VIEW OF HUMAN NATURE

AND

PARENTING STYLE:

IMPLICATIONS

FOR

PARENT EDUCATION

by

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PREFACE

Since the Child-Study Movement sparked public interest in the first quarter of the century, educators, researchers and parents have sought the "best" parenting methods. Parents can generally agree that they want their children to be happy, competent and self-confident. As with other areas of the social sciences, trends often dictate what is the "right" way to develop desired characteristics in our children. Freud encouraged us to ease up on our Victorian restrictions; Hall insisted we let children grow naturally; Skinner and Thorndike proclaimed the possibility of having ideal children by using behavioral conditioning.

As a result, today we have a variety of parenting models, often representing quite different philosophical and methodological schools. Parents seeking assistance from "experts" are deluged with a variety of "correct" methods. Several researchers suggest that different parents may require different parent education, based upon their own personal philosophy and parenting style. This researcher, in an attempt to support that hypothesis, undertook the task of comparing parents' philosophy of human nature and expressed parenting style.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Parents today are faced with challenges relatively unknown to previous generations of parents. Single-parenting, dual working parents, and step-families, anomalies to previous generations, are now often the norm. Parents often find a need to seek advice beyond that of their own parents, and are awed at the amount and variety of materials available to help educate the parent.

Statement of the Problem

Parent educators, grounded in various philosophical and psychological schools attempt to educate parents as to the "best" child-rearing methods. Croake and Glover (1977) point out that,

The approach adopted tends to follow the leaders' theoretical beliefs about how children should develop and how parents can best aid in that development. (Croake and Glover 1977, 153)

Research supporting the success of the many methods is limited, however, and parents often have difficulty implementing them. Several researchers have pointed to the possibility that parents may best benefit from parent education congruent with their own philosophy and/or beliefs regarding parenting (Fine 1980; Wood, Bishop, and Cohen,
1980; Croake and Glover 1977). It has become the task then, of researchers to explore the relationship of parenting beliefs and philosophies and child-rearing situations.

Statement of the Hypothesis

In searching for a tool to study parenting philosophies, this researcher found many instruments that analyzed parenting attitudes and beliefs with the emphasis of assessing adequate and inadequate parenting. Lawrence Clayton (1985) found a positive correlation between views of human nature and parenting attitudes, using the Wrightsman Philosophy of Human Nature Instrument (WPHNI) and Parent Attitude Research Instrument (PARI), respectively. Clayton's perspective was that of a clinician, and his intent was to identify negative parenting attitudes with negative views in general, and vise-versa. This researcher hypothesized that it would also be possible to correlate this same view of human nature with parenting styles considered equally effective.

Limitations of Study

Quite possibly, the most significant limitation of this study was the homogeneous nature of the subjects. Although efforts were made to select subjects with differences in philosophical viewpoint, the respondent group represented a religiously, and possibly therefore,
philosophically homogenous group of parents. According to Wrightsman (1964), a significant correlation existed between religious preference and philosophy of human nature as reported by the WPHNI. Thirty-three of the thirty-six respondents reported Roman Catholicism as their religious preference. Only one respondent ranked religion as unimportant in his/her life; the remaining respondents ranked it "somewhat important" or "very important" in their lives. It should be noted, however, that recent research suggests that the opinions of Roman Catholics are more likely than ever to reflect those of the general population. (Greeley 1990)

A further limitation involves the use of a Wood, Bishop and Cohen's parenting survey, which is not considered an empirical research tool. The author sought a tool that did not qualitatively discriminate between parenting styles, and the tool used seemed to meet best that need. The difficulty presented was the non-exact nature of cumulative responses. The Wood, Bishop and Cohen (1978) tool would have been more useful to the researcher had it yielded more parametric results.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Historical and Philosophical Bases of Parent Education

Parent Education in this country began with its first European settlers, who, from the pulpit, were instructed on the primacy of control and suppression of will in the formation of Christian children. This emphasis on authority, based on a philosophy of depraved human nature, emphasized the importance of the maternal role as moral guardian and exemplar. (Borstelmann 1976)

Although as early as the 1850's, Horace Bushnell, a Congregational minister, argued that 'breaking the will' might not be an effective way of raising Christian children (Greven 1973), the first to popularize a more permissive attitude toward child-rearing was Sigmund Freud. Freud contended that parental behavior in the early childhood years dramatically influenced the person's future mental health, and convinced many that the restrictive parenting practices common to the day were the cause of adult neuroses and psychoses.

The era of Industrial reform brought Scientism to the forefront, with child and parent educators emphasizing
scientific study of behavior based on a morally neutral view of human nature. G. Stanley Hall led the Child Study Movement, encouraging parents to indulge their naturally good children, allowing them to grow uninhibited, much as Rousseau's Emile. (Schlossman 1976) Piaget's research suggested a new developmental approach to parenting, allowing children to develop at their own rate.

