

## **Trends in the Study of Socialization: Is There a Lewinian Heritage?**

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*Work on “democratic” and “authoritative” parenting is traced to historical roots in the Lewinian work on group atmospheres. A consistent theme, running through socialization research for many years and especially strong at the present time, is that successful socialization of children involves not only bringing about their outward conformity to parental directives, but also enabling them to become self-regulating, and motivating them so that they become willing to cooperate with parental socialization efforts. Research seeking to identify the parenting practices most associated with self-regulation and willing compliance is reviewed. Reciprocity between parents and children, and the bidirectional nature of influence, are stressed.*

The socialization of children encompasses the whole range of processes whereby children learn to behave within the range of what is customary and acceptable in their social group (Child, 1954). Socialization occurs in many settings and involves many agents, including parents, teachers, peers, and television. In this paper, I want to focus on socialization as it occurs in one setting—the family—through interaction between parents and children. In the context of thinking about some of the changes that socialization research has undergone in the past 50 years, I want to see whether we can trace a Lewinian heritage in the work on in-family socialization.

Before coming to the United States in the early 1930s, Kurt Lewin had established himself as child psychologist, and in this country he continued with a variety of developmental studies, such as those on level of aspiration and on frustration and regression. However, I believe it was not this work, nor even his general field theory, that had the greatest impact on the part of the field that dealt

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with the socialization of children. Rather, I will argue that it was the work that he and his students did on group atmospheres that has had a lasting influence on our understanding of the socialization process.

As John Clausen said some years ago, “Whether or not inculcation or coercion is suggested in the definition, socialization does imply that the individual is induced in some measure to conform willingly to the ways of his society or of the particular groups to which he belongs” (Clausen, 1968, p. 4). The word “willingly” is important here. We have long understood that socialization does not involve merely the inculcation of socially acceptable habits, but also of *motives*, so that children willingly adopt and enact appropriate behavior patterns without constant surveillance—and indeed, so that they become sufficiently committed to social values so that, as adults, they will be capable of teaching appropriate social behavior to a new generation. Many words have been used for this aspect of socialization—the word “internalization” is still a good one—but the point is that children’s own motivation is of paramount importance in the socialization process.

### **The Lewinian Heritage**

Consider now the Lewinian heritage. Let us begin with the remarkable studies on group atmosphere first reported in 1939 by Lewin, Lippitt, and White (see also Lippitt & White, 1958). Clearly, this work reflected some of the major social and political concerns of those times, when the totalitarian regimes in Germany and Italy were threatening to engulf Europe, and when the horrors of the holocaust were occurring though not yet widely known. These authors wanted to know some very socially relevant things—how could we, as psychologists, understand the very diverse reactions to autocratic regimes? Sometimes the people living under such regimes submitted apathetically; sometimes they rebelled violently; sometimes they turned on scapegoats. The authors chose to approach these issues through setting up experimentally contrived groups that would differ in their control structure, so that they could compare the effects, on the behavior of group members, of being in an autocratically led group, compared to a democratically organized one.

Their theorizing focused mainly on differences between democratic and autocratic group atmospheres, but as their work progressed they added a third leadership style, which they called “laissez-faire.” We are indebted to Lewin’s daughter, Miriam, for some insight into how and why this modification in the research design was made. She recalls that her father observed some sessions in which potential leaders were being trained in the “democratic” style; he noticed that one trainee interpreted democratic leadership as sitting passively on the sidelines, merely being available as a resource person if the group wanted information. Lewin protested that this was not at all what true democratic leadership

involved—that it was a much more active process, one of providing structure, supporting group processes for resolving conflicts, helping groups to develop an agenda for their activities, guiding them to the use of available resources, and so forth. He thought that laissez-faire leadership might not yield any better results—in terms of generating intrinsic interest in tasks and task competence—than would authoritarian leadership, while he thought true democratic leadership would be superior to both.

Lewin's research team studied club groups of 10- and 11-year-old boys. Each group met once a week for 21 weeks, and part way through the series of meetings a new adult with a different style took over the leadership of the group so that the effects of a transition from one style to another could be studied. The boys took up a set of craft or recreational activities—different activities at successive club meetings. Under a democratic regime, the adult played an active role in encouraging the group to adopt a group decision process, so that the group would discuss and decide what activity they wanted to undertake for the day and how they would go about it. Group members were free to decide who would have what roles in the day's activities, and who would work with whom. The adult leader, if asked for information or guidance, would offer more than one alternative course of action so that the group would have a choice. The leader gave feedback on how the work was progressing, but was objective and fact minded in doing so, with explanations of why certain actions of group members had the effect they did. The leader tried to be a regular group member in spirit, though he did not actually do any of the work, and strove not to let himself be seen as a source of authority or coercion.

Authoritarian group leaders, by contrast, decided what activity the group would take up, assigned roles and functions, decided who would work with whom, dispensed praise and blame without explaining their criteria, and remained aloof, clearly conveying a status of being in charge of the group, not part of it. Laissez-faire leaders told their groups what materials and activities were available, and maintained a friendly manner, but remained on the sidelines, giving information when asked, but not offering suggestions, guidance, or feedback, nor attempting to join the group as a member.

It is important to be aware of how Lewin and his students thought about the affective side of leader–follower relations. Lewin was very wary of the intense emotions generated by charismatic leaders. He saw adoration of a leader, and identification with a leader, as dangerous avenues whereby followers surrendered their own powers of independent judgment and autonomy; he thought that democratic leadership should be dispassionate, rational, designed in every way to avoid the infusion of intense affect into the relationship of followers with their leaders. Friendliness, yes. Perhaps some degree of admiration. But worship, fear, dependency—absolutely not!

