringing her daughter to a physician, clinic or hospital for medical evaluation.

2. Medium Protective: the woman behaviorally responds to the disclosure or the discovery of the incest by verbally confronting her husband or live-in companion; talking with her daughter to glean more details about the incest; and/or seeking advice from professionals who have no legal authority to arrest or investigate and who may include psychologists, social workers, counselors, clergy, school teachers or administrators, family physicians.

3. Low Protective: the woman behaviorally responds to the disclosure or dis-
covery of the incest by seeking emotional support for herself, her daughter, and/or her husband or live-in companion from people who are not professionals, and who may include members of the immediate or extended family, friends, or social acquaintances.

4. Non-Protective: the woman behaviorally responds to the disclosure or discovery of the incest by doing nothing; physically withdrawing from, or by leaving the family or home; refusing to cooperate with, or lying to professionals with investigatory responsibilities; and/or punishing her daughter.

Using this evaluative scheme, the actions of 2 (10%) of the women can be evaluated as high protective. Five (25%) of the women are classified as acting in a medium protective fashion, 5 (25%) as low protective, and the remaining 8 (40%) as non-protective. For the purposes of illustrating what is really a vast behavioral difference between the high and the non-protective levels of action, two narratives are contrasted, one from each level, in Table 23.

It might be tempting to assume from a review of these contrasting narratives that women who feel what are often such mobilizing emotions as rage and anger may be more inclined to act protectively than those women who are numbed by shock. As reasonable as that assumption appears to be, it is not supported by a content analysis of the responses; no type of feeling was any more or any less associated with one degree or another of protective action.

It is also important to note that only those actions that were reported to have occurred within approximately the first hour after the disclosure or the discovery of the incest were evaluated and analyzed. Certainly if the question in the in-depth interview had asked for a description of actions taken within the first several hours, or the day, or even a week after the incest, the data would be distributed differently according to level of protective action.
Table 23
High Protective and Non-Protective Actions
as Described by Two Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>High Protective</th>
<th>Non-Protective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Feeling?</strong></td>
<td>&quot;Is there really rage? Rage, rage, rage. I just wanted to attack my husband physically so bad.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I was in shock, entirely numb, just numb. No feelings, just numb.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>First Action?</strong></td>
<td>&quot;My daughter was crying and I am hugging her, telling her it would be all right. And while I was doing that I was calling a friend to lend me a car so I could take (my daughter) to the emergency room, and then to the police. After I got that arranged I looked up the number of Protective Services, gave it to (my husband), told him to turn himself in, the bastard; told him to not come home after he did.&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I was crying so hard. (My (daughter) was sitting at the table crying, and my husband was just saying over and over that she was lying. I couldn't take it no more. I locked myself in the bathroom for an hour and just cried. Then I got my coat on and went out the front door. And my husband, he yells, When are you coming back, and I says, Maybe never.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Protective Action and Coping Strategies**

Some groundwork had to be laid before the fourth research question of this dissertation could be addressed. That question asks: For women in paternally incestuous families, is there a relationship between their strategy for coping with role conflict, and their actions vis-a-vis their daughters after the discovery or the disclosure of the paternal incest?

For the purposes of analysis, the four levels of protectiveness were collapsed into two categories: high/medium and low/non-protectiveness. This streamlining of data had to occur because without it cell counts were too low to conduct statistical analysis. The strategies for coping with role conflict, of course, are systemic role rede
finition, individual role redefinition, and reactive role behavior.

Statistical analysis shows that there is a significant relationship between the type of strategy for coping with role conflict and the level of protective action taken by women upon the discovery or disclosure of the paternal incest. Results are displayed in Table 24. Women who cope by systemic role redefinition, previously evaluated as both the most efficacious, powerful and satisfying coping strategy, were significantly more likely to engage in high/medium protective actions upon the discovery or the disclosure of the paternal incest. At the other end of the continuum, women who cope by reactive role behavior, the least efficacious and powerful coping strategy but curiously also quite satisfying, were significantly more likely to engage in low/non-protective actions.

Table 24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protectiveness Level</th>
<th>Systemic (Type II) n(%)</th>
<th>Individual (Type III) n(%)</th>
<th>Reactive (Type IV) n(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High/Medium</td>
<td>3(75%)</td>
<td>4(44%)</td>
<td>0(0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low/Non-</td>
<td>1(25%)</td>
<td>5(56%)</td>
<td>7(100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$\chi^2 (2, N = 20) = 6.86, p < .05$

Role Redefinition

Once again, the assumptions is made that the role process is a continuum and that women can move along that continuum in either direction in response to the conflict posed by the disclosure or discovery of the paternal incest. That conflict, in fact, would pose serious challenges to the women's view of, and their activities in, the role.
of mother. Thus, an inquiry into whether and how women redefined their role of mother was made.

Each woman was asked during the in-depth interview whether she has changed significantly in her role as mother since the disclosure or the discovery of the incest. The same standards for analyzing their responses that previously were used to analyze changes in the role of wife are used here. Briefly reviewed, reported changes in the mother role that are on the structural level of the role process encompass activities that attempt to confront or alter social/cultural/ideological notions about being a mother, mothering as a behavior, and motherhood as a quality or character. Such changes do not require direct communication, interaction or negotiation with the daughter. Those on the systemic level do require that, however, and also show behavioral changes in the role of mother that occur in direct relationship to the daughter. Responses on the individual level indicate intrapsychic changes in the woman's individual conception of the role of mother that require no direct communication, interaction or negotiation with the daughter. The content analysis of responses to this question revealed that reactive role behavior again had to be added to this analytic scheme. Responses that illustrate it describe attempts to redefine the role of mother by acting solely through role behavior, in the face of what are taken to be unalterable demands. The context here is intrapersonal, in that any behavior change does not involve direct communication, interaction or negotiation with the daughter.

In contrast to the previous discussion in which only six of the women report changes in their role as wife or live-in companion in the wake of the paternal incest, all 20 (100%) of the women report changes in their role as mother. Their responses are presented and categorized in Table 25.
Table 25
Changes in Role of Mother Post Incest Disclosure or Discovery for 20 Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Change</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Illustration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structural Role Redefinition = Social/Cultural Context</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Systemic Role Redefinition = Interpersonal Context</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active problem-solving with daughter.</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>&quot;I try to take time to let (my daughter) talk about what happened to her, what she's feeling, thinking in general. You know, work out any problems. But sometimes there's not a lot of time in the day to do that. Now I say, I don't have much time so what's it about? Before, I'd say, I don't have time. So that's different.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individual Role Redefinition = Intrapersonal Context</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank expectations into hierarchy of obligations.</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>&quot;Yeah, I'm more protective now, more suspicious of other people. I see that as my main job as (her) mother.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change attitude about role.</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&quot;I don't let them walk all over me anymore. I'm more assertive with them, but at the same time, I don't have that old love-hate relationship with them anymore. Now I feel much more love.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 25—Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Change Activity</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Illustration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reactive Role Behavior = Intrapersonal Context</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work harder to meet all demands.</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>&quot;I have increased my time with my children. I was going to say that I've increased my responsibilities, but I think now that they've stayed the same; it's just that now I'm trying harder to do a good job in living up to all of them.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The directions of the changes the women report in their role as mother require some discussion. Prior discussion indicates that activities occurring on the systemic level are the most efficacious and are based in more marital and maternal power than activities occurring on the individual level, and than those activities subsumed under the rubric of reactive role behavior. Therefore, any changes in the role of mother reported in the wake of the paternal incest that stay on the systemic level, or move up to it, are the most efficacious and powerful changes that can be made in coping in the wake of the paternal incest.

In the original analysis four of the women were categorized as coping by systemic role redefinition. Here, all four of those women report changes in their role as mother that also are on the systemic level. Nine of the women in the original analysis cope by individual role redefinition; in this present analysis, six of them remain on that level of the role process, and the remaining three report changes in their role as mother that move up to the systemic level. Finally, seven women originally were classified as coping by reactive role behavior, and in this present analysis, four of them report
changes on that same level of the role process, and three report changes that move up to the individual level.

In summary, although all 20 (100%) of the women in the research sample report significant changes in their role as mother after the disclosure or the discovery of the paternal incest, six (30%) of them made those changes on a different and higher level of the role process. Although changes of any type demonstrate the agentic capacity of these women to respond to conflicts, stressors, and transitions, because each level defines a certain orientation towards expectations, specific role senders, the self as a role player, and a certain degree of power, the changes of these six women are impressive. They truly involve the remaking or, in the terms of this dissertation, the redefining of their role. For the 14 (70%) remaining women, however, the changes are less dramatic.

Impressive or not, the very fact that all of the women report changes in their role as mother post incest is noteworthy. Two possible reasons for this fact can be posited. First, when the slash was dissolved between that conflated mother/wife role that prevails in the body of literature, thus separating the roles for analytic purposes, an inference until now left unchallenged in this research may have arisen that the two roles are equally valuable, rewarding and salient in any woman's life. In fact, there is much evidence that that simply is not true. The role of mother, by most women, is considered more central to identity, more enriching, empowering and enduring than the role of wife or live-in companion (Dally, 1982; Trebilcott, 1983). As a result, in the wake of the disclosure or discovery of paternal incest, more change is effected in the behavior and attitudes associated with this more estimable role.

