CHILDREN OF BATTERED WOMEN: PERSONALITY
PATTERNS AND IDENTIFICATION

THESIS

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By

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Mental health professionals have observed that children who witness interparental violence frequently display either an affrontive, demanding personality style, or a passive, compliant style. The prevalence of these personality types and their relation to identification, stress, and other variables was evaluated in a sample of 40 children (age range = 6 - 12 years old) who have witnessed parental spouse abuse. Children completed the Children's Personality Questionnaire and the Parental Identification Questionnaire. Mothers completed the Life Experiences Survey. Independent ratings of the children's personality were made. The results validated the existence of these two personality styles among both male and female witnesses, and supplied evidence for their relation to paternal identification, familial instability, and parental ineffectualness. The implications of these findings for assessment and intervention are discussed.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.......................................................iv

CHILDREN OF BATTERED WOMEN: PERSONALITY PATTERNS AND IDENTIFICATION

CHAPTER

I. Introduction ....................................................1

General Adjustment: Children at Risk
Personality Patterns
Familial and other Contextual Factors
Parental Identification
Characteristics of Spouse Abusers and their Victims
Stressful Events

II. Method ..........................................................12

Subjects
Materials
The Children's Personality Questionnaire
and the Early School Personality Questionnaire
The Parental Identification Questionnaire
The Children's Personality Rating Scale
The Life Experiences Survey
Procedure

III. Results ........................................................24

Reliability Check on CPQ Scores
Personality Types
Multiple Regression Analysis

IV. Discussion .....................................................36

Appendix ..........................................................50

References .........................................................60
## LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Frequency of Abuse and/or Witness to Parental Spouse Abuse in Family of Origin</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Participant's Age and Race</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Intraclass Rater Reliabilities of Staff, Mothers, and Children on CPQ and ESPQ Factors</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Frequency of Subjects' &quot;Hits&quot; on Affrontive and Passive Personality Factors versus &quot;Misses&quot; on Random, Non-salient Factors</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Frequencies of Affrontive/Passive Personality Types as a Function of Sex</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Frequencies of Subjects Showing a Dominant Personality Pattern versus No Dominant Personality Pattern</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Intercorrelations among Predictor Variables</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Frequency of Batterers' &quot;Hits&quot; on Affrontive and Passive Personality Factors versus &quot;Misses&quot; on Random, Non-salient Factors</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Frequencies of Affrontive/Passive Personality Types for Batterers</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Frequencies of Affrontive/Passive Personality Types for Mothers</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Frequency of Mothers' &quot;Hits&quot; on Affrontive and Passive Personality Factors versus &quot;Misses&quot; on Random, Non-salient Factors</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Correlations of Mothers' Ratings of the Batterer with their Children's Ratings of the Batterer</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

Current legislation and media coverage on child abuse has led to a great increase in the number of reported incidences of physical and sexual abuse and a greater awareness by the public of its detrimental effects upon these children. Concomitantly, the reported incidence of and empirical data on spouse abuse have increased over the past years (Kuhl, 1982; Straus et al., 1980) and a concern for the children of these marriages has arisen. While there currently exists a tremendous amount of research on child and spouse abuse only a handful of research articles directly address the effects marital abuse has on children who witness this abuse (Hughes & Barad, 1982).

Different definitions of what constitutes spouse abuse and different methods of reporting make accurate estimates of its incidence difficult. While the National Institute of Mental Health estimates that spouse abuse occurs in 50 to 60 per cent of American families (Rosenbaum & O'Leary, 1983), others report that at least one instance of wife battering occurs in at least 30 per cent of American homes (Hershorn & Rosenbaum, 1985; O'Leary, 1985; Wasileski et al., 1982; Fields, 1977-78; Straus et al., 1980). Another disturbing statistic is that husband-wife homicide accounts for about 13
per cent of all homicides (Warner et al., 1982). Some of the above statistics are based on actual reported incidences making those rates somewhat conservative. Reasons why underreporting might occur may include the socially undesirable nature of the behavior, the protection of one's partner, and the minimization or forgetting of negative events. Other rates reported are projected estimates and may be more representative of the actual rates. Regardless of the fact that the accuracy of these estimates may be questioned, there is no doubt that family violence takes place in a substantial number of American homes and may have significant effects upon children who are involuntary witnesses to this violence.

In fact, one of the most frequent findings in the research on spouse abuse is that a high percentage of the abusers were witnesses of parental abuse and/or were abused themselves. In one study by Roy (1977), 81 per cent of his sample of abusive husbands witnessed some form of violence in their family of origin. Fitch and Papantonio (1983) found that 71 per cent of abusive husbands in treatment said they saw violence between their parents and 50 per cent of these men claimed to have also been abused as children. Other studies report that about 50 per cent of male abusers witnessed abuse between their parents (Fotjik, 1977; Flynn, 1977). In contrast, only about 35 per cent of victims of
spouse abuse report witnessing parental abuse in their family of origin (Roy, 1977; Wasileski et al., 1982). Similarly, O'Leary (1985) and Rosenbaum and O'Leary (1983) have found that exposure to interparental violence significantly predicts later physical aggression in males but not in females. While the actual rates of children that grow up to be spouse abusers may be low, the fact that a child witnesses violence between his parents greatly increases the likelihood of engaging in or having a tolerant attitude towards the use of violence (Owens & Straus, 1975; Carroll, 1977; Straus et al., 1980; Post et al., 1981; Rounsaville, 1978).

**General Adjustment: Children at Risk**

When marital and parent-child relationships are discordant, a number of potentially harmful factors exist that may hamper a child's psychological growth and adjustment, whether or not violence is involved. In a series of studies, using well established measures of child behavior and marital adjustment, Emory and O'Leary (1982) found strong associations between children's adjustment and marital discord in clinical samples. Similar relationships were found in studies that used families from non-clinical populations. In addition, Block et al. (1981) compared teacher's ratings of children's behavioral adjustment and independently obtained reports of marital discord and found significant relationships between these two variables.
While marital discord and children's adjustment appear to be related, the amount of conflict and type of conflict may be more predictive of adjustment. One study that looked at the type of marital conflict was performed by Rutter et al. (1974). They found the relationship between children's adjustment and discordant marriages characterized by quarrelsomeness, to be stronger than the relationship between children's adjustment and discordant marriages characterized by apathy.

When marital discord is characterized by violence, the children in these families are likely to experience many potentially detrimental effects. They are already at risk for developing behavioral and emotional problems because they are exposed to marital discord. In addition, they are exposed to violent role models who may lead them to the development of a specific script for future violent actions, posing an additional threat to their adjustment (Gelles & Straus, 1979; Post et al., 1981). A child may learn that violence is an acceptable means of resolving conflict and exerting control over others. They may even come to believe that violence is an unavoidable occurrence when people live together (Owens & Straus, 1975).

Failed attempts by these children to prevent the occurrence of violence may leave them with tremendous feelings of inadequacy, guilt, fear, and vulnerability (Rosenbaum & O'Leary, 1983). These violent relationships may lead to the
formation of parent-child alliances which, in turn, may result in "confused generational boundaries and role reversal patterns" (Elbow, 1982). These children may have great difficulty establishing any trust if their basic needs have been neglected by their parents in order to keep the family unit together.

In a study on the emotional risk to children of conjugal violence, Moore (1981) found that most of these children were adversely affected in one or more of five different ways. She found that the children 1) were scapegoated, 2) were used as pawns in marital battles, 3) became depressed by turning their aggression inward, 4) had interpersonal relationship problems in school, 5) were physically assaulted by their parents, which occurred in 25 per cent of the cases.

An indepth study on sixty battered women and their children was performed by Hilberman and Munson (1977-78). They found that many of these children were affected in a number of ways. The younger children (preschool and early latency age) frequently displayed somatic complaints, enuresis, insomnia, and school phobias. Older children's behavior was characterized by aggressive, disruptive behavior or by a withdrawn, passive, clinging, and anxious style along with somatic complaints. The latter pattern was more characteristic but not limited to females. Most of the children in their study were found to have impaired attention spans and difficulty performing academic tasks.
In view of the fact that these children grow up in a violent household where marital discord is the norm, and where there may be a long history of pathological familial interactions, it is not surprising that these children manifest some behavioral disturbance. Along these lines, there are two important questions that the present study attempts to resolve. First, are these children's maladaptive and pathological behaviors a random and unpredictable response to violence, or can they be classified into distinct patterns of behavior? Secondly, if the latter is the case, do these patterns reflect a predisposition to a particular type of response that comes from parental identification and modeling?

