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FIRST-TIME FATHERHOOD:  
INTEGRATING CHILDBEARING EXPERIENCES  
INTO THE SELF CONCEPT  
by

Jeanette Dontzow Hines

DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF NURSING SCIENCE

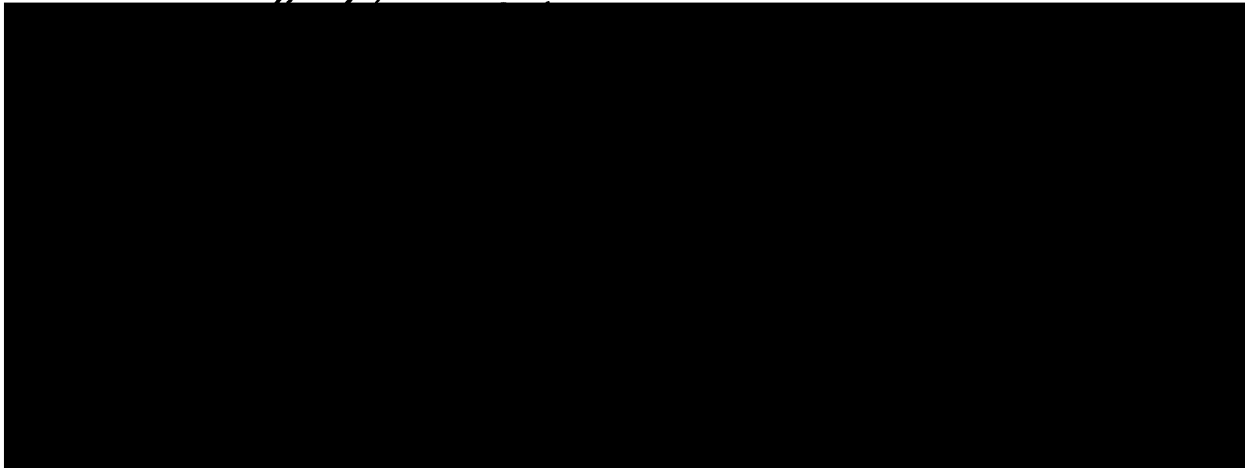
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**A DISSERTATION**

**FIRST-TIME FATHERHOOD:  
INTEGRATING CHILDBEARING EXPERIENCES  
INTO THE SELF CONCEPT**

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by

Jeanette Dontzow Hines



**DEDICATION**

To the Memory of My Parents

Pavlena Zaitzeva Dontzova

and

Roman Minaevitch Dontzov

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I wish to express my appreciation to the people who supported me in conducting and completing this study. I am indebted to the members of my dissertation committee. Dr. Katharyn Antle May, my sponsor, provided support, reassurance, and excellent editorial suggestions, while allowing me to proceed at my own pace. Dr. Leonard Schatzman introduced me to qualitative research and particularly to grounded theory methodology, guiding my fumbling first attempts with philosophical wisdom and good humor. Dr. Maria O'Rourke was particularly helpful in helping me conceptualize, as well as to curb my tendency toward hyperbole.

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First-time fatherhood: Integrating childbearing experiences into the self concept.

Jeanette Dontzow Hines

University of California, San Francisco, 1987

#### ABSTRACT

This qualitative study was a short term, longitudinal examination of men's experiences as first time fathers, from late pregnancy through six weeks after birth. Interviews were conducted during the latter part of pregnancy, at three to seven days after the birth, at three weeks, and again at six weeks. The sample consisted of twenty-three men recruited from childbirth education classes.

Four audio recorded semi-structured interviews were conducted with each father. Observations of husband-wife and father-infant interactions were also made by the investigator. Data were analyzed using the constant comparative method, with the goal being the development of substantive theory about first time fathering in the transition period from late pregnancy through the first six weeks.

## ABSTRACT


The findings indicate that becoming a first time father is a complex and multifaceted transition. The process involved is the integration process which serves to unify the father's experiences, making them meaningful to the father through becoming part of his self concept. This process is carried out through affiliative, perceptual, fantasy, protective, readiness, and emotional work. The process and the work involved are interrelated and form a matrix.

All six types of work are evident during the late pregnancy, labor and delivery, and early postnatal phases, but some types of work are more predominant in some phases than in others. During pregnancy, affiliative, readiness, and protective work predominate, while during the labor and delivery phase, affiliative, perceptual and emotional work predominate. Three types of work dominate the postnatal phase: affiliative, fantasy, emotional.

During the pregnancy phase, the fathers who were older, married longer, and had stable marriages appeared to integrate their experiences more easily. Integration involved the father being very active in the work of the labor and delivery phase. Spending time with the baby and involvement in infant care appeared important in integration in the postnatal period. In all three

phases, the quality of the relationship with the wife appeared to be a crucial factor in the man's integration of these experiences into the self concept as father.

Implications for further research, education, social policies, and the delivery of health care are presented.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Katharyn Antle May, Chair

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## Chapter 1

### THE STUDY PROBLEM

#### Introduction

In a review of the literature on child rearing in the mid-sixties, Nash found that the view of child care presented was almost completely matricentric (Nash, 1965). Since then there has been an upsurge of interest in the role of the father in early childrearing (Lamb, 1976). Studies suggest that fathers are increasingly involved with their newborn infants (Pennebaker, Ende, & Austin, 1982). However, the amount of research conducted with the father as the focus, compared to studies that focus on the mother, is still minimal. Although the father no longer needs to be categorized as the "forgotten man" (Hines, 1971), he remains for the most part a shadowy figure (McGreal, 1981).

The reasons given for why fathers have suddenly become a popular research topic are many and varied. The one mentioned most frequently is the women's movement of the 1960's and 1970's and its impact on women's perceptions of their traditional maternal and homemaker roles (McKee & O'Brien, 1982). With the questioning of child rearing and homemaking as being solely women's functions and responsibilities, male and female family roles have been challenged (Chodorow, 1978). The father's position in the family is thus being viewed in large part

from the perspective of changing women's roles.

Accompanying these changes in perceptions in family roles have been changes in public roles, as reflected in the demographic shifts in the labor force. In the United States the largest labor force increase from 1970 to 1980 was among married women with husbands present and children under six years of age, from 30.3% in 1970 to 47.8% in 1981. In 1980, only 11% of American households included a father who was the sole wage earner, a mother who was a full-time homemaker, and one or more children, while 21% of households consisted of both a mother and a father who are wage earners, with one or more children living at home (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1982).

Thus, the traditional view of the father which saw him primarily as the provider in the family (Fein, 1978a) appears to be disappearing in the United States. The number of women combining the responsibilities of mother and full-time member of the work force has increased dramatically over the last two decades not only in the United States but also in the other western industrial societies. This has created a different family environment, calling for creative personal and social responses to the needs of the men, women, and children in these "new" families (Badinter, 1981). Other social changes such as the increase in the number of single parent families, especially male headed families, voluntary limitation of family size, and shortening of the work week are also given as reasons for the escalation of

research on fathers (McKee & O'Brien, 1982).

Richards (1982) contends that researchers have turned their attention to fathers for pragmatic reasons coinciding with the growing involvement of men with their children, and also to counter feminist attacks that psychologists have promoted child care as naturally and inevitably women's business. He also discusses the need to provide research insights for child care experts and professionals who have found mother-centered studies deficient. McKee & O'Brien (1982) claim that some pressure has come from within academic disciplines resulting from dissatisfaction with existing theories of the family.

As a nurse-clinician in the field of maternal-child nursing, my initial interest in the father was aroused through observations made while implementing a family centered maternity care program in a hospital setting. The obstetricians practicing at this particular site sponsored childbirth and parent education classes for their clients, and fathers-to-be participated in these classes. My involvement in these classes as a childbirth and parent educator as well as my clinical work with prepared parents in labor and delivery presented a unique opportunity to observe fathers-to-be during pregnancy, labor and delivery, and the early postnatal period.

Later, as a graduate student I tried to learn more about fathers and found a paucity of information. Most

books on the family and on child development did not have an index listing for "father," and available research and anecdotal data about fathers were obtained from mothers and children. Almost all research on the father was in father-absent homes (Hines, 1971). Gradually I realized that promotion of the health of the childbearing family and of family centered care could not be accomplished without much more knowledge, based on research, about a very important member of the family -- the father.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the phenomenon of fathering as experienced by first-time fathers from late pregnancy through the first six weeks after the birth of their babies. As the analysis proceeded in this study, the problem statement changed. Originally, the problem statement was: "What are the experiences of first-time fathers during the first six weeks after the birth of their babies?" As the data were examined, the problem evolved into "What work do men do in the process of integrating into their self concept the experiences from late pregnancy through the first six weeks after the birth?"

#### Significance of the Study

Despite the proliferation of research on the father in the past decade, the conclusions that can be drawn from the studies are few. Perhaps the greatest problem with this research and literature is that it consists almost exclusively of correlational studies, with very few short

or long-term longitudinal studies (Lamb, 1976). A recent critique is that "research on fathers is constrained and distorted by the lack of adequate orientation or theoretical framework" (Richards, 1982, p. 63). Pederson (1985) discusses the need for a theoretical model embracing pluralistic conceptions of the paternal role.

Learning more about fathers and fatherhood is important in understanding the changes that are taking place in the American family. The trend appears to be towards greater participation by men during childbirth, greater numbers of mothers in the workforce, and the acceptance of less differentiated sex roles (Ricks, 1985). Many men feel burdened by restrictive definitions of masculinity and manliness and are making efforts to become and to stay involved in the daily responsibilities of childcare (Fein, 1978b). What implications these changes have for family life, for policies on the family, for educational and socialization processes, and for the delivery of health care are not clear. One of the reasons for this is the lack of knowledge about the father, especially from the perspective of the meaning that fatherhood experiences have for him.

This study was short term, longitudinal and prospective in nature. The study period began during the last part of the wife's pregnancy, continued through three to seven days after the birth of the baby, three weeks and concluded at six weeks. The study was designed to have

multiple contacts with the fathers in order to elicit their experiences over time. Two earlier studies with multiple contacts with fathers during the transition to the parenthood period were done with a very small number of fathers (four in each) (Gansei, 1978; Heinowitz, 1978). In this study, twenty-three subjects participated. The decision to end the study at six weeks was made from the standpoint of a practical time frame in which to do this unfunded study, but also from information in Fein's (1975) study suggesting that by the end of six weeks, things were "settling down" for couples with their first babies.

Through the use of grounded theory methodology, data from the study served as the basis for development of a substantive theory about fathers during the early weeks of parenthood. The significance of this study is that it is not only longitudinal and prospective, but also resulted in a theoretical framework about first time fatherhood during the transition period from late pregnancy through the first six weeks after birth.



## CHAPTER II

## LITERATURE REVIEW

## Overview of Relevant Research Related to the Problem

Historical Perspectives

Social science has long ignored fathers because of the assumption that they were less important than mothers in influencing the developing child. The psychoanalytic framework has had a tremendous impact on psychological theories and neither Freud nor Bowlby saw a direct, caring role for the father with infants and young children (Parke, 1981).

By and large, research on the father has followed a path similar to that of research on the mother (McGreal, 1982; Richards, 1983). Just as early studies on the mother focused on "maternal deprivation," studies on the father in relation to child development were primarily in "father absent" homes (McGreal, 1982). Generalizations about children brought up in fatherless homes included problem behavior, lowered intellectual ability and achievement, and poor emotional adjustment. Herzog and Sudia (1968) undertook a review of almost 400 research studies on children growing up in homes from which the father was absent. A primary list of 59 studies which focused directly on the effects of father absence on children was derived. Of these 59 studies, 29 supported the view that fatherless homes were associated with adverse characteristics or behavior of the child, 17

challenged this position, and 13 reported mixed conclusions. Of the 29 studies reporting adverse effects, 7 were rated reasonably sound methodologically; of the 17 challenging the adverse effects, 7 were rated as reasonably sound (Herzog & Sudia, 1968).

Fein (1978a) identified two major perspectives on fathering in the past twenty-five years, a traditional view and a modern view. The traditional view of the father was that of provider for the family. In this view, men offered companionship and emotional support to their spouses and have relatively little direct involvement with the children. The father was seen as the strong, active, stabilizing force within the family, with unquestionable authority (Nash, 1965). The modern view saw the goal as successful child development, concerned with achieving socially appropriate masculinity and femininity, academic performance, and moral development (Fein, 1978a). The studies reviewed by Herzog and Sudia (1968) on "father absent" homes fell within the modern perspective of fathering. Many of the studies falling within the traditional and modern views of the father were based on reports from mothers and/or children, with virtually no direct study of the father (Hines, 1971; Lamb, 1976).

The emergent perspective of fathering has been described as one in which the assumption is made that men are psychologically and physically able to participate in a full range of parenting behaviors (Fein, 1978a). Many of the more recent studies on the fathering during

pregnancy, labor and delivery, and the early weeks of parenting to be discussed fall within this perspective of fathering. The review of the literature for this study will cover the areas of pregnancy, labor and delivery, and also the postnatal period. Each area will be presented separately with a summary of each, and an overall summary.

### Pregnancy

The topics to be examined in the review of the literature on men and pregnancy include the marital relationship, the role of the father during pregnancy, dependency needs, couvade syndrome, anxiety and involvement of the father during the pregnancy. These were most frequently mentioned in the literature as having pertinence for the study of the father during pregnancy.

Marital relationship. Despite the paucity of studies related to fathers, the marital relationship, and pregnancy, some feel that the quality of the marriage may be one of the most important dimensions influencing both partners' experience of and adaptation to pregnancy, childbirth, and early parenting (Cowan, Cowan, Coie & Coie, 1978; Gladieux, 1978; Grossman, Eichler & Winikoff, 1980).

Men's acceptance of pregnancy appears to be closely linked to their perception of marital adjustment in a study with twenty-five married couples in the first trimester of pregnancy (Porter & Demeuth, 1979). In another study with twenty first-time expectant fathers,

May (1982a) found that men identified their appraisal of the stability of the couple's relationship as one of the four factors important in their readiness for pregnancy. Moore's (1982) study with one hundred and five couples from twenty-four to twenty-eight weeks of pregnancy and from three to twenty-one days postpartum found a significant difference in increased marital satisfaction among men who participated in Psychoprophylactic Method Classes (PPM) as compared to those who attended Hospital Class Method (HCM). In a psychoanalytically oriented study, Deutscher (1971) found that in three out of the ten couples studied, motives for having a child were not based on a stable relationship. Under these circumstances, adaptation to pregnancy and early parenthood was marked by competitiveness and dissatisfaction.

These studies hint at the potential importance of the marital relationship to the adjustment to pregnancy for the father and indicate the need for further study in this area. In this study, the relationship between the man and his wife will be explored.

#### Role of the Father During Pregnancy

The role of the father during pregnancy has been discussed primarily from the standpoint of the importance of extra attention to the wife and of providing a warm, friendly, accepting, supporting climate (Ballou, 1978; Breen, 1978; Caplan, 1959; Entwisle & Doering, 1981; Grossman et al., 1980; Shereshefsky & Yarrow, 1973). Little, however, has been done to explore the experience

of pregnancy for the father-to-be.

In one study involving one hundred and twenty-eight first-time expectant fathers attending Lamaze classes, Wapner (1976) found that the men did not conceptualize themselves as mainly supportive figures. They had a sense that they too were experiencing an important development in their lives. This was also found in Heinowitz's (1978) phenomenological study with four fathers in which he found that the pregnancy had an emotional impact on the men interviewed.

Here again, the role of the father-to-be during pregnancy has had at best cursory examination. How the fathers-to-be perceived their roles during pregnancy and what meaning those roles had for them will be examined in this study.

### Dependency Needs

Heightened dependency needs among expectant fathers have been found (Grossman et al., 1980; Shereshefsky & Yarrow, 1973). Husbands who had counseling during pregnancy were able to provide more support to their wives than men who had no counseling (Shereshefsky & Yarrow, 1973). However, spouses are the major, often only, support for adult men (Lein, 1979). Unless the man has sources of emotional support in addition to that provided by his wife, "he will experience a loss in the amount of emotional support available to him during pregnancy" (Cronenwett & Kunst-Wilson, 1981, p. 198).

The research on support systems for fathers-to-be is sparse. Where do men get emotional support during their wives' pregnancies? What implications does emotional support have for the father's health, for the marital relationship? Exploring social support systems of the fathers in this study will be undertaken.

### Couvade Syndrome

The fact that some men experience physical symptoms during their wives' pregnancy has been documented (Colman & Colman, 1972; Cavenar & Weddington, 1978; Lamb & Lipkin, 1982; Roehner, 1976; Wapner, 1976). Men's physical symptoms during pregnancy were first labeled the "couvade syndrome" (Trethowan & Conlon, 1965), as contrasted to ritual couvade which is an anthropological perspective of male behaviors in relation to pregnancy and childbirth (Heggenhougen, 1980).

The Shereshefsky and Yarrow (1973) study found that sixty-five percent of the fathers developed "pregnancy symptoms." In a study done in a large health maintenance organization, the charts of husbands of pregnant women were reviewed retrospectively. The study involved two hundred and sixty-seven men selected by random assignment. Of this group, it was found that 22.5 percent of the fathers sought care for physical symptoms during their wives' pregnancies (Lamb & Lipkin, 1982). Munroe and Munroe (1971) found that men who reported pregnancy symptoms in two out of three societies studied also reported more involvement in caretaking of children than

males who reported no symptoms.

What the implications are of men experiencing physical symptoms during their wives' pregnancies are not clear in the research done-to-date. The study will explore what, if any, physical symptoms the men in the study experienced.

### Anxiety in Expectant Fathers

Expectant fathers have been found to be significantly higher in overall anxiety, tension, and apprehensiveness than a control group of married men without children (Gerzi & Berman, 1981). Men's anxiety during the first trimester of pregnancy was found to be related to the wife's experience during childbirth and early postpartum (Grossman et al., 1980). Fein (1975) found that a general anxiety in first-time fathers decreased between the last trimester of pregnancy and six weeks postpartum.

Woldbaum (1975) distributed questionnaires to expectant fathers who attended two different types of pre-natal classes before and after they took the classes. He found that men who attended classes requiring the father's active participation did not differ significantly in their fears and anxieties from men who attended classes which did not focus on father participation.

Research studies done to date indicate that anxiety is prevalent in fathers-to-be, especially during the latter part of pregnancy. How that anxiety is manifested and how the men deal with it will be part of this study.

### Men's Involvement During Pregnancy

May (1980, 1982b), in her longitudinal study with twenty couples interviewed at 12-16 weeks, 20-26 weeks, and 34-40 weeks of pregnancy, found three detachment/involvement styles among men during pregnancy which she called observer, instrumental, and expressive. She also identified four factors men thought were important in being ready for pregnancy of which the appraisal of the stability of the couple relationship was one; the others were whether or not the man intended to become a father at some point in his life, relative financial security, and a sense of having completed a childless period of his life. A characteristic three phase pattern of subjective emotional involvement in pregnancy was identified. Heinowitz (1978) suggested similar patterns in his phenomenological study of four fathers. This study will explore if there is a consistency in the detachment/involvement styles (May, 1980, 1982b) in the fathers' behavior through the first six weeks after the birth of their babies.

### Childbirth Preparation Classes

There is a paucity of studies on the effects of childbirth preparation on men. In an early study, Engel (1963) asked fathers who had attended childbirth preparation classes for their evaluation of active participation in the childbirth process. Of 446 fathers who answered the questionnaire, 99.1 percent reported that they liked being with their wives in labor. Being present



at the delivery was not an option for these fathers, but they were asked if they felt husbands should be allowed in the delivery room in the future. Of those who responded, 40.6 percent felt they should; while 59.4 percent were against the idea (Engel, 1963). In the course of twenty-three years, there has been a change in attitude, since today men expect to be present for the birth, and this practice is actively promoted by most health care institutions (Hines, 1982).

In Hott's (1972) study, preparation for childbirth and presence at childbirth appeared to have no effect on the man's self-concept or his concept of his wife in major ways. However, Gayton (1975) reported that fathers felt that being present at labor and delivery elicited positive attitudes toward their wives. "They felt they were better able to empathize with what a woman experiences in childbirth by being present" (Gayton, 1975, p. 87). In this same study, fathers who had completed childbirth preparation classes reported significantly less state anxiety than fathers who had not attended classes in two out of five critical periods of labor and delivery: when they first heard their wives were in labor and in the delivery room before birth.

Men who have not had preparation for childbirth are increasingly rare in the United States. In a recent study with unprepared fathers, seventy percent of them described their expectations of the birth with negative words such

as "ugly," "nasty," "scary," but in their actual experience in participating during birth, 95% spontaneously indicated that they felt pride and increased self-esteem (Gabel, 1982). The impact of childbirth preparation on men is far from clear in research done to date. This area needs further study, and will be attempted in the current study.

In summary, the literature on fathers during pregnancy indicates that the stability of the marital adjustment is a major factor in men's adjustment to pregnancy. Little research has been done on the experience of the pregnancy for the father-to-be. This research indicates increased dependency needs and anxiety during the pregnancy, the appearance of physical symptoms in some men during pregnancy, and a variety of styles and degrees of emotional involvement in men during the pregnancy. The meaning of childbirth preparation for men has been minimally studied. The current study will explore this facet as well as those mentioned above with the twenty-three subjects.

### Labor and Delivery

Especially during the last decade in the United States, father participation during labor and delivery has increased markedly. However, research done on father preparation for and participation in childbirth has been largely done from the perspective of the woman. From the standpoint of the woman's emotional well being (Doering & Entwisle, 1975; Entwisle & Doering, 1981; Norr, Block,

Charles, & Meyering, 1977; Tanzer, 1968) and the need for less medication and anesthesia (Block & Block, 1975; Engel, 1964; Henneborn & Cogan, 1975) the importance to the mother of the father's presence during childbirth has been well documented. However, there have been relatively few studies on the impact of childbirth preparation on the father and what significance his presence during labor and delivery has for him and for his relationship to the mother and baby.

#### Participation in Labor and Delivery

Reports from fathers indicate that participation in the birth experience can be very meaningful to men (Bing, 1970; Phillips & Anzalone, 1978). In the Cronenwett and Newmark (1974) study, fathers who attended prenatal classes and who attended the birth answered eleven out of nineteen statements about their wives and their own part in the childbirth process significantly more positively than fathers without one or both of these experiences. Two descriptive studies, each done with twenty fathers shortly after their participation in labor and delivery, indicate the father's need for emotional support during labor (Leonard, 1977; McLaughlin, 1980).

In an earlier study (Zussman, 1970), there was almost unanimous agreement among men that it was a gratifying experience to be present at labor. Fifty-five percent (eleven out of twenty) stated they wanted to be there not only to support and encourage their wives, but also

because of their own desire to share in the experience, while forty-five percent (nine) stated that they agreed only to please their wives (Zussman, 1970). Frank (1974) used questionnaires both pre and post-delivery and found that fathers who attended classes and/or delivery rated themselves more positively than fathers who attended neither. Fathers who chose to be present at the delivery rated the birth experiences more positively than fathers who were not present. Attendance at classes was correlated with seeing labor as a more positive experience, but was not related to the father's perception of the delivery.

Forty primiparous couples recruited from childbirth education classes and obstetricians were studied to test the assumption that father involvement in pregnancy and childbirth results in a more positive birth and fathering experiences. The findings were that fathers who were more involved in terms of their wives' reports of prenatal marital closeness gave generally more positive reports of the delivery and the newborn. However, greater prenatal marital relationship closeness was also related to less change in daily routine in the first postpartum week and lower fathering confidence. Fathers who were involved in terms of their wives' estimates of their interest in children were rated by observers as interacting less with their wives during labor and reported postpartum disruption in the marital relationship (Nicholson, Gist, Klein, & Stanley, 1983).

Apparently there is some relationship between a man's perception of his own sex role and the amount of emotional involvement he has in the birth process as well as how sensitive he is to his partners' needs during labor and birth. More androgynous men appear to have greater emotional involvement. (May & Perrin, 1985).

#### Summary: Labor and Delivery

Few studies have been done on the significance of childbirth preparation for the father or of the experience of labor and delivery for him. The importance of having her husband there to the laboring woman has been well documented. Some of the difficulties in the studies done to date center on failure to define father involvement and participation. Other difficulties stem from the self-selection of samples and the bias inherent in volunteer samples from childbirth preparation classes.

#### Postnatal Period

After the excitement of the birth of the baby, the realities of the postnatal period start. One of the realities for the father is the need to begin a relationship with the baby.

Father-infant interaction. The bulk of the current literature on the father involves studies of the infant's attachment to the father (McGreal, 1981). Recently, there has been a flurry of research focused on the father and the newborn, which began perhaps when Greenberg and Morris (1974) coined the term "engrossment"

to describe the fathers' feelings of preoccupation, absorption, and interest in their newborns.

Parke and associates have done a number of studies on father-infant interactions during the newborn period (Parke, O'Leary, & West, 1972; Parke & O'Leary, 1976; Parke & Sawin, 1976) which showed some differences in fathers' interactions with newborn boys when compared to their interactions with newborn girls. Fathers exhibited more nurturant behavior than the mother when both parents were present, and fathers payed more attention to the infants when observed in father-neonate dyads rather than mother-father-infant triads. Other studies with older infants (Belski, 1979; Clarke-Stewart, 1978; Lamb, 1976a, 1976b, 1977, 1980) provide additional information on how fathers interact with their infants.

The previously held belief that men were not interested in newborn babies has been brought into question by recent research. That fathers demonstrate interest with their babies has been shown, but the significance of the experience for the father has not been explored.

#### Father-Infant Bonding and Attachment

Even more recently, research has focused on father-infant bonding and attachment behavior (Bills, 1980; Bowen & Miller, 1980; Jones, 1981; Leonard, 1976; McDonald, 1978; Tannenbaum, 1981; Toney, 1983). It is difficult to compare these studies because in all cases but two (Leonard, 1976; Tannenbaum, 1981), different tools were

used. Although the terms bonding and attachment are used in all the studies, only two define their terms (Bowen & Miller, 1980; Tannenbaum, 1981).

Of interest is the fact that claims of long term effects of early maternal-infant bonding have recently been discounted (Lamb, 1981). However, despite lack of evidence of long term effects of early maternal-infant contact, others feel that it is most important that fathers have early and frequent contact with their newborns because fathers may not be as biologically or culturally primed to respond to infant cues (Entwisle & Doering, 1981; Parke, 1981; Peterson, Mehl, & Leiderman, 1977; Rossi, 1977). Peterson et al. (1977) found that observable behavior of the father during delivery, when considered in conjunction with the father's self report of his experience and involvement, is an important variable in predicting the father's attachment to the newborn infant.

#### Responding to Cues

The subtlety of the cues and responses sent by the newborn had been well described (Brazelton, 1984). Being able to recognize these cues and respond to them appears to play a major role in establishing a relationship with the newborn.

Gansey (1978) found that the most important factor in a new father's forming a relationship with his baby was his ability to perceive a response on the baby's part to

some particular stimulus or activity initiated by him, such as eye contact, smiling, perceived recognition of his voice, cessation of crying in response to holding or rocking. The more willing the man was "to pursue these kinds of contacts, and the more confident and persistent he was in doing so, the more response he received and the more strongly related he felt" (Gansey, 1978, p. 108). The amount of time spent interacting directly with the baby appeared to be the most salient factor in establishing the father-child relationship.

Despite the rapid increase in the amount of research in the area of father-infant attachments, the implications for the practitioner are not clear. Future research should control more carefully for the many variables involved, such as the observational setting, the amount of stress, the length of observation, and the infant and parental behaviors examined (Ricks, 1985).

#### Marital Relationship and Father-Infant Interactions

Belski (1982) makes a strong case for including the marital relationship in the study of father-infant and mother-infant interactions. From the perspective of child development, the inclusion of the father in the study of infancy does more than merely introduce another parent-infant relationship. It transforms the mother-infant dyad into a family system, comprised of husband-wife as well as mother-infant, and father-infant relationships. Continuing to study father-infant interactions in isolation, as mother-infant interactions have been studied



previously, will result in little useful information.

Belski and associates have been studying the effects of the transition to parenthood on the marital relationship. They conducted a replication and extension of an initial longitudinal study of the transition to parenthood for first-time parents. The second study involved sixty-seven couples and consisted of interviews, observations, and questionnaires from the last trimester of pregnancy through the ninth postpartum month. They again observed several consistent patterns of marital change: 1) marital quality declined significantly, though moderately, over time; 2) this decline was most evident in the case of wives; 3) the decline was most evident over the first six months of the study (Belski, J., Lang, M.E., & Rovine, M., 1985). These studies support research previously done which showed a drop in marital satisfaction with the birth of the first child (Hill, 1978).

Studying father-infant interactions without taking into consideration the marital relationship makes for one-dimensional research. Until mother-infant interactions began to be studied within the context of the marital and other relationships (Entwisle & Doering, 1981; Grossman et al., 1981; Shereschefsky & Yarrow, 1973), little information for family health was forthcoming. Future research with fathers and infants should avoid those pitfalls. The decline in the marital relationship after

the birth of the first child has been shown in numerous studies (Belski et al., 1985; Hill, 1978). What has not been explored is why the decline occurs and what can be done to prevent it.

### Masculinity, Femininity, Nurturing, and Parenting

Recent research interest in fathers has brought to light that "... American males on the whole are woefully short changed when it comes to learning and being encouraged to learn their parental roles" (Brenton, 1966, p. 146). While girls have opportunities and are given encouragement to learn "how to mother," boys receive little clear information about how to be fathers (Parke, 1981). Compounding this dilemma, the male sex role in American society has prescriptions which encourage inexpressiveness. Masculinity is expressed largely through physical courage, toughness, competitiveness, and aggressiveness, while femininity is characterized by gentleness, expressiveness, and responsiveness (Balswick & Peek, 1977).

Furthermore, the implication has been that the role of the father is a psychologically foreign one, artificially imposed by the culture for the survival of the race. This stance was challenged as early as 1956 by Josselyn when she wrote:

Tenderness, gentleness, a capacity to  
emphathize with others, a capacity to  
respond emotionally and to rationalize at

leisure, to value a love object more than the self, and to find a living experience in the experiences of others is not the prerogative of women alone; it is a human characteristic (Josselyn, 1956, p. 268).

More recently, feminist writers have raised many questions about motherhood and the role of the father (Chodorow, 1978; Pogrebin, 1980; Rich, 1976). Chodorow develops a thesis for "how parenting qualities are created in women through specific social and psychological processes... These processes could be created in men, if men and women parented equally" (1978, p. 217). Wortis (1971) contends that the acceptance of the maternal role by behavioral scientists has had a major impact on women and contributes to the fact that "The vast majority of women are conditioned to expect that the child-rearing function will be their major individual responsibility" (p. 273).

Individuals' definitions of how masculine and feminine they are may affect how nurturant they are willing to be (Bem, 1974). Most theorists have conceived masculinity and femininity as complementary traits appropriate to different roles and to different people (men and women). Bem developed a sex-role inventory that treats masculinity and femininity as two independent dimensions which might more adequately be viewed as traits appropriate to different situations at different times.

Thus, some people may be "androgynous" in that they might be both masculine and feminine, both assertive and yielding, both instrumental and expressive, depending on the situational appropriateness.

