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THE DISPERSION OF KINSHIP IN MODERN SOCIETY:
CONTEMPORARY DATA AND HISTORICAL SPECULATION*

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THE DISPERSION OF KINSHIP IN
MODERN SOCIETY: CONTEMPORARY DATA AND HISTORICAL SPECULATION

by Claude S. Fischer

How has "modern society" altered kin solidarity? Students of household structure have come far in answering this question, but, as Laslett (1977) admits, not yet far enough. Household composition does not tell us about the location of kin, nor about the nature of relations with kin. Hareven notes:

Historians' concentration on the household has led to a restricted definition of the "functions" of the family to the household, thereby overlooking functions of extended family members who did not reside with the nuclear family. . . .

This emphasis has reinforced the confusion of household with family and . . . has confined most of the analysis of family structure to the household unit. Historical scholarship has thus contributed inadvertently to the myth of the "isolated nuclear family" in modern urban society. . . (1978: p. 152; see also Stone, 1981).

I hope in this paper to contribute to our understanding of historical developments in the extended family in two ways: by developing a picture of contemporary American kinship networks and by using that picture to The issue is by now familiar: Did industrialization, urbanization, and "modernization" isolate the nuclear family and reduce the functional role of

kinship? Or, do extended kin ties persist -- albeit in altered form, spatially extended, mobile, voluntaristic, and so on?

This paper will address that debate in two parts. Part I presents descriptive data on the kinship patterns of almost 1,000 adults living in northern California in 1977: the geographical distribution of the relatives whom they described as being active or important in their lives; the social characteristics of respondents that were associated with various patterns of spatial distribution; the kinds of interactions respondents reported having with their extra-household kin; and the role of distance in shaping those interactions. The findings described here should serve as a benchmark for comparisons to data collected in earlier periods; and they should shed some light on the sorts of factors that influence kinship distribution and function. The text of this paper summarizes the statistical analyses; the Technical Appendix presents the detail. Part II of the paper is speculative. It briefly reviews three possible ways of explaining the development of contemporary kinship patterns: industrialization, cultural change, and the growth of transportation and communication technologies.

PART I: EXTENDED KIN IN 1977 -- LOCATIONS AND RELATIONS

There are several empirical studies of modern North American kinship ties that precede and inform this one (e.g., Litwak, 1960; Litwak and Szelenyi, 1969; Adams, 1968; Klatzky, n.d.; Shulman, 1976; Wellman, 1977, 1979; Fischer et al., 1977; Shanas, 1979, and Goode, 1973, provide good summaries). A fair conclusion from these studies is the persistence of kinship interaction and mutual support in spite of considerable geographic

separation. For example, a 1966 national survey found that fewer than half of men's fathers lived in the same city as they did; even fewer of the more genealogically distant male relatives lived nearby. Contact was limited to about once a week with fathers, less often with other relatives (Klatzky, n.d.). Yet, the thrust of the research is that support is forthcoming even when contact is sporadic, and it is especially forthcoming in situations of crisis that demand considerable sacrifice from the help-giver (see, e.g., Litwak and Szelenyi, 1969). Adams (1968) qualifies this conclusion by contending that contact with and support of distant kin is largely limited to ascendant and descendant kin of orientation -- parents and children. Siblings, cousins, and other relatives living far away are not, in fact, significant in people's lives. The survey reported here enlarges and details the picture we have of the contemporary family.

Sample and Study Procedure. More detailed presentations of this study's procedure and of its statistical results are provided in the technical appendix. From August 1977 to February 1978, we interviewed over 1,000 adults living in, or within 200 miles to the north and east of, San Francisco. (For the original purposes of the study, the sample was weighted toward the smaller cities and towns of the region, but that bias has been counter-weighted in the present analysis.) For this paper, only heads of households, their spouses, and primary individuals have been included; i.e., dependents of the household head -- other than a spouse -- are excluded.¹ This yields an operational sample of 991 respondents, of

1. This largely eliminates adolescents and other dependents whose contact with extra-household kin were probably controlled by parents and caretakers. The results thus more closely approximate those using households as the units of analysis.

whom: 50 percent were married, 20 percent separated or divorced, eight percent widowed, and 22 percent never-married, although some of the nominally unmarried were cohabiting; the great bulk were Anglos (three percent black and four percent Mexican-American); the average age was 41; the average educational level was one or two years of college; 52 percent were Protestant and 30 percent Catholic; and the average length of residence in the community was seven years (eight percent had arrived in the previous six months and eight percent had always lived there).

We found out about these respondents' relatives in a somewhat uncommon manner. We did not obtain and inventory of their kin. Instead, we asked a series of questions designed to elicit the names of the people with whom respondents had engaged in various activities or from whom they received various sorts of aid. These questions covered topics such as who would care for their homes if they went out of town for a visit, with whom they discuss work problems, with whom they chat about favorite hobbies, from whom they could borrow money, and so on. (See Technical Appendix.) After compiling a list of all the names given in response (mean = 13.5), interviewers asked respondents to add the names of anyone else "important" to them, yielding a total, on the average, of 18.5 names.² With full list in hand, respondents then described each named person, specifying in the process the nature of any kinship tie. In the end, respondents identified a (weighted) mean of 6.5 relatives living outside their own households. This is, of course, far fewer than the number identified by inventories, such as the average of 39 counted by Adams (1968). The latter counts include minor

2. Kin were especially likely to be added in answer to the supplemental question.

children of adult relatives, long-lost kin, and the like. Cur 6.5 include only kin interacting with respondents and/or felt to be "important."

The roughly 6500 kin identified by our roughly 1000 respondents form the basic population for the following analysis. At a few points, however, I will refer to a smaller sample of kin -- a subset averaging 1.4 per respondent -- about whom we asked a series of additional questions, such as what specific city they lived in.

Three particular limitations of the northern California data should be kept in mind:

- (1) Respondents listed only active or "important" kin; analysis of those kin necessarily excludes relatives whom respondents forgot or disregarded.
- (2) We have only a limited record of respondents' careers of residential mobility; we do not know how far or how often they have moved.
- (3) The survey is, of course, cross-sectional; historical change must be inferred on the basis of charitable assumptions.

The Spatial Distribution of Kin

Table 1 presents results that indicate, in various ways, the extent of spatial concentration or dispersion of kin, crosstabulated, for illustrative purposes, by the educational level of the respondent. The first panel of figures are derived from the only inventory-like question we asked:

Do you have any immediate family -- such as parents, children, brothers or sisters, or in-laws -- living in this area, that is within about an hour's drive of here? [If Yes:] Counting adults only, about how many of your (and your spouse's) relatives live in this area -- just one or two, 3 to 6, or more than that ? I mean individuals, not couples.

The entries are the percentages of respondents giving each answer. Thirty percent of all respondents reported no immediate family nearby; a majority reported fewer than three such adult relatives (column labeled Total). The table also shows that education was substantially associated with lack of nearby kin: Nearly half of the respondents with more than a college degree estimated no immediate kin nearby, compared to about a fifth of those who completed only grade school.

A fuller analysis (Technical Appendix, Table APP-1) indicates that several respondent characteristics each independently predicts the estimated number of kin. Residential mobility was, of course, important: Respondents who had been raised nearby or at least in the Pacific region and respondents who had lived in their current communities a long time estimated more kin. Younger respondents reported higher figures, probably because they had made fewer residential moves in their lives. Married respondents estimated more kin, for obvious reasons. And, all these held constant, the more education a respondent had, the fewer kin he or she estimated.