Second and as previously discussed, only one of the women in this sample explained the incest by any reference to her role as wife. The mere possibility that a
relationship exists between that role, or the power a woman has in it vis-a-vis her hus­
band, and the incest simply is not considered, perhaps not even imagined, by the wom­
en in this sample. Thus, with the exception of one, none apparently feels the necessity
to change anything about that role.

The remaining 19 women, however, all explain the incest with rather uncom­
plicated theories in which their husband's or live-in companion's alleged psychopathol­
ogy is central. Certainly the fact that all of the women are part of this research sample
because they have been referred to a treatment center may have had an impact on how
they explain the incest. No inquiry was made during the in-depth interview, unfortun­
ately, as to any changes in these causation theories from the time the incest was dis­
closed or discovered, to the occasion of the in-depth interview. Keeping in mind these
considerations, it should be noted that most of these 19 women describe that psycho­
pathology in terms that are vaguely clinical, even though largely undefined. Take this
response as an example:

Why did he do it? I think it's because he's sick. I don't know why else. He
must have a problem with low self-esteem, low self-worth, or something like
that. He's sick emotionally and he just can't control himself sexually because
of it.

Some of the women pinpoint substance abuse as a factor in the incest. Their
causal model tends to be simple and straightforward: the substance, whether alcohol or
drugs, creates an emotional or mental problem of some kind which then motivates,
drives, compels, or even forces their husband or live-in companion to incestuously
abuse their daughter. Such accounts are riddled with errors of fact and logic, but they
all point to individual psychopathology as the major etiologic factor in the incest. One
woman asserts this position very clearly:

I know why he did it. He did it because of the drugs, especially the cocaine.
It messes with your mind, the cocaine. It takes away your sense and it gives
you a sexual desire that you can't control.
Other of the women look deeper into the childhood of their husbands or live-in companions for an explanation of their incestuous behavior. They pinpoint what they believe are the indelible and unmitigated effects of early abuse and neglect as the reason for the incest. These types of accounts often are as factually and logically erroneous as the others, but they are just as ardently believed and presented, as is illustrated by the explanation provided by this woman:

Oh, I know exactly why he did it. He was sexually molested when he was young—sexually molested by a crazy uncle and by a friend of the crazy uncle. It went on for years. He didn't tell nobody, and he didn't get no help for the emotional problems it caused. That's why he did it. That's exactly why he did it.

The accounts of these 19 women share a theme, and that is that the incest was caused by their husband's or live-in companion's psychopathology, regardless of its origin. Changing their role as wife does nothing to either ameliorate the alleged illness or protect their daughters from the continuing risk posed by it. Changing their role as mother, however, might very well afford more protection for their daughters. Thus, all of the women in the sample changed significantly, in their own assessment, in their role as mother after the incest was disclosed or discovered.

Summary

Many of the findings presented here stand in stark contrast to the conclusions about women as mothers that are found in the body of literature on paternal incest. Less collusion, less disbelief of the incest allegation, more shock and outrage upon its discovery or disclosure, more protective actions post incest, and more changes in the role of mother are found in this research sample than have been described in either the mainstream or recent feminist studies.
Future Research

These findings suggest that more thorough research needs to be conducted on maternal power. They also predict that with a careful definition of it, and with the laying of appropriate groundwork before it is evaluated and measured, subsequent research findings also will challenge the tranquilly axiomatic conclusions now found in the body of literature that women are collusive, disbelieving and non-supportive.

It seems almost sophomoric to insist that future research on women as mothers in paternally incestuous families actually use these women as subjects. Yet virtually no other study has done so. Only by listening to these women's voices can the logic of their individual courses of action be understood, and the constraints on those courses of action be appreciated.

Conclusion

Few of the findings presented in this dissertation lend support to the observations, assertions and notions about women in paternally incestuous families that are found in the body of literature. Few land solidly at the feet of either mainstream or recent feminist scholars on that topic; some even disrupt what have become in either camp the most tranquil of axioms. If nothing more than the serendipitous nature of these findings is significant, then something must be said in conclusion as to the reasons why.

Certainly one of those reasons has to do with using the truth of women's experiences, in the plural, as the empirical resources of this research. Now the very word "truth" is slippery, even dangerous, and likely to generate in reaction all kinds of reminders that when people, any people, talk about their own lives, they exaggerate and depreciate, confuse some facts and forget others and, sometimes, they even lie. The
truths of this research, however, are not objective truths, but truths of experiences. As such, they neither speak for themselves nor are open to proof, but are understood only through a careful interpretation that takes into account the social, interpersonal and intrapersonal contexts that shape and inform them.

That matter of interpretation leads to the other reason for the serendipitous nature of many of these findings: the experience, in the singular, of women is the theoretical resource of this research. This chapter opens with an epigraph that describes the living picture of women's lives: the construction of their gendered identity, their asymmetrical power relations with men, and their encounters with the transformative nature of subjectivity. Collectively, these constitute the experience of women -- the gendered experience--and it is with sensitivity to this experience that the truths shared by the women in this research are understood, analyzed and interpreted.
CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Making a Beginning

Mainstream and Feminist Scholarship

The plot of this dissertation ranges from the discovery of paternal incest as a social problem a decade or so ago, to the revelation of women as mothers and wives in paternally incestuous families. Between one point and the other, studies from diverse disciplines are reviewed, some old and tranquilly axiomatic assumptions are challenged and others still are summarily dismissed, and more novel findings are presented as valuable insights for an understanding of women in paternally incestuous families.

Like the last chapter of a mystery novel, that of a dissertation should introduce no new characters, unveil no new and surprising findings. Therefore, it would be a simple, although rather tedious, exercise in redundancy to end this dissertation by restating the research questions that guide its inquiry, presenting again the findings and then expounding a bit more upon them. But an ending is not a conclusion. To paraphrase the poet T.S. Eliot (1950), to reach a conclusion is to make a beginning: the end must be where we start from (p. 139).

This dissertation's conclusion, therefore, must start with reference to the theoretical assumptions that infuse the previous studies on women in paternally incestuous families. "Infuse" is a rather ambiguous word, but it is used with purpose. Because no single discipline "owns" the study of paternal incest and the topic, itself, is marginal to the epistemological domain of each discipline interested in it, no theory, or theories,
for that matter, consistently frames the analysis and interpretation of data. But theoretical assumptions, often in the most general sense of that term, do influence the way in which data on women in paternally incestuous families are presented and interpreted. Getting to those assumptions throughout the course of this research often has been an inferential process, a process of reading between the lines, assuming and speculating. While that in itself is sometimes an intellectually risky endeavor, it is always a necessary one, so it is to these assumptions that attention now must be turned.

Throughout this dissertation a dichotomy is made between mainstream and recent feminist scholarship on paternal incest. That dichotomy is a roughly cut one of convenience that undoubtedly leaves more than a few studies in the extant body of literature without a base. And some mainstream and feminist scholars alike may find the theoretical assumptions this process of divination leads to inconsistent with what they really believe, or what they really meant. But the dichotomy is not so rough and convenient that its heuristic value is compromised. While it would be an oversimplification to assert that one type of scholarship is the mirror image of the other, each generally is based on a different view of the family, of women as mothers and wives in families, of the etiology of paternal incest, and of the role, for lack of a better term, that women play in it.

Mainstream and feminist scholars appear to agree on little that has to do with women in paternally incestuous families but in certain areas, critical to understanding, they seem to be yoked in what surely must be an uneasy alliance. First, each fails to make a distinction between the role of mother and the role of wife. This is a curious oversight for both. After all, a theoretical assumption that informs mainstream scholarship is that although women play a largely expressive wife role in the family, by necessity they also must play an instrumental mother role in the raising and socializing of their children. And feminists surely have more than a little academic interest in the mul-
tiple roles that women, in general, play and the effects of playing them. This shows that at least theoretically each recognizes that these roles are separate and to a large extent different, but when women in paternally incestuous families are the topic under consideration, both the separation and the difference largely are ignored.

Second, each views role, whether that of mother or of wife, basically as a unitary and static concept. There indeed are some variations in that view so the word "basically" cautions against any crass overgeneralization. Certainly both mainstream and feminist scholars make reference to the different types of expectations that append to those roles, some emanating from social/cultural arrangements and ideologies, others from the family system, and others still from individual interpretations, but neither really considers a role, any role, to be a process of creating and modifying conceptions of the role(s) of self and of others through the course of interaction.

Third, it is that very issue of differences or, more to the point, the failure to recognize differences, that also yokes mainstream and feminist scholars in that uneasy alliance. In their respective portrayals of women in paternally incestuous families, each presents its own virtually unwavering image: the former describes these women as collusive, betraying, inadequate in their role behavior and unsupportive of their victimized daughters; the latter depicts them as weak, helpless and ineffectual. Women who in character or behavior vary from either of these descriptions tend to be explained away or, more often, simply overlooked.

Fourth, mainstream scholars share with feminist scholars a particular approach to method in the study of women in paternally incestuous families. Both tend to use secondhand accounts, most often given years later by victimized daughters during the course of therapy and, in the case of mainstream scholars, accounts by victimizing husbands, as well. And while both occasionally raise concerns about the accuracy, reliability and even, at times, the veracity of these secondhand accounts, they nonetheless
use them for description and explanation. In this way, what passes for knowledge about women in paternally incestuous families, passes into knowledge.