The effects of these three leadership styles turned out to be quite distinct.

Under authoritarian leadership, most of the groups were submissive toward the leader—indeed, they began to compete for his attention and praise, despite the fact that they said in private interviews that they did not like him very well. They developed less intrinsic interest in the activities, however, and tended to stop working when the leader left the room. Especially interesting is the fact that when the autocratic leader was not present, the boys would erupt into wild horseplay—indicating, the authors believed, that autocratic groups had been under considerable suppressed tension while the leader was present.

Under democratic leadership, the boys developed easy, cooperative relationships with the leader, and worked effectively in his absence. Little aggression was seen among the group members, and they were more competent in carrying out group projects than groups having the other two leadership styles. To Lewin, this matter of competence was especially important, because it demonstrated something that was by no means universally accepted at that time, even in America: that democracy was something that was not merely pleasant, but could also be more efficient than autocracy in getting tasks accomplished. The laissez-faire groups were generally disorganized and ineffective, being unable to take advantage of the available materials due to lack of strategies for organizing their work as a group and lack of scripts concerning ways in which the materials could be utilized.

After World War II, Lewin moved to MIT to establish the Research Center for Group Dynamics. Although he died shortly thereafter, his students and associates carried on the work. From these origins sprang several very vigorous streams of activity. One group—the one that later moved to Michigan to form an expanded Research Center for Group Dynamics there—carried out a program of experimental studies on many aspects of group process. Another offshoot was the sensitivity training movement, starting with the Bethel workshops and proliferating into several modern guises. Today every business school includes sensitivity training in its program for developing executive leadership. Encounter groups designed to make people sensitive to their impact upon one another in group interaction have become an integral part of popular psychology. When we consider how ubiquitous the belief in the power of democratic leadership has become, we realize that there must have been other streams of thought and social change that laid the groundwork for the ready adoption of these Lewinian ideas and research findings. The seeds they sowed fell on fertile soil.

### **Study of Family Group Atmospheres**

It was not a very big step to begin to see families as small groups, with parents as leaders, and to see families too as varying according to whether they had an autocratic or democratic group atmosphere. The person who first applied this idea to field studies of family process was Alfred Baldwin. Baldwin was a

graduate student at Harvard when Lewin came to spend a semester there in the 1930s, and was greatly impressed by his work on group atmospheres. When Baldwin left Harvard to set up his own research program, he and his colleagues did extensive observations of parent-child interactions in the homes of young children. Of course they could not experimentally assign families to the several leadership styles, but they could identify naturally occurring clusters of parental behavior that approximated these styles. They were able to distinguish democratic parenting from several other types. The primary hallmark of what they called democratic parenting was that children were allowed freedom: the parents in this group imposed the fewest possible restrictions on the child's spontaneous behavior, and avoided mandatory directions. Baldwin's democratic parents made suggestions where needed, but tried to offer alternative strategies so children would have a choice. They involved the child at the earliest possible age in rational decision-making processes. The democratic philosophy, to Baldwin, implied respect for the child's individuality, including respect for a child's right to make mistakes and learn from them.

While democratic parents could express affection toward their children, an important element of this parenting approach was a degree of emotional detachment. Democratic parenting was rational, not marked by intense emotional involvement with children. Baldwin did identify a group of parents who were intensely emotionally involved with their children, but he described these parents as being overprotective and possessive, as well as overindulgent on occasion. Today, we would probably use the word "enmeshed" for this parenting cluster.

Interestingly, Baldwin was not able to identify a parenting pattern that paralleled the *laissez-faire* style that had proved workable in the group atmosphere work. There is a lesson here: in real life, parents cannot simply sit on the side lines and wait for young children to ask them for information. They have to manage the daily life of the family—require children to do certain things, and keep them from doing others. While Baldwin's formal definition of a democratic parental style bore some resemblance to a *laissez-faire* style—because of its strong emphasis on placing as few restrictions as possible on children's behavior—in practice his democratic parents were closely involved in guiding their children.

Baldwin also identified a group of parents who were relatively uninterested in their children, and preoccupied with their own work and adult lives. To them, demands from children were experienced as particularly burdensome; they did not ignore most of the demands, but they reacted in ways designed to make the interaction with the children as brief as possible—in short, they made dictatorial snap judgments. At the same time, these parents did not go out of their way to impose demands on children or take the trouble to follow through on demands, so that the children actually had a good deal of freedom so long as they stayed out of the parents' way. In other words, this was a form of autocracy that embodied

elements of *laissez-faire*. Baldwin identified another form, involving not only peremptory and punitive reactions to children's infractions, and curt reactions to their demands, but also the imposition of strict restrictions.

True to their Lewinian heritage, these researchers expected that democratic home atmospheres would have the best results, and this proved to be true in a number of respects, although there were some surprises (Baldwin, 1949, 1955). Children from the possessive-overprotective homes proved to be apprehensive, and lacking in originality and planfulness. Children from restrictive, highly controlling homes were overtly conforming, were less outgoing, and displayed less curiosity and spontaneity than children from less restrictive homes. Children from democratic homes showed the most rapid gains in cognitive maturity, showed initiative and curiosity, were resourceful and generally cheerful—but they also tended to be dominating and aggressive toward other children. In short, they were assertive and competent in egoistic ways, but their assertiveness was not always associated with appropriately self-regulated social behavior.

The