The second panel of Table 1 presents counts of the relatives respondents actually named in answer to the aid and activity questions.³ For

3. Rather than analyze the full sample of 6,500 named relatives, I used a random 20 percent subsample, about 1,300.

Table 1. The Spatial Distribution of Kin, by Education of Respondent^a

		EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT OF RESPONDENT					TOTAL
		<H.S. Grad.	H.S. Grad.	Some Coll.	Coll. Grad.	Post- Grad.	
		-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
		N = (125)	(302)	(273)	(125)	(166)	(991)
ESTIMATED NUMBER OF IMMEDIATE KIN IN AREA ^b							
	0	21%	26%	26%	38%	46%	30%
	1 or 2	22	19	26	25	21	22
	3 to 6	30	30	23	21	20	25
	Over 6	26	24	25	16	12	22
NUMBER OF KIN SPECIFICALLY NAMED ^c							
Living Within a 5-Minute Drive							
	0	42%	54%	59%	72%	74%	59%
	1 or 2	35	26	26	22	17	25
	3 to 6	16	15	11	7	9	12
	Over 6	7	5	4	0	0	4
	(Mean =)	(2.0)	(1.5)	(1.2)	(.6)	(.6)	(1.2)
Living Over 1 Hour's Drive Away							
	0	39%	31%	28%	22%	21%	28%
	1 or 2	23	24	31	29	25	27
	3 to 6	23	30	26	30	36	29
	Over 6	15	15	15	19	18	16
	(Mean =)	(2.4)	(3.0)	(2.5)	(3.7)	(3.7)	(3.1)
AVERAGE NUMBER OF KIN SPECIFICALLY NAMED, BY DISTANCE							
Parents:	Within One Hour	.5	.5	.5	.4	.4	.5
	Over One Hour	.3	.4	.5	.3	.6	.4
Children:	Within One Hour	1.3	.6	.5	.2	.1	.5
	Over One Hour	.6	.5	.2	.4	.3	.4
Siblings:	Within One Hour	.6	1.0	.7	.5	.3	.7
	Over One Hour	.7	.6	.9	.9	.9	.8
Uncles, Aunts, Cousins,							
Nephews, Nieces:	In One Hour	.5	.5	.5	.4	.2	.4
	Over One Hour	.4	.4	.5	.4	.8	.5
Parents-In-Law:	In One Hour	.3	.2	.2	.2	.1	.2
	Over One Hour	.1	.1	.3	.1	.2	.2
Other In-Laws:	In One Hour	1.1	.9	.5	.3	.3	.7
	Over One Hour	.6	.6	.5	.8	.4	.6

-
- a. Includes only respondents who were heads of households, spouses, or primary individuals; weighted to approximate true population distribution of English-speakers in non-black urban places. Post-graduate education includes any courses or degrees beyond college.
- b. Answers to general question asking for an estimate of how many adults from respondents' immediate families lived within about a one hour's drive (see text).
- c. Statistics based on a twenty percent random sample of the approximately 6,500 kin outside the household actually named by the 991 respondents.

legibility, I have divided the numbers into the same four categories, but these, unlike the top panel tabulations, also include more distant kin and minors. The spatial division shown here is derived from asking respondents the following questions as they looked at the list of names they had given:

Which of the people on this list (other than the people who live here with you) live within about a five-minute drive from here ? [If necessary: Within a mile.]

Which of the people on this list live outside this area, that is, more than an hour's drive from here? [If necessary: 30 to 40 miles.]⁴

Note, again: These numbers only include those relatives whom respondents felt important enough to them to tell us about. We do not know their entire "true" kin networks, so we cannot say what proportion of all their actual kin are represented by the cited relatives.

Almost three in five respondents named no relatives living within five minutes' drive of them; only one in six named more than two such nearby kin. The average is 1.2. Once again, education makes a difference; there were hardly any respondents with college degrees who named more than two kin within five minutes of them. More complete statistical analyses show that respondents who named many nearby kin tended to be: long-term residents, younger, less educated, married, and living in less urban places (Table APP-1; these are independent contributing factors). Explanations for these and other findings will be offered below.

4. Pretest analyses suggest that, although respondents occasionally misclassified people by distance, they were at least approximately correct considerably more than 90 percent of the time.

(Factors predicting how many relatives respondents named who lived between five and sixty minutes' drive are similar to the ones predicting the number of kin within five minutes -- Table APP-1.)

The next panel of figures in Table 1 show the distribution of distant kin, those living over an hour's drive away. About half of the named kin, 3.1 on average, lived over an hour away, and almost half the respondents named at least three relatives living that far away. Simply put, these northern Californians' relatives tended to live outside of normal commuting distance.⁵ And the more educated named more such distant kin. Generally, naming many distant relatives was most commonly done by: newcomers to the city, married respondents, the more educated, and the older respondents (Table APP-1). Aside from marriage, these characteristics are the opposite of those typifying respondents with nearby kin.

The last panel of Table 1 presents the average numbers of specific types of relatives who lived either within or outside an one hour radius. For example, the mythical "average respondent" with less than a high school diploma named 0.5 parents living within an hour's drive and 0.3 parents living beyond. Although such fractions do not bring to mind real people, they do illustrate the general spatial tendencies. All types of relatives tended to divide roughly 50:50 on either side of the one hour mark, but that pattern varied greatly according to the educational level of the respondent. For instance, about 70 percent of the least educated interviewees' adult children lived within an hour, while roughly 25 percent of the most educated interviewees' children did.

5. It is quite likely that kin whom respondents had but did not name lived outside the area, too.

I conducted closer analyses for four categories of kin -- parents, children, siblings, and all in-laws -- to identify the characteristics of people with spatially dispersed versus spatially concentrated kinship networks. The factors that, *ceteris paribus*, appeared to most distinguish respondents whose relatives lived farther away tended to be: recent arrival in the city, age, being married, education, affluence, and urban residence (see Technical Appendix Table APP-2).

We do not actually have a record of respondents' residential mobility, but the relatives -- of whatever kind -- of respondents who had not been long in the community or who had ever lived elsewhere were more often located far away than were the relatives named by long-term and permanent residents. The greater the age of the respondent and/or the age of the relative named by the respondent, that more distant the relative. I suspect that this, too, reflects residential mobility, for the older either person, the greater the chances for them to have moved apart.

Being married is also important, but in contradictory ways. Married respondents tended to live farther from their parents than did unmarried ones, either because of neolocality, or because having moved away facilitates getting married, or both.⁶ But married respondents tended to live considerably nearer to their siblings than did the unmarried ones. Why is unclear. One possibility is that married respondents, absorbed with their spouses, children, and in-laws, "forget" to name their distant siblings (and thus we would have no record of the distant siblings). Or perhaps,

6. The separated-divorced are similar to the never-married in this respect, suggesting that marriage may stimulate moving away from and the break-up of marriage may stimulate returning to parents. This pattern probably varies by gender, but I did not have the opportunity to pursue that issue.

siblings tend to move near their married brothers and sisters.