In a series of studies with college students using this validated tool, Bem and associates (Bem, 1975; Bem & Lenney, 1976; Bem, Martyna, & Watson, 1976) found that persons who rated themselves high on both masculinity and femininity scales had a wider repertoire of behaviors available to them with which to respond to situations than persons who rated themselves as either highly masculine and feminine. In one study (Bem, Martyna, & Watson, 1976), men who differed in their sex role perceptions were observed interacting with five month old babies. Men who rated themselves high on both masculinity and femininity scales showed more interest, approached closer to the baby, and smiled, touched and vocalized at the baby more than men who viewed themselves as traditionally masculine.

In Field's (1978) study fathers who served as primary caretakers were compared with fathers who were secondary caretakers, i.e. the traditional father's role. Primary caretakers smiled more and imitated their babies' expressions and high pitched vocalizations more than secondary caretaker fathers. Primary caretaking fathers acted very much like mothers who are primary caretakers. Thus, it appears that the father's style of play seemed significantly affected by spending more time with the baby (Field, 1978). More recent research also supports the

notion that fathering behavior is directly linked to sex role expectations.

In a study with twenty-six fathers from two-parent families, Cordell, Parke, & Sawin (1980) found that the less difference fathers perceived between roles of mother and father, the more willing they were to assume infant care responsibilities and the more positive were their reactions to their infants. Fathers who became involved earlier (i.e. during pregnancy) were more willing to assume infant care responsibilities.

Despite recent focus on parenting rather than on mothering, most of the literature continues to deal with mother-infant relationships (Hines, 1971; Reiber, 1976) which seems to support the idea that "fathering is not as distinctive an element as mothering ... and also lends credence to the assumption that the father is somehow unsuited for childcare" (Reiber, 1976, p. 368).

#### The Experience of Becoming a Father

The studies dealing directly with the man's experience of becoming a father are few in number. Heinowitz (1978) did an intensive phenomenological study of four men. The study explores the experiences of these expectant fathers as described by them during the weeks following the birth of their first child. Four interviews were conducted: after the pregnancy was confirmed and the man was notified; after the man experienced the movement of the fetus; during time of childbirth education classes;

following the birth of the child, four to eight weeks postpartum. The findings indicate that expectant fathers also change significantly during the pregnancy cycle. They experience considerable ambivalence about the pregnancy and find themselves looking to their own fathers as role models for being a father.

With conception, the man begins his transition from a husband to a father, child of a parent to parent of a child, career person to a provider with increasing responsibilities to his new family. He has begun an irreversible creative process during which he will experience a transformation of identity. A life-time in experiences is being played out for him. His perceptions of himself, his wife, parents, and his relationships with others in his life world are taking on new dimensions (Heinowitz, 1978, p. 235).

### The Role of the Wife in Fathering

How much control the woman exerts on the participation of the father during pregnancy and in the postnatal period has been alluded to in various studies. In Fein's study (1976), feelings vary in the weeks after birth, with men reporting feeling gratified and burdened by becoming parents. These feelings are affected by the

extent to which the men perceived themselves to be excluded from or included in their new family lives (Fein, 1976). Apparently this is mediated to a great extent by the mother. In Reiber's (1976) study with nine couples, if women wanted their husbands to be involved in childcare activities, they agreed to do this before birth and acted accordingly afterwards. May's (1979) study indicated that women act as "gatekeepers" during the pregnancy in terms of sharing information and encouraging participation. Meyerwitz and Feldman (1966) had earlier suggested that men who were "cast" into the role of intruder in the weeks before and after the birth of a first child were less willing to talk about their experiences and may have more difficulty in the weeks after the birth than men who seemed to be more supported by their wives. In Fein's (1975) study, women's expectations of the mean proportion of baby care activities men would usually do in the weeks after birth more strongly predicted men's scores on childcare responsibility, childcare jointness, and overall family sharing variables than did the men's expectations.

The relationship between the man and his wife, also the degree to which she allows him to participate during pregnancy and in infant care, appear to be two major factors which influence the role the father plays within the family. How are agreements on participation made? How much influence does the father have in these agreements? What kind of skills are needed for

negotiating these agreements? These are research questions that remain unanswered. An attempt will be made in the current study to address some of them.

#### Adapting Six Weeks After Birth

By six weeks after the baby is born, apparently life is less chaotic for first-time fathers than during the earlier weeks of the postnatal period. In his study of thirty middle-income couples, Fein (1975) conducted interviews once before and once after the birth of their first child. He found that by six weeks postpartum the men had generally adapted to life with their wives and babies with lower levels of dependence wishes, general anxiety, and child-related anxiety than before the births. The men's dependence wishes and general anxiety decreased regardless of their degree of involvement in infant care and housework activities.

The men developed varying kinds of emotional relationships with their infants without differential effects in their levels of general anxiety. The men who were relatively high on measures of childcare shared with their wives and in their willingness to share childcare showed greater reductions in child-related anxiety than did the other men. The study also showed that "what mattered to men in the postpartum period was developing a role; a pattern of activities that met their needs, rather than a particular role" (Fein, 1975, p. 298).

#### Transition to Parenthood

The major transition to fatherhood takes place during



the early weeks and months of becoming a parent. Gansei (1978) in a series of four intensive interviews with four men identified four major transitional tasks for men moving into fatherhood. The interviews were held during the last month of pregnancy; two to four days after the birth of the baby; four weeks after the birth of the baby; and eight weeks after the birth. The tasks identified were: developing a father role, developing a relationship to the baby, reestablishing a relationship with his wife, and integrating fatherhood into his sense of identity.

The transition to fatherhood is explored as a developmental life transition. Gansei (1978) identified a number of factors that appeared to affect what men experience as new fathers. Among these is some delay after marriage before having children. The delay in having children allows more time to establish the marital relationship on a secure footing. Other factors are establishing a career as enhancing self-esteem, and financial security. In this study, as in Heinowitz's (1978) and Fein's (1975) the relationship between the man and his wife and the influence of the man's father on his own sense of fatherly identity appear to be important factors in the transition to fatherhood.

In a study done by Hangsleben (1983) with fifty first time fathers, subjects completed questionnaires within three weeks of their infant's birth and again at three to

four weeks postpartum. Areas covered in the questionnaires were infant feeding, lifestyle changes, depression, fathering activities with their own father, fathering activities planned with their own child, and marital adjustment. New fathers reported doing fewer baby care activities than they had projected prenatally, although subjects who planned to perform many baby care activities tended to follow through postnatally.

Increasing age and higher income were related to fewer plans for baby care. Subjects reporting a greater number of activities with their own father also tended to report that a father was equally or more important in the care of the baby than the mother (Hangsleben, 1983).

That the transition to parenthood requires adjustment and adaptation is without question. Early studies (Dyers, 1953; Le Masters, 1954) identified this time as a period of crisis involving sharp or decisive change for which old patterns are inadequate. These studies found the majority of couples experiencing moderate to severe crisis with the birth of their first child. Hobbs and Cole (1976) in a replication of a study by Hobbs (1965), found only slight amounts of difficulty among subjects in adjusting to their first child, with mothers experiencing significantly greater amounts of difficulty than fathers. In both the 1965 and 1976 studies, ninety percent of subjects rated their marriages as happy and satisfying prior to the birth of the baby. Significantly fewer men (forty-six percent) and women (thirty-one percent) rated the marriages as more

happy and satisfying since the birth of the baby in the 1976 study as had in the 1965 study (Hobbs & Cole, 1976).

Gansei's (1978) study using the definition of a "normal life crisis as a period of time in which new life circumstances produce fundamental disruption in a person's life organization, necessitating basic emotional and behavioral changes in order to achieve a new integration" (p. 191) supports the definition of transition to parenthood as a crisis. However, he points out that it is a normal crisis, not a pathological one. Fein (1975) refers to the experience of having a first baby as a major life change and sees it as a phase in adult development.

Although Gansei's study (1978) indicates tasks that men must accomplish in the process of becoming first-time fathers, what factors are involved in making the transition as smooth as possible is not clear. The current study will attempt to identify those factors.

Summary: Postnatal Period

The majority of studies that have been done on the father in the postnatal period have revolved around father-infant interaction, most recently in the study of bonding and attachment. However, there is little information about what the experience of fathering is like for men. There are some cues that how much the father participates in newborn and infant care is largely determined by the mother. There is also some evidence that men who rate themselves high on both masculinity and

femininity scales and would be classified as androgynous are more likely to participate in nurturing behaviors. Previous studies defined early parenthood as a crisis, with more recent ones identifying it as a major life transition.

The existing literature certainly indicates that the experience of pregnancy, birth, and becoming a father is a major event in a man's life. Although there appears to be greater participation of fathers in the pregnancy cycle and researchers have been studying this phenomenon, little systematic knowledge has resulted from these studies, possibly because of failure to define father participation (Cronenwett, 1982). Nicholson et al. (1982) have attempted to define father involvement on three dimensions and that certainly is a step in the right direction.

It might be argued by some that the chief criticism of almost all studies on the father centers around the non-probability sampling of small numbers of white, middle class, well educated fathers. Lack of validation of tools is another problem as well as the low incidence of longitudinal studies. As yet we have little knowledge of fathers from various ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Cross-sectional studies with only occasional pretesting have not provided a cohesive sense of the experience of fathering. It is of interest that the studies which have to date provided some clues as to what the experience of fathering is for men have all involved a series of intensive interviews with men having the

experience (Fein, 1975; Gansei, 1978; Heinowitz, 1978; May, 1979). These studies, except for Fein's, did not presuppose what the experience was like. Findings were based on data supplied by the men during the interviews. They provide a few slender threads in the development of theory about fatherhood.

The review of the literature indicated many gaps in research on first-time fathers. Although many bits and pieces of information have resulted from the research done, attempts at an integrated, longitudinal approach have been virtually non-existent. What this current study proposed to do is identify the essence of the experiences men have as they make the transition to parenthood from late pregnancy through the first six weeks after birth. The meanings the men attach to the experiences by and large shape their actions, reactions and attitudes. As a result of this exploration, a substantive theory on the transition to fatherhood will be presented. Based on the philosophic concepts of symbolic interactionism, grounded theory methodology was selected as the means by which this study was to be conducted. This is discussed in Chapter III, Methodology.

## CHAPTER III

## METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study is a descriptive, exploratory study. It can also be called a factor-searching study (Dickoff & James, 1968; Diers, 1979), since it will attempt to categorize, classify, and conceptualize men's experiences from late pregnancy through the first six weeks of fathering.

Grounded theory methodology was utilized in this longitudinal study of first time fathers, starting in the latter part of pregnancy and continuing until the baby was six weeks old. The decision to use this time frame for the study was made on the basis of previous studies indicating that the fathering process starts during the pregnancy (Fein, 1975, 1976; Gansei, 1978; Heinowitz, 1978; May 1980, 1982) and the findings by Fein (1975) that life seemed to be settling down by six weeks after the birth of the baby.

Since so little is known about the phenomenon of fathering, grounded theory methodology was chosen because it enables the researcher to discover what is happening in a situation (Diers, 1979; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Although questions were asked of the fathers, the purpose of the interviews was to provide a framework within which the men could express their own understandings in their own terms (Patton, 1980). In a qualitative design such as

this, the important dimensions emerge from the analysis of the data without presupposing in advance what those dimensions will be (Patton, 1980). Thus the data is used to generate theory, not to test it (Diers, 1979; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

### Conceptual Framework

In a study using grounded theory methodology, the conceptual framework is not predetermined, but rather is derived from the data as they are analyzed. The philosophical basis of grounded theory methodology is symbolic interactionism, based on the work of George Herbert Mead at the University of Chicago. This section will cover the basic premises and concepts of symbolic interactionism, examine its use in the study of the family, and its implications for research.

Mead's (1934) analysis of symbolic interaction is as a presentation of gestures and a response to the meaning of those gestures. Such gestures have meaning for the person who makes them and for the person to whom they are directed. The two parties understand each other when the gesture has the same meaning for both. In order for this to happen, both parties must take each other's roles (Turner, 1978).

Symbolic interactionism, as developed by Mead, centers around three main concepts: Mind, Self, Society.

Mind. Mead saw the mind as a process rather than a structure. The mind has the capacity to use symbols, to

designate objects in the environment, to rehearse alternative lines of action toward these objects, to inhibit inappropriate lines of action, and to select a proper course of overt action. This is termed "imaginative rehearsal" (Turner, 1978).

Self. The self, according to Mead, represents the capacity of human beings to symbolically represent themselves as an object (Turner, 1978). The interpretation of gestures can serve as the basis for self assessment and evaluation.

As the organism matures, the transitory "self images" derived from specific others in each interactive situation becomes crystallized into a more stable "self conception" of oneself as a certain type of object. An object is anything that can be designated or referred to. The self object emerges from the process of social interaction in which other people are defining the person. The self enables people to interact with themselves. The self is seen as a process, not a structure. The reflexive process yields and constitutes a self (Blumer, 1969).

Mead indicated three stages in the development of self, all involving role taking. The initial stage in which self-images could be derived were termed as "play." In play, infants are capable of assuming the perspectives of only a limited number of others, at first only one or two. Later, because of biological maturation and practice in role taking, the child can take on the role of several others engaged in organized activity. This stage was



termed the "game." The final stage of development of self occurs when a person can take on the role of the "generalized other" or "community of attitudes" as evident in society (Turner, 1978).

Society. For Mead, society or "institutions" represented the organized and patterned interactions among diverse individuals (Turner, 1978). Fundamentally, group action involves a fitting together of individual lines of action. This is done by taking the role of others. By so doing, people seek to ascertain the intention or direction of the acts of others. People then form their own actions on the basis of such interpretation of the acts of others. This is how group action takes place in human society (Blumer, 1969).

Stemming from the work of Mead, Blumer attempted to delineate the basic premises of symbolic interactionism, which he calls "a relatively distinctive approach to the study of human group life and human conduct" (Blumer, 1969, p. 1). The first premise states that human beings act towards things on the basis of the meaning that the things have for them; the second is that the meaning of things arises from the social interactions a person has with others; the third premise addresses the interpretative process used by the person in order to deal with things encountered (Blumer, 1969).

The meaning of a thing for a person thus stems from the ways in which others act toward the person in regard

to the thing. The process of interpretation has two steps, the first of which is an internalized process of self-interaction. In the second step, the person transforms the meanings in view of the situation and the direction of the action. A principle of symbolic interactionism is that through engaging in interaction, in the form of speech, gestures, thinking, etc, each individual seeks to understand the meaning of the other's action (Blumer, 1969).

### Symbolic Interaction and the Family

Symbolic interactionism has been used in studying the family. Burgess described the family as a unity of interacting personalities (Schvaneveldt, 1981). The interactionist approach strives to interpret family phenomena in terms of internal processes. Human beings interpret and define each other's responses instead of merely reacting to them.

How symbolic interactionism is played out in the family is that family members act and react by the use of symbols. The symbols are interpreted by family members and interaction takes place by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions (Rose, 1962).

The wife's response is made not merely to the actions of the husband, but to the meaning which both partners attach to such actions. The gestures made by the newborn infant are interpreted by the parents according to the meaning the gestures have for them.

### Implications of Symbolic Interaction for Research

An important dimension for this conceptual approach is the implication for research in the study of action from the position of the actor.

Since action is forged by the actor out of what is perceived, interpreted, and judged, one would have to see the operating situation as the actor sees it, perceive objects as the actor perceives them, ascertain their meanings in terms of the meaning they have for the actor, and follow the actor's line of conduct as the actor organizes it (Blumer, 1969, p. 73).

Thus, the interactions of the fathers in this study with themselves, with others, with objects (i.e. work) can be appropriately viewed within the framework of symbolic interactionism and appropriately studied using grounded theory methodology, which takes into account this perspective on human interaction.

### Sample Selection and Human Subject Assurance

Subjects for the sample were recruited through privately and publicly sponsored childbirth preparation classes, a nurse midwifery clinic, private physicians and nurse midwives. Recruitment was done through distribution of brochures (Appendix A) and through going to childbirth preparation classes and asking for subjects. In all, five

hundred brochures were distributed and fourteen childbirth education classes were visited. A total of thirty-seven men expressed interest in the study either by calling, by sending the tear-off portion of the brochure, or by giving the tear-off to the childbirth educator for forwarding to me in stamped, addressed envelopes left for that purpose.

Of the thirty-seven men who responded, four had wives who delivered early and could not participate in the first interview, one did not fit the criteria, four changed their minds about participating, and five could not be contacted despite repeated phone calls. The twenty-three remaining men participated in all four interviews. Attempts to recruit men who had not participated in childbirth education classes proved futile.

The men ranged in age from twenty-two to thirty-six, were all married, all but one were caucasian, all but three had some college education, and thirteen had individual incomes over \$25,000/yr. Additional demographic data on the men and women are found in Appendix B and C.

Criteria for Sample Selection. Fathers were selected for the study who met the following criteria:

1. First time fathers
2. Age: 20-40
3. Education: minimum of high school graduation, or equivalent
4. Uncomplicated labor and delivery: no

planned cesarean births, no planned induction of labor, no high risk infants resulting in prolonged hospitalization

5. Marital relationship: involved in the relationship at least one year prior to pregnancy. Married or living together, with intention to parent the child together

All fathers who agreed to participate in the research study signed a consent form in which the study was briefly described. The study proposal was submitted to the UCSF Committee on Human Research for Human Subjects and approved prior to collection of data.

Representativeness. Because the phenomena of interest are not well understood in advance, the usual notions of the representativeness of the sample do not apply in a study of this kind. The sample can only be representative in the sense that the events or instances recorded attempt to cover the entire range of the phenomenon (Diers, 1979). It is thus the comprehensiveness of the data collected rather than the representativeness of the sample which result in the richness of concepts developed (Glaser, 1978).

### Collection of Data

Collection of empirical data for this study was done through open-ended and semi-structured interviews and by observation.

Interviews. Four interviews were held with each

father, all but one in the fathers' homes. The purpose of the interviews was to get at the reality of the experience of first-time fathers as perceived by them (Swanson & Chenitz, 1982). Serial interviews were utilized: one before the birth of the baby, the second within a few days after birth, the third at three weeks, and the fourth at six weeks after the birth of the baby. The interviews utilized both open-ended and semi-structured modalities. In addition, observational notes were made following the interviews.

Instruments used in this study consisted of four open-ended and semi-structured interview schedules, which served as guides for the interview process. (Appendices D, E, F, G) Many additional questions were asked stemming from responses made by the fathers. Some of the data from the early interviews suggested questions for interviews with later fathers, i.e. when the pregnancy became real, taking better care of themselves. The questions raised thus evolved from the data. The sources for directions of questions for the pregnancy and immediate postnatal period were primarily previously done research studies (Fein, 1975; Gansei, 1978; Heinowitz, 1978; May, 1979).

Interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed into a typescript. Interviews varied in length from twenty minutes to two hours. The longest interviews tended to be the first (during pregnancy) and the last (at six weeks after the birth). Interviews were conducted over a period

of four and one half months (August-mid-December, 1984). Notes were not taken during the interviews. Attempts to do so proved distracting to the fathers and to me as well, and the practice was discontinued. I made "neutral notes" of points about which I wanted to raise further questions during the course of the interview.

The typed transcripts of the interview and the notes made of observations served as the data base for comparative analysis to determine the processes occurring in the situation (Stern, 1980). The use of methodological notes and theoretical notes were also helpful in giving direction to the process. Methodological notes reflect an operational act completed or planned: an instruction to oneself, a reminder, a critique of one's tactics. Theoretical notes are a self-conscious, controlled attempt to derive meaning from any one or several observational notes. Theoretical notes interpret, conjecture, infer, hypothesize (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973).

All the interviews except one were conducted in the fathers' home. Originally the plan was that the interviews would be conducted without the wife present. The rationale was that more honest responses would be elicited from the men without the wife being present. In reality, some wives chose to be present for the interviews. In other instances, the physical constraints of the home were such that the interviews could not be conducted in complete privacy. When wives were present, they participated minimally. The decision not to

interview the wives was based on the purpose of the study, namely to get at men's experience of fathering.

In all, ninety-two interviews were conducted (four with each of the twenty-three fathers in the study). When the line-by-line analysis was being done, the tape recording of the particular interview was listened to simultaneously. In this way, long pauses, the "uh, uh, uh's" and some of the conversations the typist was unable to make out were incorporated into the typed transcript, making for valid data. Occasionally the typist made editorial decisions about omitting certain material thought to be repetitious or not significant. If the tapes hadn't been listened to by me, while reviewing the transcript, valuable data would have been lost.

Stern (1985) has questioned the use of the tape recorder in data collection, seeing it as time consuming, expensive, and not necessary. I found the use of the tape recorder most worthwhile. Not only was important data not lost, but using the recorder enabled me to concentrate on what the fathers were saying. Both the fathers and I found note taking distracting to the interview process. Except for writing a key word or phrase about which I wanted to ask further questions, I did not take notes during the interviews.

The tape recordings were also a means of checking on my own biases, values, and interviewing skills. Since I come from a feminist perspective, I was concerned that



this bias might be blatantly evident in the interviews. I was relieved to find that it was not. On occasions I found myself becoming quite angry at what the father was telling me. This, too, was not evident on the recordings; the tapes thus served as an important cross-check and learning experience for me as well as a means of data collection.

Repeated interview sessions with the same person proved to be invaluable. They enabled me to validate information given in previous interviews and to learn more about the fathers. This type of cumulative knowledge made for asking better questions. The "information obtained was not only quantitatively cumulative but qualitatively better" (Strauss, Corbin, Fagerhaugh, Glaser, Maines, Suczak & Weiner, 1984, p. 188). Continuing interviews such as these tended to go deeper because both the fathers and I felt increasingly free to express ourselves.

Observations. Observations were made of interactions of the fathers with their spouses and with their newborn infants. This was done informally by spending some time with the families after the interviews were finished. Observational notes were made as soon as possible after the home visits. Observational notes are statements bearing on events experienced principally through watching and listening. They contain as little interpretation as possible, but rather, deal with the who, when, what, where and how of what was observed (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973).

After each of the interviews, I generally "hung around" for a while just chatting with the fathers and

with their wives, if they were at home. This provided the opportunity to observe some of the couples' interaction and the father-infant interaction after the baby was born. Data that would not have been evident from the interviews alone emerged. It also enabled me to establish relationships with the women even though I was not collecting data from them directly. When the wife was present for the interview, her comments and where she laughed provided cues for further questioning.

Reliability and Validity. The consistency of the information given by the participants was determined by paraphrasing their responses and reintroducing the same material for further elaboration in the same and/or subsequent interviews. In addition, my frequent contacts with the fathers promoted development of trusting relationships which encouraged openness and discussion. Because I saw each father in the study four times over a relatively short period of time (2-3 months), it was possible for me to verify earlier observations within the context of different situations (i.e. anxiety during the pregnancy as compared to after the baby was born).

Reliability was established by asking the fathers who participated in the study to evaluate the findings. The fathers were asked "Did I hear you right? Is this the way it is?" What might be called a test-retest procedure occurred as the fathers were asked about emerging hypotheses. Hypotheses were tested and retested by asking

study participants if what was true for others was true for them. Thus it can be said that a grounded theory is reliable, even though a grounded study cannot be replicated (Stern, 1985).

It has been questioned whether the criteria used to evaluate quantitative research (i.e. reliability and validity) should also be used for qualitative research. Credibility, rather than internal validity in the quantitative sense, should be the criterion against which the true value of qualitative research is evaluated (Sandelowski, 1986). Guba and Lincoln (1981) suggest that a qualitative study is credible when it presents such faithful descriptions or interpretation of human experience that the people having the experience would immediately recognize it from those descriptions or interpretations as their own. Other researchers or readers could also recognize the experience when confronted with it after having read about it in a study (Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

In a field research study such as this, the process of interaction is involved in the various forms of observation and interview necessary to the research. Thus, a conscientious examination of one's own values and interaction is essential to the research. I found the use of methodological notes very useful in this area since they consisted of instructions and questions to myself, reminders, and a critical appraisal of my tactics (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). The subjective responses and

interpretations of the researcher are thus acknowledged, understood, and controlled. In this methodology, a conscious and systematic attempt is made to control for researcher bias (Kirk & Miller, 1986). If the researcher's own biases are not examined, it is felt that the rigor of the study should be questioned (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). Rigor, using grounded theory methodology, is the process in which the researcher is systematically categorizing the scene (the complex reality) and extracting the multiplicity of dimensions (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973).

Auditability is proposed as the criterion of rigor or merit relating to the consistency of qualitative findings. When another researcher can clearly follow the "decision trail" used by the investigator in the study, then the findings are auditable. Another researcher could arrive at the same or comparable conclusions given the researcher's data, perspective, and situation (Guba & Lincoln, 1981).

### Data Analysis

The constant comparative method of data analysis is a systematic inductive method of theory building based on data gathered in the field (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978). The constant comparative method of data analysis is an integral part of grounded theory methodology and involves a number of processes which go on while data are being collected.

In the data collection phase, the first process is coding in which the data are examined line by line and each event is coded as a concept and written in the margin. These codes are called substantive codes "because they codify the substance of the data and often use the very words used by the persons being interviewed" (Stern, 1980, p. 21). It is also called open coding (Glaser, 1978). These concepts are then coded into categories or concept clusters according to fit (Stern, 1980), known as selective coding (Glaser, 1978). As each incident is coded into a category, it is compared with concepts coded into the same or different categories. By making such comparisons, ideas about the theoretical properties of each category are generated, and a tentative conceptual framework is formed (Stern, 1980).

An example will be given to show how coding was done in this study. During the first interview, a few fathers mentioned that they felt they had changed during the pregnancy in becoming more careful themselves (i.e. wearing seatbelts consistently when driving). This was substantively coded as "Being more careful about self." In subsequent first interviews, I asked the fathers if they found this to be true. Some did and some didn't. I thought I was way off the track because of this inconsistency. However, as I continued to code, dimensions emerged such as "watching what I eat more," "taking out life insurance," "encouraging pregnant wife to rest more." These dimensions seemed to cluster in a

"protective" category .

In the concept development phase, reduction of the data is one of the processes used. Category is compared to category to see how they cluster or connect. These relationships are called linkages (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). The reduction process is important in identifying the major processes, called core variables, which explain what is happening (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Clustering categories is a more theoretical form of analysis than clustering coded data. Where linkages are identical, categories collapse and form more general categories (Stern, 1980). Reduction pushes the concepts to a higher level of abstraction so that the generalizability of the theory is increased. Up to this point, the development of theory is primarily inductive in nature (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As part of the concept development phase, selective sampling of the literature is another process used. The existing literature, used as data, is woven into the matrix consisting of data, category, and conceptualization (Stern, 1980).

As numerous categories emerged, I compared them to see how they connected: protective, fantasizing, worrying, as some examples. They appeared to cluster into major processes involving work. Further reduction determined that these processes were subsumed under a major variable: the integrative process (the core variable). What is described here as a fairly linear

process was not at all so. It involved many lists, diagrams, drawings, use of the literature, and examination of previous studies. Selective or theoretical sampling was done primarily with the data and men who came into the study later.

As the main concepts or variables become apparent, they are compared with the data for the purpose of determining under what conditions they are likely to occur. Additional data may be collected at this time in a selective manner. This process is called selective or theoretical sampling because data are collected to advance theory. The purpose of theoretical sampling is to develop the hypothesis and to identify the properties of the main categories or variables (Stern, 1980). Theoretical sampling also serves to suggest the interrelationships of the categories into a theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Selective sampling is a deductive process. The conceptual framework, developed from the data, is now "tested by collecting data which proves or disproves the framework hypothesis" (Stern, 1980, p. 22).

In the concept modification and integration phase, two major processes are involved: memo writing and theoretical coding. Memos preserve emerging hypotheses, analytical schemes, hunches, and abstractions. They deal with abstractions that are embedded in the data rather than with abstractive data (Stern, 1980). A group of theoretical notes previously described, can serve as the bases for ideational memos (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). A

vital step in the analytical process is the sorting of memos.

In the course of conducting the interviews and doing the coding, memo writing was done. In this study, memos were derived primarily from theoretical notes made both after the interviews and after the review of the typescript of the tapes. Memos were kept in folders under such headings as "Work: Attitudes, Changing Perceptions," "Playing, Maturity, and Becoming a Parent," "Feeling Left Out," "Relationship to Own Parents," etc. --These represent abstractions embedded in the data and form the basis for the research report which follows in Chapter IV results.

Theoretical codes provide a way of thinking about data in theoretical rather than descriptive terms. Data may be diagrammed, put into tables, or drawn into models (Glaser, 1978). Both memos and theoretical codes are ideational in nature, but their roots are in the data, and in this way they are grounded (Stern, 1980). Continuous comparative analysis is a matrix operation, not a linear endeavor. Although the concept modification and integration phase is a "wrapping up process" (Stern, 1980, p. 23), it will have proceeded along with the other phases.

In the production of the research report phase, the organization of assorted memos forms the basis of the final writing. The research report for a grounded theory investigation presents the substantive theory,



substantiated by supporting data from the investigation. Literature is used to explain the theory. Concepts are supported in the report by examples from the field data (Stern, 1980).

Glaser and Strauss (1967) state that comparative analysis can be used to generate two basic kinds of theory: substantive theory, developed from a substantive or empirical area of inquiry, such as first time fathering; and formal theory, developed for use in a formal or conceptual area of inquiry such as power, formal organizations. Both substantive and formal theory must be grounded in data. The aim of this study is to develop substantive theory about the transition phase of fathering from late pregnancy through the first six weeks after birth. This will be presented as part of Chapter IV on Results.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Introduction to the Substantive Theory

The findings of this study indicate that becoming a first time father is complex and multifaceted. The major process involved is integration which serves to unify the experiences and to make them an integral part of the father's self concept. Integration, in its broadest sense, is an encompassing concept which deals with the person as a whole. The goal of integration is high level wellness which implies maximizing the potential of which the individual is capable (Dunn, 1961).

Integration is not merely a cognitive or intellectual process. What integration does is to make the experience part of the whole of the father physically, mentally, and spiritually. Integration implies holism and health. Both these words are derived from the same Anglo-Saxon root hal, which can mean "whole," "to heal," "serve," "happy" (Blattner, 1981). Holism is a philosophical and biological concept which implies wholeness, relationships, processes, interactions, freedom and creativity (Blattner, 1981). Health is seen as the expression of the authentic development of the many and varied possibilities within the individual (Sandelowski, 1981).

In this study, the term integration process is used to describe how the experiences the father has during the late pregnancy, labor-delivery, and early postnatal phases

are integrated into his self concept as a father. By "self concept" is meant the relatively stable sense of self derived from the behaviors, roles, relationships, intellectual and emotional experiences the person has (Gansey, 1977). Since the man in this study is a first time father, this self concept as father has probably been minimally developed, if at all. Thus, the experiences he has during the prenatal period and the meaning these experiences have for him need to be integrated into his self concept in order for him to gain a "sense" of himself as father.

