

URBAN FAMILIES: CONJUGAL ROLES AND SOCIAL NETWORKS¹

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In this paper I should like to report some of the results of an intensive study of twenty London families.² The study was exploratory, the aim being to develop hypotheses that would further the sociological and psychological understanding of families rather than to describe facts about a random or representative sample of families. Ideally, research of this sort might best be divided into two phases: a first, exploratory phase in which the aim would be to develop hypotheses by studying the interrelation of various factors within each family considered as a social system, and a second phase consisting of a more extensive inquiry designed to test the hypotheses on a larger scale. In view of the time and resources at our disposal, the present research was restricted to the first phase.

The paper will be confined to one problem: how to interpret the variations that were found to occur in the way husbands and wives performed their conjugal roles. These variations were considerable. At one extreme was a family in which the husband and wife carried out as many tasks as possible separately and independently of each other. There was a strict division of labour in the household, in which she had her tasks and he had his. He gave her a set amount of housekeeping money, and she had little idea of how much he earned or how he spent the money he kept for himself. In their leisure

1. A first version of this paper was read at the U.N.E.S.C.O. Seminar "Problems of the Family in the Changing Social Order" at Cologne in June 1954. Later versions were read at seminars at the London School of Economics in October 1954, and at Manchester University in November 1954. I am grateful to members of all three seminars, and most particularly to several friends and colleagues, for their painstaking and constructive criticisms. Under the title of "A Study of Ordinary Families", an earlier version of the paper will be included in a forthcoming book of research papers of the International Seminar on Family Research, to be issued by the U.N.E.S.C.O. Institute for Social Sciences, Cologne.

2. This research was sponsored jointly by the Family Welfare Association and the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations; it was financed for three years by the Nuffield Foundation. The core research team consisted of Dr. A. T. M. Wilson (medical psycho-analyst), Miss I. Menzies (psycho-analyst), Dr. J. H. Robb (sociologist), and the author (social anthropologist). Dr. Wilson supervised the project and conducted clinical interviews; Miss Menzies assisted Dr. Wilson in the analysis of the psychological material and supervised many of the home interviews; Dr. Robb and the author carried out the sociological field work, which consisted of home visits and interviews. Mr. H. Phillipson and Mr. J. Boreham of the Tavistock Clinic administered and interpreted Thematic Apperception Tests.

time, he went to football matches with his friends, whereas she visited her relatives or went to a cinema with a neighbour. With the exception of festivities with relatives, this husband and wife spent very little of their leisure time together. They did not consider that they were unusual in this respect. On the contrary, they felt that their behaviour was typical of their social circle. At the other extreme was a family in which husband and wife shared as many activities and spent as much time together as possible. They stressed that husband and wife should be equals: all major decisions should be made together, and even in minor household matters they should help one another as much as possible. This norm was carried out in practice. In their division of labour, many tasks were shared or interchangeable. The husband often did the cooking and sometimes the washing and ironing. The wife did the gardening and often the household repairs as well. Much of their leisure time was spent together, and they shared similar interests in politics, music, literature, and in entertaining friends. Like the first couple, this husband and wife felt that their behaviour was typical of their social circle, except that they felt they carried the interchangeability of household tasks a little further than most people.

One may sum up the differences between these two extremes by saying that the first family showed considerable segregation between husband and wife in their role-relationship, whereas in the second family the conjugal role-relationship was as joint as possible. In between these two extremes there were many degrees of variation. These differences in degree of segregation of conjugal roles will form the central theme of this paper.

A *joint conjugal role-relationship* is one in which husband and wife carry out many activities together, with a minimum of task differentiation and separation of interests; in such cases husband and wife not only plan the affairs of the family together, but also exchange many household tasks and spend much of their leisure time together. A *segregated conjugal role-relationship* is one in which husband and wife have a clear differentiation of tasks and a considerable number of separate interests and activities; in such cases, husband and wife have a clearly defined division of labour into male tasks and female tasks; they expect to have different leisure pursuits; the husband has his friends outside the home and the wife has hers. It should be stressed, however, that these are only differences of degree. All families must have some division of labour between husband and wife; all families must have some joint activities.

Early in the research, it seemed likely that these differences in degree of segregation of conjugal roles were related somehow to forces in the social environment of the families. In first attempts to explore these forces, an effort was made to explain such segregation in terms of social class. This attempt was not very successful. The husbands who had the most segregated role-relationships with their wives had manual occupations, and the husbands who had the most joint role-relationships with their wives were profes-

sionals, but there were several working-class families that had relatively little segregation and there were several professional families in which segregation was considerable. An attempt was also made to relate degree of segregation to the type of local area in which the family lived, since the data suggested that the families with most segregation lived in homogeneous areas of low population turnover, whereas the families with predominantly joint role-relationships lived in heterogeneous areas of high population turnover. Once again, however, there were several exceptions. But there was a more important difficulty in these attempts to correlate segregation of conjugal roles with class position and type of local area. The research was not designed to produce valid statistical correlations, for which a very different method would have been necessary. Our aim was to make a study of the interrelation of various social and psychological factors within each family considered as a social system. Attempts at rudimentary statistical correlation did not make clear how one factor affected another; it seemed impossible to explain exactly how the criteria for class position or the criteria for different types of local area were actually producing an effect on the internal role structure of the family.

It therefore appeared that attempts to correlate segregation of conjugal roles with factors selected from the generalized social environment of the family would not yield a meaningful interpretation. Leaving social class and neighbourhood composition to one side for the time being, I turned to look more closely at the immediate environment of the families, that is, at their actual external relationships with friends, neighbours, relatives, clubs, shops, places of work, and so forth. This approach proved to be more fruitful.

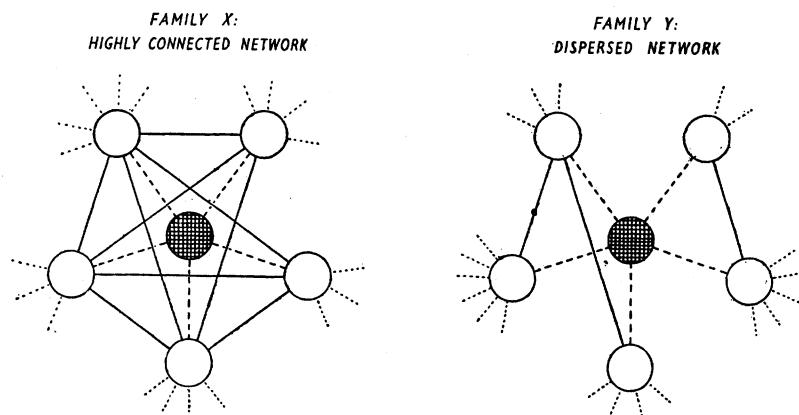
First, it appeared that the external social relationships of all families assumed the form of a *network* rather than the form of an organized group.³ In an organized group, the component individuals make up a larger social whole with common aims, interdependent roles, and a distinctive subculture. In network formation, on the other hand, only some but not all of the component individuals have social relationships with one another. For example, supposing that a family, X, maintains relationships with friends, neighbours, and relatives who may be designated as A, B, C, D, E, F . . . N, one will find that some but not all of these external persons know one another. They do not form an organized group in the sense defined above. B might know A and C but none of the others; D might know F without knowing A, B, C, or E. Furthermore, all of these persons will have friends, neighbours, and relatives of their own who are not known by family X. In

3. In sociological and anthropological literature, the term "group" is commonly used in at least two senses. In the first sense it is a very broad term used to describe any collectivity whose members are alike in some way; this definition would include categories, logical classes, and aggregates as well as more cohesive social units. The second usage is much more restricted; in this sense, the units must have some distinctive interdependent social relationships with one another; categories, logical classes, and aggregates are excluded. To avoid confusion I use the term "organized group" when it becomes necessary to distinguish the second usage from the first.

a network, the component external units do not make up a larger social whole; they are not surrounded by a common boundary.⁴

Secondly, although all the research families belonged to networks rather than to groups, there was considerable variation in the *connectedness* of their networks. By connectedness I mean the extent to which the people known by a family know and meet one another independently of the family. I use the term *dispersed network* to describe a network in which there are few relationships amongst the component units, and the term *highly connected network* to describe a network in which there are many such relationships.⁵ The difference is represented very schematically in *Figure 1*. Each family has a network containing five external units, but the network of Family X is more connected than that of Y. There are nine relationships amongst the

FIGURE 1 SCHEMATIC COMPARISON OF THE NETWORKS OF TWO FAMILIES



The black circles represent the family, the white circles represent the units of the family's network. The broken lines represent the relationships of the family with the external units; the solid lines represent the relationships of the members of the network with one another. The dotted lines leading off from the white circles indicate that each member of a family's network maintains relationships with other people who are not included in the family's network. This representation is of course highly schematic; a real family would have many more than five external units in its network.

4. The term "network" is usually employed in a very broad and metaphorical sense, e.g. in Radcliffe-Brown's definition of social structure as "a complex network of social relations" (4). Although he does not define the term, Moreno uses it in roughly the sense employed in the present paper (3). In giving the term a precise and restricted meaning, I follow the recent usage of John Barnes: "Each person is, as it were, in touch with a number of people, some of whom are directly in touch with each other and some of whom are not . . . I find it convenient to talk of a social field of this kind as a *network*. The image I have is of a set of points some of which are joined by lines. The points of the image are people, or sometimes groups, and the lines indicate which people interact with each other" (1, p. 43).

5. Barnes uses the term "mesh" to denote network connectedness. In a network with a small mesh, many of the individuals in X's network know and meet one another independently of X; in a network with a large mesh, few of the individuals in X's network know and meet one another independently of X (1, p. 44).

people of X's network whereas there are only three amongst the people of Y's network. X's network is highly connected, Y's is dispersed.

A detailed examination of the research data reveals that the degree of segregation of conjugal roles is related to the degree of network connectedness. Those families that had a high degree of segregation in the role-relationship of husband and wife had a highly connected network; many of their friends, neighbours, and relatives knew one another. Families that had a relatively joint role-relationship between husband and wife had a dispersed network; few of their relatives, neighbours, and friends knew one another. There were many degrees of variation in between these two extremes. On the basis of our data, I should therefore like to put forward the following hypothesis: *The degree of segregation in the role-relationship of husband and wife varies directly with the connectedness of the family's social network.* The more connected the network, the more segregation between the roles of husband and wife. The more dispersed the network, the less segregation between the roles of husband and wife. This relationship between network connectedness and segregation of conjugal roles will be more fully illustrated and discussed below.