The Findings and Their Implications

These four points of articulation between mainstream and feminist scholarship on women in paternally incestuous families show how rough the dichotomy is that is used in this dissertation. But they also show something else, something more critical. They reveal the first mandate for research: creating an analytic distinction between the roles of mother and wife, and conceptualizing role as process; and the first mandate for the research method: maintaining a point of view that embraces and explains differences; and using a method that is predicated on the belief that the women, themselves, are the best source of data about their own lives.

Coping With Role Conflict

The first task of research in this dissertation, therefore, was to separate the roles of mother and wife into two distinct analytic units, and then consider each role as a process. Attention then could be focused on the quantity of the conflict between these two roles, and on the quality of the strategies devised by the women to cope with that conflict. For the 20 women who comprise the research sample, the quantity of the conflict they experienced was moderately high, but it was the strategies they described for coping with it that were more remarkable. Here, finally, differences between the women started to become strikingly apparent.

Each coping strategy was categorized according to the level of the role process at which it intervened; each level, in turn, defined a unique orientation towards the roles, the self as a role player, the expectations and demands that append to the roles, and specific role-senders. Qualitative analysis revealed that women coped by systemic
or individual role redefinition strategies, or by reactive role behavior. The most efficacious strategy was determined to be the one that was the best suited to the context in which the conflict originates, and that has potential for both resolving the conflict by altering the actual expectations of specific role-senders, and the feeling of pressure that such conflict produces. By those criteria, systemic role redefinition was evaluated as the most efficacious strategy, and also was rated by the women as the most satisfying. It is interesting to note, however, that only 4 (20%) of the women in the sample described this as their typical strategy for handling conflict between their roles.

From that analysis and discussion of efficacy emerged a new, however tentative at that point, conceptualization of the role process. Rather than envisioning it as it originally was as being composed of discrete levels, it was presented as a continuum that not only defined different approaches to role-making and role-taking, but also different degrees of efficacy. If there were some integrity to that conceptualization, it was hypothesized, the duration and the severity of the paternal incest will vary along this continuum. Statistical analysis demonstrated limited support for those hypotheses: the type of coping strategy was not significantly related to the duration of the incest, but was to its severity. More to the point: the strategy of systemic role redefinition was associated with less intrusive, that is, less severe acts of paternal incest, while reactive role behavior was associated with more severe acts.

The preceding summary of findings came dangerously close to the tedious redundancy this concluding chapter seeks to avoid. Their reiteration is to demonstrate their importance for the subsequent research carried out in this dissertation, and their contribution to an understanding of coping. The findings suggested, among other things, that coping, itself, may be a process. That process may begin with the simple decision to cope—not defend, give in, accommodate—but to actually attempt to influence one's own roles. So decided, the roles then would have to be examined and de-
fined in a preferable way, and then coping could begin by active inference testing, com-
communication, interaction and negotiation with specific role-senders in order to reach an
agreement with them on a revised set of expectations and demands. If this coping pro-
cess holds true, that would mean that women begin with reactive role behavior, move
to individual role redefinition, and then cope by systemic role redefinition. Thus, the
coping process by which women come to influence their own roles is the reverse of the
role enactment process in which the roles influence the women.

These findings have practical implications as well. When the private woes of
women in paternally incestuous families become public concerns, agencies of thera-
peutic intervention and of social control enter into their lives. And as they do, they
make demands: to separate from their abusive husbands; to get a job or quit one; to at-
tend individual, marriage, family and/or group counseling; even to be better mothers,
whatever that means or, perhaps, even better wives. Often, these and other demands
are made of women in paternally incestuous families as if they collectively represent a
certain category of women. But if their diversity is appreciated, their individuality is re-
spected, these demands would be geared towards where each is in the coping process.
And simply knowing that there is a coping process would help all of these intervening
and controlling agencies to assess any individual woman's progress towards becoming
strong and competent enough to carry on her life, socialize and nurture her children,
with or without her husband.

**Traditionality**

This first mandate of research was to unravel that curious knot of mainstream
and feminist assumptions about women in paternally incestuous families. Once ac-
complished, the research proceeded to probe some of the disputed claims between
them. The first of those was traditionality. Mainstream scholars describe these women

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as low in traditionality because they do not conform well to the expectations appending to the role of wife; feminist scholars, on the other hand, depict them as high in traditionality because they are attitudinally committed to the material and ideological means that cause and maintain their inequality vis-a-vis their husbands. Here, there is not only a difference in opinion, but it is being expressed with entirely different meanings of traditionality.

Judging the mainstream opinion as problematic, even flawed, in its inference that role demands are clear, fair and immutable, and thus provide a standard against which role performance can be judged, the original intention of this research was to inquire as to the degree of the women's attitudinal commitment to androcentric hegemony. The dramatic epiphanous statements spontaneously offered by a notable number of the women during the in-depth interview, however, warned against following through with that intention. These statements revealed that many of the women had undergone recent and significant, even if evanescent, changes in their points of view about power and gender relations. Any measure of attitudes surely would have measured artifacts or residues of these transformative and empowering changes in point of view.

A behavioral index of traditionality was designed as an alternative. Composed of biographical items, the structure of the index was based on the underlying assumption that there are antecedent individual differences in commitment to androcentric hegemony that can be measured by actions taken over the course of a life. The women in the sample ranged widely in their traditionality as measured by this index, but traditionality, itself, was not significantly related to the duration or the severity of the paternal incest, nor to type of coping strategy.

While the construction of this and other such indices of traditionality had to be questioned, the findings cautioned strongly against the type of uncritical use of the con-
cept of traditionality for description, and as theoretical assumption, that is found in both
the mainstream and the recent feminist literature. The assertion that traditionality,
whether high or low, plays a causal role in the paternal incest may have all the tranquil-
ity of an axiom, but it does not have the support of rigorous research. Traditionality, in
fact, proved difficult to define, especially operationally, and revealed itself to be a com-
plex concept that surely is rooted in antecedent behaviors as well as in attitudes and in
other unmeasured variables.

The very fact that the original intention of the research in this area had to be
abandoned because of the epiphanous statements made by some of the women, drew
attention to these statements, themselves. The very word epiphanies has such an
ephemeral essence that there may be a tendency for both researchers and practitioners to
slight them when offered. But they do reveal something about the historical, biographi-
cal and political contexts in which they are framed. As stated, they can offer interesting
insights about the meaning of those contexts to the individual woman who acts within
them. Whether they also are indicative of attitude change, or of a behavioral intention,
are matters with implications for both research and practice.

Marital Power

Another point of contention between mainstream and feminist scholars has to do
with marital power. In truth, this was a somewhat constructed contention for the pur-
poses of this research, constructed only in terms of the fact that the mainstream view of
marital power had to be inferentially derived and then put together into a theoretical as-
sumption. Mainstream scholars, in fact, do have a great deal to say about the marital
power of women in paternally incestuous families, but it is said neither unambiguously
nor always coherently. If the strands of their presentation were pulled together, their
argument would take this form: women, by role and by gender, have an expressive
power in the marital relationship that is separate from, complementary to, and equal
with the instrumental power of their husbands. They exercise that relational power in a
passive, manipulative manner by inveigling their unsuspecting husbands into engaging
in incest with their daughters. Thus women have a high degree of marital power. The
feminist argument is much more straightforward: because the marital relationship mir­
rors larger social/cultural arrangements that deprive women of resources, authority and
prestige in relation to men, *ipso facto* women have very low, if any, marital power.

Despite the polarity of these contentions, the fact remains that both mainstream
and feminist scholars conceptualize marital power in a one-dimensional fashion, that is,
as the ability to enforce one's will even against resistance in order to achieve some de­
sired outcome. For the former that means manipulating reluctant or even unwilling
husbands into committing incest; for the latter that means securing some tangible out­
come, such as making a decision or winning an argument, in the face of resistance.

These one-dimensional views of power defined only in terms of some outcome
seemed very unimaginative and riskily tautological. Thus a three-dimensional defini­
tion of marital power, one which incorporated considerations of outcome, process and
legitimation, was created for this research, and answers to six questions asked during
the in-depth interview were rated, scored and indexed.

Slightly less than half of the women were categorized as having a female-sub­
ordinate marital power style; in relationship to their husbands, they reported less pro­
cess and outcome power. And they were also inclined to support, often in the strongest
terms, the idea of male superiority in marriage, making reference in that support to bib­
lical dictates, socialization experiences, and what can only be termed natural law.
These women seem to epitomize the powerless women described by feminist scholars.
They do not constitute the whole sample, however. In contrast, slightly over half of
the women were categorized as having a divided marital power type in which process,
outcome and legitimation power are divided between spouses. A review of their responses to questions and their scores indicated that they were divided from their spouses in terms of the fact that they had more process power, less outcome power, and a more equalitarian view on who should have more power in a marriage. Because process power is devaluated in this culture, these marital relationships also can be considered asymmetrical in their balance of power. Thus, if the hyperbole were stripped away from feminist claims that these women are pathetically powerless, there was support here for the contention that at least they do have less power than their husbands.