Thorndike, Watson and Skinner shook up the educational world with promises of creating behaviorally perfect children, by conditioning the morally neutral children to a desired state. Dewey's concern was raising children to "practice democracy", while Benjamin Spock, possibly the most influential of all since the Puritan ministers, encouraged "common sense" parenting with limited restriction and increased emotional involvement. (Borstelmann 1976) These prevalent parenting views, despite differing philosophies of human nature and parenting styles, share the belief that parents wield considerable influence over the holistic growth of the child, and that how child-rearing is performed will significantly affect the resultant adult.

This historical overview is significant, because rather than one dominant view arising from the different child-rearing theories of the past century, parenting and Parent Education today reflect all of the philosophies in the variety of materials and programs that are available.
Parental Influence

After World War II, research in child development skyrocketed, with parenting research close behind. In 1945, Baldwin identified three types of parental responses to children: democracy, acceptance and indulgence. (Jensen and Kingston 1986) Schaeffer, in 1959, measured parental behavior on two intersecting continuums: control vs. autonomy and warmth vs. hostility. Those parents (mothers in this, as in most cases) were seen as most effective when they demonstrated high support (warmth) and low control, the combination of which he termed "democratic" (Jensen and Kingston 1986).

Becker (1964) used factor analysis and suggested an anxious/emotional vs. calm-detached continuum, adding the organized, effective mother as a desirable parent. (Jensen and Kingston 1986) Baumrind later reported similar findings, labelling her healthy parent as "authoritative". Jensen and Kingston report, "A generally consistent conclusion from Schaefer's, Becker's, Baumrind's, and Baldwin's work is that parents who are too rigidly restrictive and authoritarian, or who are too permissive, may create undesirable attitudes and behaviors in their children." (p.46)

Luster (1987) explored the relationship of parental value systems and parenting behavior. For purposes of
objectives for their children. Using three tools, occupational prestige, parental beliefs, and the home environment were rated, with results yielding significant belief differences between social classes. White-collar parents with a high level of education were likely to value self-direction, while blue-collar, less educated parents valued conformity. The behavioral result was that high SES parents stressed "the supportive function of parenting, while parents valuing conformity emphasized control of unsanctioned behaviors." (Luster 1987, 1) Though not stated, it is implied that the former style of parenting is seen as preferred by the researcher.

Irving Sigel (1985) also has explored the relationship between beliefs and behaviors of parenting, citing that the primary difficulty in doing so is the lack of scientific proof that a substantial correlation even exists between beliefs and behaviors. Sigel lists other limitations to parental influence theories:

1. family organisms are interactive (parent is not the only force)
2. parenting styles change over time
3. people outside the home influence children
4. parents are affected by children
5. conditions of families change. (Sigel 1985, 48)

Sigel also states as a difficulty the lack of consensus in the research field on definitions of terms often used interchangeably, such as beliefs, attitudes, values, philosophies and belief systems. Although it is possible
that researchers will be able to make breakthroughs in explaining the relationship between beliefs and behaviors, Sigel insists that clarification of terms is first necessary.

As his doctoral dissertation, Lawrence Clayton (1985) studied the child-rearing attitudes of parents, (measured by the Parent Attitude Research Instrument (PARI)), compared to their philosophy of human nature, (assessed by the Wrightsman Philosophy of Human Nature Instrument (WPHNI)). Though he recognized that these elements might not indicate parent behavior, Clayton was interested in identifying a general view of human nature with complementary parenting attitudes.

Using a sample of 330 parents, Clayton divided them into three groups, according to their WPHNI scores: those who found human nature moral, immoral or amoral. Finding significant differences in child-rearing attitudes among the groups, Clayton stated that the 'moral' group: "...these parents were revealed to be persons who typically allowed children to be themselves...to express themselves." (p. 10) While the parents viewing human nature as amoral were said to have a "moderate orientation" toward parenting, the 'immoral' group, "did not allow their children to be who they were" and were "not close to their children." (p. 11-12)

Based on their review of the research, Jensen and
Kingston (1986) have proposed what they call the "Home Climate Theory" as ideal parental influence. This style combines "love" and "organization" to optimize the home environment. A loving environment is one that expresses emotion appropriately, allows freedom for choices, and encourages individuality, affection and belongingness. An organized home possesses a balanced degree of structure and work and play, encourages self exploration and acquisition of knowledge, conveys values and beliefs to all members, provides a safe and nourishing physical climate and maintains predictable consequences for behaviors.

**Parent Education**

Several publications and programs have been marketed in recent years, offering methods of optimizing parental influence. The theories and programs vary most on the exertion of parental power, view of the child, and approach to learning. Behavior Management programs, such as Becker's (1971) represent the high-power parenting approaches, with their basis in principles of operant conditioning. Gosciewski (1976) defends the behavioral philosophy of child-rearing:

Parents are responsible for the existence and welfare of their children... the parent is the authority to which the child is initially responsible and from whom he gains his knowledge of and capability for an effective lifestyle. Parents are, by the nature of their roles, authoritarians. They are in charge, and they are models of benevolent control. In that position, they are a team that must work together in
presenting to the children a consistent framework for regulation of behavior in compliance with what they judge to be appropriate and good. They are not, in that sense, equals, and they should not strive to engender such equality. (p. 139-140)

Initial external control, contends Gosciewski, is necessary for later personal freedom. While the Behavior Management philosophy is not typically shared in parent education programs, few parent education materials today fail to include some behavior management approaches in their recommendations. Behavior Management approaches are often seen by professionals as pragmatic, and effective.