The factors which appear to foster integration in the first time father vary depending on the phase of the perinatal period. These factors are derived from the study data. During the pregnancy, the factors revolve around how ready he is to be a father and the quality of the relationship he has with his wife. During the labor and delivery phase, they involve how well prepared he is for the experience, the support he gains from staff and significant others, and the response of his wife to his efforts as labor coach. In the early postnatal phase the factors include the quality of his relationship with his wife, the ability of the couple to negotiate infant and home work, feedback from parents and others, beginning a relationship with his baby, and developing a sense of family. How these parameters affect integration of his experiences into his self concept as father will be

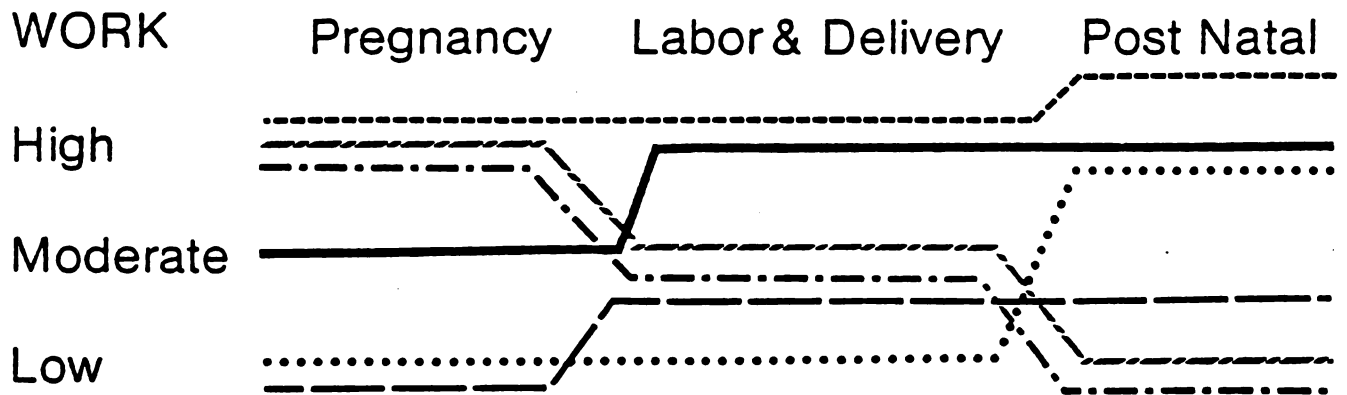
addressed in the Findings section of this chapter.

Although integration is a continuous process, it does not progress smoothly from one point to another in a linear fashion. Rather the process can be likened to a spiral in which various experiences must be examined and fit into the developing self concept as father. An example of this is when the man is beginning to develop his self concept as father during pregnancy, he spends time thinking about his own childhood and his experiences with his parents. These thoughts and feelings becoming integrated into this initial picture of himself as father.

The process of integrating his experiences is into his self concept as a first time father begins during the pregnancy and continues through the labor and delivery and postnatal phases. This process is an active one and involves work in a variety of areas. In order for the integration process to progress, affiliative, perceptual, fantasy, protective, emotional, readiness work must be done. The work required can be manifested either in interaction with others or through internal processes (i.e. thinking, fantasizing) or both.

Which type of work is predominant and how it is manifested appears to change, according to the phase of the perinatal period. For example, during pregnancy, emotional work does not predominate but is manifested by anxiety and worrying. Emotional work is dominant during the labor and delivery phase and culminates in the elation of birth. During the early postnatal phase, while

emotional work continues to be dominant, a major manifestation is dealing with feeling left out in his relationship with his wife. The level of activity in the types of work during the three phases is illustrated below.



Key:

- Affiliative -----
- Perceptual - - - - -
- Fantasy .....
- Readiness - . - . - .
- Protective - - - - -
- Emotional \_\_\_\_\_

The predominance of some types of work in some phases, with less activity in others, appears to be related to meanings the experiences have for the father at that point in time. In other words, the father puts more activity into the work that has the most meaning for him at that time. The data demonstrate that affiliative work which involves relationships with others predominates in all three phases and becomes most active in the post natal phase. The data also indicate that emotional work, which is moderately active during late pregnancy, becomes dominant during the labor-delivery and post natal phases. This is of interest in that affiliative and emotional work are infrequently discussed in relation to men.

The work is interrelated and forms a matrix that becomes the integration process. The matrix is influenced by the experiences the father has and by the meanings the experiences have for him. The integrative process and the work involved frequently occur simultaneously and are overlapping.

In order to avoid any confusion about terminology, the following definitions are presented:

**Process:** A continuing development involving many changes.

**Integrative process:** That which enables the father to have his experiences during the perinatal period become part of his self concept as father. The process serves to unify the experiences, bringing them together as a whole.

Work: The bodily or mental effort exerted to do something.

Affiliative Work: Work which involves associations with others.

Perceptual Work: Work which involves awareness of objects and events through the senses and involving the faculty of perceiving.

Fantasy Work: Work which involves imagination.

Protective Work: Work which shields from harm or injury.

Emotional Work: Work which involves feelings with psychic and/or physical manifestations.

Readiness Work: Work which prepares the person for experiences or events.

Self Concept: The relatively stable sense of self derived from the behaviors, roles, relationships, intellectual and emotional experiences the person has.

Using May's (1980) typology of Involvement/Detachment styles, the men in the study identified themselves as having Observer, Instrumental, and Expressive styles during pregnancy. The Observer style father reported a certain emotional distance from the pregnancy and saw himself largely as a bystander. The Instrumental fathers-to-be reported emphasis on tasks to be accomplished largely as a caretaker or manager of the pregnancy. The father-to-be with the Expressive style reported highly emotional responses to the pregnancy (May, 1980). In this study, the relationship between the man's self-selected

pregnancy style and the integration process will be examined.

While the work involved in the integration process, is overlapping and frequently occurs simultaneously, each type will be discussed as a separate entity for the purpose of clarity in presenting the findings in the pregnancy, labor and delivery, and postnatal phases. Quotations from the interviews will be used throughout to support the idea being presented. No names will be used in the quotations to preserve anonymity. Findings from other research studies will be integrated into the findings section and presented when commonalities or differences appear to be significant.

### Findings

The findings of the study will be presented in three phases: the pregnancy phase, the labor and delivery phase, and the postnatal phase. For each phase, an initial group profile will be presented. Following that will be a review of the work involved in the phase, with predominant work presented first, followed by the other work. Findings will be substantiated with excerpts from the interviews with the fathers. Previously done research and pertinent literature will be intertwined and presented as data. At the end of each phase, a summary of the phase will be presented. The overall summary of the findings will be found in Chapter V, Conclusions and Implications.

Pregnancy Phase: Group Profile - Men and Women



In this study of twenty-three men expecting their first child, the age range was 22-36 years, with a mean of 28, falling into these groups: 21-25 (8); 26-30(5); 31-35 (9); 36-40 (1). All of the fathers were high school graduates. All but three had done some college work; twelve were college graduates, and two had professional degrees. The men saw their financial statuses as being awful (1), OK (10), fine (12). Thirteen had individual incomes over \$25,000/year. Fourteen owned their homes. Nine rented. All the men had been married from 1-6 years. Twenty-two were Caucasian. Four of the fathers were in a second marriage. Three of the men were stepfathers with children from 2 1/2-9 years of age. These men considered themselves to be first time fathers.

For the women, the age range was 21-39 years, with a mean of 28, falling into these groups: 21-25 (9); 26-30 (10); 31-35 (3); 36-40 (1). All of the women were high school graduates. Seven were college graduates. Three women reported no income and listed themselves as homemakers. Five of the women had individual incomes over \$25,000/year. All but one of the women were planning to breast-feed. Fourteen of the twenty-three women were planning to return to work within a 6 week - 3 year time frame. Two women were uncertain about whether they would return to work.

Planned Pregnancy. The pregnancy was planned for sixteen of the couples, not planned in seven. Five of the seven unplanned pregnancies occurred in the couples where

the man was under twenty-five years of age. All of the fathers in the planned pregnancies were involved in the decision-making to have a baby at this time.

Overall Response to the Pregnancy. When asked to select a statement which best described their overall response to the pregnancy, five fathers identified themselves as Observers, eleven as Instrumental, and seven as Expressive. May (1980) had identified three basic detachment/involvement styles in pregnant fathers. Reference to these three groups will be made throughout the report. Percentages used refer to the percentage of each group (i.e., Observer, Instrumental, Expressive), not to the percentage of the sample as a whole.

The pregnancy experience for the father was described in various ways: as positive, rewarding, spiritual, uplifting, sobering. For four of the fathers, the pregnancy experience was miserable. This was in response mostly to the emotional ability of their wives manifested by excessive irritability. One of the fathers said: "I was expecting nine months without a period and instead got nine months of period."

Some of the fathers-to-be saw their impending fatherhood as a gift, a challenge, a responsibility, and a privilege. A number of the fathers stated that participating in the study provided the first real experience for them to talk about their thoughts and feelings related to the pregnancy. Several of them found

the process difficult, saying: "You ask me such hard questions," "No one ever asked me about that before," or "I never thought about that before."

### Pregnancy Work

Three types of work are predominant during the late pregnancy phase: readiness, protective, and affiliative. There is less activity in emotional, perceptual, and fantasy work. How the work is manifested is presented below according to the amount of work activity in the phase.

#### Readiness Work in the Late Pregnancy Phase

Readiness work in this phase was evident in both intrapersonal and interactional arenas and was predominant in the men's reports of their experiences. This was manifested in this group by learning activities such as reading books about babies, attending Lamaze preparation classes, talking with people who have had babies, and taking care of children.

Although a number of the men found that the repetition in the Lamaze classes was excessive, they all found they gained valuable information from them and felt they were prepared for labor and delivery. Some of the couples practiced the relaxation and breathing exercises diligently, but most did not. Three of the men stated it was at their instigation that they attended all the classes, since on occasion their wives didn't feel like going. Apparently the interaction that takes place among the participants in the classes is an important aspect of

the learning.

You don't get a real appreciation of what's going on unless you have somebody who's been through it sit there and talk to you. One of the things about the Lamaze classes is that you can ask experienced people pointed questions and they'll answer you frankly which is very nice.

Having the opportunity to talk with other people who have children was seen as very helpful in settings other than the Lamaze classes.

A lot of her friends have already gone through childbirth, and they have shared their feelings with us. We've learned a lot from them. Some of our friends have let us rent their children for a night or a week, so we've had some exposure to a lot of things involved in parenthood.

None of the fathers attended any type of parenting class during pregnancy in which the focus was on infant care.

Another aspect of readiness work is the timing of pregnancy. When the pregnancy occurred in relation to the man's perceived readiness for it appears to be important in his integration of the pregnancy experience.

I guess I've made some conscious decisions in my life. One of them was that I wouldn't get married until I was finished with college. I decided I didn't want to have a child until we had a home. About a year ago we made a decision to do it.

I think I'm prepared to be a father because I waited so long. At 34 I've been around the block a few times. I've had more experiences. I've seen more people with their families. I think you should wait until you're a little older and you have done a few things, have control of yourself a little more, know your own strengths and weaknesses a little better.

Before you're 25, you don't have the financial income to have a child.

An aspect of the timing of pregnancy work that has not been previously discussed is the "It's time to put the bike away." This is related to the willingness for the father-to-be to give up or postpone the play aspects of his life. The younger fathers (25 and under) spent a fair amount of the pregnancy interview talking about their recreational pursuits such as surfing, going to the desert, going to a sports club. While the older fathers also mentioned participating in sports and working-out, it was not with the sense of deprivation with which the younger men discussed these aspects. While this aspect is similar to the concept identified by May (1979) as "closure to the childless period," the men in the current study emphasized play much more.

The pre-occupation with playing may be indicative of the maturity level of the men involved. The maturing person is seen as one who becomes progressively organized around internalized reality instead of personal need dominated forms. Such internalization of reality leads to an increase in adaptive potential (Heath, 1965). It may be that the younger fathers were less ready to internalize their reality of having pregnant wives and of the resulting fatherhood.

During the next pregnancy we will be more stable, I hope. You know ... financially and businesswise stable. We'll have some more years behind us. I think that will be a big help. We're both too young to be doing all this garbage and handling

all this stuff. I think I handled it as good as I can. If I was thirty, I would probably handle it better.

At first when we first found out she was pregnant, it was quite a shock and I wasn't sure if I was going to be ready to be a father, or if I wanted the extra responsibility thrust on my back. I also figured that I had nine months to adjust to it.

I think I've had to do a lot of growing up. I still like to play, and there hasn't been much of that. It has been more needing to be supportive and staying at home where we would normally be going out.

Having a stable marriage is also part of readiness work. This will be further discussed under affiliative work.

I think I'm prepared to be a father because my wife and I have been married long enough to know each other. Sure, you never completely know each other, you're learning all the time.

If you don't have a sound, stable marriage before you have a baby, having a baby will kill you. It'll drive you further apart.

All of the fathers-to-be had previously thought or fantasized about being a father some day. Most of this had occurred when they were teenagers, although for some men it was not until after their marriage.

These findings fit with factors identified by May (1982a) as being important in men being ready for pregnancy: the appraisal of the stability of the couple's relationship, whether or not the father intended to be a father some day, relative financial security, and a sense of having completed a childless period in his life (May,

1982a).

The pregnancy as real is another facet of readiness work. For all the men but two, the pregnancy did not seem real until there were physical manifestations in their wives: she really started to show; the baby's heartbeat was heard; they felt the baby kicking; or they saw a sonogram of the baby.

I got to hear the baby's heartbeat. The first time it sounded like a horse galloping. We knew that she was pregnant, but we really didn't believe it until we heard the heartbeat.

The significance of men developing pregnancy symptoms (Couvade Syndrome) is not clear. It may well be part of the readiness process. An early anthropological study by Munroe and Munroe (1971) found that men who reported pregnancy symptoms also reported more involvement in caretaking of children. Lamb and Lipkin (1982), in a retrospective study, found that 22.5% of fathers-to-be sought care for physical symptoms during their wives' pregnancies. In this present study, none of the fathers admitted to pregnancy symptoms. However, ten of the twenty-three men reported weight gain of three to twenty pounds during the pregnancy. Four of the fathers reported exacerbation of pre-pregnancy problems with gastritis, abdominal cramping, and sinusitis. Some of the men complained of fatigue and feeling more irritable during the pregnancy.

Getting ready for the baby was mentioned by all the

men in terms of getting furniture, supplies, painting the room, etc. The men participated in varying degrees in these activities. Some of them got a great deal of pleasure from getting the baby's room ready. Working on the baby's room also seemed to help to make the pregnancy more real.

My wife wasn't too crazy about it at the time, but we decided to buy this unfinished furniture and finish it ourselves. I'm really happy with it, and the changing portion of that chest will come off after we no longer need it ... We did this stenciling of balloons. Actually it was only about two months ago when we put it all together that it just ... Oh, we're going to have a baby, and this baby's got the best room in the world.

#### Protective Work in the Late Pregnancy Phase

Protective work also predominates during the later pregnancy phase. Protective work takes two major forms: protecting the wife and/or fetus and self protection.

Protecting the wife/fetus. There was a general feeling that the fetus was at the parents' mercy, and the parents should care enough "about the unborn" by having the wife abstain from cigarette smoking, alcoholic beverages, and excessive sugar. A manifestation of protective work was in trying to keep the pregnant wife from hurting herself and possibly the fetus.

She's done things, and I've hollered at her for doing them. She's climbing ladders and trimming trees. I said, "Look if you want me to do those things, just tell me and I'll do them." Not once has she asked me yet to do anything.

I think that she is working too much.



She is supposed to lay down. She is not laying down ... And I come home and I holler at her and I apologize to her. But then I tell her it is for her own good, for our good. It is for the baby's good.

For some fathers, their expectations for what their wives should do became a source of conflict. This was distressing to the fathers.

We got into a rather heated debate, discussion, argument about the consumption of alcohol during the pregnancy. I'm strongly against it. I thought I had gotten agreement on this prior to conception. When I think back, I never got it. What I got was beating around the bush, "My feelings have changed. I won't do that." Food consumption has also been a source of conflict. She likes to eat more of the fast foods, McDonald's french-fries. That's fine. She can eat that, but she's got somebody else to think of, and that has been of some concern.

Another aspect of protective work was the decision to stop having sexual intercourse. Part of this decision to stop having sexual intercourse was because of fear of hurting the baby.

The reason we've stopped is not because she is not attractive to me, and it's not because I haven't wanted to, it's because I am afraid and I don't want to hurt the baby. And that even though they say it can't, I don't see how they can say that. I feel it can hurt the baby. I don't know, it's just one of those things.

Self-protective work. For many of the fathers, taking better care of themselves became important as the pregnancy progressed. They discussed becoming more concerned about their health in general, being more careful about what they ate, exercising more. They also

mentioned wearing seatbelts while driving, abstaining from alcohol, and giving up motorcycling.

I think I'm a little more cautious and careful about doing things whether it be around the house or out driving ... a little slower, not that I'm wild, but a little slower ... The last couple of months I've been trying to get enough sleep and not work as long so that when I come home I'm a little fresher. I think I'm preparing myself for when the baby is born.

#### Affiliative Work in the Late Pregnancy Phase

The other type of work to predominate during the late pregnancy phase was affiliative work. This was manifested primarily in the relationship with their wives as evidenced by the experiences reported by the fathers. The relationship with their parents was also mentioned as being of importance. Relationships with others, while discussed less frequently, was also seen to be part of affiliative work.

Relationship with Wife. As mentioned previously, a major factor in men feeling ready for parenthood is the stability of the marital relationship. Almost all the men, except for the four who described the pregnancy as miserable, reported that they felt closer to their wives during the pregnancy.

We've become much closer. It's since Lamaze. Over the span of the nine weeks of Lamaze we've become much closer than ever before. When you go to Lamaze, you get to bond together a lot more than you normally have time for. When else do you have two and a half hours a week to sit together and communicate and work together. It was real quality time.

I think my relationship with her has gotten stronger. We've talked a lot about things we're going to do. How we're going to raise a child. We have set more goals together now that we're going to be a family instead of just married without any children.

The four men who reported the pregnancy experience as miserable felt that their relationship with their wives had deteriorated during the pregnancy, that there was more distance between them. There were more arguments than prior to the pregnancy. The men described withdrawing from contacts with their wives to avoid confrontation.

I'm hoping it's our last in that our relationship has really changed. I know it is only a temporary thing. I know that once the pregnancy goes by and we have the child, everything will be fine again ... Another difficult adjustment has been the emotional instability, the ups and downs for her. It's something she won't admit. She won't admit to being bitchy. She won't admit to being difficult to get along with.... You talk to men that are going through what I'm going through and they're all saying, "Yeah, I can't believe my wife, she doesn't even think she's changing."

The last couple of weeks of pregnancy brought us apart. You know, we had moved apart a little bit. You know, she was getting to be real ornery, that kind of thing. We just had little spats. I would withdraw. I said to myself, "Here is a problem area and it's around my wife. If I don't enter this arena I will not have a problem, so I withdrew from that arena and got a little distance so that we don't create problems."

Of the men who had been married three years or longer, a number spoke of their wives as their "best friends." They enjoyed being together, talking to each

other, exercising together, doing chores together. A state of "mutuality" appeared to exist between them. They had an interdependent relationship in which neither partner was dominant or submissive (Lederman, 1984).

We've always gotten along very well.  
She's pretty much my best friend. Our  
relationship has changed in little ways.  
We're more ... just trying to think  
ahead. Every night we try to think of  
what it's going to be like having a baby.  
It's going to be different.

Although there was more of a tendency among those couples to discuss during the pregnancy how infant care and housework would be divided after the birth of the baby, only three couples did this in any depth.

I think it is going to take a lot more time working around the house, helping to get things done. She and I have discussed that we are going to put her career first with her school. When she is at school, I'll be at home taking care of the baby. It's just going to take a lot more of my time. I'll probably be here a lot more and it's probably going to take a lot more of my help to do more cleaning and stuff because the baby is going to be a lot of work, I hear. I don't know for sure.

Fein's study (1974) suggested that men and women generally made "deals" with each other before the birth regarding the division of labor in the postnatal period. These "deals" were not necessarily explicit between husbands and wives. This proved to be the case in this current study.

Agreement between the couple about the paternal role was felt to be a major factor in paternal adjustment after

the birth of the baby (Fein, 1974). This has been substantiated in a study by Fishbein (1984) with one hundred and three couples in which it was found that agreement between parents regarding a particular role seemed to be more important than what form that role would take. This had been found earlier in a study by Grossman et. al. (1980). Fishbein (1984) also indicated that increased age and combined family income related to more agreement with one's mate about roles.

Sexual Relationship During Pregnancy. By the time of the pregnancy interview (eighth and ninth month of pregnancy), most of the couples had stopped having sexual intercourse. Some had stopped earlier on the advice of the physician. Others stopped because of discomfort on the wife's part or fear on the husband's part that he would hurt his wife and/or the baby. Two couples continued to have intercourse until just before the birth of the baby. They were the most recently married.

The men did not, for the most part, verbalize that abstinence from intercourse was a major problem. Some of them compared it to a tour of duty at sea in the navy. The younger men felt most deprived. The decrease in interest in sexual intercourse by the wife was troublesome for one of the fathers.

Our love life has gone downhill. It's the pits. It stopped. In essence, I am very anxious there. I think that this pregnancy happened, and I can't even have that anymore.

We have a lot of close friends that are

going through pregnancies now. Some of the mothers-to-be have been very sexually aroused, but my life has been the opposite, and that's been a difficult adjustment.

The couples who had been married for a number of years prior to the pregnancy found that kidding each other about having sex was helpful. They also spent time cuddling and hugging each other, although "right at the end, it's very hard to hug a pregnant woman." How couples handle their sexual lives has not been reported in previous studies. Fein (1974) felt that questioning about sexual aspects was an invasion of the couple's privacy.

Relationship with Parents. Sixteen of the fathers-to-be stated that they had felt closest to their mothers as children, two said they felt closer to their fathers, and five felt close to both parents. Reason given for closeness was that the parent was easy to talk to. Fathers were seen as being reserved, quiet, and not being very involved with the children when they were young. As adults, twelve of the men continued to feel closest to their mothers, eight felt closest to their fathers, and three felt closer to neither parent.

Seven of the men said their fathers were not around a lot when they were children. Nine of them wanted to be more involved with their own children than their fathers had been with them. They hoped they would be closer to them than their fathers had been. This had also been found in Fein's study (1974).

... My mom basically raised us. I

miss, now, not having time with my Dad. I never really knew my Dad until about three years ago, and I'm finding out that he is a real person, and I can actually relate to him, but during my childhood I really never knew him ... I don't have a father figure to model my life after.

I think I'm definitely not going to be like my father was.... I think a lot of it has to do with my wife's father. Since I've known him - he was the kind of guy who was active and I can see the closeness between him and his son and it's a closeness that that me and my father don't have.

The significance of the father-to-be's relationship to his own father in the adjustment the man makes to pregnancy and fatherhood is not clear. In women, the quality of the pregnant woman's relationship to her mother was found to be related not only to psychological conflicts in pregnancy but also to progress in labor and the woman's identification with the mother role. (Lederman, Lederman, Work & McCann, 1979).

Support for active participation in labor came from friends and relatives who had had the experience, from the Lamaze instructor, and from other couples in the Lamaze class. The men did not receive support for such activity from their fathers, nor from their mothers. Several of the men discussed their fathers' reactions to the sons being with their wives in labor and delivery.

My dad, her dad too -- "What do you mean he's going to be there?" It's been fifteen years since they had a child. Fifteen years ago that was unheard of ... And my dad: "What do you mean you've got to go with her to the doctor's today?"

My dad, and men over his age, when they had their kids, weren't even allowed to bathe them. And that's a real shame.... My father said "I want you to call me as soon as the baby comes." I said I would call him as soon as I can. He goes "Well, you're just going to be pacing up and down the hall." "No, I'm going to be in there. I going to be active." He was a little bit shocked. I don't think he really believed that or something.... He just thought I was going to wait in the father's waiting room.

Relationship with others. Some of the men felt that they couldn't share their excitement about the pregnancy with others at the beginning, but as the pregnancy progressed, there appeared to be more opportunities to talk about it with others and to meet new people.

So at the beginning I was very excited about it but couldn't talk about it because I don't have very many friends with children. So it's like they couldn't relate to it.

And gradually, as people find out we're going to have a baby, more people talk to you and say, "Oh yeah, I've got two little boys." Or you meet people at work and you find you have this in common. And so it's been fun meeting new people.

The men were also thinking about changes in relationships with clients and customers in their out-of home work.

I know that I will be at home more. I know I will not be in the office as much. A lot of clients who have been used to being able to call me at home and being able to get me when they want to are just going to have to realize that I've got a little baby, a family to take care of now, and I'm not going to be as accessible as I was.

Some of the fathers-to-be were puzzled by what they thought were negative statements about parenting, made by



others. They felt this detracted from their anticipation of parenthood.

"Are you a father yet?" "No, I'm not a father yet." "Oh, just you wait!" It's as if 75% of the people I talk to have a vengeance toward first-time parents. From my mother, it's like "I hope your kids are like you when you were little. I hope you have to get up at three o'clock in the morning like I had to. And I hope your baby spits up on your brand new couch." I listen to things like that and I think "How evil can you be?"

### Emotional Work in the Late Pregnancy Phase

There is less activity in emotional work during the late pregnancy phase. Emotional work takes place in the intrapersonal arena. The two ways in which emotional work is manifested during this phase are anxiety and worry.

Anxiety. All of the fathers but one reported feeling increased anxiety and felt it was related to the pregnancy. This was manifested primarily by increased irritability and weight gain.

I've become a little more tense and anxious all the time. I think about it a lot, but my outward manifestation, the way it's manifested is I get nervous and eat more. I've put on about twenty pounds.

Fein (1979) had found significantly higher anxiety in his sample of thirty men during pregnancy than at six weeks postpartum. Fishbein's study (1984) indicated that as the expectant parents' expectations toward the father-to-be's anticipated behavior became more congruent, the anxiety level of the father-to-be decreased. Robinson and

Barret (1986) identified anxiety as one of the range of emotions experienced by men during the emotional transition to fatherhood, with anxiety the predominant emotion during the last trimester of pregnancy. Gerzi and Berman (1981) found that fathers-to-be were significantly higher in overall anxiety, tension and apprehensiveness than a control group of married men without children.

Worry. When asked during the pregnancy interview if they had any particular worries or fears at this time, all but one of the men reported that they were worried about whether or not the baby would be alright after birth.

I don't know if you would call them genuine fears, but there is the common fear of whether the child will be normal.

The only worry is ... is the baby going to be healthy. I assume the baby is going to be healthy. I haven't thought to myself or figured out what I'm going to do if there's a problem with the baby. I've avoided that.

Not one of the men reported being worried about labor and delivery, even when they were specifically asked about this. The only concern they expressed about labor was the possibility of their wives experiencing pain.

The only thing is that it will bother me for her to be in pain, but I think with me being there, maybe I can help her to get through the pain.

#### Fantasy Work during the Late Pregnancy Phase:

There is little activity in fantasy work during late pregnancy phase. Fantasy work is intrapersonal in nature

and manifests itself during this phase as fantasy about the child after birth and fantasy about the man as a father.

During the pregnancy interview, the fathers-to-be were not asked directly about fantasizing about the baby. They were asked what they saw themselves doing with the baby after the baby was born. They all talked about when the baby was older, could walk, talk, go fishing, ride a three wheeler, learn to play ball, etc. Not one of the fathers talked about the baby as an infant. For women fantasizing about the baby as an infant is seen as important in her ability to relate to the baby after birth (Caplan, 1959; Rubin, 1984). Although men seem to do as much role playing "as if" they were fathers as their wives do of the maternal role, in fantasy or role playing the men have an image of an older child, not an infant (Rubin, 1984).

The men in the study did do fantasizing about what they would be like as fathers. Rubin (1984) states that for fathers "the fantasies mobilize and direct his energies and the long-term goals give meaning to his efforts" (p. 46).

I want to be involved in my child's life.... I was in Little League and my parents never came to my baseball games, and I think that could have made a lot of difference ... I think that those are things that I want to do with my children. I want to be involved and get involved with things that they want to do, and I want to do a lot of camping with my kids.

I think I'll probably be more affectionate towards my kids and I think I'll probably be more open ... My parents never discussed family finances with me, or if we made a move the kids were never consulted. I feel like I want to include my whole family in some of the decision-making.

### Perceptual Work in the Late Pregnancy Phase

Perceptual work appeared to be at a minimal level during the late pregnancy phase. It was manifested mainly through becoming more aware of pregnant women.

Perceptual work involved awareness of objects and events through the senses and also the faculty of perceiving. Pregnant women report becoming much more aware of children during the pregnancy (Rubin, 1984). Two of the fathers in the study reported becoming more interested in other children during pregnancy. One couple borrowed friends' children for a day and a week-end. What the men reported was more awareness of pregnant women during their wives' pregnancy. Perhaps it is the men's experience with their pregnant wives that sensitizes them and makes them aware of pregnant women.

I don't know where they all came from. Suddenly everywhere I turn I see pregnant women. Maybe I just didn't notice them before.

### The Late Pregnancy Phase: Summary

In the late pregnancy phase, readiness, protective, and affiliation work predominate, while there is less activity in emotional, perceptual, and fantasy work. Men appear to prepare for fatherhood in many of the same ways that women do. They read, plan, fantasize, think

about the baby, attend classes, talk to other men (Lederman, 1984). What is probably different for men is the time table at which events occur (i.e. realizing that the pregnancy is real). May (1980, 1982b) discussed a characteristic three phase pattern of subjective emotional involvement in pregnancy which differed from what women experienced in timing.

Integrating the pregnancy experiences into the self concept appears predicated on a number of factors: The man's readiness for fatherhood, his relationship with his wife, the length of the marriage, his financial status, and his level of maturity. The process of integration is subtle and involves incorporating new behaviors and relationships so that they become compatible parts of the self concept. One of the indicators of integration of experiences into the self concept appears to be the degree of ease the man expresses and demonstrates in his status of pregnant father. The men who appeared most at ease were those who were most excited and proud in anticipating fatherhood. They were very involved in readiness work, in preparing for the baby (refinishing furniture, painting, etc.).

The men who participated actively in readiness work shared the pregnancy experiences with their wives (i.e. seeking out information, wanting to hear the baby's heartbeat, to feel the baby kick, enthusiastically participating in childbirth education classes, etc.).

They appeared to incorporate these experiences into their developing self concept as fathers. These nine men all had wives who encouraged such participation. Of the nine, one was in the Observer group, four in the Instrumental group, with the remaining four in the Expressive group. May (1979) had reported that women serve as "gate keepers" on how much information the men get about the pregnancy.

Regardless of their degree of involvement during the pregnancy, the pregnancy experience had a major impact on these fathers. The beginning of integration of the concept of fatherhood starts during pregnancy. This was made evident in the study by the three fathers-to-be in who were stepfathers. They stated that going through the pregnancy was very important in developing a sense of being a father.

There was a wide variety of subjective responses to the pregnancy. For some of the men, it was a delight and a time of great excitement. This was very much related to how well their wives tolerated the pregnancy, especially in relation to emotional lability.

The men who appeared most at ease with their anticipated fatherhood had also examined their relationships with their own parents, especially with their fathers. Eight men reported feeling closer to their fathers as adults as compared to only two feeling closer to their fathers as children. The four men who spoke most highly of their relationships with their fathers appeared to have a more clear picture of themselves as fathers-to be.

