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Extended kinship and community relations of five lower class, multi-problem families

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EXTENDED KINSHIP AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS
OF FIVE LOWER CLASS, MULTI-PROBLEM FAMILIES

A thesis

Submitted by

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(A.B., Smith College, 1955)

In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for
the Degree of Master of Science in Social Service

1960

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background and Purpose

In working with lower class problem families at the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and now at the Boston City Hospital-Boston University Child Guidance Clinic, I have been impressed with the sense of social isolation and the poverty of the social and kinship relationships which seem to characterize so many of them. Time after time one gets the same kind of history. The family has moved from apartment to apartment, each one drearier than the last, sometimes keeping one step ahead of the sheriff. Others have been thrust into the vast brick and steel jungle of the housing project where people agreed you were better off keeping to yourself. Neither situation seemed conducive to putting down roots. Fathers deserted or were sent away. At best they never found jobs where they could get along. Children went to regular school, then disciplinary school, then reform school. Relatives, if they were mentioned at all, were talked of impersonally: "My father went to an Old Soldier's home out in Nebraska, or was it Iowa, and then we got a card from Arizona. He has heart trouble or T B or something." Brothers and sisters seemed to disappear in a sea of petty crime, institutions and then nothing. Grandparents had long ago married two and three

more times.

These multi-problem families are a financial drain on the community and a continual thorn in the side of traditional social work optimism. We know that they have not been able to form constructive relationships with social agencies to solve their problems, yet they come back again and again. In the child guidance clinic we see the havoc created by pathological marital and parent-child relationships. These have been well documented, but seldom improved. But how much do we know about these families, their background and day to day living? What about their relatives and friends? Where are they? Who are they? What is their meaning to the family? Does part of the explanation and solution to the family pathology lie in the answer to these questions? Perhaps these shadowy peripheral figures are untapped resources in helping the family or perhaps here lies the key to what distinguishes the multi-problem family from better functioning lower-class families. Before we can ask the questions of cause and effect, we must know what the facts are.

Traditionally the middle-class urban family has been described as a self sufficient unit of mother, father and children. Since they are thought to be economically and spatially mobile in response to the needs of the American labor market, their relationships in the community would be secondary ones rather than primary or extended family relationships. Marvin Sussman

and others have questioned this concept of the atomized and isolated nuclear family. He found that in studies of Cleveland both middle and working class families were "closely integrated within a network of mutual assistance and activity which can be described as an interdependent kin family system".¹

Elizabeth Bott, an anthropologist working in England, reviewed the studies of general characteristics of Western European kinship systems and concluded that very few studies have been made of kinship in urban areas.² She noted that, in general, what recent studies there have been indicate that certain working class families do have a great deal of contact with their relatives. The elementary family does not stand alone; its members keep up frequent and intimate relationships with parents and with at least some of the siblings, uncles, aunts, and cousins of the husband and wife.³ Willmott and Young found that in the working class district of Bethnal Green in East London, there were strong ties between family and family based primarily on the mother-daughter relationships. The sense of belonging which came from knowing and being known by so many of their fellow residents was greatly prized and

¹Marvin B. Sussman, "The Isolated Nuclear Family: Fact or Fiction," Social Problems, vol. 6 (Spring, 1959), p. 339.

²Elizabeth Bott, Family and Social Network, p. 115.

³Ibid., p. 116.

helped to explain their attachment to the community.⁴ Both Hollingshead and Redlich⁵ in New Haven and Walter Miller⁶ in Boston found that low class families not only visited relatives but in twenty-three to fifty per cent of the households there were three and four generations living together. For example, one variant of this type of family includes three or more generations of women, probably the maternal grandmother and several of her daughters (divorced or unmarried) and their children.

In social work research the efforts at gathering such data have been meager. The Family Centered Project of the Greater St. Paul Community Chests and Councils was set up to do something about these gaps in our knowledge. They gathered a considerable amount of information about 100 multi-problem families. However at the time of publication of their research material, they did not feel they had enough data to consider social relationships outside the nuclear family, although they felt them to be important:

⁴Michael Young and Peter Willmott, Family and Kinship in East London, p. 156.

⁵August Hollingshead and Fredrick Redlich, Social Class and Mental Illness, p. 124-125.

⁶National Education Association, Juvenile Delinquency Project, Delinquent Behavior, Culture and the Individual, pp. 94-96.

Family centered social work implies an orientation which views family members in relation to all the "significant others" in their life. The shift in practice from seeing the client mainly as an individual to seeing him as a member of the family group has been a decisive one. It seems, however, that the broader orientation toward the family has neglected to take account of some roles which, though sometimes at the periphery of family life, are important factors in the functioning of family members. We found, for instance, that there are big gaps in social worker's knowledge about family members attitudes toward and use of church facilities, their friends and neighbors, their contacts with unions, social clubs, their use of recreational facilities, and simply about the way people have fun.

The study never mentions relatives, an omission which I find hard to explain.

From this brief survey of the literature, there seems to be a growing awareness of the existence and importance of the urban family's wider kinship and social contacts. However, attempts to assess these data and use them for treatment planning are scarce.

My plan was to study intensively five multi-problem families in the South End of Boston focusing on their extended kinship and community relationships. Since the study area seemed practically virgin soil, this would be an exploratory

⁷L. L. Geismar and Beverly Ayres, Patterns of Change in Problem Families, p. 26.

study. The hope was that simply gathering together these data would excite interest in further assessing the importance of these areas of family functioning for purposes of treatment and social planning.

I expected to find that these five South End families had relatives and friends in the area. Case records of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children indicate that agencies have contact with this kind of family back through generations and concurrently with many siblings all living in close proximity. But unlike the lower-class families described by Willmott and Young, Bott, Sussman and others, I expected that the disorganization and pathology which characterized multi-problem families would mitigate against any sustained or meaningful relationships. With the intense and unsatisfied emotional needs of these people, a prolonged relationship with one person seemed fraught with frustration and anxiety. The effect, then, would be one of social and emotional isolation. If there were contacts, they would be brittle and transitory.

I included contact with social institutions and service people in the study because I predicted that although they could not tolerate intimate, prolonged relationships with family and friends, these people substituted more impersonal relationships in order to feel alive and in contact with the community. For example, I expected that the relationship to Boston City Hospital would be with the cavernous buildings

themselves, rather than with the doctors who did the actual ministering. The remarkable absence of chain stores in this area seemed to reflect in part the need for residents to have frequent neighborly chats with the shopkeepers, albeit in order to arrange for credit. How common is the lament, "The only social life I have are my trips to the corner store!"

Agency Setting

The five families described in this study were taken from the South End Family Project sponsored jointly by the Division of Child Psychiatry of the Boston University School of Medicine and the Massachusetts State Division of Mental Hygiene. The purpose of this demonstration project is to find ways of providing preventive mental health measures for multi-problem, hard to reach families by working intensively with them in their homes and in the community. The work done so far can be divided into two pilot phases, the first lasting from October of 1955 to August of 1957, the second lasting from September of 1957 to the present.

In the first pilot phase, exploration of the possibilities of carrying out such a program was begun by one social worker, experienced in "protective social work", in consultation with personnel from an allied child guidance clinic. The families carried were those who had been known to the Human Ecology Program of the Boston University School of Medicine. This was a training program for the fourth year medical students in which mothers from Boston City Hospital pre-natal clinic were

seen by one medical student for two months prenatally and two months postnatally. Families presenting maximum pathology were selected for the project. The social worker took over the case-work aspects of the care provided these families during the Human Ecology Course, elaborating the case studies of the family and strengthening the services rendered. Some families were taken on at the time of termination of their contact with their student doctor, others as long as a year later.

This social worker, and the families he had been working with, continued into the second pilot phase. The personnel now included three social workers, a psychologist, a public health nurse, a secretary, and consulting psychiatrist, social scientist, and psychologist. The staff moved into new headquarters in a settlement house serving both adults and children. The case load was expanded and referrals were accepted from other sources.

At the time these data were collected (January, February, and March of 1960), the project was waiting for a grant of money to begin an expanded phase of operation. In the meantime the staff had been reduced and only seven cases were active.

Method of Procedure

Data for the five families in this study were collected from two sources: 1) the case records and 2) interviews with at least one worker who had been active on the case. The criteria for selection of cases for the South End Family Project were as follows:

1. Families with all children of pre-school age and with the probability of further offspring.
2. Families who had made poor use of existing community agencies.
3. Families with multiple mental health and social problems.

There were only seven active cases at the time of selection. One of these cases was eliminated because it was a negro family and it seemed advisable with so small a sample to keep it homogeneous, rather than try to be representative. The other case was eliminated because the family seemed better organized than the others.

The records kept by the project include:

1. A detailed account of the medical student's contact with the family for the cases referred by the Human Ecology Program, including social and medical history plus significant excerpts from interviews with the mother.
2. Casework interviews using descriptive and summary recording with special emphasis on total family functioning.
3. A detailed diagnostic summary, completed at the end of six months.
4. Summaries of psychological testing of children and parents administered when it seemed advisable and the family was willing to cooperate.
5. A record of staff conference proceedings.
6. Correspondence.
7. Photostats of Social Service Index records.

A very general schedule (see Appendix) was applied to the records of each case. Topics covered included: general characteristics of the family; relationships with relatives, both

maternal and paternal; relationships with friends; with service people; with social agencies; with other institutions; and any references to social activities. Every statement in the records pertaining to these topics was recorded just as it was written in the record. No attempt was made to indicate the source of the material, i. e., whether the mother or father or caseworker made the observation. Also no attempt was made to date the material, which in some cases covered a span of four years. Only material obtained from direct interviews with workers was distinguished from the rest of the items. The raw data were then organized into some meaningful order and common characteristics or trends were identified.

The South End

The South End is an area adjacent to the downtown section of Boston. Traditionally it has been the port of entry of immigrant groups. There is still a distinct Greek and Syrian section. Along one border there is a flashy negro commercial and entertainment district. Within the South End itself the negro population is scattered. This is the area where the first Puerto Ricans are beginning to drift in and an occasional corner grocery overnight becomes Spanish. The highest concentration of liquor licenses has made this Boston's version of Skid Row. Many of the streets glitter with broken glass. Doorways shelter heaps of empty wine bottles and often a slumped and sleeping figure. The shops along these streets cater to the endless cycle of drunk and sober and will clean and store a threadbare

suit for a more hopeful day or lend the price of a fifth for an old watch. Mission churches daily offer soup for a soul. Other streets show evidence of past dignity. Stately red brick homes with beautiful carved wood doors now house transients and roomers who come and go and die unnoticed. These streets are divided by iron fenced grassy plots where litter accumulates and old people sun themselves and wait for a welfare check. Perhaps the heart of the area is the sprawling, labyrinthian free city hospital, in and out of which pour the halt, lame and blind. Ultra-modern laboratories contrast with hallways filled with antiquated and discarded machinery and paint peeling clinics. The numbers racket and petty politics flourish here, as well as throughout the South End. Crime and poverty abound and city and social services barely touch the need, and indeed seem to have given up and gone elsewhere, giving the whole community an atmosphere of end of the road hopelessness.

CHAPTER II
GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

Introduction

Figure 1 shows some of the general characteristics of the five families in the study. There are four married couples. One of these couples was separated during their contact with the South End Family Project. However, sufficient information for the purposes of this study was available for both the father and mother. Mother ^B is currently not married. The three children in the family are the offspring of a liason with a boyfriend. Since they do not live together, this cannot be considered a common-law marriage. The nine adults in these families are between twenty-five and thirty-five years old. They average nine years of school, so it is not surprising that the majority of them are unskilled laborers. The number of children per family ranges from two to seven.

Location

Two of the families (B and D) were moved into a city housing project in an area adjacent to the South End early in their contact with the project. Of the three families remaining in the South End, Family A lives in four rooms on the fourth floor of an old brick building. (For a more detailed analysis of the location of Family A, see the map, Figure 2.) Family C lives in the same building where the mother was born but she talks

FIGURE 1
GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF FIVE MULTI-PROBLEM FAMILIES

Family	Age	Birthplace	Religion	Education	Occupation	Marital Status	Number of Children
Father A	30	Maine	Catholic by conversion	8 years	Unskilled	Separated during contact	3
Mother A	26	Boston	Catholic	12 years	Unskilled		
Father B	30	Boston	Catholic	7 years(?)	Semi-skilled	Married	2
Mother B	28	Ipswich	Catholic by conversion	9 years	Unskilled		
Father C	30	No. Carolina	Baptist	12 years	Semi-skilled	Married	4
Mother C	25	Boston	Catholic	11 years	Unskilled		
Father D	30	Nova Scotia	Catholic by conversion	9 years(?)	Unskilled	Married	7
Mother D	28	Boston	Catholic	8 years (Domestic arts at Correctional School)			
X	X	X	X	X	X	Divorced 1946. Has liason with father of these children	3
Mother E	35	New Hampshire	Catholic	7 years	Unskilled		

of moving to Dorchester because she feels the neighborhood is degenerating. Mrs. E lives in a building perhaps more typical of the South End than any other area in the city. There are several one or two room apartments with kitchens and hallway bathrooms. The rest of the house is given over to housekeeping rooms for "gentlemen drunks" and drifters - single people on old age assistance whose families have long dispersed. Some of these establishments have a relatively stable population as the one Mrs. E lives in.

Ethnic Background

The five families revealed striking ethnic similarity in surnames, and two families had the same name. In every case the name of husband and wife were of English or Irish origin. Indeed one grandfather came from Ireland and still has a touch of the brogue. Another great-grandfather was known to have come over from Ireland as a boy, and still another grandfather was described as a stern man from Wales. There were no representatives of the immigration from southern Europe with the exception of one grandmother who had come to this country from Italy at an early age. One grandfather was said to have come up from Texas. We know that one father was born in North Carolina and while stationed in Boston in the Navy met and married his wife. Another father emigrated from Nova Scotia as a child. For the rest we have no evidence of their history, and it is possible the families have been in the New England area for generations. In one instance we know from the Social

Service Index that a family has been living in the Jamaica Plain area of Boston at least from the time the great-grandparents were raising their children.

Religion

The study population is almost entirely Catholic. The one exception is Mr. C who comes from North Carolina and is a Southern Baptist. There are a surprising number of conversions in this small group and it is interesting to note the circumstances surrounding these. Mrs. B is of Scotch-Irish and English descent with its Protestant tradition. As a young girl she was converted because all her friends were Catholics and she found the idea appealing. Father D who was of Canadian descent claims to have been Episcopalian but was converted in 1958. Ostensibly this was in order to have the marriage solemnized as his wife wished. Father A, who came from Maine, described himself as "atheist by profession" and was recently converted during a term at Concord Reformatory. He now works at a Catholic institution. In this case, also, it meant the wife could have the marriage solemnized. A discussion of the role of the Church in the life of these families will be taken up in more detail later.

Vocational History

Family A. In 1955 father was known to be working as an electroplater making \$48 a week. However, because of alcoholism and an assault and battery against mother, he was sent to Concord Reformatory. On his return he and his wife remained

separated and father took a job as farm hand at a Catholic institution outside of Boston. Father has some skill at repairing T V sets, but has never used this vocationally. Mother has had five or six short lived jobs such as order filler at a greeting card company. Currently she is on ADC supplemented by father's contribution.

Family B. This father is also alcoholic. Although this has seriously interfered with his working, he has held consistently better jobs than others in the group. We know he was with a large insurance company at one time, later he worked for an automobile parts concern and was considered as a possible manager for a small branch. Currently he drives a truck and is an active union member. Mother has held jobs as waitress and counter girl.

