SPIRALS OF VIOLENCE: MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

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The aim of this thesis is to investigate mothers' use of
violence towards their children. In particular it aims to
discover what happens during violent incidents, to explain
the occurrence of violence and to develop a model which
assists in the understanding of violence in families.

Four case studies are presented based on observations of
mothers and children within a treatment centre and
interviews with the mothers. Initial interviews were
conducted concerning the background, relationships and
attitudes of the mothers. Subsequent interviews to examine
incidents of violence were conducted at the end of a day
when such an incident may have occurred.

For each dyad characteristic augmenting spirals of
interaction are described which include violence towards
the child. These spirals form the basis of a "spiral
model of violence" which emphasises the role of both
mother and child in maintaining violent interactions and
the feedback each receives from the other. The other main
components of this model are the dyad's appraisals of the
situation and choices of action. Factors affecting these
are described.

Implications of the model for treatment are discussed with
particular exmphasis on strategies aimed at altering, or
widening the range of appraisals and actions of both
participants.

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION TO THE LITERATURE

This thesis is concerned with violence inflicted on children by their parents or parental substitutes. I became interested in this topic after working with families who had sought treatment for a variety of problems, including children who would not attend school, were out of control, or who suffered from delayed development. Initially I had planned to study the efficacy of family treatment within a specific context, a day centre, for such families.

In developing such an outcome study I realised that I would have to focus on one or a few particular areas and attempt to assess the changes and the possible causes for such changes relevant to these areas. In my contact with the families an issue that emerged frequently as causing concern for both parents and therapists was the parents' lack of control of their children and their use of physical punishment. I had thought that it might be possible to use this as a focus of study, to assess the changes that occur and to try to describe the important factors leading to such changes.

However the more I considered this possiblity the more it became apparent that it was impossible to assess change, and the reasons for it, until it was clear what was being

assessed, what actually was happening. I thus decided to turn my attention to the processes of parent-child interaction, particularly to those interactions where physical discipline or violence was occurring.

In this study the term violence will be defined as:
"an act carried out with intention or perceived intention of physically injuring another person. The injury can range from slight pain, as in a slap, to a murder. The motivation may range from a concern for a child's safety to hostility so intense that the death of a child is desired" (Gelles, 1978b, p.584).

Gelles and Cornell add a useful distinction which will also be used in this thesis: Normal violence "is the commonplace slaps, pushes, shoves and spankings that frequently are considered a normal or acceptable part of raising children or interacting with a spouse". whereas abusive violence is "the more dangerous acts of violence. These acts are defined as acts that have the high potential for injuring the person being hit. Included in this definition are punches, kicks, bites, chokings, beatings, shootings, stabbings, or attempted shootings or stabbings" (1985, p22-23)

The issues concerning the definition of violence will be discussed later in this chapter.

Why study parental violence?

There are five important reasons for studying violence:

1. The relationship of normal violence to abusive violence

2. Effect on child of normal violence and abusive violence

3. Effect on subsequent generation of parents

4. Parental dissatisfaction with own use of violence

5. Frequency of use of violence

1. Relationship of violence to child abuse

It could be argued that there is little point in studying normal parent-child violence as it does not do anyone any harm and it is merely a question of moral judgement whether or not one considers it to be an acceptable form of parental behaviour. However few would argue that child abuse, the causing of severe injury to a child, is an acceptable form of behaviour, and could do anything but harm to both the child and to family relationships.

At first sight the use of physical punishment or the more minor use of violence and child abuse might seem to be different phenomena requiring different explanations and theories. However increasingly theorists are arguing that there is not a clear distinction that can be made between the two, but there exists a continuum from mild to severe violence, the severe including cases of child abuse. This view is supported by Frude and Goss who suggest "there is some validity in the argument that abusive behaviour

differs only in intensity and in its injurious consequences from other more common expressions of parental anger and desperation" (1979, p331). He distributed a postal questionaire and concluded that relevant information can be gathered from examining normal parenting difficulties and reactions, and that some cases of clinical abuse may be extreme forms of reactions which are fairly common among many families. Additionally, Frude and Goss discovered that the more parents use normal physical punishment towards their child, the more they are concerned that they might abuse their child.

In similar vein, Peckham('78) suggests it is important to study and detect minor episodes of physical child abuse as they are often signals indicating a higher risk of severe injury.

Straus('83) argues that normal physical punishment trains children in the use of violence and is the root cause of child abuse, though he adds that other factors, such as level of stress and patterns of interaction are important. He found that children who experience abuse and those who experience less extreme forms of physical discipline are more violent towards their siblings than those who do not experience violence. This indicates that the outcome of the experience of either form of violence is similar.

This study was based on interviews with 2,143 American families regarding one referent child for each family and also on the Conflict Tactics Scale, which measures severe and ordinary violence. The results of this study must, however, be carefully considered. It could be that children who are violent towards their siblings are more likely to evoke extreme measures from their parents, and the reports for parental violence and violence reported for the child may show a tendency of the parent to view the world in violent terms. Thus no conclusions can be drawn regarding cause and effect, but only that a significant association is found between violent parents and violent children. Straus also reports that the more the parents in the study reported being physically punished as children themselves, the greater the rate of abusing their own child. This was not associated with their use of ordinary physical punishment towards their children. The parents, however, were asked about their own experience at the age of 13 and this may not reflect accurately what happened to them at an earlier age. This result again indicates that the experience of physical punishment may be connected with subsequent use of child abuse, and that the two are related. A discussion of the parent's own experiences begins on page 15.

Straus points out that not all parents who experience

violence use it towards their own children and not all abusers were themselves abused, and this needs to be explained. However he does suggest that some factors explain both child abuse and ordinary physical punishment. In his study, he found that families where physical punishment is frequently used resemble abusing families when compared on factors previously found to have significant relationship to child abuse: for example, the subject has 2 or more children, experienced abuse, is less than 30, is not white, is of low income. He concludes that these factors may therefore explain both normal and abusive violence. Such factors cannot be used to explain the occurrence of violence, but his results do suggests that the families that use physical punishment share similar demographic and personal characteristics with those where abuse occurs. This provides further confirmation that studying normal violence may throw useful light on the understanding of abusive violence.

Main('84 and '80) also supports the notion of a difference in degree rather than kind. She demonstrated that normal mothers vary in the degree to which they accept or reject their infants. The children who have experienced more rejection demonstrate unpredictable bouts of hostility, avoid persons making friendly overtures and show little concern for the distress of others, very much as do abused children. She argues that there is a continuum of

psychological process from the experience of normal rejection to the experience of actual abuse. She argues that studies of normal subjects can enrich our understanding of the psychological processes involved in child abuse.

Kadushin and Matin's ('81) results also support this idea. A large percentage of parents in their sample see the intent of the abusive incident as instrumental, and the largest component of their behaviour as a manifestation of a legitimate use of force. Most instances of child abuse are described as extensions of disciplinary actions which "crossed the line" into abuse.

In line with this point of view, which suggests that child abuse is frequently, though not always, an extreme form of normal violence, this study is concerned with normal violence and its implications for abusive violence.

2. Effect on child of child abuse

Violence is an emotive issue and it is often taken for granted that it has harmful effects to both the mental and physical well- being of the victim. Cooper('78) lists some of the physical effects and signs of child abuse: bruises, laceration, wheals and scars; burns and scalds,

fractures and joint injuries; brain and eye injuries; internal injuries to abdomen or chest; poisoning; sudden infant death; drowning.

This list reflects the immediate pain and suffering that a child endures as a result of child abuse. Jones('80) also reports evidence of abused children as having a high incidence of damage to the central nervous system. Less obviously apparent is the psychological damage that abused children endure, and this has also been the subject of investigation.

Elmer('78) conducted a controlled follow-up study of a group of abused infants in an American hospital. These were compared some eight years after abuse with a control group matched for age, sex, race and socio-economic status. Looking at multiple variables in their development, she unexpectedly found few differences. Children in each group were equally retarded in their development and equally disturbed. Elmer concludes the results of child abuse are less potent for the child's development than membership of a given social class or the effects of poverty.

However most studies do not confirm Elmer's findings, but indicate that abusive violence does impede the normal development of the child:

Main('80) reports on her studies of young abused children and describes them as avoiding both peers and caretakers and behaving intrusively with the caretaker. An example she provides is of children running at the caregiver and spitting on her.

Martin and Beezley('77) studied the behaviour of 50 children 4 1/2 years after abuse and found that more than 50 per cent have poor self concepts, are sorrowful and behave in such a way as to make peers, parents and teachers reject them. They found nine characteristcs common to them: impaired capacity to relax and enjoy life, psychiatric symptoms (for example enuresis or tantrums) low self-esteem, learning problems at school, withdrawal, opposition, hypervigilance, compulsivity and pseudomature behaviour.

Oates('86)(et al.'85) also studied children at an average of 4 and a half years after an incident of abuse and found that abused children, compared to a matched group, have fewer friends and are less likely to play with friends. Similar findings are reported in a study by Perry and Doran ('83). This implies that the withdrawn behaviour, that often presents at time of diagnosis, persists for a long time. She also found abused children to have low self-esteem, which is reflected by lowered job aspirations and what they think they will achieve. This is suggested

by the author to be as a result of the inability to meet the high expectations of their parents. Such children are also more serious and cautious, shyer and more inhibited and experience much difficulty in interpersonal relationships. They have lower intelligience on WISC-r and demonstrate more behavioural problems at school and are more anti-social than the controls.

Thus the abused child's social relationships may be impaired and his contact with peers limited. There is also some evidence to suggest that they have little empathy for others. (Bohoral et al. '83, Main '84) This is a finding which will be discussed further in subsequent sections.

Another characteristic that abused children may develop is self-destructive behaviour. Green('78) showed that they are more likely than neglected or control children to commit suicide or indulge in self-mutilation. Green explains this in terms of the child internalising the hostile and critical image that his parents have of him and thus seeing himself in the same way. The child considers himself bad, inadequate, and attacks himself for these attributes.

Abused children are not only more likely to be self-destructive but also to direct aggression outwards. George

and Main('79) found abused toddlers physically assault their peers twice as often as control children and are more aggressive towards their caretakers, in terms of directly assaulting them and also threatening to do so. Gaensbauer et al.('80) conducted observations of abused and neglected children, aged 12-26 months and distinguished different types of emotional expression. They hypothesise that the "angry infants", who are very active, disorganised in their play, have frequent angry outbursts and demonstrate destructive behaviour, are those who had experienced frequent harsh punishments within a chaotic environment. This hypothesis requires further testing but confirms Main's finding concerning young abused children.

Along similar lines, Reidy('77) found that abused children are more aggressive than both neglected and normal children. On three measures, TAT cards, play with toys and telling a story, and on a Behavioural Problem Checklist completed by teachers, abused children are found to be more aggressive than both other groups. Such results are supported by others, such as Fontana('73).

However Bolton et al.('77) found slightly different results. They looked at a sample of juvenile offenders and their siblings, and discovered that in families where there had been abuse, the victim was more likely to be

avoiding aggression by committing crimes such as running away and truancy; their siblings were highly aggressive. Aggressive behaviour was defined as disturbing the peace, fighting and assault. However, when they were compared to controls, that is delinquents who were not abused, it was found the siblings of the abused delinquents were less aggressive and engaged in more escape than the controls. The authors suggest that this difference is due to the siblings having observed aggression with its resultant negative consequences.

Thus it would seem that Reidy and Bolton disagree, but it is difficult to compare the studies as very different samples were used. There may be crucial differences in children who become delinquent and are caught, from those children who are known to have been abused but are not known to have been delinquent. Bolton and Reidy both suggest, however, that the behaviour manifest in such children is modelled in some way on the behaviour of their parents. Thus it would seem that violent behaviour is seen and learnt and may be repeated. Many writers have suggested that abusing parents were themselves abused as children. This will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

Kolvin('78) summarises some of the other work concerning the effect of abuse on the child and concludes that

abused children are often described as being in a state of frozen watchfulness, wary of adults, unable to talk with them, lacking in spontaneous smiling, curiosity or exploration and, from Erikson's('50) formulation, lacking in basic trust. (Ounsted '72, Gregory and Beveridge '84). In ways, such children are also precocious: they learn to predict the moods of their parents and to comfort them when needed. This is at a certain expense to the expression and fulfillment of their own needs. They may also be excessively clinging. Peterson('73) has found abused children to be suffering from delayed speech, unable to play, excesively compliant and negativistic. They feel helpless, hopeless, inadequate and feel full of shame and guilt. Ounsted and Peterson's findings are supported by Okell('76) who adds that abused children are likely to have poor impulse control and are apathetic. A common occurrence is retarded physical growth and weight gain.

The effect on the child is considered by most writers to last into adulthood. Smith et al.('73)found that as adults, abused children have higher rates of drug and alcohol abuse, criminal behaviour and psychiatric disturbances. The effects on their own parenting will be discussed in the next section.

Most of the studies mentioned so far have demonstrated

that abused children suffer from a gamut of physical and psychological problems. However two studies (Wolfe and Mosk '83 and Reid et al.'81) found abused children did not differ significantly from children in distressed families on parent-reported child behaviour problems, level of competence and directly observed rates of aversive behaviour. And another, Straker and Jacobson('81) did not find differences in fantasy aggresion between physically abused and normals, though the former group are seen as more emotionally maladjusted. These authors argue that aversive family interaction patterns may have more of an impact on psycho-social adjustment than abuse.

This point of view is supported by others. including Baher et al.('76). They consider that it is not just being the victim of abuse but witnessing it and living in a violent environment that can lead to similar disturbances. Martin and Beezley also support the suggestion that it is not the severity of the injury that accounts for subsequent disturbance but more pervasive environmental factors. It is, of course, difficult to assess the relative contributions of different factors to the disturbance of the child, but Main's('80) and Browne and Parr's('80) studies also imply that it is the continual dysfunctional interactions between parent and child that distort the development of abused children.

To summarise, Lamphear('86) in her review of the research

relevant to the adjustment of abused children, comments that most of the recent studies do use controls which are matched on socio-economic status, sex and age of children and family structure. However she highlights that abuse or maltreatment may well be defined differently in each study and there is also no way of verifying that there is no maltreatment occurring in the control group. Nevertheless the research strongly suggests that abuse has negative consequences for the child. These consequences may continue to be operative when the child grows up and be expressed in his/her own parenting. This will now be discussed.

3. Effect on subsequent generation of parents

As suggested above, the effects of experiencing abuse may last into adulthood and affect many aspects of an individual's life. One important aspect which has been the subject of much consideration is the quality of the parenting that an abused person is, in turn, able to provide for his/her own child or children.

Kempe('78), Baher('76) and Steele and Pollock('72) all describe abusive parents as having had similar abusive experiences themselves as children. Such studies are based on samples where there has been severe injury to a child. Carrol('77) supported such results in looking at

less severe injury. He found that 36% of those who had experienced a high degree of parental punishment, compared to 14.5% who had not, reported physical violence as a problem in their current families. His sample included normal families and some from community guidance clinics. He assessed violent experience as a child, parental warmth and stressful family relationships through the use of an inventory given to the parents and included such statements as 'as a child my parent hit and slapped me' which had to be rated from 0-8. In addition each subject was given a checklist of family problems, including violence and severe punishment of the children.

However the problem of current violence did seem to be strongly related to 'happiness of marriage'. 75% of subjects reporting high physical punishment as a child and that their own marriages are not happy, reported the problem of violence, but if the marriage is happy, then a low percentage reported violence as being a concern. This finding confirms that historical factors alone are insufficient to explain current violence and suggests that violence may be transmitted from one generation to another if the current environment facilitates it.

Herrenkohl et al. ('83) conducted controlled studies based on a follow up of families over a period of 10 years. Families where there was known abuse, and matched families

where there was no suspicion of abuse, were extensively interviewed. He found parents who were abused as children use abusive methods of discipline with their own children. Additionally adults whose own families, when they were children, were subjected to high levels of stress are more likely to use severe discipline towards their own children. Stress was categorised into 39 types. 6 of these 39 factors were found to be individually related to the current use of abusive methods of discipline: lack of home conveniences, dissatisfaction in marriage of subject, difficult children in the family, chronic school problems of any of the children, responsibilities of parenthood, loneliness of a family member.

Although this study supports the hypothesis that early experience affects the behaviour of the parents, the authors also point out that there are some who experience child abuse who do not inflict it upon their own children, and so, again, history alone does not provide sufficient explanation for current behaviour.

Herzberger('83) attempts to address this issue. He considers that it is more likely to be repeated if violence is seen by the victim as legitimate. He suggests some conditions which will make the acceptance of violence more likely:

1. If it is accepted by society, such as it is in the USA and the UK.

2. If the victim is not the only family member subjected to violence.

3. If certain specific behaviours are seen to lead to violence(that is it is consistent and implies particular behaviours are unacceptable.)

4. If other family members use violence

5. If use of harsh discipline is supported by all the adults in the household.

Violence is also likely to be seen as more legitimate if it follows an actual wrong-doing, if it is seen as a physical punishment which is commonly used but has gone too far and if it is not planned. The parent who derogates the child and overtly and verbally justifies the abuse also makes it seem more reasonable to the victim, than it would be otherwise.

The above studies demonstrate that, as adults, those who have experienced violence may inflict it upon their own children. These studies are obliged to be retrospective in nature in an attempt to demonstrate that parental characteristics are passed on, in one way or another, to children. They are concerned directly with the transmission of violent behaviour. However George and Main('79) have attempted a prospective study and

demonstrate that abused children of 1-3 years of age already exhibit behaviours similar to their parents. They found that abused children, when compared to a control group of disadvantaged children, show greater aggression towards their peers and caretakers, are more avoidant in response to friendly overtures of peers and caretakers, are more self-isolating and respond with less concern or sadness in response to the crying of their peers. In such a situation they tended to respond with fear, anger, or physical abuse.

These characteristics are seen as significant by the authors and are discussesd by Main('84). She points out that Parke and Collmer('75), in their review of the literature, conclude that there are only two consistent conclusions regard abusing parents: they have difficulty in controlling aggression and they are socially and personally isolated from the community and their family. She also cites Frodi and Lamb('80) and Disbrow et al.('77) who show that abusing parents are insensitive to distress and react inappropriately, even aversively and with anger, to distress in others.

Taken together, it can be seen that the abused children are already demonstrating the very same characterisitcs which typify abusing parents, which suggests that the children will in turn grow up to be more likely to abuse

their own children, than children who have not been abused.

The studies described so far are concerned with the effect of abusive violence on the subsequent generation of parents. But it is not only abusive violence that may affect the parenting of the next generation.

Normal violence may also affect how parents treat their own children. This is particularly likely if it is assumed, as in this study, that normal and abusive violence are often the same phenomenon differing only in degree. Carlson('86) describes a study concerning the impact of physical punishment on children to see if it does lay the basis for later violence. He is concerned with normal violence and its long-term effects. Two hundred and one 9-12 year olds were presented with video vignettes depicting a peer of the same sex misbehaving in four ways. They were asked what they thought was the best thing for a parent to do and were presented with possible alternatives including hitting with a belt, spanking, talking to, sending to room. Only 6.4% of all the responses were physical ones and of these 84% were spanking. They were most likely to suggest physical punishment in response to hitting a same-sex younger sibling or physically fighting with a peer and breaking their glasses. Of these two, the former elicited physical

punishment responses twice as frequently as the second, and suggests that aggression towards a family member is more likely to elicit a physical punishment. Of the 6 responses that suggested using a belt, 5 of these were for hitting a sibling.

On the whole, children prefer non-physical punishment but physical punishment was suggested 6 times more often for aggressive behaviour than for nonaggressive behaviour. The authors suggest this demonstrates a link between aggressive behaviour and an aggressive response to that behaviour and that this is especially so when a member of the family is involved. They consider that this supports the idea that the family serves as a training ground for violence, with physical punishment playing a prominent role in normalising aggression against family members for some children.

The studies suggest that the experience of violence within the family is an important consideration when trying to understand current violence, but that it does not provide a sufficient explanation, though it may affect the parent's attitude towards the use violence in child-rearing. (Parke and Collmer '75) This conclusion was also drawn by Madge('83), after reviewing the literature with regard to a variety of family difficulties, and she stresses that family background cannot, on its own,

predict with any certainty families at risk.

It must be remembered, too, that many of the above studies rely on retrospective accounts given by the parents. Such reports may be distorted through time. Nevertheless it does seem possible that the child learns in his home what behaviours are acceptable and likely to be used when one is angry or frustrated or determined to get one's own way. Additionally it is important that the parents' accounts of their childhoods do include references to experiences of violence. Even if the incidents did not actually occur the way that the parent remembers such recollections will affect his current attitudes and behaviours.

4. Parental dis-satisfaction and effect on other family members.

Violence not only affects the victim but also the perpetrator and other members of the family. For example Bolton et al. ('77) have shown that the siblings of abused children are more aggressive than a control group. In its extreme, child abuse can lead to the intervention of the state and the compulsory separation of parent and child, which may be for the short-term safety of the child but it is not necessarily what either mother or child desires in the long term. Violence towards children may also affect the parent's relationship to his/her spouse and to other

adults in his/her network.   Violence has been associated with poor marriages(Carroll '77). It is difficult to postulate cause and effect,   but there is no doubt that the two are associated.   Baher('76) and Steele and Pollock('72) studies also support this association.

The use of violence will also affect the perpetrator's own identity, and many openly admit they are not happy with their use of violence and physical punishment. Kadushin and Martin('81), for example, found that a large percentage of parents in their sample responded negatively to their own behaviour in an abusive incident and it evoked anxiety, guilt and shame.   However they said they would do the same thing again, although they would not allow the situation to go so far; they would be more controlled. This was said even though many of them described corporal punishment as ineffective in achieving their objectives.

So, merely being unhappy with their behaviour was not enough to stop abuse occurring. This suggests that more needs to be understood about what happens at the time of the violent incident and how the parent perceives what happens.   Only then can suggestions be made as to how to prevent it in future. This study addresses this issue and describes both observed violent incidents and the perceptions of the adults involved concerning these events.

5. It is a common phenomeon

Both normal and abusive violence are relatively common
phenomena in families today. Frude and Goss('79) found
that 50% of their sample of 111 parents smacked their
child very or fairly often. 38% sometimes punished the
child for things which at other times they would have
ignored, and 26% found themselves punishing the child in
ways that they believed to be wrong. Most often this
involved shouting or smacking too hard. 57% admitted
that on least one occasion they had lost their temper
completely and hit the child really hard, and 40% had
entertained the fear that they might one day lose their
temper and really hurt their child. These parents report
erratic discipline and the frequent use of physical
punishment compared to to those who do not report such a
fear and report more irritation in reponse to the child's
crying.

Frude and Goss's finding regarding the very high use of
physical punishment is supported by the Newsons'('63) who
state that in Nottingham 62% of children at 1 year and 97%
of children at 4 years are subject to physical modes of
correction and in 8% of these it occurs daily.

In the USA, social surveys show that physical punishment
is used by up to 84-97% of parents at some time in their
children's lives (Erlanger '74, Stark and McEvoy '70). It

is commonly believed that such punishment diminishes as the child grows older, but studies in the USA demonstrate that 50% of samples of university students reported being hit when they were seniors in high school (age 17 or 18) (Straus '71).

Gelles and Cornell('85) also report that spanking the child is perhaps the most common form of family violence in the US. Some might argue that this is not violence, since the main objective of slapping or smacking is to teach a lesson , to inhibit a certain behaviour, and/or to relieve the parent of her/his own frustration. The intent is to cause some slight harm, so it is consistent with the definition being used in this study.

Of course abusive violence does not occur at such high rates. However, the figures are surprisingly high and have caused much concern both in the UK and in the USA. In '71 Kempe estimated the incidence of abuse in the States was 6 per 1000 of live births. In 1980 Burgdorf surveyed agencies and schools and found a total of 652,000 reported cases of abuse. He estimated that 10.5 children younger than 18 are abused and or neglected annually for every 1000 children in America . Straus('80a) studied a sample of families and asked parents to report on their own techniques. Extrapolating to the whole population he concludes that an average of 1.4 million children

experience acts of abusive physical violence very year.

In the UK, Beswick et al.(1976) completed a survey of a GP practice in Oxford. They found 12 cases of actual abuse during a 3 year period and 30 chidren at risk from a sample of 1,841 on the list. They do suggest that these figures may be higher than other practices, as this one had an interest in working with abusing families. Creighton('85a) bases estimates on registers of child abuse kept by the NSPCC and concludes that the incidence of child abuse in England and Wales was 7,700 in 1975, 4,500 in 1979 and 6,388 in 1982. Among these, 647 were seriously or fatally injured and the remaining 5,741 suffered moderate injuries such as bruising. Over the period 1980-1984, the rate of fatal or serious injuries per thousand population has not shown much change; it is approximately .7 per thousand physically injured children under the age of 15, and 1.15 per thousand in 1983, and 1.19 in 1984, physically injured children under 5. This gives an estimate of 6,816 physically abused children in 1983 and 7,038 in 1984 in England and Wales.

All the studies show that violence cannot be ignored and that normal and physical violence are pervasive in both the UK and the USA. These figures alone would provide sufficient justification for extensive study of violence.

It is important to consider why family violence is so common, what is it about families that allows this level of violence to continue? Important aspects of families which are relevant to violence will now be discussed:

Why is the family violent?

Straus('80a) provides a useful list which summarises important aspects of families which make them prone to violence and which distinguishes them from other groups:

1.   Time at risk.
      Family members spend much time together especially when the children are young.

2.   Range of activities and interests.
      Family members are involved in many different activities together, each of which can be potentially conflictual.

3.   Intensity of involvement.
      Family members are more emotionally involved with one another than with friends or strangers. The potential for strong feelings to be expresssed is therefore greater.

4.   Impinging activities.
      The actions of one member impinge directly on another member and can create a winner and a loser in many

situations.

5. Right to influence.

Dependency on parents by children, or on a spouse, creates a power relationship with one person being able to have some degree of control over another's actions.

6. Age and sex difference.

Families are by nature not peer groups. The differences of ages and sex can be potentially problematic.

7. Ascribed roles.

Family members are not in a position to choose or achieve different roles in relation to other family members.

8. Privacy.

Family rules regarding privacy both within the family and in relation to the outside world are an important aspect of family life which may arouse conflict between members.

9. Involuntary membership.

We can choose our friends but not our families. Individuals are obliged to remain with their families whether they like it or not.

10. Stress.

Due to the emotional involvement of family members they are potentially very enjoyable but also potentially very stressful.

11. Extensive knowlege of social biographies.

Each member of the family has intimate awareness of the others, including their strengths and weaknesses. Conflicts may therefore be more intense.

Families do not, however, exist in isolation but within a cultural context where violence may be tolerated, accepted or even mandated. This and the above list allows more understanding of why families can be both loving and violent.

Sebastian('83) also considers why family violence is so common and considers that there is great instigational potential for violence and that the restraints are weaker than outside the family. He too considers that violence is weakly inhibited in the home and adds additional reasons to the above list:

12. Legal consequences are less probable than for non-family violence. Incidents are often not reported to the police and if they are, the police are reluctant to intervene.

13. There is an absence of observation and control by others(The family also controls how much access outsiders are given.)

14.   Inability of victim to retaliate or defend self.

He also considers that there are two certain characteristics of families which actively instigate violence. The first is that family members expect positive treatment from other family members.   When these expectations are not fulfilled,   frustration and aggression may result.   Therefore hostility,   insults, or physical attack from them arouses stronger anger than from a stranger. The second is that expectations of intimates can be disappointed. Children's physical and intellectual development,   for example, can frustrate parents.

Thus there are a number of reasons given which explain why violence may be more likely to be used in a family than in another type of group. However these reasons alone cannot account for why violence occurs at a particular time within a family and what is actually happening at the time of the violent incident.

Although it has been made clear how the term violence is to be used in this study,   there is not a concensus of opinion in the literature, and many different definitions are used for the terms violence and abuse.   Before proceeding, it is important to discuss some of the difficulties in arriving at a definition.

What is violence?

According to the Dictionary of Social Sciences, (Reading'76, p228), violence is "the application of injurious physical force to persons or property". Legitimised violence is "violence which is accorded legitimacy by a given society or group"(p228) and social violence is "violence to persons or their property because of the social category into which they fall"(p228).

These definitions highlight some of the difficulties in arriving at an agreed definition. When is violence legitimate? Who is to decide? If it is legitimate, is it violence? Is the act in itself violent or does the reason or motivation for the act characterise an act as violent?

A further question emerges when the definitons of aggression are read:

1. Behaviour aimed at injury of a person or thing
2. Initiating an attack
3. A state's use of force which initiates an armed conflict. (Reading '76, p.14)

The first definition, one commonly used, is remarkably similar to that of 'violence', the words 'aim' and

'application' being the only crucial difference. How then does violence differ from aggression? These definitions do suggest that violence is the actual act (application) and aggression is the motivation (aimed) which may be expressed through violence.

Tutt addresses himself to this issue. He argues that aggression is a socially accepted and positive social attribute inherent in such ideas as fighting for independence and opportunity but that similar actions may be classified as violent when exhibited by the minority group (presumably classified as such by the majority group). He concludes that the "difference seems at best to be ill-founded and consequently possibly irrelevant" (1976,p21).

Others do not share this opinion and see aggression as "that response which follows frustration" or as "an act whose goal response is injury to an organism or organism surrogate" (Dollard 1944, p8). The limitations of such a definition have been discussed by Storr('68). He suggests that aggression, such as that expressed in intellectual effort, is not always the result of frustration and that it is a necessary safeguard against predatory attack and the basis for intellectual achievement and attainment of independence. In this, he is not considering the place of desired or actual, injury and so the definition he is

considering has a different emphasis. However it may also
highlight that violence may or may not be an expression of
aggression, that the two terms are not synonymous and that
aggresssion can be expressed in many ways.

Other areas of consideration in the definition of violence
are considered by Tutt. Examples of relevant issues are
the importance of the particular perspective and context
being considered and the person who is to define an act as
violent or legitimate. If rugby scrums occurred in a
pub, they would meet with different reactions; or
strapping a child in school is different from doing so in
the street on in the home. The different interpretations
being considered here apply to the observer's viewpoint
and not necessarily to that of the attacker or victim.
The child being strapped may not differentiate according
to the location, but more according to the pain he
experiences. However as with the other factors so far
mentioned, extent of injury cannot be used alone as an
indication or definition of violence. Accidental
happenings surrounding the incident may exacerbate the
injury and so using the extent of injury as a definition
would be fraught with difficulty.

Tutt is clear in raising many of the difficulties at
arriving at a definition but, as with other authors, he
does not commit himself to a definition. He concludes

that violence is a complex concept which cannot be explained in terms of a single cause.

This idea is supported by Toch('69), who suggests that an act of violence cannot in itself act as an unit of study. He considers a meaningful and psychological unit to be a "violent incident", that is "an interaction which begins when one person approaches another with some purpose in mind and ends in an act of aggression" p34. He suggests that violence cannot be equated with angry explosiveness, that it has shape and form. He also stresses the importance of looking at the motives behind the violence. In this study the violent episode is taken as a unit of study, but it will be demonstrated that the incident cannot be considered to end with the violent act and further interactions are part of that incident.

However this still leaves the question of what is the definition of violence?
As stated on page 1 the definition that I have chosen to use and found most helpful in this study is Gelles:

"Violence as an act carried out with the intention or perceived intention of physically injuring another person. The injury can range from slight pain, as in a slap, to a murder. The motivation may range from a concern for a child's safety to hostility so intense that the death of a child is desired"(1978b, p584).

Gelles differentiates expressive violence from instrumental. The former refers to physical force used without any intention except the expression of feelings and the latter to physical force which is intended to affect the victim's behaviour. This distinction implies that the two forms of violence exist and can be observed. This implication will be discussed further in Chapter 4.

Gelles' focus of concern is violence in the family, that is marital violence and violence towards children which is also referred to as child abuse, although there are some differences in the way in which abuse and violence are used. (The term battering is less used currently and generally refers to physical abuse, as opposed to emotional abuse.)

Authors of studies concerning abused children usually use the term to refer to children who have been non-accidentally injured by their parent or caretaker. This is differentiated from neglect, where the issue is omission of basic caring. Reidy('77) in his study of aggression in children defines abused children as those who "have suffered either fractures, contusions or abrasions, cuts or burns inflicted by a parent on more than one occassion" and the neglected child as one whose parents "had failed to provide clothing, supervision,

medical care or sanitary living conditions and for whom there was no evidence of abuse" p141. Such defintions are common with some modifications, such as Herrenkohl et al.('79) or Green('78) who adds that physical abuse occurs within the context of disturbed family relationships.

Some of the same issues arise in trying to define abuse as do in trying to define violence, such as whether the extent of the injury can be used as the crucial dimension. Kempe('78), for example, argues that the injury of the child is not the only way of looking at abuse; the actions of the adults can also be considered. He includes under the term abuse, physical violence, physical and emotional neglect, emotional abuse and sexual exploitation. It is the first that is relevant here and he says it is usually defined by reference to any inflicted physical injury, such as bruises, burns or fractures, which are serious enough to warrant medical attention. He later adds that physical abuse implies the presence of at least some emotional abuse.

Gelles' definition used in this study allows for the inclusion of major and minor injuries which would not be considered necessarily as child abuse. This is in keeping with the suggestion discussed earlier that child abuse and less extreme forms of violence are the same phenomeon,

differing only in degree. As stated on page 1 Gelles and Cornell add a useful distinction which will be used in this thesis: normal violence "is the common-place slaps, pushes, shoves and spankings that frequently are considered a normal or acceptable part of raising children or interacting with a spouse", whereas abusive violence is "the more dangerous acts of violence. These acts are defined as acts that have the high potential for injuring the person being hit. Included in this defintion are punches, kicks, bites, chokings, beatings, shootings, stabbings, or attempted shootings or stabbings" (1985, p22-23).

Although the two types of violence are here described as separate entities they can also be seen to describe two ends of a continuum, which is the assumption made in this thesis.

Gelles' definition implies that the persepective from which the event is being viewed is important. In this study two persepectives will be used: my own, through observations of parents and child, and that of the parent, tapped through interviews. Through such interviews it was hoped, amongst other things, to be able to ascertain if the parent considered the act to be legitimate and the motivation behind the violent acts. At times of

observation these can only be assessed through the observer's inferences.

Gelles' definition has been chosen because of its breadth. It covers what were earlier described as common definitions of the terms, and allows for more than one person's perspective to be considered. In itself, it makes no judgement about the legitimacy of the action, although he stresses the importance of this. Given this defintion, what kinds of act will be included and excluded as violent in this study?:

Excluded will be stroking or any affectionate physical behaviour and any accidental injury or force experienced by the child.

Included will be actions such as slapping, spanking using hands or objects and shaking or choking the child. Also included will be instances where the motivation would appear to be for the benefit of the child such as slapping him if he is about to touch a hot object. Also included will be splapping in humour or teasing as the child is likely to have felt pain as a result of the action. These are included as their definition again relies on the perspective being considered. The parent may not consider such as act as violent but both the child and outsiders may not agree, and other parents may have alternative ways, non-pain inflicting ways, of dealing with similar

situations. Non-physical violence such as sarcasm or emotional taunting will not be included, although threats of violence will be discussed. I shall use the term 'abuse' to refer to more extreme occurrences of violence, as do most authors cited earlier.

Violence may be inflicted on children by many people: in this thesis, the focus of interest is the use of violence by the parent or substitute parent. For the sake of simplicity I shall use the term 'parent' to cover both of these alternatives, though when a particular family is discussed, the true relationship will be clarified.

What is it about violence that needs to be studied and understood?

Since Kempe et al.('62) brought the issue of child abuse into the open, much research has been carried out in this and related areas. During the late 1960's and 1970's much research was described concerning different forms of family violence. Much of this research focused on two main questions: how common is it, and what causes family violence? This latter question was answered mainly by a list of factors relating to family violence. These studies were largely retrospective, and did not assess how many families with similar characteristics do not abuse their families, and what is currently happening that perpetuates

the use of violence. They were also predominately concerned with abusive violence. However, there were some factors that were shown to commonly be associated with abusive families and which provide a wider context within which to study violence.

Which families are likely to use abusive violence

Based on many studies, I shall provide a stereotyped description of an abusive family and then consider some of the more important variables in more detail.

Mr. and Mrs. S. both come from families where there is a history of violence, either they were beaten themselves or they were witnesses to marital violence (Straus '80a, Kempe '78, Carroll '77). They both lack an experience of 'basic mothering' (Steele and Pollock) which left them as deprived and needy individuals without a sense of 'basic trust' (Erikson 1950, Baher '76). Their siblings were not treated in this way, which gave rise to intense sibling rivalry (Steele and Pollock). They are both working class (NSPCC '69, Castle and Kerr 1972, Smith et al. '74, Kadushin & Martin '81), of low intelligence, she being borderline ESN (Smith et al '74). Mother lacks self-esteem and has negative feelings about her own family(Oates,Forrest'85). Both parents are younger than average and the child was conceived early in their relationship (Skinner and Castle '69, Creighton and Owtram '75, Smith et al, Creighton

'80). The pregnancy was stormy, mother having had little ante-natal care, even though she may have had a still birth or abortion previously (Benedict et al.'85).The baby is born prematurely and placed in intensive care (Kempe '78, Creighton and Owtram), thus disrupting mother's feelings of competence as a mother, feelings which may be reinforced my Mr.S's attitude (Baher, Steele and Pollock, Carroll '77). The baby is sent home to their council flat, which is clean but basic and small (Baher, Creighton and Owtram). Mother is depressed and is getting little support from Mr.S. They live away from both families and have few friends or contacts (Baher, Elmer,Steele and Pollock, Oates, Straus'80a). The baby is difficult and cries a lot, is colicky. The baby does not respond to being cuddled and at six months is admitted to hospital for a few days for investigation (Lynch '78). When the baby is about 1 year old and beginning to walk, Mrs.S is pregnant again and in the course of the next few years has three more children (Lynch, Straus '80a, Kadushin & Martin '81). The first child is beaten, from about 14 months, and reminds the mother of one of her siblings. The parents have unrealistic expectations of the baby, who is seen as willful and antagonistic (Oates '86,Kempe '78,Spinetta and Rigler '72).

This is a description of a non-existent family where child abuse has occurred, and the description includes most of

the factors that have been described as being characteristic of abusing families. However not all the results are uncontroversial. Newberger('77) and Turbott and O'Toole('80), for example. provide evidence that suggests that lower class and minority children are more likely than middle class children to be labelled abused when they are admitted to hospital. Parke and Collmer('75), in their review of the literature, conclude that there are only two consistent conclusions regarding abusing parents: They have difficulty controlling aggression. (Of course this is tautology and does not need investigating). They are socially and personally isolated from the community and their family.

The inability to draw more definitive conclusions based on the data is due to a number of reasons. Child abuse may be defined differently in each study, and even within the studies, the samples come from different populations, the characteristics of which are often not made explicit. Even if the studies could be compared such studies cannot provide a predictive or explanatory model. Straus('80a) demonstrates that it is only in combination that many of the factors can be at all predictive in value. He lists 14 factors which, if are all present, give a family a three-in-ten chance of abusive violence towards their children. This implies that 70% of families with all these characteristics are not at risk from abusive violence.

So again factors such as number of children, social class, isolation, or experience of violence are not sufficient to account for abuse. Although the research describing the characteristics of abusing families raises many interesting issues, it apears that what is being consistently ommitted from consideration is a description of violence, what actually happens, what are the interactions at the time of a violent incident and how these can be explained. There are however a few studies which investigated the type of interactions within violent families.

Interactions in families where there has been abuse

Hyman and Parr('78) studied a small sample of twelve families where there had been actual injury or reported rough handling or self-referrals where injury was feared. These were compared to a matched control group where abuse had not occurred. They made video-tapes as follows: - Mother and infant alone in strange room 3 minutes.

- Mother and infant joined by stranger 30 seconds.

- Mother leaves infant in the company of the stranger 3 minutes.

- Mother returns, reunion with infant and stranger 2 minutes.

The method used in this study is similar to Ainsworth's et al. ('71) strange situation technique.

They found through detailed analysis that the abused children show a greater tendency to become and remain emotionally upset in both the separation and reunion episodes and look at the stranger less than the controls. This distress is more pronounced in the male abused children who look at the toys and handle them less than either the abused girls or the controls.

They also found that there were differences in the mother's response to infants initiatives, and her failed interactive intiatives in which behaviours are directed at the infant but the infant does not respond. Abusive mothers show fewer responses to the infant's initiative in the initial episode and in the final one, and also show more failed initiatives in re-unions than the controls. Abusive mothers and infants are generally less reciprocal in their interactions throughout the observation.

These results are supported by Fontana and Robison('84) who also compared the interaction of abusive mothers to a control group where there had been no abuse. They found that the abusing mothers spend less time looking at their children, focus less attention on them and are physically coercive. Additionally they bombard the child with words, actions, demands and orders, irrespective of the child's initiatives; thus the lack of reciprocity found by Hyman and Parr is confirmed.

Fontana and Robison suggest that the mothers are unable to view the child as a separate being and thus to interpret the child's cues. Many of their actions are intended to evoke a performance in the child, and the child's desires and feelings are not attended to. The importance of how a mother interprets her child's behaviour is discussed further in chapter 4.

Burgess and Conger('77) conducted their observations in the homes of matched abused, neglected and control families. Three tasks were arrranged: construction, skill, and discussion. Through detailed recording and computer analysis, they were able to analyse interaction between family members. They found that in the abused group mothers direct 20% fewer verbal contacts to others and a lower proportion of these to their children than the control mothers. They direct more to the family as a whole or to the fathers. They also respond less frequently in a positive manner and comply to only 20% of the spouse's demands, compared with 60% in the control group. They found that there is less physical contact in the abusing families, both between parents and children and parents themselves. Similarly the children have little physical contact with each other. As with the negative responses, it could be that when physical behaviour is used it is inappropriate or excessive. The children are similar to

their parents in other respects: they respond more
negatively to one another, are less reciprocal and more
coercive than non-abused children. Here again is a
suggestion that behaviour on the part of the child is
learnt by observing parental behaviours to himself, or his
siblings, or the spouse.

Another study conducted in the homes of the subjects is
that of Jeffrey et al('78). They have managed to dispense
with the presence of a live observer by having the family
themselves switch on video equipment while they are having
an evening meal. Through these tapes, they found that
abusive families are less egalitarian, parents being more
pre-occupied with each other and not initiating
conversation with their children, as compared with
controls. When contact is made with the children, it is
largely to make demands. These results are similar to
Burgess and Conger's; however in their study it was the
mother, not both parents, who avoided conversation with
the children.

Although the results are not conclusive and based on small
samples of young children and infants, they all suggest
that the nature of the relationship in families where
there is violence is in some way different from that in
other families, sometimes in very subtle ways. It cannot
be decided from these studies whether such patterns
existed before the abusive incident or if they have

developed afterwards.

These studies show that there are characteristic ways of relating in violent families. This was an important development in the body of research which, hitherto, had discussed mainly demographic and situational factors. However, they do not concern themselves with violent incidents themselves, and it appears that this could be a useful next step. If the incidents themselves were studied, perhaps patterns would also be apparent. Also, it would demonstrate in what circumstances, and in what way, violence is used.

Kadushin and Martin('81) studied violent incidents and, as a result of their study of families where there had been child abuse, describe abusive incidents as interactional in nature. They emphasise the importance of the child's role in such interactions, both in initiating a progression towards violence and in maintaining it. This is an important development which will be discussed in this thesis. Kadushin and Martin are referring to the behaviour of the child. There has been other research which investigates the child's role, but much concerns innate characteristics of the child. This will now be reviewed.

Role of the child in violent incidents.

Much of the early research in this area concerned the physical characteristics of the child. Friedrich and Boriskin('76) summarise such characteristics which have been associated with child abuse as described in research. These include prematurity, physical characteristics that may remind the parent of someone else, sex of the child, physical deformities and lack of ability. However, latterly, there has been some indication that the children may play a more active role in his own abuse than previously thought.

DeLissovoy('79) suggests that certain patterns of behaviour on the part of the child may evoke abuse but he is referring to temperamental characteristics and the implication is that they are not under the child's control. Examples he gives are hyperactivity or constant crying. Bender('76) suggests that outside the family, it is clear that abused children provoke abuse by others through a sense of having to atone for their aggressive feelings towards their parents.

These suggestions imply that the infant or child affects parental behaviour. This way of looking at parent-child interaction is exemplified by Bell('68 and'74) who summarises research which supports the notion that even very young infants have an active role in influencing the

behaviour of their caretakers and stresses that a correlation between parental and infant characteristics cannot be interpreted in a uni-directional manner; it cannot be said conclusively who is affecting whom. He re-interprets research which purports to demonstrate that parents affect children, and shows that an equally valid interpretation of the results is that innate characteristics of the children affect the long term handling they receive from their parents.

Such a viewpoint is also discussed by Mahler et al.('75), who sees the child as having a definite effect on the parent, and is also implied in systems theory where all behaviour is seen as being influenced by and influencing others.(see Broderick and Smith '79)

Green('78) also suggests that severely deprived children may prefer being beaten to being ignored or abandoned, and that the contact derived through the beating may reinforce the behaviour that provokes the violence.

Focusing on the incident, on actual violent interactions, would allow the discovery of characteristic child behaviours. However as Kempe and Helfer('72) imply, it is not the behaviour in itself that is sufficient to explain the violence, but how it is seen or understood by the parent.

This point of view is supported by Kadushin and Martin('81) who see violent incidents as interactional events and stress the importance of the child's behaviour in contributing to abusive incidents. Their research was concerned with the interactions between parents and children that lead to incidents of abuse. They interviewed 66 abusive parents and came to the general conclusion that abusive incidents are initiated with some behaviour on the part of the child which the parent perceives as aversive, and as requiring some intervention to change. They found that the child's behaviour was the most important factor in precipitating interactions leading to abuse. Again, the importance of the parent's perceptions of the child is stressed, and this factor requires close attention.

Perceptions of the children
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From observations of parents and also from their own descriptions, Steele and Pollock('68) suggest that parents make excessive demands on their infants and children and expect them to perform tasks which are beyond the ability of the child and beyond their level of comprehension. Thus it appears that the parents treat the child as if he were much older than he is.

This is explained in terms of the parent's own insecurity

and lack of feeling loved. He looks to the child for reassurance and comfort or love. This is termed 'role reversal' (Morris and Gould'63). That is, the parent turns to the child for nurturing and protection and disregards the needs of the child. Kempe('78) adds that abusive parents interpret 'cannot' as 'will not' in small children. The children are thus seen as unlovable and disappointing.

Spinetta and Rigler('72) also discuss parent's perceptions of their children in a similar way: they suggest that parents wrongly judge the age-propriate abilities of their children and do not empathise with the children's thoughts and feelings. As a result they may consider that the children are being spiteful or intentional when they are in fact unable to comply to the demands being made. Such an interpretation on the part of the parent, according to Spinetta and Rigler, may provoke the parent to retaliate and become aggressive.

These findings are supported in the study by Baher et al.('76). Of a sample of 24 mother and 22 fathers, half the mothers were strongly ambivalent towards their children and only felt positively if the child responded positively towards them. The mothers very much wanted to be the ones who were dependent and expected the child to understand and satisfy their needs. Parents (especially

mothers) had high expectations of the child's physical and emotional behaviour and had little idea of infant development. For example, one mother was very frustrated as her child was not walking by 8 months. Mothers tended to be either neglectful or overly concerned about the child's safety.

Wood-Shuman and Cone ('86) described a study in which three groups of mothers were shown segments of video-taped children. Abusive mothers rated significantly more segments as negative than either mothers at risk for abuse or control mothers when the child observed was being non compliant, that is refusing a command, being mildly aversive, that is crying with an adult nearby, or begging for sweets, or involved in daily activities such as being fed or dressed. This was based on the mothers being asked to describe what they saw the child doing and whether they considered it good, bad or neutral. The author points out that child abusivemothers included normal activities in negative ratings . This supports the idea that even innocuous child behaviour is seen as negative and the child is over-estimated with respect to maturity and abilities.

This study is interesting as it involves mothers rating children who are not their own and may reveal a generalised attitude towards children. There is, however,

research that suggests that abused children are perceived differently from their siblings. Lynch('76) for example, discovered that parents say their abused child is more difficult to control than their other children. Herrenkohl and Herrenkohl('79) studied the parental attitudes towards 295 abused children and towards 284 of their siblings who were used as controls. They found that, compared with their non-abused siblings, abused children are seen more negatively by parents and are described by them in derogatory terms. In these families. the parents were asked about their children after an abusive episode and this may have affected the way in which children were perceived.

This raises the important issue concerning the relationship between attitudes and behaviour. There are some theorists, such as Festinger('57), who suggest that attitudes are altered to be consistent with behaviour, while there are others who argue that this is only true within an experimental setting, and that attitudes may indirectly determine behaviour when considering social behaviour in realistic settings (eg. Ajzen and Fishbein '80). These ideas will be developed further in chapter 4.

These studies all imply that it is important to understand how a parent perceives his or her child and how he understands the behaviours, particularly those to which he

might respond with violence. Only with this information would it be possible to understand and explain what happens during a violent incident. This was the approach taken in this study. Observations were made of such incidents and then discussed with the mothers involved.

All the research mentioned above provides many different interesting facts but how are they to be integrated? How are all the empirical findings described to be explained? There have been attempts at explaining violence with the aid of theoretical frameworks and each of these provide explanations for some of the experimental findings. These will now be reviewed.

Major theories of family violence
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1. Individual psychopathology.

Within this theory violence is described as the result of
psychological problems of the individual (Wasserman '67,
Kempe et al '62 and Steele and Pollock '74) and the type
of therapy recommended appropriate to this definition.
Steele and Pollock describe a psycho-analytic study and
treatment of abusing parents.

However, since these studies were published, much
subsequent research indicates there is no particular type
of personality associated with a violent person and
Straus('80b) and Steele('78) suggest that the proportion
of individuals who batter who suffer psychological
disorders is no greater than the proportion in the
population in general. As mentioned earlier, Parke and
Collmer('75), in their review of the literature conclude
that the only ways in which abusive parents differ from
others are that they have difficulty in controlling
aggression and that they lack networks into which they
are integrated.

Main('84) considers that the only other important
characteristic that has emerged is that abusers are
insensitive to others' distress and react inappropriately

by aversion and even anger to distress in others (Frodi and Lamb '80, Disbrow et al. '77). Another problem with a psychopathological model of violence is that, as argued earlier in this chapter, violence is not an abnormal phenomenon and therefore cannot be considered within a framework which accounts only for abnormality.

2. Frustration-aggression theory

Dollard('44) described the tendency to respond aggressively as an innate characteristic of humans and that this tendency is directed towards objects or people who block important goals. Farrington('75) developed these ideas and suggested that there is is a tendency to express aggression as a response to the emotion someone feels when his goal is blocked but this tendency is learned, not innate. Gelles and Straus('79) point out that such a theory does not explain under what conditions frustration leads to aggression, that in some societies frustration is followed by passive withdrawal and that it does not differentiate physical aggression from verbal aggression. Barker et al.('41) also clearly demonstrated that, amongst a group of children, aggression does not consistently follow from frustration but is only one possible response.

3. Social learning theory

Within this framework, violence is seen as learned phenomenon. The individual learns which are the stimuli that are appropriately followed by violence. The family can serve as a training ground by providing examples for imitation and role models. Patterson et al.('73) add that rewards and punishments are also given which reinforce violence. This theory is supported by the research which demonstrates that violent adults had violent childhoods but cannot account for individuals who have experienced violence but do not use it themselves, or for abusing parents who have not been abused as children.

4. Culture of violence theory

This theory is a development of the previous one. Violence is seen as a learned response of the individual who is part of a violent sub-culture. The family can be responsible for transmitting such a subculture (Steinmetz and Straus('74)) which supports the notion that violence towards spouses and children is acceptable. The limitation with such a theory is that it does not explain how subcultural values originate, or how they can be modified. Additionally it again cannot explain why some individuals who are raised in violent environments do not use violence themselves, or who those who use violence but did not grow up in such a subculture have learned to

be violent.

Gabarino('77) elaborates this type of model into an ecological perspective. He argues that the cultural support for violence against children is high but the level of practical family support is low. The less support families receive, the greater the risk of maltreatment. He proposes that violence and abuse arise out of a mismatch of parent to child and family to neighbourhood and community. He adds that the risk of violence is greatest when the functioning of the family is constrained by developmental problems such as learning disablities, or social and emotional handicaps. This supports evidence described earlier that families who are isolated are seen to be at greater risk for abuse, as are families where there is a handicapped child. However, as well as sharing some of the limitations of the culture of violence theory, Gabarino cannot account for other findings such as Main's('84) description of abusive parents' as being insensitive to distress in others.

5. Structural theory of violence

This theory integrates premises from the last three theories described above and has been applied to the family by Gelles('74). He suggests that deviance is unevenly distributed through the social structure and that

violence is more common in the lower socio-economic groups. He suggests these people are also those who suffer greater stress and frustration and respond commonly with violence. This response becomes part of the sub-culture and is transmitted through the socialisation processes in the family.

Gelles('79) himself states that this theory needs further testing and does not refer to important features of families and family relationships. It is only applied by him to marital violence and so modifications would be necessary to apply it to violence towards children.

6. General Systems Theory (GST)

Straus('73) has applied GST to violence in the family. He describes the family as a goal-seeking, purposive, adaptive system with violence as one of its outputs. He describes feedback processes which serve to maintain or dampen the present level of violence. His work is important in drawing attention to feedback processes connected with violence but he accounts only for the continuing presence of a given level of family violence and not the reasons why violence is used.

This is also the emphasis of Erchak('81) who uses Bateson's('79) term 'complementary schismogenesis' to account for escalating interactions between parent and

child which may lead to child abuse. He gives the example
of a child wetting his bed due to illness or anxiety. The
parent, who is pre-disposed to violence due to her own
childhood, or other factors, responds with violence. This
in turn leads to further anxiety in the child, and the
cycle escalates. He suggests the such a process leads to a
distortion, both in the personalities of the participants,
and in their perceptions of one another. Erchak's stress
on the interactive nature of violence and the perceptions
of those involved are important issues that will be
developed further in chapter 4.

7. Coercion theory

Patterson('82) is concerned primarily with aggressive
children, but the model he develops is relevant to violent
interactions between parent and child. He suggests, as do
Parke and Collmer('75), that inconsistent punishment and
even positive re-inforcement for anti-social behaviours in
the child allow both the child's behaviour and the
parent's to escalate. Negative reinforcement, the removal
of an aversive stimulus as a result of a response, creates
an escalation of behaviours and maintains intense levels
of interaction. For example, if the child is pestering the
parent and the child stops after an initial reprimand, the
situation does not escalate. However if the child does
not submit, there may be a progression which will lead to

violence. If violence is effective then it is more likely to be used again in the future, under similar circumstances. In such a situation, Patterson suggests, both parties will be involved in making hostile attributions concerning the other's malevolent intent. Knutson ('82), however, in his comment regarding this model, suggests that negative reinforcement can only account for the maintenance of patterns of interaction and not their development.

Patterson's model indicates that coercive interactions involve a bilateral exchange during which each member's behaviour affects the reactions of the other, as well as each member's previous behaviour affecting their own subsequent behaviour. He also draws attention to the attributions made, but this is not developed in detail. These are concepts which are crucial to the model developed in this thesis and will be discussed further in chapter 4.

8. Intrafamily resource theory
_____

Goode('71) suggests that all social systems including the family rest to some degree on force or the threat of force. The more social, personal and economic resources a person can command, the more force he has available to him. However the more resources a person actually has,

the less he acutally uses force. Violence may be used
against children to redress a grievance when there are few
alternative resources available. This theory is a
development of structural and cultural theory but goes
little further in explaining the circustances within the
family that are likely to lead to violence.

9. Psychosocial stress model

Justice and Justice('76,'82) describe a theory which
develops ideas proposed by Kempe and Helfer('72) and also
uses ideas from transactional analysis. They suggest that
violent parents suffer high levels of stress and choose
violence to deal with such stress, as they lack an
experience of caring mothering themselves. Through the
violence they are forcing the child to become the
caretaker, not to be the one in need of caretaking. They
describe this process as one of symbiosis, whereby one
person manipulates another into meeting his/her needs
without considering if s/he is willing or able to do so.
The child chosen for this role is seen by the parent as
special in some way, for example as being most in need or
most problematic. Cultural attitudes support the use of
violence within the family and thus make it more likely
that violence will be used against children.