Of these four men, three were in the Expressive group, one in the Instrumental group. It may be that a positive relationship with his own father enables the man to have a more emotional involvement in the pregnancy. Nine of the men stated that they wanted to be more involved with and closer to their children than their fathers had been to them. Of these, there were three in each group (Observer, Instrumental, Expressive). Gansei (1974) indicated that that the examples of their own fathers were an important source of support as men grapple with the question: "What is a father supposed to be?" In this present study, there seems to be an indication that the father-son relationship is important in the son's development of his self concept as father, and is part of the affiliative work done during pregnancy.

Four of the fathers described their pregnancy experiences as miserable. One of the men mentioned talking to another man about it, but it was done in a joking way. Of these four men, two were in the Observer group and two in the Expressive group. They spoke of their unhappiness with the changes in their wives during the pregnancy. Two of the wives had many physical complaints during pregnancy; two did not. What the men found problematic was the emotional lability, excessive irritability, and the inability of the women to acknowledge that they were in any way different than they had been before the pregnancy. The word "miserable" was

used by all four men in describing what the pregnancy experience was like for them. They said that they were excited about the pregnancy but were unable to enjoy it because of the difficult relationships with their wives. Being so unhappy during the pregnancy appeared to be a deterrent to the integration process because the focus was diverted from the affiliative and other work that needed to be done.

It has been documented that man in American society offer extraordinary resistance to seeking help of any kind when in physical or emotional distress (Rappaport, 1983). While women sometimes seek help when things are going badly, it is exactly as such times that men in this society are most likely to isolate themselves and are the most reluctant to ask for help (Rappaport, 1983). Research has indicated that men benefit from counseling during pregnancy and are able to provide more support to their wives than men who had no counseling (Shereshefsky & Yarrow, 1973). Of the four men mentioned above, only one of the men had discussed his dilemma with an experienced father at work.

For the men in this study, as in other studies (Lein, 1979; Cronenwett & Kunst-Wilson, 1981), their major sources of emotional support were their wives. Only eight men reported talking to others about their pregnancy experiences. When women withdrew within themselves during pregnancy (Rubin, 1984), men experienced a loss in the amount of emotional support available to them during



pregnancy (Cronenwett & Kunst-Wilson, 1981).

The men in the study who had sources of social support other than their wives appeared better able to handle the changes in their wives during pregnancy because they had other people with whom to discuss their dilemmas. Of these eight men, one was in the Observer group, three in the Instrumental group, and four in the Expressive group. Of these men, only one was under 25 years of age. The others were in their late twenties and early thirties. It appears that the older men were more comfortable about having social support from people other than their wives. Getting feedback from friends like "I think you'll be a good father" appeared to enhance integration into the self concept as father.

Protective work was also predominant in the late pregnancy phase and manifested itself as protection of the wife/fetus and self protection. The men who were most protective of their wives and fetus were from the Instrumental group. The fathers who were most protective of themselves were from the Expressive group. Wanting to protect the fetus during pregnancy appears to enhance the development of self concept as father.

All of the fathers in study did some fantasizing during this phase. There was some fantasy work in relation to what the baby would be like. Mostly the fantasies were in relation to older children. No fathers reported fantasizing about infants. Most of the fantasy

work was about what they would be like as fathers. The men in their late twenties and early thirties did this more than the men twenty-five and younger. This type of role "trying on" appears to be important in integrating the pregnancy experiences into the self concept as father. Men used their own fathers, brothers, and friends as comparisons for their own images of what being a father would be like. This fantasy work is important in the integration process.

Anticipation of some changes in lifestyle after the baby is born also appears to be an indicator of integration. The three men who expected the fewest changes in their lives appeared to have a less developed concept of themselves as fathers. All three were in the Observer group. The men who anticipated the most realistic changes in their lives were in the older age group.

Emotional work was not very active during the phase and took the form of anxiety and worrying. All the men in the study but one reported increased anxiety during pregnancy. Worrying was mostly about whether the baby was going to be normal and was mentioned by all the men.

Perceptual work was also not active during the pregnancy phase. It manifested itself mostly in becoming more aware of pregnant women. Only two men reported becoming more aware of other children. One was in the Instrumental group and one in the Expressive group. The father in the Instrumental group actively sought out experiences in caring for children during this phase,

while the Expressive father had had previous childcare experience babysitting for nephews.

The major factors that influence integrating the pregnancy experiences into the self concept as father appear to be the men's readiness for fatherhood and his relationship with his wife. An indicator of integration during the pregnancy appears to be the degree of ease the man has in his status of pregnant father. This ease was demonstrated in men who were most excited about the anticipated fatherhood, who were very involved in getting ready for the baby, and who spent time fantasizing about the baby and about themselves as fathers. Other indicators appear to be the quality of the relationship the man had with his own father, the sharing of the pregnancy experience with his wife, and having a social support system other than with his wife. The men in this study who were closest to this profile were in their late twenties or early thirties who were married for several years before the pregnancy, relatively well established in their careers, and had few financial worries.

This raises major questions: What resources are available for pregnant fathers to discuss their concerns and problems during pregnancy? What type of support systems do pregnant fathers need to avoid experiencing misery during the pregnancy?

#### Labor and Delivery Phase

The interviews about the labor and delivery

experience were held from two to seven days after birth. In the interviews held six or seven days after the birth, the fathers had forgotten some of the details of the birth. This has also been found in women (Rubin, 1984).

#### Group Profile: Labor and Delivery Phase

Each of the fathers in the study was present for the birth of his baby. There were twelve girls and eleven boys born. There were no planned Cesarean births, but five of the twenty-three births were by Cesarean. One of the Cesareans was for a persistent breech presentation; the others were for failure to progress in labor and/or fetal distress.

Of the eighteen vaginal births, fourteen were spontaneous and four by forceps. The length of the labors were from two and a half hours to twenty-four hours. Three of the mothers had no medication for pain during labor. All the others had narcotics administered, either Demerol or Nisentil. Thirteen of the babies were delivered with local anesthesia, six with epidural, and four with spinal.

The men described their wives' labors as "short and easy" to "long and horrible." They all felt that they were well prepared for the labor and delivery experience. Two mentioned that they had not previously heard about incidents that happened (i.e. the wife getting the "shakes" in labor). The men were, for the most part, pleased with their participation and performance in labor. They felt they had done a good job as coaches.

Almost all of the men were surprised at the intensity of the sensations of labor. They had not anticipated there would be so much pain. Although they expressed feeling helpless at times, that did not detract from feeling that their presence was helpful to their wives. Gayton's study (1975) found that men experienced anxiety as a result of their wives' pain in labor. He reported that men who had no preparation for childbirth had to leave the room because of anxiety, while the prepared men tended not to panic nor to perceive themselves as totally helpless in the face of their wives' pain (Gayton, 1975).

Husbands who attended labor and birth reported more positive feelings about the total birth experience than men who did not attend (Henneborn & Cogan, 1975). This had also been found in an earlier study (Zussman, 1969). In a study by Brown (1977), only eleven percent of the subjects viewed labor as a positive experience, sixty percent responded neutrally, and twenty-nine percent viewed labor as a negative or painful experience. Of the eighty-four percent of the men who were in the delivery room, only forty-one were actively involved (Brown, 1977).

Nine of the couples in the present study had a second support person with them in labor, either a relative or a friend. The men found that having someone they knew with them made the experience more pleasant and relaxed.

The men whose wives appeared to cope with the stresses of labor with a degree of ease expressed how

proud they were of their wives and how much increased respect they had for them. Most of the men were surprised by the emotional impact the labors and the birth of their babies had on them.

### Labor and Delivery Work

The two types of work that predominate during the labor and delivery phase are emotional work and affiliative work. There is less activity in protective work and perceptual work. Readiness and fantasy work have the lowest amount of activity in this phase.

#### Emotional Work in the Labor and Delivery Phase

Emotional work shows a high level of activity in the labor and delivery phase. Emotional work during this phase is manifested through support activities, worrying, elation, and staying in control.

Support work. Support given to the wife in labor and support received by the man from others constituted a major part of the father's emotional work in labor and delivery. Working well together was seen as basic to support. Giving support took on a variety of guises: getting the wife to walk in early labor, holding hands, verbal coaching, rubbing the back, and wiping the face with a cool washcloth were several that were mentioned. A number of the fathers expressed that just being there was most important so that their wives wouldn't feel they were alone. These fathers were least actively involved in coaching and giving physical support.

It is basically moral support. You can

only help to a certain point and that point is very limited. To try to think you can do anymore is silly. My being there was reassuring.

In a study with one hundred and three women, it was found that support for Lamaze training by significant others did not appear to decrease pain perception. This support must be translated through practical help (coaching, back rubbing, etc.) to have a reduction in pain perception (Block & Block, 1975). In the present study, the men who were most active in coaching and physical support also felt that they were of most help to their wives.

I talked to her about relaxing and gave her the massage and then we used the pant-blow breathing, so I'd call out different patterns which seemed good for her and kept her mind off what was going on.

As mentioned previously, some of the fathers were surprised by the intensity of the discomfort their wives were feeling. This was especially true of the younger men. They worked out strategies for helping their wives deal with the pain. The strategies included intensive coaching, eye contact, and very firm holding.

She did real good up until the very end, when they were really hurting. Then I would have her hold my hands, my thumbs, and I would just talk to her and have her transfer the pain to me, and she would squeeze so tight that my thumbs would turn blue, but it actually did help her.

When it started to hurt real bad, I'd turn her head to look at me. I'd put my face next to hers and then I'd do one of the forms of breathing and keep the consistency, so even if she lost it

during the contraction, she was able to get back into it. Quite a few times, I held her pretty damn hard. I'd hold her hard behind her head and put on a lot of pressure as it got worse. It seemed to help.

For the father, sources of support during labor included the presence of a friend or relative.

It was good to see that my neighbor was there, and that was a sense of security to me because she is a very good neighbor, and she has had three children. Having her there was really good for me.

The encouragement given by the health care providers was also seen as supportive by the fathers. The nurses were mentioned most often by the men. Those nurses who extended themselves in a friendly, caring way were seen as being most supportive. Those who did not made the experience less positive for the men.

The nurse we had was very, very excellent. She explained why this was happening and why that was happening. The nurse would be there and talk her through the contractions ... She turned down her breaks. She chose not to take breaks to stay with us. It was really terrific of her.

The nurse was extremely business like. She was in there, did her job, and that was about it. Trying to ask her questions to find things out was kind of tense, too. There just wasn't that interaction. For instance, when we went in there the night before, the nurse there explained everything to us about the ice chips, about going to the bathroom, exactly what the monitor was. When we went in there during the day. It was kind of a matter of well, just do as we tell you and everything will be fine. It wasn't a matter of well this is why we're doing this and this.

Worrying. Part of the worrying in this phase dealt



with concern about being squeamish at the time of birth. Some of the men were worried that the sight of blood at delivery and vernix on the baby might be upsetting to the father.

I thought at first in class that I would be all grossed out by all the blood and the white stuff, I forgot the name of it. I thought, "Oh God, I don't want to see a bloody kid with white stuff." But nothing bothered me. But those movies bothered me. I don't like watching birth movies. This was different. I imagine that it has to do with that you're so involved with it and it is your baby and your wife, not a girl I don't know in a movie.

Several of the fathers had commented that they were a little worried about not remembering the Lamaze techniques when their wives were actually in labor and in failing as coaches. None of the fathers felt they had failed as labor coaches, even those who participated minimally.

I'm sure every father has that fear they're going to fail as coach, and fail in supporting their wife and getting through ... whether they're going to succumb to the grossness. There are so many things in the back of your mind ... You're saying that this is going to happen and you're not going to be able to handle it.

Some worrying persisted about whether or not the baby would be alright at birth. This was manifested by the report by all the fathers that the first thing they did when the babies were born was to check for fingers, toes, etc.

Some of the fathers found going to the delivery room for the birth uncomfortable. They said that the delivery

room was just like an operating room and they worried that they would be in the way. They also discussed how the nurse took over the coaching in the delivery room. This was not upsetting to the fathers.

I gave up control once we got in the delivery room. It was sort of an operating room. They really had to take over. I felt relieved. I really did.

I gave up control in the delivery room. I'm in this whole different environment and wearing these scrubs and these weird things, and all I know is I'm supposed to stay here and comfort my wife and just let them do whatever they're supposed to do.

For the three fathers who were with their wives in an in-hospital Alternative Birth Center, the experience was quite different. They did not feel out of place during the delivery nor were they suddenly in a strange environment.

Just because the environment was a lot calmer, it made it almost impossible to enter into a stage of panic, and also because of the bonding that you're able to get. We had the baby with us for fourteen hours.

And then I could see the rest of him, he's a boy. At that point, there were several people in the room. My mom was there all the time. My dad, my sister, my brother-in-law came right as the baby was coming out. And then my three-year old sister, six year old brother, nineteen year old brother and his girlfriend all came in after the baby was born.

Women have stated that their main reason for choosing an Alternative Birth experience was to avoid having to move to the delivery room and to have whom

they wanted with them in labor (Pridham & Shultz, 1983). In this study, there are indications that staying in the same room for the delivery is beneficial for fathers as well.

Elation. The height of the emotional work during labor came at the time of birth and is called elation. In all instances, whether the baby was born vaginally or by Cesarean, the fathers stated that the emotional impact at the time of birth was more intense than anything they had ever experienced. This corresponds with Robinson and Barret's graph (1986) showing the peak of elation occurring at the time of birth.

A unique, unexplainable feeling. All those emotions mixed together. It is a kind of incredible, emotional cocktail is what it is.

I never felt anything like that before. It was joy, a surprise, happiness, relief, satisfaction -- a myriad of emotions. I was just so up. It was just incredible.

I never cried tears of happiness before. I've been real happy before, but didn't feel so happy that tears would come to my eyes. This was really the first time for me personally, and it was something so great in my life that it brought tears of happiness to my eyes.

Staying in control. A major consideration for the men was staying in control during the labor and delivery experience. They spoke of helping their wives stay in control during labor contractions and also of keeping themselves under control.

I tried to maintain a calm. I didn't jump up and down or anything like that ... I think that inside my heart was pounding about double what it normally did. But I tried to maintain a cool. If I showed concern or over-abundant joy, my wife might react so I tried to keep pretty much even for her. Subconsciously I said, "Well, I'll just maintain an even keel, just kind of be matter-of-fact about everything."

I felt like I was always in command of myself. I felt that I was in control, that I was logical, that I understood the situation, and I understood what was coming next, and it was just a question of experiencing it.

Two fathers reported losing control and bursting into tears -- one when there was fetal distress and an emergency Cesarean had to be done, the other at the time of birth. When these two men were describing their experiences and their reactions, they were somewhat embarrassed that they had lost control.

I was physically OK, but emotionally I was shot.... I said "Oh shit" but after that I cried. Emotionally, I did not have total control.

And honestly as soon as the baby was out I cried. I cried on my wife's shoulder, and she comforted me and said it was over now. Then I cried on my mother's shoulder when I showed her the baby.

The other men in the study indicated that they did not express their feelings at birth as much as they felt them. This has been described as "men's false need to be in control which prohibits self-disclosure and

intimate sharing of issues and feelings" (Stein, 1986, p. 262). It is also indicative of the still prevalent mystique of the inexpressive male in American society (Balswick & Peek, 1975).

#### Affiliative Work in the Labor and Delivery Phase

Affiliative work is also predominant during the labor and delivery phase. The affiliative work during this phase is manifested by the relationship to the wife, the baby, parents and others.

Relationship to wife. For the couples who worked well together in labor, with the women responding positively to the man's coaching and comfort efforts, the men felt that the experience brought them closer together. They described pride in their wives' ability to "go through it" with dignity even though the women were experiencing considerable pain. The men also said they came to trust their wives in labor and to pay attention to what the women said to them. The women expressed to me that they could "never have done it" without their husbands' presence.

And I was coming to trust her statements as to what was happening. Because every time she said something it was true. I had been kind of reluctant because the nurses were in and out, and I didn't want to be calling them every time something came up, but it turned out she had a pretty good feel of what was going on. She was examined at nine-thirty, and she was nine centimeters. As nine forty-five she said, "Hey, the baby is right here." I called the nurse. She walked in and said, "Well, you can't be ten centimeters because you were examined just ten or fifteen minutes ago, but I'll

go ahead and check you anyway." And sure enough she was. The baby was already down 2 plus.

She and I just kind of looked into each other's eyes and I helped coach her breathing. That was a feeling I guess I don't have a description for. I guess the Chinese say that they tell time through the eyes of a cat. Well there was some message going between our eyes. I guess it defies description. It was really a spectacular feeling.

I think another feeling I had was really a sense of pride. A sense of pride in my wife that she was such a strong, healthy woman. We were going to have this kid in the best possible way.

Not all of the women were as positive in response to the coaching. One couple got into an argument about it. For two other men whose wives were not cooperating with their instructions to breathe, their way of handling the situation was to withdraw. Of interest is that these two men described their pregnancy experience as miserable.

I was trying to tell her she was breathing too fast, and she would argue with me, telling me to mind my own business. I would tell her it is my business. And she would never listen to me in class either.

She didn't want to breathe. "I don't want to breathe - okay?" At that time I wasn't going to play tough guy and make her because it would have made her that much more miserable, really.

As far as Lamaze, I tried to tell her to breathe once, and she barked at me really bad and, so after that I just said, "Hey, I'll leave her alone."

### Relationship to Baby

The first reaction the men had to their babies at birth was one of relief that everything was alright and

disbelief that it was a real baby.

I thought, "Oh my God, it's real. I mean it is a real baby. It looks normal, five fingers, five toes, two eyes, two ears. So that was the start of the general excitement."

I just kept looking at him, staring at him, thinking to myself, "This is my child." It was like he was here, like here he is. I was looking forward to him growing up already. But he was so little and helpless. Kind of looked at me. I was real excited about that.

A number of fathers mentioned that it was important to be there at birth so that they could start developing a relationship right from the beginning. Holding the baby shortly after birth and looking at the baby was seen as starting communication with the baby.

He was trying to open his eyes, and I could see it, so I sheltered him from the light behind my head. He was really trying to see who it was that he was getting. It was a little bit of communication. It was the vibrations.... The impression I got was that this was a conscious decision by a tiny, tiny human being that "Hey, I want to see who is holding me. You know, I've waited just like you guys have waited. So I just want to see and I'll be fine." It was really a touching moment for me.

You know the bonding thing and all that that they talk about is important. You want to be the first person there, or at least one of the first two people. I think that is important. I would hate it if like three days after you get to see the baby after all the nurses have seen it and all the doctors have seen it and your wife has seen it and you have only seen it behind some glass.

I think I feel a stronger relationship just naturally with my daughter in that I was there, right after she was born. I

was immediately brought real close to this person.

Relationship to parents and others. One of the joys described by the fathers was in sharing the news of the birth with the grandparents. A number of the men said they felt closer to their own parents as a result of having had a baby themselves.

I looked in the window and could see the grandparents all down at the end like one hundred feet away. So I'm waving to attract their attention, and they see me then and I'm giving them the "thumbs up" sign. Then I went into the nursery and showed the baby to the grandparents. Everybody was taking pictures through the window. I was taking pictures of them looking at the baby.

Oh, it was really exciting to have a girl. We'd had nothing but boys for five generations. But I was more excited for my parents at that time. I know that they were very excited about it. I think that was the neatest thing. Just showing my mom and dad.

I feel closer to my parents. Particularly my father I guess because he has gone through what I have gone through. I mean it is really neat with my mother but with my father particularly.

Three of the fathers felt that having the grandparents around during labor was more problematic than helpful. They were afraid the grandparents would interfere with what the couple was trying to accomplish.

If we'd let somebody else in the labor room with us like either my mother or her mother, they wouldn't understand what we were trying to accomplish. The nurse came in and said: "Two grandmas are out there wanting to know what is going on". "Okay, I'll go out and tell them". It was more



distracting than anything.

Some of the fathers expressed that the birth of their babies created a bond with others which had not been present before. They felt that they now belonged to a large group of parents through having this experience.

But now I can share with other people. I'm a parent. So then, I have another thing in common with a whole mass of people and my parents that gets me attached to people in a whole different way. It is really exciting.

The thing I enjoy most is taking her and showing her to people. I can see how other people were excited -- you know, first-time fathers. They always talk about the baby. I find myself doing the same thing, and I swore to God up and down that I was never going to do that. It just bores the hell out of people.

#### Perceptual Work in Labor and Delivery Phase

Perceptual work also predominates during the labor and delivery phase. It manifests itself primarily in dissociation.

As fathers described their labor and delivery experiences, they used phrases such as: "dream-like state," "being in another world," "being in some other space," "like watching it on TV." Some of the fathers found they didn't remember carrying the baby over to their wives after delivery, nor taking the baby to the nursery. These phenomena are very much like what women have described during the second stage (pushing stage) of labor (Kopp, 1971; Rubin, 1984), but have not to date been documented in studies related to fathers' experiences during the birth of their babies.

It is a very dream-like quality because one side, the logical mind, is saying, "I should be thinking about this or that, and the other side is saying, "Wow, this is amazing -- what an experience!"

You're there, but you're not there. It is a kind of dream-like state. The placenta came out. All I could think of was jellyfish, a grey jellyfish. They put it in a bowl which reminded me of my dog's water bowl. Your thoughts go kind of haywire -- why am I thinking of my dog?

The time slowed down. It seemed like it all happened just like that. And yet I can see everything going in slow motion.

The type of disassociation behavior described by the fathers at the time of birth is called "estrangement" in psychiatric literature (Freedman, Kaplan, & Dadock, 1972). Estrangement is a sense of detachment, disarrangement, or loss of usual connections with places, persons, situations, or concepts. In mild estrangement, a person suddenly feels that a process he is involved in is somehow unreal, strange, or not really happening. This feeling may be accompanied by the sensation as though one were standing outside oneself and watching what is going on, or by a feeling that events are taking place in some automatic fashion, or that the entire experience is a dream. Such estrangements are commonly brief and related to considerable stress (Freedmen, et.al., 1972).

As mentioned, these phenomena have been described by women in the delivery stage of labor, with causality ascribed to the physical and physiological stresses occurring at that time. Since fathers are not

experiencing the physical stress of childbirth, their stress is probably emotional and psychological in nature. The frequency with which disassociation experiences occurred in the men in this study is probably indicative of the stress they were undergoing. Fourteen men in the study mentioned this phenomenon.

#### Protective Work in the Labor and Delivery Phase

While there was some protective work during labor, the activity was low. It was manifested mostly in not wanting to be excluded from what was happening during labor.

Well, no one could have kept me out of there. If they had told me to leave they would have had a fight on their hands and I'm bigger than most people, so I think I would have won. Like I said, I would have been there anyway, because I feel very strongly about it. I've got a part in it, too.

When the anesthesiologist came in to give the epidural, the nurse looked at him and said, "Do you want him to leave?" And I think I looked at her and him and probably gave them body language that said, "There is no way in hell that you're going to get me out of the room." And he said, "No, he can stay." They were not going to get me out of that room!

An overall nurturant quality and a desire to protect their wives in labor has been noted in men in other studies (McLaughlin, 1980; Wagner, 1976). This was also evident in the present study. Some of the men reported feeling protective of the baby right after birth.

Of course I was holding him, like with kid gloves, like I was afraid I would do

something wrong...But it felt very comfortable.

You've got a new son who's going to have a thousand different influences that are going to make up his life, and this is the very first one that determines the make-up of what this person is.

### Readiness Work in the Labor and Delivery Phase

The major part of the readiness work for the labor and delivery phase was done during the preparation for childbirth classes during pregnancy. The men stated that they were well prepared for the labor and delivery experience.

I feel that we were really well prepared. You know, I wasn't really surprised by anything and when the baby was born I wasn't surprised by the way it looked. You know, I'd seen films, and they'd prepared me. I wasn't shocked by anything.

Although the men had stated some apprehension that they wouldn't remember what to do during labor, this was not the case in most instances, but it did occur. One of the fathers for whom this was problematic had reported a very high anxiety level during the pregnancy.

I forgot things, though. I would get excited, and I would forget what I'd learned. I wanted a booklet nearby that I could read and get back on track. I got mad at myself that I was forgetting things. I was so excited I was forgetting what was going to happen.

During labor, I felt a little.... Every once in a while I'd feel a little lost about what to do, but that was when the nurse would come up and say something and then I could take over from there.

The men were surprised at how much work labor

coaching was and how exhausted they were after the birth of their babies. They didn't think they would be so involved or that it would require so much physical effort.

I think it's just as much work for me as it is for her. A lot more of it is more mental for me I think...A lot of work, a lot of work. I was exhausted after she delivered. She had a second burst of energy, and I was about ready to fall asleep on the table.

One of the fathers was angry with visitors who came after the baby was born, because nobody asked about how he was, nor acknowledged the major part he had played during the labor.

I felt a little funny that nobody ever asks how the father feels. Especially nowadays, the father goes through it so much. I was tired and my back hurt like heck ... I was tired, too. I was up for forty hours. It was tough. But it kind of bothers me sometimes that nobody cares ... It's not that they didn't care. They just didn't think to ask, "How are you?" I'd say something and they'd go, "Oh, that is nice," and then go back to my wife.

#### Fantasy Work in the Labor and Delivery Phase

Fantasy work appears to be almost non-operational during the labor and delivery phase. Only one father mentioned looking forward to the baby growing up, while he was holding him in the delivery room. Another father described a myriad of thoughts that went through his head at the time of birth.

Everything that happened during that birth just really took me back to that "Who are you?" quality. "Who are you? What does it mean to be you? What does it mean to be who you are?" ... Realizing that made me think about the

things that made me the way I am. It really stripped me of all the intellectual armor that you build up and really brought me back to that sense of "Who are you? What are you going to be after this?"

Findings similar to those reported in the labor and delivery section above had been found in previously done studies on the father (Gansei, 1977; Heinowitz, 1977). The sample size was small in both studies (four in each) so that the variety of experiences for the fathers was not evident, nor was the impact of the labor and delivery experience on the men.

#### The Labor and Delivery Phase: Summary

For the men in this study, the impact of the birth of their first child was considerable. Although they experienced some frustration, anxiety, and exhaustion as a result of being with their wives in labor, they all felt that they would not have considered being absent.

Emotional work and affiliative work predominated during this phase. Perceptual work was also of importance. The integration process for this experience was begun during the labor and delivery phase, but for a number of the men was still not accomplished by the six week postnatal interview as evidenced by their reports. The men who appeared to integrate the experience most were those who very actively participated in coaching and comfort measures for their wives during labor, and whose wives responded favorably to the efforts the men were making. Six of these men were in the Instrumental group

and five in the Expressive group.

Most of the men were surprised by the intensity of the discomfort of their wives' labor, and five of them felt helpless about it. Of these five, three were in the Instrumental group and two in the Expressive group. These feelings of helplessness did not interfere with their continuing to coach and offer comfort to their wives.

The men described many nurturant behaviors in the process of helping their wives in labor. Feeling successful in their efforts to comfort their wives was important in helping the men integrate the labor and delivery experience into their self concepts as father. Although the men were worried about being upset by the "gross" aspects of the delivery, the possibility of failing as labor coaches, and forgetting the Lamaze techniques, for most part these things didn't occur. Three fathers were particularly concerned about those aspects. Two were in the Observer group, one in the Instrumental.

Emotional work was predominant during the labor and delivery phase. This was manifested by support given and received, worrying, staying in control, and elation. Giving support to their wives in labor by being present, actively coaching about breathing and relaxation, physical comfort measures, and verbal encouragement was important to the men and appeared to be an indicator of integrating the experience into the self concept as father during this phase. The men saw themselves as making a major

contribution "in the best way possible." Of those men, seven were in the Instrumental group (64%) and seven in the Expressive group (100%). None of the five fathers in the Observer group felt they had made a major contribution to the labor. Apparently feeling that he had contributed to the labor is another indicator of integrating the experience into the self concept as father.

Having a support system of a relative or friend present in addition to friendly, caring nurses was important to the fathers. The nine men who had an additional support person described themselves as being relatively relaxed during the experience. Information provided by the nurses was seen as important in understanding the experience. These support factors appear to enhance the integration of the experience.

By and large, the men followed similar emotional patterns in labor and delivery previously described for women, including disassociation phenomena in the pushing stage, the elation of the time of the birth of the baby, and exhaustion afterwards. Some men experienced disorientation when they moved to the delivery room, which has been previously reported for women. Staying in control was important for the men, and they reported holding back on what they were feeling, especially at the time of birth. The men in the Expressive group reported the greatest emotional impact and elation at the time of birth, although all the men in the study described feeling



elated. Feeling disoriented on moving to the delivery room was described by five fathers, two in the Expressive group (29%) and three in the Instrumental group (27%).

Affiliative work was also predominant in the labor and delivery phase. This was manifested in the relationships with the wife, with the baby, with parents and others. The importance of the quality of the relationship with the wife was evident in the reports by the husbands. Those couples who the men had described during pregnancy as having an interdependent relationship with their wives, with neither partner dominant or submissive, appeared to work most cooperatively in labor. The ways in which the women responded to the stresses of labor and how they responded to the coaching and help offered by their husbands were factors in how the men integrated the experience into their self concept as fathers. The quality of the relationships with the parents, friends, and professional staff also appeared to influence the integration process. The opportunity to be present at the birth and to hold the baby shortly afterwards were also instrumental in the process.

Perceptual work was also predominant during the labor and delivery phase. It took the form of dissociative behavior which had been previously described for women in the second (pushing) stage of labor. Nine men vividly described these phenomena, while five others alluded to them. Of the nine, one was in the Observer group (20%), four in the Instrumental group (36%), and four in the

Expressive group (57%). The disassociative phenomena were probably indicative of the level of stress being experienced by the father rather than membership in any particular group. What the implications are for the integration of this experience into the self concept as father are not clear.

Protective work during the labor and delivery phase exhibited low activity. It was manifested primarily in not wanting to be excluded from what was happening in labor and in feeling protective of the baby after birth. Both readiness work and fantasy were minimally operational during the labor and delivery phase. Readiness work for this experience had to be done primarily during the late pregnancy phase through child birth education. During labor and delivery, it was manifested by requesting and receiving information from the professional staff and by utilizing the techniques learned in child birth preparation classes. Fantasy work was described by only two of the fathers and involved both images of the baby growing up and of what the meaning of the birth experience had for the father.

It is important to take a brief look at the phenomenon of father participation during labor and birth from a historical perspective. All of the men in this study stated they wanted to be with their wives in labor and delivery, albeit some with more enthusiasm than others. Engle in 1963 did a study with fathers in which

466 men answered a questionnaire evaluating active participation in the child birth process. All of the fathers had attended preparation for childbirth classes. Ninety-nine percent reported they liked being with their wives in labor. Being present in the delivery room was not an option for these fathers, but they were asked if they felt husbands should be allowed in the delivery room in the future. Of those who responded, forty-six percent felt they should; fifty-nine percent were against the idea (Engle, 1963).

Ten years later, the newspapers were full of articles about fathers in the delivery room (Weiss, 1973). By 1982, fathers in the delivery room was no longer news. What was appearing in newspapers were references to employee suits for paternity leave (Job secure paternity leave, 1982). What had taken place was a revolution sparked by the self-help consumer health movement, the introduction of Lamaze childbirth preparation in the United States, and the women's movement (Hines, 1982).

