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EDITORS

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Introduction

Violence done to persons and groups seems common today. The first two articles in this issue consider the cultural beliefs and practices that contribute to or offset the effects of violence in human lives. Goody begins with a discussion of the German term, "herrschaft," which is often employed in such broad senses as "political domination." But it carries within it the more specific meaning which concerns Goody -- male (herr) power (schaft). Male violence toward women, like political-military violence is justified in moral terms that result in acceptance of the doctrine-in-practice that "Might is Right." Culture and ideology enter the picture in terms of how the participants formulate the existing structures of domination as natural, inevitable, and moral. As Goody shows, there are striking cross-cultural similarities in the myths and belief systems which justify male dominance and render socially necessary, *even to the women who are being dominated*, the existing systems of power. Goody offers her analysis of sexual herrschaft as a model for understanding the dynamic relation between biological constraints and cultural systems. In many countries, the growth of social concern about family violence is giving rise to new institutions where women's situation can be examined and acted upon. Consequently, the dynamic between biology, culture, and beliefs that Goody discusses will reveal itself in new ways offering challenges to both science and social policy. Whether cultural changes can bring about equality, or simply change the conditions of domination as they have in the past, remains to be seen.

A disturbingly large proportion of the world's children are growing up in disastrously dangerous environments of human design, characterized by violence, political repression, and war. Raija-Leena Punamäki reports on rare research involving such children. In the aftermath of World War II it was reported that while the stress of war is a major risk factor in children's development, war is often less harmful for child non-combatants than for their non-combatant parents (usually mothers). It is thought that the parents absorb the brunt of the pressure; so, children escape with less severe psychological consequences. The early research was speculative with respect to the mechanisms involved in the day to day processes of coping with military occupation, restricted mobility and freedom of expression, in addition to constant danger and fear.

Punamäki's article addresses this while reporting on family processes and children's development among Palestinians living under Israeli occupation. Her methodology represents several layers of the the social system at one time as a means of tracing causal influences within it. While some of the instruments used in the study can be questioned, the careful way in which they are assembled and interpreted lends authority to the conclusions. First, the classical conclusion that adults do indeed mediate the effects of conflict for children is substantiated, with a fuller picture of how difficult this. Second, there is evidence that an important cultural factor, ideology, can provide an intellectual framework that helps women to cope with conflict-induced social stress.

The third article by Elliott Mordkowitz and Herbert Ginsburg examines the cultural beliefs and practices that promote academic success among Asian-American students. A key anchor in the discussion comes from the work of Harold Stevenson and his colleagues claiming that there are no "basic advantages in cognitive aptitude" to be found among children of Asian background. From this starting point, Mordkowitz and Ginsburg probe into the socialization factors to conclude (a) that high achievement is *not* likely to be found as a consequence of specific parental teaching practices but (b) that an effective support system for academic achievement involves a combination of organizing massive amounts of practice, beliefs in the efficacy of hard work and the importance of school success. The conclusions of this kind of interview study are admittedly speculative. Remaining uncertainties should not be taken as criticism, but rather incitement to conduct more analytical comparative studies to get at the factors involved.

The three articles in this issue of the Newsletter offer a set of perspectives on the way that social/structural/political constraints and people's belief systems interact to maintain dominance, or to counteract it. One of the most sobering conclusions they suggest is that a central part of systems of domination is a set of beliefs in which the victims accept the characterization of them promulgated by the victimizers. Yet there is a hopeful side to the issue as well. The evidence suggests that where the belief systems and social organization of the home and community support development and excellence, it occurs. The crucial issue is to create contexts that support self-determination and foster their spread.

Why Must Might Be Right? Observations on Sexual Herrschaft

Esther Goody
Cambridge University

The politics of sexual herrschaft is about control. This is very complicated politics because it emerges from the interaction of the consequences of biological differences between males and females, the conceptualization of these differences including the myths and ideologies formed around the concepts, and from the constraints of social institutions, particularly those linked to domestic and political roles. Each of these frames effects the others, and it is within this multi-dimensional field that individual men and women live and contend for control. No one frame can "explain" the patterns of control which emerge, since these are a product of their interaction. This circumstance also makes analysis difficult; the selection of one element to discuss implies its greater importance when this is not intended. To comment on these issues is also difficult because of the large amount of unusually high quality work already published. It is neither possible to do justice to these studies in the space available, nor valid to ignore them. Of necessity major contributions and unresolved debates, proper subjects of essays in themselves, are here relegated to footnotes.

A basic learning mechanism for higher animals, including humans, is the reward/punishment complex studied by behavioural psychology.¹ Our behaviour is constantly shaped by this learning organized around seeking gratification and avoiding pain. While this has obvious implications for childrearing and education generally, it is in fact also fundamental to social institutions. It is through rewarding conformity and the threat of negative sanctions that norms are established and maintained. Such sanctions need not be formal such as those embodied in courts and police. Evans-Pritchard wrote of Nuer social order being maintained by the threat of the feud (Evans-Pritchard, 1940). Yanomamo villages retain their autonomy by being feared as fierce and ready to attack others (Chagnon, 1968). Relations between street gangs in modern cities follow much the same lines (Keiser, 1969). There is thus at a basic level an association between force and the normative order. The polemics of modern governments seeking to justify massive overkill capacity are always framed

in terms of defending the good (democracy/socialism) against the evil (capitalist/socialist) dictatorship. But of course this very relativity of who and what is right throws into high relief the danger of accepting the simple equation $\text{Might} = \text{Right}$. In simple societies there is generally a straightforward pattern: My people/descent group/village are right and we will fight to defend ourselves against your people/descent group/village who are our enemies because you are fighting us. Because you are our enemies you are wrong (and we are right).

Individuals with ties to two hostile groups often act as go-betweens and mediators; or they may be caught between the two and seen as potential enemies by both. The moral element in such conflicts is sometimes expressed in the idea of a duel, tournament or battle as an ordeal, with the victory going to those who have the Lord (i.e., morality) on their side. State systems have evolved a wide variety of institutions for constraining open contests of strength within their boundaries, and for separating right (law) from whether one individual or his group is stronger than another. Significantly, at the level of relations between states (or in a civil war, between the opposing sides) Might is still used as a measure of who is Right. A successful coup or revolution is followed, eventually if not immediately, by the recognition by other nations of the new government. Winning a war results in the redrawing of boundaries, and the re-design of constitutions. The side which wins gets to make the new rules.

However this paper is not about legal systems or national politics, but about the interaction between power and morality in relations between men and women. That these are not totally separate problems can be seen in the way in which many simple societies describe their origins in terms of the overthrow of the rule of women (see below).

Paradoxes of Herrschaft at the Level of Social Structure

Women, Levi-Strauss has shown, are objects of transactions by men (Levi-Strauss, 1969). In small traditional systems marriages were often based on the exchange of sisters between men, since because of incest conventions, men cannot marry their own sisters. In other societies, such exchanges were transformed to bridewealth transactions, in which a conventionally determined valuable was exchanged for rights to marry a kinswoman; the kinsman who received bridewealth could then exchange it with another family

for a bride for himself or his son. In more complex societies fathers sought prestigious suitors for their daughters with valuable dowries (Goody & Tambiah, 1973). In many places it was accepted that men could seize wives in raids, or as the prizes of war, or as the prerequisites of slave ownership. But always it was men who transacted the rights to marry women and not the women themselves (although they might have some influence behind the scenes). The obvious question would seem to be, why in these many, many independent systems didn't women use the fact that their sexual and reproductive capacities were a valued resource, to take control over their own bodies and transact on their own account? For according to exchange theory, the party to a transaction who holds the greater resources, commands the greater power (Blau, 1968; Homans, 1958). Yet women yield this resource to men, who use it to gain wives, establish alliances between kin groups -- and determine the domestic destiny of the women themselves. Societies vary in the extent to which marriages are arranged by one or another of these institutions, but in no society do women transact in the marriages of men.

The Marxist premise is that control over the means of production leads to economic power which is the ultimate basis for political power. Yet this equation does not seem to operate in the relationship between the sexual division of labour and economic and political power for women. In simple technology societies women tend to contribute heavily to subsistence: In most types of hunting and gathering systems it has been estimated that they provide well over 50% of subsistence consumption (Lee, 1968), while in the rudimentary agriculture of New Guinea, Amazonia, aboriginal North America, and much of Africa, women were cultivators, and often produced most or all of the staple food (Friedl, 1975). Yet it is rare for women to hold positions of either economic or political authority in these societies. In foraging systems it is men who are hunters, although the supply of meat they provide is irregular and often small. However, meat, unlike gathered foods, serves as the basis for gifts and exchange outside of the domestic group and may be built into claims for wives as among the Tiwi of Australia (Hart & Pilling, 1960), or into systems of prestige and even office (as in the potlatch system of the Indians of the northwest coast of North America). Even in those simple agricultural systems in which women do all the cultivating of staple foods (frequent in New Guinea, and in many societies in Africa and Amazonia) this gives them no claims on external economic roles or political

office. It is always men who initially clear the land, and who construct and hold social ownership of land which gives them claims on the crops it bears (Friedl, 1975). It thus cannot be argued that women hold less power and prestige *because* their absorption in bearing and rearing children has prevented them from contributing to subsistence production. On the contrary, they seem to be subordinate in many societies *in spite of* being the major subsistence producers (Kaberry, 1952). What seems to happen in these societies is that men's contribution to the division of labour is based on superior strength, and possibly on the greater risk of injury or death. Both hunting and clearing of land are the basis of political and economic transactions between men in which women do not participate. These transactions create a superstructure of power and authority roles that feeds back into the definition of male and female domestic roles, and the overall pattern of male dominance. As Rosaldo argued in her seminal paper (1974), the pre-occupation of women with childrearing and the domestic domain produces societal systems in which men hold legitimate authority and manage relations *between* domestic groups.

But the final paradox is that men, holding the dominant roles in the public sphere in virtually every society², should find it necessary to label women's power, when it does emerge, as illegitimate and wrong. For in cosmologies, myths of origin, and beliefs about causes of misfortune, one repeatedly finds that the subordination of women is their own fault; either women committed some original sin which doomed them to eternal inferiority, or it is in their nature as women to be in some way to blame, to be guilty, or evil, or simply stupid. This being so, men are "naturally" and "inevitably" dominant. Such a coincidence between *de facto* distribution of power and beliefs about the nature of the world both serves to reinforce the position of the dominant and argues to the subordinated that they cannot change their situation. But of course it is not a coincidence. Why does Might claim to be Right? And why is this claim accepted by those whom it blames for their own subordination?

In discussing the nature of social stratification, Beteille has argued (1983) that complex societies in which there is an ethic of equality are in fact faced with the reality of marked inequalities. They tend to respond by producing various rationalizations as to why some are better off and others disadvantaged, and these rationalizations tend to be based on some sort of supposed "natural order."³ This displaces the

responsibility for the reality of inequality from human beings to nature, which, since there is a very strong commitment to the ideal of equality, is more comfortable than having to accept that the contradiction has a human social basis. Beteille is concerned with social divisions, class and caste. But there are striking parallels in the ideological rationalizations of very diverse societies for the domination of men over women. The parallel occurs at two levels: First, in the elaborate ideologies which explain the origin and necessity for this dominance; and second, in the tracing of the cause to the "natural" attributes of women. There is also a third element which I suspect may appear in ideologies justifying socio-economic stratification. This is based on morality. Women are inferior because they have sinned, or are in essence sinful. This twist to the argument allows men to feel not only superior, but righteous. The women brought it on themselves, and deserve to be punished. So one is forced to ask why should these ideologies legitimating dominance make the weaker also be guilty of some form of immorality? Why must Might also be Right?

One could draw illustrative material for this pattern of the social construction of reality from a very wide range of historical and ethnographic examples. I shall consider just a few cases in sufficient detail to make clear the culturally specific patterns and then return to the question of the underlying dynamic.

South American Indians: Origin Myths and Control of Women

There are two strikingly similar complexes of South American Indian origin myths, both linked to male adolescent initiation, one from the extreme southeast of the continent, and the other from the tropical forest area of the northwest Amazon and central Brazil. Bamberger has described these as "myths of matriarchy" and "myths about the Rule of Women" for they focus on an account of how women in the beginning controlled sacred knowledge, and made men raise manioc, do the domestic work and take their orders (Bamberger, 1974). In other versions men originally were dominant, but women seized the sacred objects and took control. In both variants, the men attacked the women and gained (regained) control of the sacred objects, thus ensuring their control over women's labour and their subservience and establishing the natural order of dominance which continues today. The Ona myth (Tierra del Fuego) described by Bridges on the basis of his own initiation (early 20th century) contains the main features of the set:

In the days when all the forest was evergreen, ... in the days when the Sun and Moon walked the earth as man and wife ... in those far off days witchcraft was known only by the women of Ona-land. They kept their own particular lodge, which no man dared approach. The girls, as they neared womanhood, were instructed in the magic arts, learning how to bring sickness and even death to all those who displeased them.

The men lived in abject fear and subjection. Certainly they had bows and arrows with which to supply the camp with meat, yet, they asked, what use were such weapons against witchcraft and sickness? As this tyranny of the women became worse, the men decided to kill off all the women; 'and there ensued a great massacre, from which not one woman escaped in human form.' After this debacle the men were forced to wait to replace their wives until young girl children matured. Meanwhile the question arose: how could men keep the upper hand now they had got it? One day, when these girl children reached maturity, they might band together and regain their old ascendancy. To forestall this, the men inaugurated a secret society of their own and banished forever the women's Lodge in which so many wicked plots had been hatched against them. No woman was allowed to come near the Hain (men's Lodge) on penalty of death ... (Quoted from Bridges, 1948, pp. 412-413 in Bamberger, 1974, p. 270)

From the Amazon Barasana Indians of a quite distinct culture area, Stephen Hugh-Jones recorded the following myth:

1. Romi Kumu's father, Poison Anaconda, told his sons to get up early and go down to the river to bathe, vomit water and play the *He* (sacred flutes).
2. In the morning the sons stayed in bed but Romi Kumu got up early and went down to the river where she found the *He*.
3. (Variant: the women/woman did not know what to do with the Yurupary (flutes). They put them over all the orifices of their bodies but not in their mouths. Finally a fish, jacunda (*Crenicichla sp.*) showed them what to do by signaling with its big mouth.)
4. The father was at first pleased when he heard the noise of *He* but when he saw his sons still asleep he realized what had happened and was very angry.
5. The men ran down to the port but Romi Kumu had already gone, taking the *He* and all other sacred equipment of the men with her.

6. They chased after her, following the sound of the *He*, but each time they got near she ran off again. She walked along the rivers and one can still see her footprints (carved) on the rocks in the Pira-Pirana area. There the men caught up with her and took back the *He* and ritual equipment.

7. The men punished Romi Kumu and the other women by making them menstruate. (Variant: When the women stole the Yurupary they talked a lot and were drunk. The men attacked the women and rammed the instruments up their vaginas.)