**Personality Patterns**

Although children display a wide variety of behavioral problems, there exists a large amount of data suggesting that, in general, maladaptive problems are not random and can be classed together into two distinct categories. A common methodology employed in this research has been to develop a problem checklist and then to factor analyze the results. While some of these studies have come up with a number of narrow-band factors that vary among subgroups, most have arrived at two broad-band factors that are somewhat stable over time and across different populations (Achenbach, 1978; Quay, 1977; Hale & Zuckerman, 1981). Peterson (1961) describes the first factor or response style as a "tendency
to express impulses against society", labelled "conduct problem". He calls the second factor a "personality problem" which is representative of children who display personality styles of low self-esteem, social withdrawal, and dysphoric mood. Achenbach (1978) has come up with similar factors which he labels "externalizing" and "internalizing".

Those who have had extensive professional contact with children who have witnessed abuse (Doster, 1984a; Hilberman & Munson, 1977-78) have noticed two distinctive coping styles among this population that are somewhat similar to the personality patterns described above. These children have been characterized as having an affrontive, demanding style who will at times act aggressively towards others. Other children who have witnessed abuse appear to engage in a passive, shy, withdrawn, dependent, and compliant coping style. If these coping styles are in fact distinct, non-random, and stable characteristics, to what extent does modeling of parental attributes influence their development?

Familial and Other Contextual Factors

Parental identification. Apart from genetic and sociocultural influences, most would agree that parental identification plays a major role in a child's personality development. For instance, some studies have related patterns of parental identification to adjustment, finding that males, and in some cases females, who are more highly identified with their fathers than with their mothers, are
better adjusted (Sopchak, 1952; Helper, 1955; Gray & Klaus, 1956). In a similar study by Heilbrun and Fromme (1964), well-adjusted males were significantly more identified with high masculine fathers whereas maladjusted males showed a trend toward identifying with feminine father models. However, it remains to be seen whether children who identify with their spouse abusing fathers are more well adjusted than children who identify with their mothers or other significant models. Furthermore, recent changes in the conceptualizations of masculinity, femininity, and androgeny may suggest very different theoretical relationships between parental identification and adjustment.

Other characteristics, such as parental nurturance, have been shown to have a significant impact on identification. Evidence suggests that boys tend to identify more with nurturant fathers than non-nurturant fathers (Bandura & Walters, 1959; Bronson, 1959; Distler, 1964; Mussen, 1961). Moreover, Heilbrun (1964) found that the strongest identification with fathers was among boys whose fathers were both nurturant and high-masculine. Maternal identification was strongest in girls whose mothers were both nurturant and low-feminine.

In the general population, it is clear that there exists a number of salient parental characteristics that can influence the process of identification and can have much impact on a child's adjustment. When family violence exists,
additional dynamics may come into play that effect identification and adjustment. There have been many studies that support the original findings of Bandura's "Bobo doll" experiment; that children are more likely to imitate a violent role model if there is vicarious reinforcement for violent behavior and when the model's status is highly regarded (Bandura, 1961; Bandura & Ross, 1963). Neopolitan (1981) found that the stronger a child identified with a punishing parent the greater was the child's increase in violent behavior. More specifically, in this study it was found that the better the relationship between the child and a father who encouraged aggression (ie. the greater the status of the father), the more often the child took part in aggressive behavior. However, when the child had a good relationship with a mother who modeled aggression, lower levels of aggression were found.

Characteristics of spouse abusers and their victims. If parental characteristics do indeed influence the development of specific personality patterns in their children, one would expect to find similarities in their personality attributes. Men who batter have been characterized as emotionally immature (Hilberman & Munson, 1977-78; Shorkey, 1978), rigid in thought and behavior (Ponzetti et al., 1982; Shorkey, 1978), inexpressive, passive, and submissive (Ponzetti et al., 1982; Snell et al., 1964), and have underlying feelings of inadequacy and inferiority (Weitzman & Dreen, 1982). With
regard to the characteristics of the victims, Walker (1977-78) found that the majority of spouse abuse victims tend to score high on a "learned helplessness" scale. Even long after the abuse had stopped, these women were still seen as helpless. Weitzman and Dreen (1982) also see these women as helpless, lacking in assertion, shy, withdrawn and sensitive. Similarly, in a study by Doster (1984b), the majority of battered women in his sample were seen as displaying a sensitive style (eg. unpredictable and moody behaviors), while close to half of the subjects also showed an inhibited style (eg. shy and ill at ease). The most consistent finding in this area is that both male spouse abusers and female victims of abuse are highly dependent and display a tremendous need for nurturance (Goldberg, 1982; Hilberman & Munson, 1977-78; Ponzetti et al., 1982; and Weitzman & Dreen, 1982). Thus, it appears that spouse abusers and their victims demonstrate some personality attributes and behaviors that are similar to their children's proposed behaviors and styles described earlier.

Unfortunately, most studies that describe the characteristics of spouse abusers and their victims, do so in terms of personality traits whereas children's characteristics are usually described in terms of behavior. This makes it hard to draw parallels between the two. Nevertheless, as demonstrated above, there is some support in the literature for the similarities between the children's coping styles.
mentioned earlier and the personality characteristics of batterers and their victims. In an attempt to avoid the problems of comparing traits with behavior in describing personality, this study uses the same instrument to measure both adults' personality and children's personality so that direct comparisons can be made.

**Stressful events.** While children of marital violence may display one of the two distinct coping styles discussed previously under certain circumstances, these patterns may not be reflected in their everyday behavior. It is proposed that stressful events lead to the enactment of one of these learned patterns and that the intensity and duration of stressful life experiences will be related to the presence and stability of the child's coping style. For the child who has been taken from the home on a number of occasions due to chronic cycles of abuse and separation, one would expect their style of responding to stress to be fairly stable and consistent. On the other hand, the child who has been brought to the shelter after the first instance of spouse abuse, may be somewhat erratic in behavior and not yet settled on a preferred style of coping with insecurity and stress.
CHAPTER II

METHOD

Subjects

Subjects were 21 female and 19 male children between 6 and 12 years of age. All subjects were residents of a battered women's shelter in the Dallas--Ft. Worth area and all were witnesses to parental violence in their homes.\(^1\) Mean age for the children was 8 and 1/2 years. Fifty-two and one half per cent of the subjects were White (n = 21), 35 per cent were Black (n = 14), and 12.5 per cent were Hispanic (n = 5). Subjects came from 27 different families so that some children had one or more siblings or half-siblings that also participated in the study.\(^2\) Mothers reported that 25 per cent (n = 10) of these children were physically abused on at least one occasion by the batterer. Another 7.5 per cent

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\(^1\)Participants in this study were residents of the Friends of the Family Shelter in Denton, the Family Place in Dallas, and the Arlington Women's Shelter. The shelter staff were instrumental in making this project successful. Their contribution and support is greatly appreciated.

\(^2\)The fact that some siblings were used as subjects in this study should not be seen as contaminating the independence of the scores or biasing the results. Even though siblings may rate the same mother and/or batterer at times, each score represents a dyadic rating and should be considered unique and independent of other scores.
(n = 3) were victims of verbal abuse according to their mothers.

Of the 27 mothers that participated, 55.6 per cent were White (n = 15), 33.3 per cent were Black (n = 9), and 11.1 per cent were Hispanic (n = 3). Twenty of the mothers were married, 3 were divorced, and 4 were single. Twenty-six per cent (n = 7) of the mothers reported that they were abused as children. Forty per cent (n = 11) of the mothers indicated that they were witnesses to parental spouse abuse. Only 7.5 per cent (n = 2) reported being both physically abused and witnesses to parental abuse.