One cannot help but wonder about how men felt when they were excluded from the labor and delivery experience. Sey Chessler, who had been married for forty-one years at the time an article appeared in 1984, wrote the following:

I was angry when our first son was born. These days when women had babies and men simply were proud, frightened, and prepared to pay the bills. The birth of my first child was traumatic, as it was with each of the others. Beyond admiring the growing child in my wife's body, I played virtually no part in any of their births. As each child was about to be

born, I got to drive my wife to the hospital. I was kept in the waiting room for expectant fathers. I could read and smoke and bite my nails. No one came to tell me anything.... I stood in the corner of the waiting room -- all three times -- fearful, out of touch with whatever dark things were happening in an operating room somewhere above me. Sick with wanting to be near my wife.... When my first son was born, they didn't let me see him for a while. A nurse simply came and told me to be proud. "It's a boy!" she said. I had to ask if my wife was all right. After a half hour or so, they took me up to a nursery window and pointed to a bundle in a tiny basket. They took me to see my wife and let me kiss her. They sent me away. They did the same with my second son ... with my daughter. I was proud, but they would not let me use my love, touch my world. I was angry. I felt left out, put off, unable to feel that I, too, had had a child.... I think sometimes that the anger of those days has carried into all our lives (Chessler, 1984).

Such experiences would have been unimaginable to the fathers in this present study. Several of them expressed regret that their fathers had not had the opportunity to be present when they were born.

The factors contributing to the integration of the labor and delivery experience into the self concept as father appear to be both the willingness of the man to participate actively in the labor and delivery experience and of his wife to accept his coaching and physical support. Another factor is the amount of support available to the man during the experience. Indicators of integration identified from the data include a sense of accomplishment on the part of the father, feeling that he made a major contribution to the experience, feeling

closer to his wife as a result of the experience, and seeing being present at the birth as the beginning of his relationship with the baby.

Although it appears that today men's presence in labor and delivery is both accepted and expected, a number of questions arise. Who is going to provide support needed by the father during the labor and delivery phase? Are health care personnel aware of the impact that labor and the birth of the baby have on men? Are men encouraged to express their feelings about these experiences? Are men being given sufficient recognition for the important roles they play during labor and delivery? What effect does moving to the delivery room have on the father?

#### Postnatal Phase

##### Group Profile: Postnatal Phase

For the men in this study, the first three weeks of the postnatal period were ones of fatigue, confusion and joy. Anxiety, however, had declined considerably and only one of the fathers appeared as anxious during the three week postnatal interview as he had during the pregnancy interview. Most of the men stated that the early weeks were easier than they had anticipated and that they were getting more sleep than they had expected. Ten of the twenty-three men reported appreciable sleep loss from being disturbed by the baby. By six weeks, the men felt that life was settling down, but not settled. Taking turns at night infant care had been negotiated and life

seemed less confusing than at three weeks.

Seventeen of the couples had help, mostly from grandparents, during the first week home after the birth. The majority of the men were appreciative of this and found it helpful. Four of the men took no time off from work after the baby came home. The time taken by the others varied from two days to three weeks. Almost all of the fathers wished they had had more time at home with their families.

Of the twenty-three fathers, thirteen reported that they did not hear the baby at night. Five consistently heard the baby; five reported that they sometimes heard the baby at night. Four of the fathers got up at night with the baby consistently; fifteen did not get up at night with the baby; and four got up at night on the weekends only.

The amount of time spent with the baby was reported as being from five minutes to six hours on a typical working day. One to two hours spent with the baby was the amount of time reported by eight of the fathers.

Fourteen of the fathers reported that the baby seemed real to them by six weeks. By "real" they meant that the baby was felt to be part of their lives and not a dream. Seven reported that the baby was somewhat real and two reported that the baby did not seem real at six weeks. These two men said they frequently forgot they had a baby. Twelve fathers stated that they "felt like a father" at six weeks. Nine fathers reported they did not feel like

fathers, while two replied "not really." In their relationships with their babies the men described them as being "non-existent," "becoming," and "definitely there." The men who described their babies as "blobs" felt they did not have a relationship with their babies at six weeks. The men who spent the most time with their babies appeared to be most sensitive to the responsive cues being sent by the baby and also felt they had a relationship with their babies as early as three weeks.

Sixteen of the men reported feeling closer to their wives at six weeks, four reported feeling more distant from their wives, and three were not sure. Three of the four men who had reported the pregnancy as a miserable experience reported that they felt closer to their wives at six weeks. The quality of the marital relationship appeared to be a major factor in how comfortable the men felt during the first six weeks.

When the men were asked if they had been feeling left out, five men said they had felt left out. However, in the course of the postnatal interviews at three and six weeks, almost all the men in the sample made statements that indicated that they had felt left out to some extent, mostly at six weeks. The men who felt least left out were those who were most involved in the physical care of their babies and who spent the most time with them.

By the six week interview, twelve of the couples had resumed sexual relations, nine had not. Seven of the men

were involved in some type of exercise regime at six weeks. Fifteen reported no exercise program, while one man was involved in a stress reduction program.

With the women, two of the wives had returned to work outside the home part-time at three weeks. By six weeks, four additional women had returned to work. Of the twenty-two women who had started out breastfeeding their babies, two had stopped breastfeeding by three weeks. Two were supplementing breastfeeding with formula at three weeks. At six weeks, six of the breastfed babies were receiving occasional bottles, three with expressed breast milk, one with water only, and two with formula.

#### Postnatal Work

The types of work that predominate in the postnatal phase are affiliative, emotional, and fantasy. There is a fair amount of activity in perceptual work, while readiness and protective work have low activity.

#### Affiliative Work in the Postnatal Phase

Affiliative work, while it was predominant in the pregnancy and labor and delivery phases, assumes paramount importance during the postnatal phase. The relationship with the wife appears to be the key to the father's ability to integrate the experiences of the first six weeks of parenting into his self concept as father.

Perception of a relationship with the baby and others are also integral to the integration process in this phase, as is developing the sense of family.

#### Relationship with Wife



Most of the men felt closer to their wives after the birth of the baby. Four did not, and two were not sure. The experience of being present for the labor and delivery was seen as enhancing this closeness. However, during the first three weeks at home, there was strain in the relationship compounded by lack of sleep, fatigue, and lack of time. Some of the fathers talked of irritability and arguments.

I don't think that the relationship has changed just the ... well, like I said, I think it has because she has to spend so much time with the baby, and she has to sleep in when she can. I've been put at a pretty low priority.... If my wife is awake, it is late at night. The later at night it gets, then we end up getting into some kind of argument. We didn't used to get into arguments. But I know it is because of lack of sleep.

Others found that there were fewer disagreements after the baby was born than during the pregnancy.

There have been fewer disagreements. And I don't know why. I think we're just working to cooperate.

Negotiating. How well the relationship with the wife went during the first six weeks depended in large part with how skillful the couple was at negotiating about tasks to be done whether related to infant care or housework.

I've begun trying to do more around the house because my wife is going back to work so soon. I didn't want her to be completely worn out ... Because she is breastfeeding, I can't do a lot except change his diaper in the middle of the night ... She grabs him out of the

bassinet, and I will generally take him and change him.

It's amazing how much housework there is. I've got a new appreciation for it when I started cooking. Prior to that, I helped straighten up the house every Saturday. We clean the house together. And I do the dishes. I try to keep my clothes picked up and stuff like that. But then you add in cooking, laundry, shopping and that kind of stuff, and boy I have a new appreciation for what it takes.

Negotiation can be defined as "one of the possible means of getting things accomplished when parties need to deal with each other to get those things done" (Strauss, 1978, p. 2). Shaevitz (1984) states that problems that develop in families are better handled through negotiation than confrontation. He feels that high school and college students of both sexes need basic information about relationships and family systems, which involve learning how to negotiate.

One of the areas that had to be negotiated by the couples in this study was how much the father would be involved with the baby. From the fathers' reports and my observations, it was obvious that the women controlled caring for the baby. How much the men participated was governed to a large extent by the women. This had been previously reported by Reiber (1976) and Fein (1975). Some of the men found that they had to become quite assertive to get time with their babies.

I told her that she had to give me a chance with him every now and then too. I told her that she tried to monopolize him, and the only time she wanted me to have him was when she wanted

to do something else. And I said, "Hey, we have to have a little give and take here."

If she wants seventy percent of the responsibility, it really doesn't matter to me. As long as I have a reasonable amount of input, and the time to hold the baby and change the baby. As long as I get a reasonable amount of that while I'm at home. If the baby were crying, she would swoop down and pick him up out of my arms. I wouldn't let her do that, or I would get upset if she did. Because I can soothe him, I can read to him.

Even in the most egalitarian couples in this study, the wives seemed to encompass the babies physically and emotionally, and leave little space for father interaction/participation. Whether the women did this because of social conditioning or biological determinants is not known. One of the fathers described the phenomenon as "smothering" as compared to mothering.

In an interview with Dan Yankelovich in which he was discussing the trends in the decades 1972-1982 in the United States, he stated, "I think you'll get more equal effort on shopping and housework, but the division of roles around childcare will be protected zealously by women. They want their husband's help rather than sharing" (Pogrebin, 1982, p. 144). This appeared to be the case for most couples in this study.

Yankelovich discussed a study he did on the first time father in the 1950's, when there was a clear-cut division of labor. He found that the emotional tone of that experience was overwhelming. The men experienced pride, jealousy, and ambivalence. The emotions instead of

being channeled into active fathering were directed into the responsibilities of the male role to protect and be protective. The role was performed by going to work, leaving the house early in the morning, coming home late at night, and "never even seeing the baby for whom the sacrifice was made" (Pogrebin, 1982, p. 54).

Not all of the fathers in this study were willing to negotiate about sharing the work involved in having a new baby. Some of the fathers refused to get up at night with the baby. Their stated reasons were that they had to get up to go to work in the morning and that since their wives were breastfeeding, they couldn't do anything anyhow.

Right now it is understood that I  
am the one that needs the sleep because  
I am the one who brings in the income.

Negotiating time with wife. Many of the men described having less time with their wives and missed having the chance to talk to each other. One of the men said, "I wonder if I'll ever have time with my wife again." Some couples worked out ways to have time together by staying up later at night after the baby was asleep. Even though there was less time to be alone together, several fathers mentioned that they were talking to their wives more, usually about the baby. Some of the fathers felt they had no relationship with their wives at three weeks.

Has my relationship with my wife changed?  
I don't think so. It's hard to know when  
you don't have a relationship. You know  
when all it consists of is "Hello," and

"How have you been? Here you take him."  
 We'll see as we have more time with one  
 another. We really haven't had enough  
 time to even know.

Engineering the relationship. Some of the men became aware of having to be active in maintaining a relationship with their wives during the early weeks of parenting. One of the fathers called this "engineering the relationship."

I think it is important to try to do little things. You know ... she'll drink wine in the evening, so I'll try to go and buy something special, some different wines for her.

Other fathers described how important it was to maintain physical contact with their wives during the early weeks. They stated that they missed the physical intimacy of the relationship, not the sexual intercourse.

The lack of contact, mental and physical, is going to occur and is only temporary. Make sure you try to do those little things, the little pat on the butt, or other gestures, intimate things. They aren't nearly as satisfying as they were before, but they mean more and the little compliments and things take care of the fact that you don't have many times that you are truly together.

I told her "You have an awful lot of physical closeness during the days with the baby and I really don't have that".... We made a little bit more mechanical commitment right away to start hugging several times a day to get back to where we were ... That touching and that physical closeness really require less than one-hundredth of your actual time. The value of that fraction of time might mentally carry over into sixty percent of your time. There are very few things that have so little time involvement that have so much spiritual overlay.

Resuming sexual intercourse. Eighteen of the women

had been told by their health care providers to abstain from intercourse for six weeks. "This period allows resumption to be correlated with the six-week medical check-up and makes it convenient for the physician to prescribe contraceptives at the same time" (Ayers, 1986, p. 144). Physiologically there is no reason for the six-week proscription against resumption of sexual intercourse. Once vaginal bleeding has ceased and there is no perineal discomfort, intercourse may be resumed, if the couple is psychologically ready (Ayers, 1986).

Twelve of the twenty-three couples had resumed sexual intercourse by the time of the six-week interview. For some this was as early as three weeks after the baby was born. For these four couples, it was the woman who initiated the sexual activity. Some of the fathers revealed that they were afraid to have sex at first.

She was told the sixth week, and I think it was after three or four that she said, "Let's give it a try." In fact, it was much of her doing. I was afraid to. I was afraid it was going to be a very painful experience for her.

Only three of the men had heard about the changes in vaginal lubrication in the postnatal period and during breastfeeding. Two of the men said that their childbirth instructors had discussed it, and one said that his wife had read about it and told him.

Expectations of wife as mother. In the course of discussing parenting, two of the fathers said that they felt their wives should know what to do with the baby (why

crying, etc.) because they were women.

To me she is the expert I don't know why but she is ... I feel she should know more about this than I do ... It is her part to be the expert.

When others fathers were questioned about this, they responded that they didn't feel that women instinctively know more than they did about the baby, but should "because she is spending twenty-four hours a day with him."

Father participation in infant care and housework.

In talking about taking care of their babies (changing diapers, soothing, etc.), a number of men called such activities "mothering" and housework "Mom's work." Although the men were participating in these activities in varying degrees, they primarily described themselves as "helping out." Most of them did not see themselves as doing fathering when they were engaged in infant care or doing housework. "Moms take care of you. Dads play baseball with you."

I just feel that a man has to take an active part I believe, in taking care of the household and the children in today's world, because it's just too much work to do for one person.

When my wife goes to class, I take the baby and clean the house, and wash the dishes, sterilize the bottles, and do all the mom chores, and it's fun. So I try to split it up with her a little and share the work load.

The husband has to get involved. Not so much for the baby, but for the wife.... And husband who does not do that is selfish.

In a study with twenty-six fathers in two parent families, Cordell, Parke, and Sawin (1980) found that the less difference fathers perceived between roles of mother and father, the more willing they were to assume infant care responsibilities and the more positive were their reactions to their infants. Fathers who became involved earlier (i.e. during pregnancy) were more willing to take on infant care responsibilities (Cordell, et al, 1980).

All of the fathers in the present study participated in infant care to some extent. Even in the couple who decided that she would take care of the baby and he would go to work, the father changed an occasional diaper. There appears to be some change in behavior in terms of men's participating in childcare and housework. However, the attitude that these things are women's work appears to be fairly pervasive, among women as well as among men. This was apparent in two of the fathers who quickly stopped all such activities as soon as their mothers-in-law arrived. In anthropological studies on the family where the cultural norm is for men to be involved in child rearing, such activities are integrated into fathering and fatherhood (Rosaldo, 1974).

#### Relationship with Baby

The men described their feelings toward their babies in various ways. For some, having the baby around added a new dimension to their lives, and they saw the baby as a joy. At three weeks, most of the men did not feel they



had much of a relationship with their babies, although three did. They were particularly pleased at their ability to soothe the baby when the baby was crying.

Well right now I don't know what kind of relationship we're going to have. I try to give him as much attention and love as I can.... I think we have a very good relationship. I enjoy changing him and he seems to calm down when I change his diapers. He normally calms down when I pick him up.

When I pick him up and rock him a little bit and he quiets down, it makes me feel real good. It makes me think that he knows I am somebody he can trust. I am somebody he can be comfortable with. That is the main thing.

Some of the fathers felt their relationship with their babies started during pregnancy and being there for the birth was important.

You are there and you hear his heartbeat. And then you're there when the baby's first delivered and you hold him right away, and you hold him every day. Every day since then you get to be closer. Otherwise the baby would be a total stranger.

By six weeks, three of the men described their relationship with their babies as "expectant" and "becoming." Seven were still getting used to the baby being there. Fourteen felt they had a relationship established or beginning.

Definitely a father-son relationship. And I will try to be a teacher and a lover. I love on him. I hug him and kiss him and tell him how much we like him and how cute he is and stuff like that ... I guess I'm a student, too, because I'm learning what he needs, which position he prefers to be held in.

At six weeks, the fathers saw the babies as being more responsive than at three weeks and found that rewarding. They also found the baby more fun.

He is so different. He is bigger, more alert. He doesn't seem as fragile as before and more fun, too. There are more rewards when you do something. He is reacting and so that is rewarding. Positive reinforcement.

It makes me feel like, wow, I want to keep doing this more and more and get more responses out of her ... I think she definitely associates my voice with somebody who is going to be good to her.

I think that she does recognize me. She knows the voice and is starting to know the face.

A few of the fathers found the baby to be an inconvenience and kept them from doing what they wanted to do.

Sometimes feeding him is an inconvenience. Sometimes I want to do something else or something like that, which isn't right. But it is right, because sometimes I need my own time, too.

It's a little frustrating because he doesn't let me get anything done around the house. Well, particularly things like painting. You can't start because you just can't drop everything and pick him up with wet paint all over yourself.

Two of the fathers described their babies at three weeks as blobs and did not feel they had a relationship with their babies. At six weeks, one of the fathers still saw his baby as a blob, but "now she's a crying blob." Other fathers felt that they would not really start developing a relationship with their babies until the baby

specifically responded to them in some way as laughing or  
 "Hi, Dad."

When she does get more responsive to me, I  
 am sure I will find myself thinking more  
 about her.

I still don't feel like a Dad. I don't  
 know when I will. Maybe when she starts  
 talking.

It is because I recognize the child, but  
 he doesn't recognize me yet. Maybe when  
 he recognizes me I'll really...that  
 recognition type of thing.

Apparently these men did not feel that what they were  
 doing with their babies (holding, changing diapers, etc.)  
 has much to do with their developing a relationship with  
 their babies. Other men, however saw the physical care of  
 the baby as an important aspect of developing a  
 relationship with him, a process in which the father has  
 to be active.

You need to get involved with the child  
 and the mother. You need to feed the  
 baby and hold him whenever you can.  
 Change his diapers and spend a lot of  
 time cuddling and cooing back if he coos  
 at you. Spend a lot of time holding him.  
 I think that is important. The two of  
 you growing together as he gets older, so  
 that he will be closer to the father, and  
 so that the father will be closer to the  
 child.... I think it helps the father  
 appreciate the mother. It also helps  
 the father to just have more of a bond  
 with the child.

Picking up the baby cues. As I spent time with the  
 fathers and their babies at the three and six week  
 interviews, I noticed that few of the men seemed aware of  
 the cues the baby was sending. When asked if they noticed  
 these things, many of them said, "I don't see things like

that, but my wife tells me it happens." (i.e., baby turns head when hears father's voice.)

The responsive behaviors of the infant are subtle, such as: 1. Alerting (decrease in random activity, focusing on the object when in line of vision, slow regular respirations, following in smooth arc when object moves; 2. Brightening (Change in facial expression, widening of eyes and brighter look, jagged respirations, a decrease in random activity; 3. Orienting (the response of turning toward the direction of stimulation (Brazelton, 1984). Most of the fathers were neither aware of these responses nor interpreted them as the baby responding to them.

When Rossi (1977) discussed the need to do some extra training with fathers if they were expected to participate in infant care, the area of awareness of cues the baby sends was not specifically mentioned. Shaevitz (1984) states that men are less responsive to nuances and subtle cues than are women. There is some indication that men may be less biologically/ endocrinologically primed to receive subtle cues (Rossi, 1977).

In this present study, fathers who saw little responsiveness in their infants seemed less interested in their babies at six weeks than fathers who recognized the cues and saw them as a response to themselves. The fathers who spent the most time with their babies were most perceptive of the baby's cues and most interested in

eliciting them. Gansei (1978) had also noted this.

In a study (Parke, Hymal, Power, & Tynsley, 1980) a special fifteen minute videotape "Fathers and Infants" was shown to the experimental group of fathers during the immediate postnatal period. This tape contained information on the infant's capacity for social interaction, their capacity for visual and auditory tracking, and other ways of stimulating the infant. A questionnaire was administered to the experimental and control groups. The fathers were also observed with their infants for twenty minute periods, while they were in the hospital, at three weeks, and again at three months. Results showed that parental knowledge of infant perceptual capacities was significantly modified in those fathers who had seen the film. Fathers who saw the film received higher scores on this factor than control fathers, with statistically significant differences at all three time points (Parke, et al., 1980).

Parke et al. (1980) stated that males in the pre-parenthood period (high school) can be made accessible in large numbers for parent education, but do not appear motivated to learn parenting skills. Pregnancy, on the other hand, is a period when motivation is high, but accessibility is low. In the immediate postnatal period, both the father's accessibility and motivation to learn parenting skills may be high. Of interest is that an innovative program on infant care for boys in the fifth and sixth grades evoked enthusiastic response from the

boys who participated (Herzig & Mali, 1982). Perhaps preparation for parenthood needs to be started earlier than high school for males.

In the present study, the fathers who were most involved in infant care activities reported a relationship with their babies at three weeks. Apparently participation in the physical care of the baby is another dimension in establishing the relationship in addition to picking up the baby's subtle cues. The men did not feel that their wives' breast feeding interfered in establishing a relationship with the baby. A few of the fathers wished they could feed their babies.

#### Relationship With Others

In the immediate postnatal period, the people with whom the fathers had most interaction were with their own parents or in-laws who came in to help out for a few days. Seventeen of the couples had help who stayed from two days to more than a month. Almost all of the men said they found it very helpful to have the relatives there through the early transition to parenthood.

We really enjoyed having someone there because it enabled us to kind of blend into the newness instead of just having someone new like the baby dropped into your lap. It's a new game. You've elected to play the game, but you're really committing yourself before you learn all the rules.

It was really nice to have my parents and my wife's parents taking care of us while we were learning to take care of our baby. It felt good to have someone else fixing meals and doing chores. My

parents brought over a few weeks' supply of dinners for the freezer just ready to pop into a microwave.

These comments are interesting in view of the recent re-emergence of the "doula" in American society. The word "doula" comes from a Greek word for a supportive companion, one who mothers the mother (Raphael, 1981). There are indications in the present study that men also need this type of support person during the early postnatal weeks.

Not all of the men were pleased with having help after the baby was born. Three of them said they would have preferred to be alone with their wives and new baby.

First my mother-in-law was here and then my wife's stepsister came for two days, and I'm just thinking, "Get out of here." That whole thing about you've got to have the mother-in-law down to help with the cooking and cleaning -- I don't think that at all. I could have done all that stuff. I wanted to do it. I felt a little bit cheated. That was part of the reason that I took the week off. I was ready to be Mr. Mom, you know.

A number of the fathers described feeling somewhat overwhelmed by the telephone calls and the people who dropped by.

The only down side of the whole thing is that we were inundated by company and phone calls. I mean that's great. I understand that people want to express their excitement, but it was too much. It was too many people ... I wanted to be alone with my wife and my new son. I mean I was on cloud nine. I didn't want to be entertaining anybody.

#### Changes in Relationships with Others

There was some evidence of changing relationships

with others. Some of the men felt that they were able to relate to pregnant women better after having gone through the pregnancy and labor and delivery experience themselves.

I can relate to them. It's like they are part of my family now, because they're going through what I just went through, even though I didn't actually have the baby or get big. I always smile whenever I see a pregnant woman that I don't know.

The fathers reported that men with children talked with them more than they had previously, as well as women with children.

I remember a couple of weeks ago sitting there with one of my friends and we were watching a ballgame. All we could talk about was his experience with his kid and my experience with mine. And I thought about it later and I told my wife that we had spent about a hour just talking about kids ... we were paying attention to the ballgame, but we weren't talking sports, we were talking kids.

I find that I am talking more with mothers and fathers that I meet at work and other areas. If I talk to another father we can compare notes on what is going on right now, and how we feel right now. If I'm talking to another mother, they tend to ask a lot about how the baby is and my wife, and how I am. Am I sleeping nights and that kind of thing ... It makes me feel better about it, cause they tend to ask me more about how I am feeling and how things are with me.

When the fathers were out with their babies, people asked about the baby. They found this experience rewarding. They also found their circle of acquaintances expanding.

People just come up to you in a



restaurant ... There is something about babies that brings out a real sparkle in people's eyes. I enjoy when people come up to talk to me about it. I'm proud of him. I'm enjoying it.

We're meeting a lot of new people. People that were in the Lamaze class, and people that were in the parenting class. Plus, you now, when you see somebody out there who has got another little one, immediately you have rapport, something in common.

At work, experienced fathers served as resources for the new fathers. This was the experience of four fathers in the study. A number of fathers sensed that people at work were treating them differently, since they had become fathers.

There was this guy who's having his second child, and we're both kind of on the same wave length--because I just got through with it and he is just starting it again. And he can remember what it was like the first time so we can talk about things like that.

I think I get a little more respect because now I'm a father. I mean it's like you're different until you get married. When you get married that is one step. But then you have a child, oh wow, you're a family man ... They seem to listen more to what I say.

The men sensed that they were becoming part of the larger community of parents from which they had previously been excluded. They jokingly referred to it as becoming members of the "Fathers' Club."

#### Developing the Concept of Family

Intertwined in the relationships with the wife, baby, and others is the beginning of feeling like a family. This was particularly evident in the six week interviews. At

least half of the men discussed the growing realization that they were now a family. This internalization of feeling like a family is important in integrating the experiences of becoming a first-time father into his self concept.

The thing I look forward to more than anything else is coming home and being with my family.... I have a beautiful family and am thankful for that and I feel good about it.

I'm starting to feel more like a family man. Starting to feel a little bit more that I should think in certain ways, think in more responsible ways, think of the future, that kind of thing.

I think there is more fulfillment. You know, now I feel I am working for a family. You know going home to a family ... more of a sense of responsibility ... Now I found myself thinking more of family than I do about work ... It is a great feeling. Now I have a family.

#### Emotional Work in the Postnatal Phase

Emotional work also predominated during the postnatal phase. The work was manifested by feeling helpless but mostly by feeling left out in the relationship with the wife.

During the first three weeks, the fathers reported feelings of confusion, fatigue, pride and a sense of numbness. The elation over the birth of the baby lasted about a week for most of the men. They said they were still happy, but not on the "high" of the birth and the excitement afterwards. Some of the fathers discussed feeling helpless during the early weeks. This was

especially true of the younger fathers. The younger fathers, (under 25) also found the early weeks harder than expected.

Before I was feeling very helpless. Very much out of control. Things were controlling me and that is not a real good feeling to have. I am not as frustrated any more with the baby so I can be more patient and appreciate her more than before.

Some of the fathers found that the baby crying was difficult to tolerate and found themselves becoming impatient with the baby crying. Most of these fathers were in the younger group.

Like over the weekend, he was bad. After so long it really gets to you, and I call him a little butt, or asshole, or something like that. And then I apologize. Well, you know, you have to get him back for all that squawking and I have to have a break.

Dealing with feeling left out. Probably the predominant emotion at six weeks was feeling left out, although this was acknowledged by only five of the men when asked directly about this. It is interesting that this really did not surface until the six week interview. Only one father discussed it at the three week interview. The data in the interviews indicate that almost all men experienced some feeling of being left out, even though they didn't identify it as such. Statements such as "How about me?" "When do I get mine?" "I miss talking to my wife," "I miss working out with my wife," "I spend more time alone" were clues. Some of the feeling left out was

in relation to time and experiences with the baby.

The only times was like when the baby is sleeping and I wanted to pick the baby up and then I got harassed about it. Then I feel a little left out because she has all the time with the baby, all day. I only have so many hours and I don't have the opportunity to do it even in that time frame, which I don't think is even four hours.

Well she has gone to a couple of showers and things like that which was great. But for me the sense of pride, especially the first couple of weeks. You know, I'm going to miss these people's reactions. And you know, when she comes back, "How does everyone like the baby?" "Oh, they loved him..." Well, I didn't want to go with eight zillion girls because I'm not very experienced in that situation. I felt left out in the sense that I would have loved to have seen people's reactions.

Maybe the first few days after he was born, I felt maybe just a little neglected, but not after that. It was because all he did was sleep all day and she was breast feeding him and so there was not really that much for me to do except the housework.

You know, I felt a little bit left out, for the first time about three weeks ago. And I thought about it for a week and I talked to her the following week and we got together and nailed that one down.

I was getting very edgy ... I started getting less love, less attention from my wife. It was a very strange feeling. I didn't express it, and last week I blew up at her. I told her "You aren't giving me any attention, and I need more attention." Then I just stormed out of the house and drove away. Definitely the last two weeks I felt really left out.

The fathers also discussed feeling lack of affection and intimate gestures from their wives, missing time

alone with their wives, and not having time to talk. Some of the younger fathers mentioned feeling left out from activities of friends.

We went to this church thing yesterday -- it was like a festival-carnival thing. I would rather go skateboard with the guys and I looked down and I saw I was holding the baby because she was fussy and it seemed really weird. To see people my age dancing and having a good time, you know. It was neat though because I really enjoy showing her off. But it was a feeling I'd never experienced before ... It's all part of growing up I guess. It's that time when you have to put the bike away.

It seems like I have felt left out from my friends. Since we've had our baby, it seems our friends don't ... none of our friends have kids -- and I don't know if they felt, "Well, they wouldn't be going out now." Or they are going to do something fun and they don't want to ask us because they don't want us to feel bad that we would have to say no. And we have had our feelings hurt a couple of times because we are not sure why they are doing that ... We feel like we have a disease or something.

Recently, in the literature, it has been reported that men experience depression during the postnatal period similar to what women undergo (May & Perrin, 1985; Robinson & Barret, 1986). Although the men reported some feelings of feeling low, it was more in contrast to the high they experienced at the time of birth. What seemed more prevalent than signs and symptoms of depression was the feeling of loneliness.

As had been mentioned previously, the main source of emotional support for adult men are their wives. When that emotional support is withdrawn partially or

completely during pregnancy and the postnatal period, many men are left without the social support they need (Cronenwett & Kunst-Wilson, 1981). This was certainly evident in this present study.

In two recent studies on social support in pregnant and postnatal families, the social support systems for women were consistently larger and more varied than for men (Brown, 1986; Cronenwett, 1985). For both men and women, emotional support was the best predictor of satisfaction with the parenting role and infant care (Cronenwett, 1985). Apparently satisfaction with partner support is the most important variable in understanding expectant father's health. Satisfaction with others' support was increased and became significant only in the absence of the partner support variable (Brown, 1986). What these studies indicate is that for men, intimacy and disclosure occur in the marital partner relationship.

The difficulty men have in forming friendships with other men has been documented (Stein, 1986). The major barriers to male friendships appear to be

1. Male competitiveness, which inhibits the development of friendships and the sharing of vulnerabilities and weaknesses;
2. The lack of skills and the relative lack of positive role models from which to learn about friendships and the handling of intimate relationships;

3. Men's homophobia expressed in reluctance to show affection and tenderness toward other men;
4. Men's false need to be "in control" which inhibits self-disclosure and intimate sharing of issues and feelings (Stein, 1986, p. 262).

In the present study, the men were always asking me how they were doing in comparison to the other men, so the study for them was an arena for competition. The men stated that they would have been less open and honest in talking with the researcher if that person had been a man. Only two of the fathers said it would have made no difference. It was the quality of the person that would have mattered. The other twenty-one men indicated they preferred talking with a woman.