This model is also a combination of some of the models
described above, with the added consideration of the

dynamics involved between parent and child. It can account for the research indicating that abusive parents have unrealistic expectations of their children.

10. Exchange/Social Control Theory

Gelles and Cornell('85) also combine some of the premises from other theories in an attempt to produce a more-encompaassing theory of family violence. They make the following assumptions: human interaction is guided by the pursuit of rewards and avoidance of punishment and costs. An individual who supplies reward services to another obliges him to fulfill an obligation, and the latter individual must furnish benefits to the former. If reciprocal exchange of rewards occurs, interaction continues but, if not, interaction is discontinued. In families it is not possible for individuals to break away. The principle of distributive justice is violated, leading to anger, resentments, conflict and violence. People hit and abuse family members because they can, and because the costs of violence do not outweigh the rewards.

These premises are taken from Exchange theory as ·proposed by, for example, Homans('67). From Social Control Theory Gelles elaborates his model and suggests that family violence occurs in the absence of social controls which negatively sanction violence and in the existence of

confusing norms regarding family interactions.. He gives the example of the family being seen as a safe and caring refuge but that the norm is to spare the rod and spoil the child. This confusion and lack of social control reduces the cost of violence for the individual. Social isolation and the private nature of the family also reduce the social control a family experiences. Gelles demonstrates that his theory can explain certain empirical findings, such as the greater risk of abuse to handicapped and demanding children who, within this model, could be seen as costing considerable effort to parent but not providing sufficient reward. Socially isolated families have also been shown to be at greater risk than those with adequate networks.

11. Evolutionary theory

Burgess and Gabarino('83), however, provide a different explanation of the findings described by Gelles, based on an alternative theory. They argue that child abuse can be seen as the expression of individuals to look after their own genes. Those at risk of child abuse are either not carrying their parents' genes (that is step-children or adopted children) or have a low chance themselves of reproducing. Thus handicapped or difficult children are at greater risk than normal children. They suggest this is particularly so when there are inadequate resources on

the part of the parent. They describe structural elements such as social class and size of family as reducing the available resources of the family.

All the theories described above have important ideas to promote but limitations in what they are able to explain. Gelles and Straus('79) attempted to integrate many of these theories and produced an integrated model drawing on the important aspects of many theories and conceptual frameworks. Later Gelles('83) himself argued that it was impossible to construct a simple model which retained the important aspects of each model; the resulting model was excessively complex and difficult to understand. He concluded that it was not possible to combine the most useful aspects of the theories reviewed.

It is particularly striking that few of the theories mentioned so far address the violent incident itself and what is happening that explains why violence was occurring. General Systems Theory and Coercion Theory provide useful concepts in understanding thrviolent incident as the main issue of concern. There is also empirical evidence to suggest that aspects of the immediate incident are crucial in understanding violence.

Kadushin and Martin('81) emphasise this forcefully as a

result of their study which highlights that abuse is frequently precipitated by some behaviour on the part of the child which initiates a disciplinary interaction culminating in abuse. They interviewed 66 abusive parents and came to the general conclusion that abusive incidents are initiated by the child's behaviour which the parent wishes to alter. Herrenkohl, Herrenkohl & Egolf('83) support this notion. They studied the records of 328 families cited for child abuse in Pennsylvania and concluded that physical abuse is associated with the child's behaviour at the time. This is unlike emotional abuse, which is associated with adult conflicts which are enlarged to involve the child, or neglect, which is characterised by parent's failure to assume parental repsonsibilities. The child's behaviours which were given as reasons for child abuse include: refusals, fighting and arguing, dangerous behaviour, inconveniences due to the child, child perceived as spoiled. They emphasise that the child's behaviour is the most important factor that distinguishes physical abuse from the other types of maltreatment, although in a few instances adult personal problems were implicated. They add that most of the child-related circumstances are not unusual in the course of normal child rearing.

Thomson et al.('71) also found that most abusive incidents are provoked by a child. He adds that only 10% of the

incidents he studied involved behaviour which would be considered misconduct by community standards, such as lying and stealing. Seventy seven per cent included behaviours such as crying, wetting, or not eating . He concludes that the parent-child relationship is the locus for understanding abuse and that frequently the parent is over-reacting to the child or is particularly upset by characteristics of the child.

Hererenkohl points out that there is little in the literature which accounts for the immediate situation. Gelles('79) makes reference to it in his social psychological model; however, this is not elaborated. He argues that the role of the child is important and that the child's behaviour and the current situation can be considered as causes and precipitators of violence. Similarly Gil('75)mentions "triggering contexts" but the details are not elaborated.

The only model of parental violence which focuses on the violent incident is Frude's('80) model of child abuse as aggression. He cites the findings of Gil('70) Smith('75) and Scott('73) who, like Kadushin and Martin, see abuse as the reaction to an immediate situation and also to the perceived behaviour of the child. Frude's model will be described fully as it forms the basis for the model of violence proposed in this thesis.

N.Frude - child abuse as aggression.

Frude suggests a model which concentrates on the violent incident as the focus of study and begins to answer the main questions that Gelles and Straus propose as still requiring attention.   Frude argues that extreme violence and child abuse are in many cases similar in type to the angry responses seen in families where there has been no child abuse and that clues about child abuse will be provided by studying these families.   His model was the most useful to me in understanding violence but my data highlight areas where his model needs further elaboration.

He uses the framework of an aggression incident as a model for abuse.   This describes a pathway between elements considered important to understanding the abuse incident. There exists a real situation which can be observed and is appraised by the actor. Frude describes alternative paths leading from such an appriasal, the arousal of anger or an instrumental analysis. As a result of these, action may result, but such action is mediated by inhibitory or facilitatory factors.   These may be internal to the individual or exsist externally.   Finally in the pathway he describes the aggressive act.   This can be of various types and be aimed at different targets. Each of the elements will be described in more detail in the following section.
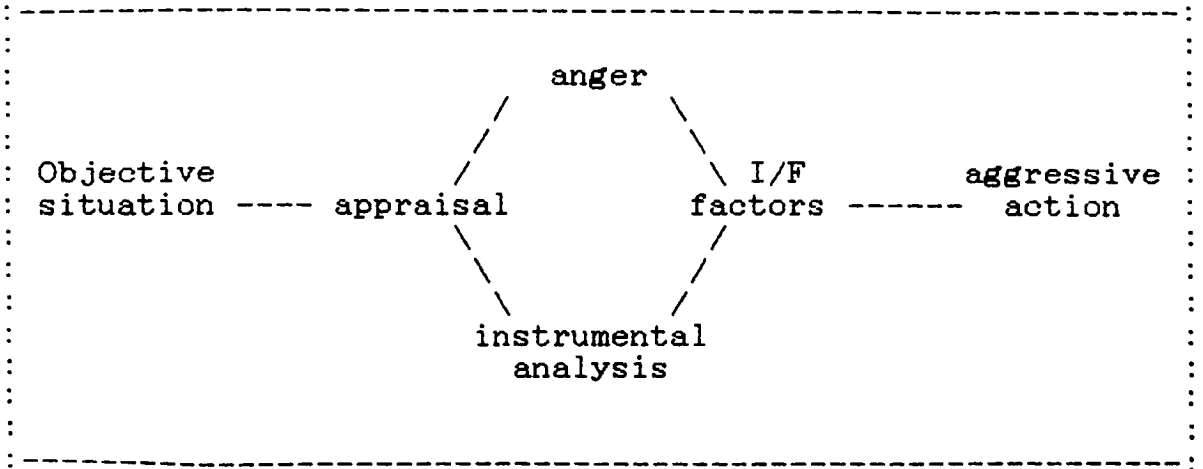
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:---------------------------------------------------------:
:                           anger                         :
:                         /       \                       :
:                        /         \                      :
:  Objective            /           \ I/F      aggressive :
:  situation ---- appraisal       factors ------  action  :
:                       \           /                     :
:                        \         /                      :
:                         \       /                       :
:                       instrumental                      :
:                         analysis                        :
:                                                         :
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Figure   1.   Frude's   model   of   Child   Abuse   as
Aggression(1980,p139).

This   model   focuses on the violent incident   rather   than
only on demographic factors such as social class,   marital
and   economic   status,   although   each   element   can   be
considered at an immediate and at a   long-term   time span.
The objective situation, for example, can be current as in
a   child crying or can be long-term,   as in   poverty.   The
other   factors   can also be considered at   different   time
spans.   Frude is aware that the model is a simplification
and   needs   feedback   loops,   that   anger   will   affect
appraisal   and that action changes the situation,   but   he
does not develop this in his description.

Objective situation.

Frude   comments   that research   indicates   that   some
situations produce aggression more rapidly than others, so

objectively certain situations or behaviours will be more likely to evoke a violent response than others. The child abuse research shows that many violent incidents are a response to a few specific behaviours in a child, for example persistent crying or an act of naughtiness. Kadushin and Martin ('81) for example, describe behaviours on the part of the child that initiate the escalation towards violence and these include enuresis, prolonged crying, persistent disobedience and others more relevant to older age groups. Frude & Goss('80) in their survey of maternal anger found that annoying situations fell into three categories: 1. irritants – eg. crying screaming, whining, eating messily; 2. transgressions – acts of defiance, lying, swearing; 3. those involving costs for the mother – interfering when she was working, wetting .

The more distant factors relevant to this element are provided by investigations that show that the situation surrounding an abusive parent is difficult and stressful. Justice and Justice ('76) describe marital difficulties; Lynch('78) financial and employment difficulties, and there are many more.

Frude argues that if in some cases a particular situational factor plays a major part, then there are clear implications for prevention and treatment. The

parent can be given practical aid in child care, the parent can be trained not to precipitate the excessive trigger behaviour in the child; the child can be helped to change his/her behaviour.

Appraisal

This is a cognitive and emotional process by which the situation is perceived, understood and evaluated, that is a meaning is ascribed to it. This meaning has been seen as crucial in the subsequent reaction. Frude emphasises this factor in his model and uses, amongst others, Berkowitz and Alioto('73) as supporters of his argument that emotional reactions such as aggression are dependent on an individual's understanding of a situation, its meaning.

This viewpoint is also supported by Glaser ('86) who considers that physiological arousal is shaped by the indvidual's interpretation of experiences. Such interpretations are seen as crucial in avoiding the use of violence to settle conflicts.

Research in child abuse applies to both long-term and short-term perspectives relating to appraisals. For example Baher et al. ('76) describe parents as perceiving their children as a source of irritation or persecution and not of pleasure, and they and Knutson('78), amongst others, describe parents as having very high expectations

of their children and unrealistic ideas about what is age appropriate behaviour for their children.

Anger

Frude points out that parents, before an incident of child abuse, are often under much stress. Frude's study of anger also found that mothers reported suffering from pre-menstrual tension when they felt most concerned about abusing their children. Baher et al.('76) also found that mothers and fathers were feeling very pressured and frustrated. The conclusion drawn from this is that an accumulation of anger has developed by the time of the violent incident. However as Frude comments, there has been no research which supports the notion that abusing parents over-react emotionally to a standard situation or that, on the whole, they are more controlled, and thus more prone to sudden outbursts than non abusing parents.

Inhibition/Facilitation (I/F)

Frude suggests that most people have strong inbuilt inhibitions against hitting children severely and this high threshold is only overcome under extreme provocation. Research, such as the Baher('76) study, indicates that abusing parents do have lower thresholds for using violence and believe in the use of strong physical methods of discipline. In such families there is also a high

level of provocation.

External factors such as the presence or absence of others can act as encouragement or discouragement to the use of violence as can the effect of a previous violent action.

Aggressive action.

Literature suggests that aggessive actions escalate until they achieve a desired aim, for example obedience. Frude quotes evidence showing it is common for an extreme threat to be carried out, so the threat will not act as a substitute for actual violence. Other studies suggest that violent actions are often symbolic or displaced, often onto someone with little power of retaliation,(Asen a. forthcoming).

Instrumental concerns.

This refers to the use of violence to achieve a specific aim, for example injuring a child in order to have him/her taken into care. Frude suggests that extreme violence for instrumental concerns is rare and does not give this factor much emphasis. The instrumental concerns he is referring to here are those that are related to people outside the family. It appears that Frude is differentiating between instrumental concerns and instrumental acts, as he acknowledges that often violent

actions are exaggerated forms of instrumental acts, such as smothering a child in order to keep him quiet.

Implications for treatment

Frude concludes that treatment for violence should be tailored to individual cases and the focus of treatment should be decided according to the needs of each family.

Summary

There are many experimental findings and many theories concerning family violence but there is relatively little which focuses on the violent incident. Kadushin and Martin's('81) findings are very interesting; however their study was based only on interviews and records, not on observation, and only concerned cases where child abuse had occurred.

Useful information could be gained from combining observations with interviews and investigating less extreme forms of violence. This is the approach used in this study. Through such an approach, it is anticipated that a model can be developed which will explain parental violence, both normal and abusive violence, with a focus on the incident, and which can account for relevant background factors as they relate to the immediate incident.

Existing models of violence have implications for therapy and a model focused on the violent incident should also have an important contribution to make in this area. This will be discussed further in chapter 4. The next chapter is concerned with the methods employed in this study.

CHAPTER 2 : METHODS

In this chapter the methods used in this study are described and justified in relation to the aims of the research. The main purposes of the study were to try to understand in detail what happens during violent incidents, to explain their occurrence and to develop a theory or model of parent-child violence that facilitates the understanding of violence in many families.

The chosen method is an intensive, idiographic approach, focusing on the details of three families. This has not been much used in studies of violence and child abuse, where the emphasis has been on eliciting population characteristics or descriptions of families where there has been abuse. These studies are not so useful in generating theories or in describing the interactions and perceptions of those invovled in violent incidents. However, the importance and value of detailed studies of individuals has been stressed by many social psychologists recently (for example Hudson('77), Harre('80, and Frude('80)) who are attempting to move away from the picture of the average man that emerges from studies of large populations.

Hudson('77), for example, stresses the importance of understanding how individuals think and how they organise

their lives. He considers that important insights and developments have emerged from such studies. He suggests that principles of organisation which make individuals seem idiosyncratic and different from each other will not be discovered by studying large samples and seeing what they have in common.

The idiographic approach is taken by Sherwood('80) in her study of racial attitudes. This is another area of investigation where much work was previously done on large samples, focussing on characteristics of groups. She stresses the value of the idiographic approach in the discovery of the inner reality of subjects and as a means to allow racial attitudes to be seen as part of a whole configuration of attitudes.

Marsh et al.('78) point out that the risk of intensive case study designs is that the individual or individuals studied may not be typical members of a group. But they stress that the detailed knowledge that can be achieved when intensively studying one group or subject cannot be gathered in any other way. Harre('80) also promotes the use of single case studies and the development of explanatory theories, rather than the spurious search for cause and effect by studying large samples.

This point of view is supported by writers in

hermeneutics.   Although this is the interpretation of
texts,   parallels can be drawn to understanding in   social
psychololgy.   Ricoeur('81) suggests that actions,   as
texts, can be analysed and interpreted. He argues that the
most   useful form of analysis is based on reasons and   not
causes.   Reasons are explanations given by intentioned
individuals about   their own actions and imply that the
actor   is   both   reflective and aware of his own
interpretations of situations.   Causes, on the other hand,
are explanations,   provided by outsiders, which imply
determinism and lack of agency on the part of the   actor.
This   distinction will be discussed,   in relation to the
model proposed in this thesis, in chapter 4 .   Only
explanations based on reasons allow one to understand
anothers actions.   The only means by which such an
analysis is possible is through detailed investigations of
individuals.

In relation to violence towards children, Frude('80)
suggests that the case-based approach has been under-
valued.   He argues that in order to understand such
violence it is essential to investigate specific cases.
Only through such a method . will it be possible to
understand the phenomenon which is variable and complex.

The use of the case-study approach is discussed , from a
very different perspective,   by Kazdin('82).   He considers

case studies of the sort completed in this study to be pre-experimental and to carry little weight in the type of research he describes. He points out that case studies do not provide the possibility to draw conclusions about internal validity and are unsystematic. He suggests that they carry more conviction if objective data are used. However Kazdin is not interested in theory generation or even with explanation. He describes research which primarily demonstrates outcome, for example that A caused B. His descriptions of single-case designs are derived from laboratory experiments concerning operant conditioning rather than social psychology.

However the idiographic approach is of particular importance in areas which are as yet lacking in hypotheses and theory, where these are still to be generated. Family violence is such an area. The methods used in this study resemble more closely sociological methods described by Glaser and Strauss than the single case designs described by Kazdin or Leitenberg('72). Glaser and Straus('67) are concerned with the generation of theory within sociology and emphasise the importance of 'grounded theory', theory which is discovered from data. They are less concerned with cause and effect but consider theory to have five important functions. These are: 1. to enable prediction and explanation of behaviour. It seems unlikely that prediction is possible unless much explanation in the form

of reasons has been completed, so this must be the first step. Marsh et al.('78) support such a funtion. 2. to be useful in theoretical advance of the discipline. 3. to be usable in practical applications, prediction, and explanation. It should be able to give the practitioner understanding and some control of situations. 4. to provide a perspective of behaviour, a stance to be taken towards data. 5. to guide and provide a style of research on particular areas.

They promote the use of comparative analysis, comparing different groups, but they also point out that neither accurate evidence nor a large number of cases is crucial for generating theory. They suggest that a single case can point towards an important theoretical concept which can then be confirmed by studying more cases.

Bromley('86) also promotes the use of case studies as particularly relevant in generating theory and suggests that a body of such studies could be collected to form the basis of psychological case-law. These would need to be collected in a systematic manner. Bromley suggests the "quasi-judicial" method and outlines a methodology. He stresses that behavioural episodes will be used as evidence in such a model although will not be presented in the final theory. He is developing ideas presented by Levine('74) who suggests the use of an adversarial model for use in social psychology. This would be based on the

study of 'whole human events' and Levine suggests that such an approach is particularly pertinent for field and clinical studies.

Thus the use of case studies is supported with the aim of generating theory. Authors also support the use of more than one kind of data in this enterprise. Different 'slices of data' (Glaser and Straus '67) are seen as useful sources of information and for providing different vantage points. This view is also supported by Marsh et al.('78) who have used video tapes of incidents in a football ground and the participants' accounts of such incidents. This is similar to the approach used here.

In this study two perspectives related to violent incidents were used: my own as an observer and the parent's as participant. The perceptions of the children involved were not included. The possibility of interviewing them was considered, but this would have required using a diffferent technique from the one used with the adults. Additionally I would have wanted to discuss with them their opinions about violent incidents and this would have posed issues of confidentiality; for example should their parents be present at the interviews, would I be obliged to tell them what the children said. I believe that most of the difficulties could be overcome, especially with slightly older children but the sample

used only concerned children under 5 with whom such an investigation would be impeded by their inability to verbalise and communicate their thoughts and feelings.

In this study parents, in the sample only mothers, were observed with their children, and the mothers were interviewed alone. The use of these as the two main techniques has similarities to an anthropological approach as described, for example, by Williams('67) for which they form the basis of studying new and strange communities and customs. Whiting and Whiting('60) also describe such cultural interviews and describe the interviewer as needing to acknowledge the expertise of the interviewee. Of course all interviews have to be modified for the subject under investigation, but it can be argued that much of the behaviour and interaction of others in owr own society is as alien to us as that of primitive tribes and different cultures studied by the anthropologists, and therefore can be studied an a similar way. Langness('65) also promotes the use of interview and direct observations of behaviour for anthropology. He suggests interviewing participants in an event, such as a funeral, "on the spot". The interview provides information which cannot be checked by observation, information concerning beliefs, emotions and judgements. Pelto('70) also recommends multi-instrument research, including observation, participant observation, and life

histories .

In this study observations and interviews were used in a very similar manner. On the day when a violent incident had been observed, the mother was interviewed and the incident discussed with her.

The sample in this study consists of four mothers and their children, one of whom acted as a pilot for the methods. Because an idiographic method was used, the amount of data collected on each family made it possible to study only a small sample. However the amount of data generated in this way is very large and is also very detailed and complex. The sample was selected from those attending a treatment centre, which will now be described.

Context of study

This is a description of the centre as it was when the families in the study were observed and interviewed: When full the centre serves 10 families. It is jointly funded by the National Health Service and the Inner London Education Authority. It is situated in the basement of a large house, the upper floors being occupied by staff who run an out-patient department and act as consultants and possibly individual therapists to the patients in the centre. The staff in the centre consist of two

psychiatric nurses, two teachers and a nursery teacher. In addition, one child psychotherapist acts in a supervisory and consultative role to the staff and participates in some of the daily events. Medical responsibility is taken by the consultant, who is responsible for all the families and participates in all clinical meetings and case conferences. This is the formation of the staff at present, but like the centre, it changes and is not a stable arrangement.

The familes are referrred from various sources: general practitioners, educational welfare officers, educational psychologists, social workers, health visitors, and teachers. The referred patient may be either the parent or the child. Common referral problems include school refusal, truancy, under-achieving and disruptive behaviour on the part of the child. Parents or mothers with young children may be referred because they are unable to cope with the child, afraid of what harm they may do, if there is a suspicion or evidence of injury or neglect. Children may be referred via social services from a nursery.

Families attend 4-1/2 days a week for a period of approximately one year. During the day various activities occur: Weekly family therapy is is conducted by a member of the centre staff and includes all members of the nuclear family and, when possible, any other members of

the extended family considered to be important. The theoretical orientation with regard to these meetings can be termed structural family therapy, particularly as applied by Minuchin('74) although the application is not rigid, and staff will use other techniques and skills that they possess and consider appropriate, such as role-playing and sculpting.

A daily community meeting is attended by all the patients and staff in the centre, including the children. The purpose of this is to discuss community difficulties and individual management issues and problems. The staff lead the meeting and the children and parents are encouraged to participate. The theoretical orentation of this group is less explicit but is moving towards a structural framework as well.

Peer group activities differ depending on the age of the group. The older children receive structured lessons; the under fives engage in pre-school activities and plays; the parents devise their own activities with the help of a member of staff.

Some afternoons are devoted to family activities such as swimming or visits to museums, when all the members of a family will attend. At other times activities, such as craft are organised for the whole family.

There is also a weekly parents group meeting run by two

members of the centre's staff for parents to share
concerns and to discuss issues that they may not wish to
raise in front of the children.

In addition members of the family may have individual
therapy. The families eat lunch together and once a week
cook it themselves.

Aims and philosophy of the centre:

The work of the centre focuses on the presenting symptoms
and on providing an alternative experience of family life
in the variety of settings that the centre provides.
Parental authority is encouraged and children are helped
to cope with school. "In order to achieve these goals the
treatment programme is so designed that there are many and
repeated transitions throughout the day ...... the
intended purpose of this is to provide the experience of
changing contexts and the opportunity to learn to cope
with the resulting demands and difficulties. In order to
survive in such a programme families and their various
members have to change." (Asen et al.'82, p348) With the
guidance of the staff the families are encouraged to try
out new behaviours in different settings. These ideas are
further developed by Asen et al.('82) and Cooklin et
al.('83).

Observations

Observation is used as technique by many authors in social psychology. For example Richards and Bernal('72) base their observational study of mother-infant interactions on similar assumptions to those made in this study: that is, they assume that mother and child influence each other's behaviour, it is not a one way process. They suggest that crucial information is forgotten in interviews or never mentioned because it is culturally unacceptable. They argue for the use of detailed records to understand interactions as complex as those between mother and infant. The reasons for the form of censoring they describe may be more complex than they suggest, and the information provided in interviews will also depend to some extent on the type of questions and the way in which they are asked. However this is not to question their basic evaluation of observation as a method. In this thesis, the observations were also used to prompt the mother when they were interviewed later on the same day, so that the observations had the additional purpose of eliciting information that might otherwise have been forgotten. Richards and Bernal chose direct recording rather than filming or video because of the expense and intrusiveness of the latter. They also decided on behavioural categories before observing.

Here, too ,direct observation was chosen, partly for the

same reasons, but also as the type and quantity of data that could be collected and analysed had to be considered. Alone, I had to limit the amount of data. Film has the advantage of replay facilities but is, like any observation, selective. The use of categories, planned before the observations, was also considered, but this would have required making judgements about what would and would not be included in the study which could only be based on hypotheses regarding crucial interactions and likely behaviours. This constraint was not considered to be useful in trying to develop explanations and theory. This approach is supported by Glaser and Strauss('67) who warn against using such pre-arranged categories and hypotheses in attempting to develop 'substantive theory', theory related to the data.

Leach('72) points out that the advantages of using a pre-prepared checklist are that the categories listed will be more consistent and easier to analyse. However they are inflexible and new items have to be ignored. They must be short or else become unwieldy and rarely allow for sequences of items to be usefully recorded. Commentaries, on the other hand are very flexible, a very large number of items and sequences can be recorded.

The observations to be described here are largely as those described by Wright('60) and in type are what he described

as time-sampling observations in that it was decided
beforehand when the observations would start and finish.
However, the ones that were of interest were those that
contained a violent episode, or the threat of violence,
and these were the observations that were re-written in
detail and subsequently analysed. So, to some extent,
event sampling was also utilised. The observations fit
what Wright describes as continous observations, planned
in terms of timing and setting, and recorded as narratives
of behaviour. The subjects and situations are chosen to
suit interests and are deliberately unselective. Such
observations provide lasting specimens of behaviour and
situations.

The advantages of such observations are numerous. They can
register almost everything that the observer sees of
the behaviour in question. They have range and variety.
They describe behaviour in context. They describe the
continuity of behaviour. They permit intensive study of
the sequence and relationships of behaviours. They can
be done with diary recording. They have permanence. They
lack theoretical bias.

Weick('68) suggests two further advantages, which are that
they allow the study of behaviour not available to
introspections or when information is not readily given
and they avoid the fallibility of retrospective data.

Many of the above are pertinent to this study, which is concerned with a behaviour that could be considered as deviant or unacceptable by those concerned, and therefore not easily spoken about, or so much a part of the mundane that they are not noticed by the participants.

This less structured form of observation and recording is also recommended by theorists such as Bick('64) as an invaluable tool to learning about interaction and behaviour and to develop theory.

The main disadvantages of observations are that they do not immediately allow for quantitative description; they are costly in time and manpower; the observer has an influence on those being observed; the observer's perception and memory is selective.

In this study quantitative description was not required and thus the first objection is not germane to this study. The cost is undoubtedly high for any detailed research but observations may or may not be more costly than interviews, for example. With regard to the issue of the influence of the observed, Rosenthal('66) has clearly demonstrated that even in the most rigorous of experiments the observer has a demonstrable influence on the phenomenon being studied.

Kazdin('82) discusses the importance of assessing inter-observer reliablity. This is particularly important in the type of study he describes, when the effect of a particular intervention on a specific behaviour is being studied. In this study, which is closer to the approach described by Glaser and Strauss, this is not so crucial. The observations provide one perspective of the incidents, the interviews provide another. Of course, the two may not necessarily co-incide, but this is itself important in developing a theory. When studying social interactions, the different perspectives and understandings of the situations are themselves the object of explanation and understanding. The value of having another observer for this study would have been to provide the luxury of another pair of eyes; to provide additional detail regarding the interactions, not to provide a test of reliablity. However this was not possible as the researcher was not part of a research team.

The majority of the observations conducted in this study were non-participant . Community meetings were observed from behind a one-way mirror. Thus the impact of the observer on the subject was reduced. Such observation was common practice in the centre and so it was not out of the ordinary for a researcher to be doing this. Each observation period focused on one of the families in the

sample.   Each day a different family would be chosen   and
the order in the week was varied from week to week.   This
was   planned in advance but often the families   themselves
would   decide who was going to be observed.   Either   the
chosen family was absent that day,   or they were too   late
for the period of observation.   All the families described
in this study attended erratically, so it was difficult to
keep to a regular pre-planned schedule.

While conducting the observations,   detailed notes of   the
interactions   of the the family members were   taken,   both
between themselves and with others in the   group.   Verbal
and   non-verbal   behaviours were noted.   If there   was   a
violent incident during the observation,   the observations
were   immediately re-written in long hand and in   as   much
detail as possible.

Over   lunch and during other activities I sat in the   room
and   was a participant observer.   It was not possible   to
take notes at the time and in detail as for the   community
meetings,   but   again,   the focus each time   was   on   one
family.   If there was an incident of   violence,   detailed
notes   were   made   immediately following   the   period   of
observation.

I was not a stranger to the families as I also had a   role
as   worker in the centre and at other times in the week   I

worked with the children.   My familiarity to the families could be argued to have altered the results, but it allowed access that otherwise might not have been possible.   In all situations the relationship with the researcher affects the results (Rosenthal '66) and in a strange situation with an unknown person the information provided or behaviour demonstrated may be less likely to represent the normal occurrences.   The families were also aware that I was a researcher.

A brief description of each family involved in the study is provided on page 111; details about the observations will be given here:

Pilot family: Lesley and Laura
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15 observations were conducted in community meetings, and 5 during parent and child activities, of this family. None of these observations contained violent incidents and so they were not retained.

The three families that comprised the sample in the study were observed over a ten month period, June to March. However there were weeks during this time when it was not possible to observe, for example, during the month of August and during Christmas. A schedule was planned so that each family was to be observed on different days of the week, and in different contexts.   However, as stated

earlier, it was often not possible to carry out such a plan, as the family to be observed would be absent or late for the designated activity. The schedule allowed for observing community meetings 4 times a week, which was sometimes preceded by snack or a business meeting, lunch once or twice a week, and parent-child activities twice a week.

Beryl and Sandy

50 observations of Community Meetings were conducted of this family, 12 of lunch, and 19 of parent-and-child activities. Of these, 21 observations were retained and recorded in detail, as they contained violent incidents or the threat of violence. Of these 21, 14 are of Community Meetings, 6 of parent-and-child activities, and 1 of Lunch.

Daphne and Martin

48 observations of Community meetings were conducted for this family , 21 of parent and child activities, and 10 of lunch. Of these, 17 observations were retained and recorded in detail as they contained incidents of violence. 14 are of Community Meetings, 2 of parent and child activities and 1 of lunch.

Barbara and Leo
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34 observations of Community meetings, 15 of parent and child activity and 8 observations of lunch were carried out for Barbara and Leo. 12 observations were retained, 8 are of Community Meetings, 2 of parent and child activities, and 2 of lunch.

From such observations I was able to draw my own conclusions about what was happening between mother and child and the others around them but could not know what the mothers themselves thought about the incidents and surrounding events. It was for these reasons that interviews were also used.

Interviews

Why is it important to discover what the participants themselves think about violence?:

Toch('69) argues that violent incidents cannot be understood by outsiders; it is necessary to consider the perspective of the violent person and his motives. The situation as perceived by an observer is likely to be very different from the understanding of the violent person himself who is involved in a problem or dilemma which he attempts to resolve with violence. Toch stresses that it is crucial to discover how one person's behaviour affects

another's feelings and perceptions and how he acts as a result. Thus he feels that an understanding of an issue as complex as violence can only be gleaned from the participants' own accounts.

The value of reports, particularly retrospective reports, has often be questioned, for example by Kazdin('82). It is argued that they cannot be shown to be valid or truthful. However many writers feel that this is a short -sighted view and that it is only through such reports a better understanding of behaviour, particularly social behaviour, can be reached.

Harre and Secord('72) support this view. Within the context of describing man as a self-directed, self-monitoring being, they argue that self-reports are crucial in explaining behaviour and the rules underlying social acts. Only the actor's own statements can explain why he performed the act in question and what meaning he gave to his own actions and those of others. These statements should be seen, according to Harre and Secord, as authentic, though revisable, reports and can be subject to empirical criticism. They conclude that only through studying individuals' reports and accounts can the rules and meanings of social life be understood. Through such reports people's emotional states can be investigated and related to their actions. They emphasise the importance

of reports given almost concurrently with actions and also retrospective accounts which may modify the earlier ones.

Canter et al.('85) and Shepherd and Watson('82) also stress the importance of using the conceptual frameworks of the respondents as the starting point for understanding their actions. Canter points out that some researchers insist on good pilot research, which consists of talking to subjects about their views and understanding of situations, and then conduct the experiment proper. However it is in the pilot phase that important concepts and conclusions are often drawn and the following experiment provides only support in the form of additional cases or statistics. Brown and Canter('85) discuss the use of explanations as a data base in research and suggest the respondent is the best person to provide, through interviews, explanations which can be used as valid data for understanding actions. Such explanations will be in the form of reasons, rather than causes, a distinction discussed earlier on page 78. Explanations provide part of the data used in this study.

Sherwood('80) discusses the view that suggests that interview material is fiction. Of course it is impossible to know if events were exactly as the subject depicts them, but she believes they do reveal their views concerning the events, their experiences and reflects on

them as people at that time. She considers that such accounts reveal important aspects of a person's personality.

De Waele and Harre('79) discuss the use of autobiography as a psychological method. They describe a systematic manner in which such documents are gathered by interviewing subjects and reviewing accounts with them. Although they are describing a particular method of interviewing, their arguments can be applied to less formal documents. They suggest that the validity of a personal document is not dependent on 'objectivity'. It reflects personal attitudes and interpretations which are relevant to providing the participant's view of his life situation. They acknowledge that accounts may vary at different times, and suggest this reflects the various perspectives man has on his life; which of these is real is a question which cannot be answered and may be irrelevant to ask.

The value of the individual's own comments has been long accepted by the psycho-analysts, and probably from this grew the awareness that it is not only the content of reports that can be useful information but also the omissions, corrections, hesitations and tone of voice. Studies of families, such as Hess and Handel('59), and individuals, such as White('75) stress the value of such

information.

An observer can draw conclusions and make interpretations about behaviour based on his or her own perspective, knowledge and suppositions, not those of the participants. Only through talking to the subjects is it possible to understand their own perspective. There is no other way in which to do this, except through interviews. They are the only tool avaliable for eliciting such information, even if they have failings and limitations.

One of the great advantages of the interview situation is that the interviewer is in a position to use his relationship with the respondent to elaborate and clarify information at the time. Kahn and Cannell('57) suggest that the respondent is more likely to be motivated as a result of the relationship established with the interviewer and that the information provided is more likely to be honest and accurate than in other settings. The openess of the relationship allows the interviewer to guide the subject to help with the interpretation of questions and to be flexible in his ordering and phrasing of questions. Brenner et al('85) (intro and chapter 7) also stress that interviews allow the exploration of the meaning of questions and answers.

Sherwood also discusses the relationship between subject

and resesarcher in the interview context. She suggests: "the relationship between subjects and interviewers is not fortuitous nor to be regarded as 'unscientific' but is the very medium through which the study proceeds and the research data are gathered. The research data are enhanced and deeper meanings are yielded if there is a full, conscious attempt to recognise the dynamics of this mutual interaction"(1980,p27).

Interviews, as all methods, have disadvantages too. They are time consuming and can be costly on staff resources. The staff need to be trained in the skills of interviewing and if intensive interviewing is required must be prepared for a commitment to the interviews and subjects that require emotional involvement (Bromley '86). Greater distance can be maintained if brief questions or experiments are performed. Although the relationship between interviewer and interviewee is one of the great assets of this method it is also a potential source of bias. This, and other criticisms have been made of interviews.

Baddely('79) and Cherry and Rodger('79) criticise interviews on the grounds that subjects' memory is poor. They suggest that if retrospective questions are asked concerning events that are not salient to the subject, replies given will be very inaccurate and will be

distorted by intervening similar events. Shotter('77) suggests that subjects do not give authentic accounts as they lack knowledge of what they are doing or have done, and Nisbett and Wilson('77) that subjects will provide the most plausible explanation for their own behaviour even if it is demonstrably false. However Marsh et al.('78) and others point out that interviewers do not have privileged access to people's feelings or intentions without first listening to their disclosures. This is not to say that different accounts or explanations will not be given to different interviewers but that, as Brown and Canter('85) suggest, the role of the listener or interviewer needs to be considered in understanding the material given. They suggest that the task for research is to place these differences into a coherent explanatory framework.

Interviews used in this study

3 or 4 General Interviews (GI) were conducted with each mother in the sample. These interviews concerned many aspects of the mothers' lives including their own childhoods, relations with their own parents, the history of their relationship with their child and attitudes to violence. (Schedule of interviews in Appendix 1). The aim of these interviews was to understand the context within which the mothers were functioning and to highlight relevant experiences and attitudes which influence their relationship with their child and particularly

interactions involving violence. The interviews included questions such as 'I would like to hear more about your childhood, about how you remember your home, parents, brothers and sisters. Can you tell me any particular memories. What were your parents, brothers, sisters like. How did you get on with them.? (This was not asked as one question but provided a guide of areas to be covered.) I would like you tell me about becoming a mother. About yourself as a parent and about your children. What do you think are your best qualities as a mother. At times mothers may feel they need help in looking after their children. Can you tell me about a time when you had help from someone?

The decisions about which questions to ask were partly based the interview schedule used in a previous study which I completed (Epstein '78) and partly on areas that have been considered to be pertinent to violence and child abuse, as spelt out in chapter 1, such as perceptions of the child, history of pregnancy and birth, own upbringing etc. Schneider et al.('72) discuss the important areas to discuss with families where there has been injury to the child and these are included in the interviews here, for example how the parents themselves were reared, patterns of isolation within the family, marital relationship and perceptions of the child. Kempe('78) discusses important areas to investigate in

relation to child abuse and these include the parents' perception of the child, their expectations of the child, the upbringing of the parents, any personal or family crisis and the parents support system when crises arise. These too were included in the interview schedules.

The importance of interviewing mothers about their own childhoods and backgrounds when trying to understand their current relationships with their children is also apparent from Main's('84) study.

To discover what mothers thought about particular incidents when they had used violence, and to elicit their own opinions and perceptions of such events, End-of-Day (EOD) Interviews were conducted ; see appendix 1b. These were interviews which were conducted at the end of the day in the centre, usually about 3 pm, when there had been at least one incident of violence that I had observed and noted. From these interviews it could be ascertained how the mother felt about the whole day and how she viewed the particular incident, how she viewed her own behaviour and her child's. Typical questions included: I would like you to tell me about your day in some detail, what happened and what you thought about it, particularly times when you were with you child. Was there a time when your child did not do what you wanted or asked him to do. What happened. What did others do. Questions concerning their

memory of events although still germane , are less at issue then when interviewees are asked to recall events of earlier days or even years. These interviews were conducted relatively soon after the relevant incident so the interviewee's memory of the events was still fresh. It was not made explicit at this time, or any other, that I was specifically interested in violence, but they were aware that this was one of many things in which I was interested. To this end I also conducted an interview on a day when there had been no violent incident that I had observed. This prevented the purpose of the study becoming apparent to the mothers and also served as a useful comparison when analysing the results.

All the interviews were semi-structured, in that questions were prepared beforehand, but were used as a guide to the researcher, highlighting the areas of information that were required. The questions were not asked in a pre-determined order, allowing the respondents, rather than the interviewer, to raise issues. In this way, potentially difficult topics were more easily addressed. Sherwood('80) found such a method essential in her study of the sensitive area of inter-racial attitudes and Gelles('74) used unstructured interviews, which were channeled towards questions about fights and violence, to explore marital violence. He suggests('78a) that such a technique allowed the establishment of rapport between

subject and interviewer and the exploration of potentially difficult issues.

The interviews were tape recorded and subsequently transcribed. This allowed for much detail to be recorded, and also for the description of the tone of voice and emotional timbre of what was being said to be noted. The subjects were asked to agree to the recording of the interviews and a small section was played back to them at the start of the interview to familiarise them with the equipment and to ensure it was functioning. Using a tape recorder allowed the researcher to concentrate more closely on the answers being given and to ensure relevant questions were asked. It also improves the rapport with the subject if they can look at the interviewer. If detailed notes were taken. the researcher's eyes would be permenantly on the paper and she would not be able to respond to the subject.

Brown and Sime('81) confirm that note taking is distracting to both researcher and informant and add that it may cue respondents into talking more about issues that they see the researcher write down and into talking only briefly about those which the researcher does not note. Taping avoids this pitfall and allows the researcher to give attention to both the verbal and non-verbal behaviour of the informant. They do warn, however, that the tape may

encourage the interviewer not to listen to the informant and this has to be guarded against. Another consideration is raised by Roberts and Renzaglia('65) who investigated the effect of tape recording on counselling sessions and found that the clients were more apt to speak favourably about themselves when they thought they were being recorded than when not; however they did not compare the results to the effect of note taking and also did not make explicit what the counsellor said to the client regarding the purpose of recording. It is difficult therefore to use such results to generalise to a study such as this. At best their results indicate that the method of study will affect the outcome and must be taken into account. This is however, as suggested earlier, true of all types of research.

For this thesis brief notes were taken after the interviews were completed concerning the context of the interview and any important aspects of which the researcher was aware, such as the overall mood of the subject.

To complete the series of interviews, a final interview was conducted (FI) after the observations had been completed. This focussed on changes since the initial interviews and allowed a termination of the relationship between researcher and mother. Any changes in attitudes

and views regarding violence were apparent through such interviews when certain questions from the earlier interviews were repeated,(app.1c) Illustrations of these repeated questions are: Can you tell me about your spouse. How did you meet . What are the good things about therelationship. All children may manange to get their parents to such a pitch that they hit them. What sort of things does your child do that make you hit him or threaten to. What sort of things have to happen to make it more likely that you will hit them or throw something at him/her. How would you describe your child.

Interviews conducted in this way are lengthy and time consuming to transcribe but provide accurate replicas of the interviews.

Interviews began in June, and the final interviews were completed the following March, the families thus participating in the study for a period of 10 months.

As with the observations, the interviews were given initially to the pilot mother, Lesley, before proceeding with the families in the sample. The general interviews and an end of day interview were completed. No major alterations to the interview schedule were made as a result of these interviews; however, it highlighted the necessity to encourage more specific information in

certain areas, particularly in relation to attitudes towards, and the use of violence. As there were no major alterations to the methods used, the data gathered from Lesley will also be used, where relevant.

To summarise, two methods were used in this study, observations and interviews. Mainly non-participant, relatively non-obtrusive observations were made, though some participant observations were also conducted. A series of interviews was conducted, including three or four general interviews, two or three end-of-day interviews and a final one when the period of observation was completed.

Studying within a treatment centre

It could be argued that studying families in treatment does not give an indication of the interactions that occur in families in their normal environments. However this seems very unlikely, but is an empirical issue. Family members are intensively involved with one another and their patterns of interaction firmly established so that it can be difficult to make any impact on them (Byng-Hall '86). The family's interactions with one another may be altered in degree when they are in the presence of therapists but the essence will remain unchanged. It takes much effort and many interventions on the part of

the therapist to effect a change in such patterns, the goal of therapy.

Concerning violence it is likely that the level of violence will be dampened, rather than heightened, in the presence of others (Gelles '78a), but this does not invalidate violence that is demonstrated. If the purpose of the study was to assess the level of violence then the above criticism would be valid. However the purpose was to study the process of violence, a process which can occur in any context. This is not to say that the context does not affect the process, but that it can be accounted for and described.

Families attend a centre for assistance with their difficulties. This makes it more likely that they will be prepared to talk about themselves and difficult issues such as violence. It would be more difficult to gather a sample from a non-treatment context who would be prepared to discuss in such detail their problems and concerns.

Another advantage of studying families in such a context is that their views about therapy and change can be gathered. Subjects can describe what they have found useful and what has changed for them. This allows for the development of a treatment model. The views and ideas of the therapists can also provide a valuable source of data.

It is also important to ensure that the theoretical model emerging from a study and its therapeutic implications are relevant to the types of families that therapists attempt to help; studying families in treatment automatically guarantees that this is the case.

How mothers were introduced to the study

When I was ready to begin observing and interviewing I attended a community meeting. I was already working in the centre, so all the families knew me in that capacity. In that meeeting, the head of the centre informed all the families that I was doing research, that the purpose of the research was to understand more what happened in families while they attended the centre and to discover what they themselves thought about it. They were told I was going to be writing a thesis and that the results in general might be discussed with the staff. The families were told that I would be observing meetings and various activities and conducting interviews. It was explained that, as it was not possible to interview all the families in detail, I would be talking to the families with under-fives a few times, but that I would be interested to hear from all the families if they wanted to come and talk to me about their impressions and experiences. No family took up this offer. At this meeting nobody asked questions, but soon after, some of the mothers asked more

about the study . One of the mothers with a younger child told me would be happy to participate. After this meeting, I approached, in turn, the families I wished to include in the study to ask their specific permission and to answer any questions they wished to ask of me. (see app.2, introduction to the mothers)

The families studied were all attending the centre during the whole period of my study. I chose families with children under five, as this is the period when violence and abuse is most apparent (Creighton '85a). At the time of the study there were four such families attending the centre. One of these was used as a pilot and the other three were the subjects for the study.

A brief description of the families will be given:

Pilot family - Lesley and Laura

Lesley readily agreed to take part in the study and was happy to talk about her life, her relationship with her family and with her child. She is a single mother, living on her own with Laura (4 yrs). She had lived with a man and with her own mother for a while. She has one older sister, and she lived at home until she was 19. She was 23 at the time of the interviews. Her father had died when she was 21 and recently she had returned to her

mother's home with Laura. Lesley is caucasian, Laura's father is West Indian. He had not wanted to have a child with Lesley, as he already had other children with other women.

Some observations of Laura and Lesley were completed to provide practice at doing the observations and taking notes. These observations are not included in the results. The initial series of general interviews , one end of day interview and the final interview were completed. As a result of the interview it was possible to revise the interview schedules in light of what was omitted or unclear in these pilots. However this does not invalidate the information that Lesley provided and reference to her material is made in chapters 3 and 4.

Barbara and Leo

Barbara agreed to participate in the study and so I began observing her and Leo. Soon after the first general interview, she changed her mind and refused to continue with the interviews. There had been areas in the first interview that she had not wanted to discuss, such as her relationship with her parents, and she may have been concerned that if she continued with the interviews she would have betrayed information she would rather not.

However it was still possible to observe Barbara and Leo. This was possible as I had an overall brief for conducting observations and all the families had given permission for this. Barbara did not object to my continuing to observe and never voiced any complaints when she knew I was watching behind the screen or in the room. It was not considered that continuing with the observations conflicted with her decision not to be interviewed, as she was free in the observations to reveal what she chose. Additionally the observations in no way interfered with, or made demands on her.

Barbara's attendance in the centre was always erratic and she was often angry with the staff and other parents, feeling forced to attend and participate in the programme. The research may have felt to her like another burden or part of the bureaucracy in which she did not want to participate . With the research she knew she had a choice, and she used it. However before withdrawing and stating her position clearly there were many times when we would fix to meet for an interview and she would not appear.

It was not possible to complete any end-of-day-interviews or a final interview with Barbara, but the observations are presented in the next chapter.

Barbara was 23 at the time of the study and Leo was nearly two. Barbara comes from a working class background; her father had been a chauffeur. She has one older brother and a younger sister. She had begun a nursery nurse training course but had not completed it. Leo's father is West Indian and she described him as a gambler. During the period of the study Barbara lived on her own with Leo, but his father came to visit and stay for short periods.

Daphne and Martin

Daphne was more hesistant than the other mothers about participating in the study, but after giving it some thought she agreed to do so. However the quality of the interviews that were conducted indicates some of the reasons for her hesitancy. She is not fluent, and the interviews required much effort on my part to elicit information. She often gave brief or cursory anwers and was not easily encouraged to elaborate her statements. This behaviour was not restricted to the interviews with me and demonstrated more than merely anxiety at being interviewed. Nevertheless, she did participate in all the interviews, four general interviews, three end-of-day interviews, and a final interview were completed. It was possible to observe her with Martin, although her attendance was also erratic, and it was often not possible to observe on the day I had planned to do so.

The timing of the end-of-day-interviews was also dictated by her attendance. However there are two when there was a violent incident and one when there was not.

At the time of the study Daphne, was 27 and living with her son Martin, aged 4. She was born in Singapore and adopted. She came to live in England and worked sporadically until she gave birth to Martin. She was not married. Martin's father has a family in Italy but for periods he lives with Daphne and Martin. They were referred to the centre by Martin's nursery school.

Beryl and Sandy

Unlike the other families, this is not a one-child family. Beryl has three other children, one of whom attends the centre: Judy, aged 15. The other two were adults and had left home. Sandy (4) was fathered by a different man than the other three. Beryl had been married but left her husband, and some years later conceived Sandy. His father was married and continued to live with his wife, but sees Beryl and Sandy regularly. Beryl was referred to the centre after attending court concerning Julie's non-attendance at school and also because of difficulties in controlling Sandy.

Beryl is a talker and relished the opportunity to have

some time to tell me about herself and her family. The interviews were in clear contrast to Daphne's. A brief question prompted Beryl to speak for minutes at a time, and then forget what it was that I had asked her at the outset. The intial series of general interviews were completed, two end-of-day interviews and a final interview. Observations were made of her and Sandy.

Of the four mothers interviewed, Barbara was the only one who was referred to the centre because of concern regarding violence, but none of the mothers was known to have abused their children.

Why did the families take part in the study?

All the families were given a choice ofwhether or not to participate in the study and were informed of the purpose, that I wished to learn more about their experiences while in the centre, about them and their family. See app 4. Three of the mothers were committed to the study .

The mothers already knew me as part of the establishment. I was not a strange person coming in from the outside and disappearing again. This helped them to feel more secure and trusting and ready to share information. In the setting of the centre, they were to some extent already used to talking about their own situations and difficulties, albeit in a different way. Having an

opportunity to criticise or praise the centre was another reason that may have motivated the families to take part. Also the whole emphasis of the centre was a family approach. The meetings that the mothers attended were with other families or just their own families with a member of staff. Hence there was rarely the opportunity for a mother to be on her own talking to someone, and the interviews gave the opportunity for this.

The type of approach used in this study in itself may also give subjects a sense of value and thus increase the chance of their participation. Sherwood('80) suggests this was important to the families involved in her study. Bott('71) also suggests that the families in her study found the experience generally rewarding, even if at times they were disturbed by it. Gorden('69) talks about people's urge for spontaneous expression. Kahn and Cannell('57) see the respondent's behaviour as more altruistic, suggesting the main reason for their participation is a sense of contributing to the accumulation of knowledge.

The families that did not take part in the study

As not all families in the centre were part of the study, being selected may also have given the subjects who were involved a sense of being special and important. I had discussed with the staff the possible complication that

this selection would raise for the other families, but as all families with under-fives were part of the study, it was felt that this clear distinction, not based on merit, would dissipate any rivalries or jealousies, and it never seemed to appear as a problem. It was also made clear to the families that I would be interested to talk to any family members about their experiences even though I could not include them all in my study.

Effects on the staff.

I needed the full approval and support of the staff in the centre to conduct the study. Again, their previous knowledge of me and my willingness to help out in times of difficulty made their agreement easy to gain, and I met with little resistance to the observations or interviews from them. They were also alerted to violence as an issue, and after difficult days, appreciated that I may be spending time talking to one or other of the mothers. So, although in no way did the study set out to be, or claim to be, therapeutic, it may have alleviated some of the anxiety amongst the staff. I also needed their assistance in looking after the children when doing end-of-day interviews and usually they were very helpful and agreed to baby sit for an hour or arrange for someone to do so, if necessary.

Difficulties involved in this type of research

Case-study research is criticised by some as being unscientific or 'pre-experimental' (Kazdin '82). This view is not supported here. Possibly the critics can see the difficulties involved in intensive, rather than extensive, investigations and are not prepared to struggle to overcome them. It is undoubtedly more straightforward and less anxiety provoking for a researcher to use a standardised tool or questionnaire, to ask many subjects, and to use an established statistical technique and to draw a conclusion regarding the probability that an independent variable caused a dependent variable. Sometimes I wished I had chosen such an approach: the conclusions would have been much less interesting but the process would have been less fraught and the analysis of the data would have been much simpler. So, what are some of the difficulties involved in conducting a study such as this, an intensive study of a few subjects?

First of all, the subjects themselves create problems. In this study, one of the mothers changed her mind after having agreed to participate. Although much data were collected, this withdrawal did affect the material and left much unanswered in relation to this one mother. If many subjects are studied, such a situation makes little impact, but it is an unavoidable risk when studying individuals. The commitment of individuals has to be

greater to such a study, less so when a brief test or questionnaire is given, and they are asked to share much that it important to them. Although this can encourage people to participate, it can also alarm them and then precipitate their withdrawal.

Being part of the institution meant that I was at the mercy of some of the feelings aroused by it too. This was clear when families would not attend arranged meetings. Also if they were feeling that they could not use the help that was being offered to them or became antagonistic and angry towards the centre staff, they would not wish to co-operate with anything. This certainly seemed to happen with Barbara.

The amount of data collected through intensive study of individuals is enormous. With such data it is crucial to reduce the data so that it can be conveniently communicated without losing any of its meaning or complexity. Numbers or ready-made categories are difficult to use for this purpose. Once such a process has been achieved it is necessary to analyse the results. There have been suggestions made as to how to analyse qualitative data, for example Mostyn('85). In this study the observations were analysed for patterns, for repetitions of similar sets of interactions, a process which requires much organising and re-organising.

Similarly the interviews were read and re-read many times
to discover important themes, to highlight aspects of the
individual that helped explain their own actions.
Characteristic illustrations were extracted to facilitate
comprehension of the points under discussion and to
summarise the person and the events. This is similar to
the process described by Glaser and Straus('67). Again
there is no easy way to simplify and reduce the analytical
processes required of the researcher; it involves a slow
reading, sorting, re-reading and re-sorting. (Details of
the method of analysis will be given in chapter 3).

The context in which research is conducted also can create
difficulties. If research is conducted in a laboratory
the researcher is on her own territory and is in a
position to control more closely the actions of her
subjects, the timing of the experiments and the contact of
subjects with one another. In a treatment setting, or in
the subject's home, the researcher is more at the whim of
the subject. In this study, observation and interview
schedules were carefully planned in advance so that each
family would be observed on a different day each week so
that each family would be observed in a full variety of
activities. In the event, I was obliged to observe which
ever family attended. Their erratic attendance upset any
plans. Appointments made for interviews were also broken.

The support of the staff in such a setting is also crucial and needs to be actively encouraged and maintained. Research can create anxiety and hostility in a setting where the staff may feel they are being 'researched' or being exluded from a private relationship between their clients and the researcher. In this study it was made clear to the subjects that, in general, the results would be shared with the staff. This prevented the staff becoming overly concerned about what was happening in the intrviews and also allowed them to gain more immediately and directly from the research. However subjects may ask for confidentiality to be respected, and the researcher then needs to decide if she has the licence to respect this. In this study the mothers were all told that confidentiality could be given completely, that is, that they could request that no information be shared with the staff of the centre, but none requested it.

In such a study there is also the issue of feedback to the subjects themselves and how much to describe, at the outset, of the purpose of the study. This raises moral and practical issues which are not so crucial in extensive designs. If many subjects are being studied, the conclusions of the study can be conveyed without identification of the individual subjects. It may be necessary in many studies to mislead the subjects as to the purpose of the study to elicit a realistic response or

reaction, and the researcher may or may not subsequently feel at ease in revealing the true intention. In this case the subjects were not told that the main focus of the study was violence but a more general interest in their families and experiences in the centre. This was considered to be more likely to put the subjects at ease and allow them to share much other information, information which was important in understanding the violence. If the focus has been made clear before conducting the study, it is likely that the mothers would have limited the topics covered in the interviews and would have been less likely to agree to being observed. They could have also believed that they were chosen to participate because they were considered to be more violent than others.

If a researcher's results are communicated to the subject it is a much more personal and involved process than if the results of a study with many subjects are conveyed to them. The feedback can in itself be a useful development of the data, as it was for DeWaele and Harre ('79). In this thesis the subjects were offered a summary of the results of the research, but none requested it.

There are difficulties in conducting this type of research, but there are difficulties in conducting any research. The amount of interesting information that can

be gathered by interviews and observations makes
overcoming the difficulties worthwhile. The results
gathered from these methods will be discussed in the next
chapter.

Summary

The aim of this study is to investigate violent incidents,
to understand the use of mothers' violence towards their
children and to attempt the construction of a theoretical
model which accounts for the reasons and behaviours
related to violence. The implications of such a model for
the treatment of families concerned about violence are
also considered.