No claim is made here that network connectedness is the only factor affecting segregation of conjugal roles. Among the other variables affecting the way conjugal roles are performed, the personalities of husband and wife are of crucial importance. Most of this paper will be devoted to a discussion of the effect of network connectedness, however, because the importance of this variable has been insufficiently stressed in previous studies of family role structure.

It thus appears that if one is to understand segregation of conjugal roles, one should examine the effect of the family's immediate social environment of friends, neighbours, relatives, and institutions. The question remains, however, as to why some families should have highly connected networks whereas others have dispersed networks. In part, network connectedness depends on the family themselves. One family may choose to introduce their friends, neighbours, and relatives to one another, whereas another may not. One family may move around a great deal so that its network becomes dispersed, whereas another family may stay put. But these choices are limited and shaped by a number of forces over which the family does not have direct control. It is at this point that the total social environment becomes relevant. The economic and occupational system, the structure of formal institutions, the ecology of cities, and many other factors affect the connectedness of networks, and limit and shape the decisions that families make. Among others, factors associated with social class and neighbourhood composition affect segregation of conjugal roles, not solely and not primarily through direct action on the internal structure of the family, but indirectly through their effect on its network. Conceptually, the network stands between the family and the total social environment. The connectedness of a family's network depends on the one hand on certain forces in the total environment and

on the other hand on the personalities of the members of the family and on the way they react to these forces.

In this paper a first attempt will be made to carry out an analysis in terms of these concepts. Part I will be devoted to a discussion of conjugal role-segregation in relation to network connectedness. In Part II the relation of networks to the total environment will be discussed.

Whether my central hypothesis, the direct relationship between network connectedness and segregation of conjugal roles, is valid for other families I do not know. At this stage I am not attempting to make generalizations about all families, and I am not concerned with whether or not the families we have studied are typical of others. What I am trying to do is to make a comparative study of the relationship between conjugal role-segregation and network connectedness for each of the twenty families considered as a social system. In so doing I have developed a hypothesis that, with further refinement of definition, preferably in quantifiable terms, might be tested on other families and might facilitate further and more systematic comparisons.

PART I. CONJUGAL ROLE-SEGREGATION AND NETWORK CONNECTEDNESS

A. METHODS OF COLLECTING DATA⁶

Although this paper will be devoted primarily to discussion of the effect of external social relationships on the role-relationship of husband and wife, the research as a whole was designed to investigate families not only socio-logically but also psychologically. The research techniques accordingly consisted of a combination of the field-work method of the social anthropologist, in which the group under investigation is studied as a working whole in its natural habitat in so far as this is possible, and the case-study method in which individuals are studied by clinical interviews. No attempt was made to use statistical procedures.

The families studied were "ordinary", in the sense that they did not come to us for help with personal or familial problems, and they were usually able to cope themselves with such difficulties as they had. We sought them out, they did not come to us. In order to simplify the task of comparison, only families with young children were selected; the discussion of conjugal role-segregation and network formation will accordingly be restricted to families in this phase of development. In order further to restrict the number of variables that had to be taken into account, only English families who were Protestant or of mainly Protestant background were selected. All twenty families lived in London or Greater London, but they were scattered all over the area and did not form an organized group. Although the families thus resembled one another in phase of marriage and in national and religious

6. For an account of field techniques see J. H. Robb (5).

background, they varied considerably in occupation and in socio-economic status; the net incomes of the husbands after tax ranged from £325 to £1,500.

Much difficulty was encountered in contacting suitable families, although the effort to find them taught us a good deal about the way families are related to other social groups. The twenty families were eventually contacted through the officials of various service institutions, such as doctors, hospitals, schools, local political parties, and the like, and through friends of the family. Introductions were most successful when the contact person was well known and trusted by both husband and wife, and the most satisfactory channel of contact was through friends of the family.

After the contact person had told a prospective family about the research and had got their agreement to an explanatory interview by one of the research staff, one of the field workers visited the family at their home to describe what the research was about and what it would involve for the family. The field worker explained the background of the research, the content of the interviews, and the time they would take. He (or she) made it clear that the family could withdraw at any time, that the material would be treated with professional discretion, and that if we wished to publish any confidential material that might reveal the couple's identity, we should consult them beforehand. The research staff also undertook to pay any expenses that the couple might incur as a result of the investigation. Although the provisional and explanatory nature of the first interview was always emphasized, we found that most of the couples who got as far as this interview had usually decided to take part in the research before they met the field worker, chiefly on the basis of what the contact person had told them. We have no systematic information about couples who were consulted but decided not to participate.

After a family had agreed to take part, the field worker paid several visits to them at home in the evening for joint interviews with the husband and wife. He also went at least once during the day at the week-end when he could meet the children and observe the whole family together. There were thirteen home interviews on the average, the range being from eight to nineteen. Each home interview began with half an hour of casual chatting followed by more focused discussions on particular topics during which notes were taken. The topics discussed were: kinship, family background, and personal history until marriage; the first phase of the family from marriage until the birth of the first child; an account of family life at the time of interviewing, including a daily, weekly, and yearly diary, a description of external social relationships with service institutions such as schools, church, clinic doctor, and so forth, with voluntary associations and recreational institutions, and more informal relationships with friends, neighbours, and relatives; an account of the division of labour between husband and wife in overall planning, in the economic support of the family, in domestic tasks, and in child care; and finally, questions were asked about values and ideology

concerning family life, social class, money and financial management, and general political, social, and religious questions. These topics were used as a general guide by the field worker; the order of topics and the form of questioning were left to his discretion. Usually he raised a topic, and the couple carried on the discussion themselves with occasional additional questions by the field worker. The discussion frequently wandered away from the assigned topic, but little attempt was made to restrict such digressions, since all the behaviour of husband and wife towards one another and towards the field worker was held to be significant data.

When the home interviews had been completed, the field worker explained the second part of the research, which had been briefly mentioned in the first interview. This consisted of a clinical investigation in which the husband and wife were interviewed at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. Fifteen of the twenty families came for clinical interviews. The first such interview consisted of a brief joint meeting of the couple, the field worker, and the psycho-analyst, followed by the individual administration of the Thematic Apperception Tests by two psychologists from the Tavistock Clinic. The husbands and wives then returned separately on future occasions for two or three clinical interviews with the psycho-analyst. The topics covered were health; personal development, and relationships with parents, siblings, and friends; sexual development; the personal relationship between husband and wife, and the effect of the children on the individual and on the family as a whole. Here again the topics were used only as a general guide. The informants were allowed to express their ideas and feelings as freely as possible.

After the clinical interviews were over, the sociological field worker paid a final home visit to bring the investigation to a close. Frequent supplementary visits have been made, however, partly to fill in gaps in the information and partly to work material through with the families prior to publication. All the families know that a book is to be written about them and most of them intend to read it. We plan to publish detailed sociological and psychological accounts of two families; this material has been disguised so that even people who knew the families would have difficulty in recognizing them; in these very detailed, exhaustive accounts, however, it was impossible to work out a disguise so complete that the couple would not recognize themselves, because many of the things that would have had to be altered for such a disguise were essential to the analysis. We have therefore discussed the material with the two families concerned. This process is somewhat upsetting, but the families found it much more acceptable than the prospect of suddenly recognizing themselves laid bare in print without any prior consultation. We took it for granted that the process of digesting an analysis of themselves in sociological and psychological terms would be disturbing, and we accepted the responsibility of helping them with it in so far as they felt the need of assistance. We did not force therapy on them, and we chose

families whom we felt could stand the stress with comparative ease. Working the material through with the families was also important for the analysis itself; the reactions of the couples to our interpretations of the facts which they had told us helped us to evaluate and revise our analysis.

In addition to the interviews with the twenty families, discussions about families in general were held with various persons, particularly doctors, who had considerable knowledge of family life. Discussions were also held with various organized groups such as Community Centres and Townswomen's Guilds. These groups had no direct connection with the families we interviewed, and in most cases they were composed of people, usually women, who were considerably older than the research husbands and wives. These discussions were therefore not directly relevant to the analysis of the research families, but they provided useful information on the norms of family life. In a public, group situation, especially one which lasts for only one session, people seem much more willing to talk about norms than to discuss their actual behaviour.

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE DATA

If families are classified according to the extremes of the two dimensions of conjugal role-segregation and network connectedness, four patterns are logically possible: 1. segregated conjugal role-relationship associated with a highly connected network, 2. segregated conjugal role-relationship associated with a dispersed network, 3. joint conjugal role-relationship associated with a highly connected network, and 4. joint conjugal role-relationship associated with a dispersed network. Empirically, two of these patterns, the second and third, did not occur. There were no families in which a highly segregated conjugal role-relationship was associated with a dispersed network; there were no families in which a joint conjugal role-relationship was associated with a highly connected network.

Six of the research families were clustered in the first and fourth patterns. There was one family that conformed to the first pattern, a high degree of conjugal role-segregation being combined with a highly connected network. There were five families that conformed to the fourth pattern, a joint conjugal role-relationship being associated with a dispersed network. These six families represent the extremes of the research set. There were nine families that were intermediate in degree of conjugal role-segregation and similarly intermediate in degree of network connectedness. Finally there were five families that appeared to be in a state of transition both with respect to their network formation and with respect to their conjugal role-relationship.

Among the twenty families, there was thus some clustering at certain points along a possible continuum from a highly segregated to a very joint conjugal role-relationship, and along a second continuum from a highly connected to a dispersed network. The families did not fall into sharply separated types, however, so that divisions are somewhat arbitrary, but for

convenience of description, I shall divide the families into four groups: 1. highly segregated conjugal role-relationship associated with highly connected network, 2. joint conjugal role-relationship associated with dispersed network, 3. intermediate degrees of conjugal role-segregation and network connectedness, and 4. transitional families. No claim is made here that these are the only patterns that can occur; further research would probably reveal others. In the following discussion I shall be chiefly concerned not with these divisions, but rather with the fact that the order according to degree of conjugal role-segregation follows the order according to degree of network connectedness, and I shall attempt to show the mechanisms by which this relationship operates.

1. Highly Segregated Conjugal Role-relationship Associated with Highly Connected Network

The research set contained only one family of this type.⁷ For convenience I shall call them Mr. and Mrs. N. They had been married four years when the interviewing began and had two small children. In the following discussion, I shall describe their actual behaviour, indicating the points at which they depart from their norms.⁸

External social relationships. Mr. N had a semi-skilled manual job at a factory in an East End area adjacent to the one in which he and Mrs. N lived. He said that many other men in the local area had jobs at the same place, or were doing the same sort of work at similar factories and workshops nearby. Mrs. N did not work, but she felt that she was unusual in this respect. Most of the neighbouring women and many of her female relatives had jobs; she did not think there was anything morally wrong with such work, but she said that she had never liked working and preferred to stay at home with the children. Mr. N said that he thought it was best for her and the children if she stayed at home, and added that he felt it was a bit of a reflection on a man if his wife had to go out to work.