Another approach toward parent education advocates a developmental approach. In the tradition of Piaget and Kohlberg, developmental educators encourage parents to learn about the natural development of abilities in children, and use them as a starting point for education and discipline. According to such authors as Lickona (1983) and White (1975), children can learn only that which they are developmentally ready to assimilate.

While Lickona presents a method of assisting in the moral development in children, Burton White has built an entire program on educating parents regarding children's development. Convinced that "most families, given a little help, are potentially capable of doing a good job of raising their children" (White 1975, xi), White offers "up to date information" regarding the development of social and intellectual skills of children in their first three years.
Simply arming parents with this information increases parenting skills, the developmental educator would contend. As with the Behavior Management approaches, most parent education programs today impart information regarding child development.

Yet another approach to parent education is that of the Democratic method. Inspired by Schaefer's, Baumrind's and Becker's expressed preference for democratic parenting styles, democratic child-rearing methods assume a degree of equality between parent and child. The most well-known proponent of democratic parenting methods is Rudolph Dreikurs. Based on Adler's theories of social adjustment, Dreikurs developed a method in which "...children are educated toward democracy, which implies limits within which they experience freedom." (Christensen & Thomas 1980, 59). Rejecting the notion of changing children's behavior, Dreikers contended that behavior could only be interpreted in a social, interactive context. Dreikurs saw behavior as purposeful, and change therefore, must be made in motivation. Though Dreikurs practiced his principles and methods in family counseling sessions, today they are practiced in such programs and Dinkmeyer's STEP (Dinkmeyer and McKay 1989). In defense of Democratic methods, Christensen and Thomas write, "...children today see themselves as being social equals to adults, and for this reason autocratic training methods [ie. behavior management]
are doomed to failure." (p.58) In Dreikurs method, faulty logic behind misbehavior is brought to the attention of the child, and reasonable behavior to replace it and achieve the intended goals is discussed.

Viewing communication as the groundwork for relationships, including parenting, Thomas Gordon (1970) designed Parent Effectiveness Training, a parent education program in the Humanist vein. Promoting a view of egalitarian "OK'ness", Gordon taught groups of parents skills and methods for communicating with children and with each other. By using these communication methods, and attempting to meet children's and parents' needs, all parties alleviate family conflict and are confident that their feelings and needs are, at least, understood.

**Comparative Program Effectiveness**

According to Croake and Glover (1977), "Research on the effectiveness of parent education has historically been very inadequate, both in terms of amount and in quality" (p.153). Interested in the effect parent education had on actual parenting attitudes and behavior, Lou Everett (1980) surveyed 119 nurses in North Carolina. As nurses are trained professionally in modern parenting theories, Everett explored whether the nurses applied this scientific knowledge they had learned or social class values to their own child-rearing. Rating importance of parenting
resources, almost half ranked their own parents as their most important resource and only 23% ranked formal courses as most important. As their childrearing guides, 36% ranked common sense as most important, 27% ranked scientific theory, and 20% looked to religion for parenting guidance. Everett concluded,

Nurses as a professional group tend to rear their children as they themselves were reared, rather than as they were taught in theoretical orientations. Even with exposure to various theory orientations, the majority of nurses in this sample chose to rely on "non-scientific" orientations of common sense or religion. (Everett 1980, 9)

Effectiveness of parent education methods have also been compared. Pinsker and Geoffroy (1981) compared Gordon's Parent Effectiveness Training and Becker's Behavior Modification approach. Administering six measures, the researchers compared the programs using an analysis of covariance. While the Behavior Modification group reported significantly reduced deviant child behaviors and decreased parental perceptions of the children's problems, the group learning Parent Effectiveness Training increased positive parental consequations and family cohesion and decreased family conflict. Both groups significantly increased their respective knowledge of the techniques involved.

What Pinsker and Geoffroy found was that although both groups increased their parenting skills, the skills and theories did not cross over to other areas of parenting. Neither program, then, was more effective. The authors
suggest that parent education instructors should, "decide what goals he or she would like to have achieved...and choose the most appropriate method to meet those goals" (Pinsker and Geoffroy 1981, 67). They also added, "Behavior Modification and PET techniques appear to contrast each other philosophically as well as in their content orientation." (p.67)

Earlier, Beutler, Oro-Beutler and Mitchell (1979) did a comparison study of Becker's Behavior Modification program and the Dinkmeyer & McKay (1989) STEP program, based on Dreikurs theories. Also administering tools assessing interpersonal needs and self-competence, Beutler, et al. found no differences in effectiveness of the programs. However, they concluded that the parent education programs in question did affect different need systems. The authors suggested tailoring parent training to specific problems and needs of the parent.