Family C. This man has been employed by a brush company in various capacities, at one time as a maintenance man. At the present time he works on machines which may or may not require much skill. Father would certainly like to create the impression that his skills are indispensable to the firm. Mother has done factory work and had Christmas jobs in department stores.

Family D. This alcoholic man shows, over a two-year period, five unskilled jobs with submarginal pay. Just prior to being sent to Deer Island for non-support he was a "pusher" in a laundry. He makes some claim to having been a landscape gardener for orange groves from age fourteen to twenty when he got married. He was said to have earned \$160 to \$180 a week. This

seems to have a quality of wishful thinking, but in any case the reality is not quite as good as it sounds since this is seasonal work with many months of unemployment.

Family E. This mother had several jobs after the breakup of her marriage and before coming to Boston. These were all in some kind of institution, either general or mental hospitals, where she worked as aide.

One of the critical factors in understanding the vocational history of these men, is the high incidence of alcoholism. In three out of the four cases it seriously interfered with their work habits. In the fourth, we hear that Father C at times drank every night but there is no indication that he stayed away from the job as a consequence.

Actually applying for a job can be a major trauma for these men. Father B went round to his parents' home before an interview and was given a few beers to steel him for the ordeal. It's not surprising he was turned down because he had alcohol on his breath. Father D has a fear of talking with people - probably people in authority. He forgets what he wanted to say and in the middle of a sentence becomes so nervous, he can't complete his thought. Finally, the worker went with him to the unemployment office to help him over the hurdles. He discovered that this father knew only the first names of his friends and was at a loss when asked for references.

Father D perhaps, most closely fits the stereotype of the lower class, alcoholic worker. There is an endless series of

unskilled jobs with inadequate pay. You get paid when you work, so there are no vacations or sick leave and frequent lay offs during a season or an economic slump. There is little or no opportunity for advancement, so a strong young man is likely to make as much or more than his middle aged counterpart. Typical also is the utopia which was or will be. With Father D it was long ago when he was a landscape gardener in orange groves making a fabulous salary. Father C is just beginning to build the myth of his great importance to the company.

CHAPTER III
EXTENDED KINSHIP RELATIONS

Introduction

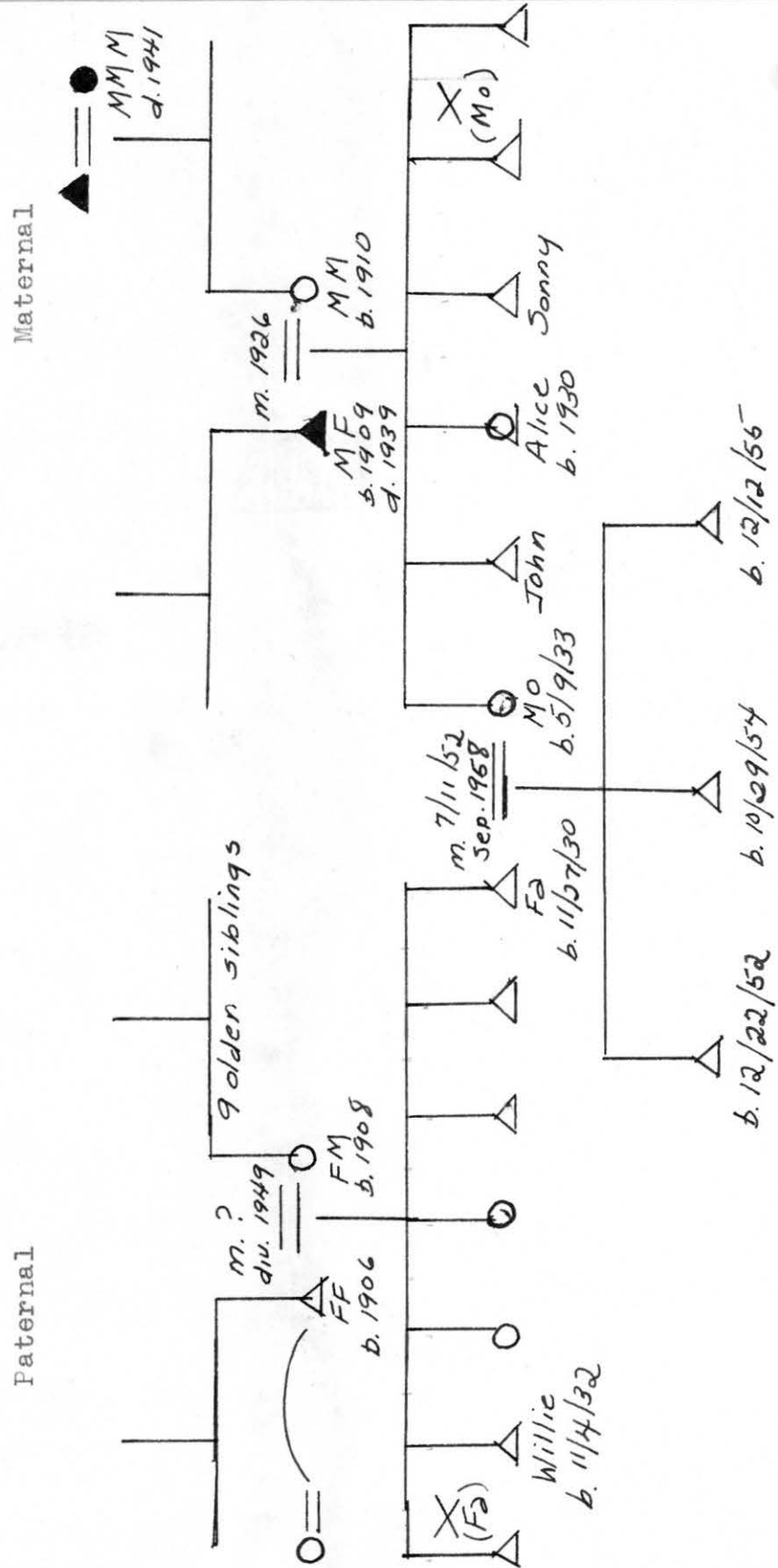
In this chapter each family's relations with their kin are described separately. In these portions the following kinship terms have been used: Mo is mother, Fa is father, MM is mother's mother, MF is mother's father, MS is mother's sister, MB is mother's brother, FM is father's mother, FF is father's father, FS is father's sister, FB is father's brother. For each family a geneological chart has been constructed based on information obtained in the records. Birth, death, marriage, and divorce dates are indicated when these are known. Proper names, adequately disguised, are given when reference to this person is made in the text. The circles stand for female, the triangles for male. When these are filled in the person has died. The equal sign designates a marriage. The X shows at a glance where father and mother normally come in their sibling birth order.

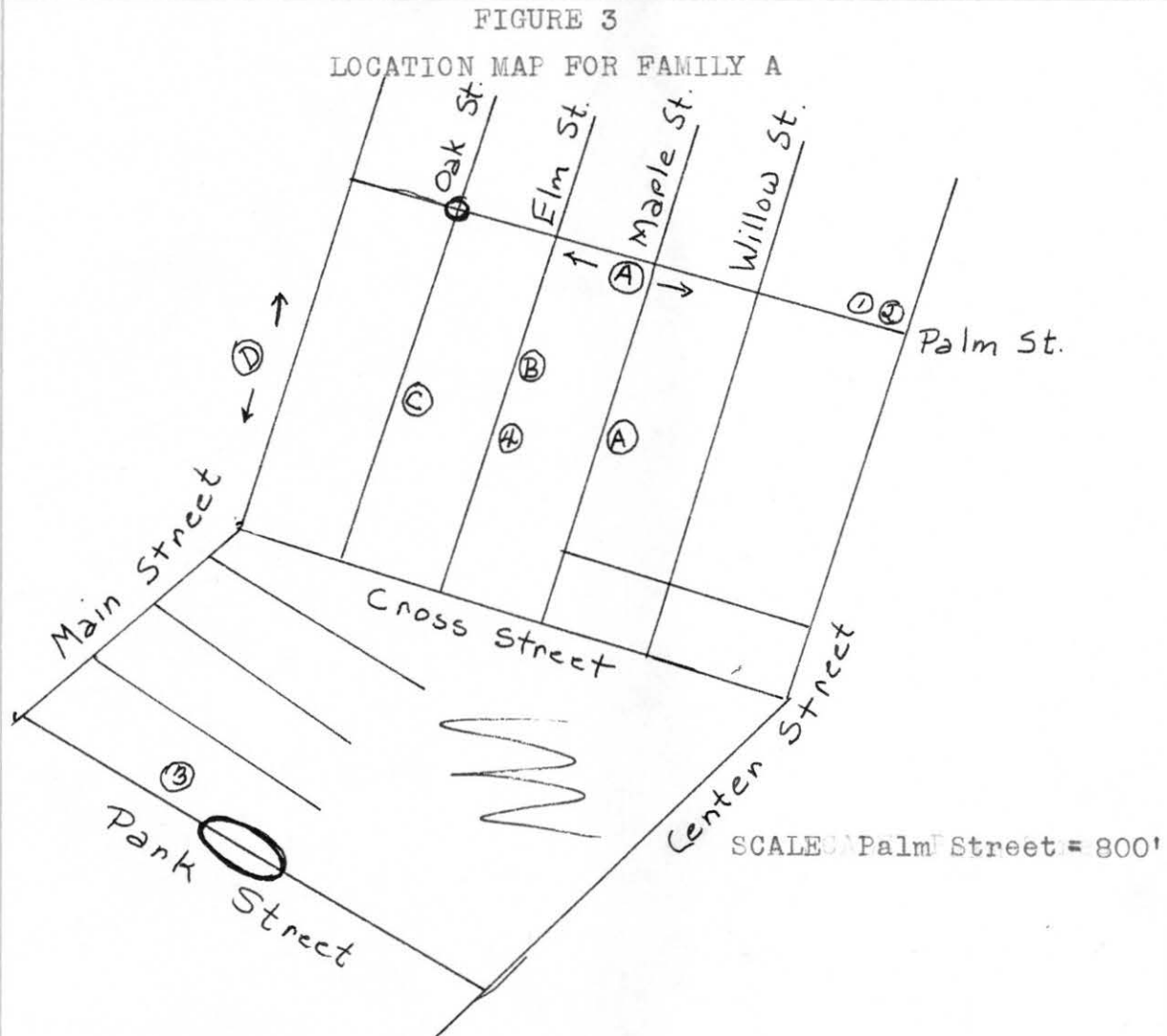
Family A

From the map one can see that the A family is surrounded by both maternal and paternal relatives. The MM was born and raised in the South End so this part of the family has been established in the neighborhood since the turn of the century. The MF was born in New Brunswick. All we know of him is that he was alcoholic, irregularly employed and supported by rela-

FIGURE 2

GENEALOGY FOR FAMILY A





MAP KEY

- ⊕ The corner where Mo's adolescent street corner gang hung out
- ① Mother has an apartment in this building
MM lives in the same building with Freddie who is currently in the service.
- ② MS, Alice lives here
- ③ MB, Sonny, lives here
- ④ MB, John, once lived here but has since moved to another part of Boston
- Ⓐ FM and FSs live here but also have lived on Palm Street
- Ⓑ FB, Willie, lives here
- Ⓒ FB, George, lives here
- Ⓓ A FB and a FS both live on this street but there is no information about exact location

tives. He died when Mo was six. Mo grew up in what has been described as a female based household.¹ The MMM brought up the family, and when she died in 1941 says Mo, "Everything went with her." MM never acted like a mother, and Mo calls her by her first name.

The maternal nucleus consists of Mo, her sister Alice and MM, all living within the same block and at various times in the same building. Contact between Mo and her mother seems to be frequent, probably several times during the day. There is many a conversation over the back porch. The children are frequently in MM's apartment. The visits among the adults are functional as well as social. MM baby sits while Mo goes shopping, or occasionally when she goes out for the evening. Although Mo claims she can't talk with her mother about her problems, we have evidence that MM has given advice on a number of topics which indicate some sharing of marital and child care problems. Specifically, MM has expressed herself as opposed to the family's moving away from the South End, has urged nursery school for one of the children, discouraged further pregnancies after Mo's recent miscarriage and favored separation from Fa at various points in the marriage.

Mutual aid in sickness is another feature of the mother-daughter relationship. When Mo was admitted to the hospital in

¹Walter Miller, "Implications of Urban Lower Class Culture for Social Work," Social Service Review, vol. 33 (September, 1959), p. 225.

1955, MM notified the Human Ecology doctor. She visited Mo in the hospital and took the children into her home. Fa stayed there as well and fed and cared for the children while his mother-in-law was at work. She in turn was present at night when he worked. In return we note that Mo took care of her mother when she was ill with a virus. Finally there has been talk of MM taking one or the other of the children with her to Canada for her vacation where she has a summer home. The record is unclear as to whether this ever materialized.

Alice is included in many of Mo's shopping trips and social visits with MM. At other times they watch each other's children so that one of them is free to go to the store. There is little indication of how much financial interdependence there is among the three households. The only mention is of Alice borrowing \$11.00 from Mo and then not paying it back at the time agreed upon. Mo did offer very tangible support in another area by taking Alice and her child into her home while Alice was getting a divorce.

It is interesting that since 1958 when Mo separated from Fa, there has been a modified version of the maternal household as it was a generation ago: the grandmother, two mothers and their children and no men.

From the amount of activity this would appear to be a picture of pleasant, mutually supportive maternal kinship relationships. Actually, it is laced with a good deal of hostile behavior and feeling. Several times the family has contemplated

moving away with the expressed purpose of escaping the interference of relatives. They have talked of moving out West, to Maine, to father's place of work in the suburbs. All they actually accomplished was a brief move to an adjacent neighborhood which is the furthest Mo has lived from the South End. During this time she was miserable and continued to visit her mother and Alice. The theme which is constantly expressed is that she wants to get away but who would she turn to in trouble if she were away from her relatives. Mo feels she does things for her mother and Alice, but they do nothing in return or, at least, not enough. MM took the children while Mo was giving birth, but made Fa do all the work. When Mo had a miscarriage, MM advised her to have no more pregnancies and visited, but refused to care for the children. At one point Mo was weighing the alternative of joining Fa vs. loss of relatives. This choice between marriage and family comes up again when husband and wife are reconciled, plan to have the marriage blessed, and possibly move out of state. All this is kept from MM and sister, the implication being that, if they knew, it would endanger the plan.

There is only sketchy information about the other maternal siblings. The oldest brother lives in Charlestown and is seen infrequently. The next brother does live in the South End and since Mo claims he is MM's pet, it seems likely he visits with her. Mo herself sees him rarely, ostensibly because they argue whenever they get together. The youngest is Mo's favorite.

They used to have mutual friends and chummed together. Technically he lives with MM but actually is in the Army and away much of the time. No other relatives are mentioned.

Fa's relationship to the maternal relatives is less clear. There is mention that MM feels more positively toward Fa than she did at first, although she has several times supported Mo's efforts to separate. Fa has made it quite clear that he resents interference from maternal relatives and wants to make his own decisions. For example, he refused to consider nursery school simply because MM had once suggested it. Mo has described at least one way she avoids conflict: When relatives visit and Fa is working around she tells them he is in one of his moods and concentrating deeply, so he is not to be disturbed.

The paternal family shows marked pathology ranging from stabbings to incest. FF was accused of neglect of his wife and children in the 1940's, and FM has been in court for fornication as late as 1955. Fa's brother, Willie, has been irregularly employed and frequently picked up on drunk charges. He was accused of trying to "have sex" with his younger sisters. One sister was wayward, another promiscuous. She recently stabbed her husband.