The Ns used the services of a local hospital and a maternity and child welfare clinic. They expected to send their children to the local elementary

7. As stated above, I am not primarily concerned in this paper with whether the research families are typical of others, but it is perhaps of some interest that families with highly connected networks and pronounced conjugal role-segregation are by no means rare, and that they appear to occur primarily in long-established working-class areas. Supplementary data about such families was collected in group discussions. See also Michael Young (8, 9) and J. H. Robb (6). In Part II of the present paper I shall discuss some of the factors involved in living in long-established working-class areas, and how these factors affect network connectedness.

8. Problems concerning norms will be taken up in a subsequent paper. I use the term "norm" to mean those items of behaviour which are felt by the members of a family to be prescribed and/or typical in their social circle. Ideal norms are those prescribed rules of behaviour which it is felt that people ought to follow; norms of expectation are those behaviours which are felt to be typical or usual. In my view, norms are partly internalized through experiences with other people and through reading, listening to the radio, and so forth; in part norms are a construction of the members of the family, who re-interpret and re-order the received norms, within limits, in accordance with their own needs. It follows that families vary considerably in their norms, although families with similar social experiences will tend to have broadly similar norms.

school. They were also in touch with the local housing authority because they were trying to find a new flat. These various service institutions were not felt to have any particular relationship to one another, except in the sense that they were all felt to be foreign bodies, not really part of the local life. Mrs. N was a little bit afraid of them, particularly of the hospital and of doctors. On one occasion, while waiting with her baby and the field worker in an otherwise empty hospital room for a doctor to attend to the baby, she said in a whisper, "My husband says that we pay for it [the hospital services, through National Health subscriptions] and we should use it, but I don't like coming here. I don't like hospitals and doctors, do you?"

To the Ns, the local area was definitely a community in the social sense, a place with an identity of its own and a distinctive way of life. They spoke of it with great pride and contrasted it favourably with other areas. "It has a bad name, they say we are rough, but I think it's the best place there is. Everyone is friendly . . . there is no life in the West End compared with the East End. They drink champagne and we drink beer. When things are la-di-da you feel out of place." They took it for granted that the other inhabitants had similar feelings of local pride and loyalty. Both the Ns had grown up in the same area, as had most of their relatives and friends. Trips outside the area were like adventures into a foreign land, especially for Mrs. N, and very few informal social relationships were kept up with people outside the area. Physical distance was felt to be an almost insuperable barrier to social contact.

Physically, the area was far from ideal as a place to live, for the houses were old-fashioned, inconvenient, and crowded. The Ns were faced with a difficult choice of whether to move out of London to a modern flat on a new housing estate, or to stay put in cramped quarters, in the old familiar local area with their friends and relatives. They knew of several other young couples who were faced with a similar dilemma. Group discussions at a local community centre and the research of the Institute of Community Studies indicated that many local residents feel this to be an important social and personal problem (9).

The Ns felt that their neighbours were socially similar to themselves, meaning that they had the same sort of jobs, the same sort of background, the same sort of outlook on life.⁹ Because the Ns had grown up in the area, as had many of their relatives and neighbours, they knew a very considerable number of local people, and many of the people they knew were acquainted with one another. In other words, their social network was highly connected. In fact there was considerable overlap of social roles; instead of there being people in three or four separate categories—friend, neighbour, relative, and colleague—the same person frequently filled two or three or even four of these roles simultaneously.

9. Unless otherwise noted, the phrase "socially similar" will be used throughout this paper to describe people who are felt by a husband and wife to belong to the same social class as themselves.

The Ns took it for granted that Mr. N, like other husbands in their social circle, would have some form of recreation that he carried on with men away from home. In his case it was football, although the most common form of recreation was felt to be drinking and visiting in the local pub, where many husbands spent an evening or two a week with their friends; quite frequently some of these men were friends of old standing, men who had belonged to the same childhood gang, and others were colleagues at work. Mr. N had kept in touch with one or two friends of his childhood; he also played football and went to matches with some of his colleagues at work; he mentioned that several of his friends knew one another. Mrs. N knew a bit about these men, but she did not expect to join in their activities with her husband. She had a nodding acquaintance with the wives of two or three of these men, and occasionally talked to them when she was out shopping.

Mrs. N also had her own separate relationships in which her husband did not expect to join. She knew many of her female neighbours, just as they knew one another; she took it for granted that a friendly relationship with a neighbour would be dropped if the woman moved away. Neighbours saw one another on the landings, in the street, in shops, occasionally over a cup of tea inside the flat or house. They talked over their own affairs and those of other neighbours. Neighbours frequently accused one another of something—of betraying a confidence, of taking the wrong side in a children's quarrel, of failing to return borrowed articles, of gossip. One has little privacy in such a situation. But if one wants to reap the rewards of companionship and small acts of mutual aid, one has to conform to local standards, and one has to put up with being included in the gossip. Indeed, being gossiped about is as much a sign that one belongs to the neighbourly network as being gossiped with. If one refuses to have anything to do with one's neighbours one is thought odd, but eventually one will be left alone; no gossip, no companionship.

With the exception of visiting relatives and an occasional Sunday outing with the children, the Ns spent very little of their leisure time in joint recreation with each other; even though they could have got their relatives to mind the children for them, they rarely went out together. In particular, there was no joint entertaining of friends at home. From time to time Mr. N brought a friend home and Mrs. N made tea and talked a bit to the friend; female neighbours often dropped in during the evening to borrow something, but they did not stay long if Mr. N was there. There was no planned joint entertaining in which Mr. and Mrs. N asked another husband and wife to spend an evening with them. Such joint entertaining as existed was carried on with relatives, not with friends. Poverty does not explain the absence of joint entertaining, for the Ns considered themselves to be relatively well off. It did not seem to occur to them that they might spend their surplus money on entertainment of friends; they felt that such money should be spent on

furniture, new things for the children, or on large gatherings of relatives at weddings, funerals, and christenings.¹⁰

There was much visiting and mutual aid between relatives, particularly by the women. The Ns had far more active social relationships with relatives than any other research family, and there was also a great deal of independent contact by their relatives with one another in addition to their contacts with the Ns themselves. In brief, the network of kin was highly connected, more highly connected than those of neighbours or friends. The women were more active than the men in keeping up contacts with relatives, with the result that the networks of wives were more highly connected than the networks of their husbands. Although husbands were recognized to be less active in kinship affairs than their wives, Mr. N paid occasional visits to his mother, both by himself and with Mrs. N. Furthermore, there were some activities for which joint participation by husband and wife was felt to be desirable. At weddings, funerals, and christenings, there were large assemblages of relatives, and on such occasions it was felt to be important that both husband and wife should attend. Recent and prospective weddings, twenty-first birthday parties, and christenings formed an important topic of discussion throughout the interviews with the Ns.

In a group discussion, a man living in the same local area as the Ns and having a similar sort of family life and kinship network summed up the situation by saying, "Men have friends. Women have relatives." Very succinctly he had described the overlapping of roles mentioned above. For Mrs. N, there was no independent category of "friend"; friends were either neighbours or relatives. She had had a succession of girl friends in her adolescence, but she said that she did not see so much of them since they had all got married and had had children. She always described them as "girl friends", not as "friends". Both Mr. and Mrs. N used the term "friend" as if it applied only to men; the term "neighbour", on the other hand, seemed to refer only to women. Mr. N looked rather shocked when I asked him if he saw much of the neighbours.

Later on in the group discussion, the same man observed, "Women don't have friends. They have Mum." In Mrs. N's case the relationship between herself and her mother was indeed very close. Her mother lived nearby in the same local area, and Mrs. N went to visit her nearly every day, taking

10. The absence of the pattern of joint entertainment of friends made our technique of joint interviews with husband and wife somewhat inappropriate for the Ns. Mrs. N was more relaxed and talked much more freely when she and I were alone or when we were together with other women. This was not because of bad relations with her husband; in fact she felt that they had a very successful conjugal relationship and that she was fortunate in having an unusually generous and thoughtful husband. But in spite of this, she felt she could not talk as freely when he was there, and in all probability he had similar feelings. Because of the difficulty in conducting joint interviews, we considered the possibility of interviewing them separately, Mrs. N by the female field worker and Mr. N by the male field worker. But there were two difficulties: first, we wanted to use the same technique with all families so as to simplify the task of comparison, and secondly we felt that separate home as well as clinical interviews would make each partner too suspicious and anxious about what the other was saying.

her children along with her. She and her mother and her mother's sisters also went to visit Mrs. N's maternal grandmother. Together these women and their children formed an important group, helping one another in household tasks and child care, and providing aid for one another in crises.¹¹ Within the network of relatives, in other words, there was a nucleus composed of the grandmother, her daughters, and her daughters' daughters; the relationships of these women with one another were sufficiently intense and distinctive to warrant the term "organized group" in the sense defined above (p. 347). Mrs. N's female relatives provided some of the domestic help and emotional support that, in other research families, a wife expected to get from her husband. Mrs. N felt tremendously attached to her mother emotionally. She felt that a bad relationship between mother and daughter was unnatural, a complete catastrophe. She would, I feel sure, have been deeply shocked by the seemingly cold and objective terms in which many of the women in the other research families analysed their mothers' characters. The close tie with the mother is not only a source of help, however, but may also be a potential source of friction, for if her husband and her mother do not get along well together, a young wife is likely to feel torn by conflicting loyalties. Mrs. N felt that she was particularly fortunate in that her husband and her mother liked each other.

In brief, there was considerable segregation between Mr. and Mrs. N in their external relationships. In effect, Mrs. N had her network and Mr. N had his. The number of joint external relationships was comparatively small. At the same time, there were many links between their networks: the husbands of some of Mrs. N's neighbours were men who were colleagues of Mr. N, some of Mrs. N's relatives also worked at the same place as Mr. N, and in a general way, his family was known to hers even before Mr. and Mrs. N got married. In other words, the connectedness of the combined networks of Mr. and Mrs. N was high compared to that of the families to be discussed below. But the Ns' total network was sharply divided into the husband's network and the wife's network. Furthermore, her network was more highly connected than his: many of the relatives and neighbours with whom she was in contact saw one another independently of her, whereas there were fewer independent links between Mr. N's colleagues, his football associates, and his friends from childhood.