The more educated the respondent, all else equal, the farther away the relatives he or she named tended to live (although the independent effect of education on the distance of parents was weak). This is a pattern others have also reported (e.g., Adams, 1968; Komarovsky, 1967; Allan, 1979), and several processes, singly or together, may explain it. One is the tendency of the better-educated to migrate farther than the less educated (Ritchey, 1976: 385) and to less often move to communities where their kin already reside (Tilly and Brown, 1974). This, in turn, may result from participation in a continental job market, or from the some adventurousness and social skillfulness associated with education, or both. Second, the relatives of the well-educated tend themselves to be well-educated, so that even if respondents have been stationary, their kin will have moved. A third possibility is a cultural difference in the valuing of kinship, so that the educated are more willing to disregard their geographically close relatives.⁷ This might be interpreted as a reflection of "modernity." And fourth, it may also be that the educated are better able to keep in touch with and call upon their distant kin than can the less educated. Some of the earlier studies using inventories of relatives lend weight to that possibility.⁸ (Income appears to play an additional role. Although level of

7. There was, in our sample, a modest association ($r = .10$) between respondents' educational levels and their willingness to say that living "close to their relatives and see[ing] them a lot" was not important. And there was a general tendency for the more educated to rely less on their relatives for aid and company than did the less educated (Fischer, 1982a: Pt. III).

8. The weak (independent) association between education and distance to parents can be interpreted as supportive of this contention, in the following way: Education discriminates those people who can keep in contact with separated kin, except if the kin are parents, because virtually everyone maintains ties to their parents.

income is associated with education, being affluent itself tended to mark respondents with distant parents and in-laws.)

Urban residents were also likelier to name distant relatives (except for siblings) than were otherwise similar respondents living in smaller communities. In this case, too, there are also probably a few factors involved (see Fischer, 1982a). One is selective migration. Migrants to large cities are less likely to have selected their communities because of relatives living there than are migrants to small towns; the former are more often motivated by economic or "life-style" considerations (see Fischer, 1982a: Ch. 3). And migrants to large cities typically move longer distances -- for example, from the East Coast -- than do migrants to small towns. Another reason may be the housing market: Small-town kin are more likely to be within five minutes of one another (if they are in the same community at all) than are residents of metropolitan areas, perhaps because housing is spatially concentrated. There probably is also something about the alternative opportunities for affiliation in urban life -- the associates, activities, and social worlds to choose from -- that may lead people to disregard nearby kin. And finally, urban residence, too, may produce or reflect a dimension of "modernity."

A rough sketch of the findings reported so far depicts a "typical" kinship network as spatially dispersed. Only about one-fifth of respondents' parents or adult children lived within five minutes' drive of them. About half of those kin lived beyond an hour's drive. Nearly 60 percent of the respondents named no relatives at all living within a five-minute driving radius of home. (Other types of kin -- in-laws, particularly -- lived a bit closer, but I suspect that this result only reflects people's

tendencies to simply not name the distant extended kin at all.) What these findings indicate about historical tendencies is not clear given an absence of comparable data, but the extent of the dispersion seems to be great in an absolute sense, and spatial dispersion appears to be more common in the more "modern" sectors of the population -- the educated and the urban.⁹

The Functions of Kin

What do kin do for one another ? What effect does distance have on those functions ?¹⁰ We can use the interview questions that elicited names as measures of the content of relations. We assume, for example, that people whom respondents named in answer to "Whose opinion do you consider seriously in making important decisions ?" were in fact counselors to those who named them.

Table 2 presents results with regard to four types of relational content: being available to lend money, providing advice, discussing personal matters, and companionate social activities. It also indicates whether or not kin were cited in answer to any specific question (the previous four or four others), the alternative being that they were named only in answer to the question, "Is there anyone [else] important to you ?". The data are crosstabulated by type of kinship relation and distance from the respondent. The initial entry, 53%, for example, means that 53 percent of parents living within five minutes' drive of the respondents were named in answer to the question concerning who could lend money in an emergency.

9. It is also more common among the residentially mobile. Whether they reflect "modern" tendencies is problematic.

10. For an effort to answer this question with respect to non-kin, see Fischer (1982: Ch. 10).

Table 2. Percentage of Kin Named as Providing Specified Aid, by Relation, by Distance^a

		DISTANCE FROM RESPONDENT				
		< 5 Minutes Drive	5 to 60 Minutes Drive	> 1 Hour Drive	TOTAL	Adj. R ²
WOULD OR COULD BORROW MONEY						
	Parents (N=179)	53%	65%	59%	60%	.00(n.s.)
	Children (N=176)	11	16	12	13	.00(n.s.)
	Siblings (N=291)	25	21	13	17	.01(n.s.)
	In-Laws (N=315)	16	11	18	16	.00(n.s.)
OPINION CONSIDERED IN DECISION						
	Parents	19%	32%	9%	18%	.06
	Children	14	13	5	10	.01(n.s.)
	Siblings	8	6	4	5	.00(n.s.)
	In-Laws	0	2	4	3	.01(n.s.)
TALK WITH ABOUT PERSONAL MATTERS						
	Parents	28%	28%	14%	21%	.02(n.s.)
	Children	33	28	14	23	.03
	Siblings	25	17	9	14	.02
	In-Laws	6	4	4	5	.00(n.s.)
DO SOCIAL ACTIVITIES WITH						
	Parents	41%	32%	11%	23%	.07
	Children	41	36	27	33	.00(n.s.)
	Siblings	56	30	5	21	.22
	In-Laws	48	45	14	32	.12
NAMED ON ANY OF EIGHT QUESTIONS ^b						
	Parents	93%	83%	72%	80%	.03
	Children	82	69	48	63	.06
	Siblings	77	54	29	44	.13
	In-Laws	74	35	38	55	.09

a. The units of analysis are relatives living outside the household, represent-

ing a twenty percent random sample of all relatives named by the 991 respon-

dents. The R-squared refers to the multiple correlation squared of two dummy variables measuring distance with each of the dichotomous dependent

variables, the latter coded as named on the cited question versus not named. b. Proportion of specified kin at specified distance named in answer to any of

the four listed questions or any of these four: would ask to look after home

when out of town; talks with about work-related topics; has helped with chores around house in last 3 months; and talks with about hobbies.

The first panel of results indicates the associations among distance, kinship tie, and the probability of being named in answer to the question,

If you needed to get a large sum of money together, what would you do -- would you ask someone you know to lend it to you; go to a bank, savings and loan, or credit union, or do something else ? [If someone:] Who would that be ? [If bank or something else:] What about in an emergency situation -- is there anyone (else) you could probably ask to lend you some or all of the money ? [If yes:] Who would that be ?

Immediately apparent in the table is the fact that respondents would or could ask their parents much more often than other kin (60% versus 13 to 17%). And it is apparent that distance makes little difference in any relative's likelihood of being a lender. What does seem to matter consistently is age -- the older kin lend to the younger -- and the income of parents -- the wealthier a respondent was the less likely he or she would be to cite a child as a lender (see Technical Appendix Table APP-3).

The next panel indicates the pattern of results in responses to the question,

Often people rely on the judgment of someone they know in making important decisions about their lives -- for example, decisions about their family or their work. Is there anyone whose opinion you consider seriously in making important decisions ? [If yes:] Whose opinion do you consider ? [Probe:] Is there anyone else ?

In providing this sort of aid, types of kin did not differ greatly, though parents were preferred and in-laws rarely asked. Distance has a slight

connection to being called upon for advice: parents and children outside the one-hour radius were less often turned to than those within an hour's drive.¹¹ Age makes a notable difference: The older people were, the less likely they were to turn to their parents and the more likely to turn to their children.¹² The results suggest that the quite elderly respondents did rely on their children (cf. Shanas, 1979). Also, women were more likely to ask either their parents or their children for advice.

The relatives who were said to discuss personal matters -- in answer to the question,

When you are concerned about a personal matter -- for example, about someone you are close to or something you are worried about -- how often do you talk about it with someone -- usually, sometimes, or hardly ever ? When you do talk with someone about personal matters, who do you talk with ? [Probe:] Anyone else ?