We know that the FM grew up on a poverty stricken farm in Maine. Shortly thereafter, her parents separated and the children were placed out with relatives. Her mother remarried but this too was a failure so FM was placed again with "flagrantly immoral" relatives. There were several illegitimate pregnancies

During the second she married FF and eventually the family migrated to Boston to better themselves economically. Fa and his siblings took to hanging around with Mo's gang. Mo dated Willie for about a year and was looking forward to an engagement ring when Fa returned from the service in Alaska and took her away from his brother. Since that time the paternal relatives have not spoken to Mo despite the fact that they live on the same street. She does report a fight with FF and a paternal sister whom she almost killed for accusing her of running around with other men, so we must conclude that there is occasional contact. According to Mo, one in the South End likes the family, and from their court records there may be some truth in this. There is almost no indication of Fa's relationship to his own family. It is noted that paternal relatives were present at Fa's Assault and Battery trial (vs. Mo). Also, whenever moving is suggested, it is in terms of escaping both sets of relatives. If the paternal relatives are indeed interfering it is likely that they do so through some kind of contact with Fa whatever the nature of it might be.

Family B

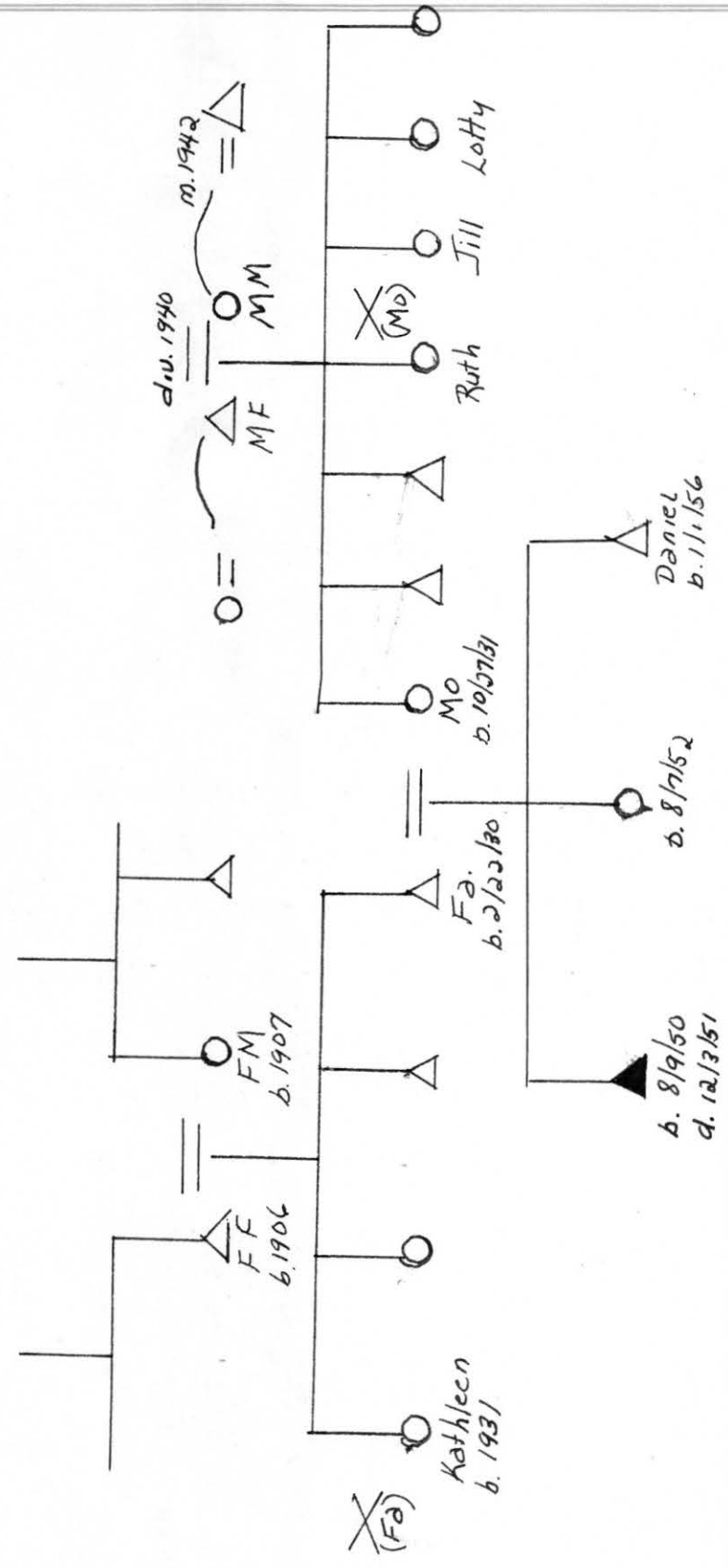
The maternal relatives of Family B seem to stem from Ipswich where Mo was born. According to the worker, MF's brother started up a clam stand which prospered to the point where he spends his winters in Florida. Various family members had been willing to set MF up in business with one kind of

Figure 4

GENEALOGY FOR FAMILY B

Paternal

Maternal



~~(Fa)~~

stand or another, but with his drinking he had gone steadily downhill. The family was able to eat only because MM could can the products of their farm. The marriage broke up when Mo was nine years and MM remarried another hard drinker. He ruled the home with an iron will. Over the years the family migrated to Haverhill, Beverly and Hingham, and MM and one sister continue to live in Beverly. Mo, however, escaped to Boston at seventeen to live with her sister, Ruth. This sister had in the past been a substitute mother for the family when MM had gone out to work between husbands.

Mo apparently sees her mother and three of her sisters: Ruth, Jill and Lotty. MM continues to live and work in Beverly but Fa drives the family up to visit on weekends and MM makes the trip into Boston to return the visit. At a time when the marriage had been going badly Mo had considered going to her mother's to live while she got a separation but decided she didn't want to live in with any families. Little is known about the content of the relationship with the exception of one statement to the effect that she couldn't talk with her mother because she wasn't understanding. It is said that MM initially disapproved of the parents' marriage but has since adjusted to it. Certainly Fa visits in her home and has been observed to have a joking relationship with her.

One has the impression that Ruth has played a more important role in Mo's life since she has been in Boston. Ruth invited the young girl to live with her because of the difficult

home conditions. Since the marriage to Fa, Ruth has always lived nearby and is a frequent visitor. On the night the family was burned out of their apartment no one was hurt because Mo and children were sleeping over at Ruth's while Fa was at work. From time to time Mo cared for Ruth's children while her sister went out to work. Before the birth of Daniel, Ruth gave Mo a shower, so we might expect that they have girl friends in common. Ruth also is married to a heavy drinker, but Smitty manages to hold down his job. His presence in the B home to pick up his children after work fostered a friendship between himself and Fa. Recently, Fa was able to get Smitty into the Teamster's union.

There is indication of a close relationship between Jill and Mo which is hampered somewhat by distance. It is this sister that Mo turns to when considering separation, perhaps because Jill herself is separated. When pondering the subject Mo mused that though Jill had gotten over the breakup, her children had not, and this should be a consideration for Mo. Apparently Mo had on one occasion gone up to Beverly unannounced since they have no phone. The weekend had been spoiled by Fa's coming up to beg her to return. During one of Fa's drinking bouts Mo considered selling the furniture and once again going to stay with Jill.

Lotty is mentioned only once as having come down from Haverhill to arrange for MF to live in a rooming house because his drinking was upsetting the B household. Why it was Lotty

who took this responsibility is a mystery. We also know from the worker that Lotty has recently and painfully separated from an alcoholic husband. Thus we know that four daughters have followed their Mo and married alcoholics.

The MF makes a rather surprising appearance in what again seems to be a female centered kinship group. Apparently MF remarried and settled in Salem. However, he now gives the impression of being a transient alcoholic supporting himself on his social security. He makes periodic excursions to Salem where he drinks with his second wife until she throws him out. Mo is the only one who will take him when he returns to the city, frequently ill. The man is relatively quiet and helps out by caring for the children if Mo has to go out. The chief problem lies in the fact that MF encourages Fa to drink with him and has warned him against going to Washingtonian Hospital for help. Mo wished to get rid of him for this reason. Although Fa allows MF to influence him to drink, at other times Fa makes valiant efforts to get him to AA. Each of the men seeks the other as an ally and hopes to sway him to his position.

Fa was born in Boston and the paternal relatives continue to live in the South End. They once lived within a block of the B Family. FF was born in Maine and his father before him. Although FF was trained to be an embalmer he never took it up and is today alcoholic. FM was born in Ireland and still speaks with a brogue. She too drinks but confines it to her

bedroom. From Mo we hear that Fa was protected and controlled by his family who were loathe to see him marry and turn his attention to his own home. Mo says she is not close to paternal relatives because they feel she took Fa away from them. Mo knows them, however, because she had been friendly prior to meeting Fa. There must be some contact since Mo describes FM as "sometimes nice and sometimes cold". Father visits the grandparents alone and also sees his sister, Kathleen, who drinks heavily, to encourage her to join AA. She and her husband are renowned for spending \$40 for one day's drinking. This sister, who particularly resented Mo's coming into the picture, chides Fa when he goes to AA, church, New England Hospital alcoholic clinic, etc. The most recent item involving her was a stormy visit to Fa at Washingtonian Hospital. She had gone there under the impression that Fa had received last rites and was irate to learn she'd been misinformed.

Although both FM and FF had been harsh with Fa about drinking before his marriage, they have been known since to encourage him. Indeed, FF gave Fa two beers to steel him for a job interview which was unsuccessful because they smelled alcohol on his breath. During the time of the project's contact both paternal grandparents were hospitalized for TB. Paternal relatives approached Family B for financial help to support the grandparents in the sanitorium. They also were trying to keep the younger members of the family in the home. Mo offered to take one of the children into her home despite

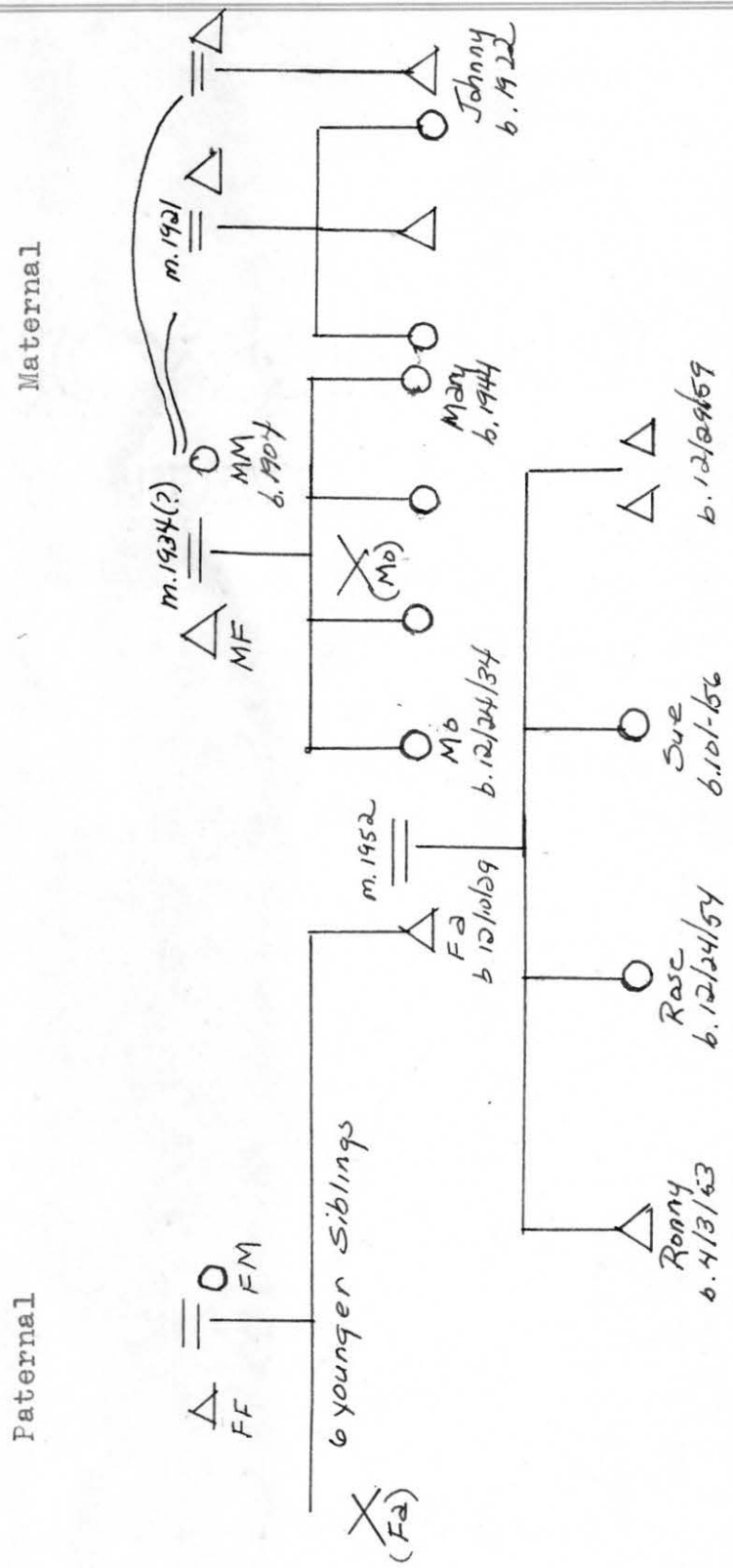
lack of space. At the same time she refused financial aid because the paternal relatives hadn't offered the B's any assistance when they had been in need. Mo noted that in the past she had been afraid to speak up to them and would say nothing, but she is standing up for herself now.

Family C

The MM is a real force in Family C. She is described as strident, coarse and aggressive, an excitable Italian woman who came to this country as a young girl. At seventeen she had an illegitimate child and married to avoid deportation. She was married and divorced two more times and now lives in the South End with a daughter, Mary; a younger son, Johnny; and possibly another daughter who is only half-sister to Mo. Until recently Mo lived only a "yell away" from MM but now they are in the same building. This is the very building Mo was born in, and this street has been her home for most of her life. MM is frequently in the C household, and at such times Fa is observed to be quiet and meek and Mo formal and guarded. Only the children remain untroubled by her presence.

MM performs many services for Mo. She took the children while Mo worked in a department store at Xmas and is constantly available for short term baby sitting. On one occasion when Mo seemed to be coming down with a virus, MM was found doing a mammoth wash while Mo lay watching TV. On another occasion she postponed her vacation until Mo's medical situation cleared up. She was taking one of the children with her when she did

FIGURE 5
GENEALOGY FOR FAMILY C



go. MM had gone to welfare on the family's behalf after their return from staying with paternal relatives in the South. She had used political influence to get what she wanted.

MM has quite strong opinions which she freely expresses. These influence Mo. For example, she was considering changing hospitals because her mother favored Women's Free Hospital. At other times she has expressed herself on child rearing practices. The woman confides freely to near strangers her feelings about Mo's marriage. She frankly told the Human Ecology doctor what was wrong with Mo's marriage and that she didn't approve of Fa. When a worker arrived at the door, MM confided that Fa was drinking every night and that Mo would deny it. Once when she brought one of the children to the agency for testing, MM told of Mo's running away during adolescence, omitting none of the unsavory details. In spite of MM's low opinion of him, Fa depends on her for help in manipulating Mo. According to the worker, at one time he approached MM to arrange a reconciliation between himself and Mo.