Demographic data on the batterers was gathered from the children's mothers. Ethnicity data for the batterers matches that of the mothers. Of the 27 batterers considered in this study, 55 per cent (n = 15) were reported to have been physically abused as children while 63 per cent (n = 17) were witnesses to parental spouse abuse as children. Of the total sample, 40 per cent (n = 11) were both abused and witnesses to parental abuse as children. Mothers reported that 26 per cent (n = 7) of the batterers were not abused while only 7 per cent (n = 2) were not witnesses to abuse. Mothers were unsure of the remaining batterer's childhood status as victims of abuse or witnesses to parental abuse. (See Tables 1 and 2.)
Materials

The Children's Personality Questionnaire and the Early School Personality Questionnaire. The Children's Personality Questionnaire (CPQ) is a factorially-derived personality inventory for use with children between the ages of 8 and 12, developed by Porter and Cattell (1968). It is similar in

TABLE 1

Frequency of Abuse and/or Witness to Parental Spouse Abuse in Family of Origin

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>Abused</th>
<th>Witness</th>
<th>Abused &amp; Witness</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children (n=40)</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers (n=27)</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batterers (n=27)</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>40%</td>
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TABLE 2

Participant's Age and Race

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Mean Age</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children (n=40)</td>
<td>6-12</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>52.5%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothers (n=27)</td>
<td>22-40</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Batterers (n=27)</td>
<td>23-44</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>55.6%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

scope to the 16 Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) used with adults. The Children's Personality Questionnaire
consists of 140 items of which a child can respond in one of two ways. For example, one item might be, "Are you alone most of the time or almost always with at least one friend?" Subjects completed form B, one of the four parallel forms of this questionnaire. Each item loads on one end of fourteen different bipolar factors such as reserved vs. warmhearted, dull vs. bright, affected by feelings vs. emotionally stable, obedient vs. dominant, etc. When completed, this questionnaire yields a profile ranking from 1 to 10 on each of the 14 factors. The mean factor score is 5.5.

The CPQ appears to be a moderately reliable and valid instrument. Test-retest reliabilities for form B of the CPQ range from .42 for factor O to .82 for factor B. The median factor test-retest reliability was .65. Internal consistencies (ie. homogeneities) range from .32 for factor O to .79 for factor B with a median coefficient of .71. Construct validity coefficients range from .38 on factor G to .84 on factor B with a median coefficient of .59. However, these internal consistency and validity coefficients are for forms A and B combined. Individual form coefficients were not available.

There have also been numerous studies that have explored the relationships of children's scores on the CPQ with real life criteria to establish the CPQ's concrete validity. For example, Karson (1965) found that children with conduct disorders were significantly more dominant (E+), tough minded
(I-), more excitable (D+), more cold and aloof (A-), and individualistic (J+). In another study (Cattell & Cattell, 1969), delinquent boys were found to score similarly on factors A, E, and D, as well as to display significantly lower scores on factor B. Other research within the realm of psychology, has looked at the relationship of CPQ scores with anxiety problems, neuroticism, general pathology, underachievement, as well as mental retardation. These studies have repeatedly shown the utility of this instrument.

The Early School Personality Questionnaire (ESPQ) was previously designed by Coan and Cattell (1966) to be administered to 6, 7, and 8-year-olds. The ESPQ is considered to measure the same personality constructs as the CPQ. However, it differs from the CPQ in that it is orally administered, has 160 items (part A1 and A2), and gives scores on only 13 of the CPQ's 14 factors.3

Internal consistencies for the ESPQ range from .31 for factor A to .83 for factor E with a median coefficient of .56. Construct validities, based on multiple correlations between the actual scales and the pure factors range from .32 for factor C to .84 for factor E with a median coefficient of .65. As of yet, there is not much research on the ESPQ's direct concrete validity. One study however, by Dielman, Cattell, and Lepper (1971) found a consistent relationship between factor E on the ESPQ and behavior problems in
variety of areas including, hypertension, neurasthenia, paranoid problems, social withdrawal, and acting-out.

Scoring of the CPQ and ESPQ was performed according to the standard instructions provided in their respective manuals. A personality profile for each child was derived. As hypothesized earlier, children of battered women should fall into one of two personality types: either the affrontive or passive types. In order to test this hypothesis, certain poles among the 14 factors that appear to be representative of the personality characteristics of the two types of children were selected for subsequent analysis.

**Affrontive personality type.** High scores on factors D, E, and N (ie. the right-hand poles) were selected as representing the affrontive child's personality. High scorers on factor D are described as excitable, impatient, demanding, and overactive. High scorers on factor E are described as dominant, stubborn, aggressive, competitive, assertive, and bossy. Subjects who score high on factor N are described as manipulative, calculating, and shrewd.

**Passive personality type.** Low scores on factors E and H, and high scores on factor O were selected as representing characteristics found in the passive type child. Low scorers on factor E are described as obedient, submissive, conforming, mild, and accommodating. Low scorers on factor H are described as shy, bashful, restrained, hesitant, and
threat-sensitive. High scorers on factor O are described as insecure, worried, guilt-prone, and apprehensive.

In addition, subjects' scores on six poles of the remaining factors were chosen at random for comparative purposes. These six personality characteristics, while meaningful in and of themselves, were not considered to be relevant to the hypothesized personality types. Low scores on factors C, D, F, and Q4, along with high scores on factors F and H were randomly chosen as the non-salient characteristics. Low scorers on factor C are described as affected by feelings, easily upset, and emotionally less stable. Low scorers on factor D are described as inactive, placid, and undemonstrative. Low scorers on factor F are noted to be serious, restrained, and prudent. Low scorers on factor Q4 are described as relaxed, tranquil, and unfrustrated. Children who score high on factor F are said to be enthusiastic, cheerful, and happy-go-lucky. Finally, high scorers on factor H are described as uninhibited, bold, and venturesome. While children who witness parental violence are likely to possess some of these characteristics, these attributes do not appear to fit with either the affrontive personality or passive personality types in any systematic way. Therefore, "hits" on the salient factors were compared to "misses" (actually hits) on the random factors to see if the salient characteristics were more prevalent than non-salient characteristics.
**The Parental Identification Questionnaire.** An additional form of the CPQ, called the Parental Identification Questionnaire, was designed by the experimenter. It was used to profile the subject's parents on these same personality factors. Each item had been rewritten to apply to one's parents instead of to the child. The items were changed to statements rather than left as questions. Children were asked whether a statement was more characteristic of their mother or their father. For example, each child was asked to put a card with the statement, "This parent wishes they had more time to be alone" into a pile labeled either "mother" or "father". This forced-choice procedure was used so that the child had to decide which parent was the most salient role model for each of the items. If, for example, both parents were considered to be passive, the child was forced to choose which parent he or she believed was the most salient model of passivity. Using this procedure allowed for more discrimination in the child's perception of each parent's personality.

The purpose for this altered administration of the CPQ was to obtain a personality profile for mothers and batterers that was directly comparable to their children's profile so that parental identification could be assessed. The first step in deriving identification scores was to obtain the parents' personality profiles. Each statement that the child placed in the "mother box", for example, applied to one pole
of one particular factor. Totals for each pole of each factor were calculated and profiles for both the child's mother and the batterer were made.

An objective scoring procedure similar to the identification measurement procedure used by Heilbrun (1962) with his Identification Scale was used to compare parents' profiles with their children's factor scores. The identification scoring proceeded by determining which parent scored on the similar pole of each construct to the child. The parent that scored on the similar pole to the child received a number of credits depending upon how much they represented that construct. The amount of credit was equal to the absolute value of the difference between that parent's score and the mean (5.5). For instance, if the child obtained a score of 9, the mother a score of 2, and the father a score of 8 on factor A, then the father would receive 2.5 credits \((8 - 5.5 = 2.5)\) and the mother, 0 credits. This procedure was repeated for all of the factors. The algebraic sum of all the credits for each parent was calculated. The parent with the most credits was considered to be the most salient parental model for that child.

The Personality Rating Scale. Finally, staff members of the shelter who had had close contact with the children, were asked to rate each child using the Personality Rating Scale (PRS). The PRS, which closely resembles the CPQ profile sheet, contains short descriptions of the 14 bipolar factors
separated by a scale ranging from 1 to 10. The staff was asked to indicate where they felt the subject belonged on this scale with regard to his or her present personality. Similar ratings were obtained from each subject's mother. These measures were used to assess the intraclass reliability of CPQ ratings for the various personality factors.