**Toward Prescriptive Parenting**

A handful of parent educators have addressed the need for "prescriptive" parent education, that is to say, parent education specific to parents beliefs and needs. Parent education programs have been introduced in which the parents are responsible for choosing and exploring parenting methods which best fit their personal value system or philosophy. Donaldson (1976) and Piercy (1977) each introduced values
clarification programs for use with parenting groups, contending,

Most parents want to be good parents but they are uncertain where to begin. We...can help parents both by sharing our own skills and by supporting them in the simple process of self-discovery. In the long run, children can benefit when their parents begin to explore their own values, beliefs, needs and goals. (Piercy 1977, 98)

Based on this assumption of the good parent, values clarification strategies such as Values Voting, Family Shield and roleplaying, parents may, "develop stronger, clearer and more consistently acted upon values." (Donaldson 1976, 6)

Based on their work with parents and children in Oregon, Wood, Bishop, and Cohen began to believe that certain parenting methods were best suited to parents who espoused the central philosophy and values of the methods. In their book, Parenting, the authors express the,

...deep belief parents can and should consciously choose to raise their families in the way they think is best for them. There is no one 'right' way for families to do things; there are many right ways. All parents want their children to be happy, confident, capable, responsive individuals who feel good about themselves and can learn from and grow with the world around them...So parents need to learn about and choose ways of child rearing they can use most successfully and comfortably in helping their children learn and grow. (10)

With their purpose to, "...help parents...explore different methods of nurturing and guiding children...", Wood, Bishop, and Cohen presented four methods of childrearing, each
expressing a distinct value system guiding parenting. Most parent education methods and programs to date can be found in one of the four parenting patterns outlined by Wood, Bishop and Cohen.

Wood, Bishop and Cohen label the first pattern "The Potter". The Potter considers the parent the authority, responsible for determining appropriate and inappropriate behavior for his/her children. Parents teach children what is right and good, and mold children's behavior using modeling and reinforcement. The Potter believes that behavior is learned, and that children will develop according to what is taught and reinforced. Children of "potter parents" are typically obedient, courteous and respectful, and tend to establish and achieve goals.

The second parenting pattern described is that of "The Gardener". This parent believes in the "innate goodness of man" (p. 134) and allows his/her child to grow according to natural principles of development. The Gardener is knowledgeable regarding child development and recognizes the individual uniqueness within that development. Parents encourage children to explore, and set limits primarily concerning health and safety. Discipline consists primarily of redirection and anticipating children's needs. The child raised by the "Gardener parent" is likely to be verbal, assertive, unselfconscious, and often impulsive.

"The Maestro" pattern of parenting, as described by
Wood, Bishop and Cohen, is one in which the democratic tradition is highly valued. Harboring the belief that every child can become good, parents value assignment of responsibility and restructuring the home to meet family goals. The family is, ideally, a model of democratic efficiency. "Maestro parents" believe that children's behavior is an expressive language in itself. Discipline relies both on natural consequences and clearly defined parental consequences. Parents structure learning experiences based on critical periods of children's development. Competent, organized, and reliable, children of "Maestro parents" are often achievers, valuing the product of their efforts.

Wood, Bishop and Cohen's final parenting pattern is that of "The Consultant". Parents favoring this pattern value self-realization above all else, appreciating individual differences and encouraging confrontation of conflict. Children are encouraged to pursue self-knowledge by engaging in problem-solving and planning. Decision making typically involves compromise, as all parties are seen as equally important in the process. Children of "Consultant parents" can be creative, independent and self-reliant.

The authors of Parenting stress that each parenting pattern represents an ideal of that pattern, and suggest resources for parents seeking to develop that pattern which
is best suited to their needs and values.
CHAPTER III

STUDY

Subjects

One hundred parents of kindergarten students were sent surveys at four suburban schools. Thirty-six parents responded to the surveys: 16 from the child-care chain and 20 from the parochial school program.

In addition to the surveys, the parents were asked to complete an information sheet. Of the 36 respondents, 35 provided information. The respondents consisted of twenty-seven mothers and eight fathers. Thirty-three of the parents listed Roman Catholic as their religious preference and one parent listed Hindu. Only one parent had no religious preference. In rating the importance of religion in their lives, eleven ranked it "very important", while 66% of the respondents ranked religion "somewhat important" in their life.

Of interest to parent educators is the parents' responses to the question concerning acquisition of knowledge regarding child-rearing. Fully 50% of the parents chose "own parents" as their only choice for how they have learned to parent. Of those parents who chose more than one response to how they have learned to parent, nine chose their own parents as one of those influences. Responses
concerning the influence of books, formal classes, friends, television and experience were also represented, but only three respondents did not mention their own parents as influential in their parenting.

Methods and Materials

One hundred survey sets were sent home from school with kindergarteners; thirty-six were returned. Three of the schools are part of a child-care chain, while one is a parochial school program. The children brought the survey sets home with a letter of introduction. In return for completing the surveys, parents were offered both general and personalized results of the study.

Participants completed two separate surveys. The Wrightsman Philosophy of Human Nature Instrument (WPHNI) determines a person's positive or negative view of human nature based on answers to Likert-scale agreement or disagreement with a series of statements about human behavior. Those facets of behavior addressed include: altruism, strength of will, trustworthiness and independence. Wrightsman (1964) and Robinson and Shaver (1973) have offered evidence of test-retest reliability and validity.