To this end three case studies were carried out, and one
pilot study. Observations and interviews were used to
collect information concerning the interactions between
mother and child and the mother's perceptions of herself,
her child, and their interactions. The study was based in
the family centre, which is described on pages 83-87,
where the families were receiving treatment. In this
chapter the details, and the advantages and disadvantages,
of each method are described. A brief description of each
family participating in the study was given and this was
followed by some important considerations regarding the
execution of such a study, such as the effects on the

staff in the centre and some of the difficulties involved in completing case-studies within a therapeutic institution and in analysing the results. Discussion of the analysis of the results follows at the beginning of the next chapter and this is followed by a presentation of the results themselves.

CHAPTER 3 : RESULTS

As described in the previous chapter two methods of
collecting data were used in this study - observations and
interviews. In this chapter the method of analysis of the
observations is described and a rationale provided for the
presentation of the interview material. This is followed
by a description of each family. Initially an overview of
the general interviews is given to provide some background
information regarding the mothers' lives and attitudes.
Then there is a detailed description of the patterns of
interaction based on the observations and on relevant
themes emerging from the interview material.

Analysis of observations

The observations consist of a quantity of narrative. That
is they are "an orderly account of a series of events"
(Bromley '86). They read as a story of what happened
between two people. The events were described in as much
detail as possible, no attempt made at explanation, and
were written in chronological order representing the order
in which things happened at the time. Presented in this
way, it was not possible to discover if they described
unique events and random sets of behaviour or if they
contained repeated patterns of interaction. After many
readings and attempts at re-writing them in different
schematic ways, sections of the observations containing

violence were represented as follows: the mother's and child's behaviours were re-written chronologically initially using the descriptive terms for the behaviour used in the observation narrative. Behaviours preceeding and following violence were included. Behaviours of people other than the mother and child were inserted where relevant.

Through this process similarities in the behaviours of the dyads emerged. The behaviours were not isolated occurrences but could be viewed as repetitions of particular types of interactions. They displayed some patterns of behaviours which were characteristic of each dyad. Each pair showed some seemingly unique sequences, those that could not be grouped with others, but more importantly each also showed sequences which were similar enough to be grouped together.

This form of analysis is similar in type to that used by Scheflen('73) in his study of non-verbal behaviour. He observed and recorded the interactions between two therapists and their clients and used context analysis to study behavioural integrations used in social communication. He picked a body position, movement, or group of movements and then scanned his data for similar occurrences. These were then compared to ensure that they were in fact replications. These behaviours were analysed

to discover how they were integrated and involved in social communication. Similarly, the behaviours observed in this study were analysed to discover how they were used in the interactions between mother and child.

The observations that were similar in type were grouped together and a more general SPIRAL that encompassed them is described. Ensuring that the spirals were accurate and included the appropriate observations was a process which required much re-organising and re-drafting until most of the observations could be included. Observations that appeared to be similar were grouped together and compared and an attempt was made to generalise and abstract from them so that one description could include all similar observations. In this process some observations were then found not to be similar and others, not originally included, were included. Some observations were found to have subtle variations and these are noted.

The term 'spiral' is used intentionally to describe interactions a) which build in emotional intensity, b) which have a tendency to repeat, in total or in part, and c) in which the continual feedback from one person to another is present. These characteristics will be described in more detail at the end of this chapter. (see page 144 for an illustration of a spiral).

In each case the spiral can be used to describe only part of an observation, the part that is common to other observations. The starting and finishing points are therefore not necessarily a beginning or an end but a punctuation (Minuchin & Fishman '81) of interaction that has been occurring previously and continues subsequently. However in some of the observations a clear episode is apparent; ie there is a start and finish to a series of interactions which include violence. This does not necessarily immediately precede or follow the steps described in the sprial but a description of any common beginning and end points, here called episode markers, is given for each family after the description of the particular spirals. Forgas('79) discusses episodes but is concerned more with stereotyped interactions where episodes can be consensually defined and may represent the culture in which they occur. The episodes referred to here are idiosyncratic and, although they may represent aspects of the culture, this would have to be investigated further.

To place the description of the spirals within the context of each family, some important themes emerging from the interviews with the mothers will be described before the spirals. (Fuller case summaries are provided in Appendix 3)

Interview material

Glaser and Straus('67) suggest using characteristic illustrations from the data to facilitate the understanding of concepts and themes being presented. Quotes from interviews are used to summarise events and people. They add that the credibility of the theory emerging from data depends on the extent that the reader become caught up in the descriptions and feels vicariously as if she were there. For this study, the interviews are used in a number of ways. Initially they are used to provide an overall picture of the mother and child being described in order to familiarise the reader with the people whose interactions will be elaborated. This information is largely gleaned from the General Interviews which were analysed for important and recurring themes. To some extent the themes were dictated by the interview guide but within this restriction, the mothers' individuality emerged, and different areas arose as important for consideration. The description of each mother, based on these themes, provides a background within which the detailed events can be considered.

The end-of-day interviews are presented differently. The quotes from these are used to add understanding to the observed behaviours which are described from the researcher's perspective. The interview material provides further description and explication from the perspective

of the mother involved. However important themes emerging from these interviews were also noted. This was important when comparisons were made to those end-of-day interviews when no violence had been observed. Differences could be noted.

Beryl and Sandy

Resume

Beryl, aged 40yrs, is illegitimate and spent some of her early years in foster care. She suffered from impetigo which frequently prevented her from attending school. Her mother's poverty also isolated her from her peers. Her mother married when Beryl was 8yrs old. Beryl left school and started work at 15 years of age. She married at 18 and immediately had her first child. She had two more children before divorcing her husband. She had a long- standing affair with a married man and later he fathered her fourth child, Sandy (5 years old), though he never lived with her. Her eldest child was taken into care and the threat of the third, Judy, being put into care as a result of non-attendance at school brought them to the family centre.

Beryl's childhood.

Beryl's mother was unmarried when Beryl was born and at the time this was considered to be 'a terrific stigma, it was a terrible disgrace'. She had two periods in care while her mother worked but returned home when she was about 5 years of age. She had memories of the poverty, including stealing wood to keep warm.

She said of herself 'I was a highly nervous child.... I was easily frightened and a bit inwards like, you know, what would you call it, like um in, introverted, very very quiet, it took a lot to get through to me to come out and get me talking, it took ages to get settled in school, absolutely ages'.

Her mother had been in service but, when Beryl returned, she worked in a factory packing tablets. Beryl was obliged to play outside till very late while her mother worked. She spoke sympathetically and with understanding about the plight of her mother and considered that it would have been easier for her to have Beryl adopted but she struggled to keep her.

She spoke with admiration of her mother's ability to survive extreme poverty, recalling at length how she made economical meals and kept the fire burning. Her mother was ostracised by her own family as were Beryl and her own

children subsequently.

So Beryl's childhood was difficult and she felt both her mother and she were different from others and were isolated. However she was understanding of her mother's predicament.

Step father and violence

Beryl's life was deeply affected by the arrival of her step father who punished and beat her: Beryl's mother married when Beryl was about 8 1/2 'not very happily unfortunately', and Beryl considered that her life was now dominated by rules which she thought were probably right, but additionally he was violent. He would hit her for writing with her left hand and for making errors when writing. 'I used to write e's over and over and the first one that wiggled he used to go bang, I used to get hit round the head, it was a very traumatic time, I remember that and I used to get severely punished if I did anything wrong.........I was very very wilfull when I was young, a very defiant sort of child, especially in my own environment'.

Thus Beryl does not only blame her father for his violent behaviour but also her own attitude.

Mother's violence

As with her father, Beryl sees her own role in instigating her mother's violence:

'I can remember her chasing me quite vigorously up the street, threatening to give me a bloody hiding in the street and I can remember her doing that, but it wasn't often. She did that because I had been rude or because I had openly defied her about something. Actually I can't remember what ticked her off, say a bit like me, in as much as she used to tolerate a lot and then there'd be a big explosion and I used to get what was coming to me for all the other things that I'd irritated her about which is a bit what I'm like, I'm extremely tolerant and very patient, my mother was the same'

She was hit with a spoon around her legs, or with a brush. She considered that her mother hitting her worked for about a week, and then she would resume being insolent again. She was not critical of her mother, although she also felt she was able to control her and have the upper hand, her mother would accept her lies.

Thus Beryl experienced violence in her childhood but considered it was justified and provoked by her own behaviour. She also thinks that her own behaviour reflects that of her mother.

Other members of the family

Beryl has relations alive whom she considers do not accept
her and the children, 'the only family I had in my own
eyes was my mother'.

Schooling

Beryl's school days were not happy and she felt isolated
as a result of her poverty and impetigo. From the age of
13 she played truant and left at 15. She described herself
as painfully shy, a characteristic she felt she kept until
she had been married for 7 or 8 years.

Work

Beryl started work at 15 and continued until she married
and became pregnant. She started in clerical work and
continued working with the manufacture of shoe pads. She
also worked in a playcentre at one time and while there
wrote and produced plays.

Men

Beryl has had a few long lasting relationships but at
present lives on her own with the children. First was Ted
whom she considered to be too much influenced by his
mother who was critical of Beryl. She did not say Ted was
generally violent but 'he smacked me round the face. I can
always remember it and knocked me through the end of the

hall and that really finished it'. This occurred when he discovered she was seeing Bernie, whom she married 6 weeks after meeting him.

Bernie was 24 when she met him (she was 16) and she was impressed at his lack of inhibition and money he earnt. Only after they were married did she discover his dependence on alcohol and his violence. 'He'd arrive home drunk and be violent to everyone in the family'. He became very jealous and hit Beryl. She stopped going out with him. 'I just used to have my life totally around the children which I did for many years.'

He forced her to have sex soon after her first child was born and Beryl was still frightened because of the pain and the operation after her first childbirth. She became pregnant with a child Bernie did not want.

She remained married to Bernie for 15 years even though she left him a couple of times during this period, and their third child was a result of a reconciliation. She considered that his handling of money, drinking and temper and lack of sensitivity towards her were responsible for their separation. The final straw was his lack of concern towards Paul, their son, when he went to court for theft and truanting from school.

She had an affair with Tom while still with Bernie, though this stopped before she finally left Bernie. She lived with Lenny for two years and some time after this ended she resumed her relationship with Tom who was then married. She stopped taking the pill and only informed Tom when she was 3 months pregnant with Sandy.

To summarise, Beryl married young and had three children with Bernie. This was a difficult relationship which she wanted to end for some time before being able to do so. Her fourth child was fathered by a married man whom she was still seeing at the time of the study.

Births

Of her four pregnancies and deliveries Be considered that John had been the easiest and Sandy the most difficult:

Beryl had a very difficult birth with her first child, Shirley. Paul, her 2nd child, was born with little difficulty and the third, Judy, was a difficult pregnancy with a high risk she would have lost the baby. With both Judy and Sandy she had to have a stitch around her cervix to prevent it dilating. Sandy was induced and she considered this to be the most difficult labour. He was very bruised when he was born and Beryl said at the time 'he's not mine he's black'.

Shirley, Paul, Julie and Sandy

'I never had any trouble with my kids when they were small, none of them except for Sandy. I mean most of the problems I had with my kids when they were older. Like John was 11 or 12 when he got into trouble with the law'.

Beryl was very proud of Shirley as a baby and had difficulties with her during adolescence but considers now that their relationship has improved. Shirley lives with her boyfriend. Paul was in much trouble with the law and was eventually taken into care but Beryl felt he subsequently achieved a lot and was attending university. Judy, now 14, was currently causing her concern, being secretive and uncommunicative. They used to argue a lot but recently less so.

Sandy has a different father from the other three. His babyhood was described as a long struggle. He was very dependent on her presence and cried a lot. By 15-16 months she was desperate and considered that 'he was such a difficult child and there was such a performance over every minor thing'. She makes a few positive comments about him, 'he's a really nice kid' but on the whole considers him to have been more trouble than the other children and to be stronger-willed. She identifies Sandy with his father, Tom: 'I wanted him so much, he's the double of Tom, I mean it's like having a miniature of

Tom...so I do have a part of Tom which is mine, which nobody can take away from me....'

Overall, Beryl focuses on different aspects of each of her children, although spent more time describing Paul's achievements and spoke with more pride about him than the others. Sandy is singled out by her as being more problematic from an earlier age.

Qualities as a mother

Beryl is on the whole positive about her capacity as a mother and considers she understands her children, and is observant in relation to them. In relation to Sandy she considers her best quality to be (without hesitation) patience. She feels she has acted differently as a mother with Sandy than with the other children because of Sandy's personality; he would take advantage of her being nice. 'I have to be a more unpleasant mother....he gets told off and quite severely and I don't reverse what I think.' However she considered that she is 'over soft and over generous and over kind because I didn't have that sort of childhood'.

She feels the only person who could have really supported her with Sandy was Tom but that he did not participate when Sandy was small. Her friend Bob helped her with him

but she thought that he was not firm enough with him. Sandy attended a playgroup for while before they attended the family centre.

To summarise, Beryl considers herself patient and understanding with her children, though with Sandy she has to be firmer and more 'unpleasant'. Her self-criticisms include being 'too soft' and over-protective.

Attitudes towards violence

Most of the details concerning Beryl's attitude towards violence are given later in this chapter; however, to summarise:

Beryl finds that Sandy makes her feel very violent and there have been times when she has feared she may injure him severely so she takes alternative action, such as leaving the room. She thinks he deserves to be smacked very often but smacks him now for the more serious offences. These include swearing, raiding and messing up the cupboards.

She tries to ensure that the smack hurts him to avoid him subsequently taunting 'that didn't hurt' and will hit his legs or his hands. She threatens to hit his face but would not carry out such a threat.

She thinks that if she smacks him in a controlled manner then her message is heard by Sandy and he listens to her and is less likely to repeat the misdemeanour or to retort with swearing. However if she loses her temper and shouts and swears at Sandy and smacks him then he shouts back and there is a screaming match.

She found him a difficult and demanding baby. She did smack him on the legs and said it made her feel terrible when she did this hard. (The exact age is not clear). When he was about 18 months she told a professional there were times when she had been tempted to throw him out of a window. Thus Beryl has been smacking Sandy since his babyhood and has been concerned about abusing him.

Referral to the family centre (FC)

Beryl and her family were referred to the family centre initially in connection with Judy:

Judy had been truanting school and a care order had been placed on her, although she was still able to live at home and attendance at the family centre was recommended by the psychologist involved. It was only subsequently that Beryl came to see Sandy as a problem and she dreaded spending a lot of time with him in the family centre.

She had previously tolerated much of his behaviour that

she decided, once in the FC, she should not, and it led
to her smacking him for more things. During her stay in
the FC she felt she had learnt to control him and that he
had stopped nagging so much. She also considered that it
had helped her become firmer in her relationship with Tom.

Beryl considered that the FC had been of help, both in
relation to her children and her own relationship with
Tom.

Summary

Beryl had a difficult childhood which was coloured by
poverty and illness, both of which affected her schooling
and on which she blames her shyness which persisted into
adulthood. Both her mother and her step-father were
violent towards her; her mother had sudden outbursts which
Beryl considered were justified. Her father was punitive
and violent. Beryl was less understanding of this,
although she also considered that her behaviour provoked
him. Beryl worked before she married at 16 and had three
children within this unsatisfactory marriage. Her fourth
child, Sandy, was fathered after she had left her husband,
by Tom who was already married. Her eldest child,
although he had been delinquent, was described with much
pride for his recent achievements by Beryl, and Sandy was
singled out as being most problematic. Beryl considers
herself to be an understanding though over-protective

mother and to be provoked by Sandy to much violence. She had fears of abusing him. Beryl and her family were referred to the FC initially for help with problems concerning Judy though she also found it helpful in relation to Sandy and Tom.

The preceding sections summarise the information provided by Beryl in the general interviews. The following descriptions will include observation and interview material. Brief general information is given concerning the observations and then a description of the spirals developed from the data.

Observations

Beryl, Sandy and Judy attended the FC for a period of 12 months and the observations cover a period of 9 months. 21 observations were recorded in detail during this time. Of these 11 contained violent episodes. The others contain the threat but not the actual use of violence. Of the 11 observations 10 are accounted for in the spirals, that is, the episodes contained in 1 observation is not included as it does not fit. In each of four observations (20,4,8,18) there are 2 violent episodes which are described and which are accounted for in the spirals. Thus, in total there are 15 violent episodes, fourteen of which are accounted for in the spirals.

The spirals which were extracted from the observations will now be described with interview material included where it directly relates to the observations. Numbers in parentheses are observation numbers and suffixes such as i, ii refer to episodes within an observation.

Spirals: Beryl and Sandy

Figure 3.1.1 Spiral 1

There are 10 episodes that have this spiral in common so it is the most characteristic for this pair. Six of the episodes occur during the community meeting and four occur during a family activity. In addition there are 3 episodes which have been described separately but can be considered as variations of spiral 1, see figure 3.1.2, page 153.

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(2,3,4i,8i,9,11,18i,18ii,19,21)
(10 of the 15 episodes are described here)

Not involved with Sandy

fidgets, protests
or interrupts
(behaviour 'a')

2,19,9 ——— No response

18ii,3,11,4i,8i ——— -ve response

'a' or demanding
closeness/
physical contact

18i
11
19
8i
2

No response

3,9,4i

'a' or singing
and playing with
toys

Violence
(and words)

(Obs.2
variation)

'a'

Violence
(and words)

(Obs.18ii
variation)

Minimal response

(Obs.19 variation)

Disengages

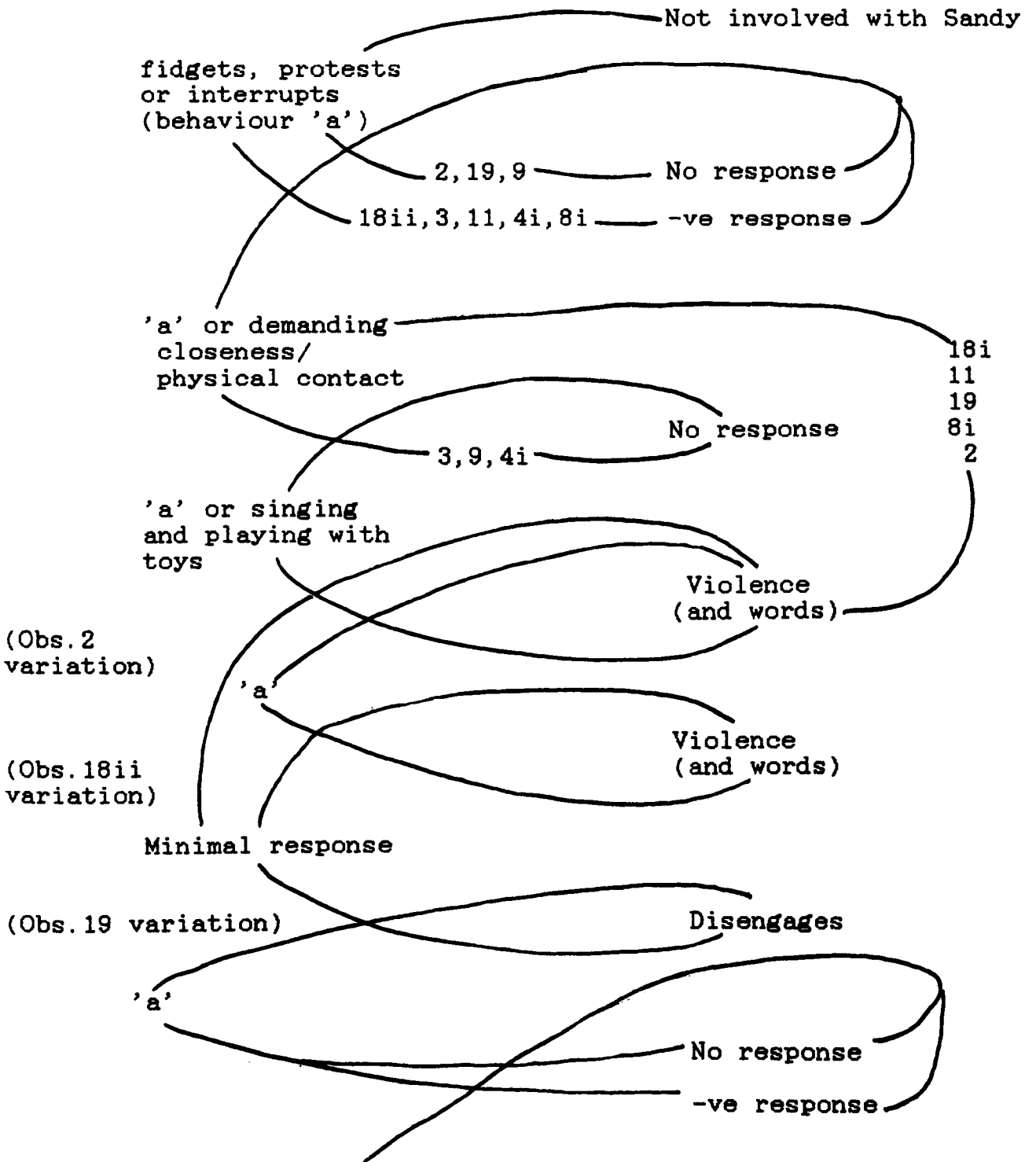'a'

No response

-ve response

Figure 3.1.1   Beryl and Sandy: Spiral 1

The spiral shows Beryl being involved with something, not with Sandy. This can be actively, in that she is talking to someone else or laughing at their comments, or passively, in that she is listening to someone else or watching a video (Obs 19). Although Sandy is beside her or close, she is not involved with him. Sandy then fidgets in his chair, makes a noise or attempts to interrupt Beryl directly by calling her name or pulling at her, but whichever behaviour he chooses, it may interrupt Beryl. If she is interrupted by his behaviour she responds with a direct 'no' and also may make a more explicit rejection and tells him to leave her alone and may push his hand away, or push him back into the room (18ii). In 4i she threatens to place him over the other side of the room with a member of staff if he does not behave, in 21 to 'tan him'. She speaks impatiently to him. Alternatively she does not respond to his behaviour. (She probably could not have avoided being aware of what he was doing but chooses not to respond.)

Sandy persists in playing around, fidgeting, singing or may demand to be with Beryl or have physical closeness with her.

The observation so far shows that the method Beryl uses is not fulfilling her aims and this Beryl confirms from the interviews:

Beryl reports that her words to Sandy are ineffectual or futile:

Q: ..I usually tell him not to do it but he will carry on

Q: ..if you tell him to stop he just says....

She also confirms during the interviews that his behaviour does interrupt her and that this irritates her:

She finds his approaches intrusive:

Q: ...he kept wanting to hold my hand or sit on my knee...I find it irritating that he kept interrupting me ..constantly goes on in my ear about something which I find distracting.

She also reports that she finds his behaviour 'frustrating':

Q: He was frustrating in the meeting too, he kept wanting to hold my hand.

Thus the observation and the interview to this point describe an interaction which is Beryl perceives as intrusive and frustrating; Sandy is making demands which she does not want to meet but where her refusal is met only with peristence on his part.

The observations continue: In some cases Beryl continues not to respond and carries on with what she was doing, but in other cases Beryl now responds with violence. There is

no apparent difference in Sandy's behaviour which accounts for the one additional revolution of the spiral. For example in obs 3 where Beryl has given a negative response to Sandy's request to get onto her lap she now does not respond to it. In the cases where Beryl has not responded, Sandy continues to sing or play noisily, or persist with his demands and then Beryl responds with violence.

Beryl explains, in the interviews, that Sandy's persistence is very aggravating.
Q: ...I think its his persistence at me that gets me most, it's if you say no he will go on trying his luck for another half an hour.

She also explains that when her words her ineffective and he 'keeps on' she resorts to violence:
Q: ..I said he couldn't and he kept on...I ended up smacking him.

There is one observation with a slight variation. In Obs 2 Beryl replies with an injunction, 'will you turn around and sit up'. Sandy asks 'why?' and Beryl provides an explanation but Sandy nevertheless persists and, as in the other cases, Beryl responds with violence.

When Beryl uses violence she is angry and hits hard with

the palm of her hand. She hits his arm, bottom, hand and/ or his leg. At the same time she issues an injunction, such as 'oi, shut up' or 'pack it in you'. In some cases this is not sufficent to stop Sandy and he persists in playing or making a noise. This results in Beryl using violence again, this time more angrily and with more force, and in obs.3 she hits Sandy with the back of her hand, and she seems less controlled than on the other occasions. She tells him again to 'stop' or to 'shut up'.

In the interviews, Beryl explains how she understands Sandy's behaviour. Often she sees him as persecuting her. Under these circumstances she is more likely to use violence:

Q:.. He only does it to annoy me...to distract me, that's why I wouldn't let him do it.

If she considers that his behaviour is playing and not a persecution of her then she does not use violence even if she does not like what he is doing:

Q: I don't really like him doing it (piling chairs up in the living room)....well he's actually playing doing that, he doesn't do it to aggravate me

Also in the interviews she elaborates on the instrumental concern in the use of violence: she uses smacking to get him to listen to her.

Q: ..the only way I can enable him to get his attention is to give him a really hard smack and then he'll listen to me.

As a result of the first or second hit, Sandy does not cry. In fact, he seems to be making an effort to deny that Beryl has had any hurtful effect on him. He may sulk, or look hurt for a moment but then smile, or he may look at the part of his body which Beryl hit. An exception to this is Obs 18ii when Sandy cries desperately after being hit. On this occasion Beryl has left the room to be with Sandy's father and prevented Sandy from joining them; this may account for the difference in Sandy's response.

Beryl is aware of how Sandy is likely to respond to her violence and reports, in the interviews, that one of his responses leads her to use further violence:
Q: Just lately we've got 'Oh that didn't hurt'...I take his trousers down and I give him a smack he will feel.

In the observations he does not say this explicitly, but he does not give any indication that he was hurt.

Beryl, in turn, will now ignore Sandy and talk to another again or will sit quietly with her head down. Sandy may then try to make contact with someone else or try yet again to get Beryl's attention, although he meets an earlier response of being ignored or rejected firmly with a 'no'.

The potential for the spiral to be continued is thus created. In one case Beryl complies to Sandy's demand and enagages in his request. The reason for this might be because Sandy is implying he is not well and/or because it is an observation (19) where he is hit twice and Beryl may be feeling remorseful.

In obs.21 Beryl also complies to his demand for closeness. The reason for this might be that he has been punished for rudeness towards another child, not towards Beryl herself.

Variations 20i,20ii and 6. see Figure 3.1.2, page 153

20i and 20ii:

As in the main spiral Beryl is not paying attention to Sandy , in these cases laughing with another adult. Observation 20 takes place during an activity not a community meeting. Sandy comes over and hits Beryl with his fist. It did appear that Sandy had the intention of hurting Beryl and distracting her from the enjoyment she is having, which is also excluding him. He hits his mother on the leg with his fist. This is a more extreme reaction than is usual in the main spiral. Beryl responds immediately with violence; she hits Sandy on the arm and says angrily 'don't do that'. In the interviews Beryl confirms that an attack on her is something that she responds to with violence
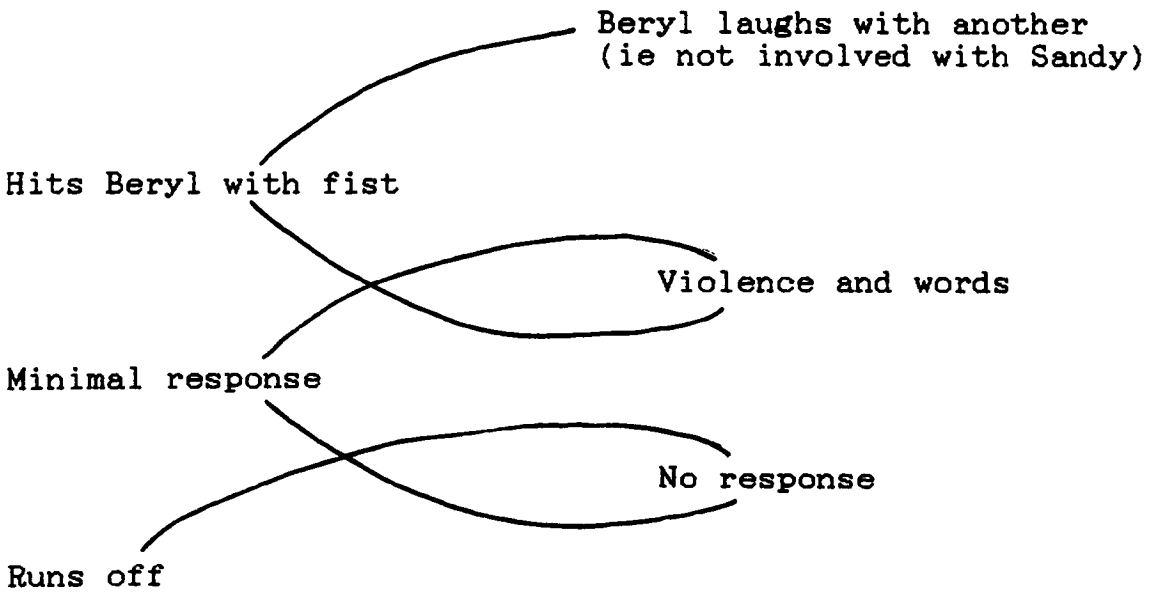
Q: goes like this on my knee...I smack him hard...I'm not going to let him do that

As in the main spiral, Sandy's response is minimal, he pouts. Beryl does not respond to him and then Sandy runs off. She views his response as permissible behaviour in the context.

6:

As can be seen, the initial section of this spiral is similar to 20i and 20ii. The outcome is slightly different in that Sandy persists in trying to engage Beryl and in this observation he succeeds. She gives him an explanation for her violence, something she does not do in the other observations.
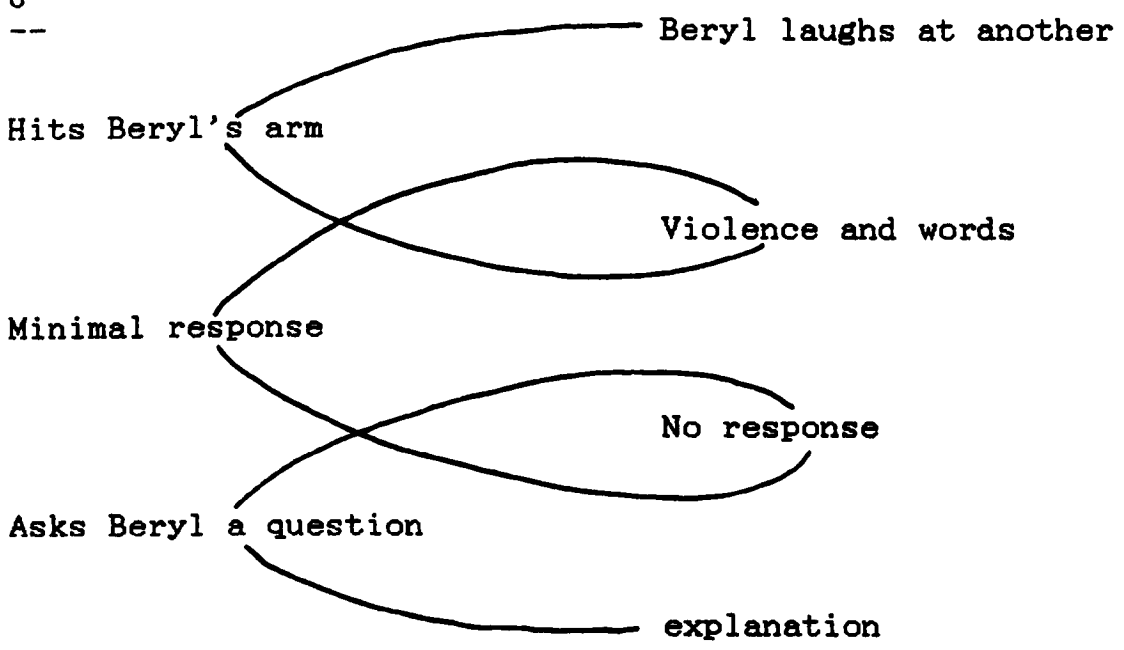
20i and 20ii

Hits Beryl with fist

Beryl laughs with another
(ie not involved with Sandy)

Violence and words

Minimal response

No response

Runs off

6
--

Hits Beryl's arm

Beryl laughs at another

Violence and words

Minimal response

No response

Asks Beryl a question

explanation

Figure 3.1.2   Beryl and Sandy: Variation of Spiral 1

Episode markers

Although in seven of the observations there may have been
previous battles, there is a period of disengagement
before the episode containing the spiral starts.   In one
case the end of the episode is marked by the end of the
meeting, and, therefore, the end of the observation but in
the others the end is indicated by a period of calm and
quiet or closeness between Beryl and Sandy or by Sandy
sitting calmly and allowing Beryl to direct her attention
towards someone else.   In three cases it is marked by
'infantile behaviour' on Sandy's part: he sucks his thumb
or may hang onto part of Beryl, her hair for example.

Figure 3.2.1   Spiral 2, see page 156

The aspect that makes the two observations similar is that
Sandy is rude to his mother and this evokes a strong and
uncontrolled reaction from her.   In both cases Sandy is
doing something that Beryl disapproves of, he is squashing
her coat or talking when he should be quiet, and she tells
him insistently to stop.   In 4ii he persists and she
issues a firmer injunction and in 8ii he gets up and hands
her the coat which is not exactly what he was asked to do
and Beryl issues another injunction.   In response to her,
Sandy is rude; in one instance he says 'you bloody pig'
and the other 'oh you cow'.   In both cases she hits him

with the back of her hand and waves her hands around as if slashing out at him and Sandy holds his hands up to protect himself. In this case there is an interaction when Beryl tells Sandy 'not to say that' and he holds his hands up indicating that he has anticipated he is going to get hit.

In the interviews Beryl defines such behaviours on Sandy's part as 'rudeness' and she is aware it evokes a strong reaction from her, though sometimes it is controlled, unlike the above:

Q: ...I find he says shut up you old cow and I want to punch him...just to shut him up.

Q: then he said shut up you old cow and that's what he got the smack for, and that wasn't a controlled smack.

Beryl is aware of the difference between her use of controlled and uncontrolled violence, as she emphasises in the interviews:

Q: I hit him with the back of my hand which is something I don't usually do. If it was a controlled smack I would have taken him off the chair... when I hit him like that it's cause I'm not in control.
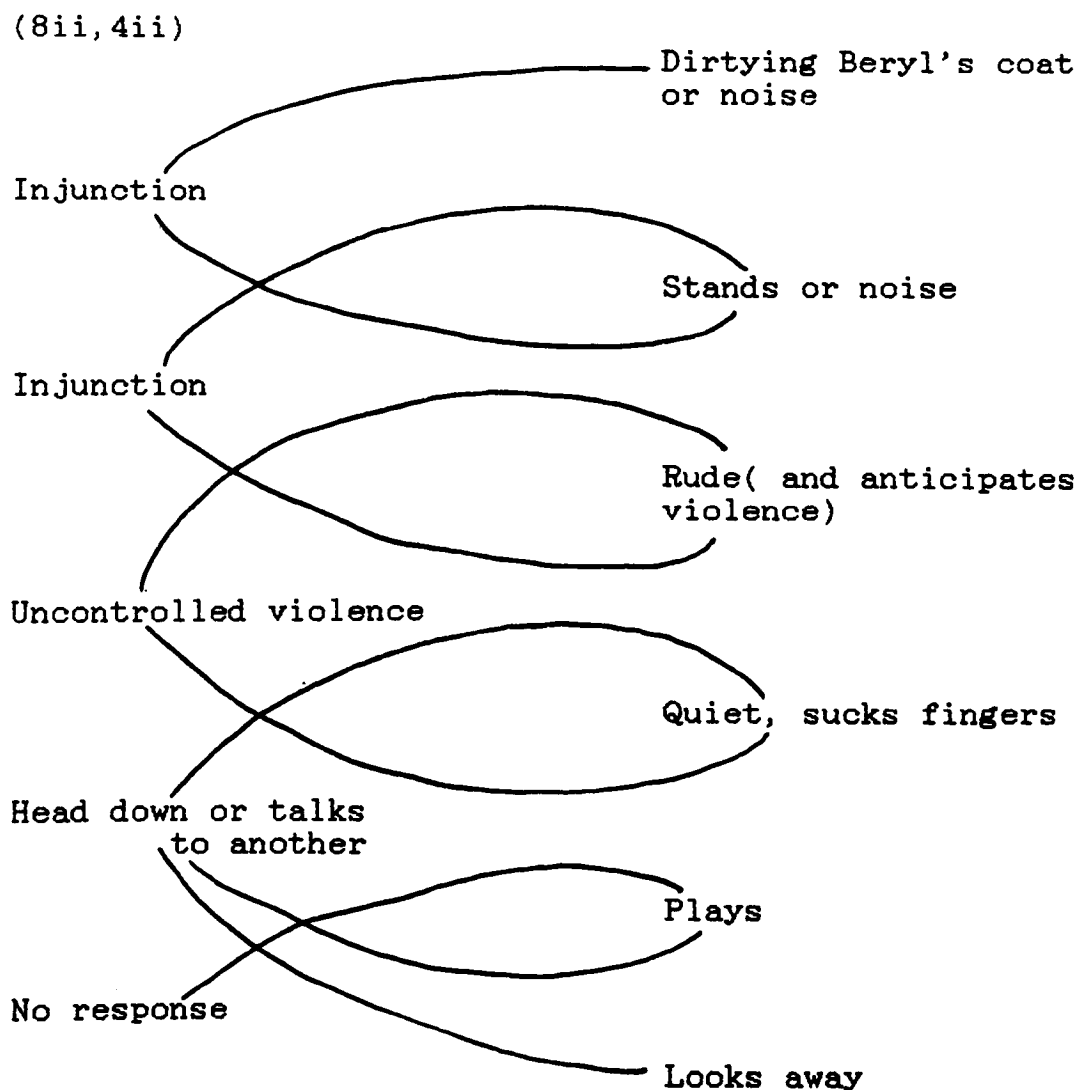
(8ii,4ii)

Injunction

Dirtying Beryl's coat
or noise

Stands or noise

Injunction

Rude(and anticipates
violence)

Uncontrolled violence

Quiet, sucks fingers

Head down or talks
to another

Plays

No response

Looks away

Figure 3.2.1   Beryl and Sandy: Spiral 2

However she considers that uncontrolled violence is

ineffective in achieving her aims, and although she

sometimes feels like using extreme violence would regret

doing so. In EOD1 she frequently describes the feeling

that she could use extreme violence and considers this to

be an emotion she does not recognise:

Q: that's what I felt like, cause its not something I

know, its something foreign to me this emotion I've got,

its totally foreign cos I've never felt violent before.

She contradicts herself in other interviews when she says that she has felt extremely violent before. Perhaps each time she feels this way, it feels like the first time to her.

Episode markers

As in fig. 3.1.1, the starts of the episodes are marked by Sandy becoming active again after a period of quiet and calm. In one case the end of the episode is marked by the end of the observation and therefore the end of the activity that Beryl and Sandy were engaged in, but in the other, it is marked by Beryl engaging in another activity and Sandy is quiet again. Both episodes are the second in the observation and this may also account for the uncontrolled and angry nature of Beryl's responses. Fig. 3.2.1 therefore can be considered as a delayed continuation of the first spiral, Fig. 3.1.1.

Inserted in the above description are themes emerging from the interviews that help in the understanding of the spirals and provide a phenomenological account by the mother. However there are other themes which emerged from the interviews directly pertinent to the spirals and these will now be discussed. Most of the quotations are

from EOD1 and where they are from subsequent interviews the quote number is prefixed, for example EOD2 for end of day interview number 2 and G for general interview.

Although Beryl clearly describes the immediate precipitating events that lead to violence, she also considers the past days and weeks as relevant both in terms of her own mood and Sandy's behaviour.

Q: he's been like that for about 3 weeks. I get short-tempered and that makes me fly at him more than I usually do, just lately my patience has got very ragged.

Additionally the start of the day affects her expectations of how it will progress:

Q:...when he starts like that its going to be a really frustrating day. (Frustrating is a word she uses later on when describing what leads up to violence.)

She admits to using violence frequently at times but considers it a failure :

Q: ... but in the process I had to smack him in order to get him to listen to me so I feel I've lost what I've been trying to do which is to avoid smacking him in the first place

Q: I don't think it is good for me cos I get too wound up

Most of the quotes used above are from EOD1 when Beryl was

asked to describe the violent events observed that day. There were some striking omissions from this interview:

There is a lack of consideration of Sandy's state or motivation for his behaviour. For example she says 'I find it irritating, I enjoy the meeting.... ' but does not pause to consider why Sandy behaves the way he does, except by suggesting that he is attempting to distract her. Similarly she does not describe how he feels about her use of violence except to suggest that 'he doesn't feel it' and it hurts him when she hits him with bare hands.

Overall she does not talk about his internal states, but only his naughtiness in EOD1. However in the next EOD interview, when there was no observed incident of violence, she does consider his feelings and describes Sandy and the events of the day much more positively.

There are other striking differences between the two end of day interviews and these will now be mentioned:

In EOD 2 her words are not useless or futile
Q: I just told him strong enough that I was not going to stand it

She does consider why he might be behaving in certain ways

and on more than one occasion in EOD2 does wonder about Sandy's point of view and how he might be feeling

Q: I think it's frustration, because he really can't win.. I mean I can understand how he feels.

She sees Sandy in a better light

Q: I was always smacking him very hard for what I saw as him being spiteful to Laura but Laura can be as bad

She describes how she gives him more warning before using violence.

Q: I said if you go outside the gate again you'll really get a hard smack

Observations without violence

Observations in which there was no violence but where there were struggles between mother and child and the threat of violence was used, were retained. For Beryl and Sandy there are 9 such observations.

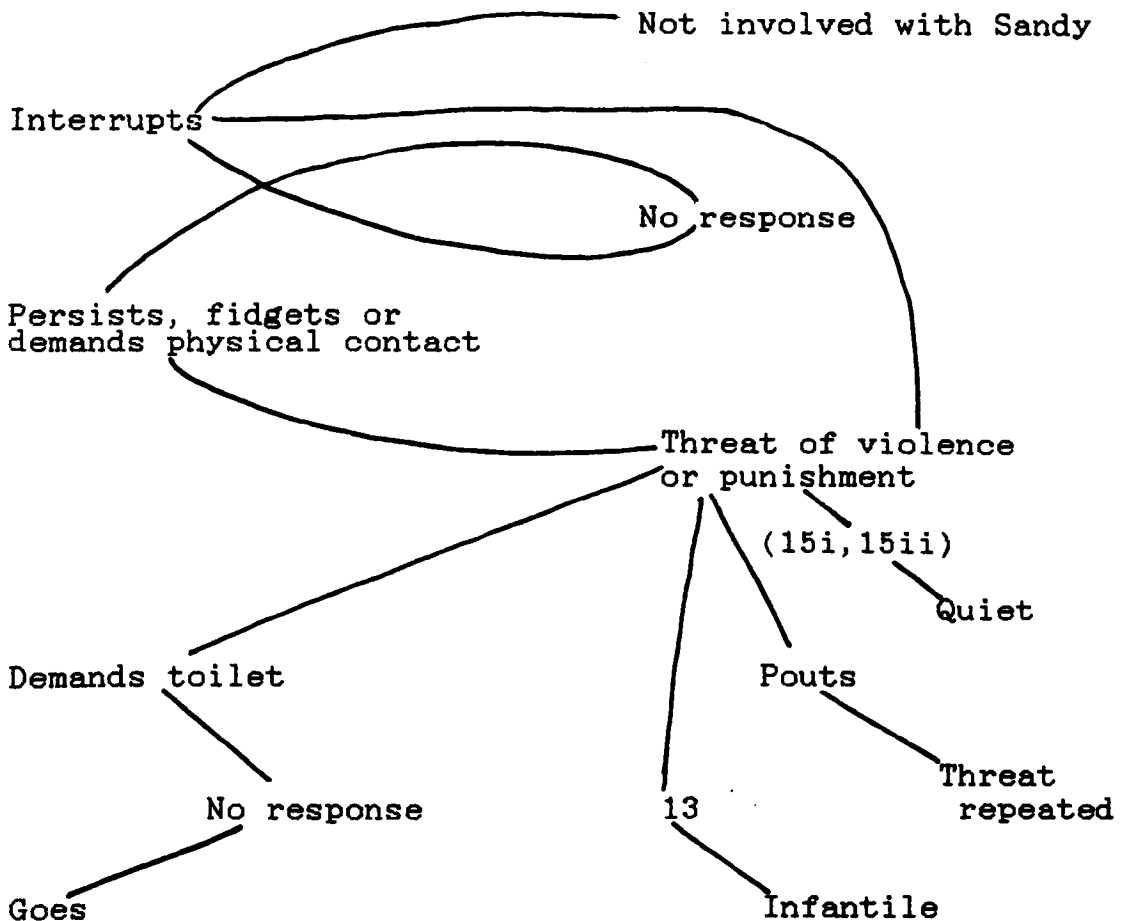See Figure 3.3 overleaf

(5, 15i, 15ii, 13)

Figure 3.3 Observations without violence: Beryl and Sandy
_____

Many of these observations begin as one of the spirals but do not include violence, only the threat of violence. Diagram 3a shows that 3 of the observations (5,13,15) contain sequences of interaction which clearly resemble the initial part of spiral 1 but where the threat of violence or a punishment is used in place of violence itself. Sandy's responses are similar to those he

displays in response to violence. Observation 15 includes an episode which is similar to the variation of spiral 1, (see Fig. 3.1.2)

Observation 12 involves Beryl and Sandy in similar battles to those described in spiral 1 and shows extended repetitions of the steps involved in the initial section of this spiral. Sandy tries repeatedly to engage Beryl and is met with rejections or lack of response. Eventually Beryl uses an alternative strategy, she moves across the room and away from Sandy. This does not stop Sandy fidgeting and disturbing his sister, so Beryl threatens violence. After a demand for her to return which is rejected, Sandy sucks his thumb, a response seen in other observations.

Observation 1 includes a struggle between Sandy and Beryl about where he is going to sit, on his own chair or on her lap. Sandy hits and kicks Beryl and to this she threatens violence. He responds with a taunt, 'I won't cry'. In the interview Beryl suggests that this sort of taunting may only serve to encourage her to use violence and it may well be that violence may have occurred, but a staff member intervenes which diffuses the situation, although the struggle subsequently continues and violence is again threatened.

Sandy laughs but again Beryl does not rise to his taunt and returns him to his chair. When yet again the struggle resumes and Sandy is struggling on Beryl's lap he stills and quietens when another mother hits her child. However this does not last and he demands to be replaced on his own chair.

In observation 7 Beryl and Sandy struggle over possession of Beryl's scarf and a gesture which intimates violence, a hit which misses his arm, serves to momentarily quieten Sandy. Soon after, she aquiesces to Sandy's demands and this also seems to diffuse the situation for a while.

Observation 22 concerns a battle over food which provokes Beryl into threatening violence. Sandy does obey Beryl but immediately provokes another threat when he calls her a greedy pig. He does not persist in his rudeness. This observation is close to spiral 2(Fig 3.2). The different response on Beryl's part may be due to a different context, meal time rather than a community meeting.

Similarly the change in context may account for the difference in Beryl's response to Sandy's persistent demands to be 'swung around' while they are dancing during an activity. Again she threatens violence and this has the desired effect, Sandy stops demanding, (obs 21)

Another strategy is seen in observation 16. Beryl de-fuses a battle with Sandy by distracting him from the battle they are having regarding removing his overall. Earlier she threatens violence when he threatens to spray paint. This threat is effective.

The threats include statements such as 'don't do that or I'll clobber you, shut up or I'll knock your block off, if you carry on like that I'll tan you'.

Important considerations arise from the analysis of these non-violent observations: First, it is not clear from the observations alone what are the differences in Sandy's behaviour that evokes a different response from Beryl, why in these circumstances the threat, rather than violence itself, is used. Different contexts may account for such a difference but it is likely that this is only, at most, a partial explanation.

Second, in nine of the observations the threat of violence is used but not violence itself. Although the threats may be temporarily effective, battles frequently ensue and so this itself is not sufficient explanation for the threats not to be carried out. Of the other 12 observations, there is only one in which the threat of violence preceedes the actual use of violence (obs 21) However the threat, "be quiet or else I'll tan you" implies he will be

hit for noise, and not for spitting which is what evokes the violence. However another threat is issued, at the same time as the violence, which specifies spitting as the offence. Later another threat is issued in relation to his repeated demands to be spun around. There are two other observations (3 and 11) where the threat of violence follows a violent incident.

Third, in 7 of the observations where there is no violent incident the threat of violence has the desired effect and Sandy stops the behaviour for which he was being chastised, albeit temporarily. However further battles may soon occur and in this way these interactions are similar to those described by the spirals, only short term change is acheived.

Fourth, Sandy's immediate responses to the threat of violence are similar to those to the actual use of violence. In some cases he appears to be unaffected as in the first instance of 5, even though the threat is relatively extreme "I'll knock your block off", and in others he sucks his thumb as in the second instance of 5 when Beryl threatens: "I won't warn you again I'll smack you very hard". This latter response is close to that seen in spiral 2 when he responds to the use of uncontrolled violence.

Fifth, other techniques in relation to Sandy are seen to be effective in diffusing the battles with him, for example distracting him or threatening a punishment such as not writing on the blackboard during a meeting. Interestingly, this is the only time when a punishment other than violence, is threatened. However in observations where violence is used Beryl threatens (obs 4) to move Sandy over to the other side of the room but, when he does resume being noisy, uses violence and the punishment is not enforced. In observation 9 she explains to a new parent that she first tries hitting Sandy and if this is not effective she will move him so that he sits with someone else. Similarly in observation 11, she threatens that if he continues talking she will not allow him to write on the board and when he does persist, she uses violence and later allows him to write on the board.

Thus threats of violence rarely result in violence being used and the two other punishments that are threatened are also not used consistently. There is no use of punishments such as the withdrawal of privilges or sweets or television, nor any attempt to encourage his behaviour into channels which might capture his imagination.

Summary

Two spirals were described for Beryl and Sandy. The first, the 'Frustrating Spiral',(see Figs. 3.1.1. and 3.1.2), can be characterised by Sandy's attempt to interrupt his mother and her ineffective attempts to ignore or reject him. She describes him as 'frustrating'. One or two violent actions are included within this spiral and Sandy's response is minimal. Variations on this spiral are described which are shorter and are provoked by Sandy's attack on Beryl. The episodes including this spiral are clearly marked, the start by a period when Beryl and Sandy are not involved with one another and then Sandy becomes active or tries to engage Beryl and the end by calm, quiet closeness or Beryl directing her attention elsewhere.

Spiral 2, the 'Rude Spiral',(see Fig. 3.2), is characterised by Sandy's disobedience and subsequent rudeness. Beryl responds with uncontrolled violence. This spiral can be considered as a delayed continuation of spiral 1. Again the episodes containing this spiral are clearly marked

In the interviews Beryl explains that the previous days and the start of the day affect her expectations of Sandy's behaviour. She considers her use of violence as a

failure. On the day when violence was observed Beryl does not consider Sandy's motivation or his responses to situations. However on a day when no violence was observed she considers Sandy's point of view and describes him positively. She finds that her words are effective and she says she gives Sandy warning before using violence.

From the observations where no violence is used further conclusions were drawn. It is not clear, from the observations alone, what evokes actual violence rather than the threat. Threats of violence are not carried out and, as with violence itself, effects only a short-term change. Sandy's responses to threats are similar to his responses to actual violence. In these observations Beryl demonstrates alternate techniques that she uses, such as moving away from Sandy, and also that threatened punishments are not carried out but may be replaced with violence. There are no attempts to inhibit Sandy's behaviour by interesting him in a different type of activity.

Daphne and Martin

Resume

Daphne, 27, was born in Singapore to Chinese parents and was adopted by her German step-mother and English step-father. She was 5 years old when adopted and came to live permanently in England at the age of 9 years. Soon after, her step-father, a plantation owner, died and she continued to live with her step-mother. She was was sent to boarding school at 11 years of age where she remained until she left school. Too young to train as a nurse, she worked as an ancilliary worker for one year and then began a nurses training course which she did not complete. She worked in a pub for a while until she became ill. After her illness she went back to live with her mother.

After other jobs and a further illness, she met her co-habitee Gianni. 3 years later her son, Martin, was born, and he is now 4. They were referred to the FC from a nursery that Martin had been attending and began in the unit in April 1980. The nursery were concerned about Martin's self injuring, head banging, hyperactivity and delayed speech development. He suffers from magnesium malabsorption syndrome which involved a long hospitalisation as a newborn.

General comments

Throughout all the interviews Daphne spoke very quietly, slowly and often fiddled with a necklace, a match or her bag. Often her statements were full of pauses and she rarely spoke more than a few sentences without prompting and so made very hard work of interviewing. She spoke slowly and her replies were often vague and confused.

Early childhood.

Daphne said of her childhood 'it's not worth remembering' and was very resistant to elaborating and talking much about her early years. She thought that her Chinese parents had many children and that she was adopted by her real father's employer.

She attended a convent school in Singapore and then in London. She described her life as a small child with both step-parents with some enthusiasm but her life changed dramatically after her step-father died. 'Yes it was alright really when my father was alive. It was only then (after his death) that she (her mother) started getting a bit out of hand.' After her step-father died Daphne became a weekly boarder at the convent but would have preferred to be away from her step-mother even more. In fact her whole life from this time seemed to have been largely influenced by her deteriorating relationship with

her step-mother and her stated desire to be apart from her.

Thus Daphne was uprooted from her natural family and from familiar surroundings and then lost her step-father. She portrays being very unhappy after this bereavement due to the difficult relationship with her step-mother.

Relationship with her step-mother

Daphne's relationship with her mother has always been, and continues to be, conflictual, argumentative and difficult. Even in her working life Daphne's decisions were governed by her attempts to separate from her mother, though these attempts were rather ineffectual. Her mother demanded more physical contact than Daphne felt able to give and criticised her for not being white. However Daphne also felt resigned that she could never change the situation: 'If I answer her back its no good and (if) I don't say anything its no good, so I hardly talk to her. I try to stay out of her way. You can't win really. (Long pause)'.

Her relationship with her mother is also interconnected with her relationship with Martin, her son, and Gianni, her partner. When Gianni is with her, her mother will look after Martin on Saturday and Sunday morning but if Gianni is not, there then she expects both Daphne and Martin to visit.

Daphne did not think her mother hit her when her father was alive and did not mention her father hitting her but described her step-mother as frequently using violence after the death of her step-father: ' I suppose in a way she was a perfectionist and everything I did was wrong. She used to beat me about the head (quietly) for silly things (voice goes up)'. She would be hit for not doing her hair properly or not wanting to eat. Daphne was beaten as a child around the head 'for just silly things'. She recalled having had a beating for being late from school though she had been delayed by another girl. Her mother hit her everywhere and used her hand, stick or shoe and would hit her even in the street or pinch her. Even after Daphne reached adulthood her step-mother used violence; Daphne told of an incident when her mother came to the hospital where she was working after discovering Daphne's relationship with a doctor and hit her.

To summarise, Daphne's relationship with her mother deteriorated after the death of her step-father and Daphne felt undermined and criticised by her. Her mother used violence, according to Daphne, with little provocation. The difficulties persisted into Daphne's adult life and continue to concern Daphne.

Self esteem

Daphne did not talk positively about herself or describe herself as an independent, separate, self motivated person but referred to other people when asked if there was a time when she was really pleased with herself.

Gianni

Daphne met Gianni at a party. She soon discovered that he was marrried and then did not plan to continue seeing him, however, they met again even though Daphne made an attempt to avoid him and 'then we've sort of been together since then'. They have separated and reunited a few times, and occasionally Gianni returns to Italy where his wife lives.

Martin, their child, was considered to be one of the good aspects of the relationship and Daphne also said she liked having Gianni around and that she feels comfortable with him. However, later in the interview, she contradicts herself and says that their relationship was good until Martin arrived, when she could no longer travel with Gianni on business. She and Gianni have always argued and Gianni was 'jealous'. Daphne specified that he was jealous when someone pinched her bottom.

They had some physical fights. One of these concerned

Daphne's wish to go out to work. Another time she felt she had provoked his temper and she subsequently felt sorry. Gianni complains about Daphne's mother and how she runs to her after quarrels with Gianni. She said they also argue about Martin and money, and she complains about Gianni sleeping in the afternoon after having been gambling. Although she thought they could not afford this, she did not complain directly about it. At the time of the first interivew Daphne said that she was 'half back with Gianni'.

Thus Daphne's relationship with Gianni did not have a smooth beginning and continues to be stormy. Daphne 'feels comfortable' with Gianni but fights with him and there have been separations and reconciliations.