Conjugal role-segregation. The previous description reveals considerable segregation between Mr. and Mrs. N in their external relationships. There was a similar segregation in the way they carried out their internal domestic tasks. They took it for granted that there should be a clear-cut division of labour between them, and that all husbands and wives in their social circle would organize their households in a similar way. One man said in a group discussion: "A lot of men wouldn't mind helping their wives if the curtains were

11. See also Michael Young (8).

drawn so people couldn't see." Although the Ns felt that major decisions should be made jointly, in the day-to-day running of the household he had his jobs and she had hers. He had control of the money and gave her a housekeeping allowance of £5 a week. Mrs. N did not know how much money he earned, and it did not seem to occur to her that a wife would want or need to know this. Although the Ns said that £5 was the amount most wives were given for housekeeping, Mrs. N had great difficulty in making it cover all the expenses of food, rent, utilities, and five shillings' saving for Christmas. She told Mr. N whenever she ran short, and he left a pound or two under the clock when he went out the next morning. She said that he was very generous with his money and she felt that she was unusually fortunate in being spared financial quarrels.

Mrs. N was responsible for most of the housework and child care, although Mr. N did household repairs and helped to entertain the children at week-ends. Mrs. N expected that he would do some of the housework if she became ill, but this was usually unnecessary because her mother or her sister or one of her cousins would come to her aid. Indeed, these female relatives helped her a great deal even with the everyday tasks of housework and child care.

Attitudes towards the role-relationship of husband and wife. Mr. and Mrs. N took it for granted that men had male interests and women had female interests and that there were few leisure activities that they would naturally share. In their view, a good husband was one who was generous with the housekeeping allowance, did not waste money on extravagant personal recreation, helped his wife with the housework if she got ill, and took an interest in the children. A good wife was a good manager and an affectionate mother, a woman who kept out of serious rows with neighbours and got along well with her own and her husband's relatives. A good marital relationship was one with a harmonious division of labour, but the Ns placed little stress on the importance of joint activities and shared interests. It is difficult to make any definite statement on the Ns' attitudes towards sexual relations, for they did not come to the Institute for clinical interviews. Judging from Mrs. N's references to such matters when Mr. N was absent, it seems likely that she felt that physical sexuality was an intrusion on a peaceful domestic relationship rather than an expression of such a relationship; it was as if sexuality were felt to be basically violent and disruptive. The findings of clinical workers and of other research workers suggest that among families like the Ns, there is little stress on the importance of physical sexuality for a happy marriage (7).

2. Families Having a Joint Conjugual Role-relationship Associated with a Dispersed Network

Among the research set there were five families of this type. All the husbands had professional or semi-professional occupations. Two of the husbands had been upwardly mobile in occupation relative to the occupations

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of their fathers. All five families, however, had a well-established pattern of external relationships; they might make new relationships, but the basic pattern was likely to remain the same. Similarly, all had worked out a fairly stable division of labour in domestic tasks.

External social relationships. The husbands' occupations had little intrinsic connection with the local areas in which they lived. All five husbands carried on their work at some distance from the area in which their homes were located, although two husbands did some additional work at home. But in no case was there any feeling that the occupation was locally rooted.

Whether or not wives should work was considered to be a very controversial question by these families. Unless they were very well off financially—and none of these five families considered themselves to be so—both husband and wife welcomed the idea of a double income, even though much of the additional money had to be spent on caring for the children. But money was not the only consideration; women also wanted to work for the sake of the work itself. It was felt that if she desired it, a woman should have a career or some sort of special interest and skill comparable in seriousness to her husband's occupation; on the other hand, it was felt that young children needed their mother's care and that ideally she should drop her career at least until the youngest child was old enough to go to school. But most careers cannot easily be dropped and picked up again several years later. Two of the wives had solved the problem by continuing to work; they had made careful (and expensive) provision for the care of their children. One wife worked at home. One planned to take up her special interest again as soon as her youngest child went to nursery school, and the fifth wife was already doing so.

These husbands and wives maintained contact with schools, general practitioners, hospitals, and in some cases local maternity and child welfare clinics. Most of them also used the services of a solicitor, an insurance agent, and other similar professional people as required. Unlike the first type of family, they did not feel that service institutions were strange and alien; it did not bother them when they had to go out of their local area to find such services, and they were usually well informed about service institutions and could exploit them efficiently. They were not afraid of doctors. There was no strict division of labour between husband and wife in dealing with service institutions. The wife usually dealt with those institutions that catered for children, and the husband dealt with the legal and financial ones, but either could take over the other's duties if necessary.

These husbands and wives did not regard the neighbourhood as a source of friends. In most cases husbands and wives had moved around a good deal both before and after marriage, and in no case were they living in the neighbourhood in which they grew up. Four were living in areas of such a kind that only a few of the neighbours were felt to be socially similar to the family

themselves. The fifth family was living in a suburb that the husband and wife felt to be composed of people socially similar to one another, but quite different from themselves. In all cases these husbands and wives were polite but somewhat distant to neighbours. In order to have become proper friends, the neighbours would have had to be not only socially similar to the family themselves, but would also have had to share a large number of tastes and interests. Establishing such a relationship takes a long exploratory testing, and the feeling seems to have been that it was dangerous to make the test with neighbours since one ran the risk of being pestered by friendly attentions that one might not want to return. Since many of the neighbours probably had similar feelings, particularly when the neighbourhood was socially heterogeneous, it is not surprising that intimate social relationships were not rapidly established. Since these families had so little social intercourse with their neighbours, they were very much less worried than the first type of family about gossip and conformity to local norms. Indeed, in the circumstances one can hardly say that there were any specifically local norms; certainly there was not the body of shared attitudes and values built up through personal interaction since childhood that was characteristic of the local area inhabited by the Ns.

The children were less discriminating than their parents. Unless restricted by their parents, they played with anyone in the street. This caused some of the parents a certain amount of anxiety, particularly when they felt that the area was very heterogeneous. Other parents adopted the view that mixing with children of other social classes was a good thing. In any case, all parents relied on their own influence and on the education of the children to erase any possibly bad effects of such contact.

It seemed very difficult for these families to find the sort of house and local area in which they wanted to live. They wanted to own a reasonably cheap house with a garden in central London, a house within easy reach of their friends, of plays, concerts, galleries, and so forth. Ideally they wanted a cheap, reliable cleaning-woman-cum-baby-sitter to live nearby, possibly even with the family if they could afford it. Only one family had achieved something approaching this aim. The others were making do with various compromises, impeded by lack of money as well as by the scarcity of suitable houses.

For these families, friends were felt to provide the most important type of external relationship. Not all of each family's friends knew one another; it was not usual for a large number of a family's friends to be in intimate contact with one another independently of their contact with the family. In brief, the network of friends was typically dispersed (unconnected). Husband and wife had usually established friendships over a period of years in many different social contexts—at school, during the course of their professional training, in the Services, at various jobs, very occasionally even because of living in the same neighbourhood. Their friends were scattered all over

London, sometimes even all over Britain. Because the network of friends was so dispersed, their social control over the family was dispersed and fragmented. The husband and wife were very sensitive to what their friends thought of them, but since the friends had so little contact with one another, they were not likely to present a unified body of public opinion. Amongst all the different bits of advice they might receive, husband and wife had to make up their own minds about what they should do. They were less persecuted by gossip than the first type of family, but they were also less sustained by it. Their friends did not form a solid body of helpers.

In marked contrast to the Ns, nearly all of the husband's and wife's friends were joint friends; it was felt to be important that both husband and wife should like a family friend, and if a friend was married, then it was hoped that all four partners to the relationship would like one another. Exceptions were tolerated, especially in the case of very old friends, but both husband and wife were uncomfortable if there was real disagreement between them over a friend. Friendship, like marriage, required shared interests and similar tastes, although there was some specialization of interests among different friends. For example, one couple might be golfing friends whereas others might be pub and drinking friends; still others were all-round friends, and it was these who were felt to be the most intimate.

Joint entertainment of friends was a major form of recreation. Even when poverty made invitations to dinner or parties impracticable, friends were still asked over jointly even if only for coffee or tea in the evening. It was considered provincial for husbands to cluster at one end of the room and wives at the other; everyone should be able to talk to everyone else. These husbands and wives usually had enough shared interests to make this possible. Many of them were highly educated, so that they had a common background of general topics, but even those who lacked such education usually make an attempt to talk about matters of general interest.

After these couples had had children, it had become increasingly difficult for them to visit their friends. Since their friends often lived at a considerable distance, and since most of them were also tied down by young children, mutual visiting had become more and more difficult to arrange. Considerable expense and trouble were taken to make such visiting possible. It was obvious that friends were of primary importance to these families.

There were usually other forms of joint recreation besides visiting friends, such as eating in foreign restaurants, going to plays, the cinema, concerts, and so forth. After children were born, there had been a marked drop in external joint recreation in preference for things that could be done at home. Going out had become a special occasion with all the paraphernalia of a baby-sitter and arrangements made in advance.

These five families had far less contact with their relatives than the Ns. Their relatives were not concentrated in the same local area as themselves, and in most cases they were scattered all over the country, and did not keep

in close touch with one another. They formed a dispersed network. It was felt that friendly relations should be kept up with parents, and in several cases the birth of the children had led to a sort of reunion with parents. It seems likely that becoming a parent facilitates a resolution of some of the emotional tensions between adult children and their own parents, particularly between women and their mothers. It is possible that in some cases the arrival of children may exacerbate such tensions, but none of these five families had had such an experience. There are of course some obvious practical advantages in increased contact with parents; they are usually very fond of their grandchildren, so that they make affectionate and reliable baby-sitters; if they live close enough to take on this task their services are greatly appreciated.

Among the families with dispersed networks, there was not the tremendous stress on the mother-daughter relationship that was described for Mrs. N, although women were usually rather more active than men in keeping up kinship ties. There were also fewer conflicts of loyalty; it was felt that if conflicts arose between one's parents and one's spouse, one owed one's first loyalty to one's spouse. Unless special interests, particularly financial interests, were operating among relatives, there was no very strong obligation towards relatives outside the parental families of husband and wife. Even towards siblings there was often very little feeling of social obligation. These families were very much less subject to social control by their relatives than the Ns, partly because they saw less of them, but also because the network of kin was dispersed so that its various members were less likely to share the same opinions and values.

In brief, the networks of these families were less highly connected than that of the Ns: many of their friends did not know one another, it was unusual for friends to know relatives, only a few relatives kept in touch with one another, and husband and wife had very little contact with neighbours. Furthermore, there was no sharp segregation between the wife's network and the husband's network. With the exception of a few old friends and some colleagues, husband and wife maintained joint external relationships.