The second tool determines a preferred style of parenting, based on Wood, Bishop & Cohen's (1980) four parenting patterns. Presented with a child-parent scenario,
four choices are offered as to a preferred method of dealing with the situation. Parenting style is determined by the highest frequency of responses in a category. This tool's strength, in the opinion of the researcher, is that all four parenting styles are considered equally healthy and appropriate. A weakness, however, is that the tool was not meant to be used as an empirical research tool. A full 28% of the respondents displayed a strong combination of styles, making it difficult to narrow the variables for purposes of evaluation.

**Results**

For purposes of comparison, the Wrightsman totals were grouped according to their positive-negative relationship. Scores of -30 to -11 were rated moderately negative, -10 to +10 neutral, 11 to 30 moderately positive, and 31+ was rated extremely positive. Parents' responses on the Wood, Bishop and Cohen Inventory fell into three of the four categories: Pattern II, the developmental Gardener; Pattern III, the democratic Maestro; and, Pattern IV, the humanistic Consultant.

The greatest percentage of parents (39%) expressed a "moderately positive" view of human nature according to the Wrightsman instrument. Twenty-eight percent scored "very positive" and fourteen percent scored "neutral". Four parents expressed a negative view of human nature,
representing eleven percent of the respondents. In a breakdown of Parenting Style Preferences, according to the Wood, Bishop, and Cohen instrument, seventy-five percent of the respondents favored the "Consultant" pattern, with eleven and six percent of the respondents preferring the "Maestro" and "Gardener" patterns, respectively. Two respondents expressed no distinct preference of parenting pattern according to the instrument.

All of the respondents both in the "negative" and "very positive" views of human nature expressed preference for the Consultant pattern of parenting, thereby refuting the author's hypothesis of a parenting difference based upon philosophy of human nature. While there was some dispersion of parenting style preference among those whose philosophy of human nature could be described as "neutral" and "moderately positive", a clear majority of these parents also chose the Consultant parenting pattern. (see Table)

Notably, none of the parents chose pattern I, the Potter, as their parenting style of choice. Pattern I is a high-power parenting style, using many methods and philosophies of Behavior Management principles. While this subject group cannot be considered as representative of the general population, their cumulative responses raise some questions about the extensive use of Behavior Management principles and methods in parent education. Further research is needed to explore the appropriateness of parent
education programs to parents' personal philosophies.
### TABLE

**CORRELATION OF SCORES**

Parenting Style (Wood, Bishop, & Cohen)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Philosophy of Human Nature (Wrightsman)</th>
<th>Gardener II</th>
<th>Maestro III</th>
<th>Consultant IV</th>
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<td>negative</td>
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<td></td>
<td>-24</td>
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**Cell Key**

- frequency
- mean
- standard deviation
- range
Discussion

As previous researchers have found, positive relationships exist between parents' view of human nature (Clayton 1985) and parenting attitudes were noted. Since this study did not do so, several considerations may have been involved:

1) The subjects represented a more homogeneous group than the researcher would have chosen. The researcher had hoped to avoid the large representation of Catholicism in the project, by choosing the non-sectarian child-care programs, but failed to do so. This alone may have been crucial in the results of the study.

Based on Wrightsman's study of Fundamentalist college students (1964), attempts were made to include parents of students at a Reformed Christian School, but were unsuccessful. In general, parents of children in Fundamentalist schools do not favor the use of psychological instruments as those used in this study.

2) The Parenting Style Inventory yielded results that were difficult to categorize sufficiently for research purposes.

3) Although relationships have been found between parental beliefs and parenting styles (Sigel 1985), it may be the case that the beliefs measured by the Wrightsman tool, defining human nature on a linear positive-negative
scale, may not be related to the parent's expressed parenting style. This is not to say that the parental view of human nature is not related to other parenting factors, such as attitudes and parent-child interaction.

4) Since one's view of human nature is simply one aspect of a personal philosophy, the Wrightsman instrument score possibly should not have been used to represent a total representation of the subject's total general philosophy.
Summary

Parent education was discussed as a growing need in light of the changing role of the family in society. As in other areas of education, controversy has arisen concerning differing philosophies and methods of childrearing. Although research has attempted to discover more effective parenting methods, the author suggests that a preferable approach might be to educate parents within their own philosophical framework. The hypothesis presented was that parents' views of human nature as measured by an instrument could be correlated with parents preferred parenting style.

A review of the literature addressed the historical and philosophical bases of parent education, research concerning parental influence upon children and a discussion of prevalent parent education programs, along with their philosophical and methodological approaches. Also presented were studies comparing parent education program effectiveness, and programs that address parent education as a prescriptive process, in which parents are encouraged to
raise their children according to their own values.

The study was then presented. The subjects, methods and materials, and results were presented and discussed. As the results failed to support the author's hypothesis, limitations of the study were discussed in detail. Possible application of the findings to the field of parent education and recommendations for further study are discussed below.

**Application of Findings**

Since the hypothesis was not supported, it is difficult to derive positive applications of the study findings in terms of parent education. At best, it may be inferred that correlations between parental beliefs and values and preferred parenting methods may not bear a linear relationship. It is more likely a subject to be considered with multivariate relationships.