Pregnancy and birth

Daphne had a miscarriage before becoming pregnant with Martin. During this first pregnancy she said she had much support from Gianni but not when she was pregnant the second time. Daphne spent a long period of her pregnancy in hospital. During her stay Gianni was having an affair with someone else.

'The birth was normal but it took long enough. It took a long time and I was disappointed with Martin when I first saw him, he looked, ugh, so funny, just like a

monkey.......'.

Martin was premature and anaemic and remained in hospital after Daphne was discharged. They discovered he had a blood disorder and Daphne did not remember how long he remained in hospital, thinking it was 2 or 3 months. Gianni was away for more than a month, so when Daphne returned home Daphne registered the baby in her name.

Thus Daphne felt lonely and betrayed when pregnant with Martin and initially disappointed with her baby who was ill and required a long period of hospitalisation.

Perceptions of Martin

Daphne did not like Martin's appearance when he was first born. He was a demanding baby and cried a lot so she had to carry him much of the time. She found him 'difficult'. She did not breast feed but bottle feeding was a problem which she thought was because he was premature. He was initially tube fed. She described him as 'quite sweet but hyperactive' and this continued as he grew older. As a toddler she was very annoyed when he touched everything.

When they came to the centre she thought he was 'difficult to handle. 'he wouldn't listen to me and I couldn't control him'....'he didn't really talk, odd word when he

came.....'.   However   she   had   already   seen   some
improvements in his behaviour;   she considered that he had
calmed down had stopped banging his head and that he could
concentrate now.

At the time of the first interview she considered him to
be sweet and sensitive to her and to others,   knowing when
she is upset.   She used the words: good, terror, he talks
too much,   good memory,   more settled now,   got a temper,
gets his silly moods.   An example of this was throwing
himself on the ground when he wanted to play with another
child.

Thus Daphne's first impressions of her son were not
favourable and difficulties began from early on and
persisted as he grew.   She described improvements in his
behaviour since they attended the centre.

Daphne and Gianni as parents

Daphne says that one of her good qualities as a mother is
her 'patience' but assigns the compliment as coming from
others.   She found it difficult to think of other
qualities, 'well its just what other people say'. She had
little support from Gianni,   she was the one who would get
out of bed at night and respond to Martin if he was
crying.   She thought Gianni had been 'jealous' of the baby

and also that she had not had enough attention from him.

Currently she describes Martin's and Gianni's relationship as 'alright' but said that Martin was unsure of his father when he returned after an absence and she had to encourage him to ask his father for help. Martin resisted this and wanted Daphne to do things for him.

Her description of an ideal mother as 'the one who is able to cope with her child and makes the child do what she wants (giggles)' implies that she feels unable to control Martin.   Her description of an ideal father betrayed a critical attitude towards Gianni. She would like a man to 'share', 'to take the child out, like take him to the park or something' which Gianni does not to. So, Daphne had little positive to say about herself or Gianni as parents although she did consider that she is patient.   She would like more opportunity to share parenting.

Attitudes towards violence.
—————————————————————————

Daphne's attitudes towards violence are discussed within the context of the spirals but will be summarised here. Some aspects not elaborated later will be included

Daphne began slapping Martin when he was 2 and when she considered that he could understand . 'Then I'd slap his hand.'

She considered it justifiable to increase the intensity of the punishment with his increasing age. At 2 years of age after he was slapped Martin wanted her to kiss it better or would hide his hands from Daphne and she explained it developed into a game with which Daphne colluded.

His persistent crying angered her but she did not hit him in response to this. She said she did not like to see him cry. Early on he would get slapped for grabbing things he should not have and later she used slaps to retaliate for attacks on her which often happened as a result of physical games. On the whole she hits his bottom though once or twice has hit his face but she does not like doing so. Alternatively she shakes him. She hits him for being 'cheeky' this includes calling her a 'silly cow' and 'swearing'. She is very critical of times when Gianni hit Martin.

To sum up, Daphne has used violence against Martin since he was 2 and has increased its intensity with his increasing age. He is hit for cheekiness, hurting Daphne, touching forbidden objects but not for crying.

Discipline

Violence is not the only method of discipline that Daphne

describes. Daphne will walk away from Martin either in
the street if he is misbehaving or if she wants him to go
to bed and he is resisting. Over food she may use
threats such as not seeing his grandmother. Dressing him
in the mornings is a problem and she says she makes it
into a game.

Daphne thus seems to try to avoid confrontations with
Martin by turning things into a game or by threatening
desertion.

Work

'Well I wanted to get away from my mother, the only thing
I could think, the only way was, I went into nursing. That
way I lived in and I was away from my mother. I lived in
the nurses home'. Daphne's adult life continues to be
governed by her mother and her half hearted attempts to
gain independence from her.

She began nursing as an ancilliary and then began
training. In one interview she blames not completing the
training on her mother's interference but in a subsequent
interview explains she could not stand the sight of blood
and suffering.. She worked in a pub and left that after
her mother traced her there. She also worked doing
promotion and sales work and in a Japanese restaurant.

So, before having Martin Daphne tried a few jobs, the choice being based on the attempt to separate from her mother.

Men

Daphne had three or four boyfriends before she met Gianni and her mother interfered at least with the first of these and also with a doctor with whom she became involved while nursing.

Coming to the family centre

Daphne was referred to the centre by the head of the nursery that Martin was attending. She originally thought that all the difficulties were 'all to do with Martin, I suppose I realised that it was to do with me, that I couldn't control him, that I had difficulty controlling Martin and for Martin his speech had improved. He didn't really talk, odd words when he came ...I wanted that to change'. She also wanted her relationship with Gianni to change.

Daphne said she had learnt not to become involved with others in the centre; particularly she felt one mother had been unsupportive in not stopping her taking an overdose. This was at a time when she was having difficulties with Gianni. As a result of her overdose, a case conference was called to decide if Martin's name should be placed on

the At Risk register.   Daphne said this had been of help
and had provoked her to resolve the situation with Gianni.
She considered she was helped in this task by her
individual therapist.   She also considered it had helped
her to watch other parents and staff deal with other
children and with Martin and to witness them being
consistent in their demands.

To summarise, Daphne was referred to the FC because of her
son, Martin, and she considered that she was being helped
both in relation to Martin and to his father, Gianni.

Summary of interviews
_____

Daphne was adopted as a small child and after an initial
contented period was very unhappy and had a fraught and
violent relationship with her step-mother.   The
difficulties with her step-mother persisted, and continue
to persist, into adult life. Daphne had nothing positive
to say of herself or her achievments and little positive
concerning her relationship with Gianni, the father of her
son, or his behaviour as a father.   She did however
consider she was 'patient' as a mother.   Gianni was
unsupportive both during her pregnancy (the second) and
after Martin was born.   Martin was ill and remained in
hospital for 2-3 months.   She had problems with Martin
early on including 'hyperactivity'. She has used violence

since Martin was 2 years, for swearing and other transgressions and also tries to avoid confrontations with him. Her working life, including nursing, was affected by her relationship with her mother as were her relationships with men. Daphne and Martin were referred to the centre regarding difficulties with Martin, and Daphne considered that she was being helped.

Observations

Daphne and Martin attended the family centre from April 1980 - May 1981. Observations were carried out from July 1980 - February 1981. There are 15 observations of this family containing 23 violent episodes. 3 episodes do not fit the spirals (15ii,16,17) but 19 are accounted for by the two spirals to be described. As there were no observations in which there was the threat, but not the actual use of violence, no observations in which no violence was used were retained.

Daphne and Martin - Spirals

The information from the interviews will be used, as for Beryl and Sandy, to explain the observations from the mother's point of view. The information provided by Daphne was always difficult to pinpoint and vague but this in itself is reflected in the spirals and is an important aspect of her functioning in relation to Martin.

The observations were largely of community meetings. Daphne said in the interviews that she dislikes these meetings and finds them persecutory.

Q: I didn't like the meeting, I mean I didn't like it when they started on me, when they were telling me to control Martin and so on, I mean he was quite terrible.
Q: I just hate those meetings.

Her dislike of the meetings is linked to   Martin's behaviour in the meetings and also to her dislike of talking, particularly about Martin.
Q: It's just awful, there are things I don't want to discuss, views and things. ....
Q: I suppose if the children weren't there (it would be better)
Q: Those were the times he was naughty today.

She also implies that she has an investment in his bad behaviour, that she does not like talking and so he provides a useful distracton:
Q: ...he always makes a noise, I suppose I'm used to it... anyway I don't like to talk in those meetings anyway.

These spirals are characterised by Martin's high level of activity and Daphne's slowness and passivity.

Figure 3.3   Daphne and Martin: Spiral 1 Page 185

At the start of the spiral Martin may be behaving in ways
that are inappropriate for the context of the community
meeting, he is not behaving according to the expectations
of Daphne and others that in meetings he is to sit quietly
and listen.   For example he is crawling on the floor, he
is getting up and down off his chair, and/or he is making
a noise.   Alternatively (or concurrently) he is lying
across Daphne or playing with her hair or fingers.   This
is labelled exaggerated physical contact on the spiral; he
is not merely touching or tapping her to draw her
attention onto himself, but treating her body almost as if
it was his own.

In Obs 11 and 15 Martin's behaviour does not fit within
either of these categories but the development of the
spirals is similar to the other observations.   In 11 he is
eating glitter and in 15 picking his nose.

Daphne responds with some physical actions and words.   She
puts a hand on him or picks him up and puts him back onto
his chair or onto her lap.   She says, for example, sit
down, stop it and sometimes she phrases this as a
question such as 'where are you going?' though the
implication of this is 'stop where you are going and come
back here'.   However Daphne rarely speaks with any

emphasis or feeling, at times she is slightly more
insistent but her voice is always quiet and tentative.

(1,3i,3ii,4,13a,2i,2ii,9i,12,13)
(11 and 15 - behaviour a. not similar -eating glitter
                                       -picking nose)

Behaviour a:
Inappropriate beh. for meeting
and/or exaggerated physical
contact

Physical actions
and words

Persists beh. a.

Physical actions
and words

Persists (and aggressive beh.)

(Variation
   obs 3i)

Rejects
- pushes away

Persists (and aggressive beh.)

Violence

Quietens

Persists

No response

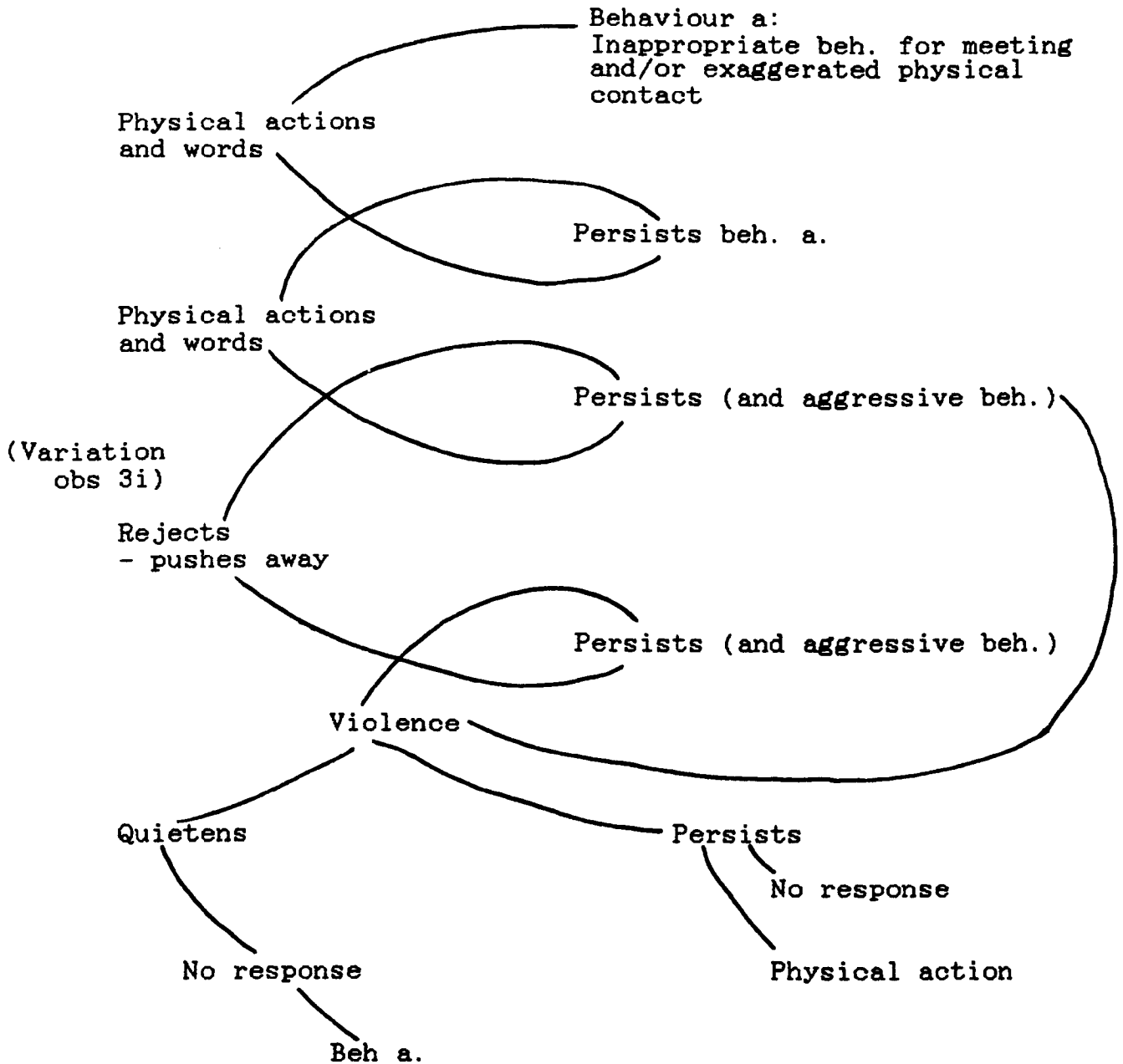No response

Physical action

Beh a.

Figure 3.3   Daphne and Martin: Spiral 1

This might be accounted for by Daphne's feeling resigned about his behaviour. She explains in the interviews:

Q: He always plays up, he always makes a noise, I suppose I'm used to it. (Speaks resignedly) I struggle but I'm used to it, anyway I don't like to talk in those meetings anyway.

His fidgeting and level of activity has been seen by her as a problem since he was tiny:

Q: even when he was born he wouldn't lie still in the incubator

and she continues to see him in a similar way:

Q: No, he just can't keep still, he kept jumping up and down.

Daphne's actions do not have the desired effect and Martin continues being active, getting up off his chair, going off, fidgeting in his chair or making moaning noises or talking, not particularly to anyone.

Daphne states in the interviews that she is aware that her words are ineffective in changing Martin's behaviour.

Q: I had to tell him a few times.

Q: ...he would have done something when I told him to (as if complete fantasy...what she would have liked him to do.)

And she lacks confidence that her words could be effective

Q: (What would a perfect day consist of?) Martin would behave ... he would have done something when I told him to do it. (speaks with a tone like all this is complete fantasy) Oh I would just have to tell him once.

In obs 15 he touches the glitter and then puts his finger into his mouth. Daphne responds with another physical action. She holds onto a part of his anatomy, his arm foot or hand, depending on the action he had previously beeing doing, or puts him back onto his chair. In 15 she snatches his hand away from his mouth. In some of the observations she uses words again and they are similar injunctions to those used before. Her voice is usually controlled and quiet and it is difficult to tell if she is becoming increasingly angry. Again she does not have the desired effect.

Martin persists in his active, noisy behaviour and may also persist in leaning or lying against Daphne and fidgeting and moving. He may also hit out at Daphne (Obs 2ii,9). Daphne responds in two ways. Either she pushes him away from her or now she responds with violence. (Except 3i). If she pushes him away Martin persists in his behaviour and then Daphne responds with violence. So in this instance there is one extra revolution of the spiral but it leads to the same point. Daphne picks up Martin and hits him more than once with an open hand on the

bottom. She may hit his foot or his hand and sometimes she will also issue and injunction , such as 'stop it' or in the case of 15 'you're not to eat it'. She has little expression in her voice and appears to be exasperated and defeated rather than expressing how angry she is. In obs 3i she takes him on her lap, he cries so she puts him down on his chair and he runs off. Violence is then used, as in the other observations.

In the interviews Daphne describes many of Martin's behaviours that will lead her to use violence and 'noisiness' is one of them, as is his hurting her. She also differentiates different degrees of smacking and his response:

Q: No, not today, I didn't hit him today, I don't think, not it wasn't really much of a smack, I gave him a little one... not I don't think he felt that smack.

The spiral has many branches after violence has been used, there is not one consistent pattern that can be described at this point on the spiral. Some consistencies are nevertheless apparent: In 5 cases (11,3ii,2ii,13,4) the behaviours indicate that the spiral is being repeated, at least in part. In 5 episodes Martin persists with the same behaviour and in 3 of these Daphne immediately responds by using violence again (11,15,3ii). In 2i violence is also used for a second time after Martin's behaviour has

escalated to behaving 'crazy' when she has not responded to his persistence. He then quietens. In 13a she holds him firmly and threatens more violence. He retaliates with a threat of his own and she does not respond.

Daphne recalls in the interviews that Martin's response to her violence is silence or crying.

Q: ...he was quiet for a bit...I don't think he wanted to get into a fight, I think it was pride more than anything.

Q: He cried...I mean he really cried, he was really upset.

She explains that she dislikes her own use of violence, especially if he cries:

Q: I bit him back. He cried, I mean he really cried, I mean I was feeling quite bad.

Q: No, not really, I mean he just went on and on today, I really just felt I couldn't take anymore. Ann(staff) said other people would have spanked him, I mean I did give him a good spanking. I mean Beryl thought that was the right thing to do, she said oh yes, that's what I would do with Sandy (mockingly). I mean I didn't do it for Beryl (another mother), I did it for myself, but I didn't feel any better for it.

Earlier in the interview she had also referred to Beryl suggesting she spank Martin and that she had not been sure

about it.

In 3 episodes (2ii,13,9i) Martin hardly responds to the violence but now sits quietly or chews his finger. In these cases Daphne does not respond; she does not acknowledge his changed behaviour and in all cases Martin becomes more active again and creates the potential for the spiral to be repeated by engaging in one of the behaviours described earlier. After the second use of violence obs.11 also fits with this pattern.

Daphne says in the interviews that she considers violence is temporarily effective in relation to 'playing up':

Q: He stopped playing up for a while but then he started again

Q: he was alright for a few minutes.

In 2 cases, (3i,3ii) Martin cries in response to Daphne's violence but she does not acknowledge it and he then leans across her. Therefore in effect the pattern is the same as described in the immediately preceding sections, with the initial difference of Martin crying, but as with the earlier pattern the spiral is restarted. Thus although Daphne says she does not like Martin crying in these cases it makes no difference to the way she subsequently responds to him.

In obs 4 Martin shouts in response to Daphne's violence and she tells him to be quiet. He leans onto another person and she pulls him up. He persists, so yet again the potential is extant for the continuation of the spiral.

Episode markers

It is often not clear where the episodes begin, and there is little that punctuates the endless succession of battles between these two. In some cases the episode begins after a period of relative quiet but in others the behaviour that eventually evokes violence has been demonstrated by Martin for a while and not evoked a strong reaction. Daphne is, therefore, inconsistent. Similarly it is often not clear when the end of an episode has been reached, sometimes it is marked by a period of quiet and disengagement, but at other times the battles continue uninterrupted. In one case the episode coincided with the observation time finishing and in another was marked by an affectionate contact between Daphne and Martin, but this led almost immediately to another episode.

Figure 3.4.1   Daphne and Martin: Spiral 2   Page 193

Martin is behaving in a similar way at the start of the
spiral as in spiral 1, though in 2 cases he is on Daphne's
lap and she is holding him around the waist (obs 10,8).
Daphne does not respond to him overtly, although she also
does not release him and give in to his pressure to get
down.   In 8i and 8ii Martin becomes aggressive and digs
his nails into her hand or pulls her fingers. Daphne does
not respond directly to this, although she still does not
give into him and keeps him on her lap if he is already
there.   As can be seen from the diagram, this turn of the
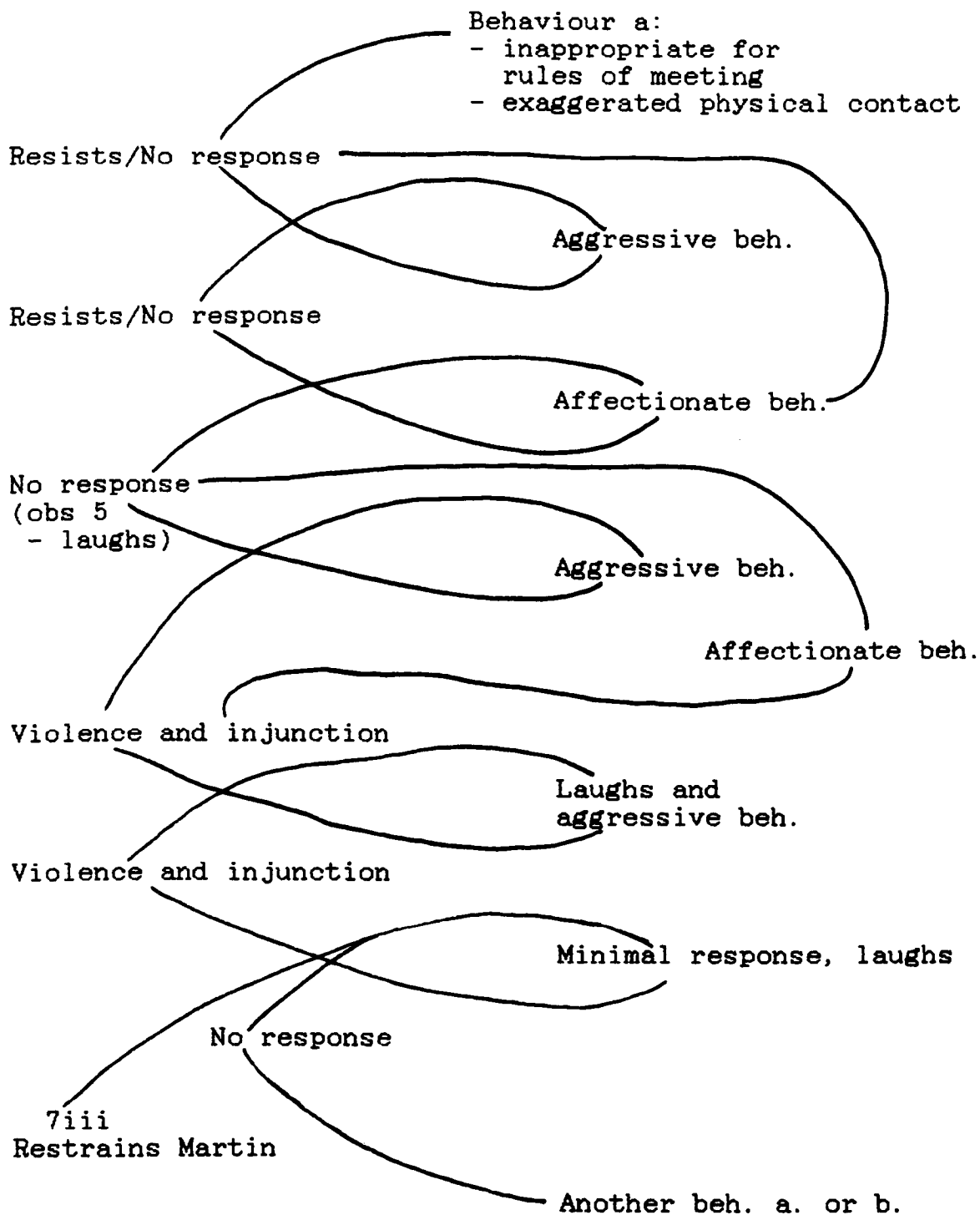spiral may be omitted.

(8i,8ii,5,7i,ii,iii,10)

Behaviour a:
- inappropriate for
  rules of meeting
- exaggerated physical contact

Resists/No response

Aggressive beh.

Resists/No response

Affectionate beh.

No response
(obs 5
 - laughs)

Aggressive beh.

Affectionate beh.

Violence and injunction

Laughs and
aggressive beh.

Violence and injunction

Minimal response, laughs

No response

7iii
Restrains Martin

Another beh. a. or b.

Figure 3.4.1   Daphne and Martin: Spiral 2

Martin's response to this lack of response is to continue touching Daphne but now in an affectionate way, although his behaviour could be considered as inappropriate and exaggerated. He leans against her, strokes her or puts his hand against her. In obs 5 Daphne laughs (perhaps he tickles her) but in the other observations these actions result in no apparent response from Daphne. In some observations she seems to be disconnected emotionally from Martin and maybe is not fully aware at first of what he is doing. Martin again resorts to aggression.

One or two steps of this sprial may be repeated (see diagram) and either affectionate or agggressive behaviour subsequently evokes violence. It could be that she is feeling either hurt or that he is beeing too intrusive or sexual. Sometimes Daphne's violence is an imitation of Martin's behaviour. For example he pulls her hair and she pulls his, and this pair of behaviours is repeated 3 times. Daphne is mimicking Martin and during this interaction uses no words. If this is not effective she will then resort to another type of violence and hits his hand or bottom.

In some observations Martin reponds to Daphne's violence by laughing and continuing to be aggressive and Daphne again uses violence. She hits his hand or his bottom and may use words such as 'stop it' or 'don't bite'. In obs

7ii she restrains him by keeping hold of his hand. Martin does not cry in response to this second use of violence and he may laugh disturbingly or smile. Daphne does not respond to him and at this point the spiral may resume again.

Daphne clearly states in the interviews that if Martin hurts her she will retaliate if she considers that it was intentional.

Q: ..he wasn't talking, he wouldn't let me listen and then he bit my hand and I bit him back

Q: I tickle him, he gets carried away and starts hitting me, thats when I get really cross with him

Q: If he hits me I'll hit him back... he pulled my hair so I pulled it back... I want it to hurt a little bit

However, in the interviews, there are also many instances when her intentions in using violence are not made explicit. She may claim that she was not fully aware of what she was thinking:

Q: I think I gave him a good spanking.......I wasn't really thinking

Q: ...he bit me so I bit him back....

Q: ...when it happened I just didn't think about it, I mean I was so fed up by lunchtime, I mean I said I've just got no more patience........I was very bad tempered then.

Q: ....he wouldn't let me listen, and then he bit my hand

and I bit him back.......

Q: .. he was really upset, I think it might have been the shock more than anything cause I hadn't thought of doing it.

Early in EOD1 she implied that she would spank Martin to satisfy others who think that spanking is what she should do though later contradicts herself and said it was not for this reason:

Q: I did it for myself, but I didn't feel any better for it.

Figure 3.4.2   Variation on spiral 2 Page 197

From the diagram it can be seen that this spiral starts in the same way as spiral 2 but Daphne responds to Martin's aggression with an injunction. Martin continues to kick her and she responds with violence. There is no affectionate gestures as in spiral 2. However the subsequent behaviours are similar to the general spiral. Martin hardly responds to the violence and is restrained from getting down as in obs 7iii. Another battle begins concerning physical closeness.
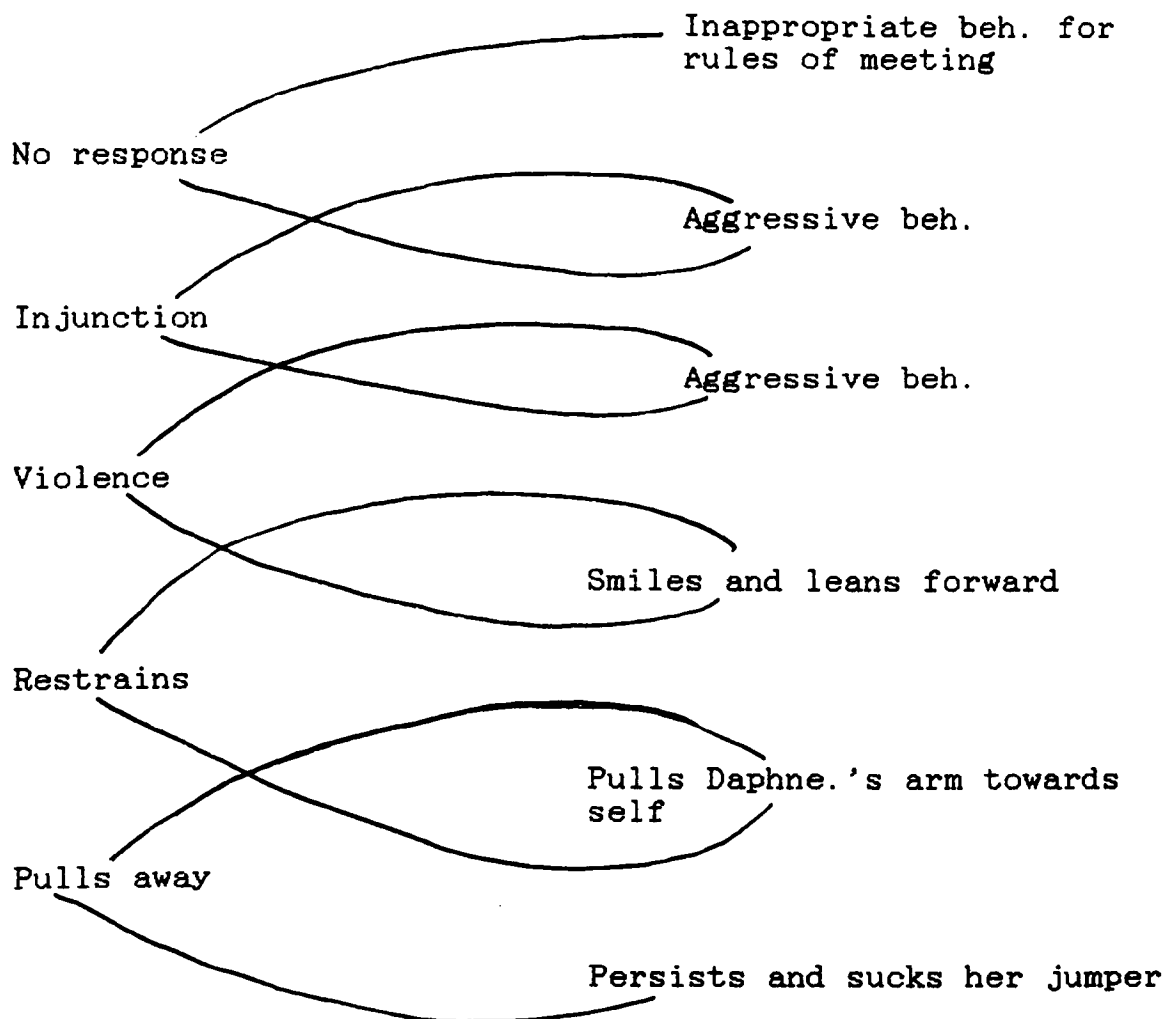
(9ii)

Inappropriate beh. for rules of meeting

No response

Aggressive beh.

Injunction

Aggressive beh.

Violence

Smiles and leans forward

Restrains

Pulls Daphne.'s arm towards self

Pulls away

Persists and sucks her jumper

Figure 3.4.2 Daphne and Martin: Variation on Spiral 2

_____

Episode markers.
_____

As with spiral 1 it is not possible to describe when episodes begin. Often there have been battles before the outset of what is described above and the reason Martin is on Daphne's lap is to restrain him from engaging in previous activities. In obs 7 there are 3 episodes and in obs 8 2 episodes that include the spiral which indicates

that it is repeated with little break.   Similarly there
are not clear endings to the episodes, the battles
continue without apparent break though in 8i and 8ii there
is a short period of calm after the episode.

The observations described above cover some of the range
of behaviours that Martin exhibits which will be likely to
evoke violence from Daphne; however, others were mentioned
in the interviews such as 'being wild', 'going on and on',
being too slow, hitting another child and possibly
rudeness.

A striking feature of the interview material which is not
clearly reflected in the above discussion is what is here
called 'enmeshment'.(see also Minuchin). By this is meant
a confusion of identity between Daphne and Martin from
Daphne's point of view.

This is reflected in a number of themes that emerged from
the interviews, and particularly EOD1. Daphne confuses
herself and Martin when trying to discuss one of them, and
she confuses herself and others who make her judgements;
she flits almost unpredictably in her speech from herself
to Martin, and back onto herself, to others and back. She
gives the impression that she is not mistress of her own
actions which she can describe only very vaguely . She
seems unable in the initial end-of-day interview to

empathise with Martin or describe her expectations of him and cannot give explanations for his behaviour.

She describes Martin as being very sensitive to her moods and that he is likely to be naughty when she is preoccupied. She considers that he can merely sense this and does not need to be told. Also his position as a child in the family is confused, and when his father is absent he sleeps with Daphne, kissing her .

In the first end-of-day interview, she is also unable to think of alternatives to violence; however, in EOD3 she can try alternatives, she cuddles him and talks to him about what is going on in the meeting. On this day there is no violence. She also says that she is the one that controls him and expresses more authority over Martin and others. She also describes Martin in better terms and considers his behaviour to be improving. This is also true of the final interview . As with Beryl, on a good day she finds her words are more effective and she herself relates this to the less frequent use of violence:

Q: I hardly spank him now - I don't have to because he listens, I think that's why.

At this interview she is also much clearer about deciding what she wants Martin to do and persevering.

Summary

Two spirals are described for Daphne and Martin. Both are characterised by Martin's high level of activity and Daphne's slowness and passivity. In spiral 1,(see Fig 3.3, p.185), the 'Can't-Keep-Still Spiral', Martin is crawling. is off his chair or is physically interfering with Daphne. Her actions and words are not effective and Martin persists. He is pushed away or she uses violence, once or twice. The violence is usually ineffective and the spiral continues. Various developments are described. Martin often shows little response to the violence; he may cry, or he may quieten and behave. None of this is acknowledged and the spiral continues. Daphne explains that she is 'used' to Martin's level of activity, that 'he can't keep still'.

Spiral 2, the 'Love-Hate Spiral',(see Fig.3.4.1, p193), begins much as spiral 1 or with Martin trying to get down from his mother's lap. Gentle, though possibly intrusive, gestures are ignored by Daphne and Martin may then become aggressive, and possibly again affectionate. Either of these behaviours may evoke violence. Daphne may imitate Martin. Martin laughs and may be aggressive again. One variation is described where Martin is aggressive only. As with spiral 1 the spiral may be continue with little break.

The episodes containing both spirals are not clearly marked, the battles are often extended and continuous.

Daphne describes, in the interviews, other of Martin's behaviours that may evoke violence such as 'being wild' 'rudeness'.

Daphne's and Martin's enmeshment is described and differences on days when there is violence and when there is not. On violent days Daphne cannot think of possible alternatives to violence but on a day when no violence is used she tells of alternatives such as cuddling Martin and talking to him. On such a day she considers her words are more effective and she herself relates this to the less frequent use of violence.

Barbara and Leo

Barbara, 22, was born in London and suffered from chronic asthma. Her school atendance was affected and she attended boarding school for 3 years. She did not describe her relationship with her father and considers her mother uncaring and unsupportive. She truanted from secondary school but managed to train as a nursery nurse. She became pregnant just as she finished her training and Leo was born in 1978 and was 2 years of age at the time of the study. His father, who does not live with Barbara is West Indian. She was referred to the centre by a social worker who was concerned about Barbara's depression and possible violence towards Leo.

The following description of Barbara is based on only one interview, as she withdrew from the study after having completed the initial interview. For this reason, many of the sections contain only limited information and there are many areas which are completely omitted.

Childhood

Barbara was born in London and her early childhood was largely coloured by her chronic asthma. She was frequently ill and had to stay in bed. She hardly attended school until the age of eight and blames her illness for this and for the lack of friends at that time.

At eight years old she was sent to a school for fragile
children. 'I hated my Mum for it'. She felt it was like
a prison. 'I'd never put Leo in a school like that,
never'.

At secondary school she still suffered from asthma and as
a result she said she was 'picked on a lot'. She was
protected by a group of coloured girls. After a year at
school she lost interest and began truanting. She had a
friend who forged letters from her mother and visited the
school. Barbara said the only time her mother really
visited the school was when she had appendicitis and had
to be whisked to hospital. Once home she thought that her
mother neglected to look after her. Her idol was her
friend Mary.

Her father worked as a chauffeur but she said she did not
want to talk about him. She has an older brother and a
younger sister. She does not get on with them and said 'I
was sort of the black sheep. They used to get on better
than what I used to on with them'. She felt she was
blamed for her sister's misbehaviour.

From the age of 14 or 15 Barbara began 'clubing it'. She
spent nights away from home and earned the money by baby
sitting for Mary.

Barbara also had a grandmother but she said she never had a good relationshiop with her.

To summarise, Barbara's childhood was unhappy and influenced by her chronic asthma. She found protection in school from 'coloured girls' but not from family. In adolescence she truanted from school and deceived her mother regarding her whereabouts.

Training

After she left school she started Nursery Nurse training though she did not enjoy the more academic side of this and truanted again. She thus had to complete a further year in order to qualify. She enjoyed working with children, although she mentioned finding some of the parents difficult and told of an occasion when a parent complained because a child was scratched. Although she completed her training as a nursery nurse, she had not begun working.

Men

She had her first boyfriend when she was 'young' and was impressed that he spent his money on her. They had to 'hide all the time becase he was black and I was white'. This was disapproved of by her family. After another two men she met Willy, who is older than she and was living

with someone else at the time. However he returned to
live with his mother. Barbara and Willy do not live
together though he stays often. 'But he was a gambler and
would stay out many nights at a time gambling.' Leo is his
son and Barbara became pregnant just as she finished her
training. She does not consider that Leo being half-caste
is a problem, 'he seems to be alright'.

Barbara was still seeing Willy at the time of the
interview but was confused about what she wanted to happen
in the relationship.

Thus, Barbara's important relationships were with 'coloured
men', one of whom fathered her son.

Self-esteem

Initially Barbara could think of nothing positive about her
childhood or her achievments during this time and said
then she believed it when 'girls take the piss out of you
'cause you're useless and you're sick and call you dumbo
and that'. However later in the interview she said that
she was good at art and child care lessons. She thought
positively about her ability to 'harden up' at school.
This is reflected in what she considers to be more current
achievements, such as telling Willy to move out of her
flat.

So Barbara's self-esteem as a child was very low but had improved slightly as she grew older.

Leo

Like his mother he suffers from asthma.

Three times she relates her own experiences to what she wants or does not want for Leo, she does not want him to be so unhappy at school, she worries about his asthma as she did her own, and she would not leave Leo at 14 years old to look after himself as her mother had done .

Violence

Barbara made only a few comments regarding violence, in relation to her brother and to her work in the nursery: She dealt with her brother with violence. Arguments would end with ' a few slaps and a few fights, it usually ended up with me hitting him first and him hitting me back and then it would get worse'. The other comment regarding violence was when she was discussing working in the nursery.

However, given that she is unwilling to discuss her father, it may well be that she was physically or sexually abused as a child.

General

Barbara spoke clearly and emphatically about some things during the interviews, particularly about not understanding racial prejudice. She mentions that in school she found refuge with black girls even though they were 'rough'. Her men are West Indians and Leo is half caste. Her relationships with her family have been affected by her liasons with black men and the issue of colour was mentioned a few times during the interview and is of importance to Barbara.

She also spoke emphatically about negative issues, such as hating boarding school and about hating her grandmother, and positively about her older friend, Mary.

Summary

Barbara had an unhappy and ill childhood and was critical of her mother's caretaking. She was not prepared to discuss her father. She truanted from school and then from her nursery nurse training which she did eventually complete. She had a few relationships and then conceived Leo who is half-caste. She has never been married to his father. Leo also suffers from asthma.

Observations

Observations were carried out during the period June 1980
-March 1981. There are 10 observations of this family
which contain 14 episodes of violence. 1 episode does not
fit the spirals described (5ii). In addition there are
two observations in which the threat, but not the use, of
violence was made and these are discussed later.

Figure 3.5   Barbara and Leo: Spiral 1 Page209

Leo has obeyed a command or injunction that Barbara has
issued but Barbara does not respond. This is labelled no
response as many responses are possible, for example she
could talk to him, or acknowledge or praise his obedience
but she does none of these. Leo then breaks the rules
Barbara has set for his behaviour in the meeting. He runs
out of the circle, or he stands outside making a noise.
Barbara has an explicit rule that Leo is to remain within
the circle during meetings. In obs 10 he is rejecting
food. Barbara then issues an injunction, such as 'don't
do that', 'get back in'. At this point she is not very
angry but insistent and annoyed. Leo obeys this
injunction and does what he is comanded. Once back he may
also lean on Barbara or look at her. Again, this evokes
no response, and he resumes what he was doing previously,
or in obs 10 he tries to move off his chair.

(2ii,3,9,10)

Beh. a.

Obeys
No response

Injunction

Beh. a.

Obeys
No response

Threat of violence
and injunction

Beh. a.

Obeys
No response

Violence

Diverted
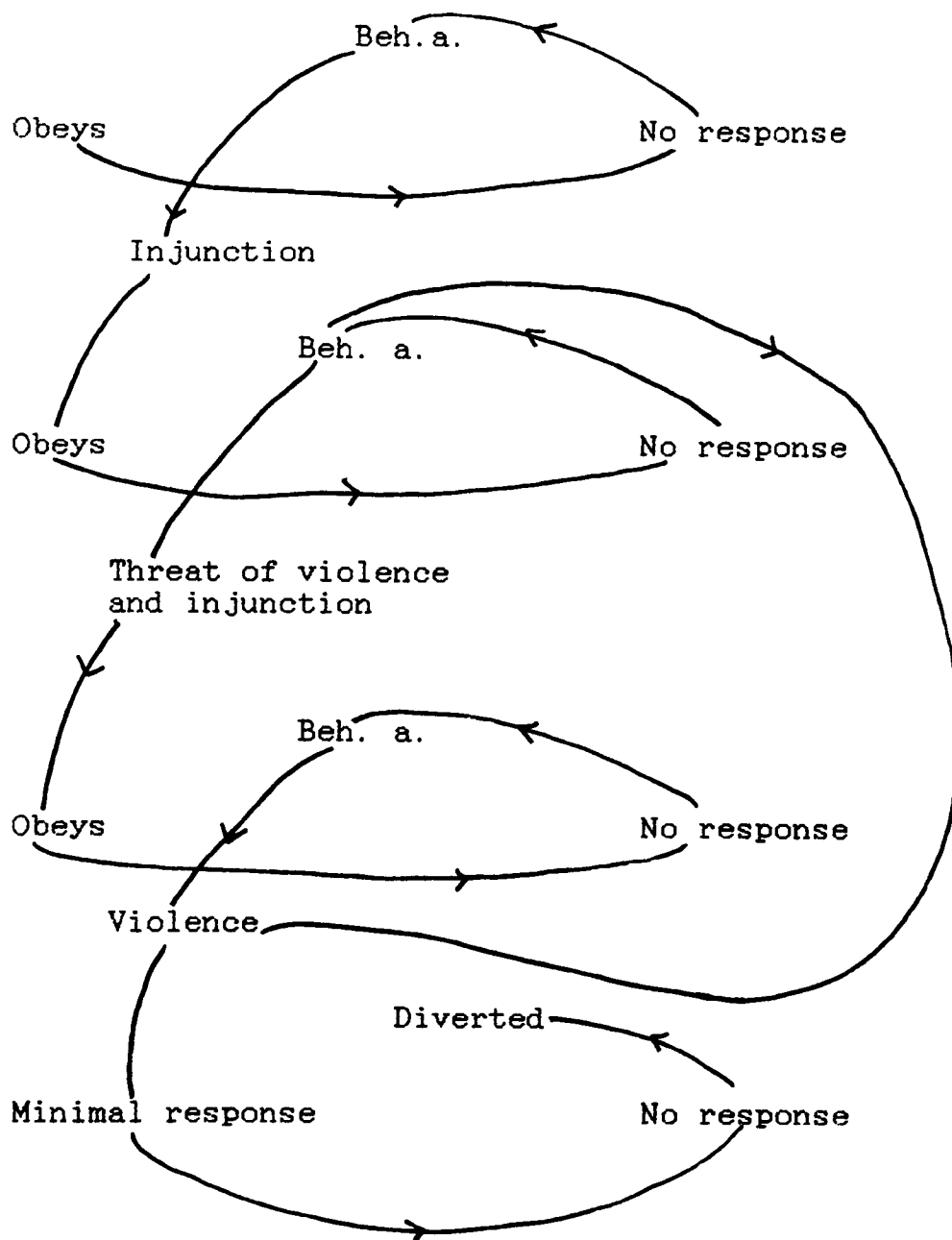
Minimal response
No response

Figure 3.5   Barbara and Leo: Spiral 1

Violence may follow immediately (9,3,2ii) or else she threatens him with violence and issues another injunction. Again he does what he is bid but yet again receives no response to this and continues his previous behaviour or something similar. This time Barbara uses violence. In 2ii she does not respond immediately and Leo makes his behaviour louder and this evokes violence. She either hits Leo on the bottom or on the legs and may slam him down onto his chair. The lack of response does seem to be crucial in this spiral.

Only on one occasion is the violence accompanied with words: 'I won't tell you twice child, don't go on the floor'. In all the observations Barbara is aroused and angry but the violence is controlled, although it is often sudden and almost unexpected. It is preceeded on her part by a lack of response to Leo. She is angry, but not extremely so, and Leo's response reflects this and suggests that he senses she is not at her limit, even though the hit itself has been severe.

Leo may cry, but not desperately, for a while and then quietens or he may merely look surprised and frown. On these occasions Barbara does not respond to him and Leo moves away from Barbara or his attention is diverted away from her. The ending to the sprial is similar in obs 10 in that Leo begins playing with a fork but the epsiode

comes to an end a while later when Barbara accepts that he is not going to eat his food and quietly takes him out of the room.

Episode markers.

In all four cases there is a clear beginning and end to the violent episode. There is a period of calm and/or closeness preceeding the episodes which are opened when Leo starts making a noise, wanting to get down, or rejecting food. In all but obs.10 the end is marked by a physical separation or by Leo directing his attention away from Barbara.

Figure 3.6   Barbara and Leo: Spiral 2   Page 212

As in spiral 1, Leo is trying to move out of the circle or is standing crying and stamping his feet. Barbara pulls him or puts him back on his chair. Leo resists and tries to move down again or pulls away. This time Barbara restrains him again or issues an injunction, such as 'sit still'. Leo persists and may cry more now, though continuing with his efforts. Barbara issues another injunction and may restrain him again.
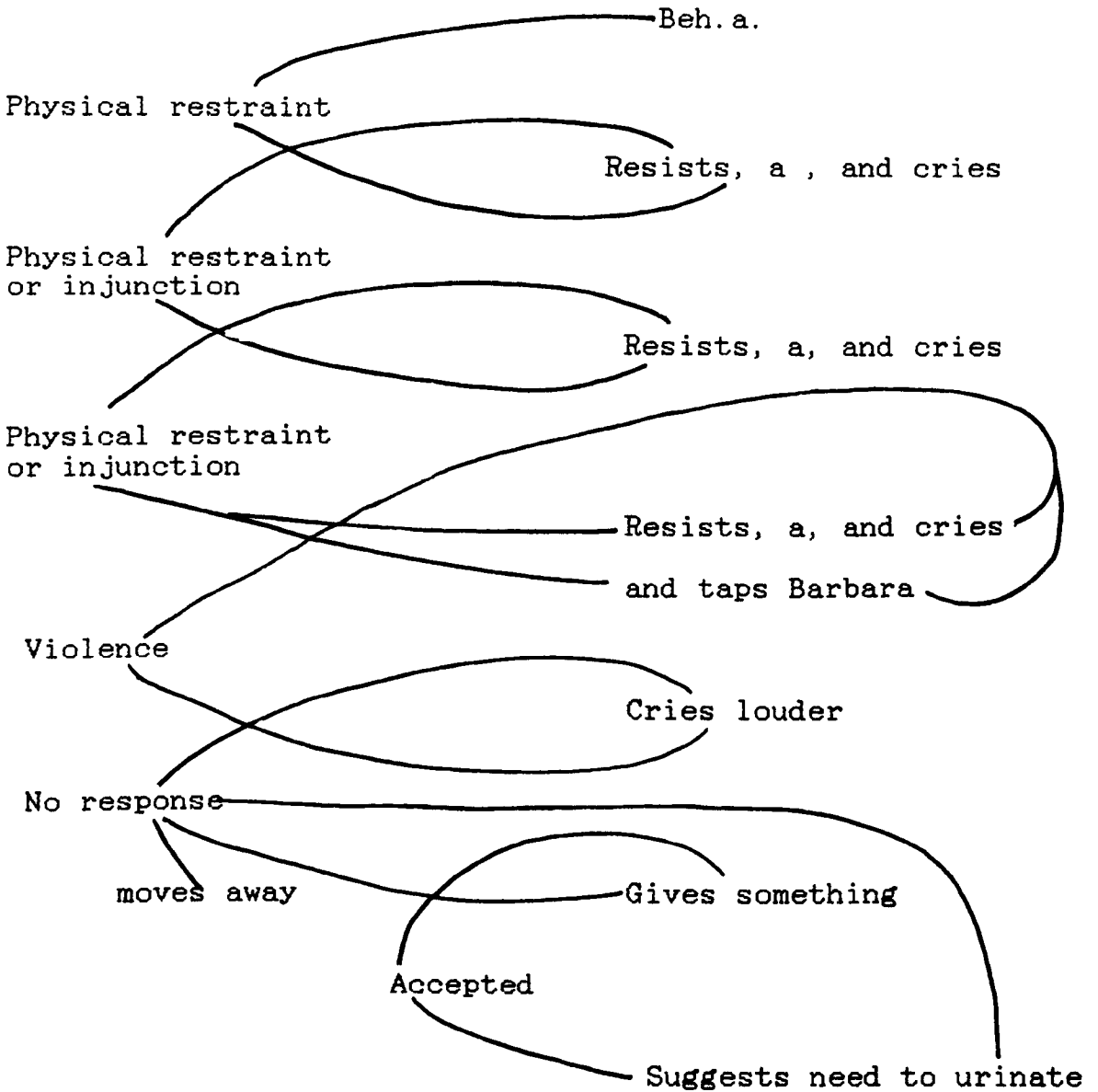
(12i,12ii,2i,5iii)

Figure 3.6   Barbara and Leo: Spiral 2

Leo continues to resist and in obs. 12i he taps Barbara on
the leg. Barbara now responds with violence, she hits his
hand or bottom with her open palm. She is firm and angry
but controlled. In all 3 cases Leo cries or increases his
crying and Barbara does not respond to him.   Leo   then

stops crying and may move away from Barbara, give her something and/or indicates he needs to urinate. Barbara responds to the latter by putting him on the potty. If he moves away Barbara watches but does not stop him and does not respond if he tries to hand her something.

Part of 12ii also fits into a section of this spiral, the second section of it shows two brief repeats of the spiral and overall it can seen as an extended response to 12i.

Episode markers
_____

Two of the episodes are continuations of previous battles and are not clearly marked. The third begins as they come into the room for the community meeting. The end of the episodes are marked by a change of focus, either Leo going to the potty or by Barbara changing her mind and allowing Leo to move out of the circle after much effort to restrain him and after having used violence 3 times.

Figure 3.7   Barbara and Leo: Spiral 3   Page 215

Leo indicates there is something that he wants, a book, to eat or not to eat some food. Barbara refuses this demand and Leo may complain by moaning, to which Barbara does not respond. Or his initial demand is ignored. He may

continue to moan but acts independently and fetches what he wanted. In obs 7 Barbara watched this and takes the book from him when he hands it to her and only responds with violence when he fetches it a second time. In observation 8 there is also an additional turn to the spiral, Barbara bangs the table and Leo responds with a startle to which Barbara laughs.

In 5i and 1 which both concern food, she responds with violence. In these two cases she is very angry and in 5i hits his face with the back of her hand. In 7 she hits his hand with a book and in 1 she throws the biscuit in his face and hits his hand. In 8 she force-feeds him.

In all cases he cries and this is followed by separation: either Barbara leaves or she puts him down or outside which provokes more crying. In 7 she does not respond and he makes noises.
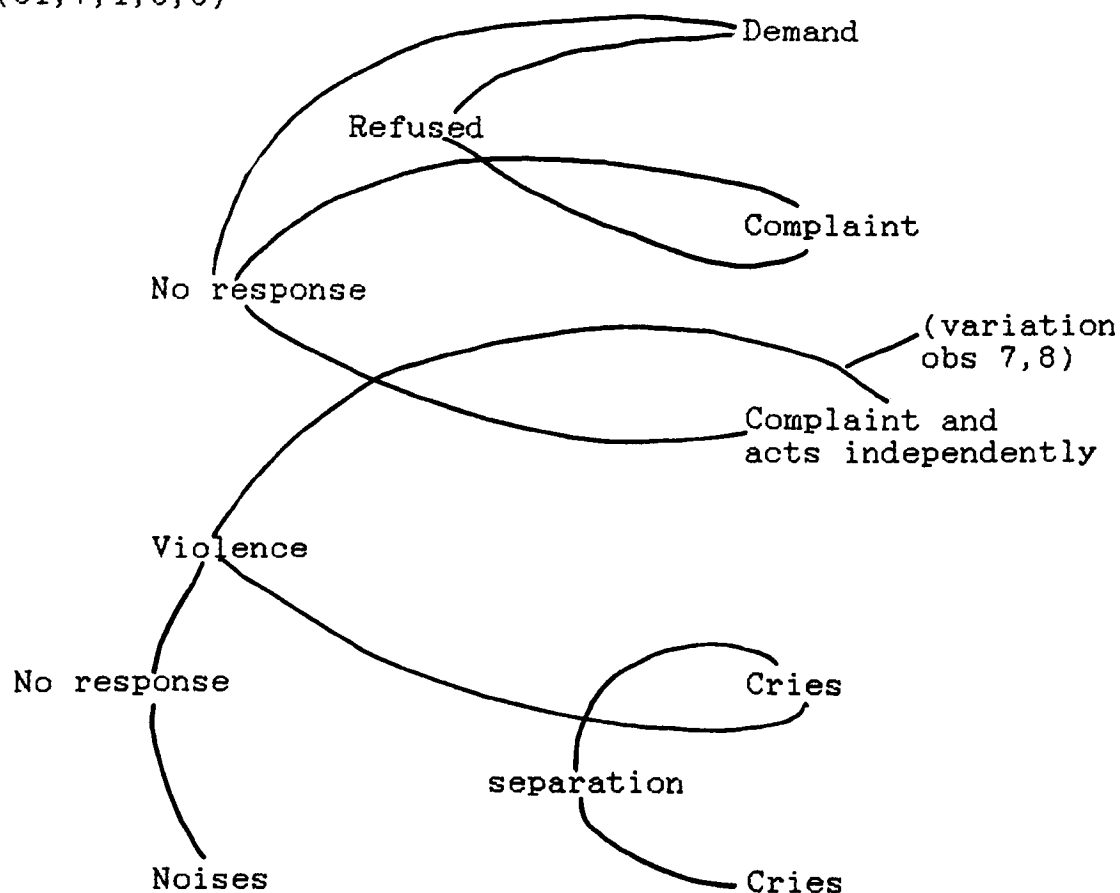
(5i,7,1,8,6)

Figure 3.7   Barbara and Leo: Spiral 3
_____

Observation 6 is a slight variation on this spiral. Leo
makes a demand which is refused and he tries elsewhere.
He   looks as if he is about to hit someone with a straw
(this action could not possibly be painful) and Barbara
intervenes with a warning. His disobeying her is met with
violence.   The subsequent steps are as in spiral 3, Leo
cries briefly and Barbara does not respond.   Leo stops
crying and again this evokes no response.   He returns to
his earlier behaviour and the potential for a continuation

of the spiral is created.

Episode markers

The start of the episode is marked by the start of the event either snack or a meeting and, as in spiral 2, the end may be marked by Leo indicating a need to urinate.

Observations without violence

There are two such observations for Barbara and Leo: Observation 4. This contains a long sequence of Leo being active and grizzling at Barbara. He is met with no response or a negative response. He hurts himself accidentally during this sequence and then later Barbara responds to him with a threatening gesture. Once when he wanders off again and goes to the door Barbara lets him go out and then closes the door behind him and he cries.

Later, in response to his noise she threatens 'if I smack you you'll feel it, now stop it'. He does stop his noise to which Barbara does not respond, and Leo immediately tries to move out of the circle again which after a call meets with another threat. 'Leo if you go out I'm going to smack you really hard'. He stays put, so this time she is effective. There is no clear clue in this observation why actual violence is not used.