The Life Experiences Survey. The Life Experiences Survey (LES; Sarason, Johnson, & Seigal, 1978) was used to assess the amount of stress and change that had taken place in the lives of the battered women in this study. The LES consists of a list of 43 events which often brings about change, such as, marriage, serious illnesses, change of residence, death of family member, pregnancy, etc. Mothers were asked to check off any of the listed events that they had experienced and to indicate if the event had occurred within the last 6 months, six months to one year, or more than one year ago. In addition, for each event that the mothers had experienced, they were to rate the type and extent of its impact upon them. A scale from -3 to +3 was used to indicate whether the event was "extremely negative" (-3) to "extremely positive" (+3), with "0" representing "no impact". With 43 items, some of which have multiple parts, there was a possible range of impact scores from -171 to +171.

A number of variables were derived from the Life Experiences Survey including, a) the number of events
checked, b) the total amount of stressful change (measured by summing both the positive impact scores and absolute value of the negative impact scores), c) the intensity of negative stressful change (sum of the negative impact scores alone), and d) the overall impact of change (difference between the positive and negative impact scores).

While the LES is a relatively new instrument, initial estimates conclude that it is a moderately reliable measure. Two reliability studies are reported in Sarason et al. (1978). Test-retest correlations for the total change score were .63 and .64. For the negative change score reliability coefficients of .56 and .88 respectively were reported. With regard to validity, the total change and negative change scores on the LES appear to correlate with state and trait anxiety measures. In addition, the negative change score was also found to be correlated with certain types of maladjustment.

Procedure

All subjects, depending upon their age, were asked to complete the Children's Personality Questionnaire or the Early School Personality Questionnaire according to the instructions provided with this measure. Following this, they were given the Parental Identification Questionnaire. The statements for this measure were presented on a series of 140 index cards, each having an altered CPQ statement printed on it. These children were asked to appropriately place the
card into one of two boxes, representing either their mother or their father.

The subjects' mothers were interviewed to obtain various demographic data including the number of times they have had to leave home due to abuse and the number of times the subject had resided at a battered women's shelter. They were then asked to complete the Life Experiences Survey and to rate their children using the Personality Rating Scale. Finally, staff members were also asked to rate each child they had observed, using this same measure.
CHAPTER III

Results

Reliability Check on CPO Scores

Multiple ratings of the subjects' personality characteristics were made using the CPQ and ESPQ factors. Raters were shelter staff members and the children's mothers. The children's own CPQ or ESPQ results served as the third independent rating. In order to obtain an estimate of the reliability of ratings for each factor the inter-correlations between raters was calculated using an intraclass correlation (Guilford, 1956; Ebel, 1951), which takes into account the accuracy of ratings and the rater's closeness of fit with one another. An underlying assumption is made that the different raters are interchangeable. These correlation coefficients can be found in Table 3. The first set of correlations, labelled "reliability of ratings", are the average intercorrelations of the raters and yields an estimate of the reliability of ratings when using any single rater. The second set of correlation coefficients, labelled "reliability of average ratings", estimates the reliability when all three rater's ratings are used together.

Overall, the factor reliabilities when a single rater is used appear to be fairly low. However, when rater's ratings
TABLE 3
Intraclass Rater Reliabilities of Staff, Mothers, and Children on CPQ and ESPQ Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CPQ and ESPQ Factors&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>J</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Q4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reliability of Ratings&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability of Average Ratings&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.36&lt;sup&gt;*,&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.45&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.38&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.53&lt;sup&gt;**&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.34&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.31&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.28</td>
<td>.31&lt;sup&gt;*&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>* P < .05; ** P < .01</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Reliabilities for factor Q3 were not calculated since this factor does not appear on both the CPQ and ESPQ. The following is a brief description of each of the bipolar factors. A = cool vs. warm. B = concrete thinking vs. abstract thinking. C = affected by feelings vs. emotionally stable. D = inactive vs. excitable. E = obedient vs. dominant. F = serious vs. enthusiastic. G = disregards rules vs. rule-bound. H = shy vs. uninhibited. I = self-reliant vs. sensitive. J = zestful vs. guarded. N = natural vs. manipulative. O = secure vs. insecure. Q3 = uncontrolled vs. controlled. Q4 = relaxed vs. tense.

<sup>b</sup>This is an estimate of the factors' reliability when using any single rater. These reliability coefficients were calculated using Ebel's intraclass correlation formula (1951).

<sup>c</sup>This is an estimate of the factor's reliability if all three raters are used. These coefficients were also calculated with Ebel's formula.

were combined, many reliabilities reached significance. In fact, all but one of the factors that contribute to the
affrontive and passive personality types had reliabilities that were significant at or below the .05 level. The reliabilities for all three of the affrontive factors (D, E, and N) and two of the passive factors (E and H) were positive and significant. This suggests that staff, mothers, and children were in moderate agreement with regard to their perceptions of these affrontive and passive characteristics. However, the low reliability on factor 0 (security vs. insecurity) suggests that raters had different perceptions of the meaning of this factor.

**Personality Types**

As presented earlier, high scores on Factors D, E, and N were selected as representative of those hypothesized characteristics found in "Affrontive" children. Low scores on Factors E and H, and high scores on Factor 0 were selected as representative of those hypothesized personality characteristics found in "Passive" children. A chi-square analysis was performed to determine if the frequency of subjects' CPQ and ESPQ scores on the hypothesized factors were significantly greater than scores on other non-salient factors. Hit rates for all subjects (i.e. males and females combined) on the salient personality factors were compared to hit rates on an equal number of non-salient factors drawn randomly from the remaining CPQ factors (i.e."misses"). To consider a subject's score a "hit", his or her score on the targeted factor had to exceed a certain cutoff score.
Subjects who "hit" neither the salient nor the non-salient factors were eliminated from the analyses.

A number of chi-square tests were computed using increasingly stringent cutoff scores. The most stringent of the cutoff scores were 8 on the high end of the factors and 3 on the low end of the factors, $\chi^2(2, n = 30) = 10.4, p < .01$, in which significance was reached. [In other words, a subject was considered to have "hit" a factor if his or her score exceeded a 8 on the high end or was below a 3 on the low end of that particular factor.] Thus, using a moderately conservative cutoff score, subjects appear to have more extreme scores on the predicted personality factors than on non-salient factors. However, 25 per cent of the subjects were eliminated from the analysis at this cutoff because they had no hits on either the salient factors or the random factors. Nevertheless, with less stringent cutoff scores significance was also reached without the loss of significant numbers of subjects. Results of these analyses are reported in Table 4.

The next step of data analysis was to determine if either the affrontive or the passive style was predominant and if male subjects versus female subjects show a preference for a particular personality pattern. A sex by personality pattern frequency table was set up and a chi-square test computed. No significant differences were found between males and females preference for either of the hypothesized
personality types, \( \chi^2(2, n = 38) = 2.71, p < .25 \). (See Table 5.)

**TABLE 4**

Frequencies of Subjects' "Hits" on Affrontive and Passive Personality Factors versus "Misses" on Random, Non-salient Factors\(^a\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cutoff Levels</th>
<th>Hits &gt; Misses</th>
<th>Hits = Misses</th>
<th>Hits &lt; Misses</th>
<th>Total(^b)</th>
<th>( \chi^2 )</th>
<th>( p ) level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;5 or &gt;6</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>12.15</td>
<td>( p &lt; .01 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;4 or &gt;7</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12.74</td>
<td>( p &lt; .01 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;3 or &gt;8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10.40</td>
<td>( p &lt; .01 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;2 or &gt;9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>( p &lt; .70 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\)Affrontive type factors were D+ (excitable, impatient, demanding), E+ (dominant, stubborn, aggressive), and N+ (manipulative, calculating, shrewd). Passive type factors were E+ (obedient, submissive, conforming), H- (shy, bashful, threat-sensitive), and O- (insecure, worried, guilt-prone). The random factors were C- (affected by feelings), D- (inactive, undemonstrative), F- (serious, restrained), Q4- (relaxed, tranquil), F+ (enthusiastic, cheerful), and H+ (uninhibited, venturesome). The "+" signifies the right hand pole of the factor while the "-" signifies the left-hand pole of the factor.