-- were, again, more commonly parents and children than siblings or in-laws. Distant relatives were about half as likely to be named in response to this question as were ones living within an hour of the respondents. When other attributes of the respondents are held constant, distance from relatives (excepting in-laws) remains an important determinant of whether they were confidants. Also important is age -- as in the case of seeking advice -- and gender: People tended to talk with their mothers, daughters,

11. The odd curvilinear pattern for parents makes distance seem more important than it probably is.

12. This result is not the reflection of an artifact, that older respondents had no living parents. The finding is that, of those respondents with living parents, the older respondents less often sought advice from their parents. Perhaps that was because those parents were quite advanced in age.

and sisters rather than with their male kin.

Sociability with relatives is indicated by answers to the question,

Please read through [this] list of [social] activities.¹³ Which if any of these have you done in the last three months ? [If any:] May I have the first names of the people you do these things with ?

There are strong distance effects here, except in the case of children. Forty-one percent of parents within five minutes were cited, compared to 11 percent over an hour away; 48 percent of nearby in-laws were named, compared to 14 percent of distant ones.¹⁴ I could identify little beyond the factors of distance and genealogy that distinguished who cited and was cited in answer to this question.¹⁵

13. The list: "Had someone to your home for lunch or dinner; went to someone's home for lunch or dinner; someone came by your home to visit; went over to someone's home for a visit; went out with someone (e.g., a restaurant, bar, movie, park); or met someone you know outside your home (e.g., a restaurant, bar, park, club)" -- or respondent volunteers another activity. Note that we only recorded the first ten names given in answer to this question. Of the original 19,417 names, as many as 1,031 may have been cited in the "overflow," about one per respondent. To the extent that kin may be among the overflow names, we underestimate their social activity with respondents. But in such cases, we can say that the omitted names did not rank among the top ten social companions (assuming that order of naming reflects ranking).

14. There is also a reversal of genealogical ordering depending on distance: Among the nearest kin, the siblings and in-laws were cited more often than the parents and children, while among the most distant kin, the opposite was true. One possible explanation is that people prefer to spend leisure time with age equals, siblings and siblings-in-law, when they can. When relatives live nearby they can indulge this preference. When spending leisure time with distant relatives -- say, visiting at Thanksgiving -- however, genealogical proximity takes precedence. (Adams [1968] data showing that siblings tended to be companions and parents to be aid-givers is consistent with this explanation.)

15. Citing adult children, which was weakly associated with their distance, was strongly associated with income and marriage. Wealthy respondents and unmarried respondents did not name their children as social companions. One might also imagine that the absence of distance effects for children was produced by parents exaggerating their contact with their children or by the tendency for children to play greater roles in their elderly

This sociability item leads to considering the frequency with which kin were seen. (Being cited for sociable activities and being seen often are highly correlated.) We found out about frequency of contact for only a select subset of the originally cited associates. The way that subset was chosen guarantees that the named people were active members of the respondents' networks and also that they tended to live nearer than most relatives. This creates some incomparability in the analysis. On the other hand, since we also asked for the specific residences of these subsample names, we can measure distance more finely. Table 3 displays the results of asking respondents, "How often do you get together with this person?" (with originally seven categories, from more than once a week to less often than once a year, here collapsed to three).

As would be expected, one observes an extremely strong effect of distance on reported frequency. In fact, distance is virtually the only determinant of frequency.¹⁶ Educational differences¹⁷ are fully explained by the fact that the more educated live farther from their kin than the less educated do. Less obvious is the interaction of genealogical and spatial proximity. Among nearby kin, the parents and children tended to be seen more often than the siblings and in-laws, but that distinction disappears among the distant kin.¹⁸ Similar findings were reported by Klatzky

parents' lives than those parents play in their own.

Also, older siblings and in-laws were seen less often than equidistant younger ones, and affluent respondents more often saw their distant children than would have been expected by chance.

17. The correlation between education of respondent and frequency of contact ranges from $-.10$ with children to $-.34$ with parents.

18. This pattern is clearer in the regression analyses which use a continuous scale, from (1) less than once a year to (7) more than weekly, as the dependent variable. The regression-smoothed means of frequency among relatives within five minutes are: parents and children, 5.7; siblings, 5.4; and in-laws, 5.1. The smoothed means among kin outside the region are: parents, 1.6; children, 1.7; siblings, 1.4; and in-laws, 1.7.

Table 3. Frequency of "Getting Together," by Relation, by Distance, for Subsample of Kin^a

	DISTANCE FROM RESPONDENT				TOTAL
	< 5 Minutes Drive	5 to 60 Minutes Drive	> 1 Hour Drive	Outside North. Calif.	
PARENTS					
Once a Week or More	88%	64%	13%	0%	44%
Once a Month, Plus	12	29	53	6	23
Under Once a Month	0	7	34	94	33
(N =)	(110)	(130)	(79)	(113)	(432)
CHILDREN					
Once a Week or More	96%	65%	4%	6%	56%
Once a Month, Plus	4	27	53	14	22
Under Once a Month	0	8	43	80	22
(N =)	(85)	(86)	(49)	(35)	(255)
SIBLINGS					
Once a Week or More	81%	33%	11%	0%	40%
Once a Month, Plus	19	53	45	4	33
Under Once a Month	0	13	45	96	27
(N =)	(99)	(105)	(47)	(47)	(298)
ALL IN-LAWS					
Once a Week or More	66%	50%	11%	3%	45%
Once a Month, Plus	31	44	57	0	34
Under Once a Month	3	6	32	97	21
(N =)	(112)	(98)	(37)	(30)	(277)

- a. Sample is subset of kin (0 to 5 per respondent) selected from those named in answer to specific questions and concerning whom a special set of additional questions were asked, including the present one: "How often do you usually get together with this person -- more than once a week, about once a week, two or three times a month, about once a month, several times a year, about once a year, less often than that?" The Ns here are greater than those in the prior tables, because those include only a 20 percent sample of all kin named in the interviews. Since we also asked, "What city does this person live in?," we could also separate the very distant kin from the others.

(n.d.) and Adams (1968). The results seem to suggest that, at easy traveling distances, the intimacy, or obligations, or both, of genealogical proximity encourage frequent contact. At greater distances, the logistical difficulties tend to suppress face-to-face meetings for all kin.

We asked only about "getting together," which of course is highly dependent on distance. Other studies (Adams, 1968; Wellman, 1977) report a high amount of contact among relatives via telephone and mail. And these forms of contact are considerably less influenced by distance. Ninety-one percent of Adams' North Carolina respondents whose parents lived over a hundred miles away had at least monthly contact with them by some medium. Thus, the frequencies of kin contact presented here are conservative in their magnitude and highly vulnerable to distance.

In overview, these findings indicate that how far apart kin live affects some aspects of their relations more than others. Emergency aid, such as lending money, and occasional advice can be solicited with little regard for distance. Regular intimate conversations are hampered a bit more by distance. But the greatest consequences of distance are in depressing sociable interactions and face-to-face meetings. (Readers should understand that these results do not mean that the people with distant kin lack companions. They typically have non-kin companions and, also typically, more such companions than do those who rely on their relatives.) This conclusion echoes those of other studies of modern kinship, studies claiming that kin continue to serve crucial supportive roles, particularly in emergencies (e.g., Litwak and Szelenyi, 1969; Wellman, 1979). The historical comparisons allowing us to say whether this is a continuing, declining, or increasing pattern, unfortunately, do not exist. But the

results here are suggestive, particularly the social class differences, with the "modern sectors" having the least extended kin ties. Also, the differences among types of kin -- the comparably few extended kin, their weak role (especially at a distance -- see last panel of Table 2), the low face-to-face contact they have even when nearby -- suggest that Adams' (1968) description may be most apropos: The modern American pattern may not be that of the isolated nuclear family, but neither is it one of extended kinship; instead it involves commitments to families of orientation and of procreation. These ties survive distance and competing social involvements; other kin ties may not.