8. When the women stole the *He* from the men, the men became like women: they worked in the manioc gardens producing manioc, they had a bend in their forearms like women, and they menstruated. (S. Hugh-Jones, 1979, pp. 265-266).

Hugh-Jones comments that the version he has given here is:

in some respects a 'weak' version: in most of the versions told to me it was stated that when the women were in possession of the *He*, the men did not merely cultivate manioc but were also subject to the political dominance of women. This theme of social revolution in which women overthrow the power of men is common to all the versions of the Yurupary myth from the Vaupes-Incana region and is also widespread amongst the Indian groups of lowland South America. (S. Hugh-Jones, 1979, p. 127)

Throughout the areas where these myths are the basis of the cosmology, explaining the power of the sacred flutes and providing the basis for male initiation, it is forbidden for women even to see the flutes, and transgression was punished by death. Whether this is accounted for by the women's original crimes (witchcraft, bringing disorder) or by the crime of usurping male power by stealing the ritual instruments and "contaminating their sacredness by viewing or touching them" (Bamberger, 1974, p. 274), women are shown to be dangerous and bad. Women are described as lazy, insatiably curious, greedy, promiscuous, and unable to keep secrets. They are "naturally" this way, and thus incapable of holding power effectively. Hugh-Jones says that the Barasana believe that if women did see the sacred flutes they would come to have the same ritual knowledge and power as men, and there would be a period of chaos when people fought each other. It is to avoid this that women are kept

away. In both the Amazonian and the Fuegian myths the theme of punishing the women is very clear. In the Ona myth all adult women are killed; in the Barasana myth they are subjected to gang rape and have the flutes rammed up their vaginas. And of course today punishment awaits any woman (or girl) who looks at the sacred flutes, or intrudes in the men's initiation rituals. The anchorage of this moral weakness in the natural order is also clear. The fact that women menstruate and that they are totally excluded from ritual knowledge "proves" that the myth is about the true relation between men and women. It is wrong for women to have either secular or ritual power; they were punished for taking it once and will be punished again should they attempt to assert equality with men. This much is clear from the texts, and from the threats ensuring the continued exclusion of women from the rituals that accompany recitation of the myths. However, Hugh-Jones does not consider that the Barasana see these as myths and rituals about morality:

Sin, to me, smacks of a universal morality which seems to be lacking in Amazonia. Morality is always contextually defined. I can think of no context in which women as a class are deemed sinful or immoral.... I don't really think that women's subordination is their own *fault* (except in the marginal sense of them failing to win a battle for supernatural power). (S. Hugh-Jones, 1985)

This highlights the need to distinguish between the actors' view (which Hugh-Jones expresses), and an analytical interpretation (on which he and I differ). For I would contend that at an analytical level the Barasana myth does describe punishment in the sense of "To afflict with pain, loss or suffering for a crime or fault" (Webster's Collegiate Dictionary) when it describes "failing to win a battle ..." as followed by "The men attacked the women and rammed the instruments (the sacred flutes) up their vaginas." (Hugh-Jones, 1979, p. 266). In the other version Hugh-Jones gives, his translation of the myth reads: "(7) The men punished Romi Kumu and the other women by making them menstruate" (p. 266). In the myth, then, the women's action in seizing the sacred flutes is explicitly judged as wrong in that the men are described as "punishing" the women by making them menstruate. This is a judgement on all women, as a class, since it is all women who must, forever afterwards, menstruate, and not just the few who seized the sacred flutes. Hugh-Jones' comment raises sharply the question of whether it is appropriate to speak of morality outside of the

framework of a universalistic ethic. His translation of the Barasana myth suggests that here, at least, it is necessary to find some way of expressing the idea of transgression and punishment. But this also raises another question: What defined the action of the women as meriting punishment? His comment suggests that if the women had won the battle for supernatural power instead of losing it, they would have not been in the wrong. At least they would not have been punished! It was winning, "Might" that defined who was "Right." Now an interesting common feature of both the Amazonian myths and the Ona myth is that when men decided to take the supernatural power away from women they were able to do so because they were stronger. This equation of dominant physical force and legitimacy is quite explicit, and it is further reinforced by the sanctions which maintain the now legitimate male dominance: If, today, women attempt to regain control over the supernatural sources of power, they will be raped or killed because the men are stronger and can do so. Significantly, here male force is linked to the normative social order. Men act together in defense of what (as the myths have demonstrated) is the correct distribution of power and authority.

The Amazonian myths are, however, too rich to be reduced to a two-dimensional silhouette of force and morality. Accounts of Barasana myths (Hugh-Jones, 1979, 1985) and Mundurucu myths (R. Murphy, 1958; Murphy & Murphy, 1974; Nadelson, 1981) emphasize that only women have the sacred power to reproduce humans. They are seen by men as full of uncontrolled power -- to menstruate and to make babies -- both of which are not open to human control. Men fear this mystical power of women, which is seen as linked to their power to grow vegetable food, and feel that it threatens their secular control over politics, community relations and the women themselves. "Men have a neurosis about the insecurity of their control and dominance over women" (Hugh-Jones, 1985). Sanday's probing study makes the same link between the reproductive powers of women, their critical influence over the growth of crops, and the fear and respect in which they are held by men (1981). And indeed, these myths are about this very fear: that women will cease to accept male domination and use their own kind of power to seize formal authority from men. In this connection Hugh-Jones writes: "I would read the myths as saying that it is only through their aggressive exertions that men came to have power" and of the Ona myth, "What the women did was to practice witchcraft (which men do today). What was amoral

was that *women* [my ital] used such power, not the power itself" (Hugh-Jones, 1985). Men's fear of women's non-formal power seems to be a key theme in the wider problem of relations between force, legitimacy and the denigration of women.

Australian Aborigines: Origin Myths and Male Initiation Rites

Extended male initiation at puberty is even more central to Aboriginal society than for the South American Indian peoples. It typically involves a period of several weeks or even longer during which youths are taken by the men apart from the women, their mothers, and ritually "killed," taught sacred lore, and finally "reborn" as men. The rituals are performed to a mythical score which gives symbolic, and sometimes explicit meaning to what is taking place. There seem to be two basic variants of these myths, both of which provide a model for the killing and rebirth of the youths. In the first, for which Warner's account of the Murgin myth serves as a paradigmatic example (Warner, 1937, pp. 250-259),⁴ two women, one pregnant, the other with a child, both by incestuous unions, wander over the earth giving names to plants, animals and natural features. The women pollute a sacred water hole with the blood of childbirth and menstruation, which insults the great Yurlunggur serpent who emerges to swallow the women and their sons. Later the serpent regurgitates them into an ants' nest where the stings revive them. In the second variant a woman (two) is entrusted with the care of (her/others') children but eats them. When the men discover what has happened they kill the women and find ritual means to revive their sons. The following Murinbata myth associated with the Punji rite (recorded by Stanner) provides an example:

The people said to Mutingga, the Old Woman: "We shall leave the children with you while we find honey; you look after them." She agreed, and the people went off to hunt. After the children had bathed, they settled down to sleep near her. Bringing one close on the pretext of looking for lice, she swallowed it. Then she swallowed the others, ten altogether, and left.

A man and his wife returned to the camp for water and realized what must have happened. They gave the alarm, and the others came back. Ten men set off in pursuit and eventually overtook Mutingga crawling along a river bed. A left-handed man speared her through the legs and a right-handed man broke her neck with a club. Then they cut her belly open and found the children still alive in her womb. They had

not gone where the excrement is. The men cleaned and adorned the children and took them back to the camp. Their mothers cried with joy on seeing them and hit themselves until the blood flowed. (Stanner, 1959-63, pp. 40-42, quoted in Hiatt, 1975, p. 151).

There are many themes in these myths and the associated initiation rituals.⁵ However, the one I wish to stress here is that in both forms of myth which provide charters for the adolescent initiation ceremonies, women are punished for abominable behaviour -- pollution of sacred sites, incest, cannibalism -- and in addition to the actual culprits being killed, all women are subsequently and forever deprived of control of their adult sons. That is (1) women are punished because they are/were evil; and (2) the initiation of their sons by men and the complete exclusion of women from this ritual which forms the basis of sacred knowledge serves to deprive women of the possibility of aligning their sons with them against their fathers. There is here a double sense in which women cause trouble, first by failing to respect the rules of decent society (against pollution, incest, cannibalism), and second by trying to seize power through their sons. Obviously, women can't be trusted (Hiatt, 1975, p. 156).

As further versions are recorded and analyzed the Wawilak myth emerges as even more rich and complex. Knight has recently argued that there are two different "messages" in this myth: In one the serpent represents the force of male dominance which controls women, and represents a phallus, male rule and possible rape. The two sisters pollute a male sacred site and are sexually punished as a result. "This is certainly the story which the women are supposed to swallow and it is also the message which most social anthropologists appear to have accepted more or less at face value" (1983, p. 25). However, there is another "inner" message according to Knight's analysis, for he contends that the myth conveys different messages to the uninitiated -- women and children -- and to the initiated -- men. The message for the initiated men is that the women have tremendous power, through menstruation and the ability to bear children, and that they must be kept in ignorance of this power, and under control by men. Women are doubly dangerous, because of the potency of their blood and reproductive activity as individual women, and because if they realized their power they might act together, as men do, seize men's ritual and secular power, and reverse the entire natural order of male dominance.

To return to herrschaft and the problem of evil, perhaps it is precisely because men fear this reproductive potency women have as a source of power greater than their own that myths portray women as unfit to hold socially significant power. This has been persuasively argued at the level of individual psychodynamics by B. and J. W. M. Whiting (1965, 1975) and Y. and R. F. Murphy (1974): Each male needs to deny his childhood dependence on an identification with his mother, i.e., her overwhelming power; myth and ritual support this denial and establish adult male identity on the basis of "natural" and supernatural dominance of men over women.

This combination of myths about the overthrow of women's power in which women are punished for wrong or dangerous behaviour, and where there is also evidence that men greatly fear and respect women's reproductive power, occurs widely in aboriginal South America and Australia, and both Hugh-Jones and Hiatt comment on the strong parallels with New Guinea material.⁶ Why should men in these societies particularly need to buttress their male identity and authority with myth and initiation ritual and the moral discrediting of women? La Fontaine suggests that these are societies in which there is very little institutionalized male hierarchy, but constant competition among men for pre-eminence (1985). In other words, control over women's power becomes the focus of fear, myth and ritual when dominance between men is unstructured, and therefore contested. This view parallels closely the picture which emerges from a consideration of witchcraft in Africa.

African Witchcraft

There are two main models for African witchcraft patterns. One is the evil witch who kills and injures relatives, including her own children, from malice, jealousy and greed, or because of blood debts to the coven. The second is the socially responsible witch who uses mystical powers in defense of the group, often to repel attacks by evil witches. Tiv elders, Azande princes and Gonja chiefs are all "known" to be "good" witches in this sense. Now clearly it is not possible to use (mystical) power on behalf of the community unless one is recognized as acting on behalf of the community. Thus Azande commoners were accused of witchcraft and required to renounce the attack on a particular victim, but princes were not accused in this way.⁷

In West African traditional societies, when serious illness, misfortune or death occurs, a diviner is consulted to discover the cause and what may be done. If the verdict was that an evil witch was responsible there were in pre-Colonial times several forms of counteraction possible. One was an ordeal which killed the guilty and exonerated the innocent. Another (still common) was to place the person under the control of a shrine believed to be mystically powerful enough to turn the attacks against the witch herself. Sometimes there was a form of judicial process followed by driving the witch out of the community, or by execution.⁸ Significantly, the forms of ordeal (throwing a bound witch into the river; reaching into boiling oil) and forms of execution (burning alive) resemble strongly medieval European practices. Few can have survived the ordeals and the manner of the witches' deaths clearly represents exaction of vengeance against a feared and hated enemy.

When I began fieldwork in Gonja (northern Ghana) I had no intention of studying witchcraft, but was forced to respond to the deep concern of the people themselves to what was for them a constant threat. The picture which emerged was of men who boasted of being witches -- and were therefore powerful and to be feared and given way to; and of women who were terrified of being accused of witchcraft, since it meant at best ostracism or flight from their home village, and possible death. These were not imaginary fears. I was involved, as bystander, witness, and in one case unwitting cause of a jealous attack, in many witchcraft incidents. All of those defined as evil (*libi*), in that they led to direct accusations and to counteraction, concerned women witches. I began to ask the women: "Why is it women who are bad witches?" (For women accuse each other, along with the men; bad witches are seen as a threat to all.) "Because," they said, "we are evil." And they went on to recount the various anti-social feelings which they knew themselves to have: jealousy of co-wives, and co-wives' children, resentment of neglectful husbands, anger against kin for favouring others or for not supporting them. The inevitable strains of social interdependency are here attributed to women, as part of their "nature"; women are likely to have evil feelings and motives, they are bad witches because of their feelings and motives, and the fact that they are identified in divination as responsible for illness and death "proves" them as evil. (See E. N. Goody, 1970)⁹

On the other hand, men in positions of political and often ritual power are "known" to be witches. They may boast of these powers in claiming rights to office, and competition for office may be carried out partly on the level of (assertions of) mystical attack and counterattack. Thus the Gonja say that no man can succeed in becoming chief unless he is a strong witch, and when a chief dies it is assumed that a rival's witchcraft overcame his own. My records of witchcraft episodes linked to men include attribution in gossip of specific deaths within the community to chiefs and to Muslim scholars. But no direct accusations were made, and no counteraction taken against them. These chiefly witches are not "evil." They are believed to need strong mystical powers to defend their people against the attacks of evil witches, both outside and within the community. Similarly, in Tiv society, which has no formal political offices, the elders are believed to meet at night as witches and may even sometimes kill and eat a member of their own lineage in order to maintain their powers of defense against outside attack (Bohannan & Bohannan, 1953). The striking thing about male witches in these societies is that there is no attempt to say that they do not use the same forms of mystical aggression (mystical poison, invisible arrows that travel many miles to seek their target,¹⁰ the power to change shape, etc.) as those for which evil witches are blamed and killed. But when these forms of mystical aggression are used, they are seen as attributes of office, or the struggle for office, and become a source of reputation and legitimate political power.

In these societies mystical aggressive powers used by men are proof of political authority; used by women they are frightening, dangerous, and so evil that they lead to the execution of the female witch by methods that are in many cases extremely sadistic.¹¹ There are also African societies in which male witches are feared and become the object of counteraction. In Azande, male commoners, i.e., those who do not hold legitimating positions in the political system, are required to blow on a chicken wing as proof that they will cease their attacks. However, it is striking that Azande male witches were not, apparently exiled or executed, even when they were thought responsible for a death. Rather, counter witchcraft was used against them -- the battle played out on the mystical plane.