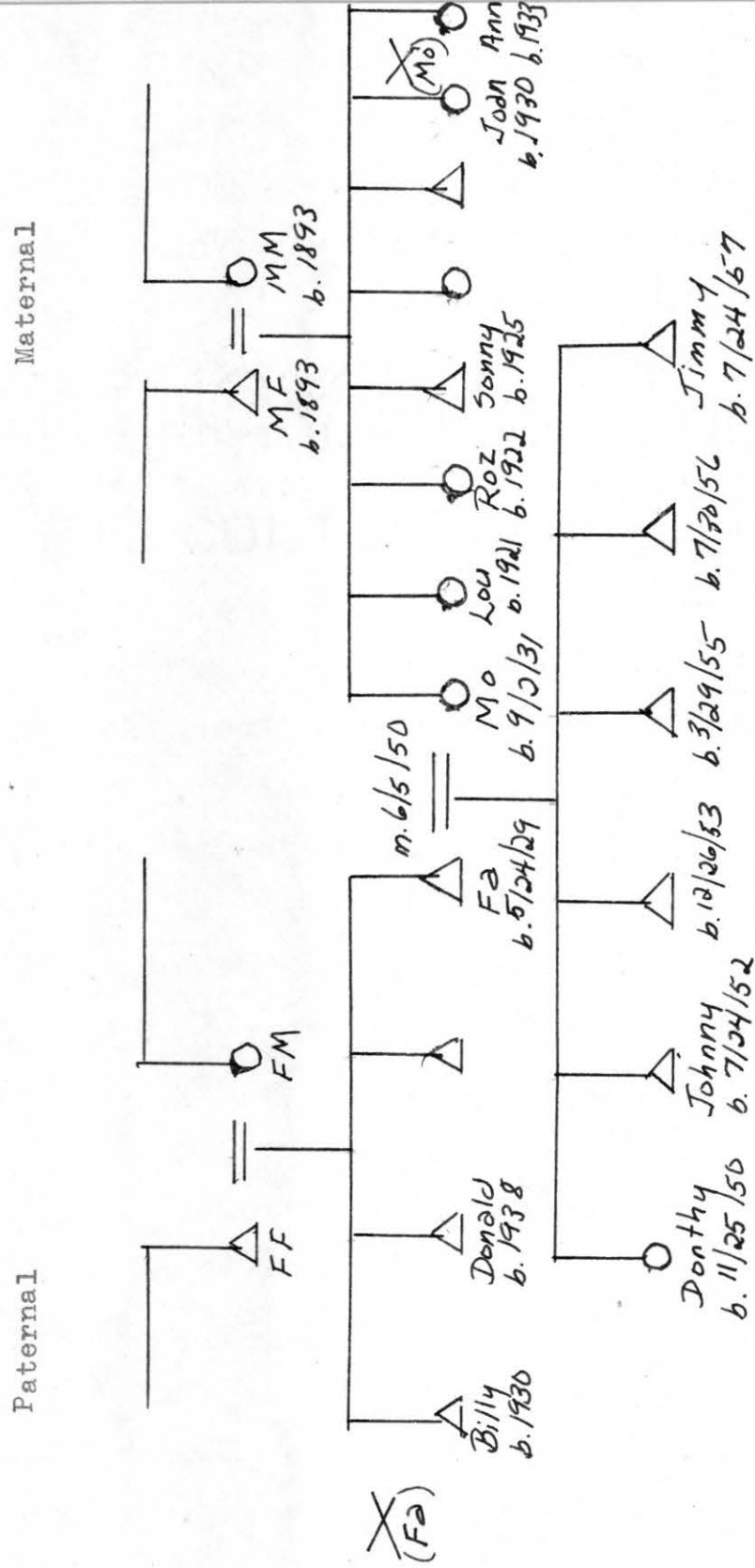
MF has remarried and is today a successful business man. He visits Mo once a month, bringing presents for the grandchildren. Despite the fact that he deserted her, he seems on good terms with MM whom he also visits.

The other siblings living in MM's household are in and out of the C home too. Johnny is a taxi driver, and Mo has asked him to take Ronny back to Metropolitan State Mental Hospital

after weekends at home because the leave taking is so painful for the parents. He is affectionate with the children and frequently is in the home playing with them. There is a maternal sister living in Dorchester who seems to play a major role in Mo's life. She took care of one of the children during Mo's most recent confinement. She drove Mo to and from Fernald to have Ronny interviewed there. The family has borrowed her car on occasion to go places on their own. Mo visits frequently but will not stay overnight because of fears of being away from home. Mo has spoken of moving away from the South End because the neighborhood is degenerating. She mentions specifically going to Dorchester, one would guess because of the presence of the sister. It should be added, however, that she would expect MM to continue visiting daily in such a case.

Fa's family is from North Carolina and aside from that we have almost no information. The C Family did spend about a year there. During the visit, Ronny contracted lead encephalopathy and had to be treated. This prolonged the stay. Mo claims to have gotten on well with her in-laws but couldn't stand rural life. She had what she calls several "nervous breakdowns" while there. Fa told Family Service several years ago that he would like to take the children to FM to raise but didn't feel the court would allow it. He claims the reason they had been in North Carolina was because Mo had deserted. He had taken the children there, where she had later joined them.

FIGURE 6
GENEALOGY FOR FAMILY D



Family D

The amount of data on kinship relations for Family D is several times that for the other cases. Despite this, little is known in detail of family history. The great-grandfather on MF's side came from Ireland but his wife was born here. They had quite a number of children but MF had little contact with his siblings because they felt superior to him. Mo recalls visiting her own grandmother only once on the fourth of July. It had been a truly wonderful day. According to MSPCC records the great-grandparents lived in Jamaica Plain and the maternal grandparents are still located there. This would indicate that the family has been in the same neighborhood at least seventy-five years. During prohibition years MF was engaged in bootlegging. However, criminal or immoral behavior was not limited to him. We know that all but two of the children (for whom there is no record) have been or are in trouble including prostitution, neglect of children, abandonment, and illegitimacy. Mo describes her parents as rarely sober during her childhood. They were very severe with the girls who, if they weren't in by ten P.M. would be locked out and then later accused of misbehavior during the time they were locked out. Mo felt that they couldn't have cared anything about the children. The parents took out court complaints against Joan and Mo in their adolescence. "My father had to put me away in the seventh grade because I got in trouble." Mo's ambivalence comes out in talking of Ann who was wild from the start, allowed to wear

low-neck dresses at fourteen. She was never put away by the parents, although Joan and Mo weren't "half as bad".

Almost all of mo's references to MM are critical. Typical is a recollection of winning a doll at a settlement house, which MM condemned to safe keeping where it still remains. Mo was never allowed to play with it. MM never cooked even a meal says mo. Neither she nor the sisters ever gave Mo any sex education. In sum, MM was never a person she could talk to or bring her problems to; it was MF who was "her mother". When she began her menstrual periods it was MF she went to in terror. Albeit, he yelled at her and smashed her head in for it. When she had her first labor pains with Dorothy it was in MF's room, and while MM yelled at her, he held her hand and told her everything would be all right. Indeed he had given her understanding all through the pregnancy. More recently MF had told her in confidence that, of all the grandchildren, hers were the prettiest. He added it was wrong of him to say so. On the negative side it appears Mo suffered from MF's drinking and feels she can't remain with Fa if he drinks. It would be a repetition of what she went through as a child. MF gave up drinking after he fell downstairs in a drunken stupor following the death of a nephew who had always called him "father". Currently MF is in and out of hospitals with TB, and Mo visits him there when possible.

The relationship with MM revolves primarily around Dorothy. The parents were living with the grandparents at the time of her

birth and much of the baby's care came from MM. There had been some talk of her adopting Dorothy since the child spent most of her early years with the grandparents. In fact, she had been taught to call MM "mother" and Mrs. D. "aunt". Mother thinks Dorothy was spoiled living there. The child continues to visit in their home frequently, and at any time placement is necessary, e.g. during confinements, Dotty will automatically go there. This holds true for vacations too. MM also provides Easter clothes. She bought the girl's communion dress. One of MM's objections to Fa has been his treatment of Dotty, who of course is not his child. Apparently MM has little interest in the other children. Mo once said after a visit from MM that this was the first time she had come in years. Until now, she had not even seen some of the younger children. The only gifts go to Dorothy and nothing for the others at Christmas. Mother excuses this by saying there are thirty-seven grandchildren. Mo will take the children to visit on Easter or Sundays to watch TV but describes the relationship as very poor. Although the visiting is at times infrequent there is a constant flow of news back and forth through sisters. Several times when Fa has been sent away, Mo has moved in with the maternal grandparents. This has always worked out badly because Mo shows no responsibility for the care of the children, under these circumstances. She will leave the feeding and clothing to her mother.

In several places it was noted that the maternal grand-

parents disapproved of Fa because of his drinking and were against a mixed marriage as well. Recently MF commented with some charity that Fa gets drunk but nothing is wrong with that, to which MM added acidly, "Nothing wrong if you can hold it!"

A number of Mo's siblings live in the South End and she is in contact with them. Lou, the oldest, seems most reliable (although we know she drinks). In the past, Mo has lived with Lou but, as with the maternal grandparents, this deteriorated because of her failure to care for her children while staying there. Despite this, Lou is described as the one sister Mo can turn to in trouble and she has frequently lived within a block of her. The youngest D baby is named after her and is notably the only child in the maternal circle who is named after another family member. Lou will get the baby a christening dress. There is much visiting back and forth between the sisters but at times there is some indication of jealousy. Explaining a recent quarrel between the sisters, Mo vows she won't yield this time and seek a reconciliation. She claims Lou is jealous of Mo's nice home. Roz and Mo are the non-drinkers in the family and therefore are careful managers. Lou, on the other hand, extravagantly owns a car despite great indebtedness. At times, Mo seems to have more in common with Lou's two teen-age daughters who are almost constantly in the home. In addition to a constant stream of chatter they are available for babysitting, to set each other's hair, to help with housework, and other chores. Mo showed one of the girls a letter

Fa had written from Deer Island and Mary thought it too "mushy".

Joan and Ann are considerably less stable than other family members and seem to float in and out of the D household so that we hear about the activities of one or the other for a few weeks and then silence.

Joan was sent away on a Stubborn Child Complaint at age eleven which Mo says was a terrible thing because it proved the parents didn't want her. From thirteen on, she was considered a prostitute and spent time at one institution after another. One of her illegitimate children (both were born at Framingham) was raised by a prison guard and his wife who expressed a desire to adopt the boy. At that point, Joan removed him. We first hear about Joan when she is asked by Mo to care for the children during Mo's confinement. From a friend Mo learns that her sister has taken the children to barrooms and along with her when she practices her profession. The evidence is all there when Mo returns from the hospital - bottles, dirty clothes, used contraceptives. Joan even manages to proposition the Human Ecology doctor while Mo is out of the room. Joan sleeps in the D home when she is hiding from the police for breaking parole or brings her children and then disappears. On one such occasion Mo went looking for Joan in the Palace Bar but one of the girl's buddies from Framingham beat up Mo and she returned unsuccessful. Mo finally reported Joan to the MSPCC and the police. Eventually, the children were removed to a Catholic shelter, and a neglect action was initiated. Mo and Fa are

both quite fond of Joan's children and were loathe to see them go. She had made some attempt to get custody of one child but felt she couldn't take the responsibility of the other because it had developmental problems. Mo sought out Joan to show her the warrant and give her fair warning but Joan only disappeared afterwards. Mo's judgment was that Joan had been given many chances but was a "no good mother"! Joan was committed to Framingham for life according to mother, and the children were placed with the state. In court Joan blamed Mo for her difficulties saying she hadn't taken care of her children. Three years later Mo reports that Joan is returning from prison. Her children are all placed, and Mo doubts she will get them back. Despite all that has transpired, Mo says she is looking forward to Joan's return.

Ann is the sister Mo referred to as always wild and from fourteen wore low neck dresses. She has two illegitimate children; the oldest is cared for by MM and refers to her as "mother". He calls his unmarried uncle (also living with MM) "father", because he does so much for the child. Ann is not married, but for two years she and baby Charlene have lived with Charlie, the baby's father. He is known as "a drinker, but a steady worker". Ann refuses to marry him despite his pleas. She frequently deserts to return only when she is pregnant or in trouble, says mother. The two children would have gone "on the state" long ago if the maternal grandparents hadn't gone to court and gotten custody. Lou is to take over if they die.

Early in the record Mo professes not to like Ann. She tells about Fa spending a drunken weekend with Ann and a maternal uncle and never letting Mo know of Fa's whereabouts. It isn't long afterwards, however, that Ann, Charlie and the new baby are noted as visiting in the D home. The two sisters frequently run into each other at out-patient clinics and share ice cream and gossip. At one time Mo observes that Ann and Mo's niece Mary are her most frequent visitors. Another time we learn that Ann and Charlie stay overnight because of a hailstorm. Mo gave Ann a beautiful christening dress for Charlene, but she sold it for milk in spite of the fact that Mo had asked her if she needed milk for the baby. Just as with Joan, Mo is critical of Ann's mothering and frequently is stuck with the care of her children. On one occasion Ann goes on a binge and runs off to New York leaving Charlene unattended and neglected. Charlie brings the baby to Mo to care for. Her comment is that the girl wants her own way first and should have a scare like she did when she abandoned Johnny. When Ann came back for Charlene, Mo slapped her up insisting there was "no shame in her".

Another time she is picked up in a car in Revere and will probably go to jail. A while later Ann leaves Charlene with Mo saying the clinic doctor ordered absolute bed rest for several days. With that, she leaves town. She returns and disappears again. This time Mo finds her in the apartment of a neighbor, an older man she's been living with for several days. Mo threatens to report her to the police; they shout at each other

and Ann says she will take a knife to Mo if she does. Still another time the child is back with Mo after Ann stabs long-suffering Charlie with scissors and badly wounds him and then takes off. He refuses to go to the hospital or report to the police for fear of implicating Ann.

The picture of the maternal relatives is rounded out by mention of the brothers, who are described as drinking companions of Charlie. Sonny, the eldest, visits Mo's children once or twice a year but the younger brother never does.

Just as the relationship with the maternal grandparents focused on one child, Dorothy, so does that with FM. She has had a special affection for Johnny and he has been placed with her for long periods of time, lately with the encouragement of the South End Family Project. She provides clothing for him and meals when he drops over for a visit.

Fa's family was Canadian, but when he was two years old, FF deserted and FM moved south living for a time in Wellesley, Norwood and in New York State and New Jersey. She struggled to retain custody of the four boys, two of whom still are in the home. Mo has remarked rather sentimentally that FM waited a long time for what she has now, but at last she is happy. In recent years FF had invited Fa and his family to come to Florida and live, but Fa resented him and rejected the plan. Mo had tried to point out that perhaps his father had his reasons for leaving. Fa had been well indoctrinated by his mother and

turned a deaf ear, says Mo. The family has at various times lived with FM who spoke bitterly of the fact that whenever they are in difficulty they come to her and not to the maternal grandparents. Mo, on the other hand, feels that Fa is too dependent on his mother. Whenever he went to visit he would come home and argue. Circumstances were the worst when they were living with FM. Mother feels that Fa's drinking and the trouble in the marriage was because FM allowed Fa to return any time he wanted to. In so doing, she didn't treat him like a married man. Fa tends to confirm this by saying he hadn't been to see his mother in six months, because if he visited he would probably want to stay. However, recently FM has stood with mother on Fa's drinking problem. She has refused to let Fa in when he has appeared on the scene drunk. However, at the time of a separation he did stay with her. At one point when Mo was sharing her marital difficulties, FM expressed understanding by relating comparable problems she had had. FM seems to waver between support of Mo and the children when Fa is drunk or assaultive and support of Fa. Mother has spoken positively of FM's good care of Johnny, the long way she used to walk to visit the family, and her wish to teach Mo to bake her special gingerbread. It was FM who decided Mo to send the children to camp saying they never got away from her. There is considerable visiting back and forth. Mo has gone on Sundays to watch TV. On Halloween Mo took the children by FM's apartment. The family spent both Christmas Eve and Christmas day with FM, al-

though they had a tree and gifts at home as well. Dorothy drops by to see her grandmother on her way home from the store, and when it is dark FM walks her on home.