Conjugal role-segregation. As described above, these families had as little segregation as possible in their external relationships. There was a similar tendency towards joint organization in their carrying out of domestic tasks and child care. It was felt that efficient management demanded some division of labour, particularly after the children had been born; there had to be a basic differentiation between the husband's role as primary breadwinner and the wife's role as mother of young children. But in other respects such division of labour as existed was felt to be more a matter of convenience than of inherent differences between the sexes. The division of labour was flexible, and there was considerable helping and interchanging of tasks. Husbands were expected to take a very active part in child care. Financial affairs were managed jointly, and joint consultation was expected on all major decisions.

Husbands were expected to provide much of the help that Mrs. N was able to get from her female relatives. The wives of these families with dispersed networks were carrying a tremendous load of housework and child care, but they expected to carry it for a shorter time than Mrs. N. Relatives sometimes helped these wives, but only occasionally; they usually lived at some distance so that it was difficult for them to provide continuous assistance. Cleaning women were employed by four families and a children's nurse by one; all families would have hired more domestic help if they could have afforded it. In spite of their affection for their children, all five couples were looking forward to the time when their children were older and the burden of work would decrease. In so far as they could look so far ahead into the future, they did not expect to provide continuous assistance to their own married children.

It seems likely that in the cases of Mrs. N and other wives with highly connected networks, the burden of housework and child care is more evenly distributed throughout the lifetime of the wife; when she is a girl she helps her mother with the younger children; when she herself has children, her mother and other female relatives help her; when she is a grandmother she helps her daughters.

Attitudes towards the role-relationship of husband and wife. Among the families with dispersed networks, there were frequent discussions of whether there really were any psychological or temperamental differences between the sexes. These differences were not simply taken for granted as they were by the Ns. In some cases, so much stress was placed on shared interests and sexual equality (which was sometimes confused with identity, the notion of equality of complementary opposites being apparently a difficult idea to maintain consistently) that one sometimes felt that the possibility of the existence of social and temperamental differences between the sexes was being denied. In other cases, temperamental differences between the sexes were exaggerated to a point that belied the couple's actual joint activities and the whole pattern of shared interests that they felt to be so fundamental to their way of life. Quite frequently the same couple would minimize differences between the sexes on one occasion and exaggerate them on another. Sometimes these discussions about sexual differences were very serious; sometimes they were witty and facetious; but they were never neutral—they were felt to be an important problem. Such discussions may be interpreted as an attempt to air and to resolve the contradiction between the necessity for joint organization with its ethic of equality on the one hand, and the necessity for differentiation and recognition of sexual differences on the other. "After all," as one husband said, to conclude the discussion, "*vive la différence*, or where would we all be?"

It was felt that, in a good marriage, husband and wife should achieve a high degree of compatibility, based on their own particular combination of shared interests and complementary differences. Their relationship with each

other should be more important than any separate relationship with outsiders. The conjugal relationship should be kept private, and revelations to outsiders, or letting down one's spouse in public, were felt to be serious offences. A successful sexual relationship was felt by these couples to be very important for a happy marriage; it was as if successful sexual relations were felt to prove that all was well with the joint relationship, whereas unsatisfactory relations were indicative of a failure in the total relationship. In some cases one almost got the feeling that these husbands and wives felt a moral obligation to enjoy sexual relations, a feeling not expressed or suggested by the Ns.

The wives of these families seemed to feel that their position was rather difficult. They had certainly wanted children, and in all five cases they were getting a great deal of satisfaction from their maternal role. But at the same time, they felt tied down by their children and they did not like the inevitable drudgery associated with child care. Some were more affected than others, but most of them complained of isolation, boredom, and fatigue. "You must excuse me if I sound half-witted. I've been talking to the children all day," was a not uncommon remark. These women wanted a career or some special interest that would make them feel that they were something more than children's nurses and housemaids. They wanted more joint entertainment with their husbands, and more contact with friends. These complaints were not levelled specifically at their husbands—indeed in most cases they felt that their husbands were doing their best to make the situation easier—but against the social situation in which they found themselves and at the difficulty of satisfying contradictory desires at the same time. One wife summed it up by saying, "Society seems to be against married women. I don't know, it's all very difficult."

It may be felt that the problem could be solved if such a family moved to an area that was felt to be homogeneous and composed of people similar to themselves, for then the wife might be able to find friends among her neighbours and would feel less isolated and bored. It is difficult to imagine, however, that these families could feel that any local area, however homogeneous by objective criteria, could be full of potential friends, for their experience of moving about in the past and their varied social contacts make them very discriminating in their choice of friends. Further, their dislike of having their privacy broken into by neighbours is very deeply rooted; it diminishes after the children start playing with children in the neighbourhood, but it never disappears entirely.

3. *Intermediate Degrees of Conjugal Role-segregation and Network Connectedness*

There were nine families of this type in the research set. There was considerable variety of occupation amongst them. Four husbands had professional or semi-professional occupations very similar to the occupations of the second type of family described above. It was in recognition of the fact that

these four families were similar in occupation but different in conjugal role-segregation from the second set of families that I concluded that conjugal role-segregation could not be attributed to occupational level alone. Of the five remaining husbands, one was a clerical worker, three had manual occupations similar in general level to that of Mr. N, and one changed from a highly skilled manual job to an office job after the interviewing was completed.

There was considerable variation among these nine families in conjugal role-segregation. Some tended to have a fairly marked degree of segregation, approaching that of the Ns described above, whereas others were closer to the second set of families in having a relatively joint role-relationship. These variations in degree of segregation of conjugal roles within the nine intermediate families did not follow exactly the order according to occupational level. If the occupations of the husbands are arranged in order from the most joint to the most segregated conjugal role-relationship, the order is as follows: manual worker, professional, professional, clerical worker, professional, manual worker, professional, manual worker, manual worker. The variations in degree of segregation follow more closely the variations in degree of network connectedness. The families with the most dispersed networks had the most joint role-relationships, and the families with the most connected networks had the most conjugal role-segregation. The families with the most dispersed networks were those who had moved around a great deal so that they had established relationships with many people who did not know one another.

For brevity of description, I shall treat these nine intermediate families collectively, but it should be remembered that there were variations in degree amongst them, and that both network connectedness and conjugal role-segregation form continua so that it is somewhat arbitrary to divide families into separate types.

External social relationships. The data suggest two possible reasons for the intermediate degree in the connectedness of the networks of these families. First, most of them had been brought up in families whose networks had been less connected than that of the Ns, but more connected than that of the second set of families. Furthermore, with one exception these couples had moved around less than the second type of family both before and after marriage, so that more of their friends knew one another; several of these families had had considerable continuity of relationships since childhood, and they had not developed the pattern of ignoring neighbours and relying chiefly on friends and colleagues that was described as typical of families with very dispersed networks.

Secondly, these families were living in areas where they felt that many of the neighbours were socially similar to themselves. In four cases these were "suburban" areas; in five cases they were mixed working-class areas in which the inhabitants were felt to be similar to one another in general occupational

level although they worked at different jobs. Five families were living in or near the area where one or both of the partners had lived since childhood. In two of the remaining four cases, the area was similar to the one in which husband and wife had been brought up. In two cases, the present area differed considerably from the childhood area of one or other partner, but the couple had acclimatized themselves to the new situation.

If the husband and wife were living in the area in which they had been brought up, each was able to keep up some of the relationships that had been formed before their marriage. This was also true of the Ns. The intermediate families differed from the Ns chiefly in that their jobs, and in some cases their education, had led them to make relationships with people who were not neighbours. Many neighbours were friends, but not all friends were neighbours. Even in the case of families in which one or both partners had moved to the area after marriage, each partner was able to form friendly relationships with at least some of the neighbours, who were in most cases felt to be socially similar to the couple themselves. Husband and wife were able to form independent, segregated relationships with neighbours. In particular, many of the wives spent a good deal of their leisure time during the day with neighbouring women. Husband and wife also joined local clubs, most of these clubs being unisexual. (Voluntary associations appear to thrive best in areas where people are similar in social status but do not know one another well; the common activity gives people an opportunity to get to know one another better.)

In local areas inhabited by the intermediate families, many of the neighbours knew one another. There was not the very great familiarity built up over a long period of continuous residence such as was described for the area inhabited by the Ns, but there was not the stand-offishness described as typical of the families with very dispersed networks. The intermediate families had networks of neighbours that were midway in degree of connectedness, and the husbands and wives were midway in sensitivity to the opinions of neighbours—more susceptible than the second set of families, but better able to maintain their privacy than the Ns.

Husbands and wives had some segregated relationships with neighbours, but they could also make joint relationships with them if all four partners to the relationship liked one another. Some relationships were usually kept up with friends who had been made outside the area. Couples usually tried to arrange joint visits with these friends. These friends usually did not become intimate with the neighbours, however, so that the network remained fairly dispersed.

Relations with relatives were much like those described above for the second set of families. But if the relatives were living in the same local area as the family, there was considerable visiting and exchange of services, and if the relatives lived close to one another, the kinship network was fairly well connected.

The networks of these families were thus less highly connected than that of the Ns, but more highly connected than that of the second set of families. There was some overlapping of roles. Neighbours were sometimes friends; some relatives were both neighbours and friends. The overlapping was not as complete as it was with the Ns, but there was not the complete division into separate categories—friend, neighbour, relative—that was characteristic of the second set of families. The networks of husband and wife were less segregated than those of the Ns, but more segregated than those of the second set of families.

Conjugal role-segregation. In external relationships, husband and wife thus had some joint relationships, particularly with relatives and with friends, and some segregated relationships, particularly with neighbours and local clubs.

In carrying out household tasks and child care, there was a fairly well-defined division of labour, a little more clearly marked than in the second type of family, more flexible than in the case of the Ns. Husbands helped, but there was a greater expectation of help from neighbours and relatives (if they lived close enough) than among the second set of families.

Attitudes towards the role-relationship of husband and wife. Although there were variations of degree, considerable stress was placed on the importance of shared interests and joint activities for a happy marriage. In general, the greater the stress that was placed on joint organization and shared interests, the greater was the importance attached to sexual relations. Like the families with dispersed networks, the intermediate families stressed the necessity for conjugal privacy and the precedence of the conjugal relationship over all external relationships, but there was a greater tolerance of social and temperamental differences between the sexes, and there was an easier acceptance of segregation in the activities of husband and wife. Wives often wanted some special interest of their own other than housework and children, but they were able to find activities such as attending evening classes or local clubs that could be carried on without interfering with their housework and child care. And because, in most cases, they felt that at least some of the neighbouring women were similar to themselves, they found it relatively easy to make friends among them, and they had people to talk to during the day. They complained less frequently of isolation and boredom than did the wives in families with very dispersed networks.