Extensive further research is warranted; however, particularly in light of previously discussed research which failed to find superior parent education among the most popular programs. Certainly, it is seems desirable to establish some way to explore parents individual needs and beliefs in terms of parenting, and to make the results available to parents at a reasonable cost and in a non-threatening way.
Recommendations for Further Study

Sigel (1985) has used possibly the most thorough methods for evaluating what he terms "parental belief systems" in relation to parenting practices. Although Sigel's goal is primarily to explore the relationship, his method might prove valuable to parent education. Sigel uses extensive interviewing and videotaping with behavioral coding to comprehensively explore the belief-practice relationship. These research methods could certainly benefit future research in parenting as well.

As the author intends to continue with this vein of research, several recommendations have been considered in light of further research:

1) Screen for parental pathology, to eliminate parents whose capacity to parent effectively is reduced.

2) Explore philosophy, or belief-systems, in a comprehensive way, focusing on all aspects of philosophy, including values.

3) Study parenting practices through use of videotape and interview, as well as parent preferences expressed in rating scales, etc.

4) Develop a tool that will assess parenting style, allowing for individual differences, but yielding scores that can be used in some quantitative manner for research.

Finally, simply as a matter of ethics, it is essential
that we continue to explore ways of educating parents, using methods that allow for individual differences, respect the family structure, and assume the goodness and capability of parents.
NOTES

1. Dr. Lawrence Clayton, interview by author. Telephone, Piedmont, Oklahoma, 4 April 1988.

2. Jensen, L. and M. Kingston. 1986. Parenting. Discussion of research by Baumrind, Becker, Schaeffer and Baldwin is summarization of these authors' overview.

APPENDIX A

Here is a series of attitude statements. Each represents a commonly held opinion and there are no right or wrong answers. You will probably disagree with some items and agree with others. We are interested in the extent to which you agree or disagree with such matters of opinion.

Read each statement carefully. Then indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree by circling the number in front of each statement. The numbers and their meaning are indicated below:

- If you agree strongly - circle +3
- If you agree somewhat - circle +2
- If you agree slightly - circle +1
- If you disagree slightly - circle -1
- If you disagree somewhat - circle -2
- If you disagree strongly - circle -3

First impressions are usually best in such matters. Read each statement, decide if you agree or disagree and the strength of your opinion, and then circle the appropriate number in front of the statement. Give your opinion on every statement.

If you find that the numbers to be used in answering do not adequately indicate your own opinion use the one which is closest to the way you feel.

1. Great successes in life, like great artists and inventors, are usually motivated by forces they are unaware of.
   +3  +2  +1  -1  -2  -3

2. Most students will tell the instructor when he has made a mistake in adding up their score, even if he had given them more points than they deserved.
   +3  +2  +1  -1  -2  -3
3. Most people will change the opinion they express as a result of an onslaught of criticism, even though they really don't change the way they feel.

4. Most people try to apply the Golden Rule even in today's complex society.

5. Our success in life is pretty much determined by forces outside our own control.

6. If you give the average person a job to do and leave him to do it, he will finish it successfully.

7. Nowadays many people won't make a move until they find out what other people think.

8. Most people do not hesitate to go out of their way to help someone in trouble.

9. People usually tell the truth, even when they know they would be better off by lying.

10. The important thing in being successful nowadays is not how hard you work, but how well you fit in with the crowd.

11. Most people will act as "Good Samaritan" if given the opportunity.

12. Attempts to understand ourselves are usually futile.
13. Most students do not cheat when taking an exam.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

14. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" is a motto most people follow.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

15. There's little one can do to alter his fate in life.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

16. Most people are basically honest.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

17. The typical student will cheat on a test when everybody else does, though he has a set of ethical standards.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

18. If a person tries hard enough, he will usually reach his goals in life.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

19. People claim they have ethical standards regarding honesty and morality, but few people stick to them when the chips are down.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

20. Most people have the courage of their convictions.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

21. The average person is conceited.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

22. The average person has an accurate understanding of the reasons for his behavior.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

23. If you want people to do a job right, you should explain things to them in great detail and supervise them closely.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3
24. Most people can make their own decisions, uninfluenced by public opinion.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

25. It's only a rare person who would risk his own life and limb to help someone else.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

26. If people try hard enough, wars can be prevented in the future.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

27. If most people could get into a movie without paying and be sure they were not seen, they would do it.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

28. It is achievement, rather than popularity with others, that gets you ahead nowadays.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

29. It's pathetic to see an unselfish person in today's world because so many people take advantage of him.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

30. The average person is largely the master of his own fate.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

31. Most people are not really honest for a desirable reason; they're afraid of getting caught.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

32. The average person will stick to his opinion if he thinks he's right, even if others disagree with him.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3

33. People pretend to care more about one another than they really do.
   +3   +2   +1   -1   -2   -3
34. In a local or national election, most people select a candidate rationally and logically.
   +3  +2  +1  -1  -2  -3

35. Most people would tell a lie if they could gain by it.
   +3  +2  +1  -1  -2  -3

36. If a student does not believe in cheating, he will avoid it even if he sees many others doing it.
   +3  +2  +1  -1  -2  -3