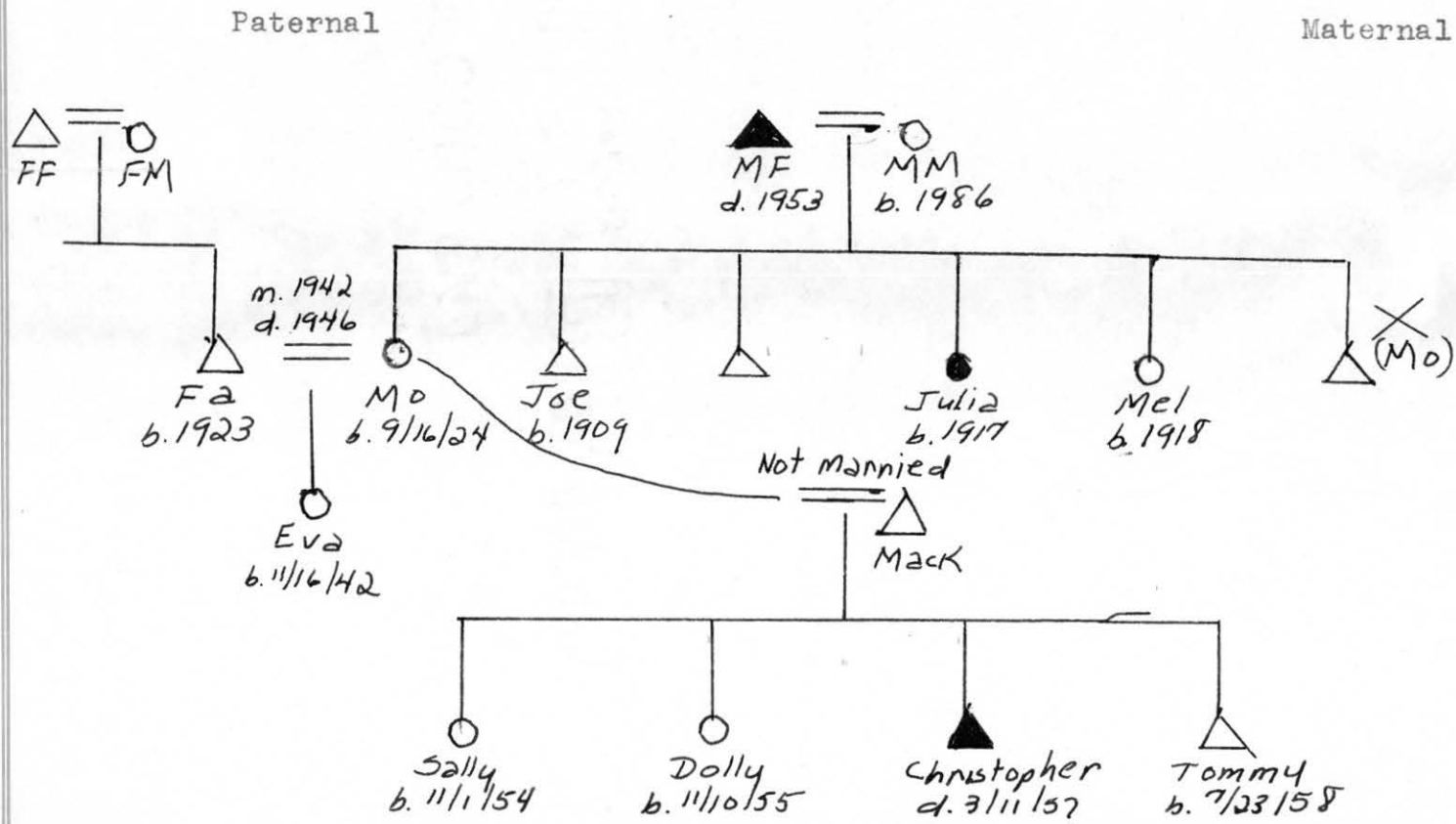
Little is mentioned of the paternal brothers except that Donald is named for one of them. Billy is married to a woman who prefers her own material comforts to children, comments Mo. "Since she has everything else she wants, I don't understand why she doesn't want children." Mo observed that FM used to indulge this woman but has changed her attitude. The family visits this brother and his wife several times a year only.

Family E

MF came from Wales and was a stern man. He earned his living by painting and repairing, but about the time Mo was eleven he was no longer able to work because of poor sight and hearing. MM, although born in Boston, was described as old world, highly moral, and suspicious. The family lived in New Hampshire at the time of Mo's birth but later moved to Everett. In 1954 MM settled in Malden. Mo complains of having been shut out of family affairs because she was the youngest. However, when she reached her teens, she was the one in the family who rebelled and stood up to Fa's tirades. Years later, siblings expressed disapproval of the parents treatment of Mo, agreeing with her she wasn't guilty of the wrong doings she was accused of.

Mo left home at eighteen after a quarrel with maternal sister, Julia, who is now dead. She can't remember what it was

FIGURE 7
 GENEALOGY FOR FAMILY E



about, but the girl had lived in North Carolina since Mo was five and she felt Julia had no right to boss her. Mo married a service man that same year. She bore one child which was placed, and the marriage eventually ended in divorce in 1946. She drifted about in the West and South Ends. Eventually, siblings encouraged her to return home to care for the maternal grandparents, which she did until her father died two years later. She says they did not get on well, and none of the relatives appreciated the time and money she put into the household. MF would never allow her out because of ungrounded suspicions. While she was living at home, a doctor recommended a D and C for internal bleeding which upset the grandparents because they had accused her of faking illness to avoid work. MM would also degrade her for having married a man who's mother was mentally ill. Despite this she bought them numerous presents such as an electric mixer. When MF died of pneumonia, MM blamed Mo because with her nurse's aid training she had opened MF's oxygen tent to administer fluids. MM erroneously thought this caused his death. It was Mo who paid the family debts and a large portion of the funeral expenses from a settlement she'd received for a back injury. None of the brothers and sisters contributed. She did this, she said, to repay her parents for the hard times she had given them.

After MF's death it was Mo who took the responsibility for applying for public welfare for MM, but the sum was so small that she spurned it. Mo resumed her life in Boston at this

point, remaining on reasonably good terms with MM until the birth of her first illegitimate child. She saw MM on the street subsequently, but the woman refused to speak to her. Mo spoke quite feelingly about her mother not visiting, not even knowing her address. If she did she probably would have sent the remainder of the funeral bill. Mo wishes now she had that money to spend on her children. Mo feels she gave up her mother for her boyfriend which she characterizes as no small sacrifice. At the same time, however, Mo speaks of moving to Malden and beginning to visit her mother again, perhaps "trap" her into meeting accidentally on the street. When a sister let Mo know that MM was getting arthritis shots, Mo felt she should contribute financially although this would mean taking from the rent money. She doesn't know her mother's financial situation but she does know other siblings will not help.

Mother's favorite sister, Mel, lives in Cambridge and has four children; the youngest is Sally's age. She was ashamed to visit her carrying her third illegitimate child. She knew her sister would be accepting but would consider her a fool for being in such a position. If anything ever happened to Mo, Sally (and possibly the other children) would go to this sister as she has always wanted a girl. Mo apparently discusses child rearing practices with her because Mel had suggested perhaps Mo was too harsh with Sally as a reason why the child was fearful. Mo's brother-in-law, Mel's husband, stopped by the house to assure her he would contribute a pint of blood at the hospi-

tal prior to her confinement.

The oldest brother, Joe, is a ne'r-do-well who drinks and drifts from place to place. Another brother married a "cheap honky-tonk show girl", but the marriage has survived and the wife is accepted by the family. Similarly, the other brother and sister married, had children and hold down steady jobs, but there is no indication of direct contact with them except for Mel.

During Mo's engagement to her former husband, he took her to visit FM. This turned out to be at the mental hospital which had surprised and frightened Mo. She visited several times subsequently and eventually worked there. Fa was sent overseas soon after the marriage, and Mo went to live near the paternal grandparents to give birth to Eva. They wrote Fa she was unfaithful to him, although this was false, according to mother. In arguments which followed over custody of Eva, Mo placed the child in a Catholic institution. Later when Fa returned she attempted reconciliation but it failed. Sometime thereafter, he took Eva out of the institution, but Mo has had no contact with the child.

I have discussed Mo's relationship with the father of her three children now in the home under "Relationships with Friends".

Summary

As a group, these families seem to have a great deal of contact with relatives. Four out of five of the families are probably daily in touch with members of their extended families. Two of the mothers have remarkably similar backgrounds. They either now live, or have lived, in the very homes they were born in, while their mothers are only a "yell away". The strong kinship ties seem to be among the women - mother, grandmother, sisters. The boys of the family drift away and are described as ne'r-do-wells or always in trouble. Often there is one exception - mother's favorite - who has remained with the maternal grandmother or, in any case, comes to visit the children. This is usually a younger brother whose care was entrusted to mother at an early age, and the bond between them has continued.

The mother-daughter relationship, however, is paramount. It involves babysitting, shopping together, help at time of illness. During confinements the maternal grandmother often takes one or more children for a longer stay. Mother may return to her mother's home if she is illegitimately pregnant, and that child may remain the special province of the grandmother long after mother has married and borne other children. She may also return to the parental home during separations from her husband, or at least consider it. Despite this, four out of five of the mothers felt they could not confide in their mothers; she wouldn't understand their problems or wouldn't listen. Perhaps the characteristic conflict is best stated by

Mrs. A who says she wants to move away, become independent of her family but, "Who would she go to in trouble; who would take care of her?" Mo E has nothing but bad things to say about her mother from whom she has been estranged since the birth of her first illegitimate child. But in the same breath she thinks of moving back to her mother's neighborhood where she would plot to surprise her mother into speaking to her once again. Both Mrs. D and Mrs. E blame their parents for early rejections. But Mrs. D promptly excuses them for sending her away to reform school because she was such a problem to them. Mrs. E gives her parents presents to make up for the trouble she caused them.

In large families, or where the grandmother has gone out to work, an older sister may be the one mother confides in and relates to as substitute mother.

Three out of the five mothers describe their fathers as stern, alcoholic, deserters. Nonetheless, they indicate that there were positive elements in the relationship despite the aura of brutality. These alcoholic men seemed capable of showing their daughters some tenderness, which perhaps the mothers reserved for sons. In the case of Mo D this was quite remarkable. She reports going to her father for help on occasions which are traditionally a mother's province - sex education and solace at child birth.

The three wives who have contact with paternal relatives are either on very bad terms with them, or at least have many

negative feelings. In all three cases the husbands are alcoholics and the wife feels that his family has over protected him as a child or currently encourages him to drink. The paternal grandmothers, for their part, have not wanted their sons to marry, particularly this girl. This is also true of maternal relatives who almost universally disapproved of their daughter's choice of husband, frequently accusing him of faults they flagrantly possess themselves. This means that relatives provide a constant pressure for disruption of the marriage. Only the mother of Fa D could at times urge her son to accept family responsibility and did provide some companionship and support for her daughter-in-law.

CHAPTER IV
RELATIONS WITH FRIENDS

Family A

This is a mother who has lived in the South End all her life and so has grown up with a group of friends. As a child she played with the boys and considered herself quite a tomboy, but in adolescence she was part of a street corner gang of both boys and girls. They used to "travel" together and monopolized the corner, refusing to let others into their circle of friends. They amused themselves by throwing firecrackers into hallways or exploding them in milk bottles. In winter they allocated a certain section of the pond in the Public Garden for their own skating. Mo was voted most popular in her senior class because she was considered "game" for anything. Fa and his siblings took to hanging around in Mo's crowd when they moved to Boston. It was at that time she dated Willie and later Fa. She was the first to marry and then four or five followed suit.

Mo mentions women friends but there is no indication whether these have carried over from the adolescent gang. In general, her views on the female sex are quite vivid and hostile. They are "cats", with the exception of "mothers" whom she respects. It's not surprising, then, that her friends are often older women. She goes to the movies or the barroom with a companion and, depending on the marital situation currently, will or will not pick up men. Sometimes her friend will talk to the

boys but she will not. One such time Fa visited the same bar and a public argument ensued. Generally her associations are casual. She runs into a woman on the street or in a bar, starts talking and the two end up drinking together. Some of these friends offer to watch the children during separations from Fa so she can get out of the house; but Mo is uncomfortable leaving the children with them. Besides the neighbors would talk if they saw her out drinking with her husband away.

Fa we know even less about socially. There are one or two remarks about friends in conjunction with work activities. For example, on Fa's foray out West to relocate, he talked of meeting friends and making the trip with them. In his current job as farmhand at an institution there is evidence that he discusses marital problems with co-workers. And finally Fa was in partnership with the husband of a friend of Mo's in a robbery and assault.

Family B

In this family there is more mention of Fa's friends. As an adolescent he had only one close friend but many acquaintances. His gang at eleven would con an alcoholic into buying them beer to sneak into the Ellis Memorial dances. This circle of acquaintances seems to persist in the barroom gang where Fa confides his marital problems and a few tears may be shed together. With reference to his alcoholism, Fa says that friends had tried to help him and others have needled, but he was "the

fool who went along with alcohol". The barroom gang has been replaced by the AA gang in recent months. Apparently the same kinds of sharing and group activity are common to both. At work Fa had talked to the boys and learned that their wives weren't getting the same pre-natal treatment at Boston City Hospital (mother was in the special Human Ecology Program). Another time Mo called a fellow employee who was one of Fa's buddies to get him to talk with Fa and assist him in regaining his job. He had lost the job after staying out and drinking several days. Currently Fa is active in the union. Presumably he has a group of acquaintances in that setting. We know he had enough influence to get his brother-in-law accepted into the union as well. Of close friends, we hear almost nothing. One who had visited regularly was discouraged from coming because Fa had begun to distrust him, feeling that he was visiting at times when Fa was not in the home. The friendship was interrupted completely, in any case, when the man went to jail.

Mo, too, seems to have acquaintances but even less in the way of friends than Fa. There is some indication, however, that she had some social life when she first came to Boston. She claims she dated a bit. She was even engaged but broke it off, ironically, because the boy drank. There was another boy interested in her, but she avoided him and finally settled on Fa when he returned from the service. Mo's current pattern is to get to know various women in the apartment building for a period.

Eventually they will squabble over children or Fa will make trouble when he's been drinking. For instance, recently Mo had a friend downstairs whose phone she used. This woman's husband also drank, and this was a bond between them. However, one day the two men got into a drunken quarrel, threw accusations at each other and since then the two women haven't spoken. In other instances, Mo cares for a neighbor child or gossips about nursery schools, but she has expressed a need to find girls she could share outside activities with such as bowling.