4. *Transitional Families*

There were five families in varying states of transition from one type of network to another. Two phases of transition can be distinguished among these five families. (a) Families who were in the process of deciding to move from one local area to another, a decision that was requiring considerable restructuring of their networks, and (b) somewhat "de-socialized" families (2), that is, families who had radically changed their pattern of external rela-

tionships and had not yet got used to their new situation. There were other families who had gone through the process of transition and had more or less settled down to the pattern typical of families with dispersed or intermediate networks.

(a) *Families in the process of deciding to move.* There were two such families. Both had relatively highly connected networks, and both had been socially mobile and were contemplating moving to suburban areas, which would be more compatible with their new social status. In both cases this meant cutting off old social ties with relatives and neighbours and building up new ones. One couple seemed to feel too bound to the old network to make the break; they also said they did not want to lower their current standard of living by spending a lot of money on a house. The second family moved after the interviewing was completed, and a brief return visit suggested that they would in time build up the intermediate type of network and conjugal role-segregation.

(b) *Somewhat de-socialized families.* There were three families of this type. All three had been brought up in highly connected networks similar to that described for the Ns, and all had moved away from their old areas and the people of their networks. For such a family, any move outside the area is a drastic step. This contrasts with the intermediate families who are not too upset by moving, provided that they move to an area of people who are felt to be socially similar to themselves.

One family had been very mobile occupationally, although they had moved primarily because of the requirements of the husband's occupation rather than to find a neighbourhood compatible with their achieved status. They were living in relative isolation, with very few friends, almost no contacts with neighbours, and very little contact with relatives, most of whom were living at a considerable distance. They seemed to be a bit stunned by the change in their immediate environment. They had some segregated interests, but they felt that joint organization and shared interests were the best basis of a conjugal relationship.

The other two families were working-class and had not been occupationally mobile. These two families were particularly important to the conceptual analysis of conjugal role-segregation, for although they were similar to the Ns in occupational level and in general cultural background, their conjugal role-relationship was more joint. It was their relatively dispersed networks that distinguished them from the Ns.

These two families had moved to a different local area because they could not find suitable accommodation in their old neighbourhoods. They also wanted the amenities of a modern flat, and since their parents had died and many of their relatives had moved away, they felt that their main ties to the old local area were gone. Both these couples seemed to feel that they were strangers in a land full of people who were all strangers to one another, and

at first they did not know how to cope with the situation. They did not react to their new situation in exactly the same way. In both cases, husband and wife had turned to one another for help, especially at first, but for various personal reasons, one husband and wife were making a concerted effort to develop joint activities and shared interests, whereas the other couple did not take to the idea of a joint role-relationship with any enthusiasm.

In the first case, husband and wife tried to develop more joint relationships with friends, but this was difficult for them because they had had so little practice; they did not know the culture of a joint role-relationship, and their new acquaintances were in a similar predicament so that they got little external support for their efforts. The husband tried to get his wife to join in his club activities, but the structure of the club was such that her activities remained somewhat segregated from his. The husband helped his wife extensively with household tasks and child care, although he continued to plan the family finances. In the second case, the husband busied himself with his work and friends and spent a great deal of time on various committees with other men; his wife was becoming isolated and withdrawn into the home. They had more joint organization of domestic tasks than they had had before; she urged him to help her because her female relatives lived too far away to be of much assistance.

In both cases, however, nothing could really take the place of the old networks built up from childhood, and both couples felt a good deal of personal dissatisfaction. The husbands were perhaps less drastically affected, since they continued to work at their old jobs and their relationships with colleagues gave them considerable continuity. Both husband and wife often blamed their physical surroundings for their malaise, and they idealized their old local areas. They remembered only the friendliness and forgot the physical inconvenience and the unpleasant part of the gossip. On the whole, although one family had carried the process further than the other, both seemed to be developing a more joint division of labour than that which they had had before, and it seemed likely that they would eventually settle down in some intermediate form of network connectedness and conjugal role-segregation.

The research set did not contain any families who had moved in the other direction, that is, from a dispersed to a more connected network. But personal knowledge of families who had been accustomed to a dispersed network and were having to come to grips with a fairly highly connected one suggests that this type of change is also felt to be somewhat unpleasant. The privacy of husband and wife is encroached upon, and each is expected to take part in segregated activities, a state of affairs that they regard as provincial. These families could have refused to enter into the local network of social relationships, but in most cases they felt that the husband's career required it.

C. THE NATURE OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONJUGAL ROLE-SEGREGATION AND NETWORK CONNECTEDNESS

The data having been described, the nature of the relationship between conjugal role-segregation and network connectedness may now be examined in more detail.

Connected networks are most likely to develop when husband and wife, together with their friends, neighbours, and relatives, have all grown up in the same local area and have continued to live there after marriage. Husband and wife come to the marriage each with his own highly connected network. It is very likely that there will be some overlap of their networks; judging by the Ns' account of their genealogy, one of the common ways for husband and wife to meet each other is to be introduced by a person who is simultaneously a friend of one and a relative of the other.

Each partner makes a considerable emotional investment in relationships with the people in his network; each is engaged in reciprocal exchanges of material and emotional support with them; each is very sensitive to their opinions and values, not only because the relationships are intimate, but also because the people in his network know one another and share the same values so that they are able to apply consistent informal sanctions to one another.

The marriage is superimposed on these pre-existing relationships. As long as the couple continue to live in the same area, and as long as their friends, neighbours, and relatives also continue to live within easy reach of the family and of one another, the segregated networks of husband and wife can be carried on after marriage. Some rearrangement is necessary; the husband is likely to stop seeing some of the friends of his youth, particularly those who work at a different place and go to different pubs and clubs; after children are born, the wife is likely to see less of her former girl friends and more of her mother and other female relatives. But apart from these readjustments, husband and wife can carry on their old external relationships, and they continue to be very sensitive to external social controls. In spite of the conjugal segregation in external relationships, the overlapping of the networks of husband and wife tends to ensure that each partner finds out about the other's activities. Although a wife may not know directly what a husband does with his friends away from home, one of the other men is likely to tell his wife or some other female relative who eventually passes the information on, either directly or through other women, to the wife of the man in question. Similarly any defection on the part of the wife is likely to be made known to her husband.

Because old relationships can be continued after marriage, both husband and wife can satisfy some of their personal needs outside the marriage, so that their emotional investment in the conjugal relationship need not be as intense as in other types of family. Both husband and wife, but particularly

the wife, can get outside help with domestic tasks and with child care. A rigid division of labour between husband and wife is therefore possible, since each can get outside help. In other words, the segregation in external relationships can be carried over to activities within the family.

Networks become dispersed when people move around from one place to another, or when they make new relationships that have no connection with their old ones. If both husband and wife have moved around a good deal before marriage, each will bring an already dispersed network to the marriage; many of the husband's friends will not know one another; many of the wife's friends will not know one another. After the marriage they will meet new people as well as some of the old ones, and these people will not necessarily know one another. In other words, their external relationships are relatively discontinuous both in space and in time. Such continuity as they possess lies in their relationship with each other rather than in their external relationships. In facing the external world, they draw on each other, for their strongest emotional investment is made where there is continuity. Hence their high standards of conjugal compatibility, their stress on shared interests, on joint organization, on equality between husband and wife. They must get along well together, they must help one another as much as possible in carrying out familial tasks, for there is no sure external source of material and emotional help. Since their friends and relatives are physically scattered and few of them know one another, the husband and wife are not stringently controlled by a solid body of public opinion, but they are also unable to rely on consistent external support. Through their joint external relationships they present a united front to the world and they reaffirm their joint relationship with each other. No external person must seriously menace the conjugal relationship; joint relationships with friends give both husband and wife a source of emotional satisfaction outside the family without threatening their own relationship with each other.

In between these two extremes are the intermediate and transitional families. In the intermediate type, husband and wife have moved around a certain amount so that they seek continuity with each other and make their strongest emotional investment in the conjugal relationship. At the same time, they are able to make some segregated relationships outside the family and they are able to rely on considerable casual help from people outside the family, so that a fairly clearly defined division of labour into male tasks and female tasks can be made.

The transitional families illustrate some of the factors involved in changing from one type of network to another. Husbands and wives who change from a connected to a dispersed network find themselves suddenly thrust into a more joint relationship without the experience or the attitudes appropriate to it. The eventual outcome depends partly on the family and partly on the extent to which their new neighbours build up relationships with one another. An intermediate form of network connectedness seems to be the

most likely outcome. Similarly, in the case of families who change from a dispersed to a more highly connected network, their first reaction is one of mild indignation at losing their privacy, but in time it seems likely that they will tend to develop an intermediate degree of network connectedness and conjugal role-segregation.

PART II. NETWORKS IN RELATION TO THE TOTAL ENVIRONMENT

Having discussed the relation of the family to its network, I should like now to consider the factors affecting the form of the network itself. First the general features characteristic of all familial networks in an urban industrialized society will be examined, then I shall turn to consider some of the factors affecting variations from one urban familial network to another.

A. FACTORS AFFECTING THE GENERAL FEATURES OF URBAN FAMILIAL NETWORKS

As described above, all the research families maintained relationships with external people and institutions—with a place of work, with service institutions such as schools, church, doctor, clinic, shops, and so forth, with voluntary associations such as clubs, evening classes, and recreational institutions; they also maintained more informal relationships with colleagues, friends, neighbours, and relatives. It is therefore incorrect to describe urban families as "isolated"; indeed, no urban family could survive without its network of external relationships.

It is correct, however, to say that urban families are not contained within organized groups, for although they have many external relationships, the institutions and persons with which they are related are not linked up with one another to form an organized group. Furthermore, although individual members of a family frequently belong to groups, the family as a whole does not. There are marginal cases, such as the situation arising when all the members of the family belong to the same church or go to the same general practitioner, but in these cases the external institution or person controls only one aspect of the family's life, and can hardly be said to "contain" the family in all its aspects.

In the literature on family sociology, there are frequent references to "the family in the community", with the implication that the community is an organized group within which the family is contained. Our data suggest that the usage is misleading. Of course every family must live in some sort of local area, but very few urban local areas can be called communities in the sense that they form cohesive social groups. The immediate social environment of urban families is best considered not as the local area in which they live, but rather as the network of actual social relationships they maintain, regardless of whether these are confined to the local area or run beyond its boundaries.