There is another very interesting set of societies in which mystical powers are sometimes legitimate and sometimes not. These tend to be systems in which lineage office exists, but is weakly developed; lineage

heads are recognized, and they have quite specific powers over junior lineage members, including control over critical economic resources. However, the process of succession to these lineage offices is linked to lineage fission, and thus gives rise to regular succession crises (Cewa, Lugbara). Accusations of witchcraft tend to focus on competitors for lineage authority. Here, to accuse a man of witchcraft is to accuse him of illegitimate mystical attack, and thus to dispute his right to the contested office, and indeed, his right to split the lineage. Where mystical powers are considered legitimate, as in the invocation by the head of the Lugbara family cluster of the ghosts of his patrilineal ancestors, it is not categorized as witchcraft -- although Lugbara use the same word (*ole*) for both ghost invocation and witchcraft.¹² Significantly, the close followers of a man accused of witchcraft may not define his actions as witchcraft at all, and thus can continue to support their candidate (Lugbara). In these societies witchcraft itself is evil, and what is at issue is whether a given act is an expression of witchcraft powers (evil) or of legitimate authority (strong/good).

If we map the male/female dichotomy onto the distinction between evil and good mystical powers, and see these in relation to the holding of office, the model is roughly:

Women No offices;
 evil witchcraft;
 severe punishment.

Men (i) Succession to office weakly defined, linked to lineage fission. Mystical aggression used in competition for power is situationally defined; "witchcraft" is evil.

Men (ii) Clearly defined offices; political system not based on lineages. Male officials expect to use mystical power. Witchcraft in competition for office = fair fighting.

The underlying pattern here seems to be that holders of clearly legitimate authority can use dangerous powers safely because there is a structural assumption (the legitimacy of office) that they are acting in the public good. If those who are competing for power in a fluid system use dangerous (mystical) weapons, their allies will consider this evidence of strength, and fair, but their enemies will consider it wicked and anti-social. The position of women is particularly interesting here, because there are very few

situations in which anyone considers their use of dangerous (mystical) power as evidence of legitimate strength used for the social good. On the contrary, they risk being branded as evil witches, exile or execution.

Although Gonja obviously represents only one kind of African system, it is a particularly interesting case for the present problem because there are a few political and ritual offices for women. The model for the legitimacy of male mystical power suggests that women holding office should be either free to use mystical power legitimately or perhaps expected not to need it. However, case material shows clearly that office-holding women are sometimes thought to have killed with witchcraft. When this happened they were ostracized and terrified, but were not killed (though this was in the 1960s when executions for witchcraft had been prevented for 50 years). While their offices may have cushioned them from the full force of counteraction against evil witches, they clearly did not gain strength and political legitimacy from being recognized as witches, as male officials still do today.¹³ For women, then, the structural assumption of legitimacy provided by office does not work. In Gonja, women who use mystical power are evil, whatever their position in the politico-jural structure. It is as though men may use mystical power safely if they have the right position in a political structure that defines authority roles and succession to these clearly. It is dangerous for men to use mystical power (which is of course difficult to observe and control) where the political system itself is loosely structured and competition between men for power threatens the stability of constituent elements of the system. This leads to situational legitimacy: "The ancestors are acting for us. You are using witchcraft." But there are virtually no conditions of structural legitimacy that permit women to use mystical power. The same logic would argue that in some way for women to be allowed mystical power *always* is experienced as threatening to the stability of the society.

Most African societies seem not to have myths of origin which justify the subordination of women as do those of South America and the Australian aborigines. However, the reservation of the legitimate use of mystical power for men, and the hysteria surrounding the evil witchcraft of women, carries much the same underlying message. Women cannot hold legitimate power; women who try to exercise power are evil.¹⁴

The Judeo-Christian Tradition

From the examples considered so far -- South American Indians, Australian aborigines, African tribes -- it might seem that it is only preliterate small-scale societies in which the ideology of legitimate power was based on the premise that women are originally or fundamentally anti-social or evil, and therefore, necessarily excluded from authority outside of the domestic domain. Surely the most widely disseminated myth of this sort is that of the Judeo-Christian tradition. As it is set out in the Book of Genesis, on the sixth day of creation God made man in his own image, and put him in the garden of Eden to care for it, admonishing him not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Then seeing that the man was alone, he took one of his ribs and made a woman as "a helpmate for him." Man, who had named all the creatures God had created, then named his helpmate, "woman," because she was taken out of "man"; (Heb. *ishshah*, from Heb. *ish*). But the serpent, who was more subtle than any other of the wild creatures God had made, told Eve that nothing bad would happen to her if she ate the forbidden fruit, but that if she ate she would become like God, knowing good and evil. So Eve was tempted, and she took the fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband and he ate. "Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons" (thus the beginning of culture). And God punished the serpent, and Eve and Adam.

Eve's punishment was that although she will bear children in suffering, yet "her desire shall be for her husband and he shall rule over her." Adam's punishment was perpetual toil to wrest daily food from the harsh soil, for God drove him from the garden of Eden "lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever." (Genesis 2: 3).

If this account is taken literally, Eve was the cause of all the later sufferings of men and women, because she listened to the subtle serpent, and then led her husband astray. Man explains his disobedience to God by saying, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." The issue between God and his creatures is control. Man is punished for disobedience by toil and expulsion from Eden. Eve is punished for being foolish and disobedient, and placed under the control of man. She was the cause of the original sin because she acted independently, under the control of neither man nor God.

God's reason for driving them from Eden is the fear that they may, having knowledge; also eat of the tree of life, thus gaining immortality as well. Since man was made in the image of God initially, with knowledge and immortality also there would be no difference between man and God, and no possibility for God to control man (or man/woman?).

But notice that in the text that has come down to us in the Bible, while God responds to this disobedience by driving man out of the garden of Eden ("God" sent him forth from the garden of Eden, ... he drove out the man" ...) he places man firmly in control of women. As Sanday notes in her stimulating essay on the formation of the Christian tradition (1981, Epilogue) later Christian writers took up this theme and were more explicit. In a letter to Timothy, Paul admonishes:

Let a woman learn in silence with full submissiveness. I do not allow any woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; she is to remain silent, for Adam was formed first, and then Eve and furthermore, Adam was not deceived, but the woman was utterly seduced into sin ... (2 Timothy 2: 11-14).

And Paul wrote the Corinthians: "But I want you to understand that in the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is her husband and the head of Christ is God" (1 Corinthians 11: 3), while elsewhere in the New Testament it is simply written, "Let the wife see that she fear her husband."

Research on recently discovered Gnostic texts suggests that this strong masculine dominance of the established New Testament was only achieved by suppressing other texts, and indeed demoting Mary Magdalene from the status of disciple to passive follower (the Gospel of Philip, the gospel of Mary, in Pagels, 1979). The relative egalitarianism of the Gnostics, who allowed women to read the scriptures and preach in religious services and to conduct rituals, was fiercely contested by the orthodox Christians. The North African theologian Tertullian (c. 190 AD) considered the religious activities of women among the Gnostics as actions of heretics. By the late second century, "Orthodox Christians came to accept the domination of men over women as the proper God-given order -- not only for the human race, but also for the (internal hierarchy) of the Christian churches." (Pagels, quoted in Sanday, 1981, p. 229).

Christianity, then, has taken the Genesis myth of Eve's foolishness, guile and original sin (she ate the apple first), as a charter for firmly legitimating the control of a wife by her husband, and of women by men (as in the organization of the churches). For a brief moment Eve had knowledge and power equal to God's but her possession of them was the supreme sin, and the cause of all subsequent human suffering. This absolves both man ("The woman whom thou gavest to me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat") and God ("Because you have listened to the voice of your wife ..."). But the early Christians seem to have reenacted the scenario, as the emerging orthodoxy and hierarchy of church authority excluded women from any role in the conduct of religious observances, and relegated them again to the authority of their husbands. From sharing in the conduct of the new religion, women became only objects of control, by conscience, by priests, and of course, by their husbands who conducted the family services (e.g., Morgan, 1944). It has been persuasively argued that the linking in Christian teachings through the centuries of legitimate authority of husband over wife to Eve's betrayal has formed the implicit basis for our attitudes today (Dobash & Dobash, 1979).

Interpreting the "Messages" of Ideology

There is a striking parallel in the nature of Eve's sin -- which gave humans knowledge that ought to have been reserved for God -- with the South American myths which tell of the time when women controlled ritual knowledge (which had to be rescued from them), and in a somewhat different way with the African premise that women who have mystical knowledge of witchcraft must be using it for evil. What is portrayed as dangerous is the possession of knowledge by those who ought to be subordinate. Clearly knowledge is power. And significantly, it is power which does not depend on physical strength, so that if women control knowledge this would challenge the physical advantage men hold.

In looking at the relationship between domination and ideology it is useful to distinguish between:

- the current function of ideology in relation to existing patterns of domination.
- how an ideology comes to be formulated. (Pre-literate cases must be treated separately from those in literate societies.)

- how an ideology comes to be institutionalized -- made "official" (i.e., encapsulated in myth, or made the basis for public justification of action).

Each of these is a separate, and major, problem. They are set out here, not because it is presumed to resolve them, but to avoid confusing the comments relevant to different ones.

The contemporary functions of this sort of ideology, once it is established, are clear. It serves to justify and to reinforce the domination of men in several ways: (1) It means that in a given relationship domination is not an individual, arbitrary control, nor, often, is it seen as the way of a particular community or society. It is pre-ordained, "natural," "the will of God" (Ortner, 1974; Ortner & Whitehead, 1981; Beteille, 1983); (2) It is thus impossible to conceive of altering the balance of power. This is so in a very literal sense -- it is impossible to *think* otherwise. The conceptual tools and premises preempt alternative formulations; (3) For those who are dominated it leads to acquiescence, to the acceptance of the inevitable, and quite possibly to less resentment and pain than if *de facto* domination were combined with an ideology of equality. This would be a clear example of what Beteille has called a disharmonic system (1983); (4) Very probably less actual power differential is necessary to maintain dominance where it is reinforced in this way by an ideology (harmonic system) than when it is not (disharmonic system); (5) Other, more specific functions can be worked out for particular cases. Bamburgher's paper on South American Indian "myths of matriarchy" sets out several (Bamburgher, 1974).

However, the very interesting questions of how such belief systems come into being, and how they come to be institutionalized as the "official view" of things are much more difficult. One problem is that it is impossible to watch the emergence and institutionalization of beliefs in any particular simple society. At a given time certain beliefs are already "official" and we don't really know how to identify emergent ones. Nor, if we look at contemporary societies and reason backwards as to how it might have been, can we do more than speculate? It is probably not fruitful to look for general answers. But in particular cases there may be hints from observing contemporary, but parallel, situations, particularly if this observation is combined with comparative analysis of the same phenomenon in many different societies. What general patterns have appeared in the cases so far considered?

- In these several sets of societies men are in fact dominant over women in the sense of managing political, religious and economic affairs outside the household, and in the sense of being "head of the household," -- the one who gives orders and is deferred to. In most (all?) of these societies men "chastise" their women physically when they deem it necessary.

- There is a belief system, cosmology, or set of ideas about causes of misfortune which defines women as at best weak and foolish, and in some cases as basically, naturally, sinful or evil.

- Men have legitimate authority roles, and women's power, where it is acknowledged, is frightening (Amazonia, Australia) or evil (African witchcraft). *De facto* male domination over women in these systems is thus justified morally.

The fact that this association of legitimate male power and the non-legitimacy, or even wickedness, of female power recurs so frequently suggests that it is generated by the interaction between men and women in widely different societies, independently of different cultural frames. Or rather, that the cultural frames emerge to give form to this aspect of the interaction. What are the dynamics here? Fortunately this is an instance in which detailed studies of a relevant contemporary phenomenon are available.

Power and Legitimacy in Conjugal Relations in Contemporary Western Society

Since the 1970s, both in England and in the United States, there has been a growing concern about cases of violence against women by the men they live with. In England this led to a Parliamentary Select Committee on Violence in Marriage whose report in 1975 laid the basis for national legislation specifically designed to provide legal protection for women who were victims of domestic violence. There has since then been considerable research on this problem in these countries, but the authors of a recent international study of family violence could find little data elsewhere except in Canada (Gelles & Cornell, 1983). There is anecdotal evidence that violence against wives has been an obvious occurrence since the early middle ages in Europe (Dobash & Dobash, 1979) and since the 18th century in the United States (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Moore, 1979). It is impossible to know whether the recent upsurge of interest is due to generally greater awareness of women's issues, or whether there has been an increase in domestic violence. It seems very

probable that growing emphasis on sexual equality makes conjugal violence more frequent (because of conflicting expectations of the two spouses) and less tolerable to the victim.

The question of the incidence of physical violence in current marriages is no less difficult. Research-based projections vary from 50-60% of all couples in the U.S. (Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980) to 21% of ever-married women based on a large California sample (Russell, 1982). Much of the difference between those two figures can be attributed to differences in definitions used, however both were based on random samples of the general population.¹⁵ These are figures for women beaten at least once by a husband or co-habitee. There is reason to believe that a single beating can permanently structure the nature of a conjugal relationship by establishing the husband's physical dominance, and thus the inevitable outcome of any future confrontation (Gelles, 1972). Within this context it is necessary to distinguish between couples who have experienced one or two episodes of violence and those in which violence has become an established pattern. In a few marriages the wife is subjected to frequent, or even daily, beatings -- which may escalate in severity (Dobash & Dobash, 1979); it is women subjected to repeated injury and who remain in this violent situation who are referred to in the literature, and by the media, as "battered wives." It is quite impossible to calculate the incidence of regularly violent marriages. The usual source of information is case material from victims which cannot be related to the wider population. Police reports can provide incidence of violence in relation to a given population, but the level of unreported cases is so high (the Dobash study estimated 2 out of 98 were reported to police) that they cannot be used reliably. There are clues: repeated physical violence is cited between 17% and 57% in various studies of women seeking divorce (Moore, 1979; Levinger, 1966). And both in Britain and the United States, refuges for battered wives seeking to leave the marriage are extremely overcrowded; newly opened refuges fill up immediately and often have waiting lists before they open their doors (Moore, 1979).

The definitions used in collecting and analysing data in one national American study suggested that wives also used violence against husbands frequently, leading to discussion of a "battered husband syndrome" (Straus, et al., 1980; Steinmetz, 1977, 1978). This has not proved a robust finding; the type of violence used by wives is significantly less severe; husbands do not

take 'wifely' violence seriously much of the time (Adler, 1981); serious attacks by women are almost always in self-defense, and it is women, not men who are seriously injured or killed in domestic disputes. For instance in a study of police cases of family violence in one year in Scotland, the Dobashes found males to be the aggressors and females the victims in 94% of the cases (Dobash & Dobash, 1978).

In violence between spouses ... usually the male is the stronger and is only the victim when this physical advantage is negated by use of weapons, or more frequently, he refrains from using his full strength ... it is rare for the male to be the victim and once he releases his full physical force inhibition and even resorts to weapons, few women stand a chance. (Gayford, 1983, p. 124).