Family C

This is another mother who was brought up in the South End and, in fact, she recently was living in the same building where she was born. The case record opens with all the neighbors and their children arriving for Sue's birthday party. Certainly Mo appears to have a wide acquaintanceship, and numerous times an assortment of women have been sitting around the kitchen when the worker arrived. Once they were busily fixing each other's hair. Many of the practical decisions Mo makes seem to be heavily influenced by what a neighbor will say on the subject. Mo asked to be in the Human Ecology Program because several of her friends had. Mo chose Kennedy Memorial for her child rather than Fernald because a neighbor had made the same choice. She had always gone to Massachusetts Memorial Hospital but was going to try Boston City Hospital because Mrs. J had spoken positively about it.

The one friendship which is mentioned specifically is with Mrs. J. Apparently the children of the two families constantly visit back and forth, or one mother takes all of them to the beach or the movies. Since the worker also had contact with Mrs. J, he learned that the two women used to see each other daily but that the relationship was not quite so close any more. Mrs. J had introduced Mo to her baby's godfather, and this had created friction between the C's when Fa found out. He felt Mrs. J was encouraging Mo to have a boyfriend. Mrs. J said she had no such thing in mind but added that the C's did seem to be having marital difficulties, and Mo did seem to like the godfather. Somewhat later we hear that one of the J children hit Rose causing enmity between the families so that joint plans for going to the Morgan Memorial Nursery may not materialize.

The only reference Fa makes to a friend is when he is applying for Post Office work at Xmas time. He indicates he got the idea from a friend who had done the same kind of work.

Family D

Mrs. D several times expresses her feeling that it is important to have friends, someone to talk to. She goes out looking for a woman to confide in. She talks of the housing project as a place where there will be companionship for herself and the children. Certainly there seems to be a steady stream of women visiting in the apartment. It is difficult, from the data, to keep the cast of characters straight all the time.

Many times the worker will run into a group of women assembled to discuss a variety of persons and problems. At one time, the conversation was about maternal sister Ruth's difficulties with the Division of Child Guardianship over her children. Each of the women had something to contribute from her own experience. At other times Mo may bring to the worker a friend's problem for comment. For example, there was a friend who was "over-sexed", another who overate. In both cases the children were being neglected as a consequence. One neighbor sits with the children so Mo can keep a medical appointment; another has brought her a Christmas corsage; the lady upstairs is taking Dorothy to Snow White; the lady downstairs lets her use her telephone.

One night a neighbor sees Fa crawling in the window at a time when the parents are separated, and she calls the police. Another night, mother helps a friend at two in the morning who is almost raped. Mo has a penchant for running into transient women and bringing them home to live with her temporarily. The two then go out together drinking and meeting men. Angie is up from New Mexico, and word has it a policeman is a constant visitor. Mother took her in until she could get settled in Boston. Another young woman who stays briefly has a husband in the service and children on vacation. She has been staying in a hotel room, and Mo rescues her.

Specific mention is made of an older woman, "Ma", who has

a motherly concern for Mrs. D. She expressed disquiet about Mo's health to the worker, and they agreed Mo should get out more. Ma came back from her vacation with a gift trophy for Mo saying, "World's Best Mother". Ma would like Mo to join her chapter of the VFW, Ladies Auxiliary. On another occasion, they went to a political rally together. For her birthday, Ma gave Mrs. D a pretty housecoat. Ma's teen-age daughter, Cooky, is frequently present in the D household and baby sits and runs errands. She is influenced to investigate the Roxbury Neighborhood House for the children when she learns that Cooky is a member.

Early in the record there is a great deal of contact with Bill who is a Syrian (?) in his sixties. He has an apartment near Mo, which he keeps himself, although he may once have been married. Mo has been known to spend many evenings there house-keeping and watching TV. Fa objected to the time spent away from home but only recently got really suspicious about the relationship. Bill is the godfather of Jimmy and the worker speculated that he may be the father as well. Bill has been seen in the D home dropping off Syrian food and items of clothing.

While the parents are separated, Mo does some dating. Mention is first made of George whom she got talking to casually, and learned he knew her brothers. They had a good time together going to Nantasket and the beach, once with the children. One

evening he took her dancing and for a lobster dinner, but she was self-conscious of how poorly dressed she was. When she found out George was married, she was determined not to see him. She didn't want to be party to a broken marriage.

Mo also hears from her friend, Joe, whom she plans to see while he is home on leave. She goes to Sunday dinner at his mother's and rides down to Ft. Dix with the family. One of the party gets sick so she returns a day late. In her absence, Cooky has cared for the children. The only other dates mentioned have been with a newspaper photographer. Each time Mo relates excitedly they had to go to an emergency.

Fa seems to have few friends besides his barroom drinking companions. Even these he will fight with. Since he invariably picks a bigger man, he is covered with scars. Often they will pass the time playing checkers or cribbage. Very occasionally, Fa will get to a wrestling match when a friend can get tickets. The worker noted that when he went with Fa to get a job, the man had difficulty listing references on the application. He finally put down some paternal relatives. Other people he knew by their first name but not the last.

Family E

It is interesting to note in this record that there is far more material on relationships with friends than family data, which is the reverse of what is found in the other four records.

At the time Mo's marriage broke up, she moved to Boston and found a rooming house on Beacon Hill. Mo gradually became ac-

quainted with the woman who operated the establishment. Mary was both a widow and divorcee by thirty. There were five children in her family, and one of them, Judy, was just Mo's age. Mo would ask Mary to heat food for her in her apartment. Gradually she was drawn into the housework. Mary would playfully invent holidays from time to time, and the two would do no work that day. It was "one big happy family", according to Mo. Everybody got along and no arguments. Eventually Mary gave up the house. She had always been a hard drinker and now she supported herself on the money from boyfriends she attracted.

Mo met her boyfriend, Mack, ten years ago with Mary. As a "lark" she took him away from an older woman. She drifted promiscuously about the West and South Ends with a year's interruption when she went back home to care for the maternal grandparents. Eventually Mo got pregnant by Mack. Only then did she find out he was married. He talked her out of an abortion and proposed that they go to live on a Maine farm, but Mo refused unless they were married. After Sally's birth, she did live with him but felt too guilty and soon moved out.

At the time the case is first known by the South End Family Project, Mo is living in a South End rooming house similar to the one Mary ran. The "gentlemen drunks", as the welfare worker called them, were in and out of Mo's apartment. Mo mentions to the Human Ecology doctor that if the baby she is expecting is a boy, she will name it after an elderly roomer who said if she named the baby for him he would see it got something

During one interview with the worker, two older men came in. Tommy is a pleasant, but deaf and crippled man, who often settles in the kitchen to read his newspapers and play with the children. The other man frequently buys Sally ice cream and offers her a nickel but she seems shy with him. Tommy cares for the children but only for short periods. Mo cleans these men's rooms for two dollars but this is considered something of a favor.

Mary's daughter, Judy, is a frequent visitor at this period. One late afternoon when the worker arrives, Judy and her husband are making supper and after the interview another couple joins them to eat. Another such visit finds two couples in the kitchen singing to the accompaniment of a guitar. For a short period Judy and her family move in, but it is unclear whether this means into the rooming house or Mo's very small apartment. Certainly Judy, her children, and husband are around for several weeks during interviews. Occasionally they comment on the worker's statements. Mo expressed relief when they finally went because it messed up her clean apartment. The welfare worker complained of having Judy's wash (particularly her husband's shirts) strung across the room. Also Judy wasn't reliable in caring for the children; she would oversleep.

All this time Mo had been getting behind on her rent. One week a friend slept with her to escape her boyfriend and contributed twenty dollars. Another week the mother of the landlady got Mo a job taking in a child of a working mother but this

proved unsatisfactory. Finally Mo is warned to leave, and succumbs to Mary's persuasion to move into the same rooming house. Mo had previously avoided this, saying that Mary always insisted she drink with her which Mo felt was a bad habit to get into. At about this time, Judy, who had been staying with Mary (except for the weeks in Mo's building), moved to the West End and left Mary with more time for Mo. There is no more mention of Judy having direct contact with Mo, although she is frequently visiting with her mother downstairs. It is Mary's boyfriend, Billy, who runs this rooming house. He is fifty, doesn't drink and is considered by Mo to be a wonderful guy. He is Sally's godfather. The set-up of this home is much like the others. Mary keeps cold beer for the roomers which they pay for plus a small donation for her service. Recently, there was a fight between two men. One broke a hip, and the police were called. Often they will goad each other into drinking. Mo comments, "What a family; what a building!"

Mo credits Mary with a great deal of influence in the children's development. She is able to get them to eat while Mo is not. Mo frequently borrows money and clothes for the children from Mary who eventually will give them to her. Mary offered to buy Tommy a playpen and allow Mo to charge the girl's new beds on her account. However, if Mo moves out she is to leave the beds if they aren't completely paid for. When Mo is particularly distraught about Dolly's hospitalization, Mary gives her money to buy a good meal in a restaurant. Later when Mo goes

to see Dolly in a medical foster home, she takes Mary with her. Almost daily Mo and the children are downstairs in the morning using Mary's washing machine while the children play together or watch TV. During these times they often discuss child rearing practices.

Mary's teen-age daughter, Mickey, is frequently found in Mo's apartment. She often stays up there to sleep and seems genuinely fond of the children with whom she baby sits. One evening while the worker is there Mo gets Mickey to take her place at dinner and she goes down and eats with Mary who has just baked a blueberry pie, mother's favorite. Mickey's presence gets Mo into trouble on one occasion when Mary is away. Mack's teen-age son is home on leave and comes to visit. While there, he is attracted to Mickey. Apparently the two adolescents do some kissing while Mo is out shopping in the afternoon. That evening when the boy misses the last streetcar back to his father's, Mo allows him to sleep the night in the same room as herself and Mickey. Billy is very critical of this and intimates she is encouraging the young people.

Mary and Billy disapprove of Mack because when he comes to the house drunk, he is loud and disruptive. They confide in the worker that Mack will never marry Mo.

Another friend mentioned often by name is Alice. You have to visit with Alice in the park because she smells so bad. The others can't understand Mo's friendship for her because Mo, herself, is so clean. Mo explains that Alice is kind hearted. She

feels sorry for her because she too is on ADC but gets no money at all from her man. Alice often watches the children in the park while Mo does her shopping. When Mo is going back and forth to the hospital to see Dolly, Mary takes Mo's laundry and minds the children with considerable help from Alice. The other roomers make constant inquiries about the child's progress.

It is difficult to follow Mack's relationship with Mo. One day he is barred from the household, the next she is taking the children to watch TV and have Sunday dinner prepared by him. Frequently when Mack comes to visit Mo, he is drinking and will accuse her of infidelity. She is a tramp and an unfit mother. Often he threatens to have the children removed and somewhat effectively holds this over her head when she is after him for money. The latter is a constant source of worry and frustration for Mo and necessitates unpleasant contacts with the probation officer. When she has a chance, Mo will go through Mack's pockets while he sleeps off his liquor. Mack's contact with the children is sporadic. For a long time he favored Sally which irritated Mo who felt that many of her problems with the children stemmed from this. Mo was furious, however, when he didn't show up for Sally's birthday party or even send a present. Another time she badgered him for months about buying the girls new beds. When Tommy was born, Mack seemed to warm up to the idea of having a boy, and Sally was abandoned. Mo had to force Mack to go to see Dolly when she was in the hospital on the danger list. There is lots of talk and little action about

marriage. Indeed, Mo is quite in the dark about Mack's marital status, although she does know he's been married twice. She has had some contact with the children of his first marriage.

Summary

Friendships in these families seem to follow rigid sexual lines which are broken only at prescribed times for purposes of courting. In general, this is during adolescence or before marriage. It occurs during separations between husband and wife or at times in the marriage when conscious attempts are being made to appease a partner or to hold together the relationship. Otherwise, husband and wife look to companions of their own sex for company.

There are data on only two of the husbands but in both cases they make extensive use of barroom sociability. This seems to be the place where they can relax and play games, arrange for occasional excursions to sports events or at least comment extensively about them. It is also the place where troubles are shared and solutions proposed. Topics range from the activities of wives to the evils and joys of alcohol. It is interesting to note that Fa B's friendships involve a series of these masculine groups from the adolescent street corner to the union halls. The little information in the records about social relations gives no indications of lasting masculine friendships.

The wives seem to have considerable contact with other wo-

men, often including important responsibilities, such as minding children sometimes for days and taking each other into their homes to live for brief periods. However, there is a striking lack of permanence in these relationships. For several weeks or even months there is every indication of great intimacy and then the name never appears in the record again. The relationship often begins very casually on a street corner, in a barroom or around the use of a phone. They seem to spring up immediately upon arrival in a new apartment building. They are dissolved just as abruptly. Sometimes the husband makes an issue over the fact that his wife's friend is bad company, the kind who will get her in trouble. The friend may prove unreliable when given responsibility or frequently just moves away, perhaps only blocks. Despite the transitory nature of many of these friendships, there is desperate need for being with someone, having friends to do things with, to the point where the physical presence seems to be the critical issue and the personality only secondary.

There is evidence of only one long standing friendship in this group of five women. This is Mo E's relationship to Mary which began at the point she left her mother and appears to be in every way a direct substitution for the loss. Other mothers show a preference for older, maternal women. Mo A doesn't like women at all with the exception of "mothers" who are all right. Mrs. D has "Ma" who seems to have taken her under her wing. Consistent with this is the observation that these mothers seem

to enjoy the company of teenagers, the very teenagers who are the daughters of their maternal friends or of their oldest sister.

CHAPTER V

OTHER SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Service People

Mrs. A at one time complains that the only time she escapes the house is to go grocery shopping. Later in the record, however, she has her first appointment at the hairdresser since her marriage and another one follows soon after.

Mo B had a frustrating contact with a bartender who refused her request to refrain from serving her husband. She smashed his glass instead! The worker observes that this woman has matured during contact with the project; in her relationships with bill collectors she no longer goes to great lengths to avoid them as Fa continues to do, but meets them at the door and explains that Fa is in the hospital.

Family D had considerable trouble with the landlady over unpaid rent and she finally padlocked the apartment and would not let anyone in until the rent was paid. Later she sold all the family furniture because they owed her \$32. They considered taking her to court but nothing was done. Perhaps, it is relevant to mention here that Fa "mashed" a policeman in a drunken fight. A storekeeper mentioned to Mrs. D that Johnny had stolen cookies and put them under his coat. He hadn't seen the boy recently and hadn't mentioned the cookie incident because he didn't want Johnny to get a spanking.

Mo E consulted a special druggist whom she went to for

advice, and she listened to him when she felt inclined to doubt a clinic doctor's prescription. However, she has to stay away from another "druggist" whom she owes \$7 for abortion pills. She got them at a bargain rate because she was a friend of a friend. The man at the cafeteria recognized Sally when she came in with the worker and he asked about Dolly who was in the hospital. He explained he got to know the mothers who were regular attenders at the park in front of the restaurant. The insurance collector stopped by while Dolly was sick and inquired about her. Mo called to him that she couldn't pay him today and even if she had the money she'd use it to call the hospital. He gave her a dime.

These few references to service people are all that appear in the case records. In almost every instance, indebtedness is the reason for strained relations. The characteristic way of handling this is avoidance. This pattern sometimes compounds the difficulty, as with the landlady. The D family made no attempt to discuss their financial problem with the landlady and work out a mutually acceptable solution. Thus they felt that they would have no chance against her in court despite the fact that she confiscated more in furniture than they owed her.

The other characteristic association involves camaraderie and mutual assistance and concern. The druggist gives advice with his pills; the insurance man gives rather than collects money in an emergency; the storekeeper protects a child from punishment; the man in the cafeteria shows concern for a child's

health.