\(^b\)Subjects who had no hits and no false positives were eliminated from this analysis.

However, there is a significantly greater proportion of subjects showing a preference for one personality type or the other (dominant pattern) versus subjects who have an equal amount of affrontive and passive type characteristics (random pattern), \( \chi^2(1, n = 38) = 10.52, p < .01 \). (See Table 6.)
TABLE 5
Frequencies of Affrontive/Passive Personality Types as a Function of Sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Affrontive &gt; Passive</th>
<th>Affrontive = Passive</th>
<th>Affrontive &lt; Passive</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( \chi^2 = 2.71 \quad p < .25 \)

TABLE 6
Frequencies of Subjects Showing a Dominant Personality Pattern versus no Dominant Personality Pattern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Dominant Pattern</th>
<th>Non-dominant Pattern</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( \chi^2 = 10.52 \quad p < .01 \)

A subject was considered to have a dominant personality pattern when the number of "hits" on the Affrontive type factors was greater than or less than their "hits" on the Passive type factors. A non-dominant pattern exists when a subject has an equal amount of "hits" on both Affrontive and Passive type factors.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was performed to determine if any of the hypothesized familial and contextual factors would aid in the prediction of the subjects' personality types. The dependent variable was the subjects' personality
type as defined by the number of hits on affrontive type factors minus the number of hits on passive type factors. Therefore, numbers between 1 and 3 indicated more affrontive (A type) personality characteristics whereas -1 to -3 indicated more passive (P type) characteristics. A zero indicates that the subjects hit equal amounts of A and P characteristics. Independent variables in the analysis included the batterer's identification score, the mother's identification score, the number of items checked on the Life Experiences Survey (LES), the negative impact scores on the LES, the total impact scores on the LES, the sex of the subject, the number of times the child has left home due to parental spouse abuse, and the number of times the child has been in a battered women's shelter. All variable intercorrelation coefficients can be found in Table 7. A stepwise procedure including batterer's identification score, number of LES items, and number of shelter visits, revealed a multiple $r = .64$ and $r^2 = .40$, $F (3,36 \, n = 40) = 8.30$, $p < .0003$. (See Table 8.) Other independent variables did not reach significance.

Since there appears to be a strong degree of relationship between a subject's personality pattern and his or her identification with the batterer, additional analyses were performed. First, hit rates for batterers on the affrontive type personality characteristics, passive type personality characteristics, and random factors were
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality Type</th>
<th>Father Identification</th>
<th>Mother Identification</th>
<th>Number of items on L.E.S.</th>
<th>Total of Negative Change on L.E.S.</th>
<th>Total of All Change on L.E.S.</th>
<th>Sex of Subject</th>
<th>Times Left Home Due to Abuse</th>
<th>Times in a Shelter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Personality Type</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father Identification</td>
<td>.483</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother Identification</td>
<td>-.066</td>
<td>-.434</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Items on L.E.S.</td>
<td>.339</td>
<td>.059</td>
<td>.146</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of Negative Change Scores on L.E.S.</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>.050</td>
<td>.119</td>
<td>.665</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of all Change Scores on L.E.S.</td>
<td>.151</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.117</td>
<td>.795</td>
<td>.854</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex of Subject</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>.245</td>
<td>-.065</td>
<td>-.079</td>
<td>-.077</td>
<td>-.199</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times left Home due to Abuse</td>
<td>.274</td>
<td>.184</td>
<td>-.103</td>
<td>.234</td>
<td>-.142</td>
<td>-.056</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Times in a Shelter</td>
<td>.420</td>
<td>.402</td>
<td>-.270</td>
<td>-.071</td>
<td>-.010</td>
<td>-.109</td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>.327</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 8
Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33.83</td>
<td>11.28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>48.94</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>F = 8.30, p &lt; .0003</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regression Equation: \( Y = -3.33 + .087(A) + .085(B) + .456(C) \)

aThe dependent variable was the subject's personality type \( Y \). Independent variables that reached significance in this stepwise procedure were the father's identification score \( A \), the number of items checked on the Life Experiences Survey \( B \), and the number of times that the subject has been in a battered women's shelter \( C \).

bVariable weights are in raw score form.

calculated from the child's rating of the batterer. Using relatively conservative cutoff scores (>7 and <4), 21 out of 27 batterers had more hits on the salient characteristics than on the random characteristics, \( \chi^2(1, n = 27) = 8.33, p < .01 \) (see Table 9).

TABLE 9
Frequencies of Batterers' "Hits" on Affrontive and Passive Personality Factors versus "Misses" on Random Non-salient Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hits &gt;</th>
<th>Hits =</th>
<th>Hits &lt;</th>
<th>Misses</th>
<th>Misses</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batterers</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>( \chi^2 = 8.33 )</td>
<td>( p &lt; .01 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Using the same cutoff scores, batterers were rated as having significantly more affrontive type characteristics than passive type characteristics, \( \chi^2(2, n = 27) = 9.55, p < .01 \). (See Table 10.)

**TABLE 10**

Frequencies of Affrontive/Passive Personality Types for Batterers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Affrontive &gt; Passive</th>
<th>Affrontive = Passive</th>
<th>Affrontive &lt; Passive</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Batterers</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( \chi^2 = 9.55 \)  
\( p < .01 \)

As a matter of interest, the same procedures were used with the children's ratings of their mothers. While mothers received a significantly greater amount of hits on the passive characteristics than on the affrontive characteristics \( \chi^2(2, n = 27) = 9.55, p < .01 \) (see Table 11),

**TABLE 11**

Frequencies of Affrontive/Passive Personality Types for Mothers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Affrontive &gt; Passive</th>
<th>Affrontive = Passive</th>
<th>Affrontive &lt; Passive</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mothers</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\( \chi^2 = 9.55 \)  
\( p < .01 \)
their overall number of hits on the salient factors was significantly less than their frequency of hits on the non-salient random factors using a liberal cutoff (<5 or >6), \( \chi^2(2, n = 27) = 20.67, p < .01 \) (see Table 12).

**Table 12**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hits &gt;</th>
<th>Hits =</th>
<th>Hits &lt;</th>
<th>Misses</th>
<th>Misses</th>
<th>Misses</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mothers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>( \chi^2 = 20.67, p &lt; .01 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since the mothers were asked to rate the batterers on the CPQ factors using the Personality Rating Scale, it was possible to compare these ratings with their children's ratings of the batterer. Correlation coefficients can be found in Table 13. Only factor Q3 (uncontrolled vs. controlled) reached significance. This correlation is in the negative direction suggesting that the children and their mothers were systematic in their ratings but in the opposite direction. Children tended to see the batterers as more uncontrolled, careless of social rules, and likely to follow their own urges. Mothers, on the other hand, rated the batterers as being more controlled, socially precise, and having good will power.
TABLE 13

Correlations of Mothers' Ratings of the Batterer with their Children's Ratings of the Batterer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor a</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>J</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Q4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td>-.34*</td>
<td></td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05

Factor B (less intelligent vs. more intelligent) was not calculated since children did not rate their parents on this factor.
CHAPTER IV

Discussion

One of the issues that arises from the results is that rater reliabilities for a single rater on many of the personality factors seem to be low. There are a number of possible explanations for these low reliabilities. First, the intraclass correlation that was used is more stringent than Pearson's correlation in that it makes more demands upon the raters. Not only does it consider the relationships of the ratings, but for the reliability to be high the ratings must be in fairly close proximity. Anything that caused the raters' ratings to be distant from one another, such as a large deviation and randomness among the staff or mothers, would tend to decrease the reliabilities.

Secondly, there may have been some difficulties with the staff's ratings. At some shelters, the staff had only minimal exposure to some of the children due to the family's short stay. Additionally, a few of the staff's ratings were made two to three weeks after the children had left the shelter. While these difficulties occurred with only a minority of the subjects, this could have contributed to lower reliabilities. More stringent controls may have yielded higher correlations.
Finally, and most importantly, the intent for using multiple raters was not to train observers to reach a high degree of agreement, but to see where the staff members and the children's mothers stood on their day to day perceptions of these children. No training of the raters was done. Mothers and staff were simply asked to indicate where these children fell on certain personality characteristics. With this in mind, one might not expect to find high correlations. The low reliabilities may just reflect that the children's own perceptions of their personality differ from those of the staff and their mother's.