Some researchers argue that verbal aggression is as damaging to wives as overt physical violence. In terms of the importance for women of a sense of competence in domestic/conjugal roles, this could be so, since a sense of competence can be verbally destroyed. However, the consequences of being physically beaten up by a person with whom she is in direct daily interaction must be separately assessed. Gelles quotes from a long interview with an American couple who asserted proudly that they never fought, but where an allusion is made to a single occasion at the beginning of the marriage when the husband became so angry that he "had to do something" and did beat his wife. Since then, he said, she had never challenged him, and they had lived on excellent terms. One confrontation established the physical dominance of the husband, and thereafter conflict was avoided by the wife's submission (Gelles, 1972). This corresponds with ethological descriptions of the establishment of dominance hierarchies among many species, from chickens to chimpanzees. Among humans it is probable that play during adolescence teaches girls that males are stronger, and that therefore many conjugal relationships never include a direct challenge or physical confrontation at all.

It is clearly important to distinguish between the implicit premise of male physical dominance, which may operate in many non-violent marriages or those in which violence is occasional, and the routinized violence of wife-battering in which this dominance is acted out. In a sense the myths and theologies legitimating male power over women may act to make this premise explicit and link it to the legitimate moral order. That it is not fully legitimate in our society is

indicated by the titles of recent books on violence against wives: *Scream Quietly or the Neighbors will Hear You* (Pizzey, 1974) and *Behind Closed Doors* (Straus, et al., 1980). The feminist movement generally sees conjugal violence as arising from what they term our patriarchal society. In other words, it is because men are dominant in the social institutions that they consider it legitimate to use physical violence against their wives if they want to. The failure of the (male dominated) society to prevent them itself acts to reinforce their view that this is right. At this level we are in the same situation as when seeking to understand societies in which origin myths and witchcraft beliefs already "in place" reinforce the system of male dominance.

In fact, one must agree with this analysis as far as it goes. It is clear from studies of police response, and from court records showing how few are the cases of wife assault brought to court, and of these, how few result in conviction of the husband, that it is extremely rare for "society" to act against a violent husband, even when serious injury has been done (Farragher, 1985; Freeman, 1979, 1985; Johnson, 1985; Paterson, 1979). And there is plenty of confirmation in interview material that some violent men really do consider that "My home is my castle and in it I can do as I please" (Frankenberg, et al., 1977; see also Dobash & Dobash, 1979).¹⁶

The Dynamics of Extreme Domestic Violence

However my puzzlement about the link between morality and force began with the women of Gonja who themselves said, "We are evil." The interest of recent research on domestic violence lies in a striking parallel. For one of the themes to appear constantly is that after an initial period of disbelief, and of hoping that the husband's violence is a temporary aberration, the woman comes to expect and accept it (in the sense that she realizes that it is a permanent part of the conjugal relationship) and frequently she concludes she must be in some way to blame. Of course part of the reason for accepting blame is that the husband tends to link his violence with accusations and complaints. These focus repeatedly on two things: sexual infidelity and domestic failure. Sexual jealousy is likely to precipitate a beating when the wife is not allowed to leave the house even to visit her mother, as well as when she moves freely outside the home. And domestic crimes include failing to keep dinner hot until midnight, or allowing the baby to cry. Very often in the interview material

the wife will insist that she has not been unfaithful, and that whatever she does, the husband complains about her cooking or the care of the children. I am not here concerned with whether these allegations are in fact true, the significant thing is that they are so frequently part of the pattern of conjugal violence. Perhaps even more significant, those very women who say that they have not done the things their husbands accuse them of still feel that the *situation* is in some way their fault; that it is somehow up to them to "make the marriage work" and that in marrying they have "made their bed and must lie in it" (folk phrase quoted in interviews both from the United States and the United Kingdom).¹⁷ For many of these women this sense of guilt lies behind their failure to leave a domestic situation in which they are regularly injured by the husband. It also makes it impossible for some to seek help from kin or to take the children back to their natal family. Indeed, it is in this sense of desperation, and of having nowhere to turn among family and friends, that accounts in part for the flooding of women into refuges. Despite the discomfort of overcrowded conditions, women say of living in the refuge that it was a tremendous relief because there they found others who had similar experiences, and at least they realized that they were not in the wrong. Those who run the refuges say that one of the main problems for these victims of extreme domestic violence is their terrible lack of self-confidence. It is difficult for them to do anything constructive when they first arrive. They cannot deal effectively with officials -- from the social services, housing department, school -- and they do not have the confidence to find work.¹⁸ Several recent studies of domestic violence discuss this crippling sense of guilt (Pagelow, 1984; Morgan, 1982).

This sense of guilt and lack of confidence probably has at least three sources, all relevant for a model of domination. First, there is the element of cultural norms and family norms. Our society does expect women to put up with difficulties to make a marriage work (see above). In fact failure may well cause a deeper sense of personal inadequacy in a society with a strong norm of egalitarian and companionate marriage than where women expect husbands to be physically dominant and this matches reality. For at least a few, their own parents' marriage provided a model of marital violence, so they may see it as "normal."¹⁹ But even these women feel they are supposed to be able to "make it work," and as they cannot cope, they have obviously failed. If husbands are "naturally" violent, they should be able to handle this without going to

pieces. Either way it is their fault. This of course takes us back to the same position we were in with the preliterate cases. How does a society come to generate such norms?

This aspect is linked to a second, which is the nature of the roles which women define as goals. During the first half of this century, girls were raised to expect to marry and have a family. They wanted to do this, and most of them did so. "Wife" and "mother" were core roles. While those less well-off may have had to work, very few had careers. I would suggest that it is axiomatic that a person's sense of competence is closely linked to his/her ability to perform to their own and others' satisfaction in core roles. Thus, when a woman feels she has failed to make a go of her marriage, it isn't only a matter of the particular interpersonal relations involved. It is her social identity which has been destroyed. It might be argued that a man must also realize his marriage has been unsuccessful if he constantly "has to" beat his wife. But of course he may see this as the proper expression of his role as a dominant male, and in some societies this is so, e.g., in the Mediterranean (Loizos, 1978). Even assuming that the husband does feel his marriage is a failure, the conjugal role is far less central for men than it is for women. I am not suggesting that it is unimportant, only that in terms of social roles comprising the social persona, it is less central. There is, in our society, a real sense in which for a man it is a personal failure, but not a social failure.²⁰ Thus in society's terms a woman has indeed "failed" in not finding herself an effective conjugal/maternal/domestic role, where a man has not defaulted on his main core roles in the same way. The question begged by this formulation is whether domestic roles are central for women in all societies, and whether if they are universally so, this centrality is best viewed as a social or a biological phenomenon? These questions have been the subject of much recent scholarship and to discuss them adequately is not possible in the space available (see Brown, 1970; Divale & Harris, 1976; La Fontaine, 1981; Maccoby, 1966; Orner, 1974; Orner & Whitehead, 1981; Parker & Parker, 1979; Reiter, 1975; Rosaldo & Lamphere, 1974; Sanday, 1973, 1981; van den Berge & Barash, 1977, etc.). My own view is that biology sets constraints that, like the grit in an oyster, produce complex and amazing responses which, as ideologies and institutions in turn shape social roles, including the division of labour. The optimal female reproductive strategy of maintaining claims on a man for support and protection in order to maximize

successful investment in her few children (Hinde, 1984), would certainly make both wife and mother roles central on a species-wide basis. But even on the most immediate level, one would have to argue that where women's core social role is the conjugal domestic role, then women are highly vulnerable in situations where they cannot fill this role effectively. Thus when a husband complains, the wife is more threatened in terms of social competence than if a wife complains about the role performance of her husband. Incidentally, the non-legitimacy of women's complaints is nicely caught by the stereotype of the "nagging" wife, i.e., the irritating repetition of the same comment or request (presumably because the husband has not responded).

The very widespread acceptance that women have a duty to succeed in the conjugal role is reflected in the view not infrequently expressed by social workers, as well as by police, that women who are the victims of conjugal violence "bring it on themselves." This refers particularly to "provocative" behavior -- taunting or indirect aggression, including verbal aggression -- which so annoys the spouse that he loses his temper and hits his wife. They say that such women enjoy the excitement of a fight, and even perhaps in a masochistic way, enjoy being injured. A surprising recent advocate of this position is Erin Pizzey, a pioneer in England of women's refuges (Pizzey & Shapiro, 1982). All these people, social workers, police, and certainly someone as intimately involved with victims of violent husbands as Pizzey, are speaking from close and extended familiarity with conjugal violence. Yet this argument has a strong similarity to the beliefs in simple societies that "women are naturally weak and unable to keep secrets, quarrelsome." What is the reality to which this modern version of "women are evil" corresponds?

It is useful here to distinguish between two (admittedly related) problems: (1) Why are men more violent towards their spouses than their wives are towards them? (2) How do women living with violent men manage this violence? One view (Pizzey, etc.) is that a man would not hit a wife unless provoked, which implies that women initiate the fights in which they are battered. However, given male aggressiveness in warfare, hunting, street gangs, not to mention rape, this seems unlikely as an explanation for more than a small proportion of domestic violence. If we can for the moment accept the view which is increasingly well documented, that men are more prone to aggressive

response than women (Konner, 1982; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Parker & Parker, 1979) then it seems more useful to consider that the answer to the first question lies, at least in part, in the realm of biology.²¹ Men are more likely to respond aggressively to frustration than women, and when they do, they are likely to "win" a fight with a woman, which reinforces the aggressive response. When women do start a fight they are likely to get hurt, and this tends to inhibit them from overt violence the next time they are angry. This may be linked to the folk observation that women are more likely to use verbal than physical aggression.²²

There are hints in the studies of domestic violence that something more complex is also occurring; that men may regularly inhibit the urge to hit out at their wives when angry -- perhaps because they sense the injury this might cause (Adler, 1981, quoted in Pagelow, 1984; Gayford, 1983). However, when a dispute escalates, perhaps with an exchange of verbal attacks, a man's inhibition may fail, leading him to "release his full physical force without inhibition and even resort to weapons, [when] few women stand a chance" (Gayford, 1983).

If this pattern were to prove general it would support the suggestion that there is a premise of male physical dominance in conjugal relations. But it would also indicate that we should focus on the psychological and social mechanisms of inhibition which prevent male force being "released without inhibition" in most marriages, most of the time. For it must be emphasized that in any given society the level of physical force used by men within marriage is a result of the interplay between social norms and social structural pressures and constraints on the one hand, and male biology, on the other. Psychological mechanisms of inhibition presumably emerge from the interaction of these two types of constraint.

When norms, social structural pressures, and failure of inhibition do act together in our society to produce recurrent violence by a man, how can the wife manage this situation? The more obvious possible modes of response would seem to be:

- (1) **Withdrawal** - she may leave the situation. In socio-cultural terms this means conjugal separation or divorce.

(2) **Submission**

(a) This may lead to established male dominance, but avoid conjugal violence.

(b) Or it may lead to routinization of male violence, with the woman remaining in the situation "because of the children" or "because it is up to her to make the marriage work," or because she lacks the resources and confidence to leave. Probably the single most consistent finding in study after study of conjugal violence is that women who are subject to regular physical attack remain, often for many years, in this situation. It is this which leads to the view that in some way they must "like it" and even encourage it.

(3) **Fighting back** - this is likely to lead to chronic fighting, since sources of conflict are endemic in the domestic situation.

(a) In a situation of chronic violence every index indicates that it is the women who are most likely to be hurt. Where this happens repeatedly the women may become cowed and demoralized, and adopt the submissive mode (2a) above.

(b) Some women refuse either to leave or to submit, and perhaps as a means of self-respect, try to fight back. They may do this verbally (with taunts and arguments) and they may risk physical combat. If, as Pizzey argues, women find this confrontation exhilarating as well as painful, are they so different in this from boxers or soldiers? Yet we celebrate the courage of these male roles, but denigrate women who defend themselves. It is also likely that a woman's failure to be submissive stimulates her husband to further aggression, and she is again likely to get hurt, but now we can see that she has indeed "brought it on herself."

It is important in considering how these different alternatives might affect women's domestic strategies to be aware of their variable consequences. Submission does not guarantee the avoidance of male violence, but it may achieve this goal. Fighting back may not save a woman from getting beaten up, but she may have self-confidence in addition to the bruises. While there is probably a strong tendency towards routinization of one mode of response (Dobash & Dobash, 1979), there can also be a shift from one mode to another, as when the consequences of fighting back become too painful, and a woman becomes submissive; or when a woman who has passively put up with

violence for years finally decides to leave. I am not arguing that one mode of response is "better" or "worse" and indeed the only "correct" response is to engage external social support against male violence, simply because it is physically dangerous to women. But the different modes of response have interesting implications for the problem of institutionalization of beliefs about the illegitimacy of female power. If one looks at the societies already discussed in this paper, certain patterns emerge.

Withdrawal from violent conjugal relationships. Sometimes women are allowed to initiate divorce, but this is relatively uncommon. Among Amazonian Indians men may forceably keep their wives from returning home, a situation sometimes related to exchange marriages. Some African societies permit women to divorce, others do not. Judaism and Christianity have fought keenly against divorce. But even where divorce is legally available the importance of the roles of wife and mother, and the absence of resources for maintaining the household apart from the husband, force many women to remain in a violent marriage (Dobash & Dobash, 1979; Freeman, 1979; Homer, Leonard & Taylor, 1985; Martin, 1979; Pagelow, 1984). The difficulty and importance of being able to withdraw from a violent marriage are reflected in the high level of demand for refuges (UK)/shelters (USA) in which women can live while trying to establish an alternative life.

Submission. If all women are defined as "naturally" subordinate to all men, then the dominance hierarchy is fixed and not subject to contest. This may in fact support male inhibition of the use of force against women. It is by far the most common solution on a cross-cultural basis. This fact is reflected not only in the belief systems described here, but in the many legal systems in which women are jural minors. While the institutionalization of submission, and the elaboration of belief systems which validate submission, do not prevent male violence against wives, they do remove one source of challenge, fighting back, which clearly sometimes elicits violence. Thus the institutionalization of submission is one kind of society-level response to male physical strength as this affects the domestic situation.

Fighting back. Very few societies treat it as legitimate for a woman to "fight back" against a husband. This prohibition is achieved in many ways: by the community closing ranks against any woman

who does so; by legal rules; by norms which hold that a man has the right to "chastise" his wife for disobedience; and by belief systems which deny the legitimacy of female power. Our society is highly ambivalent on this score. While we claim that men and women are equal, representatives of the normative order -- police and social workers -- frequently consider that if a woman fights back, or even tries to escape a violent home, she is in some way morally at fault.