37. Most people inwardly dislike putting themselves out to help other people.
   +3  +2  +1  -1  -2  -3

38. Most people have little influence over the things that happen to them.
   +3  +2  +1  -1  -2  -3

39. If you act in good faith with people, almost all of them will reciprocate with fairness toward you.
   +3  +2  +1  -1  -2  -3

40. It's a rare person who will go against the crowd.
   +3  +2  +1  -1  -2  -3

41. The typical person is sincerely concerned about the problems of others.
   +3  +2  +1  -1  -2  -3

42. Most people have an unrealistically favorable view of their own capabilities.
   +3  +2  +1  -1  -2  -3

43. Most people have to rely on someone else to make their important decisions for them.
   +3  +2  +1  -1  -2  -3

44. Most people with a fallout shelter would let their neighbors stay in it during a nuclear attack.
   +3  +2  +1  -1  -2  -3
45. Most persons have a lot of control over what happens to them in life.

+3 +2 +1 -1 -2 -3

46. Most people would cheat on their income tax, if they had a chance.

+3 +2 +1 -1 -2 -3

47. The person with novel ideas is respected in our society.

+3 +2 +1 -1 -2 -3

48. Most people exaggerate their troubles in order to get sympathy.

+3 +2 +1 -1 -2 -3

49. Most people have a good idea of what their strengths and weaknesses are.

+3 +2 +1 -1 -2 -3

50. Most people vote for a political candidate on the basis of unimportant characteristics such as his appearance or name, rather than because of his stand on the issues.

+3 +2 +1 -1 -2 -3

51. Most people lead clean, decent lives.

+3 +2 +1 -1 -2 -3

52. The average person will rarely express his opinion in a group when he sees the others disagree with him.

+3 +2 +1 -1 -2 -3

53. Most people would stop and help a person whose car is disabled.

+3 +2 +1 -1 -2 -3

54. Nowadays people commit a lot of crimes and sins that no one else ever heard about.

+3 +2 +1 -1 -2 -3
55. Most people will speak out for what they believe in.

+3 +2 +1 -1 -2 -3

56. People are usually out for their own good.

+3 +2 +1 -1 -2 -3
APPENDIX B

The following questions address how you would expect to act in specific parenting situations. You are asked to imagine a scenario and choose from among four responses. There are no right or wrong answers - your response is a matter of personal preference. You may not have had experience with many of the situations, however, please answer them as you believe you would respond to them. Please answer every question.

Read each statement and circle the letter of your answer of choice. You may feel that none of the answers describes your opinion exactly; in that case, please choose the answer which is closest to the way you would respond.

1. The most important goal in raising children is that the child:
   a. Becomes a competent, responsible adult.
   b. Is a happy, loving person.
   c. Finds a fulfilling way of life.
   d. Grows up to be a productive member of society.

2. What would you say if your six-year-old complained that she couldn't fall asleep because she was afraid of the dark?
   a. "You weren't afraid of the dark at your age, are you?"
   b. "Come into our room for a little while and then you can go back to sleep."
   c. "I'll leave a light on for you then you won't be in the dark."
   d. "What might make you feel safer?"

3. When a family establishes rules for a four-year-old, the rules should be:
   a. Only those absolutely necessary for the child's physical and psychological safety.
   b. Made by joint negotiations between parents and child.
   c. Clearly determined and explained by the parents.
   d. Presented to the child, and when appropriate, modified in a family council.
4. Your twelve-year-old daughter complains, "I'm ugly!" You should:
   a. Help her to set up a systematic program for improving her physical appearance.
   b. Listen carefully to discover what feelings she has that are giving her a low opinion of herself.
   c. Reassure her that there are many very attractive things about her.
   d. Enroll her in a modeling course.

5. Your three-year-old does not want to be left with a babysitter. You tell her:
   a. "Mother and Dad must go now. We know you don't want us to. What might help you feel better about our being gone?"
   b. "We'll set the alarm clock and when it rings Mother and Dad will be home."
   c. "We know you will be all right. We will be back, and you know and like your babysitter."
   d. "You're a big girl, and big girls don't need to fuss about staying with a babysitter."

6. When your child is faced with a problem, your greatest concern is that your child:
   a. Solves the problem correctly.
   b. Considers various alternatives and their outcomes.
   c. Faces the problem and attempts to change the situation.
   d. Doesn't get too anxious or discouraged.

7. Your fourteen-year-old has just been caught shoplifting. Your first reaction is:
   a. How could he do this to us?
   b. Almost every one has tried it once in his life.
   c. What have we done wrong?
   d. I must go to my child.

8. To prepare a child who is about to enter kindergarten, you would:
   a. Provide opportunities for language development through family activities including games, conversations, and reading.
   b. Teach the child to read by using a reading kit or by enrolling the child in a reading program.
   c. Make no special preparations for school, confident that the child will learn whatever he is developmentally ready for.
d. Build the child's self-confidence and independence.

9. If your nine-year-old says she is running away, you would:
   a. Allow the child to leave, keeping a check on her safety, and letting her discover for herself that this course of action will make her unhappy.
   b. Explain that you love her and cannot let her run away because you would miss her too much.
   c. Clearly define the punishment which would follow such a foolish act.
   d. Analyze with the child what feelings make her want to run away and discuss what the family can do to help with those feelings.