Observation 1b.   At the beginning of the sequence of
interactions Barbara and Leo are having a cuddle.   This is
unusual and may account for the observation subsequently
developing differently from the violent spirals.   Leo then
takes off his slippers and, after telling him not to and
'you'll catch cold', she does a threatening gesture to
which he pouts, laughs and gets off his chair and does not
persist trying to get his slippers off and after exploring
comes back to Barbara and they cuddle.

Summary
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3 spirals are described for Barbara and Leo.   In spiral 1,
(see Fig. 3.5,p.309) the "You-Didn't-Notice Spiral", Leo
obeys his mother but, not being acknowledged, is then
disobedient.   The disobedience evokes violence.   Leo's
responses to this violence are mild.   The episodes
containing this spiral are clearly marked, a period of
calm and closeness preceedes Leo making a noise or being
disobedient and the end is marked by a physical separation
or Leo directing his attention elsewhere.

Spiral 2, (sse Fig.3.6, p.212) the "Persisting-Resisting
Spiral" does not include obedience but only Leo persisting
in being noisy or not doing what he was told.   Violence is
used more quickly after Barbara tries vainly to restrain
him and Leo's response is more intense.   The episodes are
less clearly marked.

In the "Independence Spiral", spiral 3 (see Fig. 3.7, p.215), Leo makes a demand which is refused and after he acts independently to satisfy his request, Barbara hits him. He cries and separation follows. A variation on this spiral is described when disobedience is followed by Leo hitting someone else. This evokes violence from his mother. The episodes containing this spiral begin at the start of the activity and may end with Leo indicating he needs to urinate.

Two observations without violence are described in which Barbara uses threatening gestures and the overt threat of violence. When she issues two such threats, she is effective and Leo obeys.

Lesley and Laura - pilot family

Summary

Lesley, 27, grew up in London and was the second child in
her family. She had a difficult and violent relationship
with her father but was close to her mother. She left
school at 15 and began working in shops. At 18 she became
pregnant and had an abortion, largely against her own
wishes. The father of this baby was not accepted by her
family, and soon after Lesley's abortion, committed
suicide. Lesley's father died when Lesley was 21. More
recently her mother had an accident and is an invalid.
Lesley has taken much responsibility for caring for her,
as by this time, her sister was living in Germany with her
second husband. Lesley lived with David, the father of
her daughter Laura (4) but left him while attending the
family centre. Lesley enjoyed motherhood but found the
first 10 months with Laura stressful as the baby vomited
frequently. Lesley was referred to the centre by social
services. At the time, the relationship with David was
very stormy; Lesley was drinking heavily, abusing herself
and threatening suicide. There was concern for Laura's
well being in such circumstances.

Childhood

Lesley is her parents' second child. She considers that
her mother wanted to have another baby but her father was

very much against it, and resented Lesley's presence. Her mother was 44 when Lesley was born and Lesley said her father thought this was too old to have a baby. As a result he was very violent towards Lesley. She thought he was violent towards her for 'normal things' such as tantrums but his responses were extreme. 'He would just literally thump me or throw me across the room...you know something quite brutal really'.

She took some reponsiblity for provoking him and thought she pestered, and 'was an awful kid, really horrible'. Nevertheless his violence frightened her and she was aware that her sister was treated much differently.

She thought that her mother was unable to control her and that her father's means were unacceptable but effective. Her parents argued over his use of violence between themselves but Lesley never witnessed her father hitting her mother. After such arguments Lesley tried to console her mother.

She had recollections of some good times with her father when he took her and her sister out to the zoo or the funfair, and he was generous with toys and money. Her relationship with her father improved as she grew older 'and more reasonable'.

Lesley's father died when she was 21; her mother is still alive, but an invalid.

Thus Lesley's predominant recollections of her early childhood are of a violent father who did not want her and a mother who tried ineffectually to protect her. She could not recall her sister before the age of 10.

Schooling

Lesley enjoyed her primary school and portrayed herself as being stubborn and difficult to control. 'I didn't accept authority'. Rather than confess to being unable to do something she would refuse to do it. She considered this prevented her from appearing foolish in front of her friends. Nevertheless she had a good relationship with her headmaster. She recalled one teacher who 'did like caning for any little reason'. This frightened her and reminded her of her father 'so I did what I was told with her'. She said that she still hates this teacher and it reminds her of the hate she felt towards her father when he hurt her. At primary school she had many friends.

When she attended secondary school, her father helped her with her homework. Her sister truanted during the last 14 months of her own schooling and Lesley would also have liked to truant but felt too frightened to do so. She did not achieve well at school and considered she was not

'very bright'. 'It was unbearable sometimes not being able to do lessons'. She became more isolated at this time and had no confidante at school. She recalled only one friend whom she saw after school.

To summarise, at primary school Lesley was happy and had a circle of friends. However at secondary school, although her relationship with her father improved, she was frightened and isolated. She achieved no qualifications.

After school

Lesley left school at 15 and went to work in shops, work she found boring. At 16 she began having boyfriends and at 18 she became pregnant. Her father 'blackmailed' her into having an abortion, threatened to throw her out of the home and told her the baby would be removed from her. 'So I did just what he wanted me to do really. My mother went along with it....she didn't really want to force me. She knew that I wanted to have the baby.'

The baby's father, Malcolm, was her fiancé and Lesley's father forced them to separate. Shortly after this, Malcolm commited suicide. 'He was lovely, I know I loved him very much...he was the only one that ever really meant anything to me, even up till now'. Malcolm started taking drugs and he hung himself. 'I mean giving up the baby was

something, but to see him die was really awful at the time, but now really I've got over it'.

After this she moved out of home and shared a flat with a girl friend and began to feel 'really happy'. She visited home, and her relationship with her father improved. Her father died 2 years later, when Lesley was 21, and a few years ago her mother had an accident and has since been an invalid. She had brain surgery which has left her deaf and shaky.

Thus the second half of Lesley's teens were overshadowed by her pregnancy, abortion and death of the baby's father. Her work meant little to her and it was not until she began living on her own that she started feeling happier.

David

Lesley lived with David and together they had a baby, Laura. This baby was very much wanted by Lesley but not by David, who already had children from a previous relationship. (The pattern of her own parents was thus repeated.) Initially their relationship was good but then David spent more and more time going out on his own and they began arguing. The rows reached a peak when Laura was about 6 months old and David was having an affair with someone else.

Motherhood

Lesley recalled enjoying Laura's birth and being very
excited at the time. At first she mistook Laura for a
boy. She thought Laura was a 'very very pretty baby'. All
went well for the first 4 days but then Laura began
vomiting after each feed. Lesley was breast feeding her
but became anxious and 'blamed it on my milk and I refused
to breast feed her but they convinced me that there was
nothing wrong with my milk and I carried on.'

Laura continued to vomit though was also gaining weight
but Lesley recalled 'getting into a bad state about it'.
Laura was admitted to hospital for a week for
investigations but nothing was found. Laura also cried a
lot and Lesley felt that she was doing something wrong.

She received no support from David who slept all day and
was out at night, 'he was a rotten father' . Lesley did
not allow her mother to help as she was worried about her
fragility. She acknowledged being overprotective, and
would not let her sister hold Laura either, even though
she was perfectly capable.

When Laura was 10 months the situation improved, 'I
started to enjoy her then' and Lesley found her gorgeous
and lovely. Lesley and Laura were together 24 hours a day

and Lesley also visited her mother every day.

Thus, Lesley wanted very much to be a mother and was disappointed with the first 10 months of Laura's life, but afterwards she enjoyed her child even though she received very little support in caring for her.

Laura

Proudly Lesley recalled that Laura began moving around at 5 months and walking at 9 months. She considered her to be very bright. At 2 Laura 'became unreasonable about everything' and battles ensued. Lesley disliked the amount of shouting she had to do and recalled allowing Laura to win the arguments. At the time of the interviews she described Laura as a 'very bright, very sociable very caring little girl, with moods and she still has her temper tantrums, and she is still sometimes charming when there are other people around, but she can appear to be the perfect little girl..............I adore her she's my treasure'

Lesley and Laura enjoy outings together. She attended a playgroup in the afternoons from the age of 2.

So apart from a difficult phase at 2, Lesley's impressions of Laura are very positive. Although she found the first

10 months difficult she was still impressed with her daughter's achievments. She acknowledges her moods and temper, but remains very impressed with Laura.

Violence

Laura began having tantrums when she was two and usually Lesley considered that shouting was effective. She recalled only two occasions when she had given Laura 'a really good smack on the bottom'. One was the end of the day, after many battles 'my throat was sore with her, maybe from shouting or just trying to reason with her, and I thought this is it, she's just going to get a smacked bottom and she did, she got a bloody good hiding on her arse.'

Although Lesley thought this had been effective, and may have been so at other times, she did not like using violence and avoided doing so. When she did use it, she felt guilty and would 'beg her forgiveness. I hated smacking then. I mean now we'll get a tap, a smack but I would't regard it as a good hiding, that was the only time I'd ever really ....now she gets a tap on the bottom, it does nothing, it just helps me get rid of some frustration, really its not punishment for her'.

Lesley does not tolerate 'rudeness' or swearing' 'if

she keeps on she gets a slap. She gets a few warnings but it's like she's deliberatley making me cross and she can see I'm getting very worked up with her......she wants to get me going, then I'll slap her on the bottom, she laughs, and she goes funny unless I give her a real slap. I told you I hate smacking her.....if its a real smack and I'm really serious and I'm very cross with her then she'll just say ok mummy I'm sorry and I'll say yes right and I don't want any trouble out of you gain and then I'll say you made me smack you, you made me cross, I explain to her why I smacked her.'

Lesley did not explain in detail why she disapproved of violence but said 'I don't like smacking children, I don't think it's that necessary. There are times when mothers are driven to giving their child a smack. I mean a smack, not a thump, or a punch, only a smack, what I meant by a good hiding was to pull her knickers down and smack her bottom two times. To me it was bloody too hard, but I think its just what you feel.........I didn't like smacking kids.'

So Laura's only misdemeanour, mentioned in the general interviews, which will provoke Lesley to using violence is insolence. She differentiates between a 'bloody good hiding' and a 'tap' or 'slap' and avoids using the former.

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Referral to the family centre

Lesley's relationship with David had deteriorated, she was drinking heavily, was injuring herself and had stopped eating. Laura was kicking her, hurting Lesley and 'I used to let her do it'. She was referred to the family centre by social services and had hoped that she would be given an instant cure. 'I didn't realise that I had to do it all by myself really but with some help, with the support of the staff'.

Treatment

During her treatment she ended her relationship with David and reluctantly lived with her mother for a while. After a period in bed and breakfast accomodation she was given her own council flat.

As a result of treatment she considers that she is now more in charge of Laura and she now likes herself more. She explained that Laura 'was more like the mother really.....she was bossy...she used to hit me and bite me and talk to me like I was a little kid and I'd let her do it.....I just used to think, well I'm so awful I used to let her do it.....but now I am the mum'

After an incident when Lesley became very drunk and

attempted to cut her wrists, Laura was taken into care and Lesley admitted into hosptial. She considered that spending seven weeks in hospital had helped her to have space to think.

The community meetings had helped her to take charge of Laura. She considered she learnt from watching other mothers who were determined to control their children and from one mother who helped her understand a child's mind. 'Yes she seemed to understand her child a lot really, which was helpful, it's nice to understand your kids and not just say no and no, don't do that.......'

In the playroom she considered she had learnt much from watching the staff and from playing with Laura herself. It helped her to discover what was appropriate for a 3 year old. Additionally she observed Laura with a member of staff and this helped her to re-appraise what she was seeing, she realised that Laura was a perfectionist and concluded that this was 'too fussy' for a 3 year old, and that Laura was probably not enjoying playing as much as she might. Lesley considered that both she and Laura had changed as a result of their stay in the family centre. Laura became more relaxed in her play and Lesley considered that her own confidence had improved; she was not as anxious about making 'a fool of herself' as she had been.

To summarise, during treatment Lesley separated from David and eventually was given her own flat. She found a stay in hospital helpful; within the centre, community meetings helped her take charge of Laura and watching and playing with Laura helped her to understand and assess Laura more age appropriately.

Self-image

Lesley did not consider she was bright at school and that her lack of her achievement at school left her feeling 'insecure'. However, now she is going to sit for a CSE and felt she has gained confidence. Now, she also believes people when they tell her she is good with children.

Summary of general interviews

Lesley had a violent father who did not want her and a mother who wanted her but was unable to protect her. She was happier at primary than at secondary school. She did not manage to pass any exams and left to work in shops. At 19 she became pregnant and had an abortion. Her fiancé committed suicide, which upset Lesley greatly. She began feeling happier when she left home and shared a flat with a friend. She met and lived with David, with whom she had a stormy relationship. Together they had a baby, Laura, whom Lesley very much wanted, but David did not. Lesley

found the first 10 months with Laura difficult and had no support. However subsequently she enjoyed motherhood. She describes Laura very positively, though with her failings. She uses violence rarely and disapproves of hitting children. The only misdemeanour that continues to provoke violence is insolence.

The referral to the centre helped her to take control of her drinking, self abuse, and she finished her relationship with David. She considered being an in-patient had given her thinking time, that community meetings helped her to take charge of Laura and that watching and playing with Laura helped her to understand her more.

End of day interview

There were no observed incidents of violence and so it was not possible to complete an end of day interview when violence had occurred. However within the interview Lesley discusses battles she has with Laura and how she handles them, and some of her attitudes towards violence. These will provide the focus for this summary.

Lesley struggles to get Laura ready in the mornings and ends up dressing her. In the street Lesley may pretend to walk away and hide behind a wall or drag Laura along when

she refuses to walk by herself. 'I do my pretend walking away and I hide behind a wall (laughs) and then she sees I'm gone and rushes up the street. Its like that every morning, its not easy getting her here really. I dread it....its just the journey she hates'.

During snack Laura was complaining and Lesley had left her to cry until she came into the room sobbing. Lesley gave her a cuddle and explained that if she is sympathetic or tries to encourage her 'the more she'll play on it'.

Laura witnessed another child being hit during the day and she ran to Lesley and sat quietly with her. Lesley described this as being characterisitc of Laura's behaviour at the moment. Lesley thought it correct that this child was smacked and would have smacked Laura if she had hit a 2 year old. (This is a misdemeanour she does not mention in the general interviews.)

She saw nothing for which Laura needed a spanking today and will not discipline her for 'things I hear secondhand' She considered that Laura had been good that day. So, Lesley described a good day with Laura although it began with some struggles over getting dressed and and walking. However she did not consider it necessary to use violence.

Summary of the results

What emerges from the analysis of the observations are the existence of patterns of interactions, of spirals, which are repeated on many occasions. Most of the observations can be fitted into one of a few types for each of the families observed. There are some characteristics of these spirals that are common to all the families in the sample and these will now be described.

1.   As stated above, the cycles are observable.

They are not merely hypothesised structures to account for the recurrence of violence, but through close observation and recording, can be described in behavioural terms. The observations were non-particpant and detailed. Such observations could be carried out by therapists based on their own interactions with clients. The use of more than one observer would add both further detail and another perspective on the spirals but in this study this was not possible.

2.   They are repeated.

Most of the spirals occur more than once during the periods of observation. Also, they may be repeated during the same observation. This implies that if there is a desired goal for either of the

participants, it is not being reached. Or it could be that both mother and child have some investment, conscious or unconscious, in maintaining predictable interactions.

3. They are predictable.

After observing parent and child for a while, I was able to predict if a mother was going to be violent or not and what the likely response of her child would be. The description of the spirals confirms this predictability. The children demonstrate occasionally that they know what is the likely maternal response to their actions , for example, Sandy waves his hands in expectation of being hit after swearing at his mother. The mothers, too, know well what the likely response will be to their violence is likely to be and know what they will do if the child perists or taunts them, which happens frequenty.

There are of course variations to the theme and they are also dependent to some extent on the context or setting and the people present. For example Sandy screams when hit when he is excluded from seeing his father while usually he does not cry or complain when hit.

4. Violence is not the end point in the spirals.

    In order to understand the spirals, it is necessary not just to discover what comes before the violent act but also afterwards. That is, the response to violence and the response of the parent to this may be as much part of a repeated pattern as the violence itself. It could be argued that the violence is a peak in terms of the intensity of the interaction between mother and child, and in some families this may well be the case. However two mothers in this study (Beryl and Daphne) both suggest that a threat of more violence carries greater impact for the child and is accompanied by more emotional expression from them too.

5. Violence is not used as a response to passivity in the child.

    In the observations there is not one event when a parent uses violence because she considers a child is not doing something. That is, violence is usually used because a parent has tried unsuccessfully to stop a from child doing something, not because he is not doing something she would like him to do. The child is not given a replacement activity, but the mother tries to inhibit whatever it is the child is doing. Possibly is it less of a problem to make a child do something, to activate him. Thus violence is used for

'upper limit control' (Bell '68) and this behaviour could be considered to be repeatedly evoked in the parent by the child.

6. There is not a 'classical' escalation of words, threats and then violence.

    From an outsider's perspective, it would be easy to imagine that there is inherent in these patterns a gradual increase in intensity of maternal behaviour from calm request, or possibly distraction, to more firm requests to threat, to sanction perhaps and finally violence. However in the families of this study this is not so, and the patterns do not show this progression. The mothers report using the threat of violence after an act of violence, and that this is then effective, more so than the violence itself. This is confirmed by the observations. In Beryl's case there are many observations where the threat of violence is made but this threat is not carried out.

7. Both mother and child are required for maintenance of the spirals.

    It is not just the mother's behaviour but the child's that is to some extent predictable. Therefore the spirals cannot be considered as only the responsibility of one of the participants.

8.   The lack of responses to each other's behaviours can
      be as important as overt responses in maintaining the
      spirals.

      In all the spirals there are times when the mother
      chooses not to respond to her child, and this allows
      the spiral to continue on its course. For example
      Barbara does not respond to Leo when he obeys her and
      he then persists in disruptive behaviour; similarly
      when Beryl does not respond to Sandy, he continues to
      interrupt and violence follows. Daphne also does not
      acknowledge Martin's changed behaviour and the spiral
      repeats.

9.   The   spirals demonstrate that violence   is   not
      immediately cathartic.

      Frequently violence does not provide a release of
      anger   or frustration which then   prevents   the
      development of any further violence. Within the
      spirals, violence may be used more than once and
      frequently the interactions following   violence
      indicate that the spiral may soon be repeated again.
      For example within spiral 1 Daphne ignores Martin
      after using violence even if he behaves as she
      wanted,   and the initial steps of the spiral are
      repeated.   In Beryl's and Sandy's case spiral 2
      describes an extended continuation of spiral 1.   In
      spiral 2 violence is used in an uncontrolled way.

This suggests that violence may breed more violence and that using less severe forms of violence will not necessarily prevent the use of more extreme forms. In addition the data from the interviews suggest that the mothers frequently do not want to be violent, and feel badly about it afterwards. However their feelings do not serve to inhibit the violence as some theorists predict.

CHAPTER 4 : DISCUSSION

In chapter 3, spirals of violence were described which are
characteristic for each family and are based on observable
behaviours. Also included are the mother's descriptions of
violent incidents and details of the families' past and
current situations. In this chapter, a model will be
described which draws together these various components
into a general model of violent incidents, one which can
be tested for its applicability to other families.

Development of the spiral model

As argued in Chapter 1, describing the characteristics of
families or individuals in which there has been child
abuse is not useful in providing a predictive or
explanatory model and had few implications for treatment.
Lynch ('78) describes situational factors, such as
financial problems , hospitalisations, difficulties with
own family , in terms of a critical path with many
stresses converging at the time of a violent incident but
does not describe the interaction involved in the incident
itself. Bentovim ('77b) also integrates factors relating
to the occurrence of child abuse and also includes factors
after the incident, but the interaction occurring inthe
incident itself is not described.

However there have been some attempts at describing a

model of family violence and, as mentioned in chapter 1, these are reviewed and integrated by Gelles and Straus ('79): In this review they include theories and conceptual frameworks which have not been applied to family violence but which they consider to have some relevance and may be developed usefully. They mention, for example, the symbolic interaction approach which would be concerned with the nature of the meaning of violence and the consequences of such meanings in situations. Also it would be concerned with violent episodes. This, and related ideas proposed by Harré('77) are very important in the model of violence proposed here. Harré is particularly concerned with the rules governing behaviour, rules which give it meaning for those enacting it. It is argued that child abuse or violence may appear meaningless to outsiders but is not meaningless to those involved even if the rules governing child abuse or family violence may be idiosyncratic.

Marsh et al.('78) suggest that football hooliganism can appear meaningless but they describe the intricate rules and rituals of such behaviour , which the participants can describe clearly. They also argue that the original cause of such behaviours may no longer be active and there is no sense in looking back for such a cause. They argue that the important aspects for consideration are "reasons for behaviour" but not causes. An analysis along the lines

they suggest will lead to explanatory models but not predictive models. Eventually predictive models may be developed but only after clear explanatory models have been established.

As discussed in chapter 2 the emphasis on the "reasons" and meanings of behaviour are applied here. Shotter('78) also argues that social behaviour is best explained by the reasons that an actor can provide. He suggests that this will not necessarily reveal rules or scripts for actions, but may demonstrate how these are assessed and taken into account; he emphasises the intentional nature of man as an actor and argues that adherence to rules implies a determinism which is not necessarily present. Individuals' accounts of their actions will lead to their reasons for attempting something particular, not to a general law. He stresses that such reasons are crucial in understanding individuals as active agents.

Kadushin and Martin's('81) useful study of child abuse which highlights the importance of the child's role in violent incidents can be thought, at first glance, to be similar in approach to that taken here. However as Roberts('82) points out they are nevertheless concerned with causality and in searching for a first cause. A greater emphasis on meaning and reasons for behaviour is closer to the anthropological approach described by

Geertz('75) where the focus of ethnographic description is interpreting informant's accounts and actions.

It could be thought that the search for meanings and reasons is only possible when behaviours are under fully conscious self-control. Undoubtedly it is a more straightforward process and the informants have more ready access to their own accounts and reasons. However Harré('80) argues that even the less self conscious forms of human action are better studied as if they were more conscious, and that his research has supported this approach.

Another important inclusion in Gelles and Straus' review, in terms of this research, and mentioned in chapter 1, is General Systems Theory. This has been applied to family violence by Straus('73). She describes violence as an output of the 'system' rather than a phenomenon which can be described with reference to an individual only and suggests feedback processes will reduce or escalate violent behaviour. She highlights the importance of feedback in the maintenance of violent behaviour but is not specific enough in terms of actual behaviours to be applied usefully to particular families or dyads. Erchak's('81) description develops these ideas, and within a different framework, Patterson's('82) description of Coercion Theory also highlights the interactive

processes involved in violence and the importance of feedback of one participant to another, as well as the effect of an individual's own previous behaviours. These ideas, mentioned in chapter 1, are developed in the model proposesd in this thesis.

Asen(a & b.forthcoming) has also used a systems approach in describing families where there has been child abuse. A typology of abusing families is presented which is predominantly based on the function the child abuse has for the family, for example to recruit help from outsiders and to mediate the emotional and physical closeness between family members. Many useful therapeutic implications emerge from such an analysis which have much in common with suggestions described at the end of this chapter. However Asen's papers do not focus on the minutiae of the violent incident and the immediate perceptions of those involved.

The spiral model to be presented here can been seen as integration of some of the ideas supported by Harré et al. in the ethogenic approach, General Systems Theory and the aggression model as proposed by Frude('80). Frude's model has been described fully in chapter 1, and was the most useful in making sense of the data gathered in this study. It will be summarised here:

N.Frude - child abuse as aggression.

Frude suggests a model which concentrates on the violent
incident as the focus of study. Frude argues that extreme
violence and child abuse are in many cases similar in type
to the angry responses seen in families where there has
been no child abuse and that clues about child abuse will
be provided by studying these families. His model was the
most useful to me in understanding violence but my data
highlights areas where his model needs further work. For
ease of reference, Figure 1 is repeated here.

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.---------------------------------------------------------------------.
:                              anger                                   :
:                           /        \                                 :
:                          /          \                                :
: Objective               /            \ I/F          aggressive       :
: situation ---- appraisal              factors ------ action          :
:                         \            /                               :
:                          \          /                                :
:                           \        /                                 :
:                          instrumental                                :
:                            analysis                                  :
:                                                                      :
.---------------------------------------------------------------------.
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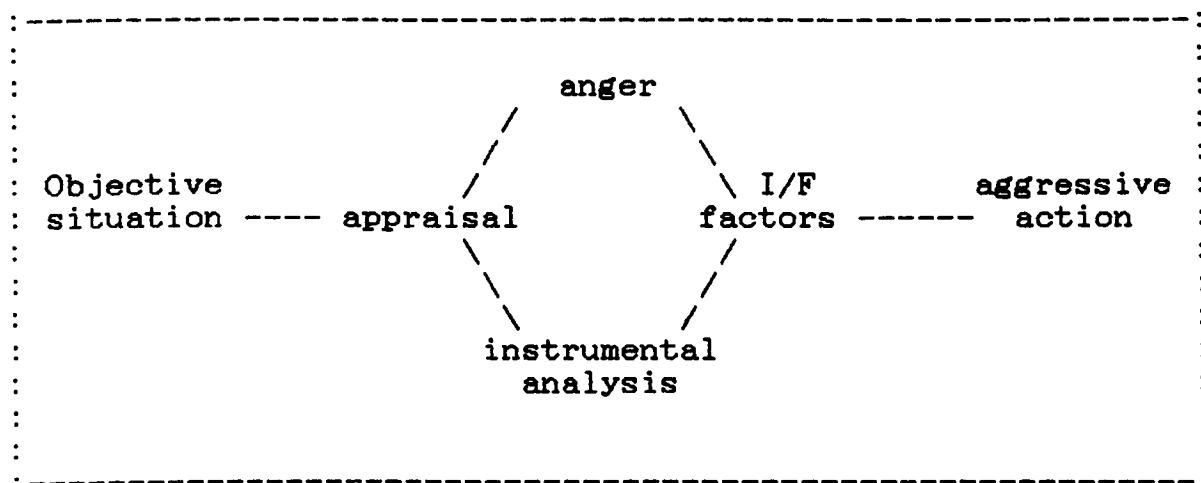
Figure 4.1. Frude's model of Child Abuse as Aggression

Frude's model focuses on the violent incident. Within this
he considers various elements:

Objective   situation.

This refers both to the immediate situation, including the behaviour of the child and the immediate context, and also to the longer term situation of the parent, such as financial and marital difficulties.

Appraisal.

This is the parent's cognitive and emotional understanding of the situation.

Anger.

This refers to the emotional arousal of the parent which may be exacerbated by stress.

Inhibitory/Facilitatory factors.

These are internal and external factors which either discourage or encourage the use of violence.

Agressive action.

The violent behaviour, in this case, towards the child.

Instrumental concerns.

This refers to the use of violence to achieve a specific aim, particularly in relation to those outside the family.

As stated, Frude's model was helpful in understanding the violence described and observed in this study, though as a result of this research the model was seen to require further development. Initially areas in common with, and supported by this study, will be described, and this will

be followed a discussion of areas requiring development.

Areas in common.

Focus on incident

Frude's model focuses on a violent incident, though each element can be considered from different time perspectives. This is consistent with this study. The observations provide an immediate description from the observer's point of view. Later that day, a description of the incident is given by the mother. This account contains information about, for example, mood and behaviours at the time of the incident, but also comments are given concerning a wider time perspective, concerning their living situations, their attitudes. The general interviews also provide clues regarding more distant influences such as the mother's own upbringing and experiences of violence.

Use of major concepts - objective situation, appriasal, anger, I/F factors

In the revised model proposed here Frude's major concepts have been retained but they have been elaborated and incorporated within a model which also includes the behavioural spirals described in Chapter 3.

Areas requiring development

Frude does not define aggression, and uses various terms: "aggression incident", "aggressive action", "aggression and its behavioural expression" and "displaced aggression". His use of the term aggression in these ways is confusing.

Gelles and Straus('79) suggest that aggression is a more general concept than violence. As stated in chapter 1, they define violence as "an act carried out with the intention, or perceived intention, of physically injuring another person. The injury can range from slight pain, as in a slap, to a murder......"(p584). Aggression can refer to any malevolent act; that is, an act which has the intention of, or which is perceived as having the intention of hurting another. The hurt can be psychological, material, deprivation or damage. When the injury is pain or damage, one can speak of physical aggression and is then synonymous with violence. As mentioned in chapter 1, the perspective being considered is important, particularly in relation to the assessment of intention. An observer can only assume intention from overt behaviour, the perpetrator may have a different opinion concerning the intention of the action. Gelles and Straus argue that their definition is consistent with the way the term is used in the social psychological

literature. Dollard('44) for example, defines aggression as behaviour aimed at the injury of a person or thing, and thus confirms Gelles and Straus's argument. This definition is the one that has been used in this study and does seem to be what Frude means.

Frude is aware that the model requires feedback loops but does not provide them. He suggests that the feedback is present from the mother's own actions to subsequent actions, but it is also true that the behaviour of each person acts as a feedback to the other. The child and parent are constantly affecting one another in a process of mutual feedback. In Frude's model the violent behaviour is the end point in the description, though he suggests that the response to violence is important in any further use of violence.

As suggested earlier, Frude makes a distinction between instrumental concern, when the violence has a purpose which is aimed at those outside the family, and violence based on anger which may also have instrumental concerns but in relation to the child's behaviour. This is not entirely clear in his model. His distinction minimises the importance of instrumental considersations in more common occurrences of violence. In this model, such a clear distinction between the two forms of instrumental concern is not made, but both are seen as important in the

understanding of violence. This is supported by Kadushin and Martin('81) who state that in most cases of child abuse which they studied, the parents had a deliberate explicit disciplinary objective in mind and the clear instrumental intent to modify the child's behaviour, and violence was less frequently merely expressive and a means of relieving anger and frustration. Asen's (forthcoming) study and description of violent families also considers violence as having a function for the family system and not merely being a method of expressing feelings. He discusses instrumental concerns relating to the immediate participants of the incident, other family members, and outsiders.

Berkowitz('83) makes a slightly different distinction and argues that much parental violence is "emotional aggression", that one of its prime aims is to do injury. He emphasises more impulsive, uncontrolled instances of violence but does suggest that these behaviours may be goal- directed. However the goal is the inflicting of injury. It is suggested here that violence only used with the intention of hurting for its own sake is rare. This is confirmed by Straus('83) who concludes from his study of 2,143 families that physical punishment is "instrumental aggression" and that the primary goal is not to hurt, but to use hurting to achieve another aim but that cases of pure instrumental aggression are rare. He argues that

parents are frustrated and angry, so both instrumental and expressive components are present. He suggests, however, that the child may focus more on the latter. His conclusions support the findings described here.
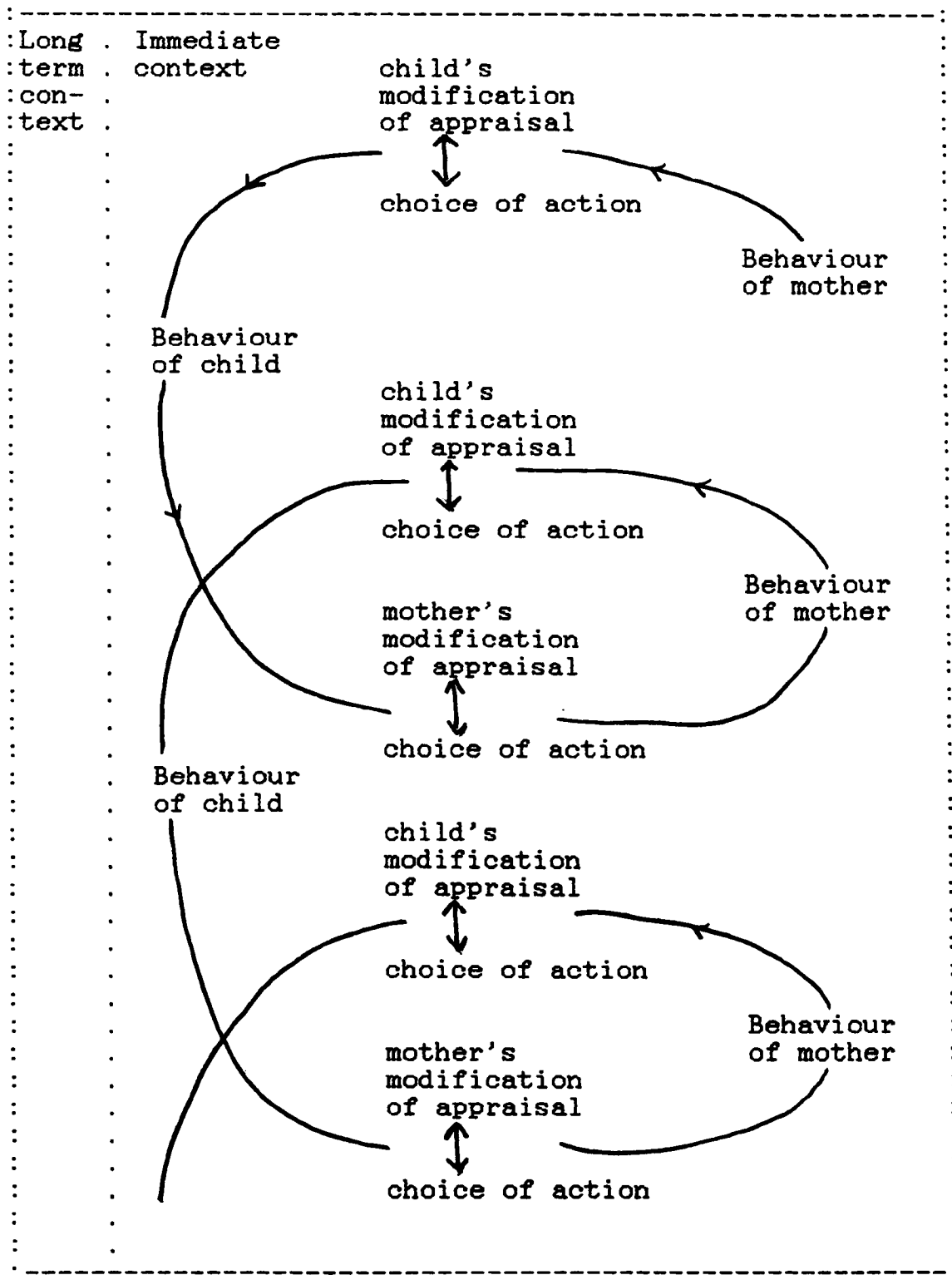
Figure 4.2 - THE SPIRAL MODEL

SPIRAL MODEL

The model to be described here is a revision of Frude's
model which also incorporates the spirals described in
Chapter 3. Frude's major concepts are retained and the
resulting model is similar in structure to Sherwood's
model of racial misuse ('80). It also bears similarities
to a structural model of a system with simple feedback
mechanisms (see Broderick and Smith '79), a system
involved in power struggles which are at risk of
escalating until some damage occurs. Such spirals can be
described as augmenting, developing so that violence does
occur, as opposed to dampening spirals where, even though
there may be a potential for violence it does not occur.

Feedback

As can be seen from the diagram, this model allows for the
continuous feedback and modification of behaviour and
perceptions that occur during human interaction. This is
still a simplification of such feedback processes but it
allows for the component parts to be studied and
understood.

Behaviour

The current objective situation in this model consists of
the behavioural steps of the spiral. These are observable
and describeable and are the basis of the families'

spirals described in Chapter 3. Similar to Frude's model this model separates, for the purpose of analysis, the behaviour from the emotional and internal processes underlying the behaviour. However the behaviour can be described with reference to the style in which it is executed, a factor which may be crucial in terms of the message that the behaviour conveys to the child.

An example of this is Beryl's observable and described distinction between controlled and uncontrolled violence; although the resulting injury may be similar the implications for her own feelings are different as are the behaviours evoked in Sandy. When she is uncontrolled she thrashes her arms around rather than hits him directly and smartly, as she does when she considers that she is more in control. She reports that when she uses uncontrolled violence he is more likely to retort with swearing or shouting than when she is controlled.

The behaviours of the children evident in these spirals are as follows:

Sandy:
fidgeting, noise, interruptions, demands for physical closeness, persistence in the face of requests to stop his interrupting behaviour, violence towards Beryl, interruption, rudeness in response to injunction.

Beryl herself describes various behaviours of Sandy that are likely to evoke her frustration, an emotion that she herself connects with violence: swearing, raiding cupboards, squeezing her knee in anger, interrupting her, taunting "no you won't" when she threatens to hit or punish him.

Martin:

fidgeting, noise, crawling on the floor, physical involvement with Daphne, peristence in the face of injunction (inappropriate behaviour for the rules of the meeting), e xaggerated physical contact, violence towards Daphne.

Daphne says she uses violence in response to noise, being wild, persistence, "playing up", hurting her, his slowness and his rudeness

Leo:

breaking rules for meeting, for example going out of the circle, noise, persistent demands. (There is no information regarding Barbara's own appraisal of his behaviours).

Laura:

There are no observations for this family but Lesley says

she uses violence for 'swearing, rudeness' and would do so if Laura hit a younger child, though this situation had not yet arisen.

Thus most of the behaviours listed above do fall into the categories described by Frude and Kadushin and can be seen as behaviours which are facilitators of violence. Frude and Goss suggest three categories of child behaviour likely to evoke maternal anger. These are irritants, such as crying or whining; transgressions, such as acts of defiance and swearing; and costs for the mother, such as frequent wetting or interruptions. All the children's behaviours seen in the spirals and those described by the mothers as likely to evoke anger or violence can be included in these categories. In one spiral, (see Fig. 3.2.1 p.156) all three types of behaviour occur, the immediate precursor to violence being a transgression. Daphne and Martin's spirals show no occurrence of transgressions leading to violence; however she does report using violence for swearing.

Appraisal and its modification

The perceived meaning of the situation is what is meant here by appraisal. This is a vital element relating to the elicited emotion and observed behaviour of an individual. In Figure 4.2 it is suggested that both mother

and child will be involved in making appraisals which will subsequently affect their behaviours but only the mother's point of view will be considered here. The mother's appraisal of the current situation is affected by the behaviour of the child, the range of available appraisals and her appraisal of her previous behaviour. Each of these will now be discussed.

The behaviour of the child

This is the objective behaviour as can be observed by another. All the mothers in the study described some behaviours on the part of their child that predictably evoke anger and possibly violence in them, as was described above.

The range of possible appraisals currently available to the mother

Frude and other writers, such as Fontana and Robison('84), suggest that abusive parents are inaccurate in interpreting the meaning of the child's signals. Here it is suggested that this is because the parents have internal access to only a limited range of appraisals. This makes it less likely for the parent to understand the child's behaviour differently at different times or in different contexts.

It may be that some mothers are more likely to account for

behaviours in different ways because they are more sensitive to more subtle cues in the child or the situation, but it could also well be that a preparedness to attribute different meanings also alerts them to these more subtle cues. That is, if they have a larger range of possible ideas or categories with which to describe their children's behaviours, they may be more likely to observe the small differences that allow for finer differentiations to be made in describing them.

For example Beryl describes that at times she is more likely to see other children's role in provoking Sandy into violence against children and then she is less likely to use violence. Also if she considers that he is 'actually playing', rather than trying to aggravate her, then violence is not used. Thus these appraisals of the situation act as inhibitors to violence. The same behaviour is assigned different meanings at a different times.

Gelles and Cornell('85), within their exchange/social control theory, discuss the cost of parenting and the lack of reward given by particular children as contributing to violent incidents. However this is presented as if there are objective measurable costs and rewards which can be assessed, and that in the case of handicapped or difficult children, for example, the costs are greater and the

rewards less. But here it is argued that no such objective judgement can be made; it is the parents' appraisal of a child and the situation which will affect how rewarding a child is perceived to be, and how much it 'costs' to take care of them. Some adults adopt handicapped children and many handicapped children live happily with their natural parents, so this cannot be given as a complete explanation, even if combined with notions regarding social control. In addition, many non-handicapped children are abused, and the theory must take into account the violence done to children who develop normally.

If a mother has only a limited accounting schema for her child's behaviour, this will, in turn, limit the behaviours she uses in relation to the child, and she may be more likely to resort to violence if she has few meanings within her repertoire. It is not being suggested that one meaning or categorisation leads to one behaviour, but rather, that a certain attributed meaning will limit the range of behaviours from which a mother will choose when responding. Attribution theory is useful in developing these ideas.

Howells('81) discusses attribution theory (AT) within the context of violent offenders, although at the start of his chapter suggests the conclusions are applicable to violent

behaviour in general. AT suggests that attributions made to explain an aversive event will determine the label attached to arousal states and subsequent behaviour. Heider('58) describes three classes of causative factors used in describing behaviour: self, other and environment

Research shows there are biases in attributional style in different groups. Loew('67), for example, studied neurotics and found they tend to say that situations are due to personal inadequacy, a bias unlikely to lead to violence. However a bias to attribute negative intent to others is more likely to be related to violent behaviour.

This bias towards the attribution of malevolent intent is discussed by Howells. Such a bias will lead to a person being resentful and suspicious. However Nasby et al.('80) point out that attribution may mediate aggressive behaviour but behaving agressively may also maintain an attribution bias; a person who is repetitively aggressive may organise others to be hostile to him and thus make his attributions realistic. (Again a spiral or feedback process is described.)

The issue raised by Nasby is addressed by other authors who consider the relationship of attitudes and behaviour and has given rise to the 'consistency controversy'(Liska '75). As a result of early studies, such as LaPiere('34),

some writers concluded that there is little or no relationship between attitudes and behaviour and this was Wicker's('69) conclusion on reviewing the research. Additionally Festinger's('57) work on cognitive dissonance suggests that it is attitudes that are changed in line with behaviour and not the reverse.

However, more recently, the early studies have been re-interpreted and criticised, and there are authors who suggest that, if the concepts are adequately defined, and the methods efficient, then a relationship between attitudes and behaviour can be assessed. (Ajzen and Fishbein '80). (Attitudes are defined by Hill('81) and Ajzen and Fishbein as the evaluation of a psychological object.) Hill, in his review, also concludes that individuals do reflect on their attitudes, both before and after behaving, and that dissonance and self-attribution theory are not sufficient in explaining behaviours that may run counter to or in line with attitudes. Kelman's('78) attitude-action approach suggests that attitudes constantly shift as people interact with the object of their attitudes and the social environment. Attitudes arise and develop in the course of such interaction and in turn they feed into it and guide such interactional processes. He is thus suggesting a cyclical process, relevant to the model described here, which is considered

by Hill to be complex but closer to reality than the linear determinism of many theories.

In this study, mothers report that violence is more likely to be used when the child's behaviour is understood as being a persecution or attack or directly aimed at the mother; for example, he hurt me, he was interrupting me. In Beryl's account, when she sees Sandy's behaviour as an attempt to spoil something for her rather than his response to some situation, she is more likely to hurt him. Lesley, although she rarely uses violence, is more likely to slap Laura when 'she's deliberately making me cross.......she wants to get me going'. In Daphne's case Martin's behaviour is often not explained, and she does not know why he might be behaving in certain ways and seems at a loss for any explanations but will use violence in such circumstances, although she does give the general comment that she hits him "when he is bad". She does also say that 'he plays on it when I'm not in a very good mood...he knows, he feels somethings, he always naughtier then'. (Her lack of possible explanations is also important). This suggests that at times when violence is likely the mothers are more likely to attribute negative intentions to the child rather than to account for their behaviour in terms of the mother's own behaviour or the circumstances.

An important factor limiting the possible range of appraisals is the incapacity (or fluctuating capacity) for the mothers to identify and/or to empathise with their children. The relationship between empathising and violence is described by Spinetta and Rigler('72) and Melnick and Hurley ('69) who suggest abusive parents are poor at empathising with their children and thus less likely to respond to subtle signs of suffering in their children. This connection is also made by Herzberger('83) who after reviewing some studies regarding abusive parents concludes 'a parent who misunderstands the child's developmental abilities and who lacks the empathic skill to discern what his or her child is thinking or feeling may interpret the child's failure to perform some activity as wilful or deliberate, perhaps done to spite the parent. The effect of such an interpretation may be the incitement of retaliatory motivation and subsequent aggresssion.'p320

The process of identification involves various mechanisms: First is the ability to imagine oneself in the child's position and then gain some insight into both how the child is feeling, and the motivation for the child's behaviour.

To be useful this needs to be a partial process, not a "projective identification" where the adult self is lost, but one where the adult retains a sense of her own

identity in order to act appropriately on the understanding of her child. Here it is suggested that this also involves a capacity to revive one's own childhood feelings and experiences, which for parents who have had traumatic and disturbed childhoods, is a dangerous and painful activity. Theorists such as Harris('75) would support this contention. Main('84) also stresses the importance of parents realistically recalling their own childhood and that distorted perceptions were associated with disturbed relationships with their own children.

The second is the ability to sympathise with how the child is behaving and feeling. Here what is being described is the capacity of a mother to say to herself, 'if it were me I wouldn't be feeling this way but I can see and hear that John is feeling and behaving this way, possibly because of this and this'. This is a more intellectual process than the one described previously. It suggests an ability to understand that different people may feel and act differently in the same circumstances. Parents who can take the perspective of the child can be called child-centred.

Beryl for example, when describing her interactions with Sandy on a bad day, perceives all of his naughty behaviour as a persecution of her. Daphne describes Martin's behaviour similarly. At these times it is difficult for

the mothers even to think of alternative possibilities based on more sympathy for the child and his circumstances.

The above discussion relates to the common finding that abusive parents have high expectations and make unrealistic judgements about their children. Although this is often considered to be due to lack of education (or at least to be corrected by education), it is here suggested that it is also based on an inability to observe the child's real capabilities and potential and to build on these. Most mothers do not know at what age children do this or that, and abusive and violent parents are not alone in this. The difference is more likely to be connected with the ability to take the perspective of another mentioned above. This is related to the concept of symbiosis, mentioned in chapter 1 in connection with Justice and Justice's('76 and '82) Psychosocial Stress Model. This refers to the parent's expectations and manipulations of the child so that the child becomes the caretaker of the parent. This is obviously an unreal expectation which will not be fulfilled. Daphne's description of Martin suggests that a similar process may be operating in this family. She describes him as being sensitive to herself and others, knowing when she is upset and sharing her bed and kissing her to wake her when his father is absent. These are all characteristics more

typical of adults.

If a parent can become more child centred she may be more able to watch and encourage, rather than force, her child's natural developments and help the child to strive one step further at a time. The violent mothers referred to in the studies are encouraging their children to strive for many steps at once, and because of the difficulty in being child centred are unable to observe carefully and unintrusively what their children are actually capable of doing. Lesley, for example, describes observing Laura with a therapist and gradually coming to realise that she was not behaving age appropriately.

Barnes('84) points out that most mothers will develop a frame of reference against which to judge their children's progress. They may do this by reading books, watching television, chatting with friends, or talking to professionals, as well as by observing their own children. Additionally, some of their ideas may come from their own childhood experiences, whether good or bad. However all of these processes may be selective, and information may be extracted which primarily conforms to the stereotypes already held by the mother regarding the development of her child. Work may be necessary to help her change her ideas based on a realistic assessment of her child. Her existing frame of reference will be crucial in her appraisal of each situation as it arises with her child.

Some mothers may tend to appraise many of their child's behaviours in terms of 'he should not be doing that' rather than developing her ideas to include what would be a preferable behaviour under the circumstances. This implies that a mother will rarely use distraction or the suggestion of an alternative behaviour as a disciplinary technique and also places responsibility on the child for deciding what to do once he/she has ceased the prohibited behaviour. The potential for a continuation of a augmenting violent spiral is more likely under these circumstances, as the child may yet again choose a behaviour which does not meet with the approval of his/her mother.

The mothers in this study do not report using distraction as a disciplinary measure and on one occasion when Beryl does distract Sandy from a battle concerning his overall she is effective in dampening the spiral and violence does not occur(Obs. 16).

Appraisal of previous behaviour

The mother's behaviour will also be subject to her own appraisal, and this will inter-relate with how she appraises her child's behaviour and the situation. She will assess how effective her behaviour has been in

achieving the aims she intended, and she may have both an explanation and feelings about what she has done. This will be one of the factors affecting an overall appraisal of the situation, which in turn will affect her subsequent choice of action. For example if she has already used violence then its effects will be assessed. The effects on the child of very extreme violence may act as an inhibitor to any further violence (Frude '80, Parke and Collmer '75). Sebastian('83) suggests attacks may be stimulated by a victim's pain or suffering, especially if the aim was to injure; however it is laboratory studies only that he quotes to support this contention. Spinetta and Rigler('72) suggest that, because of low sensitivity, some parents may not respond to low-intensity signs of suffering in their children and continue with violent behaviour.

In this study all the mothers indicate that if the child shows that s/he has been hurt, or cry, then more violence is less likely. It is a denial of hurt, or taunting behaviour, on the part of the child, that is more likely to provoke more violence or more extreme violence. In addition to the hurtful effect on the child of the mother's behaviour, other factors may inhibit or facilitate violence. If she has tried speaking quietly and it has been ineffectual she will be likely to increase her tone, to try violence or even choose to repeat the same behaviour.

It is not only the effect of their behaviour that is important in the parents' appraisal of it but also their attitudes and beliefs concerning its use. Parke and Collmer('75) discuss how parents justify the use of violence to themselves and may blame the child for their behaviour, thus not taking responsibility for their own actions. They suggest that such manoeuvres are likely to maintain the use of violence. Kelly('83) also indicates that parents may have beliefs that justify or favour the use of violence which arise from their own previous behaviours, their own backgrounds and cultural norms. Kadushin and Martin('81) however found that abusive violence evoked anxiety, guilt and shame in a large percentage of the parents he studied. However they also said they would use violence again, but in a more controlled manner. Frude and Goss('80) found mothers may also punish the child in ways that they believe to be wrong.

As discussed earlier, the relationship between attitudes or beliefs and behaviour is not straightforward and has been the subject of much debate in the literature. However writers concerned with child abuse, for example Kelly('83), do consider that it is important to address not only parent's behaviours but also their beliefs concerning the use of violence.

In this thesis the mothers made some of their feelings and beliefs explicit. Beryl, for example, considers that if she smacks in a controlled manner then she is more effective, and if she is uncontrolled, the situation escalates as a result of Sandy's retorts. She also feels smacking to be a failure on her part amd 'it's not good for me cos I get too wound up'.

Daphne says that when she does smack Martin: 'I didn't feel any better for it'. Sometimes she wants to hurt him, especially when he has hurt her, at other times she claims she was not fully aware of what she was thinking, 'I think I gave him a good spanking. I wasn't really thinking'....'I hadn't thought of doing it'.

When Laura was small Lesley considered that 'a really good smack' had been effective but it made her feel guilty. Less intense violence did not have the same effect on Laura but helped Lesley 'get rid of some frustration'. More recently she considered that 'if it's a real smack and I'm really serious' then it is effective. She still explains to Laura why she smacked her, indicating she feels the need to justify her behaviour. But she adds 'I hate smacking her' and 'I don't like smacking children, I don't think its necessary. There are times when mothers

are driven to giving their child a smack. I mean smack, not a thump or a punch, only a smack'.

Choice of action

This is separated from the 'behaviour of the mother' as it is an internal process, which cannot be observed, and which is also affected by a number of factors. The first is the appraisal itself, which has been described above. How a mother chooses to behave will in part be decided by how she perceives the situation she is in. For example if she considers that she has been insulted or ignored she may be more likely to choose a violent behaviour than if she considers that her child has not heard her and been distracted.

A second factor is the instrumental analysis. Frude mentions the rare occasions when a mother deliberately uses violence as a means to an end, such as having her child taken into care. However this type of instrumental analysis occurs on a less extreme level when a mother chooses her course of action in relation to her child. For example Beryl says she uses violence 'to get him to listen'. She implies that other behaviours have been tried with the same aim but have been ineffective, and then she tries violence. This may or may not be effective but nevertheless a form of instrumental analysis has occurred.

Additionally, it is rare in the observations that a mother will use violence to encourage a child to act in a particular fashion but uses it to stop her child from engaging in a particular action. Lesley, for example, uses violence to stop Laura swearing. There is one occasion when Daphne says she used violence to get Martin to hurry up and come into the room when he was taking a long time on the toilet, however this could be considered as using violence to stop him being so slow and thus fits with the use of violence to inhibit action. The mothers in this study do not report using suggestions of substitute activities when they are attempting to discipline their children.

This does indicate that an instrumental distinction is made in relation to the use of violence, as it is with other forms of behaviour.

A third factor is the level and type of emotion. Frude quotes evidence suggesting that violent parents are not more likely to over-react emotionally to a standard situation, but that prior to violent incidents, the parent is often in an highly aroused state due to other factors such as tirednees or rows. Lesley, Beryl and Daphne described 'bad days' when they are concerned about something, are not feeling well, and when their own levels of anger and frustration are higher, or more easily

evoked.   They consider their children to be sensitive to
their states of mind,   and violence is more likely on such
days.

As well as anger, mentioned by ·Frude, frustration and
helplessness are related emotions which are connected with
a choice to use violence.   Beryl frequently mentions her
sense of frustration in dealing with Sandy on bad days and
Daphne demonstrates her helplessness in the observations
and describes how she does not know what to do and that
others keep telling her how to behave.

As   mentioned in chapter 1 Frustration-aggression Theory
discusses   the   connection   between   frustration   and
aggression; some have suggested an innate link and others
a learned link between the two.   This study demonstrates
that frustration is one emotion that is linked with
violence but that alone it cannot explain the decision of
an individual to use violence. Frustration-aggression
Theory   also does not take account of any appraisal or
judgement of the situation,   which may affect the emotion
that is experienced.   Barker et al('41) demonstrated that
aggression is only one possible response to   frustration
and account for the existence of different responses as
a result of different learning experiences.

Not only does the appraisal mediate the relationship between emotion and behaviour but the appraisal may affect the experiencing of the emotion. For example Schachter('64) suggests that the understanding of a situation will effect how a state of arousal is labelled. Thus, as with other components of this model, appraisal and emotion can be seen as being inter-related, and it is not possible to assume that one causes the other.

The importance of helplessness as an emotion related to the use of violence is implied in the intrafamily resource theory of Goode('71). The lack of personal 'resources', amongst others, is suggested to make an individual more prone to use violence as they have less actual power to rely on, that is they are more helpless.

Fourth, the range of possible behaviours are important. Marsh et al.('78) describe the difference between rules of interpretation and rules of action, the two being inter-dependent. The former determine which of the latter are applicable. Actions will be based on rules of action which in turn will lead to different definitions of the situation. Marsh is concerned with rules governing groups but his is a similar distinction to that being made here, of appraisals and choice of action.

The range of possible behaviours has been mentioned in the discussion concerning appraisals. As with the appraisals, the data indicate that the repetoire of acts is limited. This limitation is due to the mothers' own previous experiences, their capacity to observe, and the range of the appraisals. Treatment in a multi-family context allows parents to observe others and to discuss alternative appraisals and behaviours which, if they are isolated, they may not have the opportunity to do so.

Within the context of systems theory Broderick and Smith('79) describe this phenomenon as the lack of requisite variety. That is, a system or family lacks alternative solutions or behaviours and resorts to a restricted range of action. Toch('69) also considers this issue when describing violent offendors. He describes them as lacking in social skills and suggests that violence is an expression of helplessness. He particularly mentions that verbal skills are lacking as a means of dealing with difficult situations. This is confirmed in the interviews with Beryl and Daphne, who both complain of the ineffectiveness of their words, and is also apparent in the observations of Barbara. Lesley, overall, does not complain of the ineffectiveness of her words but on the occasion when she gave Laura 'a real good hiding' she explained that her throat was sore as a result of trying to reason with Laura.

Within the context of social learning theory it could be argued that the parents have lacked sufficient opportunity in their own families to learn a wide range of behaviours. As mentioned above this could well be one factor involved, but cannot be assumed to be the complete explanation for the parents' limited range of behaviours. Parents are selective in what they repeat from their own childhoods; Beryl and Lesley, for example, experienced much violence as children but choose alternatives when dealing with their own children.

A fifth area which is important to consider are the inhibitory and facilitatory factors relating to violence. As Frude suggests these factors can be internal or external. External factors he mentions are the presence or absence of others and the effects of previous acts of violence. Internal perceptions and emotions will also act as inhibitors or facilitators.