Small-scale, more isolated, relatively "closed" local groups provide a marked contrast. This type of community is frequently encountered in primitive societies, as well as in certain rural areas of industrialized societies. A family in such a local group knows no privacy; everyone knows everyone else. The situation of the urban family with a highly connected network is carried one step further in the relatively closed local group. The networks of the component families are so highly connected and the relationships within the local group are so clearly marked off from external relationships that the local population can properly be called an organized group. Families are encapsulated within this group; their activities are known to all, they cannot escape from the informal sanctions of gossip and public opinion, their external affairs are governed by the group to which they belong.

In many small-scale primitive societies, the elementary family is encapsulated not only within a local group, but also within a corporate kin group. In such cases, the conjugal role-segregation between husband and wife becomes even more marked than that described above for urban families with highly connected networks. Marriage becomes a linking of kin groups rather than preponderantly a union between individuals acting on their own initiative.

These differences between the immediate social environment of families in urban industrialized societies and that of families in some small-scale primitive and rural communities exist, ultimately, because of differences in the total economic and social structure. The division of labour in a small-scale society is relatively simple; the division of labour in an industrial society is exceedingly complex. In a small-scale, relatively closed society, most of the services required by a family can be provided by the other families in the local group and in the kin group. In an urban industrialized society, such tasks and services are divided up and assigned to specialized institutions. Whereas a family in a small-scale, relatively closed society belongs to a small number of groups each with many functions, an urban family exists in a network of many separate, unconnected institutions each with a specialized function. In a small-scale, relatively closed society the local group and the kin group mediate between the family and the total society; in an urban industrialized society there is no single encapsulating group or institution that mediates between the family and the total society.

One of the results of this difference in the form of external relationships is that urban families have more freedom to govern their own affairs. In a small-scale, relatively closed society, the encapsulating groups have a great deal of control over the family. In an urban industrialized society, the doctor looks after the health of individual members of the family, the clinic looks after the health of the mother and child, the school educates children, the boss cares about the individual as an employee rather than as a husband, and even friends, neighbours, and relatives may disagree amongst themselves as to how the affairs of the family should be conducted. In brief, social control

of the family is split up amongst so many agencies that no one of them has continuous, complete governing power, and within broad limits, a family can make its own decisions and regulate its own affairs.

The situation may be summed up by saying that urban families are *more highly individuated* than families in relatively closed communities. I feel that this term describes the situation of urban families more accurately than the more commonly used term "isolated". By "individuation" I mean that the elementary family is separated off, differentiated out as a distinct, and to some extent autonomous, social group. Of course, in most societies the elementary family is individuated to some extent; one could not say that it existed as a distinct group if it were not. The difference in individuation between an urban family and a family in a relatively closed community is one of degree. It should be remembered, however, that urban families differ among themselves in degree of individuation; families with highly connected networks are less individuated than those with dispersed networks.

The individuation of urban families provides one source of variation in role performance. Because families are not encapsulated within governing and controlling groups, other than the nation as a whole, husband and wife are able, within broad limits, to perform their roles in accordance with their own personal needs. These broad limits are laid down by the ideal norms of the nation as a whole, many of which exist as laws and are enforced by the courts. But informal social control by relatives and neighbours is much less stringent and less consistent than in many small-scale societies, and much variation is possible.

B. FACTORS AFFECTING VARIATION IN URBAN FAMILIES' NETWORKS

Although the immediate social environments of all urban families resemble one another in assuming network form, there are important differences from one urban family's network to another. As has been demonstrated in Part I above, these differences lie in the degree of connectedness of families' networks. Such differences are most clearly marked in the area of informal relationships, that is, in relationships with friends, neighbours, and relatives. These relationships are felt to be of much greater personal and emotional importance than the more specialized and formal relationships that are maintained with doctors, clinics, schools, and so forth, and they are usually maintained with people who are felt to be socially similar to the family themselves.

In the introduction to this paper it was suggested that network connectedness is a function on the one hand of certain forces in the total environment and on the other hand of the family themselves. It now becomes appropriate to discuss this statement in greater detail.

The highly developed division of labour in an industrial society produces not only complexity but also variability. Sometimes conditions are created that favour the development of relatively highly connected networks,

sometimes conditions are created that favour relatively dispersed networks. To examine these conditions in detail would take the discussion far away from families and their networks into a study of the ecology of cities and the economic structure of industries and occupations, a task obviously beyond the scope of this paper. I should like, however, to suggest tentatively several factors that appear likely to affect network connectedness.

(1) *Economic Ties among the Members of the Network*

Economic ties operate more forcibly between relatives than between friends and neighbours, but there is a wide range of variation in the operation of such cohesive forces even among relatives. The connectedness of the kinship network is enhanced if relatives hold property rights in common enterprises, or if they expect to inherit property from one another.

The connectedness of kinship networks is also enhanced if relatives can help one another to get jobs. Only certain types of occupation allow such help; in occupations requiring examinations or other objective selection procedures—and most professional and semi-professional occupations fall into this category—relatives cannot give one another much help in this respect, whereas in some less skilled occupations and in certain businesses, particularly family businesses, relatives are able to help one another more directly.

The important point here is that neither the occupational system nor the distribution of property is uniform. Different families are affected in different ways. This means that although families' networks in general and their kinship networks in particular do not play a very large part in the economic and occupational structure, there is a great deal of variation in the way in which economic forces affect families' networks.

(2) *Type of Neighbourhood*

Type of neighbourhood is important not so much in and of itself, but because it is one of the factors affecting the "localization" of networks. If a family's network is localized, that is, if most of the members live in the same local area so that they are accessible to one another, they are more likely to know one another than if they are scattered all over the country.

Since the members of the informal network are usually felt by the family to have the same social status as themselves, localized networks are most likely to develop in areas where the local inhabitants feel that they are socially similar to one another, that they belong to the same social class, whatever their definition of class may be. Such feelings of social similarity appear to be strongest in long-established working-class areas in which there is a dominant local industry or a small number of traditional occupations. As described above, the Ns, the family with the most highly connected network, were living in such an area. It was also an area of low population turnover, at least until the recent war. Formerly people were born, brought up, and died there. Highly connected networks could develop not only because the local area

was homogeneous but also because people stayed put. Now, as some of the inhabitants move away, the networks of even those people who remain in the area are becoming more dispersed.

There were no comparable homogeneous neighbourhoods of people belonging to one of the full professions.¹² Neighbourhoods were found, however, in which the inhabitants were relatively homogeneous with regard to income, although they had different occupations. The type and cost of the dwelling was probably an important factor contributing to this type of homogeneity. Such neighbourhoods were found in suburbs; they were also found in certain mixed working-class areas in which there was no dominant local industry. Most of the families with intermediate and transitional networks were living in such areas; one family with a dispersed network was living in such an area, but they ignored their neighbours, whom they felt were socially similar to one another but not to themselves. Finally, there were some areas that were extremely heterogeneous with regard to occupational level, income, educational background of the inhabitants, and so forth; most of the families with very dispersed networks were living in such areas.

In a very complex way, neighbourhood composition is related to occupation and social class. It is possible to have fairly homogeneous areas of, say, dockworkers or furniture workers, although not all manual occupations are heavily localized, but the structure of the professions is such that it would be most unusual to find a homogeneous area of, say, doctors or lawyers or chartered accountants. On the basis of our data on families, no attempt can be made to analyse the many factors contributing to the formation of local neighbourhoods. The most one can say is that the industrial and occupational system is so complex that it gives rise to many different types of urban neighbourhood. Some are more homogeneous and stable than others. If one were making a detailed study of network connectedness in relation to neighbourhood composition, it would be necessary to work out detailed criteria of homogeneity so that neighbourhoods could be systematically compared; one could then study the relation of different degrees and types of objective homogeneity to the attitudes of local inhabitants towards one another; one could also compare the formation of the networks of families in different types of area. My guess would be that one would not find families with

12. University towns are perhaps the closest approximation to a homogeneous area of a single profession. Study of networks and conjugal role-segregation in such areas should be of considerable interest, for certain factors in the situation would be likely to foster a high degree of network connectedness whereas others would discourage it. A homogeneous local area, if perceived as such by the local inhabitants, encourages a high degree of network connectedness. The sexual segregation in the social structure of the colleges may also tend to increase connectedness among men and to reinforce segregation between husband and wife. But most professional men move around during their education and early occupational training, and have professional contacts with people outside their local area, which would discourage network connectedness. As described below, continuity of residence by all members of the network is also an important factor; it seems likely that the population turnover of university towns is relatively high, and that there are few families in which husband and wife are born, brought up, and die in the same university town. Such lack of continuity would tend to prevent a high degree of connectedness.

highly connected networks in heterogeneous areas of high population turnover, but that one might find both families with highly connected networks and families with dispersed networks in relatively homogeneous, stable areas.

It is most unlikely that one would be able to predict degree of network connectedness from knowledge of the local area alone. Too many other factors are involved—type of occupation, where the husband works, how long the family has lived in the area, perception of the area, and so forth. The family's perception of the people in the area is particularly important. Objective measures of social homogeneity give only a rough indication of how families will feel about their neighbours. Furthermore, it is always necessary to remember that a neighbourhood does not simply impose itself on a family. Within certain limits families can choose where they will live, and even if they feel that their neighbours are similar to themselves they are not compelled to be friendly with them; other criteria besides felt social similarity enter into the selection of friends.

(3) *Opportunities to Make Relationships outside the Local Area*

Networks are more likely to be highly connected if members do not have many opportunities to form new relationships with persons unknown to the other members of the network. Thus, in the case of the family with a highly connected network described above, the husband's work, the relatives of husband and wife, and their friends were all concentrated in the local area. There are no strong sanctions preventing such families from making relationships with outsiders, but there is no unavoidable circumstance that forces them to do so. In the case of the professional families in the research set, their education and professional training had led them to make many relationships with colleagues and friends who did not know one another. Even if such families keep on living in the same area throughout their lives, which is unusual though possible, the husband's pursuit of an occupational career leads him to make relationships with people who do not belong to the family's neighbourhood network, so that the network tends to become dispersed.

In brief, network connectedness does depend, in part, on the husband's occupation. If he practises an occupation in which his colleagues are also his neighbours, his network will tend to be localized and its connectedness will tend to be high. If he practises an occupation in which his colleagues are not his neighbours, his network will tend to become dispersed. One cannot predict this solely from knowledge of occupational level. Most professional occupations require a man to get his training and do his work in different areas from the one he lives in. Some manual occupations require or permit this too; others do not.

(4) *Physical and Social Mobility*

Network connectedness depends on the stability and continuity of the relationships; a family's network will become more dispersed if either the

family or the other members of the network move away physically or socially so that contact is decreased and new relationships are established.