I would think...I probably have no rational basis for this, but it seems to me that it would probably be easier to talk about this subject with a woman. I suppose it might be that there are even more barriers between men and especially on certain subjects more so than between men and women.

Man to man, I don't think I would talk about my love for my child that much, or my love for my wife, or my lack of love for my wife, or making love to my wife after four weeks. Man to man I'm just not used to dealing with issues like that.

When I am coupled with another male I am automatically competitive. If you were a man, I would be a lot less likely to give a candid answer. I would give answers that are more reserved. Because with a woman it's a lot easier. Because of the

male macho, you know. Another guy standing there, I'm not going to break down and tell you all these intimate little feelings, that men don't feel.

These weren't subjects that would have been better talked about in a male type environment. Men just don't reveal their inner feelings to other men, that is true.

I have always found it easier to talk to a woman because when men get together, this macho facade builds up and the truth rarely comes out.

Although some of the fathers in this study mentioned men friends to whom they felt close, this was the exception rather than the rule. Although cultural norms for men may be changing slightly to encourage men to seek intimacy, self-disclosure and support in their social network, wives still provide the greatest substance of their husbands' interpersonal support needs (Brown, 1986).

In this study, the men who felt least left out had emotional support systems outside their wives and also saw parenting as a joint effort.

I've been pretty much in the middle of everything and it is not like ... I guess some people may feel that now there is somebody else between us. This has been such a joint effort that I haven't. I can't even think of feeling that way.

The fathers who were most involved in the care of their babies had fewer feelings of being left out. This group tended to have wives who included them in the parenting experiences as much as possible.

When the men were aware of feeling left out, they dealt with it in a variety of ways. This applied to five



men. One way was to think about it, then discuss it with his wife. This led to a change of behavior on both their parts in terms of more overt affection towards each other. Another way was to seethe internally and blow up in a long argument. One father handled feeling left out by just going and picking up the baby when he was feeling that way. Others insisted on time with the baby when their wives were reluctant to give it. Another way was to get busy and do something else such as becoming more involved in work, school, and sports.

#### Fantasy Work in the Postnatal Phase

Fantasy work also predominates in the postnatal period, especially at the six week interval. The men found themselves imagining their babies doing all kinds of things, again, mostly when they were older.

What is he going to want to do? Is he going to enjoy the things that I enjoy and things I enjoyed? Will I seem too aggressive if I encourage him to go out jogging with me when he's three years old? And I think about toys that we would like to get him and things like that ... train sets and race car tracks, and a bicycle.

I find myself thinking of him during the day. The first couple of weeks I didn't, but now I'll be driving down the freeway and I'll get a mental picture of his cute little face.

I don't do as much fantasizing about her as about my son that I will have one day. I'm glad I had a daughter first, but being a football coach or baseball coach for her, I don't see. I can see going to dance recitals and things like that. I think more about being a football coach or baseball coach. Maybe she'll be a baseball player.

Sometimes I picture her as being kind of tom boyish and sometimes I picture her being, you know, very lady like ... On the one hand I know I'm going to make her my princess, and on the other hand I want her to feel like she can do anything a man can do ... I'd like her to be athletic. I picture teaching her how to swim and how to surf.

### Perceptual Work during the Postnatal Phase

There is less activity in perceptual work during the postnatal phase. The two main forms that perceptual work took in this period was in relation to changes in perceptions of children, of work, and of themselves.

Perceptions of children. Apparently just as it took their wives' pregnancies to sensitize the men to other pregnant women, the birth of their babies sensitized them to other children. They quite suddenly found themselves aware of other children.

You know what I really notice is other babies. Aware, boy I'm like a geiger counter. I scan the air for babies. Before I wouldn't have noticed them at all. I am definitely more aware. "How old is your baby?" "Six weeks." "Mine is only two." Well, is he going to be like that when he's that size? You kind of compare babies.

I'm seeing other babies. There was this guy and his baby was born a week or two before mine was and he was there with his baby. I thought it was rather interesting at the difference in the way I looked at it now from the way I would have looked at that baby six months ago, or even three months ago. Before I might have seen the baby, but it wouldn't have registered.... I find myself wondering how old this one is and comparing. Oh this baby is holding its head up now ... I would absolutely not have done that before.

I go out with my bachelor friends. I'll be sitting there and I'll go, "Oh look at how cute that kid is." They all look at me and their mouths will drop and they say, "Oh my God, I can't believe you. You know a year ago you never would have even noticed that kid."

Perceptions of work. How men perceived their work was an area that changed for almost all of the fathers. Three of the men who had spent long hours away from home were rearranging work schedules so they didn't leave so early in the morning or stay at work as late. Some of the men refused overtime at work so that they could spend more time with their families. About half of the men said that having a baby helped them put work more in perspective. They experienced some frustration when work demanded more time than they wanted to give.

My job is important to me and I do a very special and high quality job, but there is a line that I'm going to draw and my family is going to come in front of that.

I would rather not have to work and spend more time at home. I really don't want to work so many long hours. It was different because before she was born, I was more of a aggressive person.

Work has taken a backseat. I still have to put as much into work as I did. But, I've been putting a lot into this new thing too so it is just that I'm stretching my life around. In some ways my work is more important because it is important to my livelihood. Then in other ways, it is less important, because I have something else that I think is important to have my energy for.

Some of the fathers reported loss of interest in work. Others said they found they had difficulty in

concentrating at work. This inability to concentrate has been reported in women in the postnatal period (Rubin, 1984).

One of the fathers said that his work was the central concern in his life. Most others said that their perspective on work had changed since the birth of their babies. It was still important, but less important than their families. Entwisle and Doering (1981), in a study with sixty-five, first-time fathers, found that men rated work 5.2 on a 1 = most important to 8 = least important scale. They rated their relationship with their wives highest among the eight sources of satisfaction.

Many of the men shared that they wished they could have stayed home longer after the birth of their babies and found themselves reluctant to return to work. Several of them said they would have liked to be at home with their families for at least three months before going back to work. This was the length of time mentioned most frequently by those who wanted more time at home. This is of interest because Robson and Moss (1970) in their study of primiparous women found that three months was required for strong feelings of attachment towards the infant to develop. Men who spent the early months with their babies and were very involved in their care reported the same kind of passionate attachment to their children previously attributed only to women. (Osborne, 1985; Steinberg, 1977).

Four of the fathers stated that they would prefer

not to return to work at all, but would rather stay home with their families.

If it was up to me, I would just stay home and take care of the baby and let her go back to work. I wouldn't mind that. I don't mind taking care of him and giving him baths and stuff. It's a lot of work, I wouldn't want to do it all myself, I would share it with her. She would have to work and then come home and do this work too.

However, not all of the fathers wanted to have more time at home with their families. One man didn't see any sense in both parents being home with the baby at the same time. Another said he was glad he had to go to work because being at home all day with a screaming baby "would drive me nuts."

When possible, men made adjustments in their work hours so that they could be home more. Those who had flexibility in determining their work hours opted to stay home later in the mornings so they could have time with their babies. The men with this kind of flexibility were able to balance their work and family lives most successfully.

Self perception. Some of the men felt they were different since the birth of their babies: thinking and acting more responsibly, changing their priorities, and developing a parental outlook.

I mean it's just like you are almost two people kind of. You're one person before you have the baby and you are another person afterwards.

Because my priorities have changed, my

needs and the degree to which I need certain things has also changed. Right now the biggest thing to me is the baby.

My needs to occasionally get out and socialize with people are not really being met that much. But they're not as important to me as they used to be.

It is amazing how quick it begins and that is the whole parental outlook on the world ... I drove to work the other day and stopped to get a cup of tea, right by the high school, and as I got out the car, I walked by this kid -- he must have been thirteen or fourteen years old, tall, handsome, good-looking kid and he is smoking a cigarette. And in the old days, I would have said, "Kid, do what do you want to do. It's your life." But I looked at him and thought, "Man, if that were my son, I'd smack him." It is already hitting me, I've developed a whole layer of how I look at the world in relationship to my child.

One of the changes in self perception that occurred was the perception of self as father. While several of the men reported that they felt like fathers at the three week interview, most did not. By six weeks, more fathers reported that they felt like fathers, but for half of them this was not so, although the baby seemed more real to them by then. Integrating the concept of being a father into the self does not occur by six weeks for many men. This has been found to be true for women and "feeling like a mother" (Rubin, 1984).

I do not think of myself as a father. I think that when the baby thinks I'm a father, I'll really think I'm a father.

I know I'm a father, but I don't feel like a dad.

I mean I feel like a father in that I do have other people I feel responsible for

and there is somebody who is going to be dependent on me probably for the rest of her life ... Just for financial support for the next eighteen years and probably beyond that, and you know, emotional support and companionship and that sort of thing in a really special way.

One of the changes reported by a number of the fathers was in time perception. The men reported that events were blurred between the two postnatal interviews at three weeks and at six weeks. Their lives and the babies were changing so rapidly that they had difficulty in remembering sequences of events. At the six week interview, they expressed that it seemed like months since I had been there when actually I had been there three weeks previously. They also described previous experiences like being part of a dream.

She is so big I can't even really remember ... It was like a dream when she was born. I don't even remember what life was like then. I can't even remember what life was like when my wife was pregnant ... you know it was just like a dream ... very long ago.

Similar phenomena have been documented in women in the postnatal period (Rubin, 1984).

#### Protective Work in the Postnatal Phase

Although there was not much activity in protective work, there was evidence that it were operational. Protective work during the postnatal period again fell into two main categories: protection of the baby and self protection.

Protection of the baby. For some fathers this was manifested by taking out life insurance and buying savings

bonds in the baby's name. They also described being more careful in the way they did things.

Trying to be like safer, more sanitary, in regards to dealing with things that he is going to be touching, like his bottle, and stuff like that. I think I drive a little slower on the road now when he is in the car.

Being more protective toward the baby was seen as making the men feel more like fathers.

It was really funny. We went to brunch last Sunday. We were going to meet two other couples there. I had the stroller and there was a man and women there about thirty-five or so. The woman said, "This one is a menace." She had walked backwards into the stroller. I got so puffed-up. I said, "You are a menace. Don't you open your mouth." I just became livid. Like don't you say another word or lose your life ... Our friends thought it was a riot. One of them said, "Don't fool with Laura's father." ... And then I'm more conscious about locking doors and things like that.

Self-protection. The men described being more careful about the use of seatbelts while driving. They also saw their exercise regimes as a way of protecting their health.

I want to be in good shape and to be young and active. I'm thirty-four. When the baby is ten and starting in baseball, I'll be forty-four. I don't want to have a beer gut and not be able to play football with him.

The mental health benefits of being in good shape are tremendous. You feel so much better about yourself for doing it. Your mind is clear, you can focus better, your concentration is longer. That benefit of being in good cardiovascular condition is a real plus.



### Readiness Work in the Postnatal Phase

There was minimal activity in readiness work during the postnatal phase. Only one of the fathers went to a parenting class in the postnatal period. It was offered by the hospital in which the baby was born. The father who participated described it as "neat." He took his daughter to the class with him.

There were only about three or four dads there including myself and there were probably a dozen and a half mothers and then all of the babies ... They showed a little film and it was people talking about after birth and postpartum situations and stuff like that. And then we exchanged all our ideas. We just had a nice chance to socialize and, you know, check out the other babies. So it was neat.... It was in the middle of the day. My wife really wanted me to go. I wanted to, but I didn't feel like taking off from work, but I did anyway.

When attending parenting classes was discussed with the other fathers, they acknowledged that they might be a good idea, but doubted that they would go if such classes were offered. Reasons given for not attending were lack of time, fatigue, and also not believing someone else could tell you how to raise your child. The fathers did express a great deal of interest in continuing to meet periodically with the couples they had met in the Lamaze classes "to compare notes."

Very few of the fathers indicated that they were reading anything related to baby care. Several of them said they wished they had read something about the baby during the pregnancy, instead of material solely about

pregnancy and labor and delivery, but that no amount of reading or courses could prepare them for the reality of the experience.

I felt prepared for the baby. But as far as the baby being at home, I had a few things to learn ... I think you have to have a baby around to know these things. I mean people can tell you stuff, and tell you stuff, and you're not going to know what they are talking about until you see it or you experience it yourself. Like people telling you about the one o'clock feeding. Well, I never thought that it was going to be one plus three hours afterwards ... I just think that I really wasn't prepared for that and I don't think that there is anything that people can really tell you to prepare you.

I wish I would have known what it was like to live in a house with a new born baby. I went to Lamaze and all those things, I read the books and I read the articles and I got so tired of reading about babies. I was probably about as prepared as you can get from classes and books, but no matter what, it doesn't prepare you for the real thing. I wasn't prepared for waking up every single night, time and time again with the baby crying and my wife being tired all the time. I wasn't ready for everything. I don't know if anyone can possibly be trained to be ready.

Some of the fathers were surprised by the emphasis on the negative aspects of having a new baby presented by friends, relatives, and in the readings.

Everything that everybody told us was negative ... So we prepared ourselves for sleepless nights, crying babies and wet diapers every five minutes, all kinds of cradle cap -- you name it. I haven't seen any of that stuff yet. Nobody had anything good to say ... One or two people really had good things to say. And they said, "Hey, it is all worth it.

Doesn't matter what happens, it will be worth it" ... What helped me really was the Lamaze class. They told us more than you could ever get out of a book ... They taught us practical things.

It would seem that trying to prepare people for the reality of the first few weeks with a new baby needs to be done in a more positive way.

#### The Postnatal Phase: Summary

For this group of twenty-three first-time fathers, the six week postnatal period contained a variety of experiences. The first three weeks were seen as confusing, as the men dealt with fatigue and trying to make sense of having the baby at home with them. The early weeks were most stressful for the younger fathers (under 25) who described them as harder than they expected. They also seemed to have less patience with the baby crying.

All the men were very pleased when they could soothe the babies when they were crying and fussing. Some of the fathers reported more success in soothing their babies than the mothers. These fathers were primarily in the Instrumental group. The men participated in the care of their babies in varying degrees, with some doing virtually nothing and others changing diapers, soothing, bathing, feeding their babies. There were eleven men who participated most actively in the physical care of their babies during the first six weeks. Of these men two were in the Observer group, eight in the Instrumental group, and one in the Expressive group. The two men in the

Observer group had babies born by Cesarean as did two in the Instrumental group.

The men all expressed surprise at how much time it took to get out of the house with a new baby, describing it as "a major production." They also felt that some of the spontaneity was gone from their lives. This was seen as more of a problem by the younger fathers.

The types of work that predominated in the postnatal phase were affiliative, emotional and fantasy. There was a fair amount of activity in perceptual work, while readiness and protective work had low activity.

In affiliative work, the relationship with their wives was the most important factor in how well the men handled the first six weeks with a new baby. Those couples who tried to keep communication between them open, despite fatigue and lack of time, had fewer difficulties during the early weeks. Recognition of problems and dealing with them before they grew out of proportion was important in maintaining the relationship. Working on maintaining the intimacy of the relationship was a major factor. The men felt the lack of intimacy more difficult than the lack of sexual lives together. The five men who appeared to be more aware of these aspects were in the older age group (late twenties, early thirties). One was in the Observer group, two in the Instrumental, and three in the Expressive group. The data indicate that the quality of the relationship with the wife was important in

the integration of the postnatal experiences into the self concept as father. Those couples who were able to negotiate infant care and housework tasks to be done as well as time together appeared to make the transition into parenthood most easily. The quality of the relationship with the wife was also instrumental in how much the fathers were involved with their children. The men who were most involved in their children, both in physical care and play, had wives who encouraged such participation.

In terms of the sexual aspects of the relationship, twelve of the twenty-three couples had resumed sexual intercourse by the end of six weeks. One man was in the Observer group (20%), six in the Instrumental group (55%), and five in the Expressive group (71%). Only three of the men were aware of the sexual response changes in women in the postnatal period.

In the affiliative work involving the relationships with their babies, there was a great deal of variation. At three weeks, only three men felt they had relationship with the baby. These three men spent the most time with their babies. There was one father in each of the three groups. By six weeks, twelve of the fathers felt they had at least a beginning relationship with their babies which they were able to describe. For fourteen men, the baby seemed real to them in that the baby was a part of their lives and no longer a dream. These fathers fell into the groups as follows Observer: 2 (40%);

Instrumental: 6 (55%); Expressive: 6 (85%). At six weeks, seven of the men reported that the baby seemed somewhat real, but did not feel they had a relationship with the baby. The two fathers to whom the baby did not seem real at six weeks stated they had no relationship with the baby. One was in the Observer group, the other in the Instrumental group.

The men who spent the most time with their babies appeared to be most sensitive to the responsive cues being sent by the babies. Being able to perceive these cues and being able to respond to them appeared to be important in the integration of the relationship with the baby into his self concept as father.

Relationship with others were important aspects of affiliative work in the postnatal phase. Having help in the early days after the birth of the baby was seen as facilitating the transition into parenthood. Seventeen of the couples had such help, mostly from parents. Apparently having some one to "take care of them" made it easier for the men to learn to care for their babies and can be seen as a factor which facilitates the integration process. The men also found that interest expressed by others in their babies when they were out with them also reinforced their feelings of being fathers. They described feeling part of the larger community of parents, as having more in common with more people. Affirmation by the larger community of themselves as fathers appeared to

be important in integrating the experiences into their self concept.

Beginning to feel like a family was another important aspect of affiliative work and was dependent to a large extent on the relationships with their wives, babies, parents and others. The internalization of "feeling like a family" is another indicator of integration.

Emotional work also predominates in the postnatal phase. The elation which had been prevalent at birth lasted about a week for most of the men, although one of the fathers still seemed on the "high" at six weeks. The first three weeks after birth were seen as times of confusion and fatigue. There was some feeling of being helpless during the early weeks expressed especially by the younger fathers.

At six weeks, the predominant emotion appeared to be feeling left out, especially in the relationship with the wife. This was manifested mostly in feeling lonely. Withdrawal of the wife as a source of social support was instrumental in the feelings of being left out. The men who felt least left out had support systems outside their wives. The fathers who were most involved in the care of their babies had fewer feelings of being left out. Although only five men recognized having feelings of being left out, the data support that this occurred in almost all of the men. Three of the men who acknowledged feeling left out were in the Expressive group and one each the Observer and Instrumental groups. How the men dealt with

feeling left out was important in the integration process.

Fantasy work was also very active in the postnatal phase. Fantasizing centered on the babies as older children and on the relationships the fathers would have with their older children. Fantasizing about infants was minimal. What relevance fantasizing about older children has for the integration of the experience into the self concept as father is not clear.

There was less activity in perceptual work in the postnatal phase. It took the form of changes in perceptions of children, of work, and of themselves. The men reported suddenly being much more aware of other children, looking at other babies and comparing them to their own. This awareness of other children appeared to reinforce their self concept as father.

Another aspect of perceptual work was the change in perception of the importance of work in their lives. While work remained important, it was seen in a different perspective in relation to their families. Only one of the fathers said that work was the central concern in his life. Four of the fathers would have preferred not to work at all but to stay home with their families. They were from each of the groups. One was in the Observer group, two in the Instrumental group, and one in the Expressive group.

Eleven of the men expressed frustration of having to return to work so soon and some would have liked to have



stayed home for as long as three months. Of those eleven men, two were in the Observer group (40%), five in the Instrumental group (45%), and four in the Expressive group (57%). The three men who were able to arrange flexible schedules for their work expressed the least frustration at having to go back to work.

In self-perception work, the fathers saw themselves as being different since the birth of their babies in thinking and acting more responsibly, changing their priorities, and developing a parental outlook. The older men in the study (late twenties, early thirties) found this less problematic than the younger ones. The younger men tended to see the additional responsibility as a burden rather than as part of a new life phase. The major perceptual work was in the perception of self as father. At six weeks, twelve men said they felt like fathers, nine said they did not, and two were not sure. Of the twelve who felt like fathers, one was the Observer group (20%), six in the Instrumental group (55%), and five in the Expressive group (71%). The men who did not feel like fathers, six of the nine were 25 years old and younger. Feeling like a father is an indicator of the integration of the postnatal experiences into the self concept as father.

Protective work and readiness work demonstrated the least activity in the postnatal phase. Protective work was manifested in protection of the baby and in protection of the self. Both types of protective work are indicators

of the integration process. Readiness work was minimal in this phase. Even the fathers who had read avidly during the pregnancy were doing no reading. Only one father attended a parenting class. Most of the men stated that no amount of reading or taking courses could prepare them for the reality of living with a baby.

The factors that contribute to the integration of the postnatal experience into the self concept as father appear to be the quality of the relationship with the wife, the sense of beginning a relationship with the baby and the social support system available to the father. The indicators that integration is taking place appear to be the willingness to negotiate infant care and housework tasks and to be involved in the care of the baby. These appear to be predicated on having less rigid sex role definitions and on the willingness of the woman to allow the man into these arenas. Other indicators are feeling that the baby is real, and feeling protective of the baby. Changing perceptions of work and of self are other indicators as is the starting to feel like a family.

The findings in the postnatal phase indicate that there is a shift in the fathering role toward more active participation in infant care and in housework. A number of important questions are raised. If women resist sharing child care, will men continue to be deprived of an important, emotional component of the male fathering role? If women are not willing to share child care will

not the inequities that go with the role of woman as sole child-rearer be perpetuated in both the private and public spheres? Do men need to be encouraged to enlarge their emotional social support systems? If men need additional education in parenting skills, when should this be done and by whom? If men are indeed not as socially and biologically primed to recognize subtle cues, can they be trained to receive such cues? Would increased ability in men to respond to the newborn's subtle responsive cues enhance early father-infant relationships? What implications for later father-child relationship does father involvement in infant care have? Do fathers with less rigid sex-role boundaries continue to have a high degree of involvement with their children as they grow older? What societal and policy changes must take place to enable men to participate fully in the fathering role?

These questions, as well as those raised in the late pregnancy phase and labor and delivery phase summaries will be addressed in the next chapter, Conclusions and Implications. The implications for further research on fathers, for education and socialization of men and women, and for the delivery of health care for the child bearing family will be presented. A summary of the substantive theory developed will also be presented in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter will begin with a summary of the substantive theory developed in this study. How the findings relate to existing research and theory in adult development and fathering will be examined next. The last part of this chapter will deal with the implications of the findings for health care professionals, educational programs, and social policy changes. Suggestions for direction of further research will conclude the chapter.

#### Summary of the Substantive Theory

The findings of this study indicate that becoming a first-time father involves a complex and multifaceted transition. The transition period studied was from late pregnancy through the first six weeks after birth. The substantive theory presented in this report involved a major process, integration of the perinatal experiences into the self concept as father, and the work involved in order for the process to occur.

The integration process is continuous and involves many changes. It does not, however, proceed in a linear fashion. It is highly interrelated with the work involved in the process, all of which form a matrix. The integration process serves to unify the father's experiences and to make them meaningful to him. The integration process embodies holism and health. Holism is a concept which implies wholeness, relationships,

processes, interactions, freedom and creativity, while health is seen as the development of the many varied possibilities within the individual. Thus, integration is a broad, encompassing concept which deals with the person as a whole. The goal of the integration process is high level wellness which implies maximizing the potential of which the individual is capable. As the man integrates the perinatal experiences into his self concept as father, he is moving towards holism, health, and high level wellness.

In this study, the term integration process is used to describe how the experiences the father has during the the late pregnancy, labor-delivery, and early postnatal phases are integrated into his self concept as a father. By "self concept" is meant the relatively subtle sense of self derived from the behavior, roles, relationships, intellectual and emotional experiences the person has (Gansei, 1977). In order for the man to gain a "sense" of himself as father, the experiences he has during the perinatal period and the meaning these have for him need to be integrated into his self concept.

The process of integrating his experiences into his self concept as a first time father begins during the pregnancy and continues through the labor-delivery and early postnatal phases. The process is an active one and involves work in a variety of areas. In order for the integrative process to progress, affiliative, perceptual,

fantasy, protective, emotional, and readiness work must be done. The work required can be manifested either in interaction with others or through internal processes (i.e. thinking, fantasizing) or both.

Which type of work is predominant and how it is manifested changes according to the phase of the perinatal period. The predominance of some types of work in some phases, with less activity in others, appears related to the types of experiences and the meanings they have for him at that point in time. The data demonstrate that affiliative work which involves relationships with others predominates in all three phases and becomes most active in the postnatal phase. The data also indicate that emotional work, which is moderately active during the late pregnancy phase, becomes much more active in the labor-delivery and postnatal phases. This type of affiliative and emotional work is infrequently discussed in relation to men.

How the integrative process and the work involved are operationalized throughout the late pregnancy, labor-delivery, and early postnatal phases (the perinatal period) will be presented. Each type of work will be described for all of the three phases. How the work and the integration process relate to the self-selected category of father involvement as Observer, (5) Instrumental, (11) or Expressive (7) will be categorized. The factors which enhance integration of the experiences into the self concept as father as well as the indicators

that integration is taking place will also be presented.

### Affiliative Work

Affiliative work was predominant in the late pregnancy, labor-delivery, and early postnatal phases. During the late pregnancy phase, affiliative work was manifested primarily in the relationship with the wife, but relationships with parents and others were also an important part of the work. The men who described their wives as "best friends" had been married for more than three years. The relationship was characterized by enjoyment of being together, talking to each other, exercising together, and doing chores together. Nine fathers were in this category and were in the following groups: Observer, 1 (20%), Instrumental, 4 (36%), Expressive, 4 (57%).

One of the types of relational work with the wife was in dealing with how she manifested the pregnancy in terms of physical complaints and emotional lability. This was best illustrated by the four fathers who described the pregnancy experience as "miserable." They could not wait for the pregnancy to be over primarily because of their wives' emotional lability and excessive irritability. These men described their relationship with their wives as being more distant during the pregnancy, as contrasted to the rest of the fathers who stated they felt closer to their wives. Of these four men, only one discussed his dilemma with an experienced father at work. Being so

unhappy during the pregnancy was a deterrent to the integration process because the focus was diverted from affiliative and other work. The nine men in the study who expressed most satisfaction in their relationships with their wives had been married the longest and had wives with relatively few physical complaints during pregnancy and with relatively little emotional lability.

The men who had sources of social support other than their wives appeared better able to handle the changes in their wives during pregnancy because they had other people with whom to discuss their dilemmas. Of these eight men, one was in the Observer, (20%) three in the Instrumental group, (27%) and four in the Expressive group (57%). Of these men, only one was under 25 years of age. The others were in there late twenties and early thirties. For these men, the support system consisted primarily of friends, but some saw their parents as a source of social support.

Examining relationships with their own parents, especially with their fathers, was an important part of affiliative work during pregnancy. The four men who spoke most highly of their relationships appeared to have a more clear picture of themselves as fathers-to-be. Of these four men, three were in the Expressive group (43%), one in the Instrumental group (9%). There were no men in the Observer group who spoke highly of their fathers. Nine of the men stated that they wanted to be more involved with and closer to their children than their fathers were to them. Of these, there were three in each group:



Observer, (60%), Instrumental, (27%), and Expressive (42%). Coming to grips with their relationships with their own fathers appears to be important in integrating the pregnancy experiences into their self concepts as fathers.

In the labor and delivery phase, affiliative work also predominated and was manifested in the relationships with the wife, with parents and others, and with the baby. Of these, the relationship with the wife appeared most important as evident in the data. Those couples in whom the men had described the marital relationship as good during pregnancy appeared to work most cooperatively in labor. One was in the Observer group (20%), four in the Instrumental group (36%) and four in the Expressive group (57%). When the women responded to the stresses of labor in a dignified way and to the men's attempts to help them in a positive way, the men appeared to integrate the labor and delivery experience into their self concepts as fathers. There were thirteen who described very positive experiences with their wives in labor: Observers 2 (40%), Instrumental 7 (64%), Expressive 4 (57%). When there was little cooperation from the wife, the men had a less positive description of the labor experience.

The quality of the relationship with parents, friends, and professional staff also appeared to influence the integration process. Having a friend or relative in the room along with the laboring couple was seen as being

helpful in staying relaxed and having some companionship during labor. Eight men had someone else with them, two in the Observer group (40%), four in the Instrumental group (36%), and two in the Expressive group (28%). Sharing the birth experience with the grandparents was also important in developing the self concept as father. Relationships established with professional staff when positive was seen as enhancing the labor and delivery experience.

Having the opportunity to be present at the birth and to hold the baby shortly afterwards also was instrumental in aiding the integration process. Most men felt this experience was important in making the baby real and in starting the relationship with the baby.

In the early postnatal phase, affiliative work was even more predominant than in the previous two phases. Affiliative work manifested itself in the relationships with the wife, the baby, and others. The relationship with the wife was of most importance in how well the man handled the first six weeks with a new baby. Fewer difficulties occurred with those couples who tried to keep communication open between them despite fatigue and lack of time. Early recognition of problems and dealing with them before they grew out of proportion were important in maintaining the relationship as was working on maintaining the intimacy of the relationship. The six men who appeared to be more aware of these aspects were older (late twenties, early thirties). One was in the Observer

group (20%), two in the Instrumental group (18%), and three in the Expressive group (43%).

Fathers in those couples who were able to negotiate infant care and housework tasks to be done as well as time together appeared to make the transition into fatherhood most easily. Of these eight men, two were in the Observer group (40%), four in the Instrumental group (36%), and two in the Expressive group (29%). The quality of the relationship with the wife was also instrumental in how much the fathers were involved with their babies, both in physical care and play. Encouragement by their wives enhanced such participation and appeared to enhance the integration process.

Another aspect in the relationship with the wife is the resumption of sexual relations. Twelve of the twenty three couples had sexual intercourse by the end of six weeks. One man was in the Observer group (20%), six in the Instrumental group (55%) and five in the Expressive group (71%). Only three men were aware of the normal sexual changes in women in the postnatal period and while breastfeeding.

In affiliative work in their relationships with their babies, there was wide variation. At three weeks, three men felt they had a relationship with the baby. These three men spent the most time with their babies. There was one father in each of the three groups. By six weeks, fourteen of the fathers felt they had at least a beginning

relationship with their babies. The babies seemed "real" to them (i.e. part of their lives, not a dream). Of the fourteen, two were in the Observer group (40%), six in the Instrumental (55%), and six in the Expressive group (85%).

Sensitivity to the responsive cues being given by the babies appeared to be important in the integration of the relationship with the baby into his self concept as father. The men who spent the most time with their babies appeared to be most sensitive to those cues. There were five men who demonstrated this sensitivity, two in the Observer group (40%), two in the Instrumental group (18%) and one in the Expressive group (14%).

Relationships with others were important aspects of affiliative work in the postnatal phase. Help from relatives, mostly parents, was seen as facilitating the transition into parenthood. Seventeen of the twenty-three couples had such help. Having someone to "take care of them" during the early days of parenting was apparently important in facilitating the integration process. This was not true for all fathers. Two of them (one Instrumental, one Expressive) would have preferred to be alone with their families. The men also found that the public affirmation of their fatherhood (i.e. strangers talking to them when they were out with the baby) as reinforcing their sense of fatherhood. This was also important in the integration process, as was the development of "feeling like a family."

#### Emotional Work

Emotional work exhibited moderate activity during the late pregnancy phase and became predominant in the labor-delivery and early postnatal phases. In the early pregnancy phase, emotional work was manifested by anxiety and worrying. All of the men in the study except one reported increased anxiety during pregnancy, manifested by increased irritability and weight gain. Worrying was mostly about whether the baby would be normal. This was mentioned by all the men.