Another issue that needs attention is the measurement of identification scores. Identification could have been easily measured by comparing mother's ratings of themselves and their ratings of the batterers with their ratings of their children or with the children's CPQ scores. There are two reasons why this was not done. First, the mothers' ratings might be construed as biased. Typically, battered women who have just entered a shelter are in a crisis situation. They are experiencing a high degree of stress and may be highly anxious, agitated, and depressed. Under these circumstances, the ratings of the batterers might tend to be more negative than if they were made under less stressful circumstances. Secondly, even if their ratings were fairly accurate, it is the child's own perceptions of others that seem to be the most influential in the child's developing certain
personality characteristics (Heilbrun, 1965). Thus, the reason for using the forced-choice child's ratings instead of the mother's ratings was to insure that the child would choose the adult who was the most salient role model for the characteristics being measured. The altered CPQ method (i.e. Parental Identification Questionnaire) was used because the child's level of understanding would not permit the use of a simple profile rating using personality descriptors.

The demographic data on the subject population appear to greatly resemble previously reported data in the spouse abuse literature. Specifically, in this study 25 per cent of the children who were witnesses to interparental violence were reported by their mothers to have also been physically abused. This closely matches percentages reported in other studies using similar populations. The rates of witnessing parental abuse among batterers (63 per cent) and victims (40 per cent) seem to correspond to other previously reported rates. In addition, the ethnicity and education levels of the participants seem to be representative of urban battered women's shelter populations.

As was hypothesized, children who have witnessed parental spouse abuse exhibit a number of specific personality characteristics which appear to be non-random and distinct. When these characteristics were classified into two distinct patterns, either an affrontive, demanding, and aggressive type pattern or a passive, shy, dependent, and
compliant type personality pattern, subjects, for the most part, fit nicely into one or the other pattern. It should be noted, however, that these children demonstrated these patterns at fairly moderate levels. They did not appear to be very deviant from the normative population. When the analyses were set with increasingly stringent criteria, fewer subjects fit neatly into the hypothesized groups. In fact, this might be expected given that children in battered women's shelters tend to put on a façade of well-being that can lead to healthy self-descriptions (Hughes & Barad, 1982). Nevertheless, at moderate levels, children possessed significantly more of these personality characteristics than they possessed of the other non-salient, random characteristics that were measured.

In support of the second major hypothesis, the results suggest that there are specific familial and contextual factors that are significantly related to the child's personality pattern. The first factor that seemed to have a major influence on the child's development of these personality patterns was the degree of identification with the batterer. Specifically, the stronger a child's identification was with the batterer the more likely one was to display the affrontive, demanding, aggressive, manipulative pattern. When the batterer's personality patterns were looked at more closely, they tended to possess the same affrontive characteristics to an even higher degree.
Many of these children, both males and females, adopt personality patterns that appear to be directly modeled for them by a violent parental figure. Thus, these children's aggressiveness, dominance, demandingness, etc. does not seem to be just a generalized reaction to situational stress but is more likely a learned pattern that has developed over a long period of time.

While many of these children demonstrated an affrontive personality similar to the personality of a great majority of batterers, an even greater number of children adopted a passive, withdrawn, and submissive personality pattern. And while mothers, in general, demonstrated many of the same characteristics, these children did not identify with their mothers. It appears that these children are learning a set of behaviors or role relationships that are reciprocal to that of the batterer. Their passivity seems to be a complimentary response to the batterer's aggressive personality rather than a style learned through observational modeling of their mother.

The fact that both passive and affrontive children's personality patterns were related to the strength of identification with the batterer supports much of the literature on identification and role acquisition. Various researchers have suggested that children learn gender specific behaviors from father's differential reinforcement of boy's and girl's behaviors. In addition to gender
identity, children may learn a larger set of behaviors or roles which, through reinforcement, become consistent styles or patterns of responding. These passive and compliant children seem to develop a style of response that keeps them relatively safe in a hostile and usually punitive environment. This pattern of passivity is also similar to the coping styles exhibited by children who have witnessed sibling abuse (Pfout et al., 1982). Whereas the aggressive children might feel "safer" by identifying with the batterer, those children who do not identify strongly with the batterer or their mothers try to insure their safety by developing a reciprocal role of passivity and compliance.

While this study was not designed to assess why children do or do not identify with the batterer, three brief explanations are offered. First, in an early study by Bandura and Walters (1959), boys who had highly punitive but non-nurturant and non-rewarding fathers demonstrated "relatively little father preference and had little perception of themselves as acting and thinking like their fathers." In other studies as well, the degree to which a father figure is nurturant has been shown to be positively related to father identification or father similarity (Bronson, 1959; Mussen, 1961). A model's status and power may also be key factors in children's observational learning. Bandura et al. (1961) in their pioneering modeling studies have shown that children are more likely to imitate behaviors...
of models who have high status. Powerful adults, such as batterers, tend to have tremendous control over a child's rewards and punishment. This control can be very influential in a child's modeling certain behaviors. In addition, children may tend to model powerful adults because it increases their chances of being safe and it may also make them feel powerful (Hirsch, 1974).

The second factor that was significantly related to a child's personality pattern was the number of changes that the subject's mother acknowledged experiencing (as measured by the Life Experiences Survey). The more changes that the mother had experienced the more likely her child was to demonstrate an affrontive type personality. If one considers the amount of change to be an index of the amount of stress and/or instability in these children's lives, then this relationship makes sense. Looking at the characteristics that describe the affrontive type child, ie. excitable, impatient, demanding, easily distracted, overactive, and aggressive, it is not surprising that an increase in the number of stressors would lead to higher frequencies of these characteristics. If we speculate that the affrontive children are likely to be observed as less well adjusted than the passive children, additional support comes from the recent work of Wolfe et al. (1985). In working with children of battered women, they found a strong relationship between adjustment and maternal stress. Those children whose mothers
had high degrees of stress were rated as having significantly more behavioral problems than children whose mothers experienced less stress.

Furthermore, the overall impact or quality of the changes was not related to the development of a child's personality pattern. This suggests that whether changes are viewed by mothers as positive or negative, the magnitude of the change is more influential in the development of these children's response styles. One reason for this might be that children view certain changes much differently than their mothers. For instance, most mothers rated "change in residence" and "marital separation from mate" as having a positive impact. However, their children are likely to experience these changes as stressful and to rate them negatively. In general, it may be that when children grow up in an unpredictable environment where discordant and maladaptive relationships are the norm, that any change, even in one member, is likely to upset the precarious balance of the family system. With greater amounts of change and a concomitant increase in stress, the more likely it will be for these children to become excitable, impatient, and aggressive.

Finally, a third contextual factor was significantly related to the children's personality pattern. It was found that the greater the number of times a child had stayed in a shelter the more likely he or she was to demonstrate
affrontive type characteristics. This may be understood better if the frequency at which a mother returns to a shelter with her child can be seen as indicative of the parents' inability or ineffectualness in resolving family conflict. When a mother has repeatedly returned to a shelter it is likely that she sees the shelter as the only available support system. She may have little money and few friends or family with whom she can ask for help. When the next crisis occurs, she again seeks out refuge in a shelter. While this temporarily serves to insure her own safety and that of her child, it increases the family's instability and reflects the parents' ineffectualness in problem solving. This makes it especially difficult for a child to get his or her needs met. These children become more likely to seek out others to meet their needs. One way that children can get others to take notice is by being affrontive. It is most often the excitable, demanding, assertive, stubborn, and aggressive children who gain the attention and concern of others rather than the compliant and passive children.

In sum, the personality styles of children who witness parental spouse abuse can be seen as fairly distinctive and organized patterns that have been largely influenced either by modeling of paternal characteristics or through the learning of reciprocal role relationships with the batterer. Other factors that also play a part in the acquisition of these patterns are the amount of change or stress in one's
life and the parents' ineffectualness or difficulty in meeting the needs of their children.