Among the research set, there were clear indications that networks became more dispersed when physical mobility had been great. When the number of local areas lived in by both husband and wife before and after marriage is added up, the averages according to network formation are as follows: Families with dispersed networks, 19; families with intermediate networks, 8.2; families with transitional networks, 9.6, and the Ns, the family with the most highly connected network, 2. (In all cases, Service career was counted as one "area".)

Many factors affect physical mobility. Here again the occupational system is a relevant factor. Some occupations permit or encourage social and physical mobility so that networks become dispersed; other occupations encourage stability of residence and social relationships. Social mobility is often accompanied by physical mobility. In the research set, seven families had been occupationally mobile and three had moved or were contemplating moving to an area appropriate to their achieved status. The other four had moved too, but not primarily for status reasons. In general, the networks of socially mobile families tend to become less connected not only because they move physically but also because they are likely to drop old social ties and form new ones. Among the mobile families of the research set, most of the rearranging had been done in adolescence and in the early years of the marriage, and it involved chiefly friends and distant relatives. However mobile the family, husband and wife felt an obligation to maintain contact with their parents; occupational and social achievements were usually felt to be a positive accomplishment for parents as well as for the husband and wife themselves.

Occupation may affect physical mobility even when there is no social mobility. Among the research families many of the professional couples had moved frequently from one local area to another and even from one city to another, and they tended to treat the requirements of the husband's career as the most important factor in deciding whether to move or not; this applied as much to families who were not socially mobile as to those who were. The manual and clerical workers were less likely to give the demands of the husband's career as a chief reason for moving, and only one such family had moved very frequently. The relations between occupation and physical and social mobility are obviously very complex. The important fact is that the occupational system is not uniform; it permits much variation in physical and social mobility and hence much variation in network connectedness.

But decisions to move depend not only on occupational considerations but also on the housing shortage, the type and cost of the house or flat, the family's views on the welfare of their children, relations with relatives, neighbours, and friends in the old area, and on potential relations in the new area, and doubtless many other factors as well. All these considerations must be

weighed together when the decision to move is made, although one or other factor may be dominant. Sometimes all considerations point in the same direction; more frequently they have to be balanced against one another. But whatever the reasons, once the move has been made the family's network becomes more dispersed. Even if the family itself does not move, its network will become dispersed if friends and relatives move away.

Network connectedness thus depends on a very complex combination of economic and social forces. Instead of the relatively homogeneous environment of a small-scale, relatively closed society, the total environment of an urban family is exceedingly complex and variable. Many forces affect a family's network, so that there is considerable latitude for the family to choose among several courses of action, and a wide range of variation is possible.

(5) *Individual Decision and Choice*

The connectedness of a family's network depends not only on external social forces, but also on the family itself. Although the members of a family cannot control the forces of the total environment, they can select from among the various courses of action to which these forces give rise. It is the variability of the total environment that makes choice possible, but it is the family that makes the actual decisions. Decisions are shaped by situational factors but they also depend on the personalities of the members of the family, on the way they react to the situational factors.

Through acts of personal decision and choice husband and wife may affect the connectedness of their network, often without any deliberate intention of doing so; by changing the connectedness of their network they affect in turn their conjugal role-segregation. Thus, if a family with a highly connected network moves out of their old area to a new housing estate, their network will rapidly become more dispersed, and for a time at least they will develop a more joint relationship with each other. If a professional family with a dispersed network moves to a university town because of the husband's career, their network is likely to become slightly more connected even though they may not plan to make it so. If a family with a dispersed network decides to move to a distant suburb because that is the only place where they can find a house that they can afford to buy, they may find themselves extremely isolated—cut off from their friends, unable to make relationships easily with their neighbours, and even more dependent on each other than usual.

Among the research set there were several couples who, for various personal reasons, had almost no informal network at all. Thus two families were living in a state of voluntary isolation or near isolation; they kept up necessary contacts with service institutions and paid a few duty visits to relatives, but that was all. Or again, a husband and wife of the second set of families, for various personal reasons, had almost no friends, although they

saw a good deal of their relatives and rather more of their neighbours than the other families of this set. In so far as they had an informal network it was dispersed, but there were far fewer members in it than usual. One of the intermediate families could, if they had wished, have had a network almost as highly connected as that of the Ns, but for various personal reasons they had cut themselves off and had adopted a more home-centred outlook and a more joint role-relationship. Slightly deviant families of this type are aware that their behaviour does not coincide exactly with their own norms, although they usually do not like to discuss their deviance unless they feel that they are above their norm rather than below it.

Personality characteristics may thus affect conjugal role-segregation indirectly because they are a factor in shaping choices that affect the form of the family's network. But personal needs and attitudes, both conscious and unconscious, also affect performance of conjugal roles directly. Two families may have similar networks but slightly different degrees of conjugal role-segregation. Thus the two transitional families discussed above (pp. 369-70) were living in approximately the same social situation, but in one case the husband and wife were trying to develop as joint a conjugal relationship as possible whereas in the second case they were not. Personality factors are of necessity involved in performance of familial roles—and of any role for that matter—but it is only where there is a lack of fit between the personal needs of husband and wife, the social situation in which they find themselves, and the expectations of the members of their networks, that such needs stand out as a separate factor.

Social Class, Network Connectedness, and Segregation of Conjugal Roles

Because of the complexity of the situation it is not surprising that we could not find a simple correlation between class position and segregation of conjugal roles. In my view such segregation is more directly related to network connectedness than to class status as such, although there are probably some aspects of class position that affect conjugal role-segregation directly. For example, if both husband and wife are highly educated, they are likely to have a common background of shared interests and tastes, which makes a joint relationship easy to conduct. Although it is unlikely that teachers deliberately plan to teach children about joint conjugal relationships, higher education is probably a chief means of passing on the ethic appropriate to a joint relationship from one generation to another, and of teaching it to socially mobile individuals whose parents have had a more segregated relationship. It is doubtful, however, whether such education alone could produce joint conjugal relationships; it works in conjunction with other factors.

But for the most part factors associated with class—however one defines that complex construct—affect segregation of conjugal roles indirectly through having an effect on the connectedness of the family's network. To

sum up the empirical resultant: Families with highly connected networks are likely to be working-class. But not all working-class families will have highly connected networks.

It is only in the working-class that one is likely to find a combination of factors all working together to produce a high degree of network connectedness: concentration of people of the same or similar occupations in the same local area; jobs and homes in the same local area; low population turnover and continuity of relationships; at least occasional opportunities for relatives and friends to help one another to get jobs; little demand for physical mobility; little opportunity for social mobility.

In contrast, the structure of professions is such that this pattern of forces almost never occurs. Homogeneous local areas of a single profession are very rare; a man's place of work and his home are usually in different local areas; professional training leads him to make relationships with people who do not know his family, school friends, and neighbours; in most cases getting a job depends on skill and training rather than on the influence of friends and relatives; many professional careers require physical mobility. Almost the only factor associated with high-class status that tends to foster network connectedness is ownership of shares in common enterprises by relatives—and this is less likely to occur among professional people than among wealthy industrialists and commercial families.

But because a man has a manual occupation he will not automatically have a highly connected network. He may be living in a relatively heterogeneous area, for not all manual occupations are localized. He may live in one place and work in another. He may move from one area to another. Similarly his friends and relatives may move or make new relationships with people he does not know. A high degree of network connectedness *may* be found in association with manual occupations, but the association is not necessary and inevitable.

In brief, one cannot explain network connectedness as the result of the husband's occupational or class status considered as single determinants. Network connectedness depends on a whole complex of forces—economic ties among members of the network, type of local area, opportunities to make new social contacts, physical and social mobility, etc.—generated by the occupational and economic systems, but these forces do not always work in the same direction and they may affect different families in different ways.

Finally, network connectedness cannot be predicted from a knowledge of situational factors alone. It also depends on the family's personal response to the situations of choice with which they are confronted.

In a situation of such complexity, little is to be gained by trying to explain conjugal role-segregation in terms of single factors. In the approach to this problem, the most useful conceptual model has proved to be that of field theory: "behaviour is a function of a person (in this case a family) in a situation". Performance of conjugal roles is a function of the family in its

social network. The form of the social network depends, in turn, partly on the members of the family and partly on a very complex combination of forces in the total social environment.

SUMMARY

1. The conjugal role-relationships of all twenty urban families studied in this research contained both segregated and joint components. There were differences of degree, however. Some couples had considerable *segregation* in their conjugal role-relationship; in such families, husband and wife expected to have a clear differentiation of tasks and a considerable number of separate interests and activities. At the other extreme there were couples who had as much *joint organization* as possible in the role-relationship of husband and wife; in such families husband and wife expected to carry out many activities together with a minimum of task differentiation and separation of interests. There were many degrees of variation between these two extremes.

2. The immediate social environment of an urban family consists of a network rather than an organized group. A *network* is a social configuration in which some, but not all, of the component external units maintain relationships with one another. The external units do not make up a larger social whole. They are not surrounded by a common boundary.

The network formation of the immediate environment of an urban family is brought about by the complexity of the division of labour in the total society. Whereas a family in a relatively closed community belongs to a small number of groups each with many functions, an urban family exists in a network of many separate institutions each with a specialized function. Urban families are not isolated, but they are *more highly individuated* than families in relatively closed communities; urban families are not encapsulated within external governing groups other than the nation as a whole, and they have a relatively large measure of privacy, of autonomy, and of opportunity to regulate their own affairs.

3. The networks of urban families vary in degree of *connectedness*, namely in the extent to which the people with whom the family maintains relationships carry on relationships with one another. These variations in network connectedness are particularly evident in informal relationships between friends, neighbours, and relatives.

These differences in network connectedness are associated with differences in degree of conjugal role-segregation. *The degree of segregation in the role-relationship of husband and wife varies directly with the connectedness of the family's social network.* Four sets of families have been described, and the relationship between the connectedness of their networks and the degree of their conjugal role-segregation has been discussed.

4. Conceptually, the network stands between the family and the total social environment. Variations in network connectedness cannot be explained

in terms of any single factor. Such variations are made possible by the complexity and variability of the economic, occupational, and other institutional systems that create a complex of forces affecting families in different ways and permitting selection and choice by the family. It is suggested that the connectedness of a family's network is a function on the one hand of a complex set of forces in the total environment, and on the other hand of the family themselves and their reaction to these forces. Several situational factors possibly relevant to the connectedness of families' networks have been suggested, including: the extent to which members of the network are bound to one another by economic ties; the type of neighbourhood; opportunities to make new relationships even while continuing to live in the same area; opportunities for physical and social mobility.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

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