PART II: SPECULATIONS ABOUT HISTORICAL CHANGE

The Contemporary Kinship Network

In this second part of the paper, I will dive from the springboard provided by these data and by other studies into the murky and rocky waters of historical speculation. I will contrast, quite simply, a "traditional" kinship structure -- by which I mean only an historically prior one -- to a "modern" structure -- by which I mean contemporary. My description is, of course, archetypal, but not, I hope, stereotypical.

The contemporary kinship structure appears to be limited -- in size, proximity, function, and subjective importance. People approach it voluntarily and selectively, dealing with kin as they are inclined and choosing among kin. One of its major features is its latency. Extended kin are not very active in people's regular routines. And yet, extended kin are

available and relations remain, as critics of decline-of-the-family arguments contend, crucial strands in the social fabric of most individuals' lives.

The signs of this limited kinship involvement among the northern Californians we studied are several, and noted above. For example, the average person named only four kin who actually could or would provide the kinds of specific assistance we asked about (another two, on average, were listed as also "important"). These kin represented but thirty percent of the people actually named as companions, counselors, or helpers. Of the kin named, about half had been in respondents' nuclear families -- parents, siblings, children -- so that only small portions of the wider kinship network were represented (e.g., the average respondent named only 0.2 cousins).

And yet there are also signs of the important role extended kin play. They are counted upon in emergencies, as advice-givers in important decisions and as financial lenders of last (sometimes, first) resort. People remain in touch with those kin even if they live far away and rank their relatives as crucial -- if not often present -- members of their social networks.¹⁹ In these ways, it seems plausible to say that the extended kinship system is genealogically contracted, spatially expanded, functionally important but specialized, voluntaristic, and largely latent.

One should, of course, not exaggerate this description. Shanas (1979:6) reports, for example, that the proportion of elderly people living

19. In this study, relatives, especially parents, children, and siblings, were considerably more likely than nonkin to be called "close" (Fischer, 1982b). In Wellman's (1979) survey, respondents ranked such relatives higher than they did other associates.

within ten minutes of their children remained relatively constant between 1957 and 1975. And certainly this summary ignores subgroup variations. Moreover, the data described here include no inventory of kin, so that we may underestimate the proportion of available kin to whom contemporary people do turn. Yet, I think that the overall pattern is clear. When we contrast the number and types of relatives listed by our respondents to the inventories gathered by others, the general independence of extended kin is quite evident.

Can such a moment-in-time snapshot of kinship yield any clues to the direction of historical change? Recognizing that what follows is at best an exercise in generating theory, we can examine the correlations between "markers" of historical trends and various aspects of the extended kinship networks. One such marker is social class, particularly as indexed by education.²⁰ We might also assume that residential mobility is an indicator of "modernism," but the recent historical studies on that topic suggest that the reverse may actually be the case, that residential mobility has declined over time. Instead, perhaps, the distances, rather than frequency, of residential moves may mark "modern" patterns. And urbanism might also be taken as an index of modernism, in the sense that changes in life-ways tend to progress from city to hinterland and that cities have many structural features considered to epitomize modern societies.²¹

20. This is the key assumption made by Young and Willmott (1973, esp. Ch. 1) and to some extent also by Stone (1977). While many social scientists would agree that changes in life-ways travel down the class hierarchy, this may not be so or may be so only in the short run -- i.e., with respect to fads and fashions -- and not with respect to long-term changes.

21. For discussions on this point, see Fischer (1975, 1976, 1978).

Returning to the northern California data, we find that education and residential mobility (as measured by recency in the community) are associated²² only with the geographical dispersion of the kinship network. The educated, *ceteris paribus*, named about the same total number of relatives as did the less educated. Extended kin tended to play a smaller proportional role in the social lives of the educated, but that was largely because the educated were heavily involved with many non-kin, not because they knew fewer kin (see Fischer, 1982a: Ch. 7, n.5). (The educated also tended not to spend social time with their parents nor to borrow money from their children, distance held constant.) According to this "marker," the modern feature of the extended kin network is its geographical dispersion.

Urban, especially center-city, residents and people who had moved far since their childhood -- characteristics that tended to go together in our sample -- not only had spatially dispersed kin networks, they also named fewer kin. That is, they seemed to have dropped distant kin from their lists of associates -- at least, kin beyond parents, children, and siblings (see Fischer, 1982a: Ch.7). The possible reasons for the urban effects were discussed above: selective migration -- migrants to cities are less likely to move there to be near kin;²³ distance -- migrants to large cities tend to come from farther away, including foreign countries; and the possibility that there are competing social and personal attractions in the

20. Once marital status is held constant.

23. The historical and anthropological literature is replete with descriptions of how kin aid and direct rural-to-urban migration. The point here is that, at least today, cityward migrants are less likely than migrants to smaller communities to select their destinations because kin live there (Fischer, 1982a: Ch. 2) -- even if they use kin networks as conduits -- and they are less likely to move into a local kin group. Indeed, this contrast between rural-to-urban and rural-to-rural migration is, with the exception of seasonal agricultural movement, probably true historically, as well.

urban center. The distance effect may indicate the limits of trans-spatial social relations; cousins on the East Coast, for example, may be "lost."

The basic suggestion from this internal analysis is that modern extended kin networks are distinctive in being spatially elongated, in losing out to non-kin relations in certain regards, and perhaps in being more functionally specialized.

Hypotheses

Let us assume that what has just been described as the archetypal contemporary extra-household kin network is in fact a development of more recent generations in America. How might one explain such a development ? (Even if the assumption concerning the nature of the change is only partly correct, consideration of the following models may enlighten any exploration of historical developments.)

Industrialization. The conventional argument -- or perhaps, conventional whipping boy -- is the contention that the family had to change in order to fit the needs of the industrial system. That system needed mobile labor free from the economically irrational demands of extended kin; the isolated nuclear family is the functionally ideal institution.

This analysis has come under severe attack in the last few years (and not only for the kind of functionalist logic it relies upon). Historical studies by scholars such as Hareven and Anderson suggest that extended kin ties were very useful precisely at the historical moment of industrialization, as well as in the subsequent adaptation of the migrants to the industrial setting. Hareven (1978: 160) summarizes her observations:

Geographic distance did not disrupt basic modes of kin cooperation, but rather revised and diversified priorities and modes of interaction. Under certain conditions, migration strengthened kinship ties and imposed new functions upon them, as changing conditions dictated. Kin affiliations in the new setting not only facilitated migration to and settlement in Manchester but also served as reminders and reinforcers of obligations and ties to premigration communities.

Contemporary studies from Sussman to this one point to continuing extra-household kin relations and interdependency. Contemporary studies also indicate, ironically, that industrial workers are more kin-dependent than service and professional workers.