Lesley describes experiencing much violence as a child which she considered unjustified, although effective, and now she is adamant that she does not believe in hitting children, even though she thinks it would be effective achieiving her aims.

Beryl too, considers that violence was an effective diciplinary measure when used against herself as a child. She says her mother hit her around the face and this did stop her nagging for a while. However it is not a behaviour that she chooses to use against Sandy, so her own experiences are only one of the factors she will consider when relating to her own child. She also says that she is like her mother in having much patience and then a violent explosion, "bit like me". Beryl says that when she is frustrated or extremely angry she uses violence.

The fear of extreme violence acts as an inhibitor. She will choose different strategies such as leaving the building or moving away at these times for fear of even murdering him. She feels the short-term way to avoid the escalation of these spirals is to comply to his demands, but she is not happy doing so. On some days she feels she could be hitting him all the time and consciously chooses only "serious offences". She is also aware that her own firmness and consistency prevent the escalation of violent spirals.

Beryl's statements are consistent with research such as Patterson('73), who indicates that the consequences of inconsistent handling on the part of the parent leads to an escalation in the behaviour of the child, and then in

turn an acceleration of punitive tactics on the part of the parent.

Daphne feels she was hit unjustifiably by her own mother but considers it justifiable to use violence with Martin. Martin's increasing age and capacity to understand act as facilitators to her violence. Although she states in the interviews that his crying acts as an inhibitor and makes her feel remorseful, in the observations his crying does not appear to alter her responses towards him.

For Lesley, Beryl and Daphne, their own childhood experiences are not sufficient to understand their current use of violence and so in itself such an historical factor cannot be used to explain fully their current behaviour. More immediate information is also required.

The behaviours of the mother and child will act as inhibitors or facilitators for violence. The violent sprials described in Chapter 3 show the behavioural steps that facilitate violence. A few observations were collected, and are described in chapter 3, where violence is not used but where similar battles between mother and child occur, and these give some indications of the behavioural inhibitors to violence. These are the spirals that can be considered as dampening, in that they do not escalate to violence.

In Beryl and Sandy's case these spirals begin in a similar way to a violent spiral. but are characterised either by Beryl using the threat of violence or using an alternative strategy not seen in the violent, augmenting spirals, such as moving herself away, distracting Sandy or punishing him by withdrawing a privilege. It is not clear what Sandy does to trigger these different responses in Beryl because behaviours such as demanding closeness, rocking in his chair and interrupting Beryl are all behaviours that at other times would provoke violence. Undoubtedly, complying to Beryl's demands will prevent her using violence as will complying and resorting to infantile behaviour such as sucking his thumb or Beryl's ear. This suggests that it is her appraisal of his behaviour that is different and accounts for her different behaviour and acts as an inhibitor to violence. Additionally the effectiveness of Beryl's alternative behaviours, such as distracting Sandy or threatening a punishment, prevents the use of violence.

For Barbara and Leo there are two observations without violence. In each, Barbara's use of a threatening gesture appears to be an alternative to actual violence but it is not effective and Leo perists in his behaviour. On one occasion his accidental injury also appears to act as an inhibitor to Barbara's use of violence. The only other

strategy that Barbara uses is to shut Leo out of the room: he had been running around and Barbara was trying to keep him inside the circle. As with Sandy there seems to be no obvious difference in Leo's behaviour that evokes a different response in Barbara. Again the implication is that her appraisal is different on these occasions. (There are no observations without violence for Daphne and Martin so a comparison cannot be made.)

Parke and Collmer('75) discuss research which indicates that abusive parents are very inconsistent in their use of discipline and that parental punishment is divorced from the specific behaviour of the child. This confirms the above finding that the child does not necessarily do anything different to provoke a more violent attack. At first sight this seems to contradict the earlier discussion which suggested that there is a certain range of behaviours which will be more likely to provoke anger and violence from a parent; however, this is not so. Violence is still used in response to the same category of behaviours, but not predictably. The child is left in an unpredictable situation. Sometimes violence will follow when he nags, but sometimes not. Again this indicates that one factor alone is not sufficient to account for the occurrence of violence. This is an important development of Kadushin's('81) argument that it is the child's behaviour which is the most important element in

understanding violent incidents. In the cases discussed here, there is no evidence which suggests that it is the child's behaviour alone which provokes violence.

Context

The spirals and their components must be considered within a context to understand fully why they develop as they do. The immediate context or setting will affect how the child's behaviour is appraised and will also limit the range of action the mother considers is available to her. For example a child of 4, as Martin is, crawling around the floor may not in itself be something to anger his mother. but in the context of the community meeting, it is not considered to be acceptable behaviour. Similarly for Sandy to be talking to his mother when they are at home or involved in another activity may also be acceptable, but is seen as interruption in the community meeting and is responded to accordingly.

In this way the immediate context affects the appraisal that a mother chooses for her child's behaviour. Other people present, the physical location, the activity are other examples of immediate contextual factors that will influence the behaviours and appraisals of the mother and child. Beryl, for example, does not use violence after a battle with Sandy when they are dancing, when they are

being together, or when he has been painting. Daphne dislikes community meetings and the pressure that she feels to participate , and this affects how she responds to Martin's behaviour. Barbara uses more extreme violence than at other times when the battle concerns food. This may be a particularly sensitive issue for her.

Particularly important in normal circumstances will be other members of the family. It is interesting to note that the one time that Sandy does cry in response to his mother's violence is when his father is nearby and Sandy is not allowed to leave the room with him. This clearly demonstrates how the spirals may be modified by the presence of other important people.

The current appraisal is also affected by the long-term situation that a mother and child share, the history of their relationship. Beryl clearly describes the importance of how the day begins as an indicator of how it will progress and also that the past days and weeks influence her own mood and Sandy's behaviour and thus the course of their interactions. In this way the time span under consideration is widened and it can be widened even further to encompass further information that clarifies the context in which the mother and child are currently relating.

For example, all the mothers in the study have had difficult childhoods. Both Barbara and Daphne complain about their mothers' lack of compassion and understanding. A lack of basic mothering has been described (Steele and Pollock '72) as being an important factor in the histories of abusing parents. Beryl speaks well of her mother but also had periods of being fostered.

In each case one of the important background factors, still affecting the mothers, is their current and past relationship with their own mothers. Beryl identifies with her own mother. She has chosen to keep a child in difficult circumstances and without a father, as her own mother kept her. Like her mother she has sudden explosions of violence after long periods of being extremely tolerant and patient. She also describes herself and her mother as being too kind and too easily influenced.

Daphne's relationship with her mother influenced many of her decisions and she shows similar difficulties with Martin that she experienced with her own mother, such as demands for too much physical contact. In the spirals, when Martin demands too much contact it frequently leads to violence. It could be at these times that Martin is identified with Daphne's mother. Additionally she seems

resigned about her relationship with her mother as she is
with Martin, and with both of them will avoid
confrontations. As stated earlier, Daphne is often vague
and confused about her childhood. Main('87) has found
that parents who do not speak fluently about their own
backgrounds have difficulty in forming secure attachments
to their children. This seems to be confirmed by Daphne
and her relationship with Martin.

Barbara does not describe much of her childhood but her
memories of it affect how she decides to treat Leo. She
mentions more than once that she would not wish Leo to
have the same experience as she had, that she was not
mothered enough and she will look after Leo differently.

Lesley considered her mother to be caring, but
ineffectual, in controlling her as a child and more
recently Lesley became of a caretaker to her mother and
this occupied much of her time when she was caring for
Laura as a baby.

The women in this study were brought up in stressful
surroundings and continue to live under stress. Beryl and
Daphne report difficult pregnancies and births and
difficulty in accepting the newborn babies who were
described as difficult from the outset. Lesley also found
Laura's continual vomitting a problem for the first 10

months. The mothers had little or no support with the care of their child and difficult relationships with the child's father. Many of these factors are associated in the literature with child abuse, and although this study shows these aspects to be relevant to the mothers, it also demonstrates that in themselves these cannot be used to explain violence or child abuse fully.

General comments

The above discussion has focused mainly on an analysis of the violent incident. This does not mean that long-term and situational factors are not relevant but that they cannot be considered in isolation or separately from the patterns of the incidents themselves. Kadushin and Martin('81) in their study also support this viewpoint and conclude that the current situation is the most relevant to understanding violence and abuse.

The spiral model is described above in terms of its components. It is not intended that conclusions be drawn regarding cause and effect, or that linear relationships are implied between the different components. It is suggested that appraisals, choice of action and behaviour are constantly affecting one another and evolving, that there is continual feedback within the individual from these components and from the behaviour of others involved

in social interaction. This is similar to Kelman's('78) description of the relationship between attitudes and behaviour, involves the concept of feedback from General Systems Theory, and stresses the importance of bilateral exchange(Patterson '82) in social interaction, that is the effect each participant has on the other.

Relationship of spiral model to other theories
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As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the spiral model is a development of Frude's model and reference has been made to other theories which add understanding to the concepts described. General Systems Theory provides the concepts of feedback and of lack of requisite variety which can describe the tendency of the parent-child dyad to repeat their limited patterns of interaction. Attribution theory is useful in developing the concept of appraisal and in describing parents' tendency to explain their children's actions in particular ways.

Although not mentioned specifically in relation to any of the concepts, symbolic interaction theory ,and Harré's ethogenic approach, provide an overall perspective from which to view violence and violent incidents, and support the notion of trying to understand the meaning of incidents from the perspectives of those involved.

However other theories were mentioned in chapter 1. Of these the frustration-aggression theory, social learning theory, psychosocial stress model, exchange/social control theory and intrafamily resource theory have been mentioned in connection with concepts described above. However all these theories were shown only to offer a very partial explanation for the violent spirals observed in this study. (Gelles' structural theory has not been discussed separately as it combines theories previously mentioned and similar arguments regarding its limitations apply.)

Also described in chapter 1 were other theories which have not, as yet, been mentioned. The first described was the individual psychopathology model. A study such as this can neither support nor refute such a theory. A study of a few families cannot argue whether what is observed is normal or abnormal. Other arguments were given in chapter 1 to refute this theory. Similarly, evolutionary theory cannot be assessed on the basis of a study such as this.

Another theory mentioned in chapter 1, and so far not referred to in this chapter, is the culture of violence theory. Again a study such as this cannot assess widespread cultural attitudes. However, as argued earlier in relation to social learning theory, this study demonstrates that parents are selective in what they learn and choose to repeat, and that the transmission of

cultural attitudes alone cannot explain incidents of violence.

However, as stated in chapter 1, the focus of interest of many theories of family violence is different from that presented in this thesis. Here the focus is the violent incident which is not the main interest of the theories mentioned above. It is not within the scope of other theories to comment on the phenomenology of the violent incident, or the characteristic interactions, as it is not within the scope of the spiral model described here to comment on demographic or sociological factors.

Some of the theoreticians develop their ideas to consider the therapeutic implications of their theories, and this is an important consideration when assessing the value of the theory. The spiral model, with its emphasis on the violent incident, readily suggests therapeutic strategies which will now be discussed.

IMPLICATIONS FOR TREATMENT

In writing about treatment I shall be considering the therapeutic implications of this model for families where there has been child abuse and for families where there is concern on the part of the family or professionals about the level of violence but where child abuse has not necessarily occurred. Daphne's, Beryl's, and occasionally Lesley's, own comments will be used, where relevant; unfortunately there are no such data available for Barbara.

Demonstration of the spirals

This study shows the idiosyncratic spirals of a family based on observations. Demonstrating the existence of such spirals to the family may make the mother aware of the details of the repeating patterns that she engages in with her child. It may be difficult for her to be aware of the details of this without external feedback. This process of making the pattern conscious for the mother, and possibly the child too, could be the first step in a therapeutic programme and may lead the way towards the possibility of changing it. Erchak('81) also suggests that individuals can be helped to become conscious of destructive interactions in which they are involved.

Alternatively once the therapist is aware of the spirals,

she can also predict to the mother and child what she considers is the likely sequence of behaviours . This may give the participants the chance to forestall and change the usual pattern and to try alternative outcomes. It may also be possible to demonstrate and compare the dampening and augmenting spirals and for the participants to consider the differences, the appraisals, emotions and acts involved in each type.

Re-appraisal of other's behaviour

The notion of appraisals is central to the model described. The implication of the discussion concerning appraisals is that if the mother's appraisal of a situation could be changed or developed, violence might be avoided. But how is a mother best helped to re-interpret her child's behaviour and to enlarge her repetoire of possible meanings? Some ideas have been suggested by therapists, and amongst them is Minuchin.

Among others, Minuchin ('74) describes parents who perceive their child as much more powerful than he really is. (This includes parents who are not abusers.) The meanings that are ascribed to the child's behaviour are then made within this framework. A completely different frame of reference is required if the child is not to be seen as intentionally powerful and malicious and then responded to in like fashion. He suggests the use of

interventions within the context of family therapy sessions which diminish the power of the child in front of the parent and encourage the parent to take control of the children, and also help the parents to win the struggle for control of their children.

The therapist can select a moment in the course of interaction when the parent has been effective and point this out to her, thus emphasising her competence and altering the perception of the child as, for example, uncontrollable (Minuchin and Fishman '81). Although Minuchin does not discuss in detail the relationship between perceptions and behaviour, he suggests that the new experience will coincide with a change in the perceptions or appraisal of the child's behaviour. (The relationship between attitudes and behaviour was discussed earlier in this chapter and Minuchin's ideas are consistent with the model proposed by Kelman).

Developing these ideas specifically in relation to child abuse, Asen(b.forthcoming) suggests unbalancing the usual patterns of interaction to provoke a re-organisation of parental perceptions by supporting one member of the family, temporarily, at the expense of another. In a mother-child dyad, unbalancing would involve supporting the mother in her attempts to discipline her child beyond the point where she may have given up or resorted to

violence. The usual pattern of interactions needs to be demonstrated to the therapist who will encourage a situation where this can be done. Day settings, such as the centre, can re-create events similar to those encountered at home so that such enactments can be used therapeutically. For example, with regard to spiral 1(see Fig. 3.1.1, p145) for Beryl and Sandy, it would be possible to encourage Beryl to use a response other than violence when Sandy is attempting to interrupt her, and to persist without violence until he complies.

The discussion so far has been concerned with changing the parent's behaviour with the aim of changing his/her appraisals. It is perhaps artificial to separate the two components, but for the purpose of clarity, further discussion of ways to widen the repetoire of parental acts follows on pages 306-315.

Kadushin('81) also discusses the social worker's role in inducing a redefinition of the child's behaviour as age-appropriate rather than wilfull. How the parent's acceptance of such a redefinition could be encouraged is not discussed in detail. However Jeffrey('76) suggests an intervention which is aimed at changing the parent's attitude, as well as deflecting a violent response. Parents are provided with a list of ordinary behaviours appropriate to the age of their child. The parent is

instructed that each time their child demonstrates one of the behaviours on the list the parent is to mark it on a sheet, before responding.

The mothers' own comments regarding the helpfulness of treatment also relates to the importance of appraisals. Beryl, for example, considered that it was helpful to her to be given an explanation of the deterioration in Sandy's behaviour soon after they began attending the unit. She was given a meaning for his behaviour which she could accept. There is no way of saying what is a true appraisal, if such a thing exists, but she found this one useful. She also mentioned that the family meetings helped her "understand how he works a bit more....I almost thought that little kids don't know what's going on... how much you need to explain to him".

Daphne found family meetings useful in helping her to explain things to Martin and in understanding some of his confusion. 'We talked about Martin, helping Martin through to try and understand where his daddy is and things like that, and I suppose helping Martin to know when he's going to see his granny. Now he knows when he's going to see her.' She also valued her time in the playroom which she saw as teaching him but allowed her also to assess, more realistically than previously , Martin's capablilities.

Lesley also found that being helped to understand her daughter helped her be less negative towards her, to say 'no' less often. Observing her daughter, and other children, at play enabled her to become more realistic concerning age appropriate behaviours.

A mother is more likely to ascribe more sympathetic meanings to her child's behaviour if she is able to take her child's point of view into consideration (Spinetta and Rigler '72). The use of video playback, or observations from behind a one way screen, may be useful tools. As she is not having to respond to her child, she can think about, and can be helped to see, what the child might be experiencing. She can think about alternative explanations other than the one she made immediately during the incident being observed. A video encourages an individual to step outside her skin and to to take the role of the other, in a way which is difficult otherwise, especially when involved in interactions. (Minuchin et al. '67, Walrond-Skinner '76).

Alger('73) suggests that video-feedback is particularly useful for members of families to become more aware of their own and others actions, particularly non-verbal behaviours. Such feedback to both mother and child, or the whole family, could thus assist in their re-appraisals and may highlight important aspects of behaviour of which

they had previously been unaware, but which could be important in eliciting responses from others.

An important skill in making such judgements is 'observation'. There may be a number of ways in which this skill can be encouraged. For example a mother, and professional or another parent watching a child play can compare detailed observations. This may improve the mother's capacity to observe and also allow her to be realistic about her child's capabilites. It will also demonstrate clearly that there is more than one way to interpret behaviour.

The importance of observation is stressed by Barnes('84) who also describes the value of a professional observing with a parent and encouraging him/her to wonder about the meaning of what is seen. Lesley, the mother used as the control, particularly mentioned the value of watching her daughter with a member of staff in enabling her to see what was appropriate behaviour for a child of her age.

Also, within a therapeutic context, observation skills can be encouraged by the therapist asking questions regarding the details of a child's behaviour and encouraging the mother to make explicit her thoughts about the meaning of it.

Discussing observations of children with other parents can also help to elicit alternative appraisals, and parents may be able to accept other parents' suggestions more readily than staff's. A multi-family setting would encourage such an interchange.

As with other authors, Barnes mentions the importance of educating parents regarding normal child development, although she sees this as playing a minimal role in a therpeutic programme. She is of the opinion that parents will select and retain from such an education only those things that are congruent with their own idiosyncracies and so education, as such, can only be used in connection with other interventions. The aim of education in many programmes is to alter the parent's perception of the intentions of their child but it is unlikely that education alone will have the desired effect. Wood-Schuman and Cone('86), as a result of their study, also conclude that interventions should not focus on teaching appropriate responses but should develop the parents' skill of observation, description and appropriate labelling. Hutchings('80) discusses related approaches including that of Dubanoski et al('78) who teaches about· normal child development and also how to become better observers. Unfortunately more details are not provided.

One of the best ways to understand children and to

communicate with them is through their play. (Winnicott '71, Hoxter '77). However playing may need to be encouraged as it does not come easily to some parents. Asen(b.forthcoming), Jeffrey('76) and Erchak('81) mention the need to facilitate play in child-abuse families. Playing also has the added bonus that parents may discover they enjoy their children more than they had previously thought possible. Jeffrey discusses the need to teach parents to play as a means to encourage positive behaviour towards their children. He uses positive reinforcement to enable the parents to do this. Erchak points out that during play, parent and child can become symmetrical, they can interact as equals and are less likely to be involved in a power struggle. In this way the parent may be encouraged to change fixed attributions concerning his/her child and similarly the child may alter his/her perceptions of his/her parent.

Whichever means is used, it will be more successful if the therapist acknowledges the parent's possible resistance to such activities and attempts to find an area where the parent is going to be most, if minimally, flexible. The therapist can find activities parents may accept and gradually develop these. Even the physical position in which the parent plays may be important. Some parents sit or lie easily on the floor with their children and others do not or cannot. Literally bringing

the parent down to the children's level may encourage him/her to see things through his/her children's eyes.

For a parent to be able to see the child's point of view she/he may have to also accept the more child-like aspects of his/her own personality (Harris '75). This may be achieved partially through an experience of play, but in some cases individual psychotherapies may also be indicated. Steele and Pollock('72) recommend psycho-analytic psychotherapy as means of redressing the parents' own deprivation and lack of mothering. They describe the dynamic between mother and child not as one of projection in the usual sense, as this involves denial, but more as "I am bad, he is just like me". The dependency on the therapist is fostered actively by these authors, as it is by Lynch and Ounsted ('76), in an attempt to alter this perception.

Beryl, for example, describes both herself and Sandy as defiant, stubborn and persistent and thus provides an example of the process described by Steele and Pollock. Lesley also confirms the link between how she perceives herself and how she perceives her daughter. She explained that prior to treatment she disliked herself intensely and at this time Laura was a 'mother' to her. As a result of treatment she came to like herself more than before and was more able to see Laura as a child and encourage her to

be act appropriately.

A similar approach is recommended by Kempe and Helfer('72). They consider that if the parent has someone on whom he/she can depend, the response to the child will be improved. Jones and Jones('78) also discuss parents' tendency to seek satisfaction of their own needs from their children, and that they need to be encouraged to use adults rather than children to satisfy such needs.

Beryl wanted individual therapy to help her to think about her relationship with Tom, Sandy's father, and found it helpful. Daphne also particularly valued her time with an individual therapist and said it made her realise that she had to change . She realised that she had to change her relationship with Martin's father as this was effecting Martin. She considered a most helpful lever towards this change had been having Martin's name put on the At Risk register. This made her view her situation seriously, that is it prompted a re-appraisal of her own behaviour, an important therapeutic step which will be discussed in the following section.

The discussion so far has focused on how the mother can be helped to re-appraise her child's behaviour, however the child is also involved in appraising his/her mother's behaviour. Some research has been completed concerning

the parental perceptions of abused children, such as that
of Halperin('83). She demonstrated that, compared to a
control group, abused children are more negative in their
perceptions of their parents. As with parents'
perceptions of their children, it may be possible to help
the children alter perceptions of their parents.
Interventions mentioned earlier, such as video play-back
and encouraging play, may provide a novel experience for
the child and have the effect of altering the child's
perception of their parent. Additionally if the parent is
able to explain his/her intentions to the child, the child
may come to understand his/her parent differently. This
will also encourage the child to take the perspectives of
others. Byng-Hall('86) discusses the advantages of family
therapy for evoking mutual forgiveness and reparation. For
example, he suggests that a child may come to appreciate
that his parent's current behaviour may be an attempt to
correct his/her own experiences. The details of such
experiences can sometimes be made explicit within the
safety of the therapeutic setting.

Re-appraisal of own behaviour

The mother's own behaviour within the spiral is also
subject to her own appraisal and assessment of its
efficacy in acheiving the desired aims. Assisting the
mother to reflect on the possible meanings of her own

behaviour and think about how it is perceived by her child are also important aspects of therapy suggested by the spiral model. This process involves a re-definition of the parents' own behaviour.

Gelles('83) addresses this issue and discusses the importance of 'cancelling the hitting licence' that parents consider they have, and encouraging parents to take responsibility for their own actions and not to blame others or alcohol. Kadushin and Martin('81) also support the idea that the parent be helped to re-define his/her own behaviour, particularly that disciplinarian behaviour be redefined as abusive, if appropriate. If, on the one hand, a parent can justify internally his/her behaviour as merely disciplinary, or for the sake of the child, when in fact it is causing harm, then violence is more likely to occur. If, on the other hand, it is seen as being injurious or dangerous, then it is less likely to be repeated.

Parents may also have some idea of what they were trying to achieve with their own behaviour and can assess whether or not it was successful. Helping to make this explicit is a step towards exploring whether or not there are alternative courses of action possible. For example Beryl says she was trying to make Sandy listen to her without using violence but resorts to it nevertheless to

make him listen. She considers this a failure and does not think it does make him listen. Of course, he may well 'listen' to her but he does not act on what he has heard and this seems to be the basis of Beryl's objections. Daphne does not make her intentions so explicit and implies her actions are often unplanned or unconscious: 'I wasn't really thinking'. It may be important to help a mother, such as Daphne, be more explicit about her meanings and intentions.

Kelly('83) also discusses the importance of challenging parents' beliefs concerning the use of violence and suggests providing information regarding the disadvantages of frequent spanking, such as its temporary results, its lack of guidance to the child regarding improved behaviour, the child's tendency to acclimate to it and to come to fear rather than respect the parent. Although he sets out to address the parents' own beliefs regarding violence when educating them in this way, he is also making implicit suggestions to them regarding how the child perceives their behaviour. This is not something the parents may have considered previously and could be important in their interactions with them.

For example, Beryl when describing a 'bad day' when violence is used, does not consider how Sandy understands her violence or restrictions, but on a better day does

stop to consider how he feels about her persistence and firmness. In a family such as this, it may be possible to discuss with the participants how they do understand each other's behaviour, why they consider the other acts as he/she does and what he/she trying to achieve. This would serve to make mother and child aware of each other's appraisals and may help each to attempt alternative ways of achieving their aims, without resorting to violence or evoking it in the other.

Daphne, on a day when there has been violence, is barely able to separate her own and Martin's behaviour, and is thus unable to consider how he might be perceiving her actions. Fontana and Robison('84)describe a similar phenomenon as being characteristic of the abusive mothers they studied. The mothers were found to be unable to perceive the child as a separate being with feelings of his/her own and who responds to the behaviour of the parent. Patterson('82) also uses the concept of enmeshment to describe such a state of affairs and suggests that when this is combined with ineffective parental punishment, the child will tend to be aggressive. It is possible that in such a relationship the parent, too, will be prone to violence when the intensity becomes intolerable and some distance is desired (Asen a. forthcoming). These tendencies are apparent in Martin and Daphne's relationship, and are most clearly demonstrated

in spiral 2,(see Fig.3.4.1 p.193) described in chapter 3 as the 'Love-Hate' spiral.

Stevens et al.('83) describe how a therapist can use her own relationship with a mother to allow some separation and distance to develop between mother and child.   One suggestion given is that the mother is provided with individual therapy which can provide an alternative experience of intimacy. They also indicate the importance of involving fathers, or any other adults, in treatment so that the mother can develop relationships, other than with the child. In this way the mother can be encouraged to see the child as a separate person and will be more able to consider both how the child perceives her behaviours and how she perceives the behaviours of the child.

The augmenting spirals clearly demonstrate that violence, apart from not changing the child's behaviour in the desired direction, is also not carthartic from the parent's point of view. That is, violence may only breed more violence and not dissipate strong feelings of anger and frustration. Within the spirals violence may be used more than once and often the potential for the repeat of a spiral is apparent in the interactions following the use of violence. Demonstrating this to the parents may also help them to re-appraise their own behaviour and consider alternatives, so that dampening spirals may substitute for

the augmenting ones.

The child can also be helped to re-appraise his/her own behaviour. Individual therapy has been suggested for abused children, for example Dale et al. ('86), Scholz and Meier and Nelson and Meier('83). They suggest that such children consider themselves to be incompetent and can be encouraged to take more responsibility for their own actions, acknowledge their emotions and co-operate with their peers. They describe the use of individual psychotherapy within a residential treatment program.

Furman('86) also describes individual therapy with abused children and stresses the need to help such children to find positives qualities both within themselves and within others. She suggests it is the child's belief in him/herself as bad that will perpetuate aggressive or antisocial behaviours. Long-term treatment may help them recognise that this is not the whole picture, and that there are other aspects of themselves. Interventions such as 'you weren't kind to yourself, I wonder where the part of you was that likes you and wants to feel good about you'(p57) are recommended.

As described earlier, video-feedback may also be useful in helping members of families become aware of their own behaviours.

Kadushin and Martin('81) discuss the importance of
relating behaviour to aims and mention the importance of
helping parents find alternative skills that will be more
effective than violence in reaching their desired aims.
How to help parents enlarge their repertoire of behaviours
will now be discussed.

Widening the range of behavioural options available to the parent.

The spiral model describes the mothers as having a choice of actions in response to their children. If the use of violence is to diminish, then other options must be available readily to them at times when violence was used previously. There are various ways in which their repertoires can be widened, some of which are discussed below.

Decreased social isolation and increased opportunity for observation.

Violent families are often isolated and rarely experience the daily life of other families.(Baher '76,Straus 'sca). In a multi-family context, they are in the position of being able to observe how others cope with situations and to discuss alternative appraisals and possible behaviours (Bentovim '77a, Lynch ad Ounsted '76). Many families will prefer to take the suggestion of another family, rather than a professional. With the former, they may consider they have more in common and have more similar attitudes (Freedman et. al. '74). They can also try out behaviours they have observed from other families in order to see if they are appropriate for themselves.

Justice and Justice('82) argue that a group setting for

treatment in itself reduces social isolation. They also implement behaviour modification contracts with their clients to help them meet neighbours and leave the home. McKamy('77) suggests a multi-family therapy setting as it can lead both to competition and co-operation and results in change occuring more quickly. The importance of social comparison was described by Festinger('54) who suggested the people have a drive to evaluate themselves, and in the absence of objective, non-social means, they will evaluate themselves by comparison with other people. He adds that such social comparisons will also assist the individual in defining appropriate emotional reactions. The authors who promote the use of groups are assuming such a process will occur both in relation to feelings and behaviours.

Bentovim('77a) supports this notion and also uses a multi-family setting where parents can model on the behaviours of other families and benefit from mutual support to accelerate therapy. Multi-family groups can be used for a number of tasks, such as to explore alternative ways of expressing anger(Parish '85)

The mothers in this study confirmed the value of treatment in such a setting. Beryl considered that watching the other families allowed her to think about what she was doing in relation to Sandy. Daphne also said that watching the staff and other parents controlling their

children was useful, and if she saw any results, she experimented with Martin. Lesley also found watching other mothers' determination helped her and one particular mother helped her to understand her own child's mind.

Treatment in a multi-family setting may have other benefits. It extends, temporarily, the social network of the family and may also improve their social skills. The importance of encouraging a wider network for mothers and families has been noted by writers such as Zimrim('84) Asen(b.forthcoming) Barnes('84) Kempe and Kempe('78).

The child's network of contacts in an isolated family is also limited. Multi-family treatment may provide the child with important contacts with peers from whom he/she may learn new and different behaviours.

Improving reflection and consideration of options.

This relates to the earlier discussion concerning the re-appraisal of the parents' own behaviour. Simple questions such as 'what else could you have done? may prompt some reflection on the mother's part and also suggest that there are alternatives but does not enforce particular ones on the mother. Eliciting her own alternatives may also have the added benefit of making the mother feel more competent than if alternatives are given to her by others.

Similar questions could be asked of the child to help him/her consider different ways of behaving.

Precipitate crises in a safe setting and do not intervene.

Therapists can encourage a conflict to develop between a parent and his or her child and support the interaction developing beyond its normal limits. It is important within such a manoeuvre that the therapist does not herself take control of the child or undermine the parent's attempts at succeeding but merely supports the parent's efforts, particularly when violence is being avoided. This is a development of ideas presented above, in the preceding paragraph. Minuchin and Fishman('81) promote the constructive use of intensifying situations within therapy so that the usual pattern of behaviours can no longer be used and alternatives must be tried. Asen(b. forthcoming) discusses this in relation to child abuse and suggests that crises can be used usefully to instigate non-violent behaviours. A safe setting and the presence of the therapist may allow mothers to try out alternatives, assess their effects and discuss their impressions with the therapist. If the therapist supports the mother in her own efforts and does not intervene herself, then the mother will also have gained a sense of her own competence.

Bentovim('80) also describes the induction of a situation of attack within a family session so that the parent can be helped to find an alternative solution. He stresses that such work will be lengthy and repetitive until changes in the family are stabilised and maintained.

The process described here involves the therapist forming a temporary alliance with the mother in order to support her attempts at change. At another time it would be possible for the therapist to repeat a similar process, this time allying with the child, in an attempt to help the child to discover different ways of acting in relation to his/her parent.

If it is assumed, and has been argued in this thesis, that the behaviours of mother and child are inter-related, any changes in characteristic behaviours of one participant are likely to evoke changes in the behaviour of the other, so in fact both of the processes described above are likely to affect both mother and child.

Positive reinforcement for positive behaviours towards the child.

Justice and Justice('82) describe assertiveness training as especially valuable to passive individuals prone to

outbursts of temper. Their clients are taught how to confront people and situations but without using violence. As with most behaviourists, their work is based on the premise that new behaviours will lead to new feelings or attitudes. This is an idea suggested, for example, by Bem('72) who states that indviduals observe their own behaviour and then attribute to themselves an attitude that is consistent with the behaviour. Within such a framework it is the behaviour which must be the focus for treatment. Within the same framework, Sandler et al.('78) uses training involving positive reinforcement to encourage parents to increase their approval and positive physical contact with their children. The parent is rewarded for success with food and cinema passes! He argues that families not wanting treatment need tangible rewards. Jeffrey('76) also uses positive reinforcement for positive comments and greater communication from parent to child.

Crimmins et al.('85) does not use tangible rewards but uses a 'bug in the ear' to encourage parents to use positive verbal and physical attentiveness towards a child and found that new skills developed in such a way were maintained at a 4-month follow up. Stevens et al.('83) describe how such encouragement can be used, within the context of the family centre, and stress the importance of identifying and encouraging successful and competent

interactions between parents and children. Beryl said that the therapists rarely told her what to do but that subtle positive reinforcements were important, such as a a smile or 'well done'.

The parents could also be helped to use positive re-inforcement with their children. The spirals clearly show that improved behaviour on the part of the child is often not acknowledged in any way and then the spiral continues to escalate towards violence. In both Daphne's and Barbara's spirals it is apparent that when Martin or Leo is obedient the mother does not respond. Encouraging the mothers to acknowledge verbally or physically such obedience may help the child towards feeling that there is good reason to listen to his/her parent and to listen more readily in the future. Additionally, acknowledging the child's changed behaviour may help to convince the mother of her own competence.

Build on alternative strategies used at other times.

If the therapist is aware of other strategies that are used by the mother in difficult or conflict-laden situations, based on her observations of the family, these can be made explicit to the mother so that she can capitalise on them in future incidents, when violence may have been likely.

Skills training

Kelly('83) suggests training parents in the use of 'time out' as an alternative to violence and Patterson('82) describes a program of teaching Family Management skills such as imposing house rules, using effective punishment and problems solving skills. Other similar programs have been described and undoubtedly have an important place in the treatment of absuing families. However, it is suggested her that such training is likely to have more affect if combined with other strategies described in this chapter.

Change from actions to words

Violence is a physical act and one simple and effective change would be from actions to words. Encouraging mothers to use words and experiment with tone, content and style would also enlarge their repetoire of behaviours in relation to their child. Along similar lines, Barnes('84) describes the value of helping parents to talk clearly with their child in a family therapy context. The therapist can interrupt established patterns of communication and the process of explanation can be slowed down so that assumptions are not made , or are made explicit, and each participant can ask for clarification. She argues that shared talking will lead to improved playing and learning for the children.

Herzberger('83) also discusses the advantages of parents talking to a child, asking for explanations and explaining the consequences of his or her actions rather than using physical punishment. He suggests that this encourages the development of moral standards and involves the parent in active communication with the child. It also provides the child with a model of behaviour which can be applied to other situations.

Jeffrey('76) points out that both parent and child can be helped to elicit positive responses from each other other during practice sessions when parent and child listen and talk to one another. She suggests that a tape-recorder can be used to give all participants immediate feedback on their performance.

The change to words is not merely a simple one of a conversion of physical violence to verbal aggression, as this would not be an effective substitute. Straus('74) shows that the cathartic model is not applicable to families where there is violence, and that therapies which merely encourage verbal aggression provoke more physical violence.

The stress on verbal communications and all the strategies mentioned so far could reduce the level of actual

helplessness of a mother and may in turn reduce the feelings of frustration and helplessness in their dealings with their children. Both Beryl and Daphne complain that, on bad days, their words are ineffective and Daphne explicitly connects this with the use of violence. If they could be helped to be more effective verbally, then their use of violence may be reduced. This could also be applied to work with children, if they are more able to express themselves verbally, they may be less likely to evoke violence in their parents. For example Daphne uses violence after Martin has been physically aggressive and affectionate.(see Fig.3.4.1, p193). If Martin could express himself verbally, identify and communicate his feelings, albeit without swearing, then violence may not be evoked. It may be necessary to use various activities and various relationships to encourage such developments in children.

Eclectic approaches.

In a day hospital setting, West and West('79) report a combination of group psychotherapy and behaviour therapy aimed at parent-child interaction and marital groups. Although the treatment programme is not described in detail, they report a successful outcome with no serious injury reported during or after treatment though they were were minor traumata in 8 per cent of the sample.

Bentovim('77a) and Asen(b. forthcoming) support the family treatment of child abuse and describe the use of a day centre. Like West, Bentovim supports the notion that no one treatment modality will suffice, and an eclectic approach is essential to such a problem. In family sessions he suggests that parents should be encouraged to use firmness without threat and to use warmth and praise. He does not advocate the use of tangible rewards.

Emotion

Earlier in this chapter it was suggested that anger and furstration were emotions commonly, but not exclusively, associated with the use of violence. Authors such as Novaco('77) have described techniques for helping parents tocontrol anger and identify cues that are likely to arouse anger. He suggests that parents can be helped to re-interpet anger arousing situations; this involves a re-appraisal of the situation, which has been discussed more fully above.

Kelly('83) also describes anger-control training for abusive parents which involves relaxation training and desensitisation programmes. He also suggests that therapist and client can construct a list of statements to be used in anger-arousing situations, such as 'stay calm, her behaviour is not directed at me'. This latter statement again involves an appraisal of the situation and sugggests the value of interventions aimed at changing such appraisals.

Context

Earlier in this chapter, page 280, it was pointed out that context affects the course of interactions. The immediate context, such as the people present, the physical location and the activity are shown to affect how mother and child interact. Such contexts carry with them rules of

behaviour, although these may not always be made explicit to the child. Patterson('82) has shown that an absence of clear rules can contribute to the escalation of behaviour, to an augmenting spiral, in ther terms usesd here. It may not be possible to change the activity or situations of parent and child but it may be important that the rules regarding different settings are made explicit to the child and that consistent punishments are enforced if the rules are broken.

However it may be possible to change some aspects of the immediate context. Jeffrey('76), for example, suggests that it may be possible to change furnishings and decorations within a home in such a way as to make confrontations between parent and child less likely. However, adapting the physical context to meet the needs of the child requires the parent to see the world from the child's point of view. This is an issue which has been discussed earlier in the chapter, pages 262-265 and indicates the importance of appraisals even when considering changes in the context. It also suggests that it would not be sufficient to address context alone when planning treatment programmes.

The less immediate context has also been shown to be relevant in understanding the interactions between mother and child. Although it is impossible to change it, the

past may provide some clues about how the current situation can be changed and also it may suggest preventative measures that could be taken for others. For example, the mothers in this study report difficult relationships with their own mothers and fathers. Such relationships may result in a legacy of strong feelings that affects the relationship between mother and child (Boszormenyi-Nagy and Spark '73). As mentioned on page 293, some authors, such as Steele and Pollock('72) recommend the use of individual psychotherapy to provide the parent with an alternative experience, one in which they feel nurtured and cared for. This is hypothesised to improve the relationship between mother and child. Asen(b. forthcoming) suggests the use of individual sessions with a parent to think about possible ways of preventing the past dominating the present in such a way that puts the child at risk. He provides examples of relevant questions, such as 'what can you do when you have such feelings that will stop you from injuring your child?'.

Reports of the past can be considered as appraisals and these may subject to change. For example a parent can be asked to consider why her own parent acted as they did and this will encourage the parent to take the perspective of the older generation. Encouraging multiple perspectives may, in turn, encourage a greater understanding of the

child. Additionally thinking about the past may suggest new meanings for past events and may also change the parent's way of perceiving the present. Main('84) suggests that a mother's inability to recall her childhood is related to her relationship with her child and suggests that parents be helped to recall and re-evaluate their backgrounds.

It may be of benefit to arrange meetings with more than two generations in an attempt to improve mutual understanding and also to resolve issues that have been extant for some years and may still be influencing the present. Byng-Hall('86) Asen and Dale et al.('86), amongst others, suggest it can be useful to include members of the extended family in treatment. In such meetings it is also possible to explore if other people are involved in tacitly supporting the patterns between mother and child or undermining the parent's competence and to redirect their energies towards more supportive behaviours.

Marital therapy is also suggested by many authors, for example Dale et al.('86), Kempe and Helfer('72)and Justice and Justice('76), who consider that stressful marital relationships can have deleterious effects on the parent-child relationship. All the mothers in this study reported difficult relationships with their partners or

fathers of their child and Daphne and Lesley both were aware that these problems were affecting their relationship with, and the behaviour of, their children.

Other sources of support can also be explored, such as peer groups(Gabinet '83) or child care groups(Kelly '83). As do other authors, Kelly also mentions the need to reduce social isolation in abusive families and he suggests home visits by a 'lay therapist' and social skills training. Both parent and child could benefit from such interventions. In isolated families it is not only the parent who is deprived of social contact, but the child. He/she may need help and encouragement to socialise with peers. Regarding economic stress, Kelly suggests ensuring the the parent is receiving all possible financial aid and helping them learn skills to find and keep jobs.

Cohn('83) discusses preventative measures which relate to changing the long-term context of families. He recommends the development of the following:
1. perinatal support programs - pre and post natal;
2. early childhood screening and treatment;
3. provision of child care;   .
4. programmes of self-help groups;
5. provision of 24 hour crisis care;
.6. programs for abused children;

7. education for adulthood and parenthood;

Swift('86) is also concerned with the long term context of violent families and considers it crucial to reduce the number of unwanted pregnancies, which he considers is one of the important factors that has been associated with child abuse. He recommends sex education, birth control and parent education for expectant parents.

CONCLUSIONS

The emphasis in this thesis has been on the dyadic interaction between mother and child, however it was pointed out that the presence of other family members may be crucial in altering the course of such interactions. Many family therapists and practitioners dealing with child abuse, such as Thompson('83) and Dale('88), argue that a comprehensive model of intervention should aim at different levels, including the individual, dyads and the family, as well possibly at social and cultural components. The focus of therapy described above has been on the dyad, but most of the interventions described could also include other family members.

The above discussion has focused on the mother as the main instigator of change. However, the spiral model shows that the child's role is also crucial, and that thechild is involved in similar processes to his/her mother and so similar therapeutic strategies are implied. Such strategies have been described within the sections above. Kadushin('81) suggests the use of behaviour therapy to help the child change his behaviour, but here it is suggested that more than this may be possible, depending on the verbal capacity and level of comprehension of the child.

It would be very interesting, and could be the subject of

future research, to explore the child's perceptions of violent interactions, in similar ways as was done in this thesis with the mothers. This could provide further useful information regarding the spiral model.

There is a growing literature regarding family violence and its treatment and there have been some attempts at assessing the efficacy of different forms of treatment. (Rivara '85, Cohn '79, Lynch and Roberts '82, Skinner and Castle '69, Lynch and Roberts '82). Such studies indicate rates of re-injury, during or following treatment, of between 30% and 60%. In families where there is no evidence of continued violence there may nevertheless be much concern about the quality of life of children within them (Baher '76, Lynch and Roberts '82). Such worrying results indicate that there is still much scope for the development of theory and practice in relation to child abuse and violence.

The value of the spiral model and the therapeutic implications derived from it, which are described in this chapter, will have to be tested empirically, but it is suggested here that it is of importance to view many violent incidents as interactional processes occurring within family relationships and to develop therapeutic interventions which are congruent with such a formulation.

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APPENDIX 1

A. GENERAL INTERVIEWS

1. Could you tell me about a time when you were pleased
with yourself for something you did.   What was it.   What
happened. Did you talk to anyone about it. What did they
say. What did you feel.   Are there other times when you
felt similarly.

2.   Can you tell me about a time when someone else was
really pleased with you. What was it.   What happened.
How did you feel about it.   How general are such
occurrences.

3.   Can you remember anything you did, or happened, as a
child, that made you especially happy.   What did your
parents think about it. How often did this happen.

4.   I would like to hear more about your childhood, about
how you remember your home, parents, brother and sisters.
Can you tell me any particular memories.   What were your
parents, brothers, sisters like. How did you get on with
them.

5.   What was your school like, the teachers and the
children. Is there anyone you particularly remember from
school.

6.   All children need help sometimes with their homework,
with difficulties with friends and so on.   Who, if anyone,
did you go to when you were young, for help. What
happened. Did you ask your mother or father for help. Is
this what usually happened.

7.   At times all children do something that their parents
disapprove of or makes them angry.   When you were a child
can you remember a time when you did something that either
of your parents did not like.   What did he/she say.   How
did you feel. Was it the same other times you did
something that they did not like.   Did this change as you
got older.   Did they hit you.   What did the other parent
do. What do you think they felt about this. What did you
think about it.   Did either of them hit you when they were
angry with each other. Did it happen often. Did they hit
you with objects or hurt you in any other way.   What did
you think about this.   Do you think they could have done
anything else.

8.   Many children argue and fight about things.   Can you
remember a time when you fought with your sister or
brother.   What happened.   Can you remember a time when

things turned out differently. Did you hit or throw
things at each other. What did your parents think about
it. Was it the same when you had fights with your
friends. Is this the way it usually was when you fought.

9. Parents sometimes disagree or argue. Can you think of
things that your parents argued about. What happened.
Did you ever see your parents hit each other. How did you
feel about this. When was this likely to happen. How
often did this happen.

10. What sort of things did you do together as a family
to enjoy yourselves. Do you see any of your family now.
Do you do things with them now.

11. Parents often find it difficult when their child
leaves home, starts having boyfriends or gets married.
What did your family think about you and boyfriends,
leaving home, getting married. How did you spend your time
as a teenager.

12. Can you tell me about your husband/partner. How did
you meet and what happened. What are the good things
about your relationship. What things do you do together
to enjoy yourselves. What things would you like to change
about your relationship.

13. What are your jobs and what are his jobs in the
house. How does this work out. What does he think about
the jobs you do. What do you think about the jobs he
does. Have you ever worked outside the home. What was
that like. What does your partner think of his work. How
is your sex life.

14. Couples disagree and fight sometimes. What sort of
things do you fight about. What happens. Do you hit each
other with your hands or objects. When is this most
likely to happen. What do you think about this. What do
you think he thinks about this. How often would you say
you fight. Do the arguments ever involve the children.
Are they ever about the children.

15. I would like you to tell me about becoming a mother.
About yourself as a parent and about your children. What
do you think are your best qualities as a mother. What do
you think are the best qualities of your partner as a
father. How would you describe the ideal mother and the
ideal father.

16. How was the pregnancy and birth. How was your child
as a baby. Did he cry a lot and keep you awake at night.
What did you do about it. How was his feeding, toilet
training. How did you manage if he did not stop crying.
How did it make you feel. Did you mind being on your own

with the baby.

17.   All children may manage to get their parents to such
a pitch that they hit them. What sort of things does your
child do that make you/your partner hit him or threaten
to.   What sort of things have to happen to make it more
likely that your child will be hit or have something
thrown at him. What does your partner do and think. What
is your reaction to this.   Do you talk about it.   Do you
sometimes feel like you could hurt your child badly. When
is this likely to happen. What do you do.

18. Many mothers may feel they need help in looking after
their children. Can you tell me about a time when you had
help from someone.   What kind of help..   How did you feel
about this.   Have there been other times when you felt you
needed help but could not get it.   What happened.   Has
there been a time when someone offered help and you did
not want it.   (eg. the baby will not stop crying, you have
not got enough money to pay the bills, the baby is not
well and you need to do some shopping).   Did you ask a
Social Worker, family, husband, neighbour, friends.

19.   Has your child attended a nursery or child minder.
What did you and your partner think about this.

20.   Are there other times when you see your neighbours,
friends, relations.

21.   Does your partner spend much time with the children.
Does he treat them the same way or differently from you.
What do you think about this.   Does he know what you
think. In what ways.   Do the children ever infuriate him
so much that he hits them.   When is this most likely to
happen. What do you think about this.

22.   All children do things against their parents' wishes.
What does your child do that you would rather he did not.
What do you do. Why do you think he does it.

23.   What happens if your child wants to do something and
you want to do something different.   What will the other
children say.   What will your partner say.   Does this
happen often.

24. What do you all do together to enjoy yourselves. Can
you tell me about a particular time.

25.   How would you describe your child.   Does your child
remind you of other people you know.   Is your child
different or the same as other children and his siblings.
When do you think he began understanding what was expected
of him. How would you describe the ideal child.

26. If you could spend a day doing exactly as you pleased what would you do.

27. Why did you and your family come to the centre. What did you expect it was going to be like.

28. What changes have you and your family made while attending the centre. What changes would you like to be able to make. What has helped you make these changes. What do you think will help you to make further changes. Do you want to make changes in the relationship with your child. In what way. Do you want to make changes in the relationship with your partner.

29. What did you think about the questions I have asked you. Is there anything I have left out that is relevant to you. Have I omitted to ask anything about you coming to the centre and your treatment.

B. END OF DAY INTERVIEWS
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1. I would like you to tell me about your day and about
your childs day, in some detail. What happened and what
you thought about it.; particularly times when you were
with your child.

2. Was there a time when your child did not do what you
wanted or asked him to do. What happened. What did you
do. What did others do. Would you have like things to
have been different. Was there a time when your child was
naughty, annoyed you. What did you do about it, at the
time and afterwards. What else could you have done.
Could you have done things differently. In what way.

3. Was there any time when you had to hit your child.
What happened. What did you think about this. What did
your child think about this.

4. How would it have been if everything had gone
perfectly.

5. Was there a time when you approved/disapproved of
something that one of the other mothers did. What
happened.

6. Is today similar or different from other days. In
what ways.

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C. FINAL INTERVIEW
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1. Can you look back over the last few months and tell me what you think has changed for you. Can you describe what you think has led to these changes. Are there things you would still like to change.

2. Do you think your relationship to your partner has changed; to your children. Why do you think this has happened.

3. Do you think you handle your child differently. In what way. What does your partner think about this.

4. What do you think has been particularly helpful in the centre. What has been helpful in changing your relationship with your children. What do you think is not particularly helpful about the centre.

Repeat from General Interview:
Questions 1,,17,18,20,21,22,23,24,25,29

APPENDIX 2

Introduction to the mothers

As you may remember I am doing research in the family centre. The purpose of this research is to find out about some of the families that come to the centre, what are the important aspects of the family centre and what happens to families during their stay here. To do this I am going to observe what goes on, such as community meetings and other events, and I also I would like to talk to each family a few times about themselves and their stay here.

I think that every family that comes into the family centre is unique and special and this affects what they think is important about the family centre and what changes they want to make. To understand this more I would like first to talk to you about you and your family and how it works. I would also like to know what you expect is going to happen and what might change for you and your family while you are here.

Later I would like to meet with you again to see how some of your days in the family centre have been, and what you think about what happened.

This will involve meeting three or four times initially and then two or three times at the end of a day in the centre and finally once more during the day. I shall be recording the interviews as this helps me concentrate on what you are saying and ensures that your words are clearly recorded and not mis-interpreted.

These interviews are not part of your treatment programme and will be used by me to write a thesis. All the information you give to me will be confidential. Within the thesis all names will be changed. I will not share anything specific with the staff but in due course will discuss with them comments that have been made concerning the centre; these will not be linked with the names of the people who have made the comments and may well help improve the running of the centre. If there is anything that you would rather not have shared at all then please tell me and I will respect this wish.

You may wish to think about it and let me know whether or not you wish to participate in the research. The decision is completely up to you and will not affect the treatment that you receive here in the centre.

APPENDIX 3a.

Beryl - Summary of interviews 1-4

Resume

Beryl, aged 40yrs, was illegitimate and spent some of her early years in foster care. She suffered from impetigo which frequently prevented her attending school. Her mother's poverty also isolated her from her peers. Her mother married when Beryl was 8yrs old. Beryl left school and started work at 15 years of age. She married at 18 and immediately had her first child. She had two more children before divorcing her husband. She had a long standing affair with a married man and later he fathered her fourth child, Sandy (5 years old), though he never lived with her. Her eldest child was taken into care and the threat of the third, Judy being put into care as a result of non-attendance at school brought them to the family centre.

Childhood

Beryl's mother was unmarried when Beryl was born, and at the time this was considered to be "a terrific stigma, it was a terrible disgrace". Although pressured by her own parents to have Beryl adopted, her mother resisted, and as a small baby Beryl was left in her mother's room while her mother worked. She was "in service". At 1 year old Beryl was fostered and said that she did not recall anything of that time. She did recall going to playschool later on. While she was in foster care her mother used to visit her regularly. She returned home for about four months and then was placed "in care". Her mother told her she would enjoy it but she did not. She had recollections of "weird things" occurring. Beryl was told that she became seriously ill and the doctor advised her mother to care for her. Thus, at the age of about 5 years, she returned home. "I could only have been about 3 and a half and I spent about a year there and I can remember quite vividly some of the things that happened there, and yet I can't remember further on, or before, you know I can't remember being fostered. So whether it was a reasonably happy time for me and I only remember the nasty side, I don't know."

Beryl and her mother lived in one room with a bed and a cooker, but without running water. Gradually they

furnished the room.   Beryl had clear recollections of a log fire that was kept burning throughout the winter.   At 7 and 8 years of age Beryl stole piles of logs from the roadside. Many children did the same but "no-one ever got had up for it".   She explained in detail how they kept the fire burning and how her mother made economical meals.

Beryl said that this was during the war years and then decided she must have returned home at 4 years of age as she recalled going to the air-raid shelter with her mother, and in the rush she fell into the metal bath. As she continued she said she was confused about the time she returned home.

She said of herself, at this time, "I was a highly nervous child..I easily frightened and a bit inwards like, you know, what would you call it, like um in, introverted, very very quiet.   It took a lot to get through to me, to come out and get me talking.   It took me ages to get settled in school, absolutely ages."   She had one or two good friends, one of whom went through secondary school with her, and with whom she had been in contact recently.

When Beryl returned home, after being in care, her mother worked in a factory packing tablets and, after school hours, Beryl went to the factory and hid under the table, "until the management found me."   After this she played out in the streests till 11.00 at night when her mother came home.

She spoke sympathetically and with understanding of the plight of her mother.   "My mother had decided to keep me and had all the struggle through her life.   I must admit, when I think back on it, I'm very lucky she kept me at all, because it would have been much easier for her to get me adopted.   But I think it was her feelings for me that kept her struggling on, so that I was still available to her, even though I was in care.   I never really understood it in my childhood, but I don't think you do.   I think it was after, when my mum died and I went through her personal belongings, I found letters from employers saying things like: I understand how much you love the child, but it really is necessary , in order for you to keep your employment with us, in order for you to satisfy our requirements, you must place the child under a different roof, sort of thing.   Because up until my mother died, I didn't realise how much of a struggle she'd had."   Beryl also discovered how her mother was ostracised by her own family.

To summarise, Beryl described a difficult childhood. After periods in care, she lived alone with her mother, whom she admired for her capacity to cope with a child and economic hardship. They were isolated from other family

members.

Step-father and violence

When Beryl was about 8 and a half her mother married.
"Not very happily unfortunately. One doesn't know I
suppose what the future holds, but then that became a
whole domination of rules that hadn't been there before.
I had to be in by seven and in bed by nine. It was
probably, now I think about it, it was probably right, it
was probably beneficial... but I had a very violent step-
father and he used to try and spend hours teaching me to
write with the right hand, instead of left. He had an
obsession about that, left handed was a sign of un-
education, some wierd philosophy he had. I used to sit
for hours and I'd get a clop round the bloody ear hole if
I didn't do it. I used to spend hours at it but I still
can't, I still cannot now. I can write fairly legibile,
but he had to have it absolute precise. And he used to
take me through the alphabet, page after page. I used to
write e's over and over, and the first one that wigggled
he used to go bang, I used to get hit round the head. It
was a very traumatic time. I remember that. And I used
to get severely punished if I did anything wrong, and I
began to accept it. And then obviously one does things to
avoid getting further punished. But you see the thing is,
it was a conflict for me. I was very, very wilfull when
I was young, a very defiant sort of child. Especially in
my own environment."

Thus, from 8 and half years of age Beryl had a step father
with whom she associated rules and violence. However she
acknowledges that some of the rules may have been
beneficial and that she was difficult to control.

Mother's violence

"....Apparently I used to lead my Mum a right song and
dance actually, (giggles). You know, I used to be defiant
and I used to be cheeky before my dad came along, and I
can remember her chasing me quite vigourously up the
street, threatening to give me a bloody good hiding in the
street. I can remember her doing that, but it wasn't
often. She did that because I had been rude or because I
had openly defied her about something".