Both mainstream and feminist scholars insist that marital power, or the lack of it, is related to the incest, but the findings here failed to support that conclusion. No significant relationship was found between marital power type and either the duration or the severity of the incest. A significant relationship was found, however, between marital power type and coping strategy, with the divided type most strongly associated with systemic role redefinition, and the female-subordinate type with reactive role behavior. This finding lent support to the notion that these strategies vary in a predictable way not only in efficacy but in marital power as well. Therefore this continuum also can be thought of as a continuum of marital empowerment.

Finally, each woman was asked whether she had changed significantly in her role as wife or live-in companion post incest. Six (30%) reported they had, and only two of those six redefined their role in the direction of marital empowerment on the aforementioned continuum. Certainly one of the major reasons why so few women changed was that with the exception of one of them, none accounted for the paternal incest by any reference to that role of wife or live-in companion. Simply stated, most saw no need to change.
There are many theoretic and practical implications of these findings. Women in paternally incestuous families vary in the type of marital power they have, and that warns against both absolutist conclusions that they are archly powerful or pathetically powerless, and standardized protocols for treatment and intervention. Yet the findings also can inform intervention.

It is important to remember that many of these women ardently legitimate male superiority in marriage, and that they do so in contrast to their own life experiences with male violence, exploitation and control. These women either were able to tolerate what was likely to have been a great deal of dissonance or, more likely, were not aware of their inequality vis-a-vis men in general, and their husbands in specific. Also, so few of the women post incest made changes of any kind in their role as wife, and of the few who did, only one-third of them redefined the role in such a way that they increased their power in it. These findings suggest that empowerment is both a matter of consciousness-raising and guidance, two approaches that may be helpful in psychotherapy and in other kinds of intervention with women from paternally incestuous families.

Maternal Power

The final disputed claim between mainstream and feminist scholars that was examined in this dissertation had to do with maternal power. The disputation is more clear here, thus less a matter of that risky endeavor of inference. Mainstream scholars insist that women in the role of mother have both expressive power and some instrumental power, the latter being necessary for the raising of children. That the incest occurs in the first place, that women engage in what these scholars refer to as maternal collusion, are taken as evidence of their having compromised that power. These scholars also describe women as refusing to believe their daughters' allegations, that refusal
being a product of their denial, and as being nonsupportive and nonprotective of their daughters after their disclosure. Feminist scholars adamantly disagree, but only with the interpretation of what still are taken as facts. While few of them challenge the mainstream assertion that women know the incest is occurring, they frame their lack of intervention into it as a product not of collusion, but of powerlessness. While few of them challenge the description of women as nonsupportive of their daughters, they frame that lack of protection and care once more in terms of powerlessness. Of all of the disputed claims, this one provided the richest material for research.

And in the process, all kinds of tranquilly axiomatic conclusions about the maternal power of women were challenged, and some even were tossed aside. The first of those was the notion of maternal collusion. Recognizing that as a concept it simply cannot be accurately measured by secondary variables, each woman directly was asked during the in-depth interview whether she knew the incest was occurring. Two (10%) answered in the affirmative. Any argument that the remaining 18 women who responded that they did not know about the incest were denying, or lying, requires proof, and simply saying that they were, no matter how ardently and often that is said, does not constitute that proof. If maternal collusion is conceptualized as women knowing that the incest is occurring and then not intervening because they are unwilling to do so, as the mainstream scholars would assert or, as the feminists would declare, because they are unable to do so, then it was not a significant finding in this research.

Women indeed did vary in whether they initially believed that the incest had occurred, but they varied in patterned ways. Women who heard about the incest directly from their daughters were significantly more likely to believe the allegation than were women who heard about it through third parties. This finding was especially noteworthy given the often vague and euphemistic manner in which the disclosures were made. No significant association was found between their initial belief and their prior
relationship with their daughters, or between their initial belief and their daughters' familial relationship with the perpetrator. And listening to the words of the women, themselves, as they described their first feelings in the wake of the disclosure or the discovery challenged prevailing notions presented in the literature of how women emotionally react: the women in this sample consistently described feelings of shock, outrage, fury, panic and fear.

Despite the intensity of those feelings, the women varied a great deal in their protectiveness of their daughters as measured by actions taken within the first hour after the disclosure or discovery of the incest. Protectiveness, in turn, varied across the strategies for coping, with the high/medium protectiveness significantly related to the systemic role redefinition strategy, and low/nonprotectiveness to reactive role behavior. The findings suggested that another template could be placed over the continuum described at the outset of the research: a continuum that defines not only unique approaches to role-taking and role-making, but efficacy in coping, marital power and, now, maternal power. This empowerment continuum was proposed to have implications for both theory and practice.

All of the women reported changes in their role as mother post incest, nearly one-third of them in the direction of increased empowerment. That finding, especially in contrast to that of reported changes in the role of wife, raised interesting questions as to the salience, value and interpretation women have of each of these roles, and the nature and strength of any constraints on them.

These findings stand in impressive contrast to the conclusions found in both the mainstream and the feminist literature about women as mothers in paternally incestuous families. These along with other findings in this dissertation call into question the implied causal order of most of these conclusions, that is, the order that begins with the assertion that women know about the incest. This raises a major question of teleology.
with which treatment and intervention programs that come into effect when the private
woes of women become public concerns must come to terms. But its implication for
theory is critical, for if that fundamental assumption can be questioned, then all of the
theoretical assumptions about collusion, belief, protectiveness and power that follow
from it must be reexamined as well. Perhaps more than anything else, this constitutes
the essence of the plea for the development of theory.

Towards Theory

Throughout this dissertation a rough dichotomy was maintained between main­
stream and feminist scholarship on women in paternally incestuous families. A prefer­
ence, however, was declared early in this research for the feminist approach to data col­
lection, method and interpretation, but despite the continuing affinity towards that ap­
proach, it is disconcertingly obvious that while it is based upon distinct and largely
unique theoretical assumptions, it does not rise to theory, in the truest sense of that
term.

And that raises an interesting question with which to conclude this dissertation:
what is needed for a feminist theory of women as mothers and wives in paternally in­
cestuous families? Rather than addressing what concepts, propositions and assump­
tions are required for the structure of theory, since more than a few references already
have been made to those in this concluding chapter, something must be said about its
infrastructure.

A feminist theory of women as mothers and wives in paternally incestuous
families must be an inductively derived theory so that it stands in a reciprocal relation­
ship with data collection and analysis. That will ensure that the theory will fit the sub­
ject matter by being faithful to the everyday reality of women in paternally incestuous
families; and with that fit, it will be comprehensible to researchers, practitioners and the
women alike. Thus, personal experiences must be considered its data. Women must be able to represent their own lives, describe their own courses of action, explain the constraints they perceived and experienced on that action. Their narratives, regardless of how they are solicited, will not be without contradiction and mistakes in fact and logic, but they are truths—truths with a small "t," the subjective truths of experience and lived lives.

Their stories, of course, cannot speak for themselves, thus accepting them as true does not compromise the responsibility of interpretation. Those interpretations must be grounded in the theory itself, but perhaps more importantly, they must be analytic in the truest sense of that term, that is, multi-leveled in their analysis, thorough, systematic, rigorous and based in multiple methods.

It is the social construction of gender, the experience of it, the constraints upon it, the choices available within the confines of those constraints, that would constitute the very essence of this theory. A feminist theory of women in paternally incestuous families is a theory of women; a theory of women is a theory of context. And gender, of course, is critical to an understanding of context.

This last hectic decade after the discovery of paternal incest as a social problem has witnessed the proliferation of treatment and prevention intervention programs that directly impact on the lives of women in paternally incestuous families. A feminist theory also must be responsive to the ethics of intervention. Such a theory should provide control and constraint and, more importantly, should inform the philosophy and practice of intervention in all of the agencies that publicly respond to the private troubles of these women.

At times, over the course of this dissertation, the current feminist approach to women in paternally incestuous families has been downright disappointing. In its continuing argument with mainstream scholarship, it occasionally has been co-opted, and
sometimes its strongest conclusions rest upon concepts and variables that are ill-defined. What eases that disappointment a bit is an abiding sense of the dialectic. In the introductory chapter of this dissertation, a dialectical model for the discovery of social problems was presented and discussed. That model begins with a claim, a definition of the problem at hand, that is called into question by the introduction of some kind of strain. So challenged, resources are mobilized, claims and counterclaims are contested, and eventually a new claim, a new definition of the problem, emerges.

It is clear that the current feminist approach is not that new definition of women as mothers and wives in paternally incestuous families, not that new theory that is so needed, but is a strain against the prevailing mainstream definition. More to the point: it is not yet the theoretical product of that dialectical process, but it is its cause. And that make the plea for a feminist theory all the more exigent.

"The Mirror Crack'd"

The title of this dissertation is "The Mirror Crack'd: Women as Mothers and Wives in Paternally Incestuous Families." The main title, "The Mirror Crack'd," came to mind in a vague memory of the Tennyson poem, "The Lady Of Shalott" long before this research began. It was the nameless woman of the title who "weaves by night and day" on her "silent isle" who stirred recollection; that same woman whose desire to lose her self, her very identity in a man, was so compelling that her "mirror crack'd from side to side."