The latter observation opens one line of speculation: There indeed may be a connection between changes in work and extended kinship, not necessarily during the rise and establishment of the industrial order, but during the period of growth in white-collar and professional work. Such jobs -- lawyering, medicine, corporate management, academia, specialized accounting, etc. -- have national job markets, tend to be insulated from nepotism and cronyism more than is factory work (although not as much as we think), tend often to be filled through "weak tie" networks (Granovetter, 1974), and have as entry requirements educational credentials which can often be most advantageously gotten by leaving home.

To be more specific about this train of thought: During the twentieth century, regional and national job markets developed for highly skilled and credentialled labor -- administrators, professionals, and the like. These labor markets can be external ones, as exemplified by the annual M.B.A. and Law School job rushes, or internal ones, such as the shifting about of

I.B.M. and A.T.&T. junior executives. The infrastructure that made an integrated national economy possible -- one freed earlier spatial hierarchies to take the form of functional hierarchies (Pred, 1975) -- and that made it so easy for individuals to travel widely is of relatively recent origin (see discussion below). It is this stage of economic development that fostered a class of educated, mobile, and kin-independent workers. This set of workers also relies on advanced degrees typically obtained by leaving home -- the first stage in stretching kinship ties. And it also fills jobs that are less susceptible to being obtained through family connections than are typical industrial or petty commercial jobs.

This speculation would be consistent with the observed differences between social classes in kin (and in non-kin) ties described by others and in Part I of this paper -- e.g., the finding in Table 1 that respondents with a college diploma or more were especially uninvolved with their extended kin.²⁴

In sum, it may be the office, not the factory, that generated the genealogically constricted and spatially extended kinship structure.

Culture. Another factor that might help explain contemporary kinship structure is change in ideology. (This would follow in the steps of

24. This connection also highlights a distinctive feature of the United States: Unlike most countries to which it is compared, it has, because of its sheer size and its multiple metropolises, widely dispersed job opportunities. That is, its several metropolises offer comparable job opportunities in most fields, while in Europe there is much greater concentration in the primary city. That may, in turn, help explain the greater residential mobility of Americans (Long and Boertlein, 1977). And this analysis also suggests that there may have been an historical change in the quality of the migration for jobs, from the more common experience of moves "forced" by an absence or loss of jobs to a more common experience of moves "opportuned" by participation in an extra-local labor market.

scholars such as Lawrence Stone.) While it is probably true that there has been a gross cultural shift toward tolerance, if not preference, for spatial dispersion of kin -- although direct evidence of this does not apparently exist -- is it cause or consequence? Can we find any internal evidence in support of such a thesis? In the present data, the educated and the urban were less likely to express the opinion that living close to relatives and seeing a lot of them was very important.²⁵ Yet, these differences in verbal expressions of belief do not, in themselves, explain differences in the extended kin networks. Even with this measure held constant, the educated had more dispersed (and not any smaller) kinship networks.²⁶ There may indeed be an ideological "slow march" toward the symmetrical and isolated nuclear family (Young and Willmott, 1973), led by the educated, but it is also reasonable to expect that it was either stimulated by or facilitated by structural changes.

Technology. One such structural change that may facilitate this extended kinship system is the advent of mass rapid communications and transportation. The development of popular access to rail, auto, and plane travel and to instantaneous communication would seem to be a prerequisite for certain features of the spatially dispersed family.

On the one hand, such systems of access make possible a continent-wide labor market in the place of isolated metropolitan ones. And they make it possible for individuals to seek education, participate in national

25. Among the least educated, 34% said it was very important; among the most educated, 14% said it was very important. Among the least urban, 41% said it was not too important, while among the most urban, 53% said it was not too important.

26. Once marital status is held constant, too.

markets, to learn about opportunities, explore them at low cost, and to travel without fear of completely losing touch with the home base. These are the contributions of the transportation and communication technologies to dispersing kin. They simultaneously contribute to the other element of contemporary kinship discussed here -- staying in touch and the latent availability of kin for crises. needed.

Among those who have written on modern kinship, Litwak and Szelenyi (1969) have been most explicit in discussing the role of these technologies in helping maintain familial ties. Their major empirical claim is the contrast they found between surveys of Hungarians and of Americans. While both groups appeared equally reliant on extended kin when those kin lived in town, it was the Americans who felt that they could also call on kin who lived far away (see, especially, their Tables 3 and 7). This difference Litwak and Szelenyi attribute to Americans' access to transportation and communication. Wellman's East York study (Wellman et al., 1973; Wellman, 1977, 1979) suggests that the Torontonians surveyed there were as likely to expect emergency aid from associates outside the metropolitan area as from those living inside it.

I searched the northern California data for some internal evidence about the role of these technologies, but found little that was definitive, because, I suspect, access to transportation and the telephone per se is almost universal. The heavy involvement respondents had with kin living five to sixty minutes away is one indication of the car's importance, since it has made yesterday's one-day trip into today's one-hour sojourn. The

27. The growth of sunbelt retirement and recreation communities suggests that perhaps we should also consider nationwide housing markets.

weaker influence of distance on the likelihood of receiving intangible aid (Table 2) is suggestive of the telephone's role. And there is evidence in the fact that income, other factors being equal, contributed to naming and dealing with distant relatives. Income facilitates, and thus indexes, access to the more expensive media of interpersonal contact, such as airplane travel and long-distance calls. But ultimately, this argument will depend on historical study.

Unfortunately, the historical role of what might be called person-to-person technologies in changing social life has been little studied. With respect to developments in the family, we have fragments of speculation concerned largely with the automobile's effects on nuclear family cohesion -- and those fragments drawn largely from one source, the Lynds' Middletown (1929). A few writers, following the Lynds, argue that the automobile dissipated nuclear family ties, while occasionally another will claim the opposite (e.g., Aries, 1979). What is remarkable, however, is how little historians and sociologists have studied the topic.²⁸

A notable recent exception is Eugen Weber's Peasants into Frenchmen (1976), with its chapter entitled, "Roads, Roads, and Still More Roads," and its emphasis on the opening up of isolated backcountry regions by simple highways, rail lines, bicycles paths, and the like. (Not to shortchange Weber, his book also treats other nationalizing influences such as military conscription and Parisian-controlled school systems.) Weber

28. Having spent much time recently looking into the development of communications and transportation in the United States around the turn of the century, I think it no great exaggeration to claim that a hundred times more words have been written by social historians on the consequences of modern technology within the factory than on the consequences of all these person-to-person technologies.

stresses the unique kind of social causation entailed in the increased access of rural Frenchmen to the wider world: Aside from altering the material conditions of life through improved economic opportunities, it removed the need to remain, for a lifetime or for any particular day, in the village. It weakened, too, some of the functional necessity undergirding kinship ties, perhaps in that way contributing to a specialization of kinship. It made possible -- though it did not necessitate -- knowledge of, participation in, and personal ties to the national community.²⁹

It may be that, in our effort to understand the nature of "modern" as opposed to "traditional" social and personal life, of which spatially dispersed kinship networks are but one element, we have been too mesmerized by the dramatic sight of the "satanic mills," gargantuan dynamos, and seemingly endless assembly lines to give due notice, also, to the car keys in our pockets and the telephones on our nightstands. These mundane symbols represent dramatic changes in the material "givens" of social life, changes that alter the context within which people negotiate and manage their personal relations, including their kin ties.

29. There have been other works, of course, that deal with or touch upon this issue (e.g., Berger, 1979; Pool, 1977), but they are relatively rare.