There is a third aspect of women's sense of guilt and lack of self-confidence arising from the very fact that in the violent domestic situation, Might is Right. If a woman knows that she is likely to be hit for doing what her husband says is "wrong," then she will inevitably try to avoid the pain which follows if she does "wrong." This creates a situation in which her husband comes to define what is "right" and what is "wrong" for her in a purely pragmatic sense. Here I would recall the finding that men explain their violence as a response to their wives' faults (inedible food, failure to prepare meals on time, failure to keep the children from crying and flirting or promiscuity). A woman in this situation will attempt to have a hot meal ready for her husband at whatever hour he chooses to return; taking it as her responsibility to make the marriage work, and seeing her domestic role as central, she can believe that it is perfectly reasonable for her husband to demand this. In other words, violent men in part use their physical power to enforce their definitions of right and wrong, and their wives may come to accept this situation. Such a physically constructed definition comes to be used as a criterion for the wife's behavior, both by her husband and by the wife herself. Have we here a model for the shaping of belief and myth? In any case we have one model for the formation of consensus within the domestic group. (There are clearly others, and of course only a small minority of couples live in a violent relationship.) But where domestic groups are open (see Goody, 1973) and domestic life is closely keyed to external political and ritual forms (Fortes, 1958; Goody, 1973; Hugh-Jones, 1979; La Fontaine, 1981) domestic consensus tends quickly to generalize and become group consensus. Thus it is in the very preliterate societies I have described that such a model would also apply to the construction of group norms about definition of right and wrong.

But why do men trouble to justify the beating of a wife if indeed a man is free to do as he pleases in his own home? Obviously male freedom to behave as they choose is not complete, and it is by invoking norms

which he believes are shared by the wider society (a wife should not be promiscuous, a wife should cook for her husband) that a man seeks approval for his actions. So there is a further twist. These husbands want both the power to define what is right within the family, and they want it to be recognized that they are *right* to do so. They want to be approved of, and to feel that they are behaving as a husband should. Case material also makes it plain that despite their violent behaviour, most of them want to retain the affection of their wives. So they need to convince themselves, their wives, and others that what they do is right.

Hinde has argued (1985) that this pattern of behavior is best explained by the constraints of the optimal male reproductive strategy. This conclusion requires that men make sure that their wives are not unfaithful, since although there is no doubt as to the genetic mother of a child, a husband cannot be sure he is the father of his wife's children. A husband who suspects that his wife might have an interest in other men will thus seek to restrain her and punish any infidelity severely. Male sexual jealousy clearly is adaptive in this sense over the long-evolutionary term; adaptive for men. But it is hard to see that it is adaptive *for women* either to be denied legitimate power in small-scale societies or to be subjected to regular physical violence in some traditional societies and a small proportion of households in our own society. The only way in which institutionalized subordination might be adaptive for women is if it acted to reduce male violence (which may indeed be the case). Subordination only helps women achieve their own goals of support and protection while rearing their children because men are in a position to enforce their demands of male control. If one were to speculate on the origins of the moderately greater strength and aggressiveness of human males compared to females, one possibility would be that the pressure for these attributes from male hunting and warfare (Divale & Harris, 1976; van den Berge & Barash, 1977) was balanced for women by an advantage for those who, being smaller and passive, did not elicit violence by challenging their men. If women were physically stronger than men, would the Barasana myth tell of the overthrow of women, who for the good of the society were deprived of their sacred flutes, punished and returned to their rightful place as cultivators of manioc, and the ones who menstruate and bear and rear children?

Notes

This paper was originally written for the History and Anthropology Round Table III, *Domination as Social Practice*, although I was unable at the last minute to be present. I would like to thank particularly the discussant, Barbara Duden, for the time she took over her thoughtful comments, and in corresponding about them. The notes of the discussion, and comments from Alf Ludtke and Hans Medick also gave me much food for thought. Realizing that the points I wanted to make raised other, much debated, issues, I also prevailed on a number of other colleagues to look to look at the paper critically. Several of the comments have led to substantial changes. The various critics will no doubt recognize the points they raised; if they have not been satisfactorily dealt with, the responsibility is mine, not theirs, but for their time and ideas I would like to thank Michael Cole, Robert Hinde, Jack Goody, Stephen Hugh-Jones, Jean La Fontaine, Penelope Roberts, Joan Stevenson-Hinde and Marilyn Strathern. Some of the points apparently ignored really deserve separate papers of their own; others have been definitively handled by published work, to which I can add nothing.

¹See R. A. Hinde, 1979, pp. 193-210 for an overview of learning theory from a perspective which seeks to set the individual processes of learning in the context of social relationships. There is increasing evidence that substantial learning takes place independently of direct reward or punishment. Hinde calls this "exposure learning" but notes that this covers several different forms. Much shaping of behaviour occurs through subliminal cues (Bruner, 1974, 1975; Trevarthan, 1974; Goody, 1978). Indeed attention itself may serve as a reward (Chance, 1975). If the reward/punishment format is extended in this way, as seems necessary in looking at social relationships, then it seems to underly a good deal of human learning, as well as to have been picked up and built on in the social institutions of every society.

²The universality of male dominance is of course a function of the way in which dominance is defined. I am specifically concerned here with the holding of positions of legitimate authority and control in the political and economic system; with those who formally organize and manage political and economic activities. This form of domination is widely acknowledged to be virtually universal, even by those who argue that women hold other kinds of power (e.g., Ardener, 1971; Rogers, 1975; Sanday). If women hold other, informal types of power -- as they often do -- this raises for me the question of why it is women (not men) for whom power is "muted," "masked," "informal," etc. As I shall argue in the body of this paper, the view of Divale and Harris seems difficult to dispute: "The most obvious explanation (for the male supremacist complex) is that institutionalized male supremacy is the direct product of genetically determined human sexual dimorphism which endows males with taller stature, heavier musculature, and more of the hormones that are useful for aggression." (1976, p. 526). However, like others who have come to this conclusion (e.g., Parker & Parker, 1979) they go on to consider other questions instead of asking what are the implications for institutions and relationships of this fact.

³This may be racial or ethnic or based on the supposed inheritance of lower intelligence or inferior skills or moral constitution.

⁴Since Warner's early publication (1937) Berndt (1951) and others have recorded other versions, and many scholars have commented on the corpus, among whom Meggitt (1967), Hiatt (1975) and Knight (1983) are particularly useful.

⁵They might almost be seen as a sort of Anthropological Rorschach, allowing projection of the preoccupations of a wide range of scholars: Radcliffe-Brown (1926, 1930) pointed to the ubiquity of the rainbow serpent in Australian myths linked with initiation rites; Warner stressed the close association between the myth and the initiation ritual; Levi-Strauss argues that the double division of society into male/female and initiated males/uninitiated males is, throughout Australia, a solution to the contradictions of social organization (1966); and Hiatt sees the symbolism of swallowing and regurgitating (by serpents or women) as providing an idiom for male control of initiation on the model of normal parturition (1975).

⁶There is not the space to consider this material here, but M. Strathern's work, for instance, describes the fear and distrust with which women in Mt. Hagen are regarded, as expressed in the belief that a woman can kill her husband by polluting his food with her menstrual fluids, and that wives may indeed do this because of loyalty to their natal clan (Strathern, 1972). Here again women are inherently dangerous and evil, though Strathern's work makes clear that attitudes towards women are complex, and also contain strong positive elements (1981).

⁷The distinction between "bad" and "good" witches is an analytic one that is not necessarily reflected in the terminology used in a given society. Rather it is based on whether or not the community treats the verdict of witchcraft in a particular instance as a cause for direct accusation and counteraction, or on the contrary, the reputation for witchcraft power adds to the political or ritual stature of the "witch." This is argued fully in E. N. Goody, 1970. In *Gbanyito* there is a single word, *egbe*, for "witch" which refers to any person using certain kinds of mystical aggressive power, whether male or female, and whether for social, or anti-social ends. Other African languages distinguish between mystical aggression using powers internal to the attacker (witchcraft) and that which employs external weapons (sorcery). The English popular usage that makes witches female and sorcerers male has elements of the associations: female = illegitimate, evil power; male = legitimate, good power -- which are reflected in the Gonga tolerance for male witchcraft.

⁸European Colonial authorities forbade the execution of witches, which placed great strain on communities in which people "knew" that a witch was killing them. A variety of new forms of counteraction have evolved generally referred to as "witchfinding cults." These focus on identifying the witch and providing some form of purification ritual by which her witchcraft powers are destroyed and she is made safe to live with. (See for instance Douglas, 1963.)

- ⁹It has been argued that women are seen as witches in patrilineal societies because, due to rules of exogamy, they are married into their husband's lineage from other descent groups. Such "foreign" wives are potentially hostile strangers with dangerous access to secrets of their husband's descent group and enduring loyalties to their natal lineage. However evil witches are also mainly women among the matrilineal Ashanti and the non-unilineal Gonja. This suggests that while the divided loyalties of a wife may lead to fear and hostility, there are other factors beside descent group affiliation involved.
- ¹⁰The prototype of heat-seeking missiles?
- ¹¹Even 50 years after the legal ending of executions people graphically described a variety of forms of execution for female witches: sealing the witch into a room filled with the smoke of burning red peppers; placing the witch's head in a red-hot cast iron pot filled with red peppers; placing her on a fire in a deep pit; stabbing her with a sharpened stick of a special wood. Part of the elaborateness of these executions was due to the belief that witches were difficult to really kill. But there is a strong element also of sadism. I concluded that when a woman killed a close relative, everyone -- kin and neighbors -- felt a fear and revulsion based on the intrusion of lethal aggression into a relationship of supposed trust (see E. N. Goody, 1970).
- ¹²The Gonja word, *egbe*, refers to both good and evil witches. (See Middleton, 1963.)
- ¹³Details of these cases are given in E. N. Goody, 1970.
- ¹⁴Sanday (1981) and Rosaldo (1974) have discussed the difference between power and authority in the context of sex roles. I do not completely agree with the focus on decision making, but the issue is a difficult one. Sanday, by including informal power avoids what is for me a critical distinction between power and authority, i.e., the legitimacy of the latter, but not the former. It is the very non-formality of much of the power exercised by women which makes it difficult for men to be sure of their control. Where male power is the legitimate authority, this makes female power at best non-legitimate. If men are operating as they often do, on an implicit premise of male control, then it is very threatening not to be able to control women's informal power. It may well be that this is the dynamic behind the male perception of women's power as somehow illegitimate or evil.
- ¹⁵Other studies generating intermediate figures (e.g., Walker, 1979 50%; Frieze, 1980, 35%) have either been based on counseling, work with women in refuges, or studies with small samples and matched controls.
- ¹⁶In fact this view is an atypical one, in the sense that in most societies there are strong norms which limit the harm which one individual is free to do to another, and which are enforced within the community, either at the level of the extended kin group or the local neighborhood. If, indeed, domestic violence is more prevalent today in the West than in many other societies, it is almost certainly because of the extraordinary isolation of the family from anchorage in such local level constraints.
- ¹⁷The police and the courts tend to see it as their duty "to sustain the sanctity of marriage" by reconciling a quarrelsome couple and reinforcing the authority of the husband to "chastise" his wife (see particularly Freeman, 1979, 1985; Pahl, 1982; Patterson, 1979). The only person a woman in this situation may feel able to talk to is her doctor. A recent study showed that very few doctors feel able to advise them, and that the regular response is a prescription for tranquilizers. While from the doctor's point of view this may be intended to allow the woman to keep going in a difficult situation, women tend to see this as further proof of their own inadequacy (Borkowski, Murch, & Walker, 1983; Johnson, 1985).
- ¹⁸Walker (1979) has suggested that this inability to find a way out of the violent situation may be due to what Seligman has called "learned helplessness" (Seligman, 1976). Seligman found that animals who were repeatedly punished in a situation from which they could not escape later failed to leave the painful situation when there was nothing preventing them. He links the lethargy and maladaptive behavior of these animals to the human syndrome of depression in a provocative and much cited study. Morgan (1982) and Pagelow (1984) make this same association.
- ¹⁹This suggestion has been made on the basis of case material, so it does sometimes happen. However, a recent review of studies relevant to the possible intergenerational transmission of violence concluded: "The vast majority of woman batterers do not come from homes where they were beaten, and the vast majority of men who were beaten as children do not beat their wives." (Stark & Flicraft, 1985) Straus et al. concluded from their U.S. national interview survey that "the majority of today's violent couples are those who were brought up by parents who were violent to each other." (1980) However, serious difficulties have been found with this study (Dobash & Dobash, 1979) and Stark & Flicraft point out that the same data shows that while a boy who witnessed wife-battering is three times as likely to beat his wife now, a current batterer is more than twice as likely to have had a non-violent as a violent home in childhood. One of the difficulties in assessing the extent of modeling of wife-battering from a violent family is the lack of longitudinal studies. Such modeling in all probability does occur sometimes.
- ²⁰Hinde suggests that this is probably true in all human societies (personal communication). However, in many tribal societies men must marry and show that they can manage and support a household before they can participate in the external politico-jural domain. Here the simple male conjugal role is a requirement for valued male political and economic roles. A man who repeatedly fails to keep a wife will experience social as well as personal failure (E. Goody, 1973 and fieldnotes; La Fontaine, 1981). In other societies the sexual division of labor is so linked to marriage that it is not possible to function in adult economic roles unless also married. These are cases in which for men the conjugal role is a prerequisite to core adult male roles: It is not actually being a husband and father which is central in itself. In this sense Hinde is probably correct.

²¹Recent reviews and analyses of the literature on sex differences (Maccoby, 1966; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974; Parker & Parker, 1979) have convincingly argued the basic dimorphism characteristics of size, strength, and aggression-enhancing hormones. Analyses reaching such different conclusions as Sanday (1981) and Divale & Harris (1976) agree in seeing males as dominant in hunting and warfare in the long period when hominids survived as hunters and gatherers. The latter conclude that "central to the sexual distribution of power is the fact that almost everywhere men monopolize the weapons of war as well as weapons of the hunt" (1976, p. 524). They further argue that it is only by assuming the advantage to preindustrial societies of rearing the largest number of fierce and aggressive warriors that the widespread imbalance in sex ratios in favor of males can be explained.

A very different sort of evidence occurs in the totally different way in which homosexuality is structured in men's and women's prisons. In men's prisons males challenge each other with aggressive demands for homosexual services. The only possible responses (Toch, 1977) are (a) to fight the man who demands sex, (b) to flee and seek protection from the prison guards, (c) to give in and provide homosexual services. This leads to a high level of violence, a very high level of anxiety about being caught and raped (by a single inmate or by several) and a situation in which every gesture is scanned for sexual and aggressive implications. Giving in leads to a crisis of sexual identity, and of self-worth and ability to function outside the prison. Giving in also leads to being labeled as a homosexual which is closely linked to being weak and powerless, and so carries the risk of further attacks, both aggressive and sexual.