That metaphor of the mirror was valuable to this dissertation. And it was used often by the 20 women, providing a metaphoric image for their solipsistic reflections. This dissertation concludes not with one of those reflections, though, but with another, this one of the French feminist philosopher Luce Irigaray (1981):
You look at yourself in the mirror. And already you see your own mother there. And soon your daughter a mother. Between the two, what are you? What space is yours alone? In what frame must you contain yourself? And how to let your face show through, beyond all the masks? (p. 63)

It would be a nice conclusion to this dissertation if its research has given some answers to those questions. And it would be a nice beginning.
Chapter I

1 In a long footnote to this discussion in *Totem and Taboo* (pp. 142-143), Freud acknowledged that this story lacked both the "exactitude" and the "certainty" that is needed for a real theory of the origin of the incest taboo. But as a series of assumptions about the inclination to engage in incest and the deliberate creation of prohibitions against doing so, he felt the mythic story had some relevance for a conceptualization of the development of culture.

2 A quarter of a century later, the master sociologist Talcott Parsons came to the same conclusion. He emphasized the function of the incest taboo in creating the proper climate for the socialization of a child. He argued that healthy socialization required two things: the development of a primary erotic bond that engenders the child's ability to form relationships and a sense of self; and the frustration of genital sexuality between parent and child that fosters the child's ultimate ability to separate from parents and to subordinate sexual needs to social regulation. Therefore, adherence to the incest taboo is functional to each individual in that it ensures the successful passage from childhood to maturity. It is equally functional to larger society. Wrote Parsons: "On the societal level incest must be regarded as a regressive phenomenon, a withdrawal from the functions and responsibilities on the performance and fulfillment of which the transfamilial structures of society rest" (1954, p. 114).

3 Kinsey's and his associates' skepticism about both the prevalence and the harm of paternal incest is dissected by Herman (1981) on pages 12-17, and by Russell (1986) on pages 5-8 and 63-65. Both describe a rather cavalier attitude. Kinsey and his associates devoted only 6 pages of their 761 page text to incest, dismissing the 139 cases they found in their sample to be too small to warrant any analysis beyond the comment that incest is a rare phenomenon. They dismissed any allegations of harmful effects by suggesting they were the products of "cultural conditioning" (p. 121), rather than of the incest, itself. They also imputed responsibility to the child for the incest by concluding that, "the (incest) experiences were repeated because the children had become interested in the sexual activity and had more or less actively sought repetitions of their experience" (p. 118). Finally, their analysis of the data on incest is sloppy and inaccurate, with inconsistent tabular data that is not explained.

A particularly revelatory statement about the bias in this study was made by Kinsey associate Wardell Pomeroy in 1976 in an issue of Penthouse's *Forum* in which he called for a new look at the incest taboo because, "Incest between adults and younger children can also prove to be a satisfying and enriching experience" (p. 10). The statement stands in contrast to the Kinsey study data in which respondents with a childhood history of incest uniformly described it in the most negative of terms.
Chapter II

Throughout this literature review section, the terms "husband" and "wife" will be used. The definition of paternal incest currently incorporates biological fathers, stepfathers and live-in companions with custodial responsibilities for the child. With rare exception, however, studies published in the literature only considered legally married couples. Also, for the sake of clarity and consistency in writing, these terms are used.

Chapter III

For the sake of clarity once again, the term "father" will be used in this chapter. It will be evident, upon presentation of the data, that many of the men, in fact, are the biological fathers of the incestuously abused girls, while others are their stepfathers, adoptive fathers, or as the women's live-in companions, have a custodial relationship with the girls.

Chapter IV

The rich and fascinating tradition in sociology of using the in-depth interview begins with the early Chicago School and is described by Thomas (1983). Those who developed the tradition of the sociological interview include, among many others, Becker (1954), Caplow (1956), Merton and Kendall (1956), and Whyte (1957).

As a senior clinical consultant to the Center, and as a member of the consortium of interested parties who formed it ten years ago, I am familiar with the Center's program and staff. It was that familiarity that allowed me access to the women who participated in this research study. My research activities were unanimously supported by staff members, the director of the Center, and the members of the Advisory Committee.

This is a clinical, rather than a legal, designation. The traditional incest statute was repealed in 1974 when the state of Michigan enacted rape reform legislation that incorporated incest under the heading of "criminal sexual conduct." See BenDor (1976) for a succinct history of the activities of the Michigan's Women's Task Force on Rape that initiated these changes. The term "paternal incest" continues to be used interprofessionally as well as colloquially, and is conveniently used by the Center to designate those families in which an adult male in a caretaker role has sexually abused the child.

In Michigan, those legally mandated professionals are: physicians, dentists, nurses, social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, law enforcement officers, teachers, educational administrators, school counselors, pastoral counselors, and licensed day care professionals.
Chapter V


The sociological literature on this point is vast. Biddle and Thomas (1966) reviewed much of it, and more recent, although less thorough reviews, can be found in Burris (1991), Hochschild (1988), Pleck (1985), and VanSell et al. (1981), among many others.


Brief Checklist of Salient Features of Proposed Coping Strategies:

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Brief Checklist of Salient Features of Proposed Coping Strategies--Continued

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6 Each woman was asked to rate on a 5-point scale with 1 indicating complete disagreement and 5 indicating complete agreement, her response to each of the following statements:

1. I believe that men should have more power than women.
2. I believe that men should earn more money than women.
3. I believe that men should have less child care responsibility than women.
4. I believe that women with children should not work outside of the home.
5. I believe that women are happiest when they are married and have children.
Demographic Questionnaire

Please take a few minutes to fill out this questionnaire as completely as possible. If you have any questions about it, or if you cannot complete an answer, we will discuss it during our interview session.

1. Your first name and last initial___________________________________________
2. Your date of birth______________________________________________________
3. Your race/ethnicity:
   ______ White
   ______ Latina
   ______ Afro-American
   ______ Asian
   ______ Other (please specify)
4. Your current marital status:
   ______ Single
   ______ Married
   ______ Separated Legally
   ______ Widowed
   ______ Divorced
5. How many children have you raised?_____________________________________
   a. What are their current ages? _________________________________________
   b. How many boys? __________________________________________________
   c. How many girls? __________________________________________________
6. The highest educational level you have achieved to date:
   ______ Grade School
   ______ Junior High
   ______ High School
   ______ Some College
   ______ College Degree
   ______ Graduate School
   ______ Professional School (e.g.: medical school; law school).
7. Your total household income for last year (1989):
   ______ Less than $7,500
   ______ $7,500 to $14,999
   ______ $15,000 to $24,999
   ______ $25,000 and over
   ______ Do not know
8. Your current employment status:
   ______ Full-time employment
   ______ Part-time employment
   ______ Unemployed
   ______ Keeping house
Student
Retired
On welfare
Disabled
Other (please specify)

   ______ less than $7,500
   ______ $7,500 to $14,999
   ______ $15,000 to $24,999
   ______ $25,000 and over

10. Who is accused of sexually abusing your daughter?
    ______ biological father of your daughter
    ______ stepfather of your daughter
    ______ your live-in male companion
    ______ adoptive father of your daughter

11. Has your family had any Juvenile Court hearings since the accusation of sexual abuse was made?
    ______ Yes
    ______ No

12. Has the Juvenile Court taken wardship of your daughter since the accusation of sexual abuse was made?
    ______ Yes
    ______ No

13. Has your daughter been removed from your home since the accusation of sexual abuse was made?
    ______ Yes.
    Please indicate where she is__________________________
    How long has she been there?_________________________
    ______ No

14. Has your husband or live-in companion been criminally charged for sexually abusing your daughter?
    ______ Yes
    ______ No

15. Is your husband or live-in companion currently living in your home?
    ______ Yes
    ______ No
    How long has he been gone from your home?___________

16. On what date did you have your first contact with Children's Protective Services?
Appendix B

Statement of Confidentiality and Consent
Statement of Confidentiality and Consent

My name is Mary deYoung and I am a doctoral student in Sociology at Western Michigan University. I am doing research on women in families in which the father, stepfather or male live-in companion has been accused of sexually abusing the daughter. The purpose of this research is to aid in an understanding of women and to examine their roles within their families, their exercise of power both inside and outside of their families, and their interactions with their daughters. This research is designed to provide insights into the women of these families, and will lead to recommendations for better intervention and therapy services.

Your voluntary participation in this research will require 2 to 3 hours of your time. You will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire and then will be interviewed by me. That interview will be tape-recorded, but please be assured that everything we discuss will be held in strict confidence. Your questionnaire, the tapes of your interview, and any notes I take during it will be kept by me in a locked storage file, and will be destroyed on March 1, 1991. Although the four members of my dissertation committee may choose to listen to the tape of your interview, at no time will you be identified by name. While information from this study will be presented in a final research report, once again, you will not at any time be identified by name.

Because we are going to discuss the sexual abuse that occurred in your family, you may experience some emotional discomfort. You may want to discuss those feelings with your therapist. Please know that you may withdraw from the study at any time without any changes in services you are now receiving, or that you will receive in the future.

I will pay you $25.00 for your time. Upon completion of this study, a summary of the findings will be made available to you through your primary therapist at the YWCA, if you are interested in reviewing it.