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TECHNICAL APPENDIX¹

Sample. Between August, 1977, and February, 1978, we interviewed 1,050 adults (18 and over) living in that portion of northern California including the city of San Francisco and the region 200 miles to the north and due east. The sampling frame stratified communities in the region by median income and urbanism, drawing roughly equal samples from: (1) center cities -- San Francisco, Oakland, and Sacramento; (2) inner suburbs; (3) outer suburbs; (4) large towns outside the two major metropolitan areas; and (5) towns 2,500 to 10,000 outside the two major metropolitan areas. It also excluded the following populations: people residing in towns under 2,500 population; those residing in neighborhoods that were predominantly black (although we did interview blacks); and those who did not speak English. The response rate was 76 percent of eligible households. While not perfectly representative of the northern California population, the sample is reasonably representative of English-speaking adults living in predominantly white urban places in northern California in 1977-78.

For the purposes of this paper, two alterations were made in sample: (1) I excluded dependents -- that is, young adults or elderly people living with relatives who were heads of their households -- leaving the household heads, their spouses, and adults living as primary individuals (alone or

1. An extensive discussion of the methodology and its rationale, as well as a copy of the entire survey instrument, appears as an appendix to Fischer (1982).

with roommates). This loses about 59 respondents but prevents the complication of including adults who were atypical by sharing their households with parents or children who cared for them. Comparison with other analyses suggests that the results would not have been grossly different with those cases. (2) The data were weighted to counterbalance the oversampling of small-town people and the undersampling of center-city people. The weighting scheme also corrected for a few inaccuracies in the sampling process. Again, the changes wrought by this procedure did not seem great.

The Interview. The heart of our one-hour, in-person interview² is a series of questions designed to elicit from respondents the names and descriptions of the people in their personal social networks. The technique we developed asks respondents to name the specific people with whom they do, or could expect to, receive supportive social exchanges. We ask for the first names of those who:

1. respondents would ask to look after their homes when they go out of town;
2. had helped with tasks around the house in the previous three months;
3. they talk with about how they do their jobs (asked only of employed respondents);

2. The survey work was conducted by the Survey Research Center, University of California, Berkeley.

4. they do various social activities with -- sharing a meal, visiting, going out socially; etc.;
5. they get together with to discuss shared hobbies;
6. they date seriously or consider a fiance(e) (asked only of unmarried respondents);
7. they talk with about personal matters of concern;
8. they rely on for advice about personal decisions; and
9. they would or could ask for a sizable loan.

In answer to each question, the respondents named as many people as they wish, but interviewers recorded only the first eight names (actually, the first ten for question 4, the first four for question 9, and only one for question 6). Interviewers compiled from these answers a master list of named associates to which they added the names of people in the respondent's household. Then the interviewer handed a copy of the list to the respondent and asked:

10. "Is there anyone who is important to you who doesn't show up on the list?"

Any new names were added. In the end, respondents listed from two to 65 names, with an (unweighted) average of 18.5.

With both interviewer and respondent holding a copy of the master list of names, the former asked a series of questions calling for descriptions of the named people, such as whether they are relatives, neighbors, coworkers, etc.; whether they live within a five-minutes' drive; whether they

live over an hour's drive away; whether they are of the same ethnicity; and so on.

We gathered yet more information about a subset of these associates, by having the interviewer pick one name (usually the first name) given in answer to each of six questions until she had a maximum of five names for each respondent. (The six questions were 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, and 9, above, and household members were excluded.) About each of these people we asked questions such as how the respondent had met them, how long ago, where they lived, and so on.

For the purposes of this paper, only relatives living outside the household were examined -- 6,490 (weighted) overall, 6.55 per respondent. In most analyses, a twenty percent random sample of that group ($N = 1,298$) was used. The intensive sample numbered 1,427, 1.44 per respondent.

Data Analysis. In conducting the analysis, I sought to describe the spatial distribution of extended kin from the perspective of the respondent and also to explain the distribution, at least in the sense that a compendium of correlates (in the form of a regression equation) can be said to "explain" a variable. In seeking such explanatory correlates, I began with a long list of variables and narrowed them down in successive data-sets: first, the data-set containing descriptions of the respondents' networks at the level of the network itself; second, the data-set containing descriptions of the individual kinship relations; and third, the data-set containing descriptions of the "intensive" subsample of relations (those associates selected for the supplementary questions). I sought also to describe and explain the consequences of the spatial distribution by seeing what aspects of respondents' relations to their kin were correlated with -- in

general and independently -- the distances that separated them.

Table 1 in the text presents the results speaking to the first concern, the aggregate spatial distribution of respondents' kinship networks, using various indicators. Table APP-1 presents the results of a closer look at a few of these indicators. The crude estimates respondents made of the number of adult family members they had living within an hour's drive of them, and the total numbers (logged) of relatives they actually named and described as living within five minutes', within five to sixty minutes', and over an hour's drive were regressed on a long list of possible correlates. ("Correlates" is used advisedly, since, though I explain the correlates in causal terms, arguments can be made reversing the causality. For example: people with many kin nearby are restrained by their familial duties from leaving to pursue their educations, thereby creating a correlation between education and distance from kin.) I conducted a variety of regression analyses, but the table presents the results of only one: a stepwise regression in which variables were sequentially entered (by the S.P.S.S. program) until a predetermined limit. (I show only those variables with partial betas greater than or equal to .10.) The list of variables eligible for the equation is presented in the notes to the table.

The next step involved moving from respondents as the units of analysis to specific kin relations as the units of analysis. Table APP-2 presents some of the results of regressing the distance between the respondents and each of their named relatives on characteristics of the respondent and the relative, for four categories of relatives. The table itself shows the stepwise regression results for one dependent variable -- a three-point scale: lives within five minutes, five to sixty minutes, or

Table APP-1. Key Predictors of Respondents' Involvement With Kin^a

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES IN REDUCED REGRESSION EQUATIONS (BETAS) ^b				
DEPENDENT VARIABLES:	Estimated # of Kin in the Area	# of Named Kin Within 5 Minutes	# of Named Kin In 5-60 Minutes	# Named Kin Over 1 Hour
	Distance from Home Town -.25	Yrs. in City .29	Distance from Home Town -.21	Married .17
	Yrs in City .29	Urbanism -.15	Never Marr -.14	Yrs. City -.19
	Age -.30	Age -.20	Education -.11	Education .14
	Never Marr -.21	Education -.16	Yrs in City .10	Age Square .11
	Education -.14	Married .12		
	Sep/Divorc -.12			
	R-sqrd: .24	R-sqrd: .15	R-sqrd: .10	R-sqrd: .07

- a. The units of analysis are 991 (weighted) respondents, including only heads of households, their spouses, and other "primary individuals."
- b. The lists display those variables which entered a stepwise regression analysis, in the order entered, until that point when the next entered variable had a beta of under .10. The DEPENDENT VARIABLES are: (1) answers on a four-step scale to the question of how many immediate-family relatives lived with-in an hour (see text); and (2) the number of actual kin named who were identified as living within certain distances (the raw number was added to 1 and logged). The INDEPENDENT VARIABLES subjected to the analysis are: age, age-squared, gender, years in the city, years in the neighborhood, how far away was the town in which the respondent was raised, education (6-point scale), education-squared, household income, income-squared, income adjusted for household size, married, never-married, separated or divorced, number of young children at home, number of teenagers at home, owns home, employed full time, employed part time, spouse works, can drive, number of cars in household, access to car, church attendance, Protestant, Catholic, Jew, other religion, is Irish ethnicity, Italian, Black, Mexican, urbanism, urbanism-squared, and has telephone.

lives over an hour away -- on the "independent" variables listed in the notes to the table. I also ran regressions using specific distances -- e.g., lives within five minutes or not -- as dependent variables. And, with a somewhat different list of predictors, I ran similar analyses within the sample of relatives drawn for more intensive questioning. That list dropped some of the weaker predictors presented in the notes to Table APP-2 and added a few others available only for the intensive subsample: age of the relative, marital status, and difference in age between the two. Moreover, in that sample it is possible to make the measure of distance more precise by dividing the over-an-hour category into two, within northern California and outside of it. For reasons of space, none of these other analyses are displayed. But the verbal summaries of the results presented in the text draw from comparing and cross-checking all of the analyses in addition to Table APP-2.