While the present study was not specifically designed to assess the effects that witnessing interparental violence has on children, this might be one goal for future research. The inclusion of an index of severity of violence as well as various measures of adjustment would be useful for research in this area and, if included in the present study, may have helped to explain some results. For example, knowing the degree of violence in these families might help to explain why certain children adopt an affrontive style rather than a passive style. Also, knowing the degree of exposure to violence might aid in the prediction of future violence. The child's level of adjustment may have been useful information. While one might speculate that these affrontive children have more behavior problems than the passive children, only an objective measure of adjustment could validate this hypothesis. Measures such as the Behavior Problem Checklist (BPC) and the Personality Inventory for Children (PIC) might be useful in assessing adjustment in future research. Comparitive studies that look at the effects of different forms of violence accross different populations would be useful. Knowing how these children differ from sexually abused children, physically abused children, and children whose parental relationship is characterized by discord but
not violence might lead to more appropriate prevention and treatment.

Longitudinal research with this population is also needed, especially since there is such a high risk for male witnesses of parental spouse abuse to grow up to become abusers. These high risk children need to be followed through adolescence and young adulthood so that other cognitive, social, and/or emotional influences related to these periods of development can be explored. Other research might look at these children's patterns of problem solving accross time and accross situations to see if they generalize to situations outside the family context. Furthermore, the consistency and the stability of these personality styles should be examined. Studies might look at these patterns to see if they remain constant throughout adulthood or fluctuate between the two observed patterns depending upon situational variables. These are just a few areas in which longitudinal research might be valuable.

It is clear from the present study, as well as from other research in this area (Wolfe et al., 1985) that when familial stresses increase there is a greater chance that children will be more affrontive, aggressive, and likely to display many behavioral problems. This is not to say that the passive, compliant child is better adjusted. Some researchers have suggested that these passive children, particularly the females, may not display behavioral problems
in their youth, but instead may experience high rates of familial and mental health problems later in life (Carlson, 1984). What is necessary then, is an adequate assessment of familial stressors and subsequent interventions to significantly reduce this stress. In addition to stress reduction, teaching violent couples to become more effective parents is suggested by the present research. Furthermore, developing social support systems outside of the shelter would be extremely important in helping to stabilize these families.

The importance of early intervention cannot be overemphasized. When families continue to go through cycles of abuse, children's maladaptive behaviors and coping styles are likely to become more and more restrictive, inflexible, and resistant to change. While many shelters already implement effective counseling programs for battered women, there is a great necessity for shelters to employ skilled child-care staff who can develop appropriate therapeutic programs for their children. The focus here could be on helping children develop alternatives to helplessness and violence, as well as helping them develop adaptive problem solving skills.

Temporary residence in a shelter is only the first step in what should be a multimodal and multilevel, long-term intervention strategy. Initially, working on an individual level with the batterers, victims, and their children would
be appropriate. In addition, since spouse abuse can be conceptualized as an indicator of family dysfunction (Pfouts et al., 1982), it would be useful to focus treatment at the familial level. As mother's and batterer's self-esteem, effectiveness, and ability to deal with stress begins to improve, a move toward intervention with the larger family system is suggested. Breaking maladaptive patterns, such as drawing children into marital battles, and developing communication skills can be effectively dealt with in family treatment. In the final correlational analysis it was found that children tend to view batterers as uncontrolled and careless of social rules while mothers see them as controlled and having good will power. This is an interesting finding in view of the fact that these women are victims of often impulsive and uncontrolled violent acts. This discrepancy in children's and mother's perceptions of the impulsivity of the batterer points toward the need for mothers to be made aware of their children's attitudes and feelings toward the batterer especially when it deviates from their own attitudes. Furthermore, in light of the present finding that children's personality styles are partially influenced by their relationship with the batterer, family treatment becomes essential. Within the context of family therapy the examination and subsequent reorganization of maladaptive role relationships between family members is made possible.
Finally, since socioeconomic factors contribute to familial stress, intervention at the societal level might be expected. As mentioned before, the development of ongoing, long-term support systems outside the family will be necessary to maintain adaptive family functioning. The provision of financial and legal assistance to these families may also be required.

Hopefully, such multifaceted approaches will aid in increasing the current functioning of these families and ultimately lead to the prevention of family violence in future generations. Still, additional research is needed to more fully explore the effects that interparental violence has on children and to elucidate other interpersonal and intrapsychic dynamics involved in the commission and transmission of family violence.
Appendix A

Statement to Subjects

Children's Project

Hello. My name is Jeff Adler and I am a graduate student in the Psychology Department at North Texas State University in Denton. I will be running a project here at the Shelter. Recent studies on battering have shown that there is a higher rate for male children who have witnessed abuse (rather than females) to be at risk for following their father's violent behavior in their future relationships. I am interested in looking at the differences in how these children see their relationship with their mother and father (or man in the house) so that we can understand this problem better and try to design a way to prevent it from happening. There has been very little attention given to the effects that viewing battering in the home has on children, and more attention to these children's needs is necessary.

If you have any children (either male or female) between the ages of 6 and 12, I hope that you and your children will participate in this short project. About two hours of your child's time will be needed to complete some questionnaires regarding their personality and how they view their parents' personality. I will need to meet with you only briefly (15 to 20 minutes) to ask you some questions and to have you fill out a few short rating forms which will help me to know more about your child's personality and background.

By participating in this project you may be helping other mothers and children who have had similar experiences to understand more about the factors that are related to spouse abuse. Your participation is completely voluntary and at any time you may withdraw your consent and discontinue participation in this study. All information will be kept strictly confidential. Any questions that you might have about this project or the procedures, I will be more than happy to answer.

Thank you,

Jeff Adler
Appendix B

Children's Project

I __________________________________________ have read the description of this project and fully understand the procedures and requirements. I willingly give my consent to have myself and my child complete the necessary information. I also understand that any information gathered will be kept strictly confidential and that participation in this project is completely voluntary.

______________________________
Child's Name

______________________________
Parent / Legal Guardian

______________________________
Date
Appendix C

Parental Identification Questionnaire

Part I

1. This parent gets together with others in the evenings. (A+)

2. When someone tells your parents that what they believe is wrong, this parent will still believe it anyway. (A-)

3. This parent's ideas are better than other adults' ideas. (C+)

4. This parent makes a lot of mistakes. (C-)

5. This parent wishes that they had more time to be alone. (A-)

6. This parent is slow. (C-)

7. This parent feels unhappy when a party goes on and on. (A-)

8. This parent's plans do not often work out. (C-)

9. This parent will do something if someone tells them to. (A+)

10. This parent is sure of him or her self. (C+)

12. When others make mistakes this parent would laugh at them. (D+)

13. This parent likes to watch wild animals in the woods. (E-)

14. This parent gets mad when someone yells at them. (F+)

16. This parent pays attention when someone is talking to them. (D+)

17. This parent goes places without telling anyone. (E+)

18. This parent can put unpleasant things out of their mind as if they had never happened. (F+)

20. This parent obeys the rules all the time. (D-)

21. This parent reminds you more of a teacher. (E-)
22. This parent could easily learn how to fly an airplane. (F+)

24. This parent can sit and relax. (D−)

25. This parent has many accidents. (E+)

26. This parent's feelings often get hurt. (F−)

28. If someone called them a bad name, this parent would call them a bad name back. (D+)

29. This parent wears their clothes very neatly. (E−)

30. This parent would rather be the captain of a peaceful ocean liner than the captain of a submarine in a war. (F−)

31. This parent likes to brag about the things they know. (G−)

32. This parent is wide awake most days. (H+)

33. This parent would rather play a rough game like football than fly a kite. (I−)

34. This parent can read well. (J+)

35. This parent does the things they should do. (G+)

36. This parent is afraid of large dogs in the street. (H−)

37. This parent reminds you of an elf or pixie. (I+)

38. This parent wishes that they were better looking. (J+)

39. If one of your parents was a teacher, this one would let the kids be noisy. (G−)

40. This parent has trouble falling asleep. (H−)

41. This parent likes to read about wars and battles. (I−)

42. This parent forgets things that they tell people they will do. (J+)

43. This parent always blames the other parent when they are mad at each other. (G−)

44. If people aren't doing something the way that your parents like, which one will tell them. (H+)
Appendix C--Continued