Emotional work became predominant during the labor and delivery phase. This was manifested by support given and received, worrying, staying in control, and elation at the time of birth. Giving support to their wives in labor by being present, actively coaching about breathing and relaxation, and verbal encouragement was important to the men. It appears to be an indicator of integration of the self concept as father during this phase. Of the fourteen men who saw themselves as making a major contribution to their babies being born "in the best possible way," seven were in the Instrumental group (67%) and seven in the Expressive group (100%). None of the five fathers in the Observer group felt they had made a major contribution to the labor. It appears that being very involved in labor both in doing things and/or in emotional involvement is important in integrating the experience into the self concept as father.

Receiving support from companions and from the staff

was also seen as important. Receiving information from the nursing staff was seen as being very supportive of the father during labor. Worrying took the form of being concerned about forgetting the Lamaze techniques and failing as a coach. Only two of the men reported difficulties in remembering the techniques and none of them felt they had failed as labor coaches.

Staying in control appeared to be a central concern to the men. The two men who lost control (by crying) during the labor and delivery experience appeared embarrassed when describing their experience. The need to stay in control appeared to mitigate against feeling the full elation at the time of birth.

In the postnatal phase, emotional work was again predominant. The early weeks were characterized as being ones of confusion, fatigue, pride, and numbness. The elation over the birth of the baby lasted about a week for most men. The younger (under 25) fathers discussed feeling helpless during the early weeks and had more difficulty tolerating the babies' crying.

The predominant emotion at six weeks appeared to be feeling left out. This was mostly in reference to their relationship with their wives, but also in relation to the babies and their friends. The data indicate that almost all of the men experienced some degree of feeling left out even though they didn't identify it as such. What the men seemed to miss the most was the lack of affection and intimate gestures from their wives. The men who felt

least left out had support systems outside their wives and were most involved in the care of their babies. Only five men recognized having feelings of being left out, three in the Expressive group (43%) and one each in the Observer (20%) and Instrumental (9%) groups. Recognition of feeling left out and how this was dealt with was important in integrating the experience into the self concept as father.

#### Readiness Work

Readiness work was predominant during the late pregnancy phase and become increasingly less active during the labor-delivery and early postnatal phases. Feeling ready to be a father was part of the readiness work. The factors involved in this feeling of "being ready" appears to be the stability and length of the marriage, being established in career choice, relative financial stability, and sensing that the childless period of his life is ending. In this study, the men who were in their late twenties and early thirties expressed the most readiness for pregnancy as compared to the younger ones (under 25). The timing of the pregnancy in terms of being planned or unplanned was an important consideration in readiness work. Five of the seven unplanned pregnancies occurred in couples in which the man was under 25.

Readiness work during pregnancy manifested itself by learning activities such as reading books about babies, attending Lamaze preparation classes, talking with people

who have had babies, and taking care of children. Being involved in getting ready for the baby (refinishing furniture, etc.) was another activity in readiness work, and an indicator of beginning integration.

The men who appeared most at ease as pregnant fathers were those who were most excited and proud in anticipating fatherhood. This appeared to be closely related to their age. The men who participated actively in readiness work shared the pregnancy experiences with their wives (i.e. seeking out information, wanting to hear the baby's heartbeat, to feel the baby kick, enthusiastically participating in childbirth education classes, etc.). They appeared to incorporate those experiences into their developing self concept as fathers as evidenced by their reports and behaviors. These nine men all had wives who encouraged such participation. Of the nine, one was in the Observer group (20%), four in the Instrumental group (30%), and the remaining four in the Expressive group (57%).

In the labor and delivery phase, activity in readiness work was relatively low. Most of the readiness work for the labor-delivery experience had been done during the late pregnancy phase. During the labor and delivery phase, readiness work was manifested by requesting and receiving information from the professional staff. Men in all the groups were eager for information. Whether or not they received it was determined by the responsiveness of the nursing staff. Another manifestation



of readiness work was utilizing the techniques learned in childbirth preparation classes.

Activity in readiness work was minimal during the early postnatal phase. Even the fathers who had most avidly pursued information during the pregnancy did no reading. Only one father had attended a parenting class. Such classes were available through the hospitals where the babies had been born to an additional five fathers. Most of the men felt that no amount of reading or taking courses could prepare them for the reality of living with a baby.

#### Protective Work

Protective work is predominant during the late pregnancy phase and decreases in activity in the labor-delivery and early postnatal phases. Protective work during pregnancy manifested itself as protection of the wife/fetus and as self protection. Activities in protecting the wife/fetus involved keeping the wife from doing heavy work and from injuring herself. Also keeping the the wife from drinking alcohol, smoking, eating non-nutritious foods was seen as protective of the fetus. The six men who reported most concern with protecting the wife/fetus were in the Instrumental group (55%). One man in the Observer group also was concerned about this (20%). Self protection mostly took the form of wearing seat belts while driving, decreasing alcohol intake, and being more careful in physical work. These activities were reported

most by five men in the Expressive group (71%). One man in the Observer group discussed self protective activities (20%) as did three in the Instrumental group (27%).

Wanting to protect the wife/fetus and the self during pregnancy appears to be an indicator of integration into the beginning self concept as father.

Protective work during the labor and delivery phase exhibited low activity. It was manifested mainly in not wanting to be excluded from what was happening in labor and in feeling protective of the baby after birth.

During the postnatal phase, there was little protective work demonstrated. Protective work was manifested in protection of the baby and in protection of the self. Protection of the baby took the form of having clean hands while handling the baby, making sure that equipment used was clean, and driving more carefully when the baby was in the car. Other forms of protective work were taking out life insurance and starting bank accounts for the baby. Self protection was manifested by driving more slowly, wearing seatbelts, and increasing exercise regimes to get in shape. More men in the Instrumental group demonstrated activities to protect the baby than in the other two groups. Self protective activities were seen in all three groups: Observer 1 (20%), Instrumental 4 (36%), Expressive 4 (57%).

#### Perceptual Work

Perceptual work was low in activity during the late pregnancy phase, but became predominant in the labor-

delivery phase, and had less activity in the early postnatal phase. Perceptual work during pregnancy manifested itself mostly in becoming more aware of pregnant women. Only two men reported becoming more aware of children. One was in the Instrumental group and one in the Expressive group.

Perceptual work become predominant during the labor and delivery phase. The primary manifestation was in disassociative behavior which had been previously described for women in the second (pushing) stage of labor. The men who had this experience described it as being "dreamlike," "unreal," "being in some other space," or "watching it on television." Nine of the men in this study vividly described these phenomena, while five others alluded to them. Of the nine men, one was in the Observer group (20%), four in the Instrumental group (36%), and four in the Expressive group (57%). The disassociative phenomenon was probably indicative of the level of stress the father was experiencing. What the implications are for the integration of the experience into the self concept as father are not clear. Another manifestation of perceptual work during labor and delivery was in relation to perception of time. The men reported actual time as slowing down or speeding up.

There was less activity in perceptual work in the postnatal phase, but much more than in the late pregnancy phase. It was manifested in changes in perception of

children, of work, and of themselves. The men reported suddenly becoming more aware of other children, especially of babies. They found themselves comparing their babies to the ones they saw. This awareness of other children is an indicator of incorporating the experience into their self concepts as fathers.

Another aspect of perceptual work in the early postnatal phase was the change in their perception of work. Only one father said that work was his central concern. All the other men reported that while work was important, they had a different perspective on it in relation to their families now that they were fathers. Four of the fathers would have preferred not to work at all but to stay at home with their families. One was in the Observer group (20%), two in the Instrumental group (15%) and one in the Expressive group (14%). The significance of this is not clear.

Eleven of the men expressed frustration at having to return to work so soon and would have liked to have stayed home longer, some for as long as three months. Of these eleven, two were in the Observer group (40%), five in the Instrumental group (45%), and four in the Expressive group (57%). The three men who were able to arrange flexible schedules for their work expressed the least frustration at having to go back to work.

In self-perception work, the fathers saw themselves as being different since the birth of their babies in thinking and acting more responsibly, changing their

priorities, and developing a parental outlook. The older men in the study (late twenties, early thirties) found this less problematic than the younger ones. The younger men tended to see the additional responsibility as a burden rather than as entering a new phase in their lives.

The major perceptual work was in perception of self as father. At six weeks, eleven of the men said they felt like fathers, eight said they did not, and four were not sure. Of the eleven who felt like fathers, one was in the Observer group (20%), six in the Instrumental group (55%), and four in the Expressive group (57%). Of the nine men who did not feel like fathers at six weeks, six were twenty-five and younger. Feeling like a father is another indicator of the integration of the postnatal experiences into the self concept as father. It is of interest that 66% of the men who did not feel like fathers at six weeks were twenty-five and under.

#### Fantasy Work

Fantasy work was minimal during the late pregnancy and labor-delivery phases and become predominant in the early postnatal phases. In the late pregnancy phase, there was some fantasy work in relation to what the baby would be like, but mostly the fantasies were about older children. No fathers reported fantasizing about infants. Most of the fantasies were about what they would be like as fathers. The men in their late twenties and early thirties did this more than the men twenty-five and

younger, but all the men had these fantasies. This type of role "trying on" appears to be important in integrating the pregnancy experiences into the self concept as father. Men used their own fathers, brothers, and friends as comparisons for their own images of what being a father would be like. This fantasy work, while not very active in this phase, appears important in the integration process.

Anticipation of some changes in lifestyle after the baby is born also appears to be an indicator of integration during pregnancy. The three men who expected the fewest changes in their lives were all in the Observer group. The men who anticipated the most realistic changes in their lives were in the older age group.

In the labor and delivery phase, fantasy work was also minimal. Only two fathers reported any fantasies during the labor-delivery phase, one in relation to seeing the baby grown up and the other about the meaning of this experience for his life.

During the postnatal phase, fantasy work became predominant. Fantasies again centered on the babies as older children and on the relationships the fathers would have with their older children. Fantasies about infants were few. What the relevance of fantasizing about older children has for the integration of the experiences into the self concept as father is not clear.

The Integration Process:  
Influencing Factors and Indicators

The Late Pregnancy Phase

The major factors that appear to influence integrating the pregnancy experiences into the self concept as father are the man's readiness for fatherhood and his relationship with his wife. The major indicator of integration during pregnancy appears to be the degree of ease the man exhibits in his status of pregnant father. This ease was demonstrated in the men who were most excited and proud about the anticipated fatherhood, who were very involved in getting ready for the baby, who actively participated in childbirth preparation classes, who spent time fantasizing about their babies and about themselves as fathers, and who anticipated changes in their life styles. Other indicators appear to be the quality of the relationship the man has with his own father, the sharing of the pregnancy experiences with his wife, and having a social support system other than his wife. The men in this study who came closest to this profile were in their late twenties or early thirties who were married for several years before the pregnancy, relatively well established in their work, and who had few financial worries. The data support that the pregnancy experience was very different for these men than for those twenty-five and younger. The pregnancy was more troublesome and burdensome for the latter group.

In affiliative work, a greater percentage of men in

the Expressive group (57%) described their relationship with their wives as very good during pregnancy as compared to the other two groups: Observer (20%) and Instrumental (36%). There was also a greater percentage of men in the Expressive group (57%) who had a social support source other than their wives, as compared to 20% in the Observer group and 27% in the Instrumental group. A greater percentage of the men in the Observer group (60%) wanted to have a closer relationship with their children than they had had with their own fathers, as compared to the Instrumental group (27%) and the Expressive group (42%). Of the nine men who were most active in readiness work during pregnancy, the highest percentage was in the Expressive group (57%) as compared to the Observer group (20%) and the Instrumental group (30%). In protective work related to the wife/fetus, the Instrumental group (55%) was most active. In self protective work, the Expressive group (71%) was most active as compared to 20% in the Observer group and 27% in the Instrumental group.

#### The Labor and Delivery Phase

The factors contributing to the integration of the labor and delivery experiences into the self concept as father appear to be both the willingness of the man to participate actively in labor and of his wife to accept his coaching and physical support. Another factor is the amount of support available to the men during the experience. Indicators of integration include a sense of



accomplishment on the part of the father, feeling that he made a major contribution to the experience, feeling closer to his wife as a result of the experience, and seeing being present at the time of birth as the beginning of his relationship with the baby.

In affiliative work, the couples who worked most cooperatively in labor were the ones in whom the men had described the marital relationship as very good during pregnancy. The highest percentage of men were in the Expressive group (57%) as compared to the Instrumental group (36%) and Observer group (20%). Of the thirteen men who described very positive experiences with the labor experience in relation to working well with their wives, the highest percentage was in the Instrumental group (64%), following by the Expressive group (57%) and the Observer group (40%). In emotional work, fourteen men saw themselves as making a major contribution to the birth of their babies. The greatest percentages were in the Expressive group (100%) and in the Instrumental group (67%). None of the fathers in the Observer group felt they made a major contribution to the labor. In perceptual work, 57% of the men in the Expressive group experienced disassociation, as compared to 20% in the Observer group.

### The Postnatal Phase

The factors that contribute to the integration of the postnatal experiences into the self concept as father appear to be the quality of the relationship with the

wife, the sense of beginning a relationship with the baby, and the social support system available to the father. The indicators that integration is taking place appear to be the willingness to negotiate infant care and housework tasks and to be involved in the care of the baby. These appear to be predicated on the man having less rigid sex role definitions and on the willingness of the woman to allow the man into these arenas. Other indicators are feeling that the baby is real and feeling protective of the baby. Changing perceptions of work and of self and starting to feel like a family are additional indicators.

In affiliative work, the relationship with the wife was of primary importance. Of the men who were most sensitive to maintaining communication with the wife and of maintaining the intimacy of the relationship, the greatest percentage was in the Expressive group (43%) as compared to the Observer group (20%) and the Instrumental group (18%). Of the couples who were able to negotiate infant care and household tasks, the highest percentage were in the Observer group (40%). For these two men both of their babies were born by Cesarean. The percentages for the Instrumental and Expressive groups were 36% and 29% respectively. The resumption of sexual relations by six weeks was as follows: Expressive 71%, Instrumental 55%, and Observer 20%.

In affiliative work with the baby, fourteen of the fathers felt that they had established at least a

beginning relationship with their babies at six weeks. This represented 85% of the Expressive group, 55% of the Instrumental group, and 40% of the Observer group. Sensitivity to baby cues was reported by and observed in five men, two in the Observer group (40%), two in the Instrumental group (18%) and one in the Expressive group (14%). Each of these five men spent a great deal of time with their babies and were actively involved in their physical care. For the two men in the Observer group, their babies had been born by Cesarean.

Emotional work was manifested primarily in feeling left out. However, only five men consciously recognized having such feelings: 3 Expressive (48%); 1 Observer (20%); 1 Instrumental (9%). The data indicate that almost all men experienced some feelings of being left out. The men who felt least left out looked at parenting as a shared endeavor, were actively involved in the physical care of the baby, and had a social support system other than their wives.

Perceptual work during the postnatal phase centered on changes in men's perceptions of children, work, and themselves. All men reported becoming more aware of children. Almost all of the men reported that becoming a father gave them a different perspective on their work. Eleven of the men would have preferred to stay home from work longer after the birth, with four being in the Expressive group (57%), two in the Observer group (40%), and five in the Instrumental group (45%). In their self

perception as fathers, twelve men said they felt like fathers at six weeks. Of these, one was in the Observer group (20%), six in the Instrumental group (55%), and five in the Expressive group (71%).

Thus, the integration process is a complex and multifaceted one. The work that needs to be done to integrate the experiences into the self concept as father is difficult and interrelated. There appears to be some extension of self-identification as having Observer, Instrumental, and Expressive styles during pregnancy into the labor-delivery and early postnatal phases. Three of the men in the Observer group continued to be Observers throughout. The other two became more instrumental in style in the postnatal phase, possibly because their wives had cesareans. There was more consistency in the Instrumental and Expressive groups.

The data indicate that proportionately more men in the Expressive group demonstrated more indicators of integration than the men in the other two groups. The data also indicate that for the sample as a whole, the older men (late twenties, early thirties) demonstrated more indicators of integration than did the younger men (25 and younger). Of the nine men who did not feel like fathers at six weeks, six of them were the younger fathers. Overall, the men who felt they had established a relationship with their babies and felt like fathers at six weeks had spent the greatest amount of time with their

babies and were actively involved in their physical care.

The next section of this chapter will attempt to set the study just reported within the context of existing research and theory. How this study relates to adult development theory and theory on the father will be explored. Since fathering is a construct of adult development, an examination of adult development theory is warranted.

#### Relationship of this Study to Existing Theory and Research

The examination of fathering logically falls within the framework of adult development theory. However, there is a paucity of adult development theory. Also, changes in family life which have occurred in the last decade have caused many questions to be raised about existing theories.

The field of adult psychology and adult personality has received little attention from psychologists. Almost all developmental research has been focused on children and adolescents, with a fair amount done on the elderly in the past two decades. The "in-between" -- the young and middle adults -- have been virtually ignored (Neugarten, 1975). The field of adult development is similar to that of child development of fifty years ago in its exploration of age-linked developmental sequences (Rossi, 1980). At present, there is no integrated body of theory that encompasses the total life span (Neugarten, 1975).

Perspectives that have evolved in adult development in the lifespan framework fall into two major models: The

Normative-Crisis model and the Timing of Events model (Rossi, 1980).

The Normative - Crisis Model

The normative-crisis model is a developmental model centered around growth and directional change, stimulated by the interaction of an organism and its environment. The assumption underlying this model is that constant change is inherent in life, that movement through the stages is consistent, and that the sequences of stages is hierarchical, proceeding by gradual step-wide transitions. Mastery of a task in one stage contributes to successful mastery in succeeding stages. Crisis is usually involved both in the stages and the transitions between stages. Crisis is defined as a significant event which demands that the individual alter a usual pattern of functioning and adopt to new roles with different behaviors (Tilden, 1980). This definition of crisis would apply to the transition into parenthood for the first-time fathers in this study.

Almost all the theories developed within this model stem from the work of Erikson (1963) who conceived the developmental life cycle as extending into old age. However, only a few pages were devoted to description of adult phases (Erikson, 1963, 263-268). In his model, Stage VI is related to young adulthood where the chief task is achieving intimacy. The next stage is called Generativity vs. Stagnation and corresponds to middle

adulthood. The primary concern for this stage is establishing and guiding the next generation, but includes productivity and creativity as well. Gould (1972) has described the work of Vaillant and Buhler in developing models based on Erikson's work. Vaillant identified the central task of adulthood as Career Consolidation vs. Self-Absorption. Buhler came up with a schema of three phases in the life process:

1. Growth period from birth until the organism is fully developed.
2. Stationary growth period during which the organism's power to maintain its development is equal to the forces of decline.
3. The last period of decline (Gould, 1972).

There is very little in these models that deal with parenthood or fatherhood and it is difficult to find a relationship between the findings of this study and these models.

Basic to the normative-crisis model is the sequencing of events and crises involved in moving from one stage to another. Levinson (1971) in research with forty mid-life men, developed the idea of the life cycle evolving through a sequence of "eras" each lasting twenty-five years. The eras are partially overlapping in transition phases so a new one is getting underway as the previous one is terminating. The sequence is as follows:

Pre-Adulthood Childhood-Adolescence 0-22

Early Adulthood	17-45
Middle Adulthood	40-60
Late Adulthood	60-85
Late, Late Adulthood	80 +

The eras are composed of stable periods of 6-8 years alternating with transitional periods of 4-5 years (Levinson, 1978).

The primary concept in Levinson's theory is of the individual life structure which deals with three aspects:

1. Nature of man's sociocultural world, including class, relation, ethnicity, race, family, political systems, occupational structure.
2. Participation in this world. Evolving relationships and roles as citizen, worker, boss, lover, friend, husband, father, member of diverse groups and organizations.
3. Aspects of his self. Expressed and lived out in the various components of his life; aspects of the self that must be inhibited or neglected in the life structure.

(Levinson, 1977, pp. 99-100).

Central components of the life structure are occupation and family. Other important components are ethnicity, religion, peer-relations, and leisure.

Entering the adult world occurs at ages 22-28 and begins with the Early Adult transition (17-22) leading to



the novice phase. The major tasks of "Entering the Adult World" are to explore the possibilities of adult living and to create a stable life structure, ending in the age 30 transition (Levinson, 1977). There are four major tasks of the novice phase: Forming a dream and giving it a place in the life structure, forming mentor relationships, forming an occupation, and forming relationships, marriage and family (Levinson, 1978).

The second Adult Life Structure is called "settling down" and occurs at ages 32 or 33 to 39 or 40. The tasks are to establish a niche in society and to work at "making it," becoming one's own man, having a greater measure of authority (Levinson, 1977, p. 103).

In Levinson's study, very little attention is given to the fathering role. Almost all discussion centered around the men's work. "A man's work is the primary base for his life in society. Through if he is 'plugged into' an occupational structure and a cultural class and social matrix. Work is of great psychological importance; it is a vehicle for the fulfillment or negation of central aspects of the self" (Levinson, 1978, p. 8). In the present study, the men's perspective on work appeared somewhat different, with more emphasis being placed on the family. Since the study was focused on family issues, this perspective is not surprising.

In this study, the men fell into the following age groups: 21-25 (8); 26-30 (5); 31-35 (9); 36-40 (1). While all these age groups fell within Levinson's Early

Adulthood Era, they represented a variety of the phases of the era. Two of the fathers were in the Early Adulthood transition (17-22); nine were in the novice phase (23-28); eight were in the age 30 transition (28-32); and four were in the settling down phase (33-40).

The findings in the study indicate that the men who were in the age 30 transition and in the "settling down" periods demonstrated more indicators of integration of the late pregnancy, labor and delivery, and postnatal experiences into their self concept as fathers. The descriptions of their experiences were very different from those given by men under twenty-five. The younger fathers had more difficulty in accepting the pregnancy and their wives' pregnancy behavior. They were not ready to stop playing. They felt the responsibility of the baby as more of a burden. They had more difficulty in dealing with the baby crying. They seemed less aware of their role in maintaining relationships with their wives. They tended to have more rigid definitions of parenting roles according to sex role stereotypes. They seemed less ready for the experience of fatherhood. It may be that men in the transition age 30 and settling down phases are more likely to be ready for the emotional commitment that pregnancy and parenthood demand, since they are no longer working through separating from their own parents, getting settled in occupations, and establishing intimate relationships. The present study indicates that the men

in the Expressive group who tended to be older, had more indicators that integration was taking place.

### The Timing of Events Model

This model is based on the assumptions that there is no over-arching structure to the process of adult development and that chronological age is not a meaningful marker. Major life events in the middle part of life occur at different ages to different people. While stress along the life-time may occur, it may be a manifestation of asynchrony in the time of life events (Rossi, 1980). Normal and expected life events are not in themselves life crises, such as leaving the parents' home, marriage, and parenthood. These events may call forth changes in self concept and identify, but whether or not they produce crises depends on their timing (Rossi, 1980).

The concepts of biological timing and social timing are central to this theory. Biological timing deals with such aspects as puberty, occurring earlier for both sexes, climateric coming later for women, and the longer life expectancy for both sexes. Social timing involves entry into the labor market later for men, exit earlier, marriage occurring later, grandparenthood coming earlier, widowhood later, and the pattern of marriage - divorce - remarriage. The fluid life cycle is marked by an increase in the number of role transitions, and by the disappearance of traditional time tables (Neugarten, 1979).

For the men in this study, the timing of the

pregnancy was important in the men's ability to integrate the pregnancy experiences. When the pregnancy was unplanned, as it was in seven of the twenty-three couples, accepting the pregnancy took a longer time. It is of interest that in this study five of the seven unplanned pregnancies occurred in couples where the man was under twenty-five years old, and which had the least reliable information about birth control.

The timing of the pregnancy was important from another aspect other than if the pregnancy had been planned. This was in relation to whether or not the man felt ready for the pregnancy. In May's (1979) study the first-time father-to-be's sense of readiness for pregnancy emerged as an unexpectedly important component of the male pregnancy experience. In this current study, the finding has been supported. The more ready the man felt for the pregnancy, the more he was able to integrate the pregnancy experience into his self concept as father. The data indicate this occurred more for the men in their late twenties and early thirties.

As a test of May's concept of detachment/involvement styles adopted during pregnancy by first-time fathers-to-be (May, 1980), the men in this study were asked to identify a statement that best described their overall response to the pregnancy. Five fathers identified themselves as observers, eleven as instrumental, and seven as expressive: (Observer: Certain emotional distance from

the pregnancy; saw self as bystander. Instrumental: Emphasis on tasks to accomplished; manager of the pregnancy. Expressive: Highly emotional response to pregnancy).

May (1979) found that the average ages of the men in each detachment/involvement style were: Instrumental, 22; Observer, 28; Expressive, 32. In this study, the mean ages in each group were: Instrumental, 27.5; Observer, 28.6; Expressive, 29.6. Although the differences between the means are not as great as in May's study, it shows the trend of men in the instrumental style to be the youngest, with the observer group next, and the expressive group being the oldest. The men in the study identified their pregnancy styles agreeing with my assessment of their involvement in all but two cases.

Was there continuity of these detachment/involvement styles into the other two phases examined in this study, i.e. labor and delivery, and postnatal? Three of the five fathers who identified themselves as observers, continued to be observers in the other phases. The other two fathers became more instrumental in their style in the postnatal phase. Their wives had cesarean births. These same two fathers (40%) in the Observer group felt they had a relationship with their babies at six weeks.

The eleven men who saw themselves as having an instrumental style continued to do a lot to "help out," to manage outings, etc. Six of these men (55%) felt they had a relationship with their babies at six weeks.

Among the seven men with the expressive style in only one case was this translated consistently into spending a great deal of time with the baby, giving physical care, and getting up at night with the baby. Six of these men (85%) felt they had a relationship with their babies at six weeks.

The men in the instrumental group appeared to participate more after the birth of the baby than the men in the expressive group. Two of the men who identified themselves as having expressive styles were in the group of four who saw the pregnancy experience as miserable. Perhaps their response to "I experienced a lot of new emotions because of the pregnancy" was on the basis of their reaction to their wives' behavior, rather than on an emotional response to the pregnancy itself. Two of the expressive style fathers had constraints that mitigated against active participation in the post-natal period. One had a job involving a long commute and an extra work-load during the first few weeks after the baby's birth. The other had a wife who did almost all the infant care. He was also a student as well as working full-time. Another expressive style father felt very awkward in handling the new born and did not participate much in the baby's care.

The data indicate that proportionately more men in the Expressive group demonstrated indicators of integration of their experience into the self concepts as father than in the Observer and Instrumental groups in

all three phases. However, in the postnatal phase, the men in the Observer and Instrumental groups who spent most time with their babies and were involved in their physical care had more indicators of integration than the men in these groups who did not participate as much.

This beginning attempt to extend May's concept of detachment/involvement styles in pregnancy to the postnatal period has raised more questions than it has answered. Can it be that the involvement style taps emotional dimensions specific to pregnancy that are not necessarily indicators for post-natal involvement in infant care? In Russell's study (1978), using Bem's masculinity-femininity scales, it was shown that men who had androgenous personality structures (high masculinity - high femininity) were more involved in day-to-day care activities with their babies than men classified as masculine. What relationship does May's detachment/involvement styles in pregnancy have to do with how men internalize gender role behaviors? In the present study, the men who appeared to have the least rigid sex role boundaries participated most in infant care.

Pederson (1985) has developed a model for the study of fathers which is based not on a normative-crisis or timing of events model. His model fits most closely to what was attempted in this study -- to look at the experience from the father's perspective and to identify the factors that make for successful integration. Pederson's model is presented on the following page:

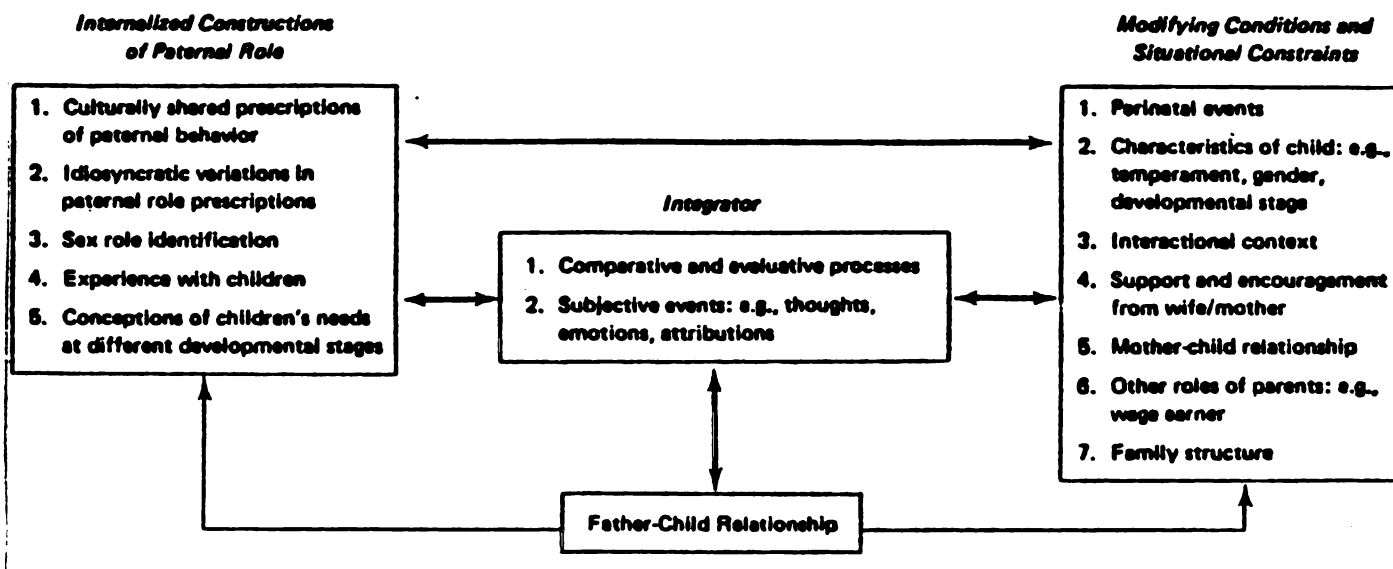


Figure 19.1: Rudiments of an Eclectic Theory of Pluralistic Fatherhood

(Pederson, 1985, p. 441).

Pederson discusses the need for some kind of "integrator" mechanism to reconcile discrepancies between role constructions (in left hand box) and situational constraints (in the right hand box). He states that a comparative or information-processing function is necessary to evaluate "the applicability of one's behavior repertoire to what is judged to be most appropriate in a given situation" (Peterson, 1985, p. 439). In this study, the integration process serves the function of comparing and evaluating information from the work that is being done. What has been described as emotional, perceptual, and fantasy work could also be seen as "subjective events" (2. in the integrator box) which fuel the integrator



mechanism. Readiness work, protective work, and the Involvement typology would belong in the Internalized Constructions of Paternal Role. Affiliative work could be subsumed under Modifying Conditions and Situational Constraints.

Thus, all of the elements of the substantive theory presented in this report fit into Pederson's model (Pederson, 1985). The action and interaction described in the work of the father in the transition period from late pregnancy through the early postnatal phase are also compatible with Pederson's idea of the "dynamic, transactional character of most behavior" (Pederson, 1985, p. 439).