If you would like further information about my research study, please contact my advisor, Dr. Paul Friday, at the Sociology Department of Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Michigan. His number is (616) 387-5284.

Your signature on this form indicates that you understand the conditions of your participation in this study, and that you are giving your informed consent to participate in it.

Your Signature _______________________________ Date ______________

Principal Investigator _______________________________ Date ______________

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Appendix C

Human Subjects Institutional Review Board
Research Protocol Clearance
Date: January 24, 1990
To: Mary deYoung
From: Mary Anne Bunda, Chair

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research protocol, "A Mirror Crack'd: Mothers in Paternally Incestuous Families", has been approved as full by the HSIRB. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the approval application. You must seek reapproval for any change in this design.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

cc: P. Friday, Sociology

HSIRB Project Number 90-01-01

End Date of Approval January 24, 1991
Appendix D

In-Depth Interview Format
In-Depth Interview Format

Note: Italicized statements are prompts to be used if the information is not freely given in response to the direct question.

I. Family History

Introductory Statement: I'd like to start out our discussion by talking about you. I'm interested in your background, and the family life you experienced as a child and as an adolescent.

1. Let's start by discussing your family. Tell me about the family you were born and raised in.
   - urban vs. suburban vs. rural
   - estimate of socioeconomic class
   - religious vs. nonreligious
   - size of family
   - socially interactive vs. socially isolated

2. Tell me about any traumatic or tragic events your family experienced when you were growing up.
   - respondent's age at each event
   - family's reactions to each event
   - respondent's behavioral reaction to each event
   - respondent's feelings about each event
   - any changes in respondent's "world view" as a result

3. Did you have any periods of extended separation from your family as a child and/or adolescent? If so, describe them to me.
   - circumstances
   - respondent's age at each separation
   - duration of each separation
   - reason for each separation
   - respondent's feelings about each separation
   - respondent's behavioral reaction to each separation
   - any changes in respondent's "world view" as a result

4. What was your school experience like for you as a child and as an adolescent?
   - general level of academic success
   - relationship with teachers
   - extracurricular activity involvement
   - friendships with other students

5. I'd like to ask you some question about your mother (note: substitute other term if respondent was not raised by her birth mother).
   a. How would you describe her behavior and feelings in her role as a mother?
   b. How would you describe her behavior and feelings in her role as a wife?
   c. How did she discipline you?
   d. How did she show affection to you?
   e. When you were a child and an adolescent, how involved in your life was she?
f. Tell me about any extended period of time your mother was separated from your family.
g. How would you describe your relationship with her when you were growing up?
h. Did your relationship with her go through any significant positive or negative changes over the years? If it did, please discuss those changes.
i. How would you describe your relationship with your mother now?
j. When you were growing up, what main piece of advice did she give you about being a mother? A wife?
k. Looking back, what is the primary thing you really did learn from her that you brought into your role as a mother? As a wife?

6. Now I'd like to ask you the same questions about your father (note: substitute other term if respondent was not raised by her birth father).
a. How would you describe his behavior and feelings in his role as a father?
b. How would you describe his behavior and feelings in his role as a husband?
c. How did he discipline you?
d. How did he show affection to you?
e. When you were a child and an adolescent, how involved in your life was he?
f. Tell me about any period of time your father was separated from your family.
g. How would you describe your relationship with him when you were growing up?
h. Did your relationship with him go through any significant positive or negative changes over the years? If it did, please discuss those changes.
i. How would you describe your relationship with your father now?
j. When you were growing up, what main piece of advice did he give you about your being a mother? A wife?
k. Looking back, what is the primary thing you really did learn from him that you brought into your role as a mother? Into your role as a wife?

7. As you look back now, who has had more influence in your life, your mother or father? Why?

8. When you were growing up, did you witness any physical abuse in your family, either between your parents or by your parent(s) against a sibling? By physical abuse, I mean punching, hitting, whipping, slapping, burning, kicking.
   -- who was perpetrator; who was victim
   -- type of abuse
   -- frequency
   -- duration (in terms of respondent's life span)
   -- circumstances under which it seemed to respondent to occur
   -- victim's reaction to it
   -- respondent's feelings about it
   -- respondent's thoughts about it

   a. Did you ever try to stop or to intervene in the physical abuse?
      -- how often
      -- behavioral strategies for intervention
      -- with what results?

   b. Did you ever tell anyone about this, or complain to anyone about it?
      -- who?
      -- with what results?
c. When you were growing up, could you sense when the physical abuse was going to happen; could you get a feeling it was about to occur?
   -- cues
   -- respondent's feelings about cues
   -- respondent's behavioral strategies to change potential outcome

d. Did witnessing the physical abuse change the way you looked at yourself, the world, other people? If so, explain.

9. Did either one or both of your parents ever physically abuse you? Once again, by physical abuse I mean punching, hitting, whipping, slapping, burning, kicking.
   -- who was the perpetrator
   -- what kind of abuse
   -- frequency
   -- duration in terms of respondent's life span
   -- respondent's feelings about it
   -- respondent's thoughts about it
   -- non-participating parent's reaction to it

a. Did you ever try to stop it or resist it when it was occurring?
   -- how often
   -- behavioral strategies for resistance
   -- with what results?

b. Did you ever tell anyone about this, or complain to anyone about it?
   -- who?
   -- with what results?

c. When you were growing up, could you sense when your parent(s) was going to physically abuse you; could you get a feeling it was about to occur?
   -- what cues
   -- respondent's feelings about cues
   -- respondent's thoughts about cues
   -- respondent's behavioral strategies to change potential outcome

d. Did the physical abuse change the way you looked at yourself, the world, other people? If so, explain.

10. Did you witness any kind of emotional abuse in your family while you were growing up, either between you parents, or by your parent(s) against a sibling? By emotional maltreatment, I mean verbal statements that are intended to humiliate, embarrass, threaten or ridicule the person; or verbal threats against the person's life, or well-being.
   -- who was the perpetrator
   -- who was the victim
   -- what kind of emotional maltreatment
   -- frequency
   -- duration in terms of respondent's life span
   -- respondent's feelings about it
   -- respondent's thought about it
   -- victim's reaction to it

a. Did you ever try to stop it or intervene in it when it was occurring?
   -- how often
   -- behavioral strategies for intervention
   -- with what results?

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b. Did you ever tell anyone about this, or complain to anyone?
   -- who?
   -- with what results?

c. When you were growing up, could you sense when the emotional abuse was going to occur?
   -- what cues
   -- respondent's feelings about cues
   -- respondent's thoughts about cues
   -- respondent's behavioral strategies to change potential outcome

d. Did witnessing the emotional abuse change the way you looked at yourself, the world, other people? If so, explain.

11. Did either one or both of your parents ever emotionally abuse you?
   -- who was the perpetrator
   -- what kind of emotional maltreatment
   -- frequency
   -- duration in terms of respondent's life span
   -- respondent's feelings about it
   -- respondent's thoughts about it
   -- non-participating parent's reaction to it

a. Did you ever try to stop it or resist it when it was occurring to you?
   -- how often
   -- behavioral strategies for intervention
   -- with what results?

b. Did you ever tell anyone about this, or complain to anyone?
   -- who?
   -- with what results?

c. When you were growing up, could you sense when your parent(s) was going to emotionally maltreat you?
   -- what cues
   -- respondent's feelings about cues
   -- respondent's thought about cues
   -- respondent's behavioral strategies to change potential outcome

d. Did experiencing the emotional abuse change the way you looked at yourself, the world, other people? If so, explain.

12. Tell me about the one thing you learned or experienced while you were growing up that made a positive contribution to you in your role as a mother.
   -- source of contribution
   a. How about in your role as a wife?
      -- source of contribution
   b. Was there one thing you learned or experienced that made a negative contribution to you in your role as a mother?
      --source of contribution
   c. How about in your role as a wife?
      --source of contribution

13. When you compare yourself now to how you remember your mother when you were growing up, in what ways are you similar?
   a. In what ways are you different?
14. When you compare yourself now as a mother to what you as a child imagined you'd be like as a mother, in what ways are you similar to that image?
   a. In what ways are you different?
   b. Now compare yourself as a wife to what you as a child imagined you'd be like as a wife. In what ways are you similar to that image?
   c. In what ways are you different?

II. Sexual History

   Introductory Statement: Now I would like to ask you about any unwanted or coerced sexual contact experiences that you may have had as a child, adolescent and/or adult. By sexual contact, I'm referring to a range of sexual behaviors: fondling, masturbation, oral contact with the genitals, the insertion of fingers or objects into the vagina and/or rectum, rectal intercourse, and vaginal intercourse. Again, I am inquiring about sexual contact that occurred against your will and without your consent.

   You may give me as much information as you feel comfortable in giving, or none at all, if you would prefer not to answer any of the questions.

15. Please tell me about any unwanted or coerced sexual contact you had as a child, adolescent and/or adult with any person who was a stranger to you.
   - age of respondent at incident(s)
   - estimated age of perpetrator
   - multiple occurrences over time?
   - type of sexual contact
   - type of physical force used, if any
   - pressure on respondent not to tell by perpetrator
   - behavioral resistance strategies of respondent, if any
   a. Did you tell anyone about what happened?
     - who
     - with what results
   b. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 meaning "not at all upsetting," and 10 meaning "extremely upsetting," how would you rate the reaction you had to the sexual contact?
     - describe reasons for rating: feelings, thoughts
   c. Looking back on that experience now, how would you rate it, using that same scale of 0 to 10?
     - describe reasons for rating
   d. If the ratings are different, why? If the same, why?
   e. Did experiencing this unwanted sexual contact change the way you looked at yourself, the world, other people? If so, explain.