Social Agencies

Only one family talks about contact with Family Service. Mr. A was referred there by his probation officer. The agency insisted that Mo come too, and initially she was willing if it would help Fa. After one visit she concluded it "was for the birds". When Mo discontinued Fa began to flag and Mo supported him saying, indeed, it was futile for only one to go. Fa D when asked about Family Service says simply he's not interested; it doesn't help. Mrs. B had a brief experience with counseling at Catholic Charitable Bureau where she went seeking separation from Fa. She quickly gave it up because she felt the Sister blamed her and told her to remain at home and care for the children.

Two mothers talk about voluntary child placing agencies with considerable fear. Mrs. D told with some intensity about a social worker at a Catholic children's shelter who had tried to take her children away from her. She outsmarted her by removing them as soon as she found out. Mrs. E continually balks at any institutional placement for her children during hospitalization for fear she couldn't get them back. This is somewhat justified in her mind by the ADC worker's vow to take the children if her boyfriend or any other man is spotted in her vicinity.

Fa B has been involved in several self-placements for alcoholism. The initial steps in getting help he took for himself

by going to the Boston Committee for Education on Alcoholism where he was referred to the New England Hospital clinic. He committed himself to Bridgewater and later with great encouragement from the worker was admitted to Washingtonian Hospital for alcoholics. He violently distrusts the hospital, however, since it was from there he was committed to Boston State Mental Hospital for observation because of possible suicidal tendencies. However, he now keeps appointments at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital's alcoholic clinic where he can confide to the doctor things which he cannot to any one else. This is the only instance of successful voluntary association with a social agency where relationship therapy is involved. This is also the father who has maintained his contact with AA. Mrs. B visited the Roxbury Neighborhood House and by chance observed a woman's group; later she made inquiries. The president was responsive and accepting of her but there is no indication of whether she followed through on this or not. Mrs. E has had some contact with the Morgan Memorial nursery for her children, but she views it not as constructive experience for her children but as taking them off her hands. More recently she went to the mother's club associated with the nursery and there are indications that her attitude may be changing.

These families have had considerable experience with Public Welfare, either General Relief at times of unemployment or ADC when fathers are away in jails or hospitals or, as with Mrs. E, when there is illegitimacy. For two of the families it is an

accepted fact of their existence. The D family has had a long history of welfare contact. The South End Family Project worker feels that they accept the welfare agency as authoritative and will comply with requirements generally. However, there is evidence of deception when the possibility presents itself. Several checks have been lost or burned up under what the worker feels are suspicious circumstances. Also Fa has been known to use the welfare check for drinking. There is talk from time to time about getting off public welfare, but no action is taken in this direction.

Mrs. E, who has been on ADC for years and will probably be on some kind of welfare for the rest of her life, has the most to say on the subject. She seems to shift from fear to defiance. Probably her first experience with asking for financial help was for her mother after her father's death. She told the worker they could keep their money because the sum was so meager. Apparently she had quite an argument at that time and has argued with Boston welfare as well. She rather vainly hopes to go to work and get off ADC; but since her youngest child is only two years old this seems unlikely. Mo bragged that she was very "cold" to the welfare worker who "pumped her" about having a girl friend in her apartment for a period. Another time she was quite irate with a worker for asking neighbors questions about her rather than coming to her in person. In contrast, however, is her fear of the worker's reaction to her latest pregnancy and, at another time, of the worker's threats to

remove the children if any men were seen around.

There are some indications of what kind of social worker one of these families seemsto appreciate and how they view the contact or relationship. Mo D told the current South End Family Project worker about another social worker on the project who had brought his fiancee to meet the family. She commented that she was a pretty young girl and Mo planned to give them His and Her towels for a wedding present. She said she could talk easily to this male worker and to a nurse on the project who she said "kept them in stitches" the last time she visited. She is not "professional" which means she doesn't use big words and they can understand her. When Mo did give the wedding present, she commented to the bridegroom that he had put on weight, and she asked questions about his new wife.

Relations with social agencies, public and private, are almost entirely unsatisfactory. The families expect to be judged and punished either by having their children removed from them or by being themselves removed to an institution. This fear is fostered by ignorance about the power structure and legal procedure, for example, about who can remove children and under what circumstances.

For those families who have extensive and frustrating contact with public welfare there is no evidence of their dealing directly with the agency about their dissatisfaction. However, there is defiance and rebellion, such as using money for alcohol and being evasive or lying to the worker about circumstances in

the home. In one case, the D family, the South End Family Project worker suspected actual fraud.

Other Community Institutions: Hospital and Church

Boston City Hospital and the church are two institutions in the South End which play a role in the lives of almost every family. In this community, "the church" is the Catholic Church almost without exception and Boston City Hospital, considered as a totality, is the place where most South End mothers are born, give birth, and die. There are almost no references to any other community institutions, so I have focused on these two.

Boston City Hospital

The only specific mention of contact with the hospital in the A family is when Fa suggests that Mo see a psychiatrist about her depression. When the psychiatrist suggested voluntary commitment to a mental hospital, she refused for fear she wouldn't be able to get out. She had liked the Human Ecology doctor, however, and in his report he describes her as able to spontaneously give a good deal of family history. She used him for the children's illnesses as well as for her pregnancy. Mo herself admits, though, that she usually did just the opposite of what the doctor said.

Mrs. B also had a good relationship with the Human Ecology doctor, used him medically and asked for help with housing. She was less able to give a good history and according to the

doctor said nothing about the alcoholism in the family. Fa was suspicious of the doctor's attentions to mother, and he was the one who compared notes with fellow workers on the job and found that their wives didn't get the same treatment at Boston City Hospital. However, during delivery Mo had difficulty with the nurses and signed herself out of the hospital early.

Mo C had considerable conflict over Boston City Hospital and was influenced by neighborly gossip of the pros and cons. She preferred Massachusetts Memorial Hospital as a "family type hospital" and felt secure living near by; since there were so many family illnesses. (Boston City Hospital is in the next block, so proximity cannot be taken as a valid consideration in this case.) The family's stay in North Carolina had worried Mo because they were so far from medical care, and Ronny had been very sick. Mo's fears of Boston City Hospital were partly based on the fact that MM had lost a baby there once. She feels it is so big you can't get nursing help when you need it. However, she was able to go through pre-natal clinic when Fa sat with her part of the time. These waits in the out-patient department make her particularly anxious. Her last child was successfully delivered there. The parents were very dissatisfied with their son's treatment at Metropolitan State Mental Hospital. They felt personnel didn't have the answers to their questions. They were often unavailable and particularly avoided them after Ronny got a black eye. A question the family asked themselves was whether Ronny would have been accepted at Kennedy Memorial Hos-

pital if they had had money to pay.

Mo D has many complaints about Boston City Hospital. She gives as an example the time she took Tommy to the accident floor with what she thought was a serious arm injury and the doctor gave it only scant attention. Later in out-patient, her diagnosis was confirmed and so were her suspicions about the hospital. The family is well known, particularly in the children's building. The ward aides recognize Mo and the children and occasionally are very disagreeable when she doesn't visit. An old "battle axe" of a nurse kept her from bringing Johnny home after an illness, and she refused to go back for him. She did seem to get along well at the Boston TB Sanatorium. According to the worker, this was probably because she was encouraged to be completely dependent. Her relationship to her Ecology doctor perhaps went to the other extreme and was the most positive among the five families. According to her, he was the only good physician she ever had and she would like to have all her babies under his care. One of the children was named for him. Fa complained that Mo had a seductive relationship with the doctor and went so far as to tell his mother they were sleeping together and practicing fellatio. FM told him "to shut his dirty mouth"! Fa has always shown some anxiety about Boston City Hospital. He claimed he was afraid to visit the children for fear of getting lost, yet he did manage to get to see his mother when she was hospitalized.

Mo E's experience with Boston City Hospital parallels that

of Mo D. She expresses frustration at the long waits, the insensitivity of doctors, inconsistency of diagnosis, the many return visits often with no progress. Recently, Mo took Tommy to the emergency entrance with what she thought might be measles. The doctor took one look and shoved her out. When she brought Dolly in with pneumonia, they made her give the child alcohol baths and clean up vomit, but offered no help and equipment. She was particularly antagonistic about pre-natal clinic where they first said she was pregnant, then said no, and finally agreed that she was. Mo partially solves the problem by sneaking around looking at medical records, particularly diagnoses of the children when they are hospitalized. Her relationship with the nursing service seems particularly poor. She admitted being afraid she would scream during delivery and the nurses would get angry. She herself got angry at the rough handling she got from nurses at the dental clinic and walked out. When she tried to arrange special nursing service for her critically ill child, she was unsuccessful with the nurses and finally turned to the project for help. Here again the Human Ecology doctor is the one bright spot. She wishes he could be the family doctor and keeps tenuous contact by sending him Christmas cards. During delivery she commented, "I knew I could hold on to him. I would have gone all to pieces but I behaved myself because he was there." She wishes she could have him for the next baby because no one else ever visits her in the hospital.

Four out of the five families were referred to the South End Family Project from the Human Ecology Program. Each of these mothers has given birth to at least one baby at Boston City Hospital. Mothers D and E both have extensive and unsatisfactory experience with the hospital. Their constant complaint is that they are kept waiting and kept ignorant. Just as with public welfare, no efforts were made to ameliorate the situation directly but devious means were at times employed. Mrs. E was a master at reading charts when no one was looking. She also consulted her druggist when she felt the doctor's prescription was unsatisfactory.

Three of the mothers talk vaguely of difficulties with the nursing service, which have led to signing out of the hospital early and foregoing necessary treatment. On the other hand, the relationship to the Human Ecology doctor in each case was very positive. The doctor's going out to the mother and taking an interest in the total family situation seems to have fostered a wish to prolong the relationship. Several mothers would like to have this doctor for all their babies. One sends him Christmas cards, another named the baby after him.

The Church

The A's marriage was a mixed one which gave Mo considerable concern. She went to talk with a clergyman once who disapproved and, according to her, recommended a separation. She tried to practice her religion over Fa's protest but actually never went

to Church much. She went to a local priest for material help and had once or twice considered talking further with him, but nothing came of it. The situation changed considerably recently when Fa was converted to Catholicism while at Concord Reformatory. The parents are now separated and father is working as a farmhand at a Catholic institution, but in the meantime Mo has had the marriage solemnized.

Fa B has always been quite close to the Church and once thought of becoming a priest. Mo was converted to Catholicism as a girl because all her friends were Catholics. Both parents have always attended church regularly. This is the only family which seems to have a strong relationship with a particular priest, Father McC. He was actively trying to help Fa with his alcoholism as had priests at churches they had attended in the past. The priest went looking for father when he was drinking, went to court with him and brought him home from jail. One of his goals was to get him to the Washingtonian Hospital. Despite this concern, Fa found it difficult to share his feelings of guilt and anger with the priest but could do so with the social worker. While drinking heavily Fa went to the rectory to talk to the priest who gave him \$4 which he spent on "booze". Finally, Father McC threatened to terminate the relationship if Fa didn't reform. Now that Fa has stopped drinking, the family is active in the church. The children attend parochial schools and the family takes time to see that they know their prayers. Attendance at church is regular and, as mentioned before, Fa

has participated in religious retreats with AA members.

Mo is the Catholic in the C Family but attends church only irregularly. Fa is a Southern Baptist but no mention is made of any religious activity on his part. Mo makes three negative references to Catholic institutions which may be indicative of her overall attitude: 1) Catholic camps are too strict; 2) she dislikes Kennedy Memorial Hospital because it is Catholic; and 3) would Ronny have been admitted to Kennedy if they had been able to pay?

Mo D claims she attended church regularly before her civil marriage. After her illegitimate pregnancy she felt too guilty to attend or have the marriage solemnized. However, all the children were baptized, and Dorothy is studying for her first communion which is to be a big family event. They go to church on Easter and indeed, according to the worker, new clothes on Easter are more important than eating. Fa was fairly recently converted although the circumstances are unknown (he claimed to be Episcopalian). He wanted the marriage blessed before going to Long Island Hospital, feeling it would solve things between the parents. However, his church going hasn't increased since this was done. The worker thought the family had received food from the church in the past and recently Mo describes subscribing to a Catholic magazine when a nun came peddling it. Her comment about herself was that she had no sales resistance. She had bought True Confessions magazine the same week and had no interest in either of them.

Mo E has little contact with the Catholic Church beyond christenings. Her friend, Mary, arranged for Sally's christening at the Cathedral. Mo felt guilty and embarrassed because Mary was drunk during the service and made improper remarks to the priest. Mo was also uncomfortable because she wasn't married. For the next baby she is having another friend arrange the christening and she will not be present. Recently, Mo sent the children to a nearby Episcopalian Sunday School with Mary's daughter. The minister who was aware that the children were Catholic discreetly questioned Mo to see if she knew what kind of church they were going to. Mo replied that later they could decide to be Catholics but for now they enjoyed the Sunday School. The worker feels Mo uses this to get the children off her hands for a few hours on Sunday. Mo's only direct reference to religion was reported by the worker. At the time Dolly was quite sick, Mo confided to him that she thought God was punishing her. She had sent the children to her boyfriend's house in a taxi one day when she got fed up with them.

Only one family out of the five participates fully in the church. Two marriages until recently were mixed religions which aroused guilt on the part of the Catholic wives and ostensibly was the cause of their estrangement from the church. A third marriage continues to be mixed but Mo C shows little concern about her status with the church. Two mothers also mention illegitimacy as a factor which keeps them away from church. Although most of the parents do not attend church they do

observe the forms in varying degrees and seem to value the outward signs, such as baptism, confirmation, and solemnization of marriage. Having the proper clothes for these occasions is critical in the D family. Easter clothes are more important than eating and the exchange of christening dresses and confirmation clothes is a sensitive indicator of extended family relations.

Only one family expresses any feeling that the church exploits them. Mo C intimated that a Catholic hospital was overly concerned with money. She is the one who seems most alienated from the church.

By contrast, the B family has made considerable use of the church. Both Mo and Fa showed signs of early interest in religion. Fa wanted to be a priest and Mo was converted as a girl. Unlike the other families whose problems kept them away from the church, Fa B was helped directly with his alcoholism by a priest. This also represents the only long standing personal contact within the church, although Mo A talks of a brief relationship concerning material needs. Currently the total B family has been drawn into church activities from religious retreats to parochial school.

There is only one direct reference to God or religious beliefs..Mrs. E expresses a fantasy of direct retribution for a wrong action.

Social Activities

In Family A there is very little shared activity between

husband and wife. Mo comments that when they were first married they went to the wrestling matches and once during a separation Fa arranged such a date. Mo enjoys sports including baseball and stock car racing. Fa agrees with her on these choices, but she feels that if they were away from Boston or city life their interests would diverge. Back in 1952, they took one of the children to the circus and Fa has taken Freddie to the airport since then. At home Mo does the crossword puzzles occasionally. On rainy days she has taught the children to string macaroni and play games like "Ring Around the Rosey", which she remembers from her own childhood experiences at the settlement. Fa's hobby is to construct model boats. Recently Mo has started going out with girlfriends to movies and bar-rooms. She commented about the bar, that she enjoys watching the people coming and going and notices the people visiting from the suburbs. They have an accent (like the worker's) and you can tell them apart. She and her friends mock them, call them "squares", "rubes", and "hicks". She insists city and country people are different and cannot change. As an afterthought she added that perhaps this doesn't apply to men as some of the outsiders (including doctors) date the local girls.