Gialombardo also found a preoccupation with homosexuality in women's prisons (1966, 1974). However, there is virtually no aggression associated with homosexual soliciting in women's prisons. Instead there is an elaborate culture of courtship, marriage ritual, in some prisons there are rules for divorce, and kinship systems which include incest rules prohibiting sexual relationships between "brother" and "sister," "father" and "daughter," "mother" and "son." Incest rules "had" to be invented because of the sexual jealousy between women over the same "man." If two individuals of opposite prison gender were seen alone together, it was likely to be assumed that there was a sexual relationship involved. The only way to avoid jealousy was to define the relationship in close kinship terms which rendered a sexual relationship impossible.

However, there is clearly tremendous variation among members of each sex in their adaptation to biology and the cultural institutions which it generates. There is presumably variability among both males and females in strength, stature, and hormonal levels as with other physiological characteristics. Both developmental interactions and social norms (cultural, sub-cultural and familial) will differentially reinforce aggressive responses on this initially variable base. Thus individual men must vary greatly in readiness to express aggression and this is further differentiated by the response pattern of the spouse. In addition to this complex individual variation, the relationship between

external stress -- in work, finances, unemployment, peer conflicts, etc. -- and aggressive responses in the conjugal relationship need to be understood.

²²The analysis of projective material in boy's and girl's stories in a study in northern Ghana showed boys significantly more aggressive on measures of extreme aggression, physical aggression and mystical aggression, but the girls were higher on measures of verbal aggression. (Goody, 1982). Where males are likely to win an open fight and it is illegitimate for females to physically confront males (as in Gonja) verbal aggression may be the only safe form for females.

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Ethel, a little girl of eight or nine when asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?":

I wanna see if I'm gonna grow up first. I mean, I might not live to be grown up. 'Cause I don't know when my time is up. I don't know when I'm gonna die yet. I never know if I could die overnight from the bomb or somethin'. So the day wasn't promised to me. (Laughs.) I don't know what may happen, uh, my life weren't promised to me.

Studs Terkel, *The Good War*

Psychological Stress Responses of Palestinian Mothers and Their Children in Conditions of Military Occupation and Political Violence

Raija-Leena Punamäki
Department of Psychology
University of Helsinki, Finland

Psychological stress responses were studied among 174 Palestinian women and their 105 children living in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip -- territories under Israeli military occupation since June 1967. This article discusses the impact on children of exposure to traumatic events related to military occupation as well as the relation between children's responses and mother's responses to the situation. The moderating influences of other variables on the relationships between traumatic events and children's mental health are reported as well. Interviews illustrate the relationship between mothers and their children in the particular conditions of military occupation and the national struggle against it. Results show that exposure to events related to military occupation increased both the women's and the children's mental health problems. Yet, among the Palestinian women studied, traumatic experiences related to the military occupation tended also to mobilize counter-forces aimed at dealing with and managing stress: internal locus of control and social-political activity as coping modes increased with exposure to military occupation-related stress. The study partly confirmed earlier findings that a mother's mental health and behavior in a stress situation mediates the impact of traumatic events on a child's mental health. Analysis of interviews shows that historical and political factors determine a child-mother relationship in conditions of political violence.

Little effort has been devoted to investigating the psychological well-being of civilians in contemporary military conflicts. Traditionally, psychologists have invested great efforts to improve the effectiveness of fighting soldiers. The mental health of American soldiers in Vietnam (Bourne, 1970; Huffman, 1970; Keane & Fairbank, 1983; Strange & Brown, 1970) and

Israeli soldiers in Lebanon (Dasberg, 1982; Solomon, Mikulincer & Hobfoll, 1986) has been thoroughly studied, while the victims of the actions of these soldiers have hardly evoked psychologists' interests.

When facing civilians' suffering in conditions of political and armed conflict, the following questions emerge: How do experiences of violence, loss, and terror affect children's and women's psychological functioning and mental health? Which psychological processes and social factors may help civilian victims to protect their psychological well-being when facing traumatic experiences? What is the nature of the mother-child relationship and the development of the child under conditions of constant danger, hostility, and insecurity inherent in the lives of politically victimized people? This article concentrates on these questions, using statistical data and interviews with Palestinian women and their children living in the Israeli occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Psychological studies during World War II point to children's resilience under extreme conditions of war stress and suggest that the emotional state and behavior of mothers are the main mediators between children's psychological functioning and traumatic experiences (Bender & Frosch, 1942; Despert, 1942; Freud & Burlingham, 1942, 1943). Fraser (1977) studied psychiatric effects of the Northern Ireland conflict on children, and he agrees that the mother's psychological state is an important influence on the child's well-being in conditions of political violence. He found that among children suffering from mental health problems, characteristically, one parent was either absent or seriously emotionally disturbed. Examining children's emotional adjustment in conditions of national conflict, Israeli researchers have emphasized not only the importance of the family functioning as a responsible and supportive group, but also the supportive function of the whole society (Lifshitz, Berman, Gilad, & Galili, 1977; Milgram, 1978; Ziv, Krulanski & Schulman, 1974).

Only one empirical study was found, however, which documented responses of a random sample of mothers and children. Bryce and Walker (1986) studied Lebanese women and their children after the 1982 Israeli invasion. They found that the number of traumatic experiences of a family was related to behavioral problems among children but that a mother's depressiveness was the main determinant of child illness and hospitalization.

Protacio-Marcelino (1985) studied stress and coping problems of children of political detainees in the Philippines. Her study documents deep emotional distress among children due to involuntary separation from their fathers but also shows a wide repertoire of children's coping devices - including traditional psychological defenses and coping modes as well as social and political activity. She stresses the fact that the problems encountered by the children of political prisoners are inextricably tied to political, economic, and social realities. Thus, treatment of the children of detainees must not be confined only to reinforcing internal motivational and emotional factors (subjective cognitions) but must also aim to change the political and social situation, which means here to call for a general amnesty for all political prisoners.

Information on the impact of the Apartheid policy on South Africans is scanty. Information about the detention and torture of thousands of black children has reached the public despite heavy censorship regulations imposed in South Africa. The Lawyers' Committee for Human Rights (1986) reported long-term psychological problems in 70% of the detained children. They include anxiety disorders, depression, adjustment and behavior disorders, and psychotic episodes. Children frequently exhibit acute feelings of fear, guilt, isolation, and depression upon their release.

For this study of Palestinian mothers and children, stress theory (Lazarus & Launier, 1978) was applied to assess the psychological responses of the women and their children to political violence. Stress theory suggests that exposure to traumas alone is hardly ever a sufficient explanation for the onset of psychological problems. The way people appraise the meaning and harmfulness of stressors encountered (i.e., primary appraisal), their appraisal of their own resources to cope with stressful events (i.e., secondary appraisal), and actual coping modes employed in stress situations -- these all function as psychological mediators between exposure to stress and mental health outcomes (Lazarus, Averill, & Opton, 1974; Lazarus, Cohen, Folkman, Kanner, & Schafer, 1980). The social mediators of a given stress process may be called *vulnerability factors* and *protective factors*, which tend either to increase or decrease the effect of stressors on mental health (Brown & Harris, 1978; Rutter, 1983).

Method

Subjects. The data were collected from Palestinian families residing in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip during the first half of 1982. For the study 174 women were interviewed, and in 105 cases, one of their children was also interviewed. The age of the children was between 8-14, and there was an approximately equal number of boys and girls in the sample. The families were selected as representative of the whole Palestinian population living in the occupied territories (i.e., social class, woman's job status, place of residence, and whether they are refugees, see Statistical Abstract of Israel 1981, p. 734). As a pilot study, eight Palestinian families were interviewed in depth.

The field work was conducted in times of heightened tension and violence, just before the Lebanon war. Shooting incidents, collective punishments, mass arrests, and confrontations between Israeli occupation troops and Palestinian youths were daily events. The nature of "stressful life-events" and the political atmosphere in the occupied territories are described in several sources (e.g., Abu-Shakrah, 1985; Benvenisti, 1982; Lesch, 1980; Said, 1976).

Procedures. The instrument used to measure stressful life-events consists of 24 items. Seven items representing "universal" stressors (such as financial troubles, problems in human relationships, and other everyday difficulties) were taken from the list by Holmes and Rahe (1967). The rest of the events are characteristic of military occupation and national conflict and are called traumatic events related to military occupation. They were drawn from interviews with Palestinians, news items, personal observations, and earlier studies (Kuttab, 1979; Langer, 1975; Metzger, Orth, & Sterzing, 1980; Punamäki, 1981). They include physical violence (e.g., gun fights, confrontations with soldiers, and destruction of houses), experiences of loss (e.g., death in war, imprisonment, and exile of a family member), and acts of harassment and terror by the occupiers. In a factor analysis applied to all stressful life-events, everyday difficulties and traumatic events related to military occupation loaded in their own, separate factors. The reliability values for these scales were 0.86 and 0.91, respectively.

Psychological symptoms, anxiety, and fearfulness were assessed as indicators of a child's mental

health problems. A checklist of 15 psychological symptoms was drawn from a screening tool developed by Rutter, Shaffer and Shephard (1975). The list includes symptoms of aggressiveness (e.g., outburst of anger, aggression, and destructiveness), withdrawal (e.g., extreme and paralyzing fears, depressiveness, and sad moods), and nervousness (e.g., difficulties in sleeping, restlessness and problems in concentration). Mothers were asked to report the prevalence of psychological symptoms observed in the focal child using a three-point scale: very often (3), sometimes (2), or never (1). The cluster of variables was counted as means of these symptoms. The reliability measure for the cluster variable of all psychological symptoms was 0.86.

A shortened version of Castaneda's Children's Form of Manifest Anxiety Scale (Castaneda, McCandless, & Palermo, 1956) was used to measure anxiety among the children. On the basis of results obtained in the pilot study, only 28 of Castaneda's original 53 items were included, and Cronbach's alpha value for the new version was low at only 0.55. Eight items describing positive feelings were added for the scale.

The fear scale used among the children was made up of the following: 1) fears which are thought to be common to children in many countries and which were drawn from the Fear Survey Schedule for Children of Scherer and Nakamura (1968); and 2) fears characteristic of the situation of national conflict and war. Two new fear categories were developed: fear of war and conflict (e.g., guns and submachine guns, being in a gun battle, and the sound of jet fighters) and fears concerning the children's personal and family security (e.g., father is taken to prison, soldiers attack home, and something bad happens to the family). The final fear scale that was employed consisted of 48 items. The reliability value for the entire fear scale was 0.92. The children were asked to state whether they feared the issue very much (4), much (3), a little (2), or not at all (1).

The factors which are assumed to protect or make a child more vulnerable in the face of traumatic experiences are as follows: socio-economic situation of the family; happiness of family life; and, sex and age of the child. The indicators of the socio-economic status of the family were as follows: mother's evaluation of the family's economic situation (good, reasonable, bad), mother's education and working status (i.e., works at home or outside the home as skilled or

unskilled labour), father's profession, size of the family, and, residence status of family (i.e., refugee or non-refugee). Happiness of family life was assessed by asking the mother whether her marriage was very happy, sometimes happy, sometimes unhappy, or very unhappy.

Measures of the women's stress process include: a) appraisals of her resources to cope with stress, b) her coping modes, and, c) her mental health problems. The woman's appraisal of her coping resources was assessed by locus of control and optimism-pessimism tendencies. The test of locus of control by Rotter (1966) was modified for the purpose of this study by adding three items concerning the Palestinian issue and three items referring to helplessness.

The optimism-pessimism measurement was obtained by using the Rotter Incomplete Sentence Blank (Rotter & Rafferty, 1950) on items referring to prospects for the future.

Coping modes were measured by a modified version of the Rotter Incomplete Sentence Blank. Women were presented with situations related to military occupation and national struggle, such as "When I see a house destroyed...", "My husband does not return home...", or "When I hear that Israelis are attacking Palestinian refugee camps..." The responses of the women were classified according to the conception of different coping modes proposed by Lazarus (1966): aggressive action, avoidance and retreat, inaction and passivity, general apprehension, and defense mechanisms. A category for social and political activity as a coping mode was added and was determined on the basis of the women's responses to the stress situations presented in the incomplete sentences task.

Finally, the mental health outcomes of the mother were assessed by means of the psychiatric screening instrument of Gurin, Veroff, and Feld (1960), which assesses psychosomatic and emotional symptoms, in addition to the Multiple Affection Adjective Checking List of Zuckerman and Lubin (1965), which assesses anxiety, depressive, and hostile feelings. The women were also asked to evaluate their general health (good, reasonable, bad).

Statistical Treatment. The dimensionality of the sum of the variables was checked by means of factor analysis. The reliability measurement was based on the item-analysis developed by Tarkkonen (1987) and

Cronbach's alpha values. Multiple regression analysis was used as a method for studying the influence of stressful life-events, vulnerability-protective factors, and the mother's responses to stress on aspects of children's mental health. The relationships between traumatic events, mental health indicators, and possible "buffering" variables were determined from crossbreaks, with X^2 (chi square) used to denote statistical significance.

Results

The psychological responses of children and women to exposure to traumatic events. Children's psychological disorders significantly increased when the amount of traumatic events in military occupation increased. Children whose families faced a high amount of traumatic events suffered more often from severe aggression ($X^2=9.66$, $df=2$, $P=.008$), severe nervousness ($X^2=10.25$, $df=2$, $P=.005$), and severe withdrawal symptoms ($X^2=4.93$, $df=2$, $P=.08$) than less traumatized children. Enuresis, as an example of single symptoms was about three times as common among children with a high amount of traumatic experiences (21%) as compared with children having a low amount of traumatic experiences (8%).

Children's anxiety also increased significantly ($X^2=13.76$, $df=2$, $P=.001$) when their exposure to traumatic experiences increased. A third (35%) of the children with a low amount of traumatic events and 85% of the group having a high amount of traumatic experiences showed strong anxiety. Unlike anxiety and psychological disorders, the children's general fearfulness did not vary according to the amount of traumatic experiences reported for their families. From the different fear categories, only classical phobias, such as fears of darkness, ghosts, or thunder ($X^2=4.97$, $df=2$, $P=.08$) increased with the greater exposure to traumatic experiences.

Among the Palestinian women, too, mental health problems increased when the family's exposure to traumatic events of military occupation increased. There were almost significant variations between women's anxiety ($X^2=6.09$, $df=2$, $P=.04$), depression ($X^2=6.40$, $df=2$, $P=.05$), hostility ($X^2=6.45$, $df=2$, $P=.03$), and the amount of traumatic events. Only hostility increased linearly according to the amount of traumatic events: Women exposed to a high amount of traumatic events showed three times (48%) as much severe hostility as the women with a low amount of

Table 1

Factors Related to Stress		BETA	Multiple R	R ²	F-value
Psychological Disorders	Maternal depression	.62	.62	.39	26.63
	Economic situation of the family	.30	.70	.48	18.56
	Optimism-pessimism of mother	.31	.75	.56	17.10
Anxiety	Sex of the child	.34	.34	.12	5.50
Fears Concerning Own and Family's Security	Sex of the child	.39	.39	.15	4.12
	Avoidance as mother's coping mode	.38	.48	.23	6.04
	Religiousness of mother	.31	.65	.42	9.12
Positive Sentiments	Social support	.62	.62	.39	26.86
	Religiousness of mother	.42	.74	.55	24.71
	Mother's locus of control in Palestinian issue	.26	.78	.61	21.09
	Maternal depression	.22	.81	.65	18.18

Key: All F-values included in the table have the significance of $P < .001$

traumatic experiences (15%). The severity and amount of psychological symptoms were found to increase significantly ($X^2=9.44$, $df=2$, $P=.008$), and general health to deteriorate ($X^2=19.81$, $df=4$, $P=.02$) with more frequent exposure to military occupation-related experiences.