10. What would you do if your six-month-old child is not sleeping through the night?
   a. Determine from the start not to spoil him. Let him cry until he falls asleep on his own.
   b. Respond immediately to his cries, resigning yourself to "live through it" until his nervous system is sufficiently mature.
   c. Be sure the child is physically comfortable so he can settle himself. Provide a favorite blanket within the child's reach.
   d. Be sure the child is physically comfortable and psychologically relaxed. Then wait five minutes before going in to help him settle back to sleep.

11. You want to establish good communication with your children now so that you avoid the kinds of problems that you see friends experiencing with their older children, so:
   a. You teach your children how to develop communication skills.
   b. You require that your children listen to others without interrupting so they will acquire good listening habits.
   c. You encourage your children to express their feelings through words instead of actions.
   d. You develop your own communication skills so you can provide a good model for your children and use better skills with them.

12. Your ten-year-old started taking piano lessons. How would you get him to practice?
12. Your ten-year-old started taking piano lessons. How would you get him to practice?

a. Designate one hour in the day during which must practice. Reward him for keeping to this schedule.
b. Establish with the child a daily time for practice. If that time doesn’t work, examine together why and negotiate a new schedule.
c. Applaud the child's efforts to practice, but leave it to him to decide how much and when he will practice.
d. Set a time for him to practice that leaves room for his other activities. Explain that the lessons will continue only as long as he practices.

13. You discover that your seven-year-old tells lies. You feel that:

a. He will change when he experiences negative social consequences.
b. He is sending a non-verbal message which you must try to understand.
c. He is going through a transient stage.
d. It is morally wrong.

14. You are concerned about your child's spiritual development, so you:

a. Invite your young child to attend services with you if she wants to. However, you let the child decide about her religious affiliation for herself when she reaches her teens.
b. Insist that the child participate in all religious activities with you.
c. Carefully structure attendance at services and other religious activities so that your child enjoys them.
d. Examine your own religious beliefs. Discuss your own and other religions and philosophies with your child, exploring various ideas and customs.

15. You're tired, and it is drizzling, but your three-year-old begs and begs to be taken out. What do you tell him?

a. "All right, but I have to rest for awhile first. I'll set the hands on your clock. Come and get me when the hands on our clock match the hands on your play clock. Then we'll put on our raincoats and boots and go out for awhile."
today in the rain. You can ask me nicely another
day and we will arrange to go out together. Now
please find something else to do."
c. "All right, you've been cooped up all day. Put
on your raincoat, hat and boots and we'll go out."
d. "Put on your raincoat, hat and boots and play
outside in the yard for awhile. I'm too tired to
go out, but I'll watch you from here."

16. To establish good table manners you would:

a. Assume the child will develop desirable habits as
   he mature physically and socially.
b. Explain and demonstrate the desired behavior, and
   praise the child for observing these rules.
c. Model the desired behavior.
d. Remove the child's plate when his table manners
   are offensive.

17. Your son, a high school senior, has informed you he
does not intend to go to college.

a. You ask what his plans are and assure him that
   there are many things he can do that will make him
   happy.
b. You remind him that if he is to achieve the goal
   of a career in architecture, he has to go to
   college.
c. You arrange for him to get aptitude testing and
   vocational counseling so that he can discover for
   himself what occupations his skills match.
d. You discuss with him what he thinks he would like
to do, sharing with him your experiences and
   information. Together you brainstorm steps he
   could take to prepare to enter fields which would
   interest and fulfill him.

18. Your three-year-old is not yet toilet trained although
most of your friends' children his age are.

a. You do not worry, confident that each child is
different and that he will show an interest and be
quickly trained when he is ready.
b. You put him on a schedule of visits to the potty
every two hours. You reward him with a cookie
each time he is successful in using it.
c. You encourage him to follow the models of his
daddy and older brothers, explaining, "You will be
able to use the toilet like the big boys when you
are ready. Tell me when you want to try."
d. You consult books and talk to your friends in
order to try to find out what training techniques
d. You consult books and talk to your friends in order to try to find out what training techniques others have found successful.

19. Your eleven-year-old says she has no friends, that no one will play with her.

a. You explain to her that if she would be less bossy she would have lots of friends.
b. You phone a friend and arrange for your daughter and hers to go skating one afternoon.
c. You realize that at this age most children go through a period of feeling rejected. You reassure her that soon she'll have many friends.
d. You sympathize with her feelings of frustration and unhappiness and help her plan ways to try to gain new friends.

20. You want your children to be responsible for keeping their own rooms neat.

a. You promise that each evening that the bedrooms are picked up there will be a special treat.
b. You set up expectations for each child according to their respective ages.
c. One day you collect the toys scattered on the floor, put them in a box in the basement, and calmly announce that the children may have the toys again if they can keep their rooms neat for a week.
d. The family discusses the problem of messy rooms. Both parents and children express their views. You negotiate a solution that is realistic for the children to carry out and that everyone can live with.
### APPENDIX C

**LIST OF SCORES**

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