The next sections will deal with the implications of this study for clinical practice, followed by the implications for education programs, social policy change, and further research. The chapter will end with a short summary of the substantive theory developed in this report.

#### Implications for Clinical Practice

The diversity of the men's experiences in this study in the integration process and work involved in becoming a first-time father should caution health care professionals to avoid expecting certain behaviors of all fathers. Not all men are ready, willing, or able to be highly involved and fully participating fathers. Some of the constraints identified have to do with age, level of maturity, level of education, type of work, social support

systems, and most important of all, the relationship with the wife. What this study implies most clearly for health professionals is the necessity of including the father in assessments during pregnancy. Without such information, the needs of the father cannot be met, the status of the couple relationship ascertained, nor care plans devised to enable both the man and the woman to have the most healthful experience during the pregnancy.

Childbirth education is of great value in preparing couples for labor. What is missing is preparing them for parenthood and their relationship after the baby is born. The fathers in this study felt they were very well prepared for the labor and delivery experience, had learned enough about infant care to get them through the first weeks, but had no information about life for the couple after the birth of the baby. Childbirth educators need to acknowledge the importance of the labor and delivery experience for the man, not just focus on his role as coach.

During the labor and delivery experience, most of the father's contact with health professionals is with the nurse. The findings in this study indicate the pivotal role the nurse plays in making the experience a positive one for the couple in labor. Nurses need to develop skills in assessing the father's readiness to participate fully as labor coach. Making the assumption that because the father has attended childbirth preparation classes he

is ready to be a labor coach is not valid. This study indicates how much support the father needs in labor and that such support can come from a friend or relative as well as from the nurse. In emergency situations, concern needs to be shown for the father's needs as well. He needs information, explanation, reassurance, and the opportunity to talk about what is happening.

With the tendency toward early discharge from the hospital after having a baby, there is little opportunity for extensive educational programs on infant care for either parent. This study indicates that the father needs information about the responsive cues of the baby as well as the "nuts and bolts" of changing diapers, burping, etc. An assessment of the couple's plans for father participation in infant care should to be made. Without such an assessment, the father may be encouraged to participate more actively than the couple has decided he would. This study indicates that participation by the father in the physical care of his child may be important in the early development of a relationship between them.

Recognizing that men currently have a large deficit in their readiness for the realities of parenthood, special educational programs to meet their needs are required during pregnancy and the early parenting period. "Fathers Only" classes have been found helpful. Men need to see other men interacting with and taking care of their babies. They need to practice fathering skills. Counseling services for fathers should be available during

pregnancy and early parenting. In this study, the four men who described the pregnancy experience as "miserable" would have benefited from such services.

The importance of the marital relationship during the early weeks of parenting cannot be overemphasized. Health professionals need to be aware of cues of marital dysfunction. Assessment of the marital relationship is important in the postnatal period. With early discharge, follow-up home services are needed to provide continuity of care. This study also indicates a knowledge deficit in the areas of birth control and sexual response in the postnatal period.

What is needed is a program of truly family centered care involving all members of the family equally. What has evolved is a system where the father is allowed to be present and frequently encouraged to participate, but his needs are rarely ascertained or met. It's almost as if he is being told, "It's all right for you to be here, but don't bother me." This study has indicated that some men need a great deal of support and counseling during the pregnancy. When four the men in this study (17%) described the pregnancy experience as miserable the need for support services for the pregnant father becomes more apparent. All of the men in this study indicated that they benefited from having an interested, concerned, knowledgeable person to whom to talk about their experiences.

### Implications for Educational Programs

The findings in this study indicate that many men want to be involved, participative fathers. Education for family life has not been high on the agenda in the education and socialization of boys in American society. The macho image is perpetuated although increasingly, more men are aware of this and the disservice it does in having them reach their full potential. These sex stereotypic behaviors impede men's being able to make intimate friends, especially with other men. This study indicated that the men had limited social supports systems for the most part.

In the educational system, there must be continued efforts towards non-sexist education on all levels. The support of sex-stereotypic roles by textbooks, teachers, and the media warrants elimination. Preparation for family living must be incorporated in curricula on all levels. Such courses need content, not only on sexuality and human reproduction, but on relationships, conflict resolution, problem-solving, leadership and building self esteem. The skills of negotiation are implicit in such programs.

Boys should to be introduced to the idea of men as nurturing human beings early on. There is also no reason why boys cannot be taught infant care skills. Programs where this has been done have proved very successful with fifth and sixth grade boys. Boys need to grow up with the idea that parenting and child rearing are experiences to

be shared equally by the father and the mother.

### Implications for Social Policy Change

The findings in this study indicated that many men would like to spend a protracted period of time at home with their families after the birth of their babies.

Financial and job constraints made this impossible.

In the public sphere, social policies that enhance the family need to be implemented. The United States, of all the industrial countries, has no family policy.

Needed social policies include: parental leaves after birth, opportunities for part-time work for fathers and mothers when their children are young without loss of benefits or deterring of careers, opportunities for job sharing and for flexible work schedules.

In this study, two of the women had returned part time to out-of-home work at three weeks, and four others were back at work at six weeks. This represents 26% of the sample. In addition, seven more women were planning to return to work from two months to one year after the birth of their babies. This constitutes 56% of the sample of women who are planning to go back to work within the baby's first year. In Fein's study (1974), only one woman out of thirty (3%) had returned to work by six weeks, while five others planned to do so sometime within the first year. This constitutes 20% of Fein's sample of women and shows very vividly the increase in the number of women with very young children in the labor force. It

also demonstrates the need for affordable, reliable, safe child care.

Ideally, child care programs would be voluntary, have flexible hours, be non-sexist, and developmental in nature. Child care care programs need to be developed in places of employment. Although some changes have taken place along these lines in the United States, progress has been painfully slow. Good models of parental support programs have been developed in countries like Sweden and France. The influx of women with very young children into the work force has created a vacuum in the need for child care in the United States.

In this study, men participated in varying amounts in infant care and housework during the first six weeks after the birth of their first babies. However, studies indicate that the amount of child care and housework done by men in the dual earner families does not vary significantly from that done in wife-at-home situations (Benokraitis, 1985).

#### Implications for Research

The findings of this study have raised many questions that suggest further research related to fathers.

1. What type of support systems do pregnant fathers need?
2. What type of support is needed by men during the labor and delivery experience?

3. How can health care personnel be made more aware of the impact of labor and the birth on men?
4. How can health care professionals meet the needs of men during pregnancy, labor and delivery, and the postnatal periods?
5. What effect does moving the mother from labor room to delivery room have on the role and involvement of the father?
6. How can women be encouraged to share child care?
7. What additional education in parenting skills do men need?
8. Can men be trained to recognize subtle cues, such as those given by the new born?
9. What implications does the father's sex role definition have for how involved he is in infant care? In older child care?
10. What implications for later father-child relationships does father involvement in infant care have?
11. What relationship does feeling "let down" in the postnatal period have to feeling "left out?"
12. What is the effect of the marital relationship on the father-child relationship?

In summary, this report has presented a substantive



theory of the integration process for first-time fathers, during the transition from late pregnancy through the six weeks after the birth of the baby, in which work is done to integrate the experiences into the self concept as father. The types of work are affiliative, perceptual, protective, readiness, fantasy, and emotional.

Affiliative work was predominant in all three phases and became even more important in the postnatal phase. In affiliative work, the relationship with the wife was the most salient. Although there were many variables involved in the integrating of the experiences in all three phases, the one that predominated was the quality of the marital relationship. The implications of the findings for health professionals, educational programs, and social policy have been presented, as well as some suggestions for further research on fathers.

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**Jeanette D. Hines**

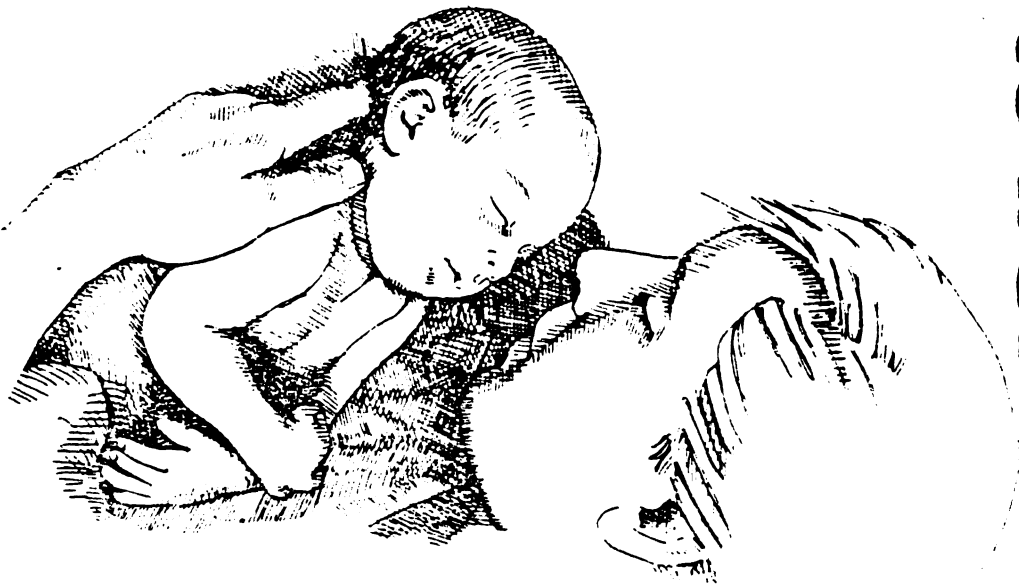
San Diego, CA 92119

**About the Investigator**

Jeanette D. Hines is a registered nurse by profession. She has been a childbirth and parent educator as well as a teacher of nursing for many years.

Currently she is on the faculty of the School of Nursing at San Diego State University. Jeanette is also a doctoral student in the Doctor of Nursing Science program at the University of California, San Francisco. This study is part of her doctoral program.

# First time Father to be?



Learn more about the study

**Call**

# You're Needed!

**For:** A research study on first time fathers during the first six weeks of parenting.

## How much time?

Interviews will be 1 - 1 1/2 hours in length conducted by Jeanette D. Hines, doctoral candidate at the University of California, San Francisco.  
(See back)

**Why:** Very little is known about fathers. Although a lot has been written about family centered care, little research has been done on fathering.

## Where:

Interviews will be conducted in the father's homes at their convenience. Fathers will be interviewed alone but are free to discuss the interview with their spouses.

## APPENDIX A

**Who:** First time fathers to be.  
Minimum high school graduation or equivalent.  
Last trimester of pregnancy.  
English speaking.  
Married or living together at least one year prior to pregnancy.

## What will

## participants get out of it?

There are no direct benefits to men who participate beyond helping to increase knowledge about fathers and fathering.

## What:

1. Four interviews.
1. During last month of pregnancy.
2. Two to three days after birth of baby.
3. Three weeks after birth.
4. Six weeks after birth.

**How to get more information:**

**Call**

**Yes**, I am definitely interested in participating in this study.

**Yes**, I am interested in this study but want more information about it.

Please call me...

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

(Hours that are convenient to you.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please fill in, cut off, and mail in right away!**

APPENDIX B  
Demographic Data: Men

Men	Age	Yrs. Rd.	Occupation	Income*	Race	Marital Status	How Long	FXC	Health Care Provider	Place of Birth	Childbirth Prep. Classes	Parenting Classes
	31	16	Chemical Worker	5	Other	Married	1 yr	8-9-84	Kaiser	Kaiser	Yes	No
	31	18	IK Rep	6	Caucasian	Married	4 yrs	8-1-84	Kaiser	Kaiser	Yes	No
	29	16	US Naval Officer	6	Caucasian	Married	1.5 yrs	8-10-84	Kaiser	Kaiser	Yes	No
	34	16	Landscape Arch.	6	Caucasian	Married	6 yrs	8-21-84	Pri. Phy.	Scrripps Hosp.	Yes	No
	32	18	Internal Auditor	6	Caucasian	Married	2 1/2 yrs	8-5-84	Pri. Phy.	UCSD Med Ctr.	Yes	No
	31	15	Hall Carrier	6	Caucasian	Married	6 yrs	8-5-84	Kaiser	Kaiser	Yes	No
	36	None	Attorney	6	Caucasian	Married	1 yr	8-7-84	Kaiser	Kaiser	Yes	No
	34	None	Lawyer	6	Caucasian	Married	6 yrs	8-20-84	Pri. Phy.	Scrripps	Yes	No
	23	12	Heating/Air Cond	3	Caucasian	Married	2.5 yrs	8-22-84	Kaiser	Kaiser	Yes	No
	10	16	Computer Sales	6	Caucasian	Married	4 1/2 yrs	9-6-84	Pri. Phy.	Scrripps	Yes	No
	11	16	Writer	6	Caucasian	Married	3 yrs	8-28-84	Kaiser	Kaiser	Yes	No
	35	16	CPA-Controller	6	Caucasian	Married	1 yr	8-11-84	Pri. Phy.	Mercy	Yes	No
	28	16	Contractor	5	Caucasian	Married	1.5 yrs	8-22-84	Pri. Phy.	Scrripps-LJ	Yes	No
	29	15	Business Owner	6	Caucasian	Married	3 yrs	8-15-84	Pri. Phy.	Grossmont	Yes	No
	14	15	Clerical Clerk	4	Caucasian	Married	2 1/2 yrs	9-11-84	Kaiser	Scrripps-LJ	Yes	No
	25	14	Landscape Arch	4	Caucasian	Married	1 yr	9-15-84	Pri. Phy.	Kaiser	Yes	No
	31	16	Cost Analyst	4	Caucasian	Married	3 1/2 yrs	9-12-84	Kaiser	Kaiser	Yes	No
	17	14	Scientific Pyrmer	5	Asian	Married	1.5 yrs	8-31-84	Pri. Phy.	Ray General	Yes	No
	25	16	Building Dev.	6	Caucasian	Married	4 yrs	9-4-84	Kaiser	Kaiser	Yes	No
	26	14	Clock Repairman	3	Caucasian	Married	4.5 yrs	9-8-84	Pri. Phy.	Sharp	Yes	No
	27	12	Order Filler	4	Caucasian	Married	3 yrs	10-2-84	Pri. Phy.	Sharp	Yes	No
	24	12	Ctr. Bld. Designer	4	Caucasian	Married	1 yr	10-20-84	Pri. Phy.	Grossmont	Yes	No
	22	14	Graphic Artist	4	Caucasian	Married	1 yr	10-7-84	Pri. Phy.	Mercy	Yes	No
	23	15		5	Caucasian	Married	1 yr					No

## \*Key-Income

1. Less than \$4, 999
2. 5,000-9, 999
3. 10,000-14, 999
4. 15,000-19, 999
5. 20,000-24, 999
6. Over 25,000



APPENDIX C  
Demographic Data: Women

Women	Age	Yrs. Ed.	Occupation	Income*	Race	Marital Status	How Long Currently Working	How Long Expected to Work	Planning to Work After Baby	How Soon	Breast Feeding
1	27	14	RN	5	Caucasian	Married	1 yr	No		4 mos	Yes
2	26	12	Housewife		Caucasian	Married	4 yrs	No	?		Yes
3	29	18	Teacher	5	Caucasian	Married	1.5 yrs	No	Yes	4-6 wks	Yes
4	29	14	Arch. Illustrator	3	Caucasian	Married	6 yrs	Yes	2 wks pre-delivery	3 mos	Yes
5	30	13	LVN	6	Caucasian	Married	2 1/2 yrs	No	Yes	5 mos	Yes
6	27	15	Teacher's Aide	1	Caucasian	Married	6 yrs	No	No		Yes
7	7	13	Computer Programmer	6	Caucasian	Married	1 yr	No	?		No
8	33	18	Teacher	6	Caucasian	Married	6 yrs	No	No	1 yr	Yes
9	24	12	Homemaker	4	Hispanic	Married	2.5 yrs	No			Yes
10	30	16	X-Ray Tech	4	Caucasian	Married	4 1/2 yrs	Yes	Until I lose Interest (never) To the day	3 mos	Yes
11	39	More	School Psych.	6	Caucasian	Married	3 yrs	No		2-3 yrs	Yes
12	26	14	Travel Agent	5	Caucasian	Married	1 yr	Yes		2 mos	Yes
13	29	15	Construct. Est.	2	Caucasian	Married	1.5 yrs	Yes		?	Yes
14	21	12	Kennel Manager	6	Caucasian	Married	3 yrs	Yes	1 wk before due	Yes	Yes
15	23	13	Order Processor	5	Caucasian	Married	2 1/2 yrs	Yes	To due date	3 mos	Yes
16	31	15	Dental Asst./Stu.	4	Caucasian	Married	1 yr	No	1 wk before	2-3 yrs	Yes
17	25	13	Data Proc. Suprvsr	4	Caucasian	Married	3 1/2 yrs	Yes	2 weeks	Yes	Yes
18	23	16	Housewife		Other	Married	1.5 yrs	No		6-8 yrs	Yes
19	24	16	Escrow Officer	3	Caucasian	Married	4 yrs	No		4-6 wks	Yes
20	30	16	Accountant	3	Hispanic	Married	4.5 yrs	Yes		Yes	Yes
21	24	14	Bookkeeper	4	Caucasian	Married	3 yrs	Yes	Until due date	3 yrs	Yes
22	24	11	Homemaker		Caucasian	Married	1 yr	No	1 wk pre-delivery	Yes	Yes
23	25	14	Housewife	1	Caucasian	Married	1 yr	No		No	Yes

## \*Key-Income

1. Less than \$4, 999
2. 5,000-9, 999
3. 10, 000-14, 999
4. 15, 000-19, 999
5. 20, 000-24, 999
6. Over 25, 000

## APPENDIX D

First Interview. 4-6 weeks prior to anticipated birth of baby.

1. Can you describe to me what your experience has been during this pregnancy?
2. Can you tell me about the time you first learned you were going to be a father?
  - a. Was the pregnancy planned?
  - b. Had you used birth control? What kind?
  - c. Were you involved in making the decision to become pregnant at this time?
  - d. What was your reaction when you found out your wife (partner) was pregnant?
3. How would you classify your finances generally?
 

Awful \_\_\_\_\_ OK, about what you can expect nowadays \_\_\_\_\_ Fine, no problems \_\_\_\_\_
4. Did you attend childbirth classes (at least 1/2 series) with your partner?
  - a. If yes, what kind of classes did you attend?
  - b. If yes, why?
  - c. If no, why not?
  - d. How much pressure from your partner did you feel to attend classes?
  - e. Did you get anything out of going to the classes? What?
5. Have you and your partner attended any parenting classes?
6. Which of the following statements best describes how you responded to the pregnancy overall?
  - a. I was pretty much an observer during the pregnancy.
  - b. I took care of a lot of things for my partner because she was pregnant.

- c. I experienced a lot of new emotions because of the pregnancy.
7. How long ago did you decide you would be a parent?
8. What do you recall about your own parents while you were growing up?
  - a. To which parent did you feel closer as a child?
  - b. To which parent do you feel closer now?
  - c. How much will you be like your father or mother?
9. In your relationship with your partner, have there been any changes because of the pregnancy?
  - a. How has the relationship changed?
10. Do you feel that you have changed during the pregnancy?
  - a. How have you changed?
11. How has your health been during the pregnancy?
  - a. have you had any physical symptoms?
  - b. Have you gained any weight?
  - c. Do you feel you are more tense or anxious than before the pregnancy? Do you have any particular fears or worries?
  - d. How about your love life?
12. Are you planning to be present at the labor? At the delivery?
13. What preparations, if any, have you made for the baby at home?
14. Have you had any previous experiences with babies and/or children?
  - a. What kind?
  - b. When?
15. Do you have any preferences about the sex of the baby?
  - a. Do you have names picked out?
16. What changes, if any, do you expect in your life as a

result of becoming a parent?

17. What kinds of things do you anticipate doing after the baby is born?
18. have you and your partner talked about how you are going to manage things after the baby is born?
19. Do you have family (parents, siblings) or friends you can call on after the baby is born?
20. Do you feel prepared to be a father?

## APPENDIX E

Second Interview: 2-3 days after birth

1. Can you describe in as much detail as you can remember your feelings and experience from the time you knew your wife (partner) was in labor?

If the following are not covered in response to 1., they will be raised by the interviewer:

2. What was the labor like?
  - a. Was medication used during labor? Kind?
  - b. How long was the labor?
3. Were you with your partner for part or all of labor?
  - a. What role did you play in labor?
4. How much pressure did you feel from your partner to be there in labor?
5. What was your overall response to labor?
6. What was the delivery like? (Vaginal, cesarean, forceps)?
7. Were you in the delivery room for the birth?
  - a. When did you decide to attend the birth? (Before pregnancy, during pregnancy, during labor)?
  - b. What role did you play in the delivery?
8. How much pressure did you feel from your partner to attend the birth?
9. When did you hold the baby for the first time?
  - a. What was that like for you?
  - b. What was your reaction to the sex of the baby?
10. Did you feel prepared for the labor and delivery experience?
  - a. How do you think you could have been better prepared?
11. Did you feel any different about yourself after the birth experience? How?



## APPENDIX F

Third Interview: 3 weeks after birth

1. Can you describe in as much detail as you can remember your experiences in the last three weeks?  
  
If the following are not covered in response to 1., they will be raised by the interviewer:
2. What was it like coming home?
3. Who, if anybody, gave you help and support?
4. How are these first three weeks compared to how you thought it would be?
5. How are you and your partner handling: sleeping at night, night feedings, eating, time together?
6. Has your relationship with your partner changed since the birth of the baby? How?
  - a. Are there more or less disagreements than before the birth?
  - b. How do you handle the disagreements?
7. How much time did you spend at work the week after the birth of the baby? The second? The third?
8. Describe what you did yesterday from the time you got up until you went to bed. Would you consider this a fairly typical day?
9. How much time do you spend taking care of the baby? Doing housework?
10. What's your relationship with the baby like?
11. Do you feel different since the birth of the baby? How?
12. Have you attended any post partum classes? Would you go if they were available?
13. What are the things that concern you most right now?
14. In general, how is your life different since the birth of the baby?
15. How would you describe the state of your health right now?





## APPENDIX G

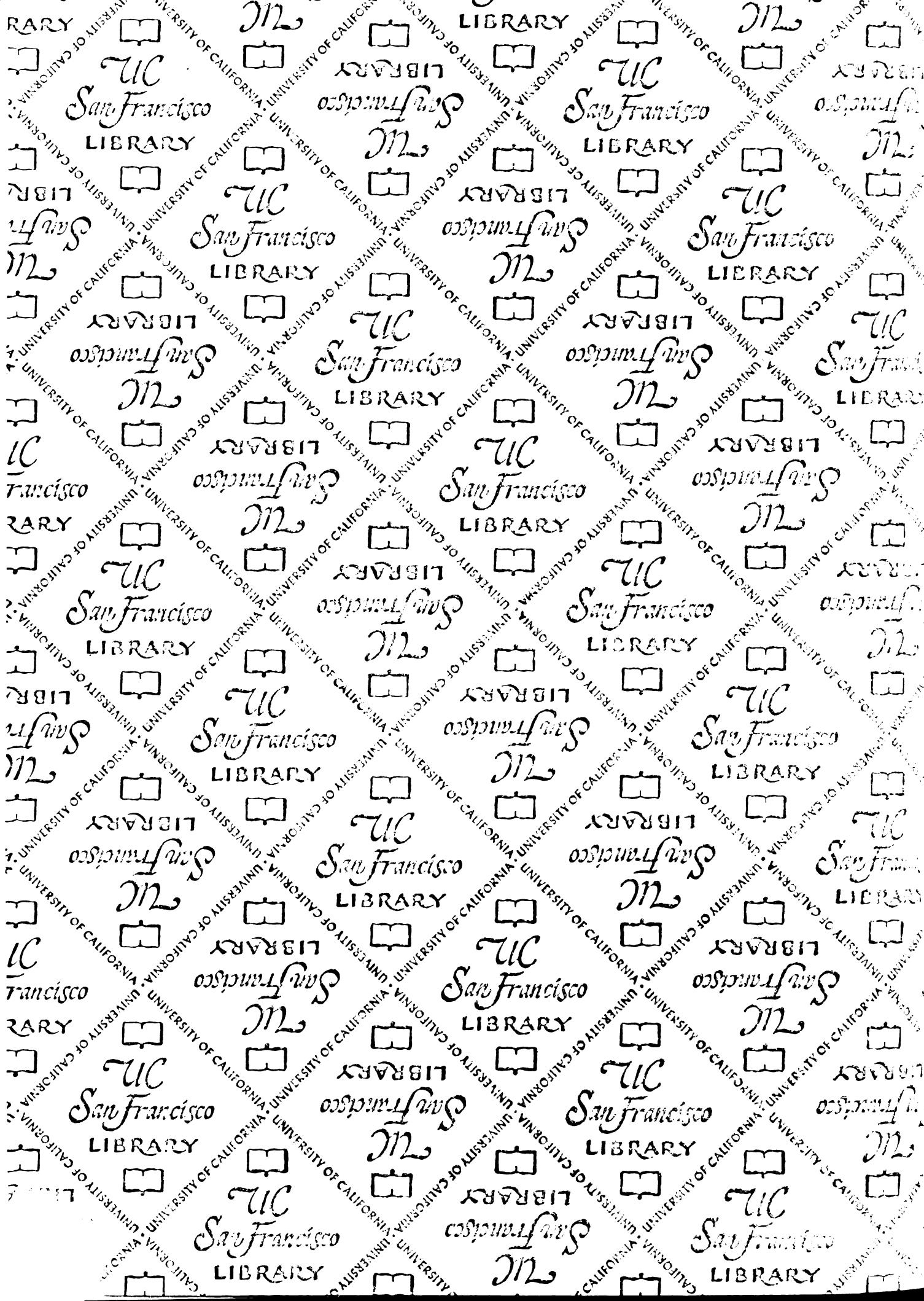
Fourth Interview: 6 weeks after birth.

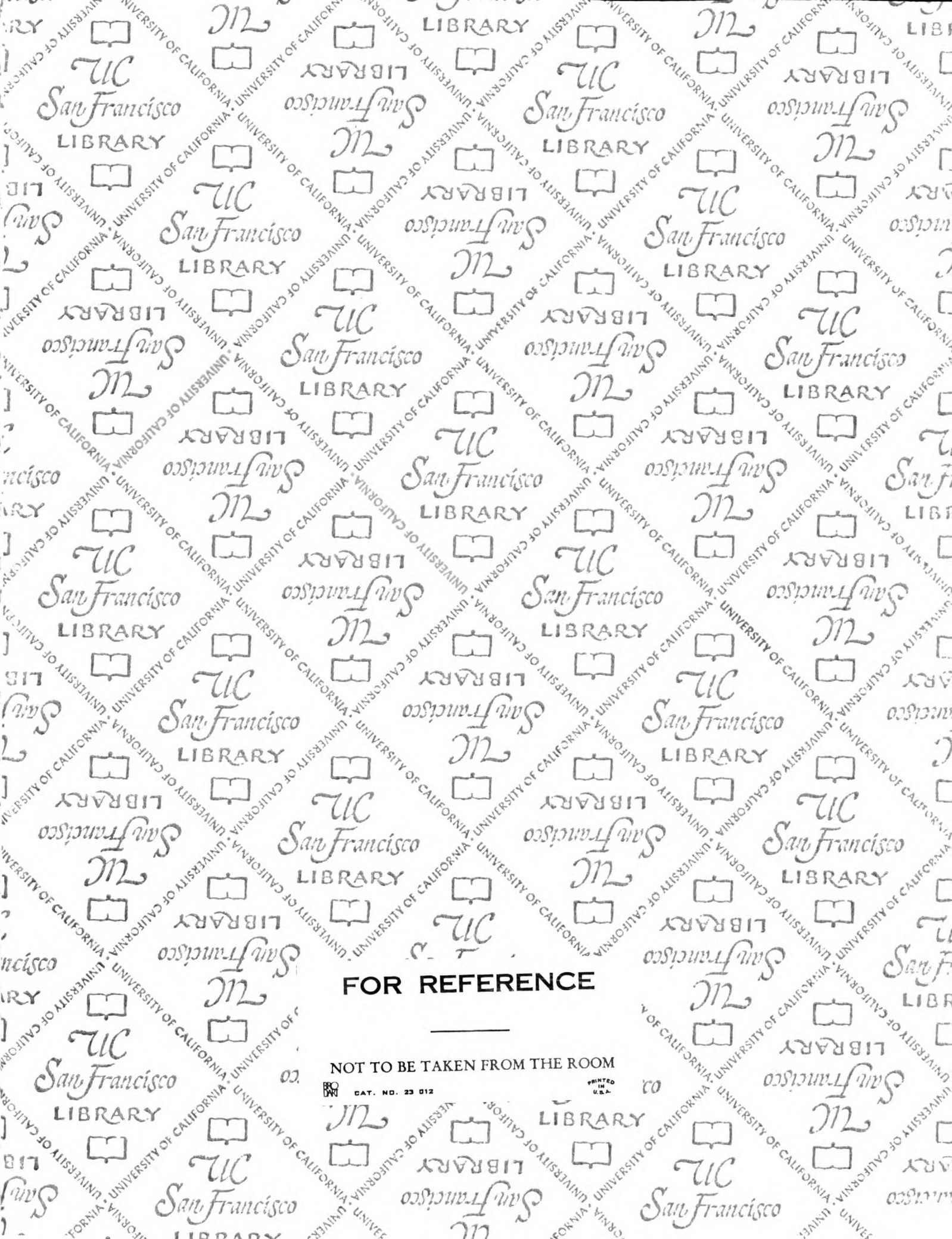
1. Can you describe in as much detail as you can remembering your experiences in the last three weeks?  
  
If the following are not covered in response to 1., they will be raised by the interviewer.
2. How have these past three weeks been different from the first three weeks after birth?
3. What's your relationship with your partner like now?
  - a. Do you have enough time together?
4. What's your relationship with your baby now?
  - a. Does the baby seem real to you?
  - b. Have you felt that the breastfeeding interfered with your establishing a relationship with your baby?
  - c. Have you found yourself fantasizing about the baby?
5. What have been your needs in the past six weeks?
  - a. How have you been able to meet them?
  - b. Have you felt left out?
6. Describe what you did yesterday.
  - a. Was this a fairly typical day?
7. How is your life going right now?
  - a. Do you spend more or less time at work than during the first three weeks? Than before the baby was born?
  - b. How would you have your life be different?
8. What kind of changes have there been in your life in the past three weeks?
9. What kind of changes have there been in your life after the birth?
10. Do you see yourself as a father?
  - a. Do you feel like a father?

11. What kinds of things do you wish you have known beforehand that might have made the last six weeks easier?
12. What advice would you give first time fathers?
13. How would you describe the state of your health right now?
  - a. Have you resumed sexual relations?
14. What is the central concern in your life right now?

Questions 15 - 18 relate to participation in the study.

15. Why did you decide to participate in the study?
16. What, if anything, did you get out of participating in the study?
17. What kinds of things could I have done to get at your experiences more easily these past six weeks?
18. Could you have talked more freely and openly if I were a man?





**FOR REFERENCE**



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