"Actually I can't remember what used to tick her off, say
a bit like me, in as much as she used to tolerate a lot,
and then there'd be a big explosion and I used to get what
was coming to me for all the other things that I'd
irritated her about. Which is a bit what I'm like. I

mean, I'm extremely tolerant and very patient and my mother was the same. But every so often, she'd have what I called an explosion and god help you if you got in the way. And it would be the cooking spoon, around the back of the legs, she never hit me round the head or nothing like that. She just used to whack out at me, but always at a low angle. A bash, but the cooking spoon was worse. I used to be fortunate with the hair brushes 'cause they were plastic then, (giggles a little) and they'd break in half, half way through."

"Well I might get about 5 whacks with the hair brush but the cooking spoon used to be a bit longer, 'cause those things would never give in. They were made with wood, it didn't break, it was just unlucky if she happened to have that in her and I'd irriated her. But a good hiding used to put me in my place, I must admit. I can remember going to bed with a red bottom and legs and thinking, well that wasn't worth it. So it used to work and I'd be good for about a week and then I'd start again. (laughs). Yes, I'd be very insolent. I can remember I used to be very insolent and extremely secretive about things that I didn't want her to know about. With something I wanted to do and I didn't want her to know about it, like bunking into the pictures."

Again there are no criticisms of her mother and Beryl is very understanding of her actions. However she also felt that she was able to control her mother, and have the upper hand; her mother would accept her likes when she had been stealing, "my mother just used to accept it, you know."

So Beryl experienced violence from her mother too, but considered it justified and provoked by her own behaviour, particularly insolence. She thought that a "bloody good hiding" affected her behaviour for about a week. She also considered that her own behaviour reflects that of her mother.

Other members of the family

Beryl's maternal grandparents died beofre she was born. She knew that they were Irish. Her mother spoke of happy childhoold and had retained a strong Irish accent and made very economical Irish dishes. This was described at length.

Beryl's mother was not married and did not maintain contact with Beryl's father. At one time she tried to race him but "we've never spoke about my past or her past or my father very much".

After Beryl was born, her aunts and uncles disowned her mother but when Beryl was 10 or 11, some contact was resumed. Beryl occasionally went to visit her aunts, one of whom she recalled as "one of those women, I can't really explain it, I mean if you had a spot on your face, you'd have to stay in a different room from her. You'd have to put a plaster on it. And you must always have washed your hands. ...I used to feel like I wasn't really clean, I wasn't clean feeling and I got that feeling from my own family. It was nothing to do with the outside, but my own own family."

She recalled 2 years after her mother's death, her aunt died and she went with her own three children to the funeral.. She was told not to "come to the after things, because it wasn't really convenient, because I'd brought the children. And that was a member of my own family. They didn't want me to come back because of the kids. And I went home and it taught me a lesson about my family. It taught me that they really were, that they weren't really my own family. Not in my eyes. The only family I had, in my own eyes, was my mother."

Thus, Beryl has relations whom she considers do not accept her and her children.

Schooling

"I was very shy and withdrawn and if I did ever achieve anything at school, of any sort, like receiving a prize or whatever, it was a big day in my life, because I always felt a bit out of things at school."

She said she was "confused at primary school. She was sent home in her first term because she had impetigo, which she thought was a result of their poor conditions, lack of hygiene and malnutrition. "I felt a bit like a leper feels." She recalled she stayed at home for seven weeks and when she returned to school everybody "checked, and I remember showing the kids my legs, 'cause they.. the conversation had gone around that I had this terrible illness and that nobody should go near me....".

She considered she was academically "up to standard" until she started at secondary school and blamed her difficulties in school on her family circumstances. As her mother had little money, Beryl wore clothes until they were worn out, "I could be described as rather shabby looking". She thought her school friends treated her differently and did not invite her to parties as she could not afford a present. She mentioned, more than once,

being teased at school and feeling isolated because of family circumstances and poverty.

She found Maths like "double dutch", could manage the stories but not the dates in history and was bad at Geography. She thought she was "mentally a late developer" so did not benefit from her education. However she did participate in, and enjoy school plays and this interest remained with her.

"I played truant constantly when I was about 13, in fact the last year and a half if they ever saw me, the school was lucky; I didn't attend school at all in the last year and a half". This upset her mother but Beryl left school at 15 and considered that "no serious trouble arose from this."

When she played truant from school, she wandered around the shops, went to the cinema, the park or swimming. Alternatively she took care of dogs or children. She "loved" baby-minding and was paid well and even given gifts. She insisted that she "done no nicking" and earned her money.

"I was a loner at that time". She preferred to be on her own. "I suppose I wasn't really that easy to get to know....I was a bit withdrawn and I also suffered terribly from shyness." She thought people considered her unfriendly but she found it difficult to join with others and as a result only had one friend. She thought she continued to be excessively shy until she had been married for 7 or 8 years.

There was no-one whom she considered sympathetic at school and recalled a teacher who "used to scare the living shits out of me. Just by being in her class she used to come and whack your hands with the rulers, a real cow she was. But it was her attitude that used to frhighten me more than anything, you'd call her aggressive in her mannerisms...." Beryl thought this was partly why she stopped attending school. "If I'd been away she'd be very sarcastic, she'd make you stand up and reprimand you, and it used to cripple me because I was so shy, it used to really hurt me." Once she started truanting she found it simpler to continue than to return to school.   ·

So, Beryl's school days were not happy and she felt isolated as a result of her poverty and impetigo. She described herself as very shy and difficult to get to know. From 13 years of age she began truanting and felt that a sarcastic and violent teacher contributed to her decision to stay away from school.

Work

Beryl started work at 15. She enjoyed her first job, filing and general office duties. She was "upgraded" to packing and then to the manufacture of shoe pads. However the glue used in the process aggravated her, and she was advised by her doctor to leave. She then worked a switchboard until she married and became pregnant. She enjoyed all her jobs and said she "got on well" at work and was promoted, "which was quite an achievment and pleased me."

She gave her mother some of her earnings and spent the remainder on clothes. She was then obliged to borrow money from her mother. "I'm abslolutely irresponsible with money, I've got no sense of value; well, regarding money that is. I've got no sense of tomorrow. If the issue is - well you spend £5 today and you're broke tomorrow - I'll still spend it today regardless,...its still the same." Later, she added that she had recently become slightly more sensible when handling money.

For a while she also worked in a playcentre where she also wrote and produced plays, and "actually I done it very well".

Although she described enjoying her work, it does not feature to a great extent in her interviews and seems to have been something much associated with the period before she had children.

To summarise, Beryl started work at 15 and continued until she married and became pregnant. She started in clerical work and continued working with the manufacture of shoe pads. She also worked in a playcentre and while there wrote and produced plays.

Men
___

Beryl has had a few long lasting relationships but at the time of the interviews was living on her own with her children. Her first boyfriend, Ted, was a neighbour. She separated from him as his mother disapproved of her due to her poverty. She recalled a holiday with Ted's family when she left early as she was constantly criticised by Ted's mother. She stopped seeing Ted as "he let her do it" and did not support Beryl. "I said you just totally let her belittle me to the extent I can't even talk to you anymore. And I suppose it could have been put right, but I was so hurt inside." Ted's mother forbade Ted from seeing Beryl and he obeyed for a week but did not explain to Beryl why he stopped visiting. She was angered that he

paid any attention to his mother and considered he did not care enough for her. She ended the relationship. "I think it would have just hurt me too much to go back, probably". Ted tried to make amends, but during their separation Beryl met Bernie, whom she married within 6 weeks. "It was ridiculous, I didn't even know the guy, when I think about it, but you do things like that when you're 16 and a half."

Ted slapped her when he discovered she was seeing Bernie. "He smacked me round the face. I can always remember it, and he knocked me through the end of the hall and that really finished it. Because I think if he'd played his cards right it probably, it could have gone differntly. But hitting me, my natural reaction was well, if you come near me I'll, I'll stick a knife in you, or something. So don't come near me. And it was a total breakdown and that was it. It was a shame. He didn't speak to me for years and years, even though he continued to live next door with his mother.." The only one time Ted spoke to Beryl was when Shirley, Beryl's eldest child, was 8 years old. He stopped to compliment her on her children. Since then Beryl has not spoken to him.

So, she met and married Bernie. He was "more worldly and outoing and didn't have all the hangups that Ted had. Like, you know, we mustn't let Mummy see us cuddling or doing anything. Ted was very inhibited about everything and Bernie was different, and it was flattering." She was impressed with the money Bernie earnt (he was 24) and said "the expensvie evenings out went to my head".

However later, she discovered his alcohol dependence. While they were courting he went out alone on Saturday nights and did not see Beryl until Sunday afternoon. Once they were married, she was shocked to discover that he was getting very drunk. "Then it used to go to his head and he used to do all sorts of violent things, and really you only discovered it when you married, you know. He used to come in and wreck the house......He was violent towards everyone in the family actually. And, um, when we got married in the beginning he was very violent and particularly towards me if, um, if he was drunk. He'd sort of imagine like, if I was dancing with someone else, then he'd think I was having it off. He was one of those sorts of people, he'd always put things that didn't exist and I'd say to him the next day when he was sober. I'd say well you just came up and punched me one, I just can't understand it".

Initially she tried to reason with him but then stopped going out with him. "I used to have just my life totally around the children, which I did for many years."

He forced her to have sex, soon after the birth of their first child, and Beryl was still frightened because of the pain and an operation after childbirth. As a result she became pregnant the second time, but Bernie did not want a second child. "Financially mainly, and the fact we already had one and Shirley was so difficult when she was young."

Nevertheless, she remained married to Bernie for 15 years. "(Whispers)It's quite a long time and we had two breakups in that time. I left Bernie twice during that time and I said I was never going to go back, and I went back because of the kids really". She could not tolerate being separated from the children, and when she had three children, she left Bernie. Her third child, Judy, was the result of a reconciliation.

The separations concerned "money and Bernie's problem with drinking, his rotten temper. He was very, very quick tempered. He was very, very fussy over food. Silly things, really, when I think about it and our compatibility. He wasn't sensitive enough for me." She blamed his "unfeeling nature" on his upbringing and his father's attitude to women and thought he was unable to change. "I left 'cause he didn't fulfill me in any way...the kids are the only things that I really got good from the marriage. It was killing me off as a person, it was stopping me being me....". Since their divorce she is more able to "be me with Bernie".

She added that Paul, he elder son, was the instigator to the final separation. Paul was the "black sheep of the family". Bernie had no involvement with Paul and his crimes and Berly frequently went to court. "When Paul was finally put into care, and he went away, Bernie's attitude was well it fucking serves him right." He also "switched off" from Judy's problems and would not attend the centre. "He just switches off and if he doesn't want to see something happening and then he can say he's totally blameless".

As for her own failings within the marriage she said, "I used to be terrible (with money) when we were married, it was one of my major problems in the marriage. I was terrible with money.

While with Bernie she had an affair with Tom. Bernie "did not not forget about it". After he discovered the affair, Bernie went out on his own, staying away for days at a time and not informing Beryl of his whereabouts.

Eventually Beryl decided to leave Bernie and worked long hours to be able to do so. She told him that she was planning to go but he did not believe her. Her

relationship with Tom had also come to an end as he had become involved with someone else. Bernie has kept in contact with his children, particularly Shirley. Beryl considered that the family is closer now, and although the children disliked Bernie when they were young, now they accept him, particularly as he is no longer aggressive.

She was then on her own for a year. She met and lived wth Lester for two years. Lester's room mate, Bob, babysat for them. After she separated from Lester, Bob remained a friend and "I look on him as family member now".

Some time later, she contacted Tom again and they resumed their relationship, although he was married. She stopped taking the pill and only informed Tom when she was 3 months pregnant with Sandy. She knew that Tom would not leave his wife but felt she wanted something that was his, she considered the baby to be "something that belongs to me of Tom's".

Sandy has always been aware that Tom is his father but their relationship had not been good. Recently, Beryl considered that it had improved, particularly since the family had been attending the centre.

To summarise, Beryl married young, very soon after separating from a young man who was much influenced by his mother. Her husband Bernie, was an alcoholic and was violent towards her and the children. They had three children and Beryl considered that he was not sufficiently involved in their caretaking. After 15 years she finally separated from Bernie and after another relationship resumed an affair with Tom, whom she had seen while still living with Bernie. Tom is the father of her fourth child, Sandy.

Births

Beryl had a very difficult birth with her first child Shirley, and said Bernie forced her into making love soon after and she conceived Paul. Paul was born with little difficulty and Beryl considered she had "turned my mind off to the pain as I had such a long and drawn out labour with Shirley".

With Judy she had a difficult pregnancy with a high risk of miscarriage. With both Judy and Sandy she had to have a stich around her cervix to prevent it dilating prematurely. Sandy was induced. "I've never had labour pains like it, I've never and I've had three children beforehand and everything's in such a rush because the

baby is literally forced, literally forced out and he was
black from here to there (indicates top of head to
waist).......I didn't believe he had come out of me when I
saw him, I said he's not mine he's black". She was told
"he's bruised, it will go, but it'll take a few weeks and
I wouldn't show him to anyone when I first took him home".
The description of Sandy's birth was given in a quieter
almost sad tone. He was checked for cranial damage as his
head was pointed. "I mean I had a difficult time having
the baies but I think of all Sandy's was the worst. He
really did look black when I first saw him".

Thus, Beryl had difficult births with three of her
children but considered Sandy's to be the worst. He was
severely bruised at birth and Beryl could not believe that
he belonged to her.

Shirley, Paul and Judy

Beryl had three children with Bernie, Shirley, Paul and
Judy. Sandy has a different father. Only Judy and Sandy
were still living at home at the time of the interviews.
Beryl described having difficulties with all of them but
Sandy is singled out as being problematic earlier in his
life. "I never had any trouble with my kids when they were
small, none of them except for Sandy. I mean most of the
problems I had with my kids when they were older. Like
Paul was 11 or 12 when he got into trouble with the law."

Shirley

Having her first baby is one of the main things that Beryl
mentions when considering times when she was really
pleased with herself. "My first baby , it was a bit of a
shock but I was chuffed, it wasn't quite like I thought it
was going to be." Shirley was 2 months premature and Beryl
did not see her for 5 days and "I think that was the most
moving time ever in my life, when I acutually saw
her.........they lifted her out of the incubator and
brought her to the window, and I was really , it was
fantastic feeling that moment, the baby that baby came out
of me it was totally from me, it was all my own
work......she was terribly ugly really but I thought she
was, too fantastic when I think back, it was probably the
ugliest one of the lot, but not to me at the time..it was
a terrific feeling you know, that you'd, another human
being that you had produced."

Shirley lived with Beryl until 3 years ago when she moved
out to live with her boyfriend Robert. Beryl did not
object to this and thinks Shirley's relationship with
Robert is a good one.

"I had a lot of hassle with my eldest daughter when she was Judy's age, but she never listened to anything I said and I was wrong, I was always wrong". Beryl particularly mentioned Shirley deciding to leave home. Some time later after she left Shirley told her mother that within 4 weeks of leaving she wanted to return home but she did not want to concede her mother was right concerning her doubts about the move. Beryl's and Shirley's realtionship improved and she thinks that this will happen with Judy.

Paul

"As a young child I never had any trouble with Paul, he was a handful, he was a very lively and intelligent child, but he was not defiant, or rude or stroppy at Sandy's age, which Sandy is. Paul was the black sheep of the family, he was the naughty one, the bad one, the one that, he was the one that truanted, and I couldn't tell you how many times I appeared in court about Paul. I mean it just wasn't countable, but he alone got 180 convictions for stealing from parking meters and that's not on its own, and that's not counting anything else, just that one offence."

Paul was eventually taken into care but Beryl felt he subsequently acheived a lot. "Paul proved... . that underneath there was a lot in Paul that nobody knew about. I mean he's a talented musician for a start and he's got so many A levels I couldn't count them."

Beryl continued at some length about Paul's academic achievements and the help he received at special school. He went to university and changed from an English to a Music degree. She described his antics and frequent absconding from his original approved school with some pride. "He always used to ring me and say he was alright when he was on the run."

Judy

"Judy's going through a stage at the moment which I had with Shirley years ago, in that she doesn't confide in me very much, and although I know, I'm aware of what's happening, she bites my head off when I bring it up, do you know what I mean, its like as though I'm intruding on her inner mind....she's a very closed person at the moment.........I've experienced it before with the other kids, I think its something that happens to girls or boys when they get to a certain age, they become a bit more secretive...Judy's really not that close to me at the

moment, she's her own person, she's very independent of me
and soon or later something will happen and it'll bring us
closer together, I think it has to."

"She's a very generous person in material things but not
so much in emotional things". Beryl elaborated that Judy
had bought nice Xmas presents but that she is more
concerned about Judy's attitude towards her and does not
feel like she is treated like her mother.

Beryl did have stormy arguments with Judy, though at the
time of the interview felt they "were at a lower level, I
mean no-one is screaming and hollering at each other like
we were before. If I'm arguing with Judy, I keep my cool
for a start, 'cause she's up much more than I am, she's up
straight away, a teenage type of thing....she flares up
much quicker than I do and I used to flare up as well and
I don't now." The arguments she mentioned are often
concerned with mess in the house. Beryl said she now tries
to keep calm about it and considers that Judy responds
better to this changed approach. She also thinks they can
talk about things more easily and are less inclined to
avoid discussing their disagreements.

Now she thinks that Judy is more adjusted than she was a
year ago and that she is "more sure of what she wants and
where she's going. She's got a very good relationship also
with her boyfriend which she's met since she's been
here......he's a nice guy, I really like him and he's
fully understanding that Judy does get stroppy sometimes
and he does make allowances for it, I think she's very
lucky."

(In these interviews it is interesting to note that Beryl
does not mention the problems she had with Judy which were
partially responsible for bringing her to the centre; Judy
had been truanting from school, had been taken to court
and was at risk of being taken into care unless her
attendance improved.)

To summarise, Beryl was very proud at the time of
Shirley's birth and described problems beginning when
Shirley reached adolescence. Similarly, the problems with
Paul and Judy began when they reached their teens and Paul
was eventually taken into care.

Perceptions of Sandy

Many of Beryl's statements about Sandy are negative such
as:
"Sandy is what I call a nagger he goes on and on."

His babyhood was described as a long struggle:
"He was very difficult when he was a baby, he was a very

unsettled baby." She thought Judy was similar in temperament but not as bad. "He seemed to need to be close to me.....perhaps he didn't feel secure but one doesn't really know." She carried him in a sling when he was small and found him very dependent on her presence, not being able to be put down or play on his own. He screamed insistently to be picked up. The clinic told her he might be a bright bored child and at 18 months found him a place at playschool, but he found separating from his mother very difficult. Separations generally were difficult and even at night she used to take him into her bed rather than spend the night with him screaming in his cot.

She considered him to be a bright child, "at 15 months he began to understand no and don't do that. He's never been a slow child and that sort of thing or mentally and he's always been aware of what's going on."

At 15-16 months, "I said he was literally driving me potty at home." Amongst other things, he pushed over displays in supermarkets. "I used to find it too embarassing". She left her shopping behind and took him out of the shop; the same happened when he nagged for sweets. His persistent demands are recalled as dominating his 2nd year. "At 1-2 years he was such a stroppy child.... he was such a difficult child and there was such a performance over every minor thing." However recently she has seen improvements.

"Sandy has got a nice personality underneath, you just have to get to it. Actually he can be a really really nice kid, it's just that he still does get stroppy and still tries it on, but he doesn't get anywhere with it now you see. He's a very strong willed boy. He's stronger than anyone...He will try even now."

As with his birth, Sandy's personality is singled out and she considers Sandy to be different from the other children: "He's much stronger, unless it's me that's weaker, but it seems to me that he's a lot stronger in trying to achieve what he wants to achieve........His nature is stronger than the others, perhaps, have been. I mean I never had any trouble with my kids when they were small, none of them except for Sandy".

This difference may be related to the different fathers and circumstances involved. Of Sandy she says: "I wanted him so much, he's the absolute double of Tom, I mean it's like having a miniature Tom, sort of thing. So I do have a part of Tom which is mine, which nobody can take away from me and which is officially mine you know, it belongs to me, I'm not lending it or anything."

Thus, Sandy who has a different father from Beryl's other children, is seen by her as being more problematic from an earlier age than the others. He was a demanding baby and separations were difficult. She described him as bright and strong willed and as a part of Tom, his father.

Qualities as a mother

Beryl is, on the whole positive about her capacity as a mother:
"Yes, I think I'm very understanding to problems about my kids without them realising that I know they've got them, they very often underestimate me I think, I can often know when something's wrong....I think I'm quite observant but I think they don't give me credit for it."

In relation to Sandy she considered her best quality to be (without hesitation) "patience, basically patient.....if I didn't have the patience that I've got I would have probably done him in by now, 'cause he's that sort of kid......Well another good thing about me is that I'm not violent." This was also said in relation to Sandy whom she considered provoked her the most.

She said she acted differently as a mother with Sandy than with the other children because of Sandy's personality: "I'm much less of my nicer self with Sandy 'cause he'll take advantage of it, you know because normally I don't like to have to smack them and I'm fairly easy going, quite placid and kind I suppose. But I find I can't do that with Sandy because he'll take advantage of it and he'll be wanting to rule the roost with a little iron hammer.....I have to be a more unpleasant mother.........I'm unpleasant in as much as I, that he does get told off and quite severely and I don't reverse what I think. If I think he's being extremely nasty I'll tell him so which he doesn't like......."

At the time of the interview she considered she stood by what she said and that when she said no she meant it.

When asked how she would describe the ideal mother Beryl replied: "Not me, no. Me, I'm too weak, I'm too soft. I think you have to be things that I'm not, harder, stricter much more strong than me. I'm not really very strong, I'll give in too easy, not always but I think partly somewhere in my past there's something in me that isn't there that should be there, that's history, my background. Perhaps I'm over soft and over generous and over kind because I didn't have that sort of childhood."

These ideas regarding herself were repeated in different ways and she added she would have liked to have been more forceful with Judy.

The other self criticism she made involved Tom: "Tom calls me over-protective, probably he's right."

Thus, Beryl considers herself to be patient and understanding with her children though they do not appreciate this. With Sandy she had to be stricter and more "unpleasant". Her self-criticisms include being "too soft and over-protective".

Support with Sandy

"When I had Sandy I suppose the one person who could have helped me was Tom, he is Sandy's father, he's married, but the thing is that basically Tom didn't want a kid.....Tom never got off the ground with Sandy, he didn't like him as a child.....Tom wasn't available, he was inclined to close his eyes and make out that Sandy didn't exist at all. The one person who could have really helped me didn't."

"Then Bob (a friend) started looking after Sandy and Bob was softer than I am....because I went back to work and part of the reason was to get out of the situation at home. Bob was overawed by Sandy, Sandy made him do everything he wanted him to.....I used to say to Bob, look you make it difficult for me , because when I come in he won't take no from me at all.....he probably needed someone like Tom rather than Bob." She gave the example of Bob sitting in Sandy's bedroom until Sandy fell asleep and then Sandy expected the same thing from her. This she resented.

Before they came to the centre Sandy had been attending a playgroup on weekdays, 9.00-3.30.

Thus, Beryl describes wanting support with Sandy from Tom and receiving inadequate support from Bob. Sandy spent much of the day in playgroup before they attended the centre.

Attitudes towards violence

Most of the details concerning Beryl's attitudes towards violence are given in Chapter 3. To summarise: Beryl finds that Sandy can make her feel very violent. There have been times when she has feared she may injure him severely and has taken alternative action, such as leaving

the room. She thought that he deserved to be smacked very often but, at the time of the interviews, smacked him for the "more serious offences". These included swearing, raiding and messing up the cupboards.

She tries to ensure that the smack hurts him to avoid him subsequently taunting "that didn't hurt" and will hit his legs or his hands. She threatens to hit his face but would not carry out such a threat.

She thought that if she smacks him in a controlled manner then her message is heard by Sandy and he listens to her and is less likely to repeat the misdemeanour or to retort with swearing. However if she loses her temper, shouts and swears at Sandy and then smacks him, then he shouts back and there is a screaming match.

She found him a difficult and demanding baby. She did smack him on the legs and said it made her feel terrible when she did this hard. (The exact age is not clear). When he was about 18 months she told a professional there were times when she had been tempted to throw him out of a window.

So, Beryl has been smacking Sandy since his babyhood and has been concerned about abusing him.

Referral to the family centre

Judy had left drama school and stayed at home for approximately a term. She was due to start another school but she attended only intermittently for the first 3 weeks and then stopped completely. Over a period of a year, the Education Welfare Officer visited and the family was twice taken to court. A psychologist recommended a care order and attendance at the family centre. (The care order recommended that Judy continued to live at home but parental rights were given over to a social worker). The psychologist then met Sandy and "asked about his overall patterns of behaviour and asked me how long he had been behaving in the way......He was very demanding, he wouldn't sit down and he totally wrecked the place in interviews. I suppose at that time, although I knew he was difficult, you don't really recognise it as a serious problem. I think partly that might have been because I had so much on my mind because of Judy."

The alternative to attending the centre was Judy being placed in a childrens' home. Beryl did not think that she or Judy would have been happy with this and said that Judy panics when the care order is reviewed.

Of the centre, she said she was not aware how "consuming" it was going to be. She thought she would be able to attend one meeting a day and then leave. "I was greatly set back really, to find that I had to stay all day here, or as much spare time as possible. And possibly a bit put off by that because that time with Sandy, it was so difficult to control Sandy that it was a terrible thought......When I came here I found it terribly difficult to take him all day." She said that some days she stayed away to avoid being with Sandy but at the time gave other excuses.

To summarise, Beryl and her family were referred to the centre as Judy was not attending school. It also became apparent, to Beryl and the professionals, that Sandy was a problem and very difficult to control.

Changes made in the centre

"Well we've still problems but they're nowhere near as bad and I can get control of Sandy. Not always as I'd like to, but I can get control of him quite easily sometimes, which I'd never been able to do before." She thought she did not really become aware of the intensity of the problems with Sandy until she came to the centre and began spending more time with him, and "I thought, my god, he's a right bloody horror. You can look on children in reflection and say that. I wouldn't let anyone else say that but I can say it and think it, and realise that he really was a little horror.......I mean he was totally out of control, when I think about it. I mean temper tantrums at anything he didn't want to do. I mean, and he be so rude and swore if you told him to do anything. He'd say fuck off and piss off and no you bastard, and all this you know, and although you take it at home, but it become normal. It become a normal pattern. Because I had so many worries with Judy that I suppose my mind was concentrating on her care order..."

She thought that within two weeks of attending the centre she became aware of her difficulties with Sandy and then "you think I'm never going to do it, I'm never going to work, it's never going to work because Sandy's Sandy and I'm me, and its never going to work and that's when I started finding the reasons for not coming here".

She also expected to be given advice and instructions but found "no-one really tells you anything. It's just something you learn to do on your own. Just by watching other people. I don't know why you learn it really." She thought the only time she was given a direct instruction

was by Dr.C. during an early family meeting. He told her "you should be telling Sandy what to do rather than him performing".

She particularly mentioned violence in this context: "No, nobody said when I should smack Sandy or when I shouldn't smack him, or what I should smack him for, or in fact how I should reprimand him......One of the staff does occassionally offer some advice, but if I'm not sure about what I'm doing I might ask her then she'll say her yea or nay, whatever it is. I smack, oh, I smack him for lots of things now that I wouldn't have smacked him for before. Um, I smack him hard enough so that he knows he's got a smack. But I usually try and smack him in a controlled manner, because before I think the most major difference is before he used to get away with everything under the sun. And I used to get under more and more pressure, and then it would build up to a big crescendo. And then one Sunday, which is always a terrible day for Sandy, it's always a bad day Sunday, because he's totally bored, there's nothing on tele, everbody is indoors, especially in the winter. It used to build up to a big crescendo and it used to burst out of my on a Sunday. After about four weeks, and I'd have a real rage and I'd smack him, totally out of control and the whole thing used to get very hysterical. I was screaming and shouting and he was creaming and shouting and then I'd push him over a bit more and then I'd smack him again because he wouldn't stop smoking (laughs), I mean screaming."

"And it all became highly emotional and everybody being emotional. Not just him, but me and Judy getting emotional because I'd gone like a raving loony." (All this was said with much excitement). "That hasn't happened to me for a long time. I think because I deal with it at the time, rather than build it up. It used to build up in me you know. I mean, I'm basically very patient, but something can just snap in me sometimes, and then I'm away. I can never, I can do my nut....."

"Yes, well I've changed in that if I feel he's done something serious enough, it doesn't matter where or what I'm doing, I will stop and chastise him. I did it with the incident with the gun in the car. I pulled up to the side of the road and I gave him a very hard smack for it, and I took the gun away. And then I carried on driving. But normally it wouldn't have over ridden the fact that I was driving along the street, and by the time you get home you can't chastise him for something he did a mile up the road. You know the time has gone, the time of chastising him has passed. But now I would stop and chastise him......I mean I used to lash out in temper while I'm driving alng the street, into the back seat.. Apart from anything else it's very dangerous and I used to miss. The

he'd go you missed, you missed. (This was said in an imitative taunting voice). Then he's only more irritating you know.......If I ever stop now and he knows he's done something wrong you can see his face 'cause he knows, if he's done something serious enough, he knows I will chastise him.   So its changed in a lot of ways.   I don't build up in the same way as I used to.   I build up more with things in the centre rather than things indoors."

She thought Sandy's behaviour deteriorated during the first few weeks they attended the centre and had been told it was because she was trying to change and re-establish control over him. But he fought this, "he deliberately pushed me to the end of my patience". She thought he was fighting against the major changes she had made in the family at home. However she considered that he became aware that she was going to persevere and and that she is now less likely to "give in to him". "I can control him. He does give me fight sometimes ...and before if I stopped him doing something his fighting back would go on for a coule of hours, and he'd do a series of , he'd do a whole load of things to release his frustration...and in the end I'd give in because I couldn't stand all the other things that he did. It would really get me down , but he knows now that no matter what he does I won't change my mind. I think that's the most, the biggest change, that he knows it".

The other change that Beryl reported at the time of the intial interviews concerned her relationship with Tom. She thought she "was less emotionally involved though I will always love him. "She felt she could tell him things that she had not been able to in the past, for example that he should help her with Sandy, both financially and emotionally. Although she had never lived with Tom she had not seen other men but now felt that she could consider seeing someone else. She also thought that Tom now takes "less advantage", something she spoke about at some length and considered to be a major change.

To summarise, at the time of the interviews Beryl considered that there had already been changes in the family. She had become aware of her difficulties with Sandy was more able to control him. She used more controlled violence and responded more immediately to his misdemeanours. Previously she delayed responding and had dramatic outbursts. Sandy had attempted to resist changes that she was instigating but became aware that Beryl was more consistent and persistent in dealing with him.

Beryl's relationship with Tom had also changed and she felt more able to communicate with him and ask for help.

Changes Beryl wanted to make

Beryl said she would like to be able to take Sandy
shopping and to have him "behave in a reasonable way".
However, "the most important thing to change now is
Sandy's attitude to Judy. He still, you know it's a lot
better than it was, but he still, I mean when he first
came here he used to totaly torment Judy at home. He
aggravated her until she lost her temper. He's actually
started to do it again, not for a terrific amount of time,
but I usually go in and intervene."

"He pulls stuff out of her room, things she doesn't like
him touching, and he pokes her and pulls her hair, and he
does it deliberately to provoke her...". Beryl asked Judy
not to lose her temper and said she would remove him; then
he "doesn't win" as he has not provoked anyone. Once he
threatened to wipe his dirty hands on her wll and Beryl
intervened but while he was cleaning his hands he hurt
Judy and she slapped him across the mouth; "I said to her,
I do the smacking around here, you don't smack him like
that, in fact you don't smack him at all. If there's a
smack going to come, its going to come from me".

This did not lead to the usual family argument and Beryl
did not hit Sandy again. She told of another incident
when Sandy provoked Judy and Judy and Beryl then argued.
She thought that Sandy created this situation
deliberately, "which he enjoys for some reason". She
wanted to prevent such situations occuring.

"I suppose subconsciously there's lots of things that I
want to alter, but at the moment I'm not thinking about
those, I'm trying to work on those I've already talked
about."

To summarise, Beryl wanted to be able to take Sandy
shopping and to have Sandy change his "attitude" towards
his sister, Judy.

Helpful aspects of the centre

Beryl thought that being told why Sandy's behaviour had
deteriorated soon after they began attending the centre
had been useful, as she had blamed this on the centre.
She did not find meetings difficult and found the parents'
meeting "relaxing". "Sometimes its quite traumatic but
its good in some ways because it brings out things that
are better not shared with the children around. I mean if
someone wants to have a go at someone else its probably
better to do it in the parents meeting. I don't know

whether they've helped me personally because I always end up doing most of the talking. I don't know, I think maybe it helped everybody, because I see things different to some of the people here."

She disliked explaining absences in the community meetings as it reminded her of school. She discovered, however, that she could say she was going to be out and not necessarily provide a reason, if it was private. She thought that the centre had given her strength to speak to Tom and she had come to realise that she was in less fortunate circumstances that some of the other parents.

Thus, Beryl found an explanation for Sandy's behaviour useful and valued parents' meetings. There were aspects of the meetings she disliked but she also considered the centre had given her strength to speak to Tom.

Summary of general interviews 1-4

Beryl had a difficult childhood though she admired her mother for coping with her illegitimate child and poverty. Her mother married when Beryl was eight and half and she associated him with rules and violence. Her mother also used violence and Beryl considered that she was a wilfull child who was difficult to control. She has other relations whom she considered do not accept her and her family.

Beryl was unhapppy at school, felt isolated and shy, and from 13 years of age truanted. She started work at 15 and continued working until she married and became pregnant. She had three children with Bernie and after she was divorced from him she and Tom conceived Sandy. Of her four children, Sandy is singled out as being the most problematic early in his life and she found him a demanding baby.

She described herself as a patient and understanding mother and stricter with Sandy than with the others. She has used violence with Sandy since he was a baby and had been concerned about abusing him.

At the time of the interviews Beryl had already made changes. She had become aware of her difficulties in controlling Sandy and was using violence in a more controlled manner. She was not delaying reprimanding him and this prevented her having angry outbursts. She felt more able to communicate with Tom and ask for help. She found parents' meetings helpful as well as being given an explanation for Sandy's behaviour.

APPENDIX 3b

Daphne - Summary of interviews

Resume

Daphne, 27, was born in Singapore to Chinese parents and was adopted by her German step-mother and English stepfather. She was 5 years old when adopted and came to live permanently in England at the age of nine. Soon after, her step-father, a plantation owner, died, and she continued to live with her step-mother. She was sent to boarding school at 11 years of age where she remained until she left school. Too young to train as a nurse, she worked as an an ancilliary worker for one year and then began a training which she did not complete. She worked in a pub for a while until she became ill. After other jobs and a further illness, she met her co-habitee Joseph. 3 years later her son, Martin, was born and he is now 4. They were referred to the family centre from a nursery that Martin had been attending. The nursery were concerned about Martin's self-injuring, head banging, hyperactivity and delayed speech development. He sufffers from magnesium malabsorption syndrome which involved a long hospitalisation as a newborn.

General comments

Throughout all the interviews Daphne spoke very quietly, slowly and often fiddled with a necklace, a match or her bag. Her statements were full of pauses and she rarely spoke more than a few sentences without prompting, and so made very hard work of interviewing. She spoke slowly and her replies were often vague and confused.

Early childhood

Daphne was born in Singapore but said of her childhood "its not worth remembering" and was very resistant to elaborating and talking much about her early years. She did not know if her real parents are dead or alive and was vague about the circumstances of her adoption. She thought that her real father worked for her step-father, "that's how I got to know them....."maybe I liked them a lot, or they liked me, I don't know. I can't remember, I just wanted to be with them so they adopted me". She made it sound as if she was the one who had made the decision. The only suggestion she gave as to the real reason was: "I think my Chinese parents had a lot of children. I think

my Chinese mother, my real mother, could't have any children so she adopted a boy and after she adopted the boy she got prenant, then she had a few of her own".

From what it was possible to piece together of Daphne's account, she was adopted while still in Singapore and attended a Convent school there. Her step-father became ill and returned to England and after 2 years Daphne and her step-mother followed him. Daphne did not like being in England and was sent back to boarding school in Singapore. However she added, "I soon came back again". Of the school in Singapore she said, "it was a convent again. It was very strict. (Pause) It was funny, it was half orphanage and half boarding school so during the holidays I'd be there."

On returning to England she attended a convent school in London, "it was run by nuns, it was quite nice. I was quite happy there".

She was content until her step-father died. "Everything was alright then, my father was alive. I hardly knew him, I only knew him for a couple of years". She described her step-father postively as an "English gentleman (laughs). Something like, have you seen MacMillan, yes he was like that you know, umbrella and moustache. I think he was quite good looking when he was young, I've seen a picture. He looked like Clark Gable". She said nothing about his personality though she remembered going away with him and her step-mother. "We had a country cottage in Kent, that was quite good. We used to go there at week-ends, the three of us. I just used to play, my father used to do the gardening, my mother would do the cleaning and washing up. I suppose what else is there to do, ordinary things......... yes it was lovely, yes everything was alright really when my father was alive. (Laughs anxiously). It was only then that she started getting a bit out of hand." (This comment refers to her mother).

Daphne's step-father died of a coronary while undergoing surgery for a duodenal ulcer. I asked how this affected her and her mother. She replied, aparently a non-sequitor: "When I was adopted, when he adopted me, he took me to see his office in the city". After describing this event she said her mother never talks about her father now but added "well my mother and I don't talk too much anyway to each other. I just say what I have to say to her and that usually concerns Martin and that'ls it."

After her step-father died Daphne became a weekly boarder at the convent, "I didn't really like it very much, I would have preferred to be a full time boarder ....it was better than being at home". Her whole life, from this time, was largely influenced by her deteriorating

relationship with her stepmother and her stated desire to be apart from her.

She felt she could have done well at school but "I wasn't happy at home as I got many beatings and so on, I mean even when I was at school I had to phone my mother up. I just couldn't concentrate sometimes". The nuns at the boarding school "cut the phone off if it got a bit too much... They would always help you....we had one special nun she was tiny, you know all the teenagers would got to her. She was the most understanding".

To summarise, Daphne was adopted as a small child and after some years settled in England. Initially she was happy but after her step-father's death portrays being very miserable. Her relationship with her mother deteriorated and she would have preferred to be away from home. Her schooling was affected, and she did not achieve as well as she felt she would have been able to under different circumstances.

Relationship with her mother

Daphne assigned the onset of difficulties in her relationship with her mother, and her desire to separate from her, to the time when her father died. Her mother's personality altered and Daphne partially blamed slimming pills for this transformation. Daphne was explicit in her criticims of her mother, more so than in her descriptions of other things.

However, when Daphne mentioned her mother, as with other issues, she did not talk about one particular time and often the period to which she was referring was unclear. She found it particularly difficult to focus on her childhood.

"I suppose in a way she was a perfectionist and everything I did was wrong. She used to beat me about the head (quietly) for silly things (voice goes up). I was never really that naughty, there were times when she would teach me how to set my hair and I couldn't do it properly, couldn't do it properly the way she wanted me to do it, and if I got untidy or screwed it up or something, just little things like that, or if I didn't want to eat, especially at breakfast, I'd eat very little at breakfast, she always tried to make me eat my breakfast and if I didn't she'd get very cross."

Daphne's relationship with her mother continued (and continues) to be conflictual, argumentative and difficult. Even in her working life Daphne's decisions were governed by her attempts to flee from her mother, however these

attempts were rather ineffectual. She said, in connection with changing jobs, "I just didn't want to know her anymore (emphatically). I just wanted to get away from her but I couldn't."

"We were never really close; she wanted me to be close to her but I just couldn't be". Daphne explained that her mother sometimes gave her the "creeps" when she wanted to touch her or hold her hand in the cinema and her refusals anger her mother, also "she'd want me to get into her bed you know and give her a cuddle, but I didn't like it. I mean its quite normal (as if she is trying to convince herself). I know some children, some cuddle into their mothers, but it was just her. I just couldn't. I just couldn't with her". This was taken as rejection by her mother and angered her.

Daphne continued with her criticisms and said "she used to make comparisons", but the incident she related to explain this again shows how she felt her mother punished her unjustly. She described a shopping expedition; Daphne's friend was dawdling and Daphne was encouraging her to hurry but "I'd just get a slap from her (her mother), you know, slaps just in the middle of the street". Only after she had described this the "comparison" became clear: "she'd say I wish I'd adopted a white girl and in the middle of the street she'd say don't call me Mummy, call me Mrs. S.   .   That's why now I hate, I never call her Mummy, I try to avoid it when I speak to her".

She felt "terrible" about the way she was treated. She elaborated on how her mother used and uses Daphne Chinese origins to criticise, even her choice of colour and clothes. Daphne felt her mother should not have been so accusing but also repeatedly expressed resignation in relation to her and she continued: "if I answer her back it's no good and I don't say anything it's no good, so I hardly talk to her. I try to stay out of her way. You can't win really". (Long pause).

She said almost nothing positive about her mother; only that materially she received nice things but "not emotionally".

Her mother influenced her relationships with other people and also Daphne allowed Gianni (her child's father) to influence her relationship with her mother: "I did eventualy (get away) until I met Gianni but Gianni said that it wasn't right, that she's your mother and you ought to be in contact with her you know, you should phone her and see her sometime, so I did (resigned). And I've been seeing her ever since". Martin "goes to his grandma every Saturday so I'm free then, I'm free all day Saturday and Sunday morning (vaguely). It's funny it's only when

Gianni's here, I mean since Gianni came back it's been like that, but say Gianni's not here, he's away for the weekend I don't think she'd do it. I mean when Gianni is away she always wanted me to stay with her, she always wanted for me to be with them, with her and Martin."

To summarise, Daphne's relationship with her mother deteriorated after her father's death. She considered that her mother criticised her unjustifiably and wanted more emotional and physical closeness than Daphne felt comfortable with. She expressed anger and resentment about the way her mother treated her but also resignation, that it was not possible for her to change the situation or even to effectively separate from her mother.

Parent's use of violence

Daphne said her mother used to hit her, even after she had left home, for example when she discovered Daphne was "having a relationship with a doctor....I got quite embarassed. Um ah she used to come there and she used to hit me about, she came there and she was hitting me about in my room. (Hesitatingly) I think I got involved with a doctor there, I don't know, maybe she didn't like that.....yes, it got unbearable so I didn't stay on".

The use of violence had been consistent since Daphne"s step-father died. "She used to beat me about the head for just silly things...I was never really that naughty". (She did not mention her father using violence).

She recalled "having a beating for being delayed home from school by another girl. She did not elaborate on how she was beaten but said evasively, "oh well never mind, she just gave me a good beating, she's tiny but she's quite strong". Her mother hit her "everywhere" and used her hand, stick or shoe and at times "she'd slap me in the middle of the street and she'd pinch me, she'd, if we were in a taxi she just got hold of my arm and pinch me.......that's why I didn't want to stay at home (as if I should realise), that's why I wanted to go away. (laughs)".

Thus, Daphne recalled her mother as frequently using violence even when she had reached adulthood and considered it to be unjustified.

Work

"Well I wanted to get away from my mother, the only thing
I could think, the only way was, I went into nursing, that
way I lived in and I was away from my mother. I lived in
the nurses home."

Daphne's working life was goverend by her mother and her
attempts to gain independence from her. Work as a source
of potential satisfaction or self development did not
enter into Daphne's plans or ideas, but was described as a
means of thwarting her mother. When asked if she enjoyed
her jobs she replied, "I did, I enjoyed being on my own."
She began nursing as an ancilliary and then began
training. She preferred the hospital where she fist
worked, a private hospital. "I got to know the patients
better because it was private; it meant you could give
them more of your attention, you know, you just got to
know them really".

She did not complete the training because "my mother kept
coming there..... She kept coming to the nurses home and
making trouble and complaining about me so I left."
However in a subsequent interview the reason for her
leaving nursing is not attributed to her mother. "I did
paediatrics for the first year, that was when I started
and then I went to female surgical, but I didn't like
it....no I probably just couldn't stomach it. We had, um,
we had an assessment and I just couldn't go through with
it. It was only a dressing. I had to do a dressing of
this woman's leg, but I just couldn't, I couldn't do it. I
mean I could do it but I knew it was hurting her". I just
couldn't stand the sight of blood and suffering....it was
too much."

"I found another job, she (her mother) found out where I
was through the police". She had found another "live-in
job" in a pub but her mother again traced her and
complained to the management about her. "She was saying
that I was unreliable.....they didn't take notice, didn't
take notice of her anyway. Then she kept phoning and
phoning and phoning, and I left that job as well".

Daphne also spent some time doing promotion and sales
work. During this time she became ill. She was reluctant
to talk about this and at first said she went into
hospital "for a rest.......the doctor said I was bored."
However later she explained she was rapidly admitted to
hospital after an x-ray and had to remain in bed for 2
months. "It was just that I had trouble with digesting.
It's just my food doesn't pass down through my stomach
quick enough so I was put on medicine."

After this she lived with her mother for a while and then moved into a room on her own She did some more promotion work in a large store but became ill again.   "I had a D and C as I was bleeding". Again she returned to her mother. After she met Gianni she worked in a Japanese restaurant.

To summarise, Daphne began her working life in nursing but did not complete her training . Further choices of jobs were based on her attempt to separate from her mother and were affected by two illnesses.

Relationships with men

Daphne met her first boyfriend in Spain.   "I met one in Spain when I was about 15 but that was nothing. My mother knew him better than I did.   I didn't like him..... When I was 18,   I suppose, that was more, that was the first time I really went out with a boy." She considered herself to be a "late starter" and said she would not let him kiss her and, after his attempt to do so, she stopped seeing him.   Her mother interfered in her relationships and accused her of sleeping with one man but Daphne said they were only "lying around on lilo's with people all around."

She met an Italian man when on holiday in Germany. "He was really very nice (emphatically).   I think he respected me. He never wanted me to to go to bed withim you know, like other men, you go out with them for once and that's all they think about". However she lost contact with him.

While in promotion work she met another Frenchman.   "I found out he was married and my mother stopped that.   It was good in a way........just told me to write a letter to him and I wrote him a letter and that was the end of it". However it was this man with whom she first had sex when she was 20.   She said at the time she was not aware he was married.   "I was still a virgin at 20,   that's not bad is it?".

Daphne vaguely described becoming involving with a doctor while she was nursing.   As with other aspects of her life Daphne described this in a confused way implying there was another nurse involved;   her mother discovered   the situation and "put an end to it".

Thus, Daphne's relationships were largely with European men and some were influenced by her mother.

Gianni

"I met him at a party". Gianni subsequently took Daphne
out to a club. "Do you know he was very sweet. I suppose I
fell for him there." She spoke postively of his
attentiveness at this early date. He went home to Italy
after 1 week. After his return to England he told her he
was married and she did not expect to continue seeing him,
"so I didn't want to get too much involved and then I
think I moved into another room, it was a little flat, it
was just across the road from where I was then. I was
trying to get away from him but I couldn't very well, he
found me. I had the flat there, he lived with me and then
he went back again. He went back to Italy, it was just
before, around Christmas, I didn't really know what to do,
I was lost. I think again, I moved into a block of flats
where the man I was telling you about, the friend of the
family lived, and he hired me a room in the block of flats
so I lived there. And Gianni used to come and look for me
there but he wouldn't tell him where I was. But then we
just bumped into each other, and we've sort of been
together since then, and then we stayed together."

Daphne attempted to split from Gianni, but as with her
mother, these attempts were not efficient, and at the time
of the interviews she described a relationship in which no
firm decisions have been made. The separations and
reunions continued and were still continuing.

When asked about the good aspects of the relationship
Daphne said "well we've had a child haven't we, thats one
thing, that's one thing I didn't have with the other men.
I mean we had our quarrels and so on but most of the time
I'm quite happy with him. You know when I'm at home its
nice to have him around the house, you know. I'm free and
easy with him. I can't explain really, there's just
something there you know, I feel comfortable with him".

Contradicting her earlier statement, she then said "no it
was good before I had Martin; it was good then Martin
arrived". Before Martin was born she travelled with
Gianni on business and described holidays they took, "That
was good, but we had a few quarrels there too and fights".
The fights concerned jealousy and Gianni fought with a man
who pinched Daphne's bottom (She giggled through this
almost as if she could not believe it.) This precipitated
a fight between Gianni and Daphne.

The fights were usually verbal, however violence was used
on a couple of occasions. "Only a couple of times, no not
really violent, he'd slap me a couple of times. I can't
remember the first time. I remember the second time, he
wans't doing very well in his job, wasn't making very much

money, so I said to him, it was no good, that I would go
out to work and he wasn't very pleased and I probably said
something and he just sort of hit me you know, (speaks
even more quietly than usual). I went to work". She
concluded, "he just didn't like the idea of me working and
he didn't like it and he just hit me". She added that he
felt sorry later. At the time she went to work in a
Japanese restaurant.

She told of another incident when she felt she had
provoked the slap he gave her. She mentioned unspecific
nasty things he would say that angered her and for which
he felt sorry later. She was angered by Gianni's gambling
which he could not afford. She did not complain about
this but I'd just ask him if he'd been gambling and then
I'd get angry with him for going to sleep in the
afternoon". This continued to anger her.

At the time of the first interview Daphne was "half back"
with Gianni. The initiative for this had been taken by
Gianni. "He phoned me up" . She added, "I just can't
live without him, , I just can't live with him and I can't
live without him". When together they quarrel and when he
is away she misses him.

At the time of the fourth interview she complained: "I
don't like it, (Gianni's freqent trips to Italy), I still
don't like it very much, it's a bit silly. After all I
mean he goes, he doesn't spend a lot of time but we do
quarrel......the same old thing.....it's been like that
for a long time, usually about my mother". Daphne
explained that after quarrels with Gianni she goes to her
mother and Joseph disapproves. They also argued about
Martin and money, but again was not specific about the
content of these quarrels.

To summarise, Daphne initially was not aware that Gianni
was married and when she discovered he was, made
ineffectual attempts not to continue seeing him. There
were quarrels before Martin's birth and these continued;
violence having been used only on two occasions. There
have been separations and reconciliations which were
continuing at the time of the interviews.

Pregnancy

Daphne had a miscarriage before becoming pregnant .the
second time, with Martin. During the first pregnancy she
said she had much support from Gianni but not when she was
pregnant the second time. She thought he was unconcerned
about the second pregnancy. "The second time he was in
Ireland and when I told him he didn't really care, he said

well I'm just going to bed then, he'd just come home from work(laughs) and he said he was going to get drunk and I just went out but he soon came to find me and he said he was shocked". Daphne, on the other hand, was "pleased (emphasised the pleased) yes I was was quite pleased."

Daphne spent a long period of her pregnancy in hosptial. The waters broke at 5 months and her cervix dilated so she was obliged to spend 2 months in hospital. Her description of this time is confused, she implied she had also spent an earlier period in hospital.

Gianni visited her but had become involved with another girl. This angered Daphne. Gianni and his girlfriend had a car crash and Daphne did not believe Gianni's account that he was driving her home for someone else. Daphne had found the girl's phone number before going to hospital so was very suspicious. "I was cross because I was in hospital and I thought I was losing Martin, the baby, and I was on complete bed rest; they wouldn't even let me get up or anything. I couldn't even get up and go out for a meal or something, they said it was dangerous. That's why I was cross. I mean it wouldn't have been so bad if I hadn't been pregnant and he wasn't doing what he was, I really was quite cross. (Pauses and then sighs sorrowfully)".

Thus Martin was the result of Daphne's second pregnancy. She spent many weeks in hospital and felt betrayed by Gianni who was unfaithful to her during this time.

Birth

"The birth was normal but it took long enough. It took a long time and I was disappointed with Martin when I first saw him, he looked, ugh, so funny, just like a monkey. I didn't really care anyway once Martin was out, I didn't really want to know. Gianni was there; he saw it and took a part, but he had to go out he can't stand the sight of blood...... I had him but they took him away. I didn't really care at the time. I didn't care what happened. I was just pleased it was all over". Because of the extended labour she was eventually given gas.

Daphne left hospiial on her own. Gianni was in Scotland and Martin stayed in hospital. He was a "prem" and they discovered he was anaemic. "They tried to give him a blood transfusion but they couldn't do it; because he so tiny they couldn't get a needle into the vein, so he had two or three of those at St. Christopher's and then they found something wrong with his blood so he stayed on in hospital for a while. I think another two months, two or

three months and then he came home for Christmas and I saw
him for a day or two and then he went back Christmas eve
again; so Christmas day he wasn't home, and he stayed in
there for another month I suppose, I can't really
remember". (Chuckles).

Thus, Martin spent many of his early months in hospital.
Gianni was away for more than a month after Daphne's
return home and during this time Daphne registered the
baby in her name, something she felt Gianni disapproved
of.

Perceptions of Martin

Daphne said she wasn't very pleased when she first saw
Martin after he had been born. "No, well I didn't think
he was very pretty. He looked a little bit like a
monkey......he was tiny, he had a very big head, apart
from that I can't really remember what he looked like. I
just saw him for a second. He had loads of black hair,
thats all really". She suggested he had changed a lot.

As a small baby he used to cry frequently, "I had to carry
him all the time, I had a pram but couldn't leave him in
the pram, I always had to take him out because he used to
yell, even if I was pushing him in it he used to cry so
I'd have to carry him and push the pram as well; he
wouldn't stop". When she picked him up he was "ok".

She considered him "difficult" as a small baby and
recalled problems with breast feeding. She called his
behaviour on the bottle "naughty". He "was too small to
suck. I tried with the bottle but he was naughty, he used
to put the teat underneath his tongue. He didn't used to
take it, he was too small 'cause he was a prem baby, he
wasn't ready."

Martin was initially tube-fed and Daphne said she then
gave him solids.

She described him as "quite sweet but hyperactive". From
birth she said that he "wouldn"t lie still in the
incubator". She did not consider this a problem until he
was old enough to walk which she said he began at 11
months. She thought he was just like any other baby in
terms of the antics he engaged in, touching and smashing
things, though she was impressed at his not touching the
gas fire. "He used to touch everything, I suppose that's
what annoyed me most."

Very thoughtfully she described him currently: "um he can
be very sweet. He is very sensitive, he's aways been

sensitive". Daphne explained that he judges her mood, and that of others, and tries to comfort them. "Well, when I feel a bit sad he knows, I don't say anything but he knows. He comes up to me and cuddles me or says stop crying Mummy, you know, like that if he sees anyone upset or a bit upset, he goes up to people and tries to comfort them."

"He can be very good, just like any other boy I suppose. He can be very good, sometimes he can be a little terror. (The tone of her voice is affectionate). He talks a little bit too much sometimes, well when he starts on something he doesn't stop. He's got quite a good memory, he remembers names, he's getting a bit more settled now, probably. I mean the teacher was saying this morning that he was getting on quite well. He's still slightly confused about his father I think, bcause he's not always there, he comes and goes........he's got a sweet little character as I say, he's senstivie, a bit confused. I think he's quite bright, he does get his silly moods (giggles). Um what can I say, he's got a temper".

To illustrate this last point, Daphne gave a recent example when Martin threw himself onto the ground as he wanted to play with another child.

She described Martin's problems when he came to the family centre as "difficult to handle.......he was just running, you know, just running around, he wouldn't stay in the room, he wouldn't listen to me and I couldn't control him.......he didn't really talk, odd words when he came........he is quite active now and he was very active when we came.......he calmed down a bit. I think he was frustrated.....well he used to bang his head, he used to do it and he wouldn't stop. And I suppose he can concentrate now".

Her ideas about an "ideal son" demonstrate what she thinks about her own son and how she would like him to change. The characteristics she suggested were: "doesn't swear, eats what is put in front of him, goes to bed when told, does things when told, ...of Martin's age, well I suppose he should be going to nursery really shouldn't he (quiet and subdued). Clever and brilliant, no I suppose in good health, I suppose I would like him to be well mannered, which Martin isn't, loving, I suupose which Martin can be, obedient".

To summarise, Daphne was initially disappointed with Martin and found him demanding as a baby. He was always very active and currently, amongst other attributes, she described him as sensitive, affectionate and as having a temper.

Daphne as a mother

Daphne said that one of her good qualities as a mother was her "patience" but does not completely believe it and assigns the compliment as coming from others: "Well people say I've got a lot of patience, I suppose that's one of my good qualities, well it used to be. I suppose I can take quite a lot from Martin when he's really naughty, it can take me along time to get angry or upset".

She found it difficult to think of other qualities, "well its just what other people say."

She considered the ideal mother to be: "um I suppose the one who is able to cope with her child and makes the child do what she wants(giggles). Um I suppose she has to be tolerant, understanding, loving (pauses) responsible, patient, dont know (long pause.)".