16. Please tell me about any unwanted or coerced sexual contact you had as a child, adolescent and/or adult with any person who was in a position of authority over you.
   Examples of that kind of person are a teacher, a doctor, a dentist, a therapist, a minister.
   - age of respondent at incident(s)
   - estimated age of perpetrator
   - multiple occurrences over time?
   - type of sexual contact
   - type of physical force used, if any
-- pressure on respondent not to tell by perpetrator
-- behavioral resistance strategies of respondent, if any

a. Did you tell anyone about what happened?
   -- who
   -- with what results

b. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 meaning "not at all upsetting," and 10 meaning "extremely upsetting," how would you rate the reaction you had to the sexual contact?
   -- describe reasons for rating: feelings, thoughts

c. Looking back on that experience now, how would you rate it, using that same scale of 0 to 10?
   -- describe reasons for rating

d. If rating is the same, why? If different, why?

e. Did experiencing this unwanted sexual contact change the way you looked at yourself, the world, other people? If so, explain.

17. Did a male relative, such as your grandfather, uncle, brother, stepfather or father, ever have any type of unwanted or coerced sexual contact with you as a child, adolescent and/or adult?
   -- age of respondent at incident(s)
   -- estimated age of perpetrator
   -- multiple occurrences over time?
   -- type of sexual contact
   -- type of physical force used, if any
   -- pressure on respondent not to tell by perpetrator
   -- behavioral resistance strategies of respondent, if any

a. Did you tell anyone about what happened?
   -- who
   -- with what results

b. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 meaning "not at all upsetting," and 10 meaning "extremely upsetting," how would you rate the reaction you had to the sexual contact?
   -- describe reasons for rating: feelings, thoughts

c. Looking back on that experience now, how would you rate it, using that same scale of 0 to 10?
   -- describe reasons for rating

d. If rating is different, why? If the same, why?

e. Did experiencing this unwanted sexual contact change the way you looked at yourself, the world, other people? If so, explain.

18. Did any person less closely related to you, such as a half-brother or sister, a step-brother or sister, an in-law, or a first cousin, ever have any unwanted or coerced sexual contact with you as a child, adolescent and/or adult?
   -- age of respondent at incident(s)
   -- estimated age of perpetrator
   -- multiple occurrences over time?
   -- type of sexual contact
   -- type of physical force used, if any
   -- pressure on respondent not to tell by perpetrator
   -- behavioral resistance strategies of respondent, if any

a. Did you tell anyone about what happened?
b. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 meaning "not at all upsetting," and 10 meaning "extremely upsetting," how would you rate the reaction you had to the sexual contact?
   -- describe reasons for rating: feelings, thoughts

c. Looking back on that experience now, how would you rate it, using that same scale of 0 to 10?
   -- describe reasons for rating

d. If rating is different, why? If the same, why?

e. Did experiencing this unwanted sexual contact change the way you looked at yourself, the world, other people? If so, explain.

19. Tell me about any unwanted or coerced sexual contact you may have had with a female relative, such as your grandmother, sister, aunt, stepmother or mother, as a child, adolescent and/or adult.
   -- age of respondent at incident(s)
   -- estimated age of perpetrator
   -- multiple occurrences over time?
   -- type of sexual contact
   -- type of physical force used, if any
   -- pressure on respondent not to tell by perpetrator
   -- behavioral resistance strategies of respondent, if any

   a. Did you tell anyone about what happened?
      -- who
      -- with what results

   b. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 meaning "not at all upsetting," and 10 meaning "extremely upsetting," how would you rate the reaction you had to the sexual contact?
      -- describe reasons for rating: feelings, thoughts

   c. Looking back on that experience now, how would you rate it, using that same scale of 0 to 10?
      -- describe reasons for rating

   d. If rating is different, why? If the same, why?

   e. Did experiencing this unwanted sexual contact change the way you looked at yourself, the world, other people? If so, explain.

20. As a child, adolescent and/or adult, did any person you knew, but who was not related to you or in a position of authority over you, ever have any unwanted or coerced sexual contact with you. The type of person to whom I’m referring may be someone like a friend of the family, a neighbor, one of your own friends.
   -- age of respondent at incident(s)
   -- estimated age of perpetrator
   -- multiple occurrences over time?
   -- type of sexual contact
   -- type of physical force used, if any
   -- pressure on respondent not to tell by perpetrator
   -- behavioral resistance strategies of respondent, if any

   a. Did you tell anyone about what happened?
      -- who
      -- with what results
b. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 meaning "not at all upsetting," and 10 meaning "extremely upsetting," how would you rate the reaction you had to the sexual contact?
   -- describe reasons for rating: feelings, thoughts

c. Looking back on that experience now, how would you rate it, using that same scale of 0 to 10?
   -- describe reasons for rating

d. If rating is different, why? If the same, why?
e. Did experiencing this unwanted sexual contact change the way you looked at yourself, the world, other people? If so, explain.

III. Employment/Financial/Resources

Introductory Statement: I know that you filled out a brief form regarding your current and past employment, and your general financial status, but I would like to discuss with you some factors that are related to that.

21. Since graduating from high school (note: substitute "age 18" if not high school graduate) describe your employment history.
   -- number of jobs
   -- types of job(s)
   -- job satisfaction
   -- balance of job and family
   -- if currently employed, relationship with co-workers/boss
   -- if currently employed, can respondent rely on co-workers/
     boss for help if needed?
   -- what type of help can they offer?

22. Have you ever been the sole financial support of your family?
   -- when?
   -- describe circumstances
   -- duration
   -- respondent’s reaction to it
   a. If you had to be the sole financial support of your family in the near future (or if you had to continue to be into the future), are you confident that you could do that?
   b. What types of resources could you rely on to do that?

23. I am interested in knowing about your circle of friends. Could you tell me about that?
   -- number of friends
   -- frequency of contact
   -- closeness of friendship(s)
   a. Do you feel you can rely on your friend(s) for help if you needed it?
   b. Have you told your friend(s) about the incest in your family?
      -- if not, why?
   c. Do you feel they will be able to help you now that incest has been discovered in your family?
      -- what kind of help do you need from them now?
      -- what can they offer in way of help

24. Do you belong to any social organization, social club or religious congregation?
-- what type?
-- degree of involvement
-- degree of emotional affiliation

a. Do you feel you can rely on the organization(s), club(s), or congregation for help if you needed it?
b. Have you told anyone affiliated with the organization(s), club(s), congregation about the incest in your family?
   -- if not, why?
c. Do you feel the organization(s), club(s), or congregation will be able to help you now that incest has been discovered in your family?
   - what kind of help do you need from them now?
   -- what can they offer in way of help?

25. I am interested in your immediate and extended family, and the amount of support they do and can offer to you. Could you tell me about that?
   -- which family member
   -- what type of support
   -- degree of involvement
   -- degree of emotional attachment

a. Do you feel you can rely on your family member(s) for help if you needed it?
b. Have you told your family member(s) about the incest in your family?
   -- if not, why?
c. Do you feel the family member(s) will be able to help you now that incest has been discovered in your family?
   - what kind of help do you need from them now?
   -- what can they offer in way of help?

IV. Marital/Relationship History

Introductory Statement: I would like to discuss with you your marital and relationship history. I know that you answered some questions about this on the questionnaire you completed, but I have some additional questions that will help me understand your experiences and your feelings while in those relationships.

26. Tell me about your previous marital and/or live-in relationship history.
   -- age at each marriage/relationship
   -- duration of each marriage/relationship
   -- reason(s) for divorce or separation
   -- children of each marriage/relationship

a. Were any of these previous marriages/relationships characterized by physical violence?
   -- who was perpetrator, who was victim?
   -- respondent's feelings about this
   -- respondent's thoughts about this
   -- respondent's behavioral strategies to cope, intervene in it

b. Were any of these previous marriages/relationship characterized by emotional abuse?
   -- who was perpetrator, who was victim?
   -- respondent's feelings about this
   -- respondent's thoughts about this
   -- respondent's behavioral strategies to cope, intervene in it
c. Were any of these previous marriages/relationships characterized by sexual abuse?
   - who was perpetrator, who was victim?
   - respondent's feelings about this
   - respondent's thoughts about this
   - respondent's behavioral strategies to cope, intervene in it

d. Did experiencing physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse change the way you looked at yourself, the world or others? If so, explain.

Statement: I would like you to focus for a moment on your husband (live-in) who is accused of sexually abusing your daughter.

27. In all of the major decisions you have had to make, who generally has the final say?

28. In all of the major arguments you have had, who generally has the final say?

29. In general, which one of you has to overcome the most resistance in order to change the other person's behavior, feelings or thoughts?

30. Who wants to change the behavior, feelings or thoughts of the other person the most?
   a. Who tries to change the behavior, feelings or thoughts of the other person the most?