Having described the spatial distribution of kin and its correlates, I turned to certain qualities of the kinship ties themselves: whether the relative was named as a lender of money or not, a source of serious advice or not, a confidant or not, a social companion or not, and how often he or she was said reported to "get together" with the respondent (the latter information being only available for the intensive subsample). Each (and a pair of summary indicators) was treated as a dependent variable to be correlated with distance and then to be correlated simultaneously with background variables that may themselves correlate with distance.

Table 2 presents a simple crosstabulation: cited as support source or not X distance X type of relation. Table APP-3 presents the regression results -- again, stepwise selection up to a preset criterion -- in which

Table APP-2. Key Predictors of Distance Between Respondents and Kin^a

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES IN REDUCED REGRESSION EQUATION (BETAS) ^b			
Parents	Children	Siblings	In-Laws
(N=179)	(N=176)	(N=291)	(N=315)
Yrs in City -.24	Education .25	Yrs in City -.31	Education .16
San Francisco .21	Age .27	Age .28	# Children -.16
Jewish .13	Yrs in City -.24	Married -.19	Yrs in City -.21
Never Left -.15	Jewish -.14	Education .18	Urbanism .14
# Children -.18			Age .12
Married .19			
R-sqrd: .20	R-sqrd: .12	R-sqrd: .18	R-sqrd: .12

a. The units of analysis, kin named by the respondents, represent a 20 percent random sample of all kin named by respondents in the course of the interviews (household members excluded).

b. Results of a stepwise regression requiring that entering variables be significant at $p < .10$. The dependent variable is a three-step scale: kin lives within five minute's drive/ 5 to 60 minutes' drive/ farther from the respondent. (Note: Similar analyses were run with each category as dependent variable, but are not presented to save space.) The independent variables submitted to the program were: age, gender, education, years lived in present city, whether or not had lived all of life in present city, married, never-married, number of children at home, household income, Catholic, Jewish, gender of named person, whether respondent and named person were same gender, urbanism, and whether respondent lived in San Francisco.

distance is one of a long list of possible correlates. Parallel regressions were performed in the intensive subsample, with its modified measure of distance and modified list of predictors.³ Table 3, in addition, shows the crosstabulation of distance and reported in-person interaction frequency (available only for the intensive subsample). Regressions, unshown, were also conducted on this variable. And as before, the conclusions drawn in the text derive from the unrepresented as well as the presented analyses.

3. A technical complexity arises here which should be noted by any potential users of the data: When correlating characteristics of specific relations among the full set of named associates, one is comparing associates named on a substantive eliciting question (questions 1-9 above) to ones named on other such questions or named only as an "important" person otherwise overlooked (question 10 above). But in analyzing the intensive subsample, one is necessarily (because of the selection procedure) comparing associates named on one kind of substantive question to those named on another, and typically different, one.

Table APP-3. Key Predictors of Aid Given and Activities Shared by Specific Kin^a

INDEPENDENT VARIABLES IN REDUCED REGRESSION EQUATION (BETAS) ^b							
Parents		Children		Siblings		In-Laws	
(N=179)		(N=176)		(N=291)		(N=315)	
WOULD OR COULD LEND MONEY							
(Mean=.60)		(Mean=.13)		(Mean=.17)		(Mean=.16)	
Father	.23	Income	-.30	Over 1 Hour	-.20	Age	-.11
San Francisco	.19			Age	.20		
Same Gender	.21			Married	-.14		
Age	-.28			Yrs. in City	-.13		
Yrs. in City	.28			Male	.10		
All Life Here	-.17						
R-sqrd = .18		R-sqrd = .08		R-sqrd = .05		R-sqrd = .01	
OPINION CONSIDERED IN DECISION							
(Mean=.18)		(Mean=.10)		(Mean=.06)		(Mean=.02)	
Over 1 Hour	-.22	Over 1 Hour	-.12	Male	.13	Over 1 Hour	.08
Age	-.26	Age	.24	Income	-.12	Years in City	-.11
Female	.14	Catholic	.19	# Children	-.10	In-Law is Male	.09
		Female	.18				
		Income	.14				
R-sqrd = .13		R-sqrd = .11		R-sqrd = .03		R-sqrd = .02	
TALK WITH ABOUT PERSONAL MATTERS							
(Mean=.21)		(Mean=.23)		(Mean=.14)		(Mean=.05)	
Over 1 Hour	-.18	Over 1 Hour	-.23	Over 1 Hour	-.19	Same Gender	.14
Age	-.17	Age	.26	Sister	.19	Married	.10
Mother	.14	Daughter	.20	Same Gender	.16		
		Same Gender	.13	Jewish	.13		
				Yrs. in City	-.11		
R-sqrd = .06		R-sqrd = .15		R-sqrd = .10		R-sqrd = .02	
DOES SOCIAL ACTIVITIES WITH RESPONDENT							
(Mean=.23)		(Mean=.33)		(Mean=.21)		(Mean=.32)	
Over 1 Hour	-.26	Yrs. in City	.15	Over 1 Hour	-.31	Over 1 Hour	-.35
Education	-.14	Income	-.26	Within 5 Min's	.23	Same Gender	-.11
		Married	.26	Same Gender	.11		
		Daughter	.12				
R-sqrd = .08		R-sqrd = .11		R-sqrd = .23		R-sqrd = .13	

<table continued>

<table app-3 continued>

Parents		Children		Siblings		In-Laws	
NAMED ON ANY (OF EIGHT) QUESTIONS ^C							
(Mean=.80)		(Mean=.62)		(Mean=.44)		(Mean=.55)	
Over 1 Hour	-.15	Over 1 Hour	-.23	Over 1 Hour	-.28	Over 1 Hour	-.32
Father	.23	Age	.15	Within 5 Min's	.18	Married	.16
Same Gender	.22	Married	.31	Married	-.18	Catholic	.13
San Francisco	.18	Within 5 Min's	.11	Same Gender	.11	# Children	-.12
Age	-.24	Female	.14	Age	.10		
Yrs. in City	.14	# Children					
		(at Home)	-.15				
		Income	-.16				
R-sqrd = .18		R-sqrd = .20		R-sqrd = .17		R-sqrd = .13	

-
- See note a to Table APP-3.
 - Results of stepwise regression requiring that entering variables be significant at $p < .10$. The dependent variables are dichotomous variables indicating whether or not a specified relative was named in answer to the specific name-eliciting question. The independent variables submitted to the program are the same as those listed in note b to Table APP-2 and two dummy variables measuring distance: whether or not the specified relative lived within five minutes' drive and whether or not the relative lived over an hour's drive away (the base, of course, is five to sixty).
 - In addition to the four listed items, the eight included calling upon the relative to care for the home, discussing work-related issues, having helped with household chores in the previous three months, and discussing hobbies. Note that the first and third in this last list almost necessarily require geographical proximity.