Daphne said she had little support from Gianni, "it was always up tp me really. No there were just things I had to do 'cos I was Martin's mother really (speaks despondently). I had to go and see him all the time in hospital. Gianni used to take me to the hospital and drop me off. Oh don't know I mean I am his mother, I mean I've been with him most of his life(long pause)".

Thus Daphne considered her main asset as a mother to be patience and found it difficult to describe any others. She regreted not having more support from Gianni.

Gianni's role as father

"He's not as patient as I am". She considered that he had always been this way with Martin, "if he used to cry in the night he wouldn't get out of bed (giggles embarassedly) he never did, I was always the one who had to get out of bed. I suppose most mothers do but I've heard some father do at times, I was a bit angry about that. (After some consideration) I think maybe he did once. One day I had Martin in bed when he was very tiny and sometimes maybe he'd give him a but of a rock or rock him to sleep. But once he went to sleep before the baby was alseep, so it didn't really help very much (laughs). I had to wake him up. When Martin was younger I used to come down and Martin was crying and Gianni would just be sitting watching TV, things like that. It didn't make any difference". Daphne complained to him, "yes, I'd say

your're just sitting there and the poor child is crying you
know".

She also considered that Gianni was "jealous" of the baby.
"He used to come in and say oh Martin comes first (pauses)
I think he does really, I agree ....No I did everything
for Martin, you mean feeding him and looking after him, no
I did everything , Gianni didn't really".

She had more to say about an ideal father than about the
ideal mother. At first she said he should have the same
qualities as the ideal mother and then added " well if its
an ideal one he can do all the housework(giggles) and let
the mother rest. That's right, I mean the poor man when
he's been out all day and comes home tired (sarcastic and
laughing). No really, I suppose just have share, yes to
share. I suppose there's something that Gianni doesn't do
it take the child out, like take him to the park or
something, sometimes in the Summer but not very often. Um
well you know, I think that's what I'd like in a man.
Someone you could live with and I'd like him to got
shopping and by me clothes sometimes. Gianni hardly ever
comes home with anything, sometimes with clothes but
they're usually too small......I suppose share
Martin.....I suppose and do things together, but its just
a dream."

Currently she described Martin's and Gianni's relationship
as "alright" but said Martin was unsure of his father when
he returned after an absence. She has to encourage Martin
to ask his father for help. Martin resists this and wants
Daphne to do things for him.

To summarise, Daphne had little positive to say about
herself or Gianni as parents. She considered her main
attribute to be patience. She had little support from
Gianni, with whom she would like to share more of the
parenting.

Attitudes to violence

When Martin was a baby "when he was naughty I never used
to slap him, I'd just took the things away from him, just
put it out of reach.....At 11 months he's too young I
think. I began slapping him when he could
understand....about 2. Then I'd slap his hand......he'd
probably get hold of something or get something he
shouldn't and I'd slap his hand....I'd just slap him hard,
not like now, he gets a good hiding from me now(laughs)."

At 2 years of age after he was slapped Martin would "want me to kiss it better....he was quite clever sometimes, he, if he thought I was going to slap that hand he put that hand at the back of him. Then I'd try and get the other one and he'd take that away and it turned into sort of a game (giggling)". Sometimes Daphne found it difficult to persist with her punishment and colluded with Martin's attempts to defuse the situation.

When asked if Martin's crying ever drove her to feel like hitting him she replied: "well he used to get me very angry when he cried all the time, but no, I didn't feel like hitting him....yes it did make me angry but I didn't hit him. Even now when I see him crying, if I see him crying I don't like it very much. I mean when he really cries and tears.......just don't like to see him cry".

So she did not hit him for crying but she did in retaliation for his attacks on her: "No he gets a bit carried away sometimes when he plays with me, say if I'm just playing with him or I tickle him or what. Or I throw him in the air or something like that, he gets carried away and starts hitting me , thats when I get really cross with him.......He doesn't mean to, its just in a playful way, but he does it quite hard sometimes and to stop him I have to give him a good spanking....on his bottom. I have slapped him across the face once or twice when he wouldn't stop. I've given him a spanking but he wouldn't stop.......yes I was so mad I didn't know what to do, I just slapped him across the face, not hard (an anxious giggle)". This was effective and Martin cried, " a bit".

"I don't really like it, I don't really like slapping him anywhere apart from his bottom. I'd, I'd feel a little bad yes. I don't think it really hurt him.(Trying to convince herself.) Um it was just sort of surprised I think.... because I'd slapped him across the face, I didn't know what to do with him, sometimes I shake him, not hit him, just shake him to try and get some sense into him, it helps. (Pauses)."

She was critical of times when Gianni hit Martin. "Yes, well I spoke to Gianni about that last time. I told him if Martin plays with him and he gets carried away then stop him. I don't know what it is maybe because he's a man he can take more than I can, but he lets Martin get away with quite a lot, he lets him hit him and slapping his leg"...."Yes Martin to Gianni. I watched the two of them, they're just playing but Gianni just sits in front of the television and just lets him hit him about and then he gets fed up and then poor Martin gets it, which I think is wrong, I think its a bit unfair"........"You know Martin, if Gianni wants to play with Martin then its O.K.

then he'll let Martin hit him and so on and he'll play
with Martin but if Gianni's a bit tired or he gets tired
of the game, or then he wants to watch a programme, then
he gets angry with Martin and gives him a spanking".... "He
just sort of laughs when he's spanking. I told him don't
do that and if your'e going to give him a spanking don't
laugh at the same time, it must be, just give him one good
or, otherwise he won't stop."

"Eventually he did that, he just gave him a good spanking
and Martin stopped. I said its not fair if you just let
Martin hit you about, just when you feel like it and when
your'e angry or tired you won't let him.......... I mean
Gianni, I don't think he likes to spank Martin. Because
you see if I've seen him spank him and Martin cries then
he comes running to me, of if Gianni tells him off, then
he comes running, Mummy, Mummy and I feel a bit sorry then
and I think well, what did he do(laughs)".

Daphne said she does not hit Martin for not eating his
food, "I don't hit him very often anyway, only if he does
something bad...yes I shout at him if he does something
naughty, or if he's clumsy or something like that, if he
doesn't stay in his place. I mean like yesterday I went
into a cafe and I ordered a glass of coke and he had spilt
a little bit on the table and I told him to be careful, so
after a litte while, before I knew it, it was all over the
place, and I was really quite cross then, 'cos he was
already a bit difficult before going in there. I didn't
slap him or anything, I just got hold of him, 'cos I was
quite cross and I told him to be careful. I said I've had
enough of you today, I didn't slap him or hit him'.

In response Martin was "a bit cheeky, if he's a bit cheeky
then I spank him". She told me at some length, how Martin
had overhead others call Daphne something similar to "you
silly cow". Daphne was too embarassed to tell me actually
what was said. Martin repeated this to her. She told him
a few times not to say it then gave him a spanking. "But
he hasn't said it, he doesn't swear now, I used to spank
him for that. I probably just spnk him too, for things I
don't want him to repeat......I mean the first time I
didn't mind so much because he probably didn't know what
it meant but I think he just picked it up, though I'm sure
he knew what it meant".

To summarise, Daphne began using violence when Martin was
2 years of age when she considered him able to understand
what was happening. Martin was able to turn conflicts
into a game and Daphne often colluded with this. She does
not like to see him cry and crying did not evoke violence
in her. She spanks his bottom for attacks on her, and
once or twice has hit his face, though does not like to do

so.   She also shakes him when he has hurt her.

She was critical of Gianni's unpredictable use of violence and consoles Martin on such occasions.   She does not   use violence for not eating or clumsiness,   even   though   the latter   angers   her,   though   will   spank   Martin   for "cheekiness".

Discipline

Daphne described how Martin threw himself on the floor   in a "temper   tantrum" after visiting another mother   as   he wanted to play with her child. "Yes, it was in the middle, yes we were walking along and he just threw himself on the ground,   and I just sort of ignored him and walked on,   he did just get up and eventually,   I think he thought I   was leaving him.11 I tried to explain to him again and it   was OK.   It didn't last too long."

This strategy is similar to one she uses at bed time.   "I think I get more angry when I'm tired and if I want him to go to bed and he doesn't want to go and I shout him then........Then   I   just say I'm tired and I'm going to bed,   goodnight,   and I go upstairs. He follows me and he still probably,   if he doesn't want to go to sleep, I just threaten him and I say he can go downstairs and stay alone and he doesn't like that much.   So he just goes to sleep". Daphne sits with Martin until he falls asleep.

They also battle over eating, "if I really think he should eat   then I try and force him but then I think   its   time, and   I won't force him now,   so he leaves   it.......If he says   he   really doesn't want anymore then   I   just   leave it..........Wlhen   he   won't eat and I say you   don't   eat then there'll probably be another threat, if you don't eat you don't see your Nana,   you don't see her....He   doesn't like it, he says alright then, one spoonful."

She   also   has problems dressing Martin in   the   mornings. "He just doesn't want to listen to me,   he doesn't want to get dressed for instance,   um you know, I hurry him up and he doesn't want to get dressed and I get cross   sometimes. And   then   I just pick him up and   get   him dressed.   He doesn't like it.   He doesn't like it of course.......I've been trying different ways to, like humour him, but I mean I   just try and make it into a game because then   I   don't lose my temper then you see. And he's happier for it   as well and then wer'e both happier and its much better.   And if he doesn't go to bed he gets wild,   and then I come   up and   smack him,   or I just leave him and I go upstairs   by myself.   Then   he   comes   running after me and   then   he probably thinks I'm going to come down and get him".

To summarise, Daphne will walk away from Martin in the street or if he is misbehaving at home, such as not going to bed. Over food she uses threats such as not seeing his grandmother. Dressing him in the mornings is a problem and she may attempt to transform the conflict into a game.

Referral to the family centre

Daphne was referred to the centre by the head of the nursery which Martin was attending, "because she thought it would do Martin good to continue at school. She didn't really say that Martin was difficult or anything like that, she sent me here........I saw Miss R.... I told her that he was quite difficult to handle....he was just running around, he wouldn't stay in the room, he wouldn't listen to me and I couldn't control him....What I really expected was that for Martin to come here just a few days a week during the holidays." Miss R explained to Daphne that "it wasn't that sort of place and that it was a special place."

"I wasn't very keen on it. I didn't like the idea of coming, especially for, oh the first month". She did not like a fight that occurred between two mothers and "I thought well that's not really the place for Martin, and I didn't want to come back again, and I thought I'd go somewhere else and take Martin away".

When she first attended the centre she thought her difficulties were "all to do with Marlo. I suppose I realised that it was to do with me, that I couldn't control him, that I had difficulty controlling Martin and for Martin his speech had improved. He didn't really talk, odd words when he came, I wanted that to change".

Other changes she desired at that early stage, were "to get on better with Gianni...I suppose trying to settle, or trying to sort out our disagreements". Their disagreements concerned money and Daphne turning to her mother for refuge or support. She was concerned about Gianni's frequent trips to Italy, "it's no good for Martin....he hasn't gone so much now... no when I came here I never thought anything about myself. I thought about Martin really, but then I suppose after a while I realised that um, that it just wasn't only Martin and it was Gianni and me, and if we were better then it would be better for Martin."

She wanted to be "able to control Martin. I mean make him

listen, to make him do what I want him to.   I think he
does that a little better now.   I mean um, ah, he still
gets a bit out of control sometimes, but its not as bad as
it used to be."

At the time of the fourth interview, (after 8 months in
the centre), Daphne felt the following things had changed:
Martin had stopped banging his head, and could concentrate
better.   She had organised fixed times when Martin visits
his grandmother, his speech had improved and he was eating
a little more.   She said they were "more like a family
now" and that occasionally they all go to bed at the same
time, including Gianni.

She still wanted to improve her control of Martin.   "Maybe
I could do it better.   I don't know, I try quite hard as
it is..I wish he could go to sleep on his own....its
terrible to have to stay in there you know.   I mean he
goes to sleep and I fall asleep sometimes as well".

She felt she "should do things with Martin, like the
things with the teacher, letting him sit down and do
things and teach him things he should know by the age of
4.   He's a bit slow, I mean the things we have to do
here. "

In addition she wanted to "try and arrange the things I
want.   I mean like Gianni.   Try and make him understand I
mean like to eat at the same time you know, I mean its so
awkward.   I mean I just cook and then eat on my own and
then he wants to eat at ten, and then I'm too tired and he
has to go out, or I have to make him something.......a bit
more organised I suppose.   Yes, organised, it would be
nice......I've talked to him about it but he gets a bit
funny over it..........I'll have to handle him.   I mean
sometimes I can or even that , or he'll run away from
me...well men don't like being nagged too much.   Oh I
don't know. "

To summarise, Daphne and Martin were referred to the
centre by Martin's nursery and Daphne came to realise that
Martin had difficulties with his speech and being over-
active and that she had problems in controlling him.   She
also realised that the situation between herself and
Gianni was important and required changing.   Treatment had
helped, to some degree, with these issues though she
desired further changes.

Likes and dislikes of the centre

"Like about it?(as if I must be insane).   Nothing.
(Laughs) No not really".   However later in the interview

she said that she considered the family meetings to be most helpful.. "Its more private. I can talk easier in family meetings, its just between me and Belinda really. Not everybody else around". She thought these meetings had helped Martin to understand his father's changing whereabouts and the times at which he visits his grandmother. "Well Belinda I suppose, I sorted it out too. I suppose she, um, she gave me advice on what to do and which days Martin should see his granny. She helped me work it out really". They arranged that Martin would see his grandmother regularly at week-ends rather than the ad-hoc arrangement which existed previously.

She considered that her time with the pre-school teacher in the playroom to be a "good time for both of us". At these time she could "teach" Martin.

She particularly disliked meetings, "I hate meetings, all meetings. The one I really don't mind is the family meeting. The worst one is the community meeting or the parents one". Of the community meetings she said "it's just awful. I suppose its just um, I meant the community meetings usually, um, we discuss things. I don't really like the atmosphere in there anyway. I mean in the parents meeting its more realxed and I haven't got Martin to control like in the community meeting." She suggested it would be improved without the children, but ideally would not attend at all. "I don't like talking, then it's no good."

Other dislikes mentioned by Daphne were activities with the children and "I don't like to have to ask to go out". She thought she should just be able to leave when Martin was in the playroom, as if he was in a nursery. "I would like Martin to spend more time in the playroom,(that is without her)...No I mean before I used to get angry, when I was feeling ill or a bit low and they said I had to take Martin on the outing and I wanted to stay behind because I wasn't feeling well".

At the end of the fourth interview I asked whether I had omitted to ask her anything of importance and Daphne said, "Um well I know what I've learnt about being here. I think everyone learnt that...to keep your mouth shut.(Laughs) No, its true, no not to get too involved. I mean to give you an example, Lesley and me.". She and Lesley had been friends and then Daphne felt "she was taking advantage, I mean I didn't feel appreciated. I mean it was just something she said to me when she was angry, she said she was jealous of me, and I didn't like it. But I suppose at the time I took the pills, I mean Jo said to me she wasn't really a friend, she should have discouraged me. I was thinking that if she really was a

friend then she wouldn't have let me, she would have discouraged me, and I went into hospital. Yes, she didn't stop me. I mean she really left if up to me. I mean she said it was up to me but she shouldn't. And another time I mean the Dr, you know, Dr. V., and when Lesley was staying at my place, he said she wasn't good company for me."

Daphne had taken a circuitous route to telling me that she had attempted suicide. Her judgements about Lesley were based, largely, on the opinions of others.

To summarise, Daphne disliked many aspects of the centre, though did consider that the family meetings and time with the pre-school teacher had been of help. During her stay she attempted suicide and thought that Lesley, another mother, had been unhelpful and unfriendly.

Perfect day

Daphne said her perfect day would be without Martin, shopping for a new warderobe. She would have a nice lunch and would like Gianni to be more attentive and shop with her. She would like him to take her out for a meal, dinner and dance. She concluded, "it's all a dream."

Summary of interviews

Dorothy was adopted and moved from Singapore to England. She was content until her step-father died but after this her relationship with her step-mother deteriorated and continues to be problematic. Her step-mother used violence and criticised Daphne. Daphne did not achieve well at school and did not complete her nurse's training. After a few relationships, she met Gianni with whom she had a baby, Martin. Gianni was married and Daphne attempted, unsuccessfully, to stop seeing him.

Daphne spent many weeks in hospital when pregnant with Martin and thought that Gianni was unfaithful to her during this time. She was initially disappointed with Martin and thought he had always been very active. Currently she described him as sensitive, affectionate and as having a temper. Daphne had little positive to say about herself as a mother, except that she is patient, and said she had little support with Martin.

She began using violence when Martin was 2 years of age, for swearing and other transgressions, but also tries to avoid confrontations with him. She was critical of

Gianni's use of violence. At other times she withdraws from Marlo or threatens that he will not visit his grandmother. Daphne was referred to the family centre regarding difficutlies with Martin and, although she disliked many aspects of the centre, considered that she had been helped in some areas.

APPENDIX 3c.

Barbara - Summary of interview

Resume

Barbara, 22, was born in London and suffered from chronic asthma. Her school atendance was affected and she attended boarding school for 3 years. She did not describe her relationship with her father and considered her mother uncaring and unsupportive. She truanted from secondary school but managed to train as a nursery nurse. She became pregnant just as she finished her training and Leo was born in 1978 and was 2 years of age at the time of the study. His father who did not live with Barbara is West Indian. She was referred to the FC by a social worker who was concerned about Barbara's depression and possible violence towards Leo.

The following description of Barbara is based only on one interview as she withdrew from the study after having completed the initial interview. For this reason many of the sections contain only limited imformation and there are many areas which were completely omitted.

Childhood

Barbara was born in London and early childhood was largely influenced by her chronic asthma. She was frequently ill and obliged to remain in bed. "The doctor would come and give me all these different pills and the pump, you know, the inhaler for the asthma. And he'd tell my Mum to keep me quiet." She lay in bed and played or drew. "I used to sleep a lot as well, those tablets used to drug you up."

She only attended school rarely until the age of eight and blames her illness for this and for her lack of friends at that time.

At eight years of age she was sent to a school for fragile children. "I hated my Mum for it, cause I was only eight. I didn't know you had to be ill to go to them sort of schools (Speaks more emphatically). I thought they were like prisons, especially as you had to stay there a whole term." Barbara said her mother visited only once every three weeks but was vague about the frequency of her

father's visits.

She formed a friendship with one of the cooks but disliked the teachers. She considered herself to have been poor at Mathematics and English but competent at art. She was frightened to ask in lessons when she did not understand. Of this time she said, "no it was horrible. I hated it, (with emphasis). I'd never put Leo in a school like that, never. I hated being there and I hated my Mum putting me there. I felt like she just didn't want you and she had shoved me away." At 11 years of age she returned home and attended a day secondary school.

Her father worked as a chauffeur but she said she did not want to talk about him. She has an older brother and a younger sister. She did not "get on with them and I was sort of the black sheep. They used to get on better than what I used to get on with them." She thought her brother was "brainy" and her sister "was always the favourite she got all the attention at home. And because I was ill I suppose I got left out." She felt she was blamed for her sister's misdemeanours and told in detail of an incident when her mother blamed her for something and stopped her pocket money, when her sister had caused the damage.

Conversations with her siblings ended in fights, verbal and physical, and then "my Mum would end up starting on me and I'd have to stay in and he'd get away with it." As with her sister, she felt she was blamed when trouble arose between her and her brother.

At secondary school she still suffered from asthma and as a result she was "picked on a lot...as I couldn't fight back...but then I got in with a crowd of like coloured girls, you know. And then no-one would pick on me because they were, like, the big bullies of the school, and I'd be alright with them. The asthma frightened her, "I still don't understand it. It's why it frightens me whe Leo gets it. I start to panic and I rush him to hospital. I don't want to see him going through what I went through. I wouldn't put him through it anyway."

She found secondary school "bad at first" as she was placed in the top class. "I had to keep working my way down, and then I had to start from the bottom and work my way up again. And when you're at school the other girls take the piss out of you, 'cause you're useless and you're sick, call you dumbo and all that."

"Looking back now, I wish I'd done more work at school, done my lessons, but at the time I couldn't stand school. I think I had such a bad time at the boarding school that I just hated school. I didn't give the teachers a chance really". She was proud of achieving Art 'O' level and

also enjoyed child care lessons, but nevertheless attended erratically.

After one year she began truanting. With a group of children she would go and meet others. Any letters from school she took to an older friend, Mary, who would fake replies from Barbara's mother. Barbara pleaded illness and exaggerated the severity of her asthma. When the school asked to see her mother Mary went in her place.

The only time Barbara's mother came to the school was when Barbara had appendicitis and had to be whisked into hospital. She was in hospital for two weeks and then at home, though her mother did not look after her. "She thought I was old enough to look after myself". Barbara thought this wrong, "well I wouldn't leave Leo on his own at 14 to look after himself, after coming out of hospital." She could not tell her mother it angered her and would not be able to do so now, either.

Barbara did not turn to her mother for support but to Mary. This woman she idealised, "I used to wish I could be like her....She was a bit of a villain, anyway, she was a bit of a hard nut....She'd been in boarding school, for all her life. She was a bad girl, she'd been in court a lot, that sort of school. So she was a bit of a villain and I used to look up to her 'cause she was hard".

Barbara had other friends from school and with some she maintained contact after leaving school.

From the age of 14 or 15 Barbara began "clubing it. I used to say that I was staying with a friend and she used to say she was staying with me, and we just used to got to the clubs". She spent the night at Mary's and returned home the next day. At times she babysat for Mary's child to earn money for her outings. This supplemented the pocket money she received from her father "if we pulled our weight during the week. We had to do our share of the work, keep our beds tidy and help out Mum, wash up after dinner and we would all have our own rooms to do."

To summarise, Barabara described her childhood as unhappy and influenced by her chronic asthma. She did not want to discuss her father and resented her mother for sending her to a school for fragile children when she was eight. She has a brother and a sister but felt isolated from them and fought with them. She was "picked on" at school and found protection with a group of coloured girls. From 14 she truanted from school and managed to decieve her mother regarding her whereabouts, both during the day and at night.

Training

After she left school at 16, Barbara started training as a
Nursery Nurse.   "There was nothing much my Mum could say
about this and Dad never had a say in anything.   It was
always my Mum who was the head of the family".

She enjoyed the training but "I didn't know you had to go
to college though (laughs).. when I found out you had to
go to college.   But it was something I had wanted to do
since I was tiny, cause I'd always baby sat for people
from when I was about 7, and when they used to come home
from boarding school I used to baby sit for people.   Take
people's kids out in the day time.   So it was something
I'd always wanted to do, work with children, but I didn't
know it was that hard."

She truanted from college and was obliged to work for an
extra year as a volunteer before qualifying.   She enjoyed
the practical work with the children and attended the
"important lessons" but not needlework and classes about
social services.   "But I used to like going to the nursery
anyway (happily)..You used to just play with the kids
really, you weren't allowed to take them out or anything.
We used to just really play with them, paint or clean them
after dinner, things like that."   In the summer she took
the children to the park and "just sunbathed".   She did
not find the children difficult but "we used to have some
difficult parents, if they come down and saw a scratch on
their child, you know, there would be a big argument about
it.   But they never used to come to me about it anyway,
and if they did I used to have to tell them to go to
Matron. Because I was only a student, so I wasn't allowed
to talk to them about it.   They used to get stroppy with
my, but I used to say to them, 'cause I'd hardened up by
then (laughs shyly), it's nothing to do with me..."

She explained, "I'd learnt to sort of stick up for myself
more and not let other people stick up for me." This had
come about through her "hanging about with the girls I
used to hang about with, because they used to, most of the
girls that I used to hang around with were quite hard
anyway...They used to stick up for themselves, I mean they
wouldn't let no-one walk over them, like I used to."

So, after she left school Barbara trained as a Nursery
Nurse, a training she completed after an extra year.   She
enjoyed her contact with the children but found the
parents more problematic.   However, she felt able to cope
with them as she had learnt to "stick up for herself."

Men

She had her first boy friend when she was "young" and was impressed that he spent his money on her. They had to "hide all the time because he was black and I was white. My Mum didn't like it and his parents didn't like it, so we used to have to sneak about, and it was great fun sneaking about." They went out or listened to records. She was not concerned about his colour and could not understand her parents' attitude. They thought "its not right.... but it's not as if they're bloody from Mars or something is it."

Barbara's mother told her that the family in Wales would not accept her and that her children would not be accepted by whites or blacks. Barbara thought that "Leo (her half-caste son) seems to be alright". Her parents tried, initially, to prevent her meeting coloured boys and her mother encouraged her father to keep Barbara at home. For some time she thought this was her father's initiative, though did not say who told her this was not true.

Her next boyfriend was also coloured but her mother did not try to stop her seeing him. Barbara thought this boy was "more mature". She then met Ian, to whom she became engaged, but he went into the army and during this time she met Willy. Willy knew about Ian and eventually forced Barbara to choose between them, and she chose Willy. Willy is older than her and was living with another woman. However, he returned to live with his mother and often stayed with Barbara. "But he was a gambler" and stayed out many nights gambling.

Leo is his son and Barbara became pregnant just as she completed her training.

Thus, Barbara had relationships with coloured men, of whom her family disapproved. With Willy she conceived Leo, who is half caste, but she did not perceive this as a problem.

Family

Barbara has a grandmother but said she "never got on with her". She did not like her mother's step-father. However, her grandmother was jealous of her as her grandfather "made a fuss of me". She disapproved of Barbara's liasons with coloured men and only visited when Barbara was in hospital and pregnant. "I really hated her. I still do, I find it really hard to talk to her." Barbara was taken into hospital when she was seven months pregnant as she "was threatening".

Self image

Initially Barbara could think of nothing positive about
her childhood or anything that pleased her, "I mean I was
always ill when I was a child. So there wasn't much I
could do". She gave many indications of lacking any
positive self esteem. She was isolated at school and at
home and felt rejected and uncared for by her mother. She
said she believed it "when girls take the piss out of you,
'cause your'e useless and your'e sick and call you dumbo
and all that". She thought she "worked my way down" at
school.

However later in the interview she said she was good at
Art and Child Care at school and thought positively about
her ability to "harden up".

Barbara said recently she was proud of doing "something
against B and J", staff in the centre. She had been able
to tell Willy to move out of her home and said the staff
had not thought she was able to do so. He had returned
while she was ill, and she had been happy to have him for
a few days, but not to stay permanently. "I felt good
about it but at the moment I'm very mixed up, I'm mixed up
about it all. I mean 'cause Leo is all over him and I
don't want to go against Leo, but I don't want Willy to
fall back into his old routine..."

To summarise, Barbara could think of only little positive
about herself and believed the criticisms of others.

APPENDIX 3d.

Lesley - Summary of interviews

Resume

Lesley, 27, grew up in London and was the second child in her family. She had a difficult and violent relationship with her father but was close to her mother. She left school at 15 and began working in shops. At 18 she became pregnant and had an abortion, largely against her own wishes. The father of this baby was not accepted by her family, and soon after Lesley's abortion commited suicide. Lesley's father died when Lesley was 21. More recently her mother had an accident and became an invalid. Lesley took much responsibility for caring for her as by this time her sister was living in Germany with her second husband.

Lesley lived with David, the father of her daughter Laura (4) but left him while attending the family centre. Lesley enjoyed motherhood though found the first 10 months with Laura stressful as the baby vomited frequently.

Lesley was referred to the family centre by social services. At the time the relationship with David was very stormy, Lesley was drinking heavily, abusing herself and threatening suicide. There was concern for Laura's well being in such circumstances.

Childhood

Lesley was her parents' second daughter and described her early childhood as being difficult and unhappy particularly in relation to her father. She thought that her father did not want to have another baby, though her mother wanted her very much. "I think my mother was just happy with having me, I mean my father didn't like me at all much. He wasn't happy about me at all. You see he didn't want me. He didn't want my mother to have a baby because she was too old and I just came at the wrong time of life for them and it ruined his life from what he said". Her mother was 44 when Lesley was born; she did not say how old her father was. She became her mother's "favourite" even though Lesley gave her " a hard time".

Her father was violent towards her, "and tormented me. I suppose for playing up, for the normal tantrums, but he would, instead of a slap or how I would cope with Laura's tantrums, he would just literally thump me or throw me

across the room, or something like that. You know
something quite brutal really." She was aware of the
behaviour which provoked such attacks but considered that
she could not control the tantrums or her feelings. "I
mean what Laura does, would do, just have a terrible
tantrum, being unreasonable, be very unreasonable maybe
just kicking the door, kick the door for an hour and maybe
mother would have the patience but he wouldn't. He would
just thump me."

She "pestered" for things that she wanted and she "was an
awful kid, really horrible". She was frightened by her
father's violence and felt that he hated her "'cause he
was always so nice to my sister, and didn't like me very
much."

She heard her parents argue about her, "I was just a
problem, you know, I should be put away, she's too old to
look after me. He didn't want any kids hanging around
him, you know at his age........"

Her mother begged her father not to hurt Lesley and on one
occasion Lesley was placed for 6 weeks in a convalescent
home on the pretext of being ill. "But I think it was when
my mother and father had all these rows over me and I was
a problem. I was having tantrums, my mother couldn't
control me at all. The only way I could be controlled was
my father hitting me."

She recalled a time when he " literally threw me across
the room from one side to the other, literally had me
above his head and threw me and the window was there and
luckily enough I just landed in front of the window, I had
visions of me, not then but now, going through that damn
window, but he was in such a temper, because I had been
screaming, and screaming and screaming and he had heard me
as he came in the door, he just came up and just picked me
up and threw me across the room and shut the door and left
me in the room and I just cried."

She could not recall what had triggered her screaming but
thought it was "probably not getting something I wanted
with my mother...... I couldn't get my own way, I was
terribly awkward with her....... Well I was only a kid. I
know now that I was awful, but I didn't know how bad I was
at the time, what I was doing. He didn't really
understand it I don't think. He thought I was some
demented little kid that was pretty awful that should be
sent away."

Lesley has one older sister whom she could only recall as
a teenager. She was much easier to control, "my dad
really loves my sister. He wanted her very much, you know,
and they only wanted the one daughter..... We had the

usual squabble about, I think most siters do. We were always very close. She was very protective towards my mother and me". When her sister saw Lesley in trouble with her father she "would just grab me and take me off, or run out to the bedroom or something like that. Or even call my Mum."

Her parents aften argued but her father never hit her mother, only Lesley. When they rowed Lesley said she felt "very frightened for my mother, you know it was very frightening for her. I couldn't do anything as I was so tiny. We could just sit and watch and be glad when it was all over. Hopefully he would go out so I could cuddle my Mum , or something like that, comfort her."

She did recall good times when "he wasn't constantly hating my guts, he did take me out, my sister and myself, take us out together, but most of the time my mother would take me on holiday and he would take my sister on holiday.....roundabouts, to the seaside. He would take us out together for days, like the zoo, funfair, things like that. He was generous with toys and money, got the same toys and the same money everthing like that, both dressed nicely, and everything like that." She could also remember "bits and pieces when my dad used to play with us. He was very good playing with us, with playing with children, he used to play with us and let us jump all over him and that sort of thing. I think one of the best times was when he actually took me out without my sister and bought me something. He took me out to buy ME something, (emphatically) and I was over the moon about that."

Her father worked for some years in the Navy and then for British Rail "as some sort of foreman...he was an inspector type thing, inspecting the work.... He was always employed." Her mother worked part time as an office cleaner. " She enjoyed actually getting out and having somewhere else to go... I mean apart from the house just being with her friends chatting and doing something else out of the house and not being with the family, being with other people." At the time Lesley thought "she must be mad" and couldn't understand why her mother would want to do cleaning but now can understand her desire to get away from the home.

Lesley's father died when she was 21 and Lesley still sees her mother who is now invalid.

Thus, Linda describes her childhood as overshadowed by a violent father by whom she felt unwanted and from whom her mother tried, ineffectually, to protect her. She recalls particular violent incidents and rowing between her parents though she is also able to recall pleasant events. She was close to her sister when her sister was a

teenager.

Schooling

"Primary school was lovely, I mean I enjoyed my primary school. I was naughty there I used to play the teacher up terrible.... I would decide that if I didn't want to do it then I wouldn't do it and nobody in the world was going to make me. I didn't accept authority. The teachers were the authority and I wouldn't accept that. I accepted it in secondary schhol but not primary.... It was mainly because I couldn't do them, I was too frightened to say I'm sorry I can't do that, I was too frightened to say will you show me how, even though it was explained to me, I didn't want to be the only one who couldn't understand and could you epxlain it again because you always feel a fool in front of friends." She stressed it was more a matter of "couldn't rather than wouldn't." She was competent at English but not Maths.

She "got on well" with the headmaster, and "he liked me very much, even when I was in trouble." He did not punish her but talked to her. She thought he was "lovely and popular".

She recalled one particualar teacher "that just did really like caning for any little reason. (Insistent) That sort of thing, I really, well, that really frightened me because it was like my father. She frightened me so I did what I was told with her... I thought she was very sadistic. She would punish you (loud) for the least little thing. The pleasure on her face when she was hitting you with the cane. I thought when I grow up, I'm going to get you..... I didn't forget though. I still feel that hate for her you know, like I do for my dad when I remember the times he hurt me. The hate I feel inside, although it was such a long time ago. I lie in bed sometimes and I boil up and there's nothing I can do about it, it was awful."

She had many friends, and one in particular with whom she was very close.

At secondary level her father helped her with her homework. Their relationship had improved: "I was grown up then and I was a bit more reasonable. I didn't have any more tantrums, I had grown out of those... and I understood him a bit more". She considered her father more "brainy" than her mother and "he always thought himself quite brainy as well.... He was very good at Maths. He was fantastic at Maths. My mother was very good at history, she still is, but I would do most of it."

Her sister truanted from school and Lesley admired her

courage. "(Loud and excited) I thought she was GREAT she was able to sort of bunk off school and nothing was done aboout it. It was in the end the truant officer came round but.. by the time they got round to seeing her she was 15 anyway... I mean I hated secondary school and I wish I had the courage to play truant but I didn' t...I was the sort of person who would get caught. I went through the whole day so nervous and frightened, every man that had a brie case was a truant officer."

She did not achieve well at school "No I wasn't very bright. I mean that, I'm not just running myself down, I wasn't a very bright student and, um, I thought I might as well truant but I couldn't... it was unbearable sometimes not being able to do lessons." At seondary school she did not have a confidante.

After school she "stayed in mostly". She had one friend in the street and they stayed at home and played records. She recalled having just the one close friend.

To summarise, Linda enjoyed primary school and had a group of friends, though also recalled a violent teacher who frightened her. At secondary school she was isolated and achieved no qualifications but her relationship with her father improved during this time.

After school

Lesley left school at 15 and went to work in a shop . "I was glad in a way that I was getting out of school and I was going to be independent and earning some money ....but I knew I was going to be bored after about 6 months, which I was, I just left the job and skipped then from job to job, although they were only shop jobs.."

She began having boyfriends at 16

When she was 18 she became pregnant and felt "blackmailed into having the abortion" by her father. He threatened to throw her out of the home and told her the baby would be removed from her "if you're pregnant and you're not married and you'd never be able to see, step foot inside this house again, so I would never have been able to see my mother and would have just been thrown out. So I did just what he wanted me to do really. My mother went along with it, she did agree that I shouldn't have the baby, but she didn't really want to force me. She knew that I wanted to have the baby."

She was engaged to the baby's father, Martin, but after the abortion, her father forced them to separate . "We had to split up and he killed himself. (Sadly) I don't know

what to say, I'll start crying". Of Martin she said "he was lovely, I know I loved him very much..... he was the only one that ever really meant anything ot me, even up till now."

Lesley's father successfully prevented the relationship continuing and Martin "got onto drugs or something and he hung himself..." She heard about this from someone. She considered that even her child's father had not made her as happy as this man. "It was even worse than giving up the baby I mean giving up the baby was... something, but to see him die was really awful at the time, but now really I've got over it".

She was still rowing with her father when at 19 she left home and shared a flat with a friend "and that was lovely. (enthusiastically) and that was when I really felt happy, you know my life was, I was beginning to feel really happy. We had our own flat and we had our jobs, we did our own thing and it was really nice." She visited home once a week and on those visits her relationhip with her parents improved although her parents never came to see her. Her father died when she was 21 and she has always maintained contact with her mother.

Her sister was married, for the first time, when Lesley left home. This lasted about 4 years and "was not a good marriage." Currently her sister lives in Germany with her second husband and Lesley misses her greatly and enjoys her visits. "I miss her madly I really do."

A few years ago her mother fell down the stairs and had an operation on her brain, "it left her with hardly any; she loses her balance very easily and she's very deaf and her hands are like that (shakes her hands). One of her hands is like that and she can't stand up very well. She falls over quite a lot and she's always very tired."

Thus, Lesley's late teens were overshadowed by her pregnancy, abortion and death of the baby's father. Her work meant little to her and it was not until she began living on her own that she started feeling happier. More recently, Lesley's mother was rendered an invalid and her sister moved to Germany and is much missed by Lesley.

David

She met David through a friend with whom he was going out. He lived with Lesley and "we had Laura about a year and half or two years later." Lesley wanted a baby but David did not "as he already had children from a previous relationship".

Before Laura arrived "I think we just enjoyed each other's company when we were out. He took me out a lot more then. Just things like that really. But then he was out much of the time on his own". Lesley did not object strongly to David's absences before she had her baby but "he began staying out more, sometimes as much as a week and arguments started then." They reached a peak when Laura was about 6 months old. "He was knocking about with another woman then, that's what really started it all. He had a baby by her two years ago and from then I never trusted him".

So, Lesley's relationship with David deteriorated after the birth of their baby, Laura, and he became involved with another woman.

Motherhood

Lesley reported enjoying delivering Laura. "I was really enjoying myself (laughing almost uncontrollably, expecting my disbelief and insisting). It sounds really mad I was really excited all the time. I kept laughing and I was so happy..." She did not suffer much with her labour though considered she may have been particularly lucky.

When she saw her baby "I thought it was a boy, you know all that loose flesh and with the pethadin, I was rather high anyway... she was beautiful, very very pretty baby. She was very big for the first few days, the first 4 days. ..everything seemed to work, she fed well and I winded her and she brought up wind and everything went by the book. I'd read books on it. She slept well and woke up regularly. I woke her up for feeding. After about 5 days she started getting, she couldn't take her feeds. Everything used to come back all the time. I got myself into a state, 'cause I was breast feeding her and I blamed it on my milk, and I refused to breast feed her but they convinced me that there was nothing wrong with my milk and I carried on...."

Laura continued vomiting until 3 and a half months, though was gaining weight. Lesley "tried everything" and concluded that Laura was a baby with a sensitive stomach who did not hold down her food "but I used to get into a very bad state about it......I thought she was going to die." Laura was admitted into hospital for a week but nothing was discovered. She improved once she started on solids. The sickness discouraged Lesley and she gave up breast feeding at 2 and a half months. Laura also cried a lot during this time. "I used to think, christ this baby's supposed to be lovely and contented, she's not, somethings going wrong. I thought I was doing something

wrong...."

She turned to her health visitor for advice. "who was not very helpful." However Lesley appreciated the rest when Laura was in hospital as she was tired and herself in tears much of the time and thought: "I can't do anything with her, she doesn't love me... I'd think I can't do it, I was no use as a mother then was I. So I said take her away...". After the admission Lesley felt less guilty as she knew there was nothing wrong with Laura.

At this time David was sleeping all day and out all night. Lesley sat in the kitched or took Laura out during the day. David "never did anything for her. I always used to get cross with him about that, he was a rotten father." He helped financially but otherwise took no interest. "I just wish he'd took more interest and helped me out a lot more. It was quite a struggle at first, 'cause I was lost. I mean I had nothing to do with babies before that, I didn't know nothing about babies, only what I'd read up and brushed up in books and that.'

Lesley did not allow her mother to help with Laura as she was worried that her mother was too fragile and wobbly, though she also acknowledged she was being "over protective" and did eventually allow her mother to look after her and change her. Initially she did not allow her sister to hold the baby either.

Lesley thought she was very good at looking after Laura. She regretted not having been able to relax with her more as a baby but from 10 months she stopped vomiting and then "I started to enjoy her then." As a toddler she considered her to be "goregeous, into everything, but she was lovely. She was really a nice little kid, she was much more cheerful, she smiled a lot and she was more sociable...."

Proudly Lesley recalled that Laura began crawling at 5 months and walking at 9 and half months. She couldn't recall when Laura began talking, but thought it was early enough to impress the health visitor . Lesley was very proud and considered Laura to be very bright.

Lesley said she and Laura were together 24 hours a day with no break. "Sometimes I'd get to the point where I'd like a day out on my own, I mean like my friends .... so I was pretty tired a lot...... Most of the time it was ok because I enjoyed being with her so much". At this time she would also visit her mother every day.

Lesley recalled times when Laura was about 2 years old when "she got into a very awkward stage, she used to get very, yes, I used to get into awful states about that

(long pause). She just became very unreasonable. She got to a stage where she was being unreasonable about everything. I couldn't reason with her and she started having tantrums." Battles concerned dressing; Laura would take clothes off and "scream and scream and I'd tried to reason with her and I'd end up really shouting and I'd hate it myself having to shout really loud at her. I must have looked really fierce because she looked terrified.. I had to shout really really loud before she'd take any notice..." They had battles concerning "silly little things, things she couldn't have and I must admit a lot of times I gave in to her".

Usually shouting was effective but there "were times when I had to give her a very good smack on the bottom". Lesley could recall only two occasions when she had done this. "It was the end of the day and she really got on top of me, she'd gone through so many tantrums and so many struggles with her, by the end of the day I was so (emphatically) tired and she just kept on. My throat was sore with her, maybe from shouting or trying to reason with her, and I thought this is it, she's just going to get a smacked bottom and she did. She got a bloody good hiding on her arse."

This was effective in stopping the tantrum and Lesley thought that hitting Laura on the arm would generally have been effective but did not want to use violence. "I just don't like smacking children, I don't think that its necessary. There are times when mothers are driven to giving their child a smack. I mean a smack, not a thump, or punch, only a smack, what I meant by a good hiding was to pull her knickers down and smack her bottom two times. To me it was bloody too hard, but I think it's just what you feel, just giving her a smack on the arse and now behave yourself, and that was it, but I didn't do it too often because I didn't like it. I didn't like to smack kids".

After smacking Laura, Lesley said she felt "guilty". "I'd beg her forgivenss... I felt so guilty afterwards because I thought I shouldn't have done that. I know I shouldn't done that 'cause I'd hurt her. You mustn't hurt her. I hated, I hated smacking then, I mean now we'll get a tap, a smack but I wouldn't regard it as a good hiding. That was the only time I'd ever really, she had a tap on the bottom, something like that, it does nothing, it just helps me get rid of some frustration. Really, its not punishment for her, 'cause she hardly feels it, but it got rid of some of the frustrations that I felt."

To summarise, Lesley enjoyed delivering her baby and the first few days of her life, but the next few months were not as she expected, due to Laura's frequent vomitting.

This undermined Lesley's impression of herself as a mother. She received no support from her co-habitee and did not allow her mother or sister to help. She began enjoying her child after 10 months and then considered Laura to be bright and sociable. Laura became "awkward" at about 2 years of age but Lesley rarely used violence. When she did hit Laura she felt guilty.

Laura

"A very bright, very sociable, very caring little girl, with moods and she still has her temper tantrums, and she is still sometimes very unreasonable at home or when she's got me alone. She's very charming when there are other people around, but she can appear to be the perfect little girl. She is a charmer. She's just lovely really. She's bright and pretty and sociable really and lovely and all that (laughs embarassed).....I adore her, she's my treasure.. They'll bury her one day 'cause she's a treasure and someone can dig her up. Oh I love her. Too much sometimes I think."

Laura enjoys being taken to the zoo and Lesley and Laura enjoy visiting places "where we can look together". She also enjoys visiting friends. She is awkward, however, when they visit shops and Lesley accommodates to this by avoiding it as much as possible.

At 2 years of age Laura began attending a playgroup for two and a half hours in the afternoon and she enjoyed this. Laura still recalls this playgroup.

So, Linda spoke very highly of Laura, though also acknowledged less positive aspects, such as her tantrums and difficult phase at 2 years of age.

Referral to the Family Centre and treatment

"I was very worried about myself and the effect on Laura. I was drinking a lot. I was very depressed and I was in a dead-end relationship with David. Very bad, I mean it just turned awful, became awful, we were having lots of arguments and I became very depressed and I was drinking lots and I was worried about myself because of the drinking....."

Lesley argued with David and then became drunk. Then she cried, shouted and screamed and "doing that silly business (indicated cutting her wrists with her fingers) abusing myself". She stopped eating and drank too much. Laura

"was awful with me and I used to let her be.   She used to kick me and bite me and hit me and everything and I used to let her do it" Laura witnessed the fights and Lesley's outbursts and "I just clicked one day that this can't go on, its got to stop".

Lesley spoke to her health visitor who referred her to social services, who in turn referred her to the FC. She had thought that within two weeks she would be "cured. Just give me an injection in the leg and I won't drink anymore and just tell me what to do and what not to do and everything will be fine". She thought the centre would be more like a traditional hospital and had not realised that it was a family centre she would be attending.   At first she thought there was no chance of being helped but graudally realised this was not so.   She had hoped for quick results and "to be told what to do. I didn't realise I had to do it all by myself really, but with some help, with the support that I have had, from the staff."

She acknowledged that over the 10 months of treatment there had been "ups and downs" but that her drinking and eating had improved and that instead of drinking she now attempts to talk. "I still find it it hard to put things into words, and express myself or tell them how I'm feeling or what's troubling me, but I do it, the relief of it is lovely." She finished her relationship with David. She felt she would have been unable to achieve this without the support of the centre, in particular the family meetings when she was able to discuss her relationship with him. Reluctantly, she went to live with her mother while she and David decided about their relationship.

In relation to Laura, she said "I mean she was more like the mother really. It sounds daft, but she was bossy... she used to hit me and bite me and used to boss me and talk to me like I was a little kid, and I'd let her do it...... I just used to think, well I'm so awful I used to let her do it". Lesely considered this had changed and that she, herself, is "more like a mother.... I am the grown up and she is my little girl..... I'm in charge of her, she's not in charge of me, which is a big change." She thought that allowing Laura to hurt her reflected her own dislike of herself and when she first came to the centre "I couldn't stand me"; but since receiving treatment, "I like me a bit more now".

She considered that spending seven weeks in hospital had helped her. "It gave me the space and time to actually think... Taking Laura into care was awful, at first I thought it was the worst thing they could do, at the time that they could have ever done to me, only because it hurt, it really hurt, but after the seven weeks of being

in St. Mark's I realised it was helpful."

The community meetings had been helpful in finding ways to control Laura. The staff and parents helped with this. For example, watching another mother who was determined to get her child "to do something" had been of benefit. She didn't give up and I thought there's one there that keeps going". She also learnt from watching another mother with her child both in terms of control and "in working out a child's mind.. Yes she seemed to understand her child a lot really, which was helpful. It's nice to understand your kids and not just say no and no don't do that. The poor little kid's going to go through the rest of its life with lots of beating, and talk to your child as well, but that's something I've always done with Laura.

In the playroom she considered she had learnt much from watching the member of staff and from playing with Laura herself. She discovered what was appropriate behaviour for a 3 year old. When observing Laura with a member of staff she reappraised what she was seeing. For example, she was watching Laura build a brick tower. "I found out that Laura was very, she was a perfectionist, when she is say building something, it's got to be right, everything got to be right. I thought at first that was lovely, that was really nice, but then she's only 3 and she's just too fussy, everything's got to be too perfect... Laura was going through agonies to get things perfect, she wasn't really enjoying it.."

Laura continues to be a perfectionist in relation to her clothes, but in her play is more free and relaxed. She is no longer upset if her drawings do not match up to her mother's. Lesley felt that Laura was responding more appropriately to situations, crying and was even sometimes babyish, which she could not be before. Now she "can get upset, she can have her tantrums."

She thought there should be more time in the centre when the parents and children play together, especially in the playroom "you learn a lot from watching other parents with the kids."

Lesley still wanted to be more "able to talk about things when they are on my mind" and knew she could not depend on others to do it for her. She also wished there was an activity after the day in the centre had finished and said that was a time when she felt "terribly lonely". Lesley socialised with a couple of mothers from the centre but otherwise described herself as isolated.

She decided that she wanted to work with children and had been receiving help from the teacher in the centre. She thought follow up appointments after discharge were also

important. She planned to get a job once Laura was settled in school and to develop a wider social life.

To summarise, Lesley was referred to the centre after repeated crises which involved her relationship with David and led to drinking and suicide attempts. She had hoped for an instant cure but discovered that she could be helped in a family centre. She finished her relationship with David and considered she was more able to control Laura. She thought a stay in hospital had been helpful, as well as community meetings, playing and observing Laura and finding ways for herself to talk about her concerns. She was able to make plans for the future.

Violence

Laura has tantrums when she "sits in a corner and screams and thumps" and at these times Lesley waits until she is tired and more reasonable and can talk to her. She can also be cheeky or rude, "she's getting like a 4 or 5 year old now. If she swears or she's very rude, I mean she's always saying to me shut up you (with feeling), I mean very rudely the way she says and I just won't have it. Well I just tell her she doesn't do that, she doesn't speak to Mummy like that, and she knows I just won't have it, and if she keeps on she gets a slap. She gets a few warnings, but it's like she's deliberately making me cross and she can see I'm getting very worked up with her, and I say to her, stop it 'cause your're getting me into a state and I can feel it. But she'll get me into that state and that she knows she is doing it. When she's in one of her funny moods and she wants to be very naughty, she wants to get me going, then I'll slap her on the bottom.........she laughs, and she goes funny unless I give her a real slap. I told you I hate smacking her, with her it's just one like that and she just laughs at me. If it's a real smack and I'm really serious and I'm very cross with her then she'll just say ok mummy I'm sorry and I'll say yes right and I don't want any trouble out of you again, and all that, and then I'll say you made me smack you, you made me cross, you made me smack you and I did warn you, so I explain to her why I smacked her. Can you imagine it, smacking her and then saying you know why I smacked you don't you cause you made me cross....."

So, Laura's only misdemeanour, mentioned in the general interviews which will provoke Lesley to use violence is insolence. She differentiated between a real smack and a less serious smack and considered that the former is necessary to have the desired effect on Laura. She explains to Laura why she smacked her.

Self image

As a child Lesley described herself as "an awful kid, really horrible, I was a really horrible.... At primary school I was naughty there, I used to play the teachers up terrible. I would decide that if I didn't want to do it then I wouldn't do it, and nobody in the world was going to make me. I didn't accept authority". She explained that she was most likely to be stubborn when there were things she was unable to do and feared asking for help or explanations. "It would make you feel a fool in front of your friends".

She changed when she went to secondary school and began doing as she was told. "I could still feel those tempers building up in me or tantrums. Naturally as you get older you deal with them in different ways. I hated secondary school and I wish I had the courage to play truant but I didn't..... I was the sort of person who would get caught. I went through the whole day so nervous and frightened, every man that had a briefcase was a truant officer. I wasn't bright little girl... I was good with my English essays and that".

"How I didn't do at school affects how insecure I am now, affects how I got through jobs. Now I'm going to try for a CSE. I didn't think I was brainy, I didn't think I could try for anything 'cause I was too stupid. But since I've been here I gained a bit of confidence.... Before I had no confidence in myself at all. I thought I was stupid becauase I had done so badly at school." More recently people have told her that she is good with children "people have to tell me for me to realise".

Lesley was pleased with herself for asking for help. "I used to find it difficult to ask for help. I used to want to do things on my own and then if I couldn't then I just used to suffer the consequences. Even in the centre "I was always worried about making a fool of myself, saying the wrong thing.. or not being able to do something right and I get a feeling of oh God you silly cow or something like that".

Although Lesley spoke negatively of much of her life, she spoke positively of her parenting. "Even when times were difficult she (Laura) was being well cared for, I wasn't neglecting her. I was pleased that I was still loving her, you know, caring for her, even though I was going through a rotten time."

Thus, Lesley's described herself as a child as "naughty, unintelligent and stubborn". Her impressions over the years have only gradually improved and more recently she

believed that she may be able to achieve some qualifications. She spoke well of herself as a parent.

Summary of general interviews

Lesley had a violent father who did not want her and a mother who wanted her but was unable to protect her. She was happier at primary than secondary school. She did not gain any exams and left school to work in schops. At 19 she became pregnant and had an abortion. Her fiance committed suicide, which upset Lesley greatly. She began feeling happier when she left home and shared a flat with a friend. She met and lived with David, with whom she had a stormy relationship. Together they had a baby, Laura, whom Lesely very much wanted, but David did not. Lesley found the first 10 months with Laura difficult and had no support. However, subsequently she enjoyed motherhood. She described Laura very positively, though with her failings. Lesley uses violence rarely and disapproves of hitting children. The only misdemeanour that continues to provoke violence is insolence. The referral to the centre helped her take control of her drinking, self abuse, and she finished her relationship with David. She considered being an in-patient had given her thinking time, that commuinity meetings helped her control Laura and that watching and playing with Laura helped her her understand her child more than before.

End of Day Interview

In this summary the focus will be on comments relevant to discipline and violence, even though there was no observed incident of violence on the day of the interview.

At the time of the interview Lesley was living in her own flat which was not fully furnished. She had spent a period in bed-and-breakfast with Laura, after moving out of her mother's flat. They were sharing a bed.

Lesley described Laura as very "clingy and argumentative at the moment", especially in the mornings. Laura wants to play and Lesley explains that there isn't time, "but she's murder to get dressed or anything like that. She's murder, I end up chasing her around. Laura wants to carry on with what she is doing". Lesley resorts to dressing her and also has to carry her as Laura refuses to walk. Alternatively Lesley pretends to walk away and hide behind a wall, or drags her along the street.

In the centre Laura is also "very clingy" and Lesley related this to their move of home and previously a

period when Laura was in care.

At snack time Laura complained that she did not have a chair but would not fetch one. Instead she went and cried out in the passage. Lesley left her. "With Laura the more I say 'come on darling' or get up and get her a chair, the more she'll play on it and she can really.... eventaully Laura will come in and I just gave her a cuddle 'cause she was sobbing, and she felt better... She was a bit fidgety in the meeting but I think that's because the other kids were always fidgety. As soon as one starts then the others do, but she was ok, she didn't go on about it."

Lesley herself felt "edgy" in the meeting regarding an issue with another mother though she felt supported by someone else. She wanted to tell one of the mothers to be firmer with her child. She thought this child's behaviour provokes Laura. If Laura fidgets Lesley can normally tell her to be quiet and "it works, I don't have to shout at her or anything, she's quite good in meetings recently, not too bad".

Lesley said she is firm at meal times and does not allow Laura to "play around" but "when I knew she had enough I said it's alright you can go and play". She said Laura was well behaved at lunch time and "if she wants to eat then she'll sit even if the other children have gone."

During the afternoon one child hit another and "then got a good hiding from his mother and when Laura saw that she came to me.. she clings, she sat down very quietly, when she sees a child getting smacked or like when I shout at her, she shuts up and she was seeing Sandy get smacked... she'll come to me and sit next to me. Maybe she feels more safe then."

Lesley thought that it was correct that Sandy was smacked. "I would have smacked Laura for the same thing if she had done something like that. Leo, whose nearly 2, I mean she's nearly 4 and she knows a lot better than him. Yes, I mean I wouldn't even expect her to do it, but if she did she'd get a spanking."

However Laura did nothing today that necessitated a spanking. "I know that she and Phil were ganging up on Martin telling each other to push him off the bike,.. I can't remember who said it. But things like that, things I hear secondhand I don't take any notice of. If I'd heard it myself then I would have dealt with her......... No, she's ben quite good. I mean she starts off in the morning awful, I hate her sometimes . I dread it but she gets through the day alright.

Of the staff she said "I think they leave an awful lot up

to the parents. I think they've got a reason for that. I
know the staff don't like giving advice... but sometimes
you want some support and you look upon someone and you
dont get any response from them."

Laura said today she had felt more realxed and happier
than she had for a while.

Summary of the end of day interview

Lesley described a day that began with battles with Laura
but improved once they arrived at the centre. Laura
objected to not having a chair and was left by Lesley to
calm down. Laura behaved in the meeting and at lunch and
did nothing that necessitated a smack. Lesely considered
that if she did hurt a younger child then such behaviour
would warrant a smack.