The B family shows a considerable amount of joint activity. Early in the marriage the parents went roller skating together. Now they go to the movies about once a week, to church regularly, and on pay nights they shop together. During the week they play cards in the kitchen until late at night and in summer go to the

beaches. On father's day off, the whole family, plus the maternal sister's children, go to the beach. Father plays baseball in the yard with the children and once took them to the dairy show on the Boston Common. He takes along a camera and gets pictures of the children. Currently, AA meetings consume much of Fa's time and Mo goes along to the annual meeting which is a big family affair with speakers, dancing and quantities of food. Since Fa is a devout Catholic he has participated in church activities for AA members. Fa is an active union member and attends these meetings regularly. Not long ago Fa went to hear Jimmy Hoffa speak and came back solidly behind the man.

Only one item is recorded for the C family: Mother took Debby to the beach.

Mr. D used to play football and baseball as an adolescent and was in the American Legion hockey team in his town. Now he goes to the wrestling matches or plays checkers and cribbage in the bar. Before Johnny was born, the parents had dreamed of traveling around the country utilizing Fa's vocation which he claims was landscape gardening in orange groves. Also about this time they used to enjoy going to the movies together. Now they confine themselves to a nightly radio program. Mo and Fa get in bed at ten at night and listen to two serials that last a total of a half hour. Over the weekend they amuse themselves listening to the radio and reading pocket books. For New Years, Fa had hoped to take Mo to a nightclub but there was no money

so they stayed home. Together they have taken the children to the zoo, the beaches and the downtown Christmas displays. On Halloween Mo took them around the housing project in costume. Recently the worker found her excitedly making dolls from colored cellulose cotton, a project described on the package. Mo takes the children on various excursions around town primarily because she fears going alone. About twice a week she and Dorothy go to the afternoon movie to see their favorite horror pictures. At home they watch television, especially the children's movies and the giveaway programs for Mo although she can't really believe that they give away "that much money". Before they had television, Mo would go to MM or FM to watch Sunday programs or frequently to the apartment of an older man named Bill for the same purpose. Sometimes Mo is compelled to get out and walk around at night although she feels the streets aren't safe anymore. She recalls how it was in the past when the Neighborhood House had street parties with dancing under lanterns. During the day she listens to popular music as she works and reads the more sensational newspapers. One very special occasion was a political rally she went to with a friend where they gorged themselves with free refreshments. During the parents' separations, Mo goes out with men who take her to beaches, amusement parks and once for a lobster dinner and dancing. She felt she didn't have the right kind of clothes to go out socially, however.

Mo E once spent a good deal of her time in barrooms but now confines herself almost entirely to visiting back and forth in her apartment building. In summer this social activity flows out into the parks and sidewalks. One reference was made to group singing to a guitar. Mo likes to read and consumes love and mystery stories. Recently her books from the library included Of Human Bondage.

In general, there is little mention of social activities in the case records. When couples go out together this tends to be to public amusement places rather than to homes. Both the B family and the D family have gone to the movies regularly at some point in their marriage. In the summer this is replaced by trips to the beach. Mr. and Mrs. A prefer wrestling matches. Bars and nightclubs occasionally attract these families, but more often mother or father will go to a barroom with companions of their own sex. At home a couple plays cards, listens to television or the radio or reads paperback books. Visiting back and forth in the home tends to be restricted to relatives if it occurs at all. Only Mrs. E has had groups staying for supper or singing to guitar music. The rooming house atmosphere seems particularly conducive to this kind of informal entertaining.

Excursions which include the children are usually landmarks in the family history. The places visited include the airport, the circus, the beach, the department stores at Christmas and the dairy show on Boston Common.

Voluntary associations and clubs are not typical of this group. Only the B family is socially active in AA, the union, and the church.

Occasionally a mother will play with her children in a more organized fashion. Mrs. A has taught them activities remembered from her early participation at a settlement. Mo D also involved the family in simple craft activity. She also takes the children around town with her to movies and stores. Fa B plays baseball with his boys.

Solitary amusement involves listening to television and the radio and sometimes reading. Only one father has a hobby, building model boats.

CHAPTER VI
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

What kind of contact does the multi-problem family have with relatives and friends and with the wider community? This is the question this study was designed to explore by taking a systematic look at five such families. The cases were selected from the South End Family Project, a demonstration project offering preventive mental health services to these families. The case records were examined to obtain information about relations to extended family, friends, service people, social agencies, community institutions, and social activities.

The families revealed many common characteristics. The parents are young people of twenty-five to thirty-five who average nine years of education. The resulting lack of vocational skills combined with a high rate of alcoholism (three out of the four men) shows up in the kind of jobs the men hold. They are low paid and menial and sometimes follow one upon the other in rapid succession. Of the nine adults (one mother is unmarried), three have been converted to Catholicism which seems to reflect a tendency to adopt certain elements of the predominant culture.

What little we know of the ancestors of these families supports the idea that they came from either England or Ireland several generations ago and have been settled along the East

Coast for many years. The city seems to have gradually lured them down from New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Maine, Ipswich to better themselves economically. Once in Boston these families have continued to move from apartment to apartment, but in two cases these moves were confined to one block of one street -- upstairs, downstairs, across the street, next door. These two mothers were born in this block and now are raising their families here. Another mother's large family (D) has been in the neighborhood over seventy-five years. Although the members marry or go off to jails and hospitals, they continue to be held within the web of family and neighborhood ties and eventually return. The women in the families seem to be the ones who maintain this continuity of residence over the years. The men tend to drift out of town into the army, the prisons, or just away.

Life within the community for these families frequently brings them into daily contact with relatives. In two cases mother and daughter are back and forth between apartments sharing the burdens of laundry, shopping, child care, and illness. Another mother has no contact with the maternal grandmother but has effectively substituted an older woman with whom she can share these tasks. In three cases where the grandmother is not emotionally or physically close to her daughter, an older sister plays a maternal role. She accepts and supports the younger girl in a way the grandmother has not. For example, Mrs. B ran away from a repressive household to join her older

sister in Boston and has remained close to her ever since, although she goes to visit her mother periodically. Mrs. E depends on her older sister to understand the fact that she has three illegitimate children, but the maternal grandmother refuses to have anything to do with her.

The wives who have fathers still living continue to see them even though the men have since remarried. Mrs. B's father lives with her whenever his second wife puts him out. Mrs. D has gone to her father for the tenderness and concern she could not obtain from her mother.

All of the husbands have contact with their paternal families. However, the records do not contain as much information about the nature or extent of this as they do for the wives. Since two of the paternal families are quite hostile towards the mother, the father visits them on his own. Three of the men are alcoholic and another is described as a heavy drinker. Several of the wives blame the paternal relatives for fostering dependence in their boys because they wanted to keep them at home. In one case the wife feels the paternal family actually encourages her husband to drink. For their part, two of the men express a longing to return to their families. Father C would like to take his children back to North Carolina for his mother to raise. Father D dares not visit in his mother's home for fear he would stay.

Friendships for this small group of families have a characteristic pattern for men and for women. The fathers seem

to escape from the threat of an intense relationship with the wife or mother into the masculine group. This is most frequently the barroom. With Father B who functions more effectively it also includes the AA, trade union, and church retreats.

The wives, on the other hand, form individual friendships but these tend to be impulsively begun and abruptly ended. During the course of the relationship, however, there is activity which is normally associated with great intimacy. Women picked up in the street are brought into the home for several days or weeks. The children are left in a friend's care for days at a time. There is evidence that these friends are sometimes valued not for their personality but simply for their presence. Mrs. E, for example, preferred the constant activity of a rooming house to the possible social isolation of an apartment. She referred to the drunks and drifters as her "family" and allowed them free access to her rooms.

Socializing between the sexes is not characteristic of these marriages. Only the B family goes to the grocery and the movies together, to AA and church functions. More typically, however, this behavior is reserved for courting. This may be either before marriage or during periods of separation or strain when the couple is making an effort to improve the relationship. At such times they might attend sporting events or meet in a barroom or other public place. Formal parties in the home are never mentioned in the records, although there are occasional informal gatherings of couples to eat or play cards

or in one case to sing and play the guitar. This kind of visiting back and forth is almost exclusively with relatives, usually siblings.

Looking at the total picture of contact with family and friends, one sees little evidence of physical isolation. Indeed, several of the mothers are rarely without adult company. However, listening to them talk about the important people in their lives can be deceptive. Time after time the maternal grandmothers are described as incapable of understanding or unwilling to listen to problems. "My mother has never seen the younger children and doesn't give them presents at Christmas." Grandfathers are described as brutal and rejecting. Sisters and brothers are ne'r-do-wells, quarrelsome, unreliable, bad mothers, certainly well rid of. Mrs. D reports one sister to the M.S.P.C.C. and "slaps up" another. It is tempting to accept such statements at face value and dismiss the relationships as unimportant or non-existent. The critical and casual attitude towards friends tends to confirm this impression.

In order to make sense out of the situation it seems fruitful to distinguish the concepts "relationship" and "contact" which heretofore I have used interchangeably. These families have extensive contact with relatives and friends but this need not indicate mature object relationships in the psychoanalytic sense of the word. In discussing some of this material with the staff of the South End Family Project, the word "tie" was suggested as more accurate. Certainly these

mothers seem almost literally tied to the maternal grandmother. Mrs. A feels that her mother controls her and interferes in her life in an unloving way, yet she expresses the fear that to leave her mother is to relinquish the possibility of care. Mrs. E retains the fantasy of reunion with her mother despite the fact of total rejection.

Another striking characteristic of the relations with both family and friends is their "all or nothing" quality. Mo D describes one bad experience after another with her sister Joan. The girl practices prostitution in the D home while she is supposedly caring for the children during mother's confinement. She brings her children for mother to take care of and then deserts. When Mrs. D goes looking for her she gets a beating from Joan's prison friends. Finally mother reports her to the M.S.P.C.C. declaring that she is a "no good mother." Joan, in turn, berates mother in court. I was astounded, then, to note sometime later that mother was looking forward to Joan's return from the reformatory. There seemed to be no memory for the severe difficulties which had beset the relationship in the past. In the same way, friendships which begin in a barroom or on a street corner may involve immediate intimacy and shared responsibility but one false move and the relationship is abruptly dissolved. Thus two friends commiserate about their alcoholic husbands, but one day the men have a drunken quarrel, and the friendship is abandoned.

My impression is that these relationships are not based on

understanding and affection for the person involved but rather are the convenient hook on which to hang intense emotional needs and fantasies. Minor frustrations and obstructions easily disrupt the contact and a substitute is sought. At the same time there are some notable exceptions. Mo D defends her friend Alice, who smells so badly, saying she feels sorry for her because the woman is on welfare and her man doesn't contribute anything for the care of the child (mother's boyfriend does). This indicates a nice sensitivity to another's pride.

What happens when these families have to deal with the wider community, with service people, agencies and institutions? In responding to people in the community there seems to be a subtle distinction between those people who are one of us and those who are not. There is an in-group and an out-group. To the former one relates with friendliness and mutual assistance--the stranger who has no place to stay, the insurance man who lends a hand, the grocer who protects a child, the neighbor who takes over chores at time of illness, the druggist who gives medical advice or sells abortion pills.

The outgroup consists of those in authority, the big people with power. There are indications in the data that these families seem remarkably ignorant of how the world runs. For example, several times mothers have expressed fears of having their children removed. Mrs. B felt she outsmarted the social worker at the Catholic shelter who she was convinced was plotting to take the children. Mrs. E accepted the welfare

worker's threat that if her boyfriend, Mack, was seen in the neighborhood, she would lose her children. She further believed her boyfriend could accomplish the same thing simply because he threatened to. There was no understanding that such action required evidence and court proceedings. Welfare funds are thought to be given or withheld according to the feelings of the worker and not in response to rules and regulations. Note Mrs. E's fear of the worker's reaction to her latest illegitimate pregnancy and what this might mean for her ADC. The reference was made to the worker's reaction and not to any ruling which makes a statement about illegitimacy. Two people refused to seek help with problems for fear of being committed to a mental hospital. For Mr. B the application procedures at the unemployment office were more than he could manage. He didn't know the last names of friends to use for references.

These families seem to cope with their inadequacies and fears in two ways. One way is to avoid the situation altogether. The familiar statement that Family Service is no help may mask confusion about how to behave and what the appropriate responses to people are. The D family accepted the unjust loss of their furniture rather than brave the mysteries of court action.

An alternative way of coping is to use devious means. Mrs. E is a master at reading medical charts because she is unable to get adequate information from doctors. The South End Family Project worker suspects the D family supplements their welfare funds by periodically claiming a check was lost or burned.

The total effect of this inability to cope with the wider community is to effectively insulate the families from the resources which might be used to achieve mastery. Thus they are unable to move out of what seems to be a community of relatives and friends who share or support the behaviors which perpetuate inadequate solutions to the tasks of earning a living and raising a family, i.e., inadequate jobs, dependence on welfare, and poor physical and emotional health.

Perhaps the plight of these families can be clarified by looking more closely at the B family which seems to have progressed furthest during contact with the South End Family Project. Looking first at the family history, this seems to be the only instance where the relatives generally have made successful adjustments and prospered. The maternal grandfather could be considered the "black sheep" of his family. There is the barest hint that the paternal relatives also were in better circumstances. The paternal grandfather was trained as an embalmer. The possession of a skill, even though he didn't use it, is rare for this group of families. The father, too, began with good jobs and then deteriorated as the drinking increased.

Although the mother's relatives are scattered, she maintains contact which indicates an ability to sustain a relationship over time and space. There are indications of family unity among the paternal relatives, as well in their efforts to support the grandparents in the TB sanitarium and arrange for

the younger children to remain in the home.

When the mother first came to Boston to live with her sister, she was socially active. She knew father's family before she met him when he returned from the service. Father's use of masculine social groups during adolescence bodes well for the eventual substitution of AA and union groups for the bar-room gang. The shared activities of the courting period have persisted during the marriage. Mr. and Mrs. B shop together, see a movie once a week and frequently play cards together. The mother's sister, Ruth, gave her a baby shower, an activity which denotes planning for and anticipation of a child as well as a more stable social life.

Both of these parents had a well established relationship with the church prior to their difficulties. Thus they were able to remain within the church and use its resources - namely the persistent efforts of a particular priest - for helping to solve their problem. This differs markedly from the other families who felt estranged from the church and its resources because of their problems.

For purposes of prognosis, it would seem that families, like individuals, which have achieved adequate functioning in the past and where only one line or generation has been unable to maintain this, are more hopeful than those which have adopted an inadequate mode of functioning which has been passed on from generation to generation.

This opportunity to contrast what seem to me to be two

kinds of problem families -- the truly "hard core" extended family and the single "multi-problem" family within a more stable extended family was an accident of case selection in this study. It suggests, however, that this could profitably be studied in a more systematic way, as I feel this is an important distinction both for understanding and treating the two kinds of families.

Further, I think it would be useful to study families like the D family, which show generations of pathology, through direct interviews as well as traced back through the years to understand more fully the factors which perpetuate the pathology and hopefully to identify critical points of intervention and prevention.

And finally, in this study I have consistently felt the need for information about families from the same economic and social background for purposes of comparison. If these multi-problem families function poorly, what is the nature of "successful" functioning in the South End. At times I have questioned whether these families differ very much from their neighbors. If, indeed, they do, what are the factors which determine success and failure?

*Accepted 7-23-60
Katherine Spencer*

SCHEDULE

1. Names of parents and children
2. Birthdates
3. Ages
4. Ethnic background
5. Education
6. Worker contact and referral
7. Religion
8. Location
9. Marital history
10. Vocational history
11. Relations with kin
 - a. genealogical chart
 - b. maternal relatives
 - c. paternal relatives
12. Relations with friends
13. Relations with service people
14. Relations with social agencies
15. Relations with other community institutions
16. Social activities

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