Exposure to traumatic events resulting from military occupation increased mental health problems, and also exercised impact on secondary appraisal and coping modes among the Palestinian women. Exposure to traumatic events tended to increase total amount of perceived internal control ($X^2=6.51$, $df=2$, $P=.05$) and, of the different control areas, particularly control of general political situations ($X^2=5.44$, $df=2$, $P=.06$). Everyday difficulties, in contrast, tended to intensify the external locus of control in the women's personal lives.

Exposure to the traumatic events of military occupation increased social and political activity ($X^2=6.49$, $df=2$, $P=.03$) and decreased avoidance and retreat ($X^2=6.17$, $df=1$, $P=.01$) as a means of coping with stress situations.

These results show that the Palestinian women who had a high amount of experiences of violence, loss, and terror strongly believed in their resources to control their lives, and tended to employ active means of coping in order to change and influence the stress situation. Everyday difficulties were not capable of evoking these resourceful and active responses to stress. Yet, there was a direct association between exposure to traumatic events and mental health problems among the Palestinian women and their children.

Determinants of the children's psychological disorders, anxiety, fears, and positive sentiments. Regression analysis was used to identify the main determinants of the children's mental health. Table 1 shows the results of stepwise multiple regression analysis with child's psychological disorders, anxiety, security-related fears, and positive sentiments as dependent variables. The independent factors in the regression were: stressful life-events, vulnerability-protective factors (economic status, social position of the family, job status of the mother, social support), the mother's psychological responses to stress (locus of control, pessimism-optimism, coping modes,

psychological symptoms, and emotional distress), and the child's sex and age.

The main predictor of child's psychological disorders was maternal depression, which accounted for 39% of the variation. Characteristic for a child showing frequent psychological disorders (such as aggression, withdrawal symptoms, and nervousness) was that the mother suffered from depression and appraised her life pessimistically, and that the child's family was poor.

Of the selected determinants, only the sex of the child was able to explain some (12%) of the variation in child anxiety. Girls were more anxious than boys among the Palestinian children studied. Happy children, those frequently expressing positive feelings, were those whose mothers received sufficient social support and were religious. Furthermore, the mothers of these children showed internal locus of control on the Palestinian issue and were non-depressive. These factors -- all of them related to the child's mother -- were able to explain 65% of the variation of the children's positive sentiments.

Children's fearfulness was accounted for by the child's sex and his/her mother's ways of coping with stress. Children who expressed intense fears concerning their personal and family security were girls whose mothers were non-religious and used much avoidance and withdrawal in their coping with stress. These factors account for 42% of the variation in the security-related fears.

When the mother's psychological responses to stress were excluded from the regression analysis, the amount of traumatic events turned out to be the main determinant of the children's psychological disorders. Traumatic events alone explained 24% of the variation in the children's psychological disorders. The family's economic position and social support were other significant determinants of children's disorders. The total prediction power was lower when mother's responses as determinants were excluded; the three factors were able to explain only 26% of the variation of children's psychological disorders.

Descriptive analysis of mother-child relationship under occupation. Regression analyses confirm earlier findings that a mother's mental health and behavior are important in affecting her child's psychological well-being in a stress situation. Yet, the context

in which the child-mother relationship takes place is of great importance. Interviews with Palestinian mothers suggest that the political and military situation under foreign occupation, conflict over the land, intimidation by the enemy, forced evictions and expulsions, all affect the nature of mother-child relationship. Using women's own words, I describe here three phenomena found relevant in analysing the relationships between mothers and their children who are victims of political violence and engaged in a national struggle for freedom.

First, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been going on for over a generation, disrupting the life of an entire nation and uprooting families from their homes time and again. Many of the women, especially refugees from Palestine during 1948, had been themselves exposed to major traumatic experiences as children. The mother-child relationship is largely affected by collective and personal memory, in addition to the confrontations and harassment which this population is currently subjected to. Below is how a 42-year-old mother of seven children told of the destruction of her house and about the reactions of her seven-year-old boy to the event:

I was 8-years-old, when we had to leave our village in Palestine. I still remember the horror I felt, I couldn't understand why everyone was running away and why all were so speechless with pain. I only sensed that something terrible was happening. When the soldiers came last week, surrounded the house, and blew up our home, the old memories came fresh and so real. I felt only horrifying helplessness.

I find it difficult to admit and to tolerate the idea that my son must experience a similar childhood as I. As a refugee child you must live with fear, insecurity, and humiliation. We all want to guarantee our children a better life and future. My youngest son is afraid of everything, he is unable to stop crying, he even cries in his sleep. He is constantly repeating: 'Mother, why did they destroy our home?' I am not able to explain it to him.

Second, the fact that a mother is forced to act as a buffer between traumatic events and the child's

well-being in conditions of political violence often means an additional stress to the mothers. Many of the Palestinian women expressed despair and guilt when trying to fulfill the often impossible goal of protecting their children from external dangers. A 45-year-old educated woman and mother of three told how she felt about having her young son taken to the interrogation center; the son was accused of having thrown stones towards military patrol near his play ground.

He is five-years-old. He is a very sensitive and quiet child. During the interrogation he was shivering. His face was pale and as he looked ready to vomit... poor child. What shocked me most, was that I felt that this military man had no respect whatsoever for me, as a human being or as a mother. He didn't care about my little boy being so terrified. He knew that I, as a mother, was not able to express my true feelings in front of him, because I didn't want to terrify my son more. He took no advantage of me being under his control and arbitrary power.

I feel very helpless. I want my children to grow up normally and enjoy their childhood. But what happens under occupation, I cannot ensure that I am able to protect even my youngest child from outside dangers and major tragedy. As an adult, as his mother, I have the responsibility to guarantee him a secure life. But I cannot prevent these things from happening. Already as a five-year-old he is as affected by occupation hardships as I am. I am very worried about the effects of this constant violence on his development. I also feel sorry for myself that the life of my family is out of my control.

Third, the psychological responses of the Palestinians reflect the values, ideology, and concrete political aims of the society under military occupation. In conditions of foreign occupation and national struggle the important values include not betraying one's belief, non-cooperation with the occupier, and involvement in acts aimed at national liberation. The example of one woman who is 48 years old, lives in a refugee camp, and has three of her twelve children in prison may illustrate the phenomena referred to:

When my sons were imprisoned... all of them still under twenty-years-old... the interrogators tried to make them talk, to betray their beliefs. The soldiers tore my clothes in front of my sons' eyes and humiliated them and me in many disgusting ways. The soldiers kicked and beat my youngest child in front of his brothers. The second eldest boy, the most temperamental, couldn't hold himself. He spat and hit one of the soldiers in the face, the one who had torn my clothes. These incidents are too painful to recollect... But to my sons did not speak, they did not open their mouths, and I closed my eyes and felt their pain inside me. I know that it was very painful for them because of me and for their little brother, but they did not give up their beliefs. I was and I still am very proud of them. I knew that they instinctively felt my pride and morality. They know that they can trust me. I know my sons, I have brought them up, I have educated them to be freedom fighters. We have a common language. We understand each other, even now when they are in prison. (That is why) the humiliating actions of occupiers do not work with us.

norms and values of the society: In the Palestinian case, the society's struggle for freedom encourages the use of active, social-political coping modes. The use of passive and submissive coping modes are condemned.

Seligman's hypothesis (1975) that exposure to stressors leads to helplessness (external locus of control) and increases a tendency toward inactive coping responses, was not confirmed in this study of Palestinian women, when stressors were related to military occupation and national struggle. Rather the opposite was true: Even if exposure to traumatic events of military occupation had a negative effect on women's and children's mental health, these same experiences tended to mobilize "counter-forces" aimed at dealing with and managing stress. Internal locus of control and socio-political activity as coping modes were most frequent among women suffering most from violence, loss, and terror inherent in their nation's life.

Many women interviewed expressed these dynamics between exposure to traumatic events, internal locus of control, and active means of coping, but one was especially succinct:

When I am knocked down, I grow stronger. What other choice do the Palestinians have than to stand firm and struggle for their freedom...The more I suffer, the firmer I stand. I believe that deep in their souls the occupiers sense our strength and that is why they take more cruel means against us, they are afraid of our spirit.

This study confirms the earlier findings that the emotional state of the mother mediates between the children's psychological functioning and the experience of traumatic events. Classical pronouncements that "mother functions as a buffer between traumas of war and child's well-being" assumes new dimensions when it is realized that it leads to an additional stress on the mother. The trend to concentrate on the mother's significance as the main determinant of their children's well-being, distorts our understanding of the psychological processes which are characteristic of a population exposed to political violence. The interviews with Palestinian women and children indicated that the women's success in retaining their psychological integrity is related to their political and ideological commitment to the national struggle. We may thus assume that in case the source of stress is political and

national in its nature, ideological determination to struggle against national hardships rather than personality, mental health, or other individual determinants explain the resilience of civilians.

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Conversation in a Kindergarten:

Teacher: *I think I'm better off searching for it, Andy.*

Wally: *You're better off wishing. Then you don't have to search. If you make a wish, don't search. Wait for the fairy to do it.*

Vivian Gussin Paley, *Wally's Stories*

Early Academic Socialization of Successful Asian-American College Students

Elliott R. Mordkowitz
Harvard University

Herbert P. Ginsburg
Teachers College, Columbia University

The academic and occupational achievement of Asian immigrants to the U.S. has been much noted in recent years (e.g., Bell, 1985). One striking manifestation of this success has been the percentage of Harvard students who are Asian, a figure currently approaching 10%. In a comparative literature review, Vernon (1982) concludes that the most defensible explanation of Asian-American achievement centers on family structure and value systems. It therefore seems appropriate to study the home backgrounds of successful Asian-American students in an attempt to formulate testable hypotheses about the socialization of exemplary school achievement.

Roots of the Math Gap

One compelling reason to study the influence of Asian culture on educational development is the commonly observed tendency of Asians and Asian-Americans to do particularly well in mathematics learning. Stevenson, Lee & Stigler (1985) have shown in careful cross-national comparisons that the children of Japan and Taiwan surpass American children in mathematics achievement as early as the first grade and leave American children even further behind by fifth grade. There is ample documentation in Vernon (1982) and elsewhere that Asian-Americans excel in mathematics. This achievement profile is quite interesting in light of the aversion many American students develop to mathematical and technical subjects, an aversion so well-known that Americans have invented the expression "math anxiety" to describe it. If we could identify particular childrearing and/or pedagogical practices in Asian cultures which promote resistance to math anxiety, or actually create a preference for mathematical material, then the practical benefits for our technological society might be substantial.

There are several reasons to be optimistic about identifying such cultural differences in socialization. First, research (Ginsburg & Russell, 1982; Song & Ginsburg, in press) has established that there are no major differences between black, white, and Asian preschoolers and kindergarteners with respect to informal mathematical competencies. Similarly, Stevenson et al. (1986) find no evidence to support the notion that Asian schoolchildren have any basic advantage in cognitive aptitude that would explain their superior achievement scores.

If superiority in cognitive aptitude cannot explain Asian Americans' high levels of achievement, then it seems natural to examine the role of motivation, attributions of the source of success, and other factors that may be influenced by parental childrearing practices and values--that is, by Asian American "academic socialization."

The informal positive evidence for such family-based academic socialization is fairly abundant (see Vernon, 1982, and Kitano, 1984). The role of attributional styles in achievement is becoming a central facet of such socialization studies. Stevenson et al. (1985) and Holloway, Kashiwagi, Hess, & Azuma, (1986) show that Asian parents believe more strongly than Americans that effort, rather than fixed differences in ability, is the most important factor in accounting for learning outcomes. Asian parents are also more likely than Americans to be dissatisfied with their children's current performance. And Hess and his associates (Hess, Azuma, Kashiwagi, Dickson, Nagano, Holloway, Miyake, Price, Hatano & McDevitt, 1986; Hess, Chih-Mei & McDevitt, ms.) show that Japanese, mainland Chinese and Chinese-American children share their parents' bias in favor of effort attributions for educational achievement. However, except for the very last result mentioned, these cross-national comparisons are difficult to interpret because of the multiple, confounded differences between Asian and American educational systems. The experience of Asian and American children in American schools, on the other hand, seems like a natural laboratory in which to isolate the role family socialization differences play in the adaptation of students to the context of American schooling. The case studies below of successful Asian-American college students raise issues that can be pursued in direct studies of school-age children.

The Study

We conducted 90 minute structured interviews with 15 Asian-American students. These were either Harvard undergraduates or secondary school summer students; they volunteered and were paid \$6. The sample contained roughly equal numbers of Chinese, Japanese and Korean youth. All were children of immigrants, but some were born in the U.S. and others were not. With two exceptions, the parents' schooling level in Asia and their occupational level in the U. S. were both relatively high; a number of parents came here on scholarship. It will obviously be essential for future research to analyze the influence of class on Asian-American socialization and distinguish various waves of immigration. Nevertheless, the tendency of interviewees to report how widespread their experiences were in the Asian communities, and the considerable proportion of families with multiple high achievers, makes it plausible that ethnic cultural socialization per se was being studied.

The interviews began with an open-ended request for salient autobiographical memories about learning and then continued with approximately 30 questions covering a range of issues. These included assessment of parental instructional styles, parental attitudes and practices in childrearing, family involvement in the child's perception of school demands in the early years and, finally, self-assessment of the interviewee's current responses to academic challenges. A table of potentially significant persons, settings and subject matters associated with learning was provided to cue episodic retrieval.

Results

While the families showed much individuality, our analysis-- essentially an informal induction of common experiences-- suggests that it is possible to abstract prototypical tendencies in childrearing. By distinguishing factors which seem variable from those which characterize the upbringing of a large percentage (and occasionally all) of the sample, we hope to generate new hypotheses but of course do not offer definitive conclusions.