45. This parent would rather be a school teacher than a great hunter or athlete. (I+)

46. People pay enough attention to this parent. (J–)

47. This parent would rather listen to their friends than talk him or her self. (G+)

48. This parent can easily keep tract of things that belong to them. (H+)

49. This parent would rather bring you to auto races than to a dog show. (I–)

50. This parent succeeds in most things that they try. (J–)

51. This parent will talk to the other one as if their feelings don't matter. (N+)

52. This parent can understand other people easily. (O–)

53. When there's a group singing this parent would not join in. (Q3–)

54. This parent would boil up inside if some people started teasing them. (Q4+)

55. This parent is the first one to try exciting new things. (N+)

56. This parent is usually happy and contented. (O–)

57. This parent would rather learn something new at work than play a game. (Q3+)

58. This parent gets upset when they have to do chores. (Q4+)

59. This parent likes working best. (N–)

60. This parent hardly ever feels lonely. (O–)

61. This parent gets upset when people play jokes on them. (Q3–)

62. This parent often does things so fast that they are sorry later. (Q4+)

63. This parent would rather learn something from a book than watch television. (N–)
64. This parent is upset a lot of the time because so many things go wrong. (O+)

65. This parent will do their chores without being told. (Q3+)

66. This parent pays more attention to you when you read something to them. (Q4−)

67. This parent would rather not be polite to people. (N+)

68. It is hard for this parent to be brave when they go to the doctor. (O+)

69. Even when someone tells them exactly how to do a job, this parent will still do it the way that seems easiest. (Q3−)

70. This parent remembers most of what they learn. (Q4−)

Part II

1. This parent thinks that most children are nice. (A+)

2. Other grownups take advantage of this parent. (A−)

3. Other people really like this parent. (C+)

4. People think that this parent doesn't do things very well. (C−)

5. This parent is alone the most. (A−)

6. Grownups think that this parent doesn't behave very well. (C−)

7. This parent likes only a few other grownups. (A−)

8. If there is a group of grown-ups playing together, this parent would rather sit and watch than to play with the others. (C−)

9. When asked, most people gladly help this parent. (A+)

10. This parent gets along well and doesn't seem to have lots of problems. (C+)

12. This parent has scary dreams. (D+)

13. This parent will do what other people want them to do. (E−)
14. When it's dark out, this parent can walk outside without feeling worried. (F+)

16. This parent feels like fighting when they get disappointed. (D+)

17. This parent would rather go to a football game than take a walk on the beach. (E+)

18. This parent laughs and jokes about sad stories. (F+)

20. This parent thinks more often about their work than exciting things they would like to do. (D-)

21. This parent would rather be a movie start than take a trip to the moon. (E-)

22. This parent would rather travel as a crew member of a spaceship than work with books in a bookstore. (F+)

24. This parent is the quiet one in your family. (D-)

25. If a grownup left something at your house, this parent would not bother to return it. (E+)

26. This parent would worry if they did something wrong. (F-)

28. This parent wishes that work would not be so much of a bother. (D+)

29. This parent wishes they could do better at work. (E-)

30. This parent would be scared if they saw wild animals or snakes. (F-)

31. This parent would rather work in a place where everyone could goof off a bit. (G-)

32. This parent usually has time to finish something they have started to read or write. (H+)

33. If grownups could pretend, this parent would rather be a test pilot than a famous writer. (I-)

34. Loud noises scare this parent. (J+)

35. This parent would rather make something the way their boss says it is best. (G+)

36. This parent would be afraid to butt in when other people are talking. (H-)
37. This parent would rather watch beautiful scenery than watch a bulldozer knocking a building down. (I+)

38. This parent gets scolded the most for not paying attention. (J+)

39. This parent would rather go out with their friends than with your family. (G-)

40. This parent feels as if they never do anything right. (H-)

41. This parent can touch a big bug. (I-)

42. This parent would rather watch animals at the zoo than climb a mountain. (J+)

43. This parent leaves things around the house for someone else to put away. (G-)

44. Wonderful things happen every day to this parent. (H+)

45. This parent would be scared if they were very high up on a big rock. (I+)

46. Who does almost everyone like, your father or your mother. (J-)

47. This parent does their work carefully because it's good to do things that way. (G+)

48. This parent likes to do what their friends want to do. (H+)

49. This parent likes to play fast, hard games. (I-)

50. This parent can always find someone else to talk to. (J-)

51. Other adults like this parent better. (N+)

52. When people say "Let's work together on this," this parent will usually agree. (O-)

53. This parent would rather let someone else clean up their room. (Q3-)

54. This parent has more bad luck with their work going wrong. (Q4+)

55. This parent feels a bit "low" most days. (N+)
Appendix C—Continued

56. If your family passes by a horrible fire or an accident, this parent would look to see what's happening. (O-)

57. When your parents go to a movie, which one will enjoy it all. (Q3+)

58. Little things upset this parent so much that they feel like kicking something. (Q4+)

59. This parent would rather do things that are safe and right than dangerous and exciting. (N-)

60. This parent tries to be polite to old people. (O-)

61. This parent complains the most when they are playing and they don't win. (Q3-)

62. This parent is more likely to talk back and yell when they get angry. (Q4+)

63. This parent will obey a rule even if they don't think it was meant for them. (N-)

64. This parent thinks that people are sometimes mean just for the sake of being mean. (O+)

65. This parent thinks that a person with a good job is happier than a person who does whatever they want to do. (Q3+)

66. This parent is more polite. (Q4-)

67. This parent lets you try stuff that is a bit dangerous. (N+)

68. This parent likes a party where they can decide what to do. (O+)

69. This parent isn't too neat about their things. (Q3-)

70. This parent will go quietly to another room when they are angry. (Q4-)

Note: A plus sign (+) indicates that the parent to whom the item was applied gets a point for that factor. A minus sign (-) indicates that the other parent will get the point for that factor.
Appendix D

**Personality Rating Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT #</th>
<th>CHILD</th>
<th>MOM</th>
<th>DAD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</td>
<td>Warm, Outgoing, Kindly, Easy-going, Likes People</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Concrete Thinking, Less Intellectual</td>
<td></td>
<td>Emotionally Stable, Mature, Calm, Faces Reality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Affected by Feelings, Easily upset, Emotionally Less Stable</td>
<td></td>
<td>Excitable, Impatient, Easily distracted, Overactive, Demanding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Inactive, Deliberate, Placid, Undemonstrative</td>
<td></td>
<td>Dominant, Stubborn, Aggressive, Competitive, Assertive, Bossy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Obedient, Submissive, Conforming, Mild, Accommodating</td>
<td></td>
<td>Enthusiastic, Cheerful, Happy-go-lucky, Expressive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Serious, Restrained, Prudent, Sober, Taciturn</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rule-bound, Conscientious, Moralistic, Persistent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Disregards Rules, Undependable, Pickle, Expedient</td>
<td></td>
<td>Uninhibited, Bold, Unafraid, Venturesome, Spontaneous</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Shy, Bashful, Restrained, Hesitant, Threat-sensitive</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sensitive, Overprotected, Tender-minded, Refined</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Self-reliant, Rough, Realistic, No-nonsense, tough-minded</td>
<td></td>
<td>Guarded, Restrained, Reflective, Introspective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Likes to go with the Group, Zestful, Given to action</td>
<td></td>
<td>Manipulative, Calculating, Shrewd</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Natural, Open, Naive, Forthright</td>
<td></td>
<td>Insecure, Worried, Guilt-prone, Apprehensive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Secure, Untroubled, Self-satisfied, Free of Guilt, Self-assured</td>
<td></td>
<td>Controlled, Good Will Power, Socially Precise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Uncontrolled, Careless of Social Rules, Follows own Urges</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tense, Frustrated, Driven, Overwrought</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Relaxed, Tranquil, Peaceful, Unfrustrated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


Emory, R. E., Weintraub, S., & Neale, J. M. (1982). Effects of marital discord on the school behavior of children of