31. During your marriage (or relationship) did he ever physically abuse you? By physical abuse, I mean punching, hitting, whipping, slapping, burning, kicking.
   - type of abuse
   - frequency
   - duration
   - circumstances under which it seemed to respondent to occur
   - respondent's feelings about it
   - respondent's thoughts about it

a. Did you ever try to stop him or to resist the physical abuse?
   - how often
   - behavioral strategies for resistance
   - with what results?

b. Did you ever tell anyone about this?
   - who?
   - with what results?

c. Could you sense when he was going to physically abuse was going to happen?
   - what cues
   - respondent's feelings about cues
   - respondent's thoughts about cues
   - respondent's behavioral strategies to change potential outcome

d. Again, using the rating scale of 0 meaning "not at all upsetting," and 10 meaning "extremely upsetting" how would you rate your reaction to the physical abuse?
   - describe reasons for rating: feelings and thoughts

e. Looking back on that experience now, how would you rate it using that same scale of 0 to 10?
-- describe reasons for rating: feelings and thoughts

f. If rating is different, why? If the same, why?
g. Did experiencing physical abuse by your husband change the way you looked at yourself, the world, or others? If so, explain.

32. During your marriage (or relationship), did you ever physically abuse him?
   -- type of abuse
   -- frequency
   -- duration
   -- circumstances under which it usually occurred
   -- his reaction to it
   -- respondent's feelings about it
   -- respondent's thoughts about it

   a. Did he ever try to stop you or to resist the physical abuse?
      -- how often
      -- behavioral strategies for resistance
      -- with what results?

   b. Did he ever tell anyone about this?
      -- who?
      -- with what results?

   c. Could you sense when the physical abuse was going to happen?
      -- what cues
      -- respondent's feelings about cues
      -- respondent's thoughts about cues

33. During your marriage (or relationship), did he or you ever physically abuse your children?
   -- who was perpetrator?
   -- type of abuse
   -- frequency
   -- duration
   -- circumstances under which it usually occurred
   -- child's reaction to it
   -- respondent's feelings about it
   -- respondent's thoughts about it

   a. Did you ever try to stop him or yourself from doing it, or intervene while it was happening if he was doing it?
      -- how often
      -- behavioral strategies for intervention
      -- with what results?

   b. Did you ever tell anyone about this?
      -- who?
      -- with what results?

   c. Could you sense when the physical abuse was going to happen to your child(ren)?
      -- what cues
      -- respondent's feelings about cues
      -- respondent's thoughts about cues
      -- respondent's behavioral strategies to change potential outcome
34. During your marriage (or relationship), did either one or both of you ever emo­tionally abuse each other and/or your children? By emotional maltreatment, I mean ver­bal statements that humiliated, embarrassed, threatened or ridiculed; or verbal threats against life, or well-being.

- who was the perpetrator
- who was the victim
- what kind of emotional maltreatment
- frequency
- duration
- respondent's feelings about it
- respondent's thoughts about it

a. Did you ever try to stop it or resist it when it was occurring?
   - how often
   - behavioral strategies for intervention
   - with what results?

b. Did you ever tell anyone about this?
   - who?
   - with what results?

c. Could you sense when the emotional maltreatment was going to occur?
   - what cues
   - respondent's feelings about cues
   - respondent's thoughts about cues
   - respondent's behavioral strategies to change potential outcome

35. During your marriage (or relationship) did your husband (live-in) ever force you in­to sex against your will?

- frequency
- type of sexual contact
- type of physical force used, if any
- behavioral resistance strategies of respondent, if any

a. Did you tell anyone about what happened, or complain to anyone about it?
   - who?
   - with what results

b. On a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 meaning "not at all upsetting," and 10 meaning "extremely upsetting," how would your reaction to it?
   - describe reasons for rating: feelings, thoughts

c. Using that same scale, how would you rate that experience now?
   - describe reasons for rating: feelings, thoughts

d. If ratings are different, why? If the same, why?

e. Did experiencing sexual coercion in your marriage change the way you looked at yourself, the world, or others? If so, explain.

36. What "duties" or "obligations" do you believe women should have as mothers?
   a. As wives (live-ins)?
   b. What "duties" or "obligations" do you believe men should have as fathers?
   c. As husbands (live-ins)?

37. What "rights" do you believe women should have as mothers?
   a. As wives (live-ins)?
   b. What "rights" do you believe men should have as fathers?
   c. As husbands (live-ins)?
38. In your opinion, who should have more power in a marriage or live-in relationship? Why?

39. Before the incest was discovered in your family, had your relationship with your husband (live-in) undergone any significant sexual changes? If so, please explain.

V. Relationship with Children

Introductory Statement: I'd like to ask you some questions about your relationship with your children. We will focus later on your relationship with your daughter who was sexually abused, but right now, let's talk about your kids in general.

40. How would you describe your current relationship with your children?
   - discipline: how and who?
   - affection: how and who?

41. Can you tell me about any family rules that have been set down for your children?
   - who created them
   - why
   - how strong are they
   a. What happens when one of the kids violates this rule?

42. Have you ever been separated from your children for any lengthy period of time, due to such things as hospitalization, incarceration, employment, etc.?
   - reason(s)
   - frequency
   - duration
   - in relationship to time when incest was occurring?
   - respondent's feelings about separation
   - respondent's thoughts about separation
   - children's reaction to separation
   - husband's reaction to separation

43. When you compare your relationship with your children to the relationship you as a child had with your parents, what are the similarities?
   a. What are the differences?
   
   Statement: Let's focus now on your daughter who allegedly was sexually abused.

44. Tell me about her.
   - age
   - physical or mental handicaps
   - birth order
   - any notable way she is different from siblings
   a. Do you believe what she is saying about the incest?
   b. What was your relationship like with her?
   c. Had that relationship gone through any significant changes before the incest was initiated?
   d. During the time the incest was occurring?
e. After the incest was discovered or disclosed?

45. Tell me what you know about the incest that was alleged.
   -- duration
   -- type of sexual abuse
   -- pressure for secrecy
   -- use of physical force
   -- child's symptomatic reaction to it
   -- how discovered or disclosed

46. Did you know that the incest was happening?
   -- how did you know?
   -- if you knew, how did you feel about it?
   -- if you knew, what did you think about it?
   a. Did you try to prevent it from continuing, or intervene in it in any way?
      -- how often?
      -- with what results
      -- behavioral strategies of intervention
   b. Did you tell anyone it was occurring?
      -- who?
      -- with what results
      -- if no, why not?
   c. How many of your children experienced it?

47. It is always easy to see things after the fact, but I'd like you to try to remember if you had any suspicions that incest was occurring during that time. Please tell me about them.
   -- cues
   -- feelings about cues
   -- thoughts about cues
   -- any behavioral strategies to address suspicions
   -- tell anyone/ask for help or advice
   -- confront husband
   -- ask daughter
   -- strategies to cognitively resolve suspicions
   a. Did you then, or do you now, suspect that any of your other children were also being victimized?

48. To the best of your recollection, what was your very first feeling when you knew for certain that incest was occurring?
   a. Describe your actions during the first hour after you learned about the incest.

49. Why do you think the incest happened?

50. Looking back on it, is there anything you could have done to prevent it from occurring in the first place?

51. Looking back on it, were there clues you could have picked up that would have led you to realize that the incest was occurring?
   a. Why do you think you did not pick up on them?
   b. If you had, what would you have been able to do?
52. Looking back on it, could you have done stopped it from continuing, if you had known about it?
   -- how?
   -- anticipated results

53. Have your feelings about yourself as a mother changed since the incest was alleged?
   a. As a wife (live-in)?

54. Have you changed significantly in your role as mother since the disclosure or discovery of the incest?
   a. In your role as wife (live-in)?

55. Do you believe that you played a role or a part in the incest, whether intentionally or unintentionally? Please describe that role or part.

56. Has the way you look at yourself, the world, or others changed since the incest was discovered or disclosed? Please explain.

57. How do you feel now about your daughter?

58. How do you feel now about your husband (live-in)?

59. On a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 meaning "never" and 5 meaning "always," how often do you wonder or ask yourself, "why me"?
   a. And what answer(s) do you give yourself?

VI. Concluding Questions
60. What are your goals for yourself at this point?
   a. How about for your daughter?
   b. How about for your family as a unit?

61. What, if anything, would you like to see happen to your husband (live-in)?

62. Given what you know now about the incest, what if anything would you have done differently as a wife (live-in)?
   a. As a mother?

63. What kind of advice would you give to other women so that paternal incest does not occur in their families?

64. What kind of advice do you give to your daughter about her possibly becoming a mother some day?
   a. A wife, or live-in?

65. Is there anything you would like me to know that we have not discussed in this interview?
Appendix E

Follow-Up Interview Format
Follow-Up Interview Format

1. Prior to the discovery or the disclosure of the paternal incest, how much did your role as mother and your role as wife (or live-in companion) interfere, that is, conflict with each other? Use a number on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (a great deal) as your answer.

2. What was the primary, that is, single most important source of that conflict, in your opinion?

3. Describe the primary way by which you coped with that conflict.

4. How satisfied were you with the way by which you coped with that conflict? Use a number on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 5 (a great deal) as your answer.
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