Cognitive scaffolding vs. academic-socialization. The first question the interview protocols can address is whether parental influences always depends on the kind of sensitive tutoring interaction or "scaffolding" described by neo-Vygotskians (Rogoff,

1985), or whether the only indispensable parental influence is a more general valuation of learning and sharpening of attitudes relevant to learning. In our sample, the latter seems more likely given the variability in tutoring style which we encountered among three dimensions. First, parents varied in the extent to which they had the time and/or skill to tutor. Second, the sample was divided on whether they considered a parent a patient tutor or rather an impatient and undesirable one. And third, a tendency identified by Hatano (unpublished) for Asian parents to emphasize rote efficiency over insight or creativity in learning is inconsistently represented in these reports. Some parents never wanted their children to ask "Why?", yet others emphasized creativity deliberately--for example, by covering walls with writing paper. Kitano (1984) reviews research on mother-preschooler interaction which also finds some diversity in Asian-American tutoring styles. While more research should certainly be done, researchers should be open to the possibility that the detailed microstructure of parent-child cognitive interaction is not crucial to academic socialization (which is not to say that it is unimportant for curriculum design, computer-aided instruction, etc.)

Commitment to education. The more uniform factor noted in the home environments was what might be called a "synergy" between close family feelings and parentally instilled respect for education. Often guilt about parental sacrifices seemed to be the socializing instrument which transmits educational achievement striving from parent to child. The most direct index of the strong family structure is the absence of a single divorce in the whole sample. Two other curious things can be taken as direct indices: First, these Asian-American parents tend not to use babysitters and, secondly, they often do not give their children freely spendable allowances. Both choices seem to reflect a desire to play a direct oversight role in their children's activities. Also, parents would often have the children present at gatherings. However, we failed to find any evidence that they tried to involve children in adult conversation to stimulate cognitive advances.

The emphasis on educational study as the principal obligation of the child was equally pervasive. It seemed to represent a mixture of desire for economic advancement, traditional reverence for scholars, and some degree of threat that mediocrity would lead to dire economic insecurity. The extent to which some interviewees' entire community would harp on the importance of getting into a good college could be

comical. Yet, contrary to some stereotypes, parents were not uniformly negative about sports in this sample. The important thing is that academics always had to take priority.

The reciprocity of parents showing love by providing the best possible opportunities for learning and children returning love by doing their best in school was quite rich and explicit. The children were told that any investment in tutors, books, music lessons, summer schools, etc., was worthwhile, and they often clearly specify these things in terms of stretched budgets and long parental working hours. At the furthest extreme was the prevalence of family moves to relocate to better school systems. Indeed, many cited enhanced educational opportunities as the reason parents emigrated to the U.S. in the first place. Some parents who cannot leave the homeland even send children over with caretakers. Finally, an interesting comment made by one Harvard student suggested that mothers in Boston's Chinatown often cite the need to help their children with learning as one reason to withdraw from the labor force if the family can afford it. Kitano (1984) likewise mentions that a sample of Chinese-American mothers considered formal teaching of preschoolers a more important part of the maternal role than did other mothers and the former requested notification of kindergarten learning problems more commonly than did the latter. Clearly, there are a great variety of ways that parents can underscore the importance of the child's education, and parental willingness to further it.

An effortful excellence. Even though education was highly valued, the motivational regimen that worked so well for these interviewees was based not on large extrinsic rewards, but on high expectancies and socialization of effortful perseverance. Parents held uniformly high expectations for achievements: Good rather than excellent, A- rather than A and so on were often greeted with a non-punitive but insistent demand that the child had the ability to do better. If a child eventually proved to have no talent for, say the piano, the parents might allow the activity to lapse. But it was clear that most of our Asian-American interviewees had internalized the same bias toward effort attributions Hess et. al (1986) identified in Japan and Stevenson et al. found in Japan and Taiwan (1985). And this belief that "There's nothing you can't handle if you try hard enough" was put in the service of parental expectations.

At the same time, the great majority received only muted, sparing praise, and only a few ever received material rewards for good grades. An alternate, and apparently pervasive, motivating technique was nonridiculing comparison of the child's performance with exemplary models. One manifestation of this is that the ethnic newspapers seem to devote much more space to stories about high achieving students than would seem usual. And parents frequently point these stories out to their children. Secondly, the child was often told how other children were doing academically. This seems simultaneously to provide role models and competitive stimulation.

Activity supervision. The major factor which may actualize the achievement potential of the preceding motivational pattern is the strict control of after-school time most parents exerted. This control varied from simply making sure homework was done to permitting no more than one afternoon a week to play with friends. Even if a child just came back to the parents' grocery store after school, the point is that he or she was watched over in the grocery. Many parents assisted with homework difficulties, while those less prepared to do so because of linguistic or educational deficits certainly inquired about the child's progress. In some cases tutoring by siblings supplemented the parental contribution.

The theme of control of after-school time was well elaborated. On the one hand, there was an emphasis on scheduling library trips, music lessons, etc. On the other hand, there was a slight tendency to discourage unlimited play and a strong tendency to regulate both the quantity and quality of television viewing. A relative, and possibly more troubling, phenomenon are the reports from a couple of interviewees that they had few friends in grade school and that this led them to engage in solitary learning. Some parents seemed actually to abet this isolation, for instance by discouraging the child from inviting anyone home.

The typical parental reaction to a school difficulty tended to be an exaggeration of, and hence a good summary of, the tripartite pattern we have presented up to this point. They 1) provided additional remedial resources such as workbooks and tutoring drill, 2) elicited greater effort and 3) constrained outside activities. Perhaps none of this is very surprising, but what may prove to be unusual is the consistency of parental concern.

Cognitive enrichment. One reason school problems might not arise in the first place, though, was the prevalence of accelerated exposure to the basic school curriculum. Prior to and outside of school, many parents taught their children basic mathematics through diverse activities such as counting pennies, memorizing the Chinese multiplication table, or solving geometry problems in the car. For some children, there was a strong emphasis on overlearning critical lessons so that they would not have to be learned more than once. In reading, where parents' language handicaps were often a factor, some ingenious learning strategies were devised, including having a young child define words for a Chinese grandmother, copying English text, explaining text to a mother, and doing weekly composition assignments outside school.

An equally surprising departure from the norm was the several instances where the child attended summer school for acceleration—mostly early in high school but in one case in grade school as well. Combining this practice with the tendency to schedule learning time after the school day leads one to observe a possible parallel between the mandated longer school year and longer school day in some Asian countries (see Stevenson et al., 1985) and the apparent *de facto* duplication of these requirements for some of our interviewees.

Adaptive classroom attitudes. This accelerated passage through the private world of cognitive skill was facilitated by several loosely related attitudes that helped define the relation of the child to the external society. First, while some students sensed that their minority status required them to do better than average to obtain the same rewards, this was not pervasive. It is more important to observe the relative absence of feelings that the school threatened the student's cultural identity. This kind of threat is a major problem for American blacks, according to Ogbu (1983).

Secondly, upon reaching school age the child must accommodate to a new socializing agent, the teacher. And the uniform report of our sample is that a relatively unquestioning respect for teachers was inculcated at home. This was true even in cases where direct parent involvement in school was minimal because of language problems. One interviewee remarked that the disorders in her American classroom were a vivid contrast to the quiet discipline of her Saturday Japanese language class. Another interviewee said her mother insisted that she take small

gifts to the teacher. And a third even reported that when once she swore at her mother, the response was, "I hope you don't talk that way to your teacher."

A third possible form of attitude socialization that promotes school adjustment is the reported strong discouragement that Asian children receive about fighting. Some children were instructed to deal with harassment by ignoring it and inducing the other person to lose interest. It is well known that some non-Western cultures put a greater emphasis on self-control of aggression than Americans do (see, for example, Lebra, 1976). It may be significant that a bias toward non-confrontational responses seem to co-occur with high respect for learning among Jews immigrating from Europe to Israel as well. Just as the economist Thomas Sowell has observed that both Asian-Americans and American Jews shunned political conflict in favor of entrepreneurial activity (Sowell, 1981), one might conjecture that in the microcosm of school society the child is encouraged to do about the same— i.e., to avoid conflicts that reduce concentration on academic work.

Prioritizing education. A final way in which many Asian parents shape the child's intercourse with the external world was the absence of any pressure to contribute to either daily household chores or economic livelihood unless doing so was essential. As one interviewee put it, "Studying could get you out of 99% of anything." Clearly, by not demanding such contributions, the parents simultaneously made more study time available, provided an incentive to study, and increased the sense of obligation to the parent. A striking extension of this behavior is the many cases where parents discouraged any part-time work in high school and college—even to the point of absorbing the cost of that part of college financial aid involving a job. The same underlying concern for uninterrupted studies underlies the resistance some parents have to the increasingly common idea that a few years of work should intervene between college and graduate school. The effects of these influences may be to alter crucially the students' perception of how to manage time in pursuit of educational goals.

Low verbal interaction. There was also a rather unexpected discovery when a question was asked about the kind of conversational topics the family tended to discuss. This query led to several statements that the family was very quiet and did not talk much at all around the dinner table or anywhere else.

If one combines this unexplained report of low verbal activity in any language with the deemphasizing of social skills, one sees how the low representation of Asians-American in, say, law, compared to science and medicine, might be a byproduct of socialization. In an article critical of the "model minority myth," Suzuki (1980) argues that lower verbal skills and general taciturn demeanor of Asian-Americans is partially a defensive reaction to racial ostracism. But if a deemphasis on verbal expression is present in family interaction from an early age, the socialization factor is likely to be more critical. Certainly, there is a strong emphasis on non-verbal communication in Japanese culture (Lebra, 1976).

Seeing as others see us. At the end of the interview, the students were asked to speculate about how they might have been different had they grown up in a white majority family. In many respects they see majority upbringing as the inverse of their own. That is, they believe they would have had parents who gave them more freedom, but possibly cared less about their welfare, and that they would have had a less positive image of academic achievement and less willingness to work hard, but more developed social skills. Yet the difference between the experience of Asian-Americans and the rest of us should not be exaggerated because they reported many of the same concerns about laziness, procrastination, daydreaming, study anxiety and cramming that everyone has felt.

Theoretical Discussion

We believe that our inquiry lends support to two recent theoretical trends in explanations of school achievement. The first of these is the use of the concept of learned helplessness to account for long term motivational problems of students (Dweck, 1984; Kuhl, 1985). The second is the increasing conviction that specific aspects of home socialization can exert a positive effect on school adjustment irrespective of class or race (White, 1982; Entwisle & Hayduk, 1982). Future studies of Asian-American school achievement may be an ideal way of examining the validity of these theoretical positions in ecologically valid settings.

The helplessness hypothesis. Learned helplessness is a psychological state in which repeated failure to control the outcome of one situation induces a carry-over of passivity and a depressed level of performance to a new situation. Carol Dweck (e.g., Dweck, 1984) has shown that children differ in the readiness in which

they succumb to helplessness on experimental learning tasks. A prominent explanation of the cause of learned helplessness is an attributional bias to explain failure as due to global, stable, and uncontrolled causes (Fincham & Cain, in press). In particular, Dweck finds that a bias to attribute inequality in academic performance to difference in relatively fixed abilities, instead of to the variable and controllable factor of effort, is a good predictor of susceptibility to helplessness after failure (Diener & Dweck, 1978; Dweck, 1984).

In Germany, Kuhl (e.g., 1985) has shown parallel results indicating that a self-reported tendency to perseverate on thoughts of previous failure experience is an equally strong predictor of experimentally-induced helplessness. The research programs of Kuhl and Dweck seem to dovetail neatly. At the same time that Dweck has found that the helplessness prone children, classified by ability bias in attribution, exhibit task-irrelevant, self-conscious and pessimistic thoughts during post-failure problem solving, Kuhl has shown that performance deterioration can be blocked if irrelevant failure cognitions are experimentally suppressed or if the sting of prior failure is explained away well in advance. Kuhl (1985) has convincingly argued that it is not an expectation of the likelihood of renewed failure which explains learned helplessness, but rather the inability to screen out interfering thoughts which prevent initially hopeful expectations from being realized.

We believe that some of the socialization patterns identified in this paper could be associated with an acquired resistance to academic learned helplessness. If the conditions which induce helplessness are more often found in mathematical and technical areas of instruction, where the helplessness state has been labeled "math anxiety," the anomaly of more widespread comfort with these subject matters among Asian-Americans would naturally follow. Dweck (1984) has given several possible reasons why learned helplessness may be more common in mathematics. And it does seem natural that some of the socialization themes we have identified--high value of learning conveyed through mutual sacrifices, high expectations with muted praise, salience of peer models, and inculcation of an effort bias in attributions for academic outcomes--would create the "mastery orientation" (Dweck, 1984) or "action orientation" (Kuhl, 1985) which are hypothesized personality mediators of resistance to helplessness. Our future research will try to substantiate this causal chain beyond the simple

demonstration of Asian differences in attributions shown by Hess and Stevenson (Hess, et al., 1986; Stevenson, et al., 1985).

The answer is at home. One of our informants said he came to feel that, even if teaching in school is sometimes awful, "the answer's at home some place." The factors reviewed in relation to helplessness, coupled with the other factors we have identified including time supervision, enrichment, socialization of respect for teachers, avoidance of conflict and deemphasis of nonacademic responsibilities, form a strong constellation of hypotheses which situate part of the "answer" to early school achievement at home.

Moreover, our findings are consistent with an identifiable trend back to optimism about home influences on cognitive development. Karl White's scrupulous meta-analysis of studies claiming a relationship between socioeconomic status (SES) and academic achievement (White, 1982), has produced two major findings. First, the magnitude of the correlation between achievement and family SES as traditionally defined--through income, education and/or occupation of parents--and achievement depends crucially on the unit of analysis. If, as is often done, the mean SES and achievement of schools is used to compute a correlation, it is .73. But if it is more appropriately calculated student by student, it is only .22. Secondly, if studies which misleadingly define characteristics of home environment as SES are eliminated from consideration, the correlation of family home atmosphere with individual student achievement is .55. The five most frequent variables used to operationalize home atmosphere were family's attitude toward education, reading materials in the home, family stability, aspirations of parents for the child, and amount of cultural activities in which the family participates.

Additional support for the influence of home rearing conditions on school achievement comes from a path analysis of early school achievement by Entwisle and Hayduk (1982). After analyzing relationships between parent expectancies, child expectancies and obtained marks in reading and math, from first through third grades, they conclude,

With IQ controlled, children of parents with high expectations do better than children of parents with low expectations, and this is not a consequence of parent expectation acting upon child expectation....It

seems likely that parents promote specific achievement-related activities rather than just provide an overall positive atmosphere.

A controlled comparison of ethnic differences in socialization, particularly with close attention to varying outcomes among subgroups or atypical individuals, may be a tool for doing the difficult job of examining the causal status of these home atmosphere variables. Naturally, one should be alert to the possible negative side of any particular socialization practice. For example, one informant believed that there is a subgroup of Asian-American students that becomes alienated from the motivational patterns described and exhibit poor educational performance. The issue of whether creativity is sufficiently encouraged in these rearing environments is also commonly raised. Nevertheless, the basic fact of high Asian and Asian-American mathematics achievement, based on normal curriculum materials, leads one to ask whether all our research eggs should be put in the basket of instructional cognitive science. There may be motivational and cognitive style influences at home which will appreciably moderate how much our best instructional strategies will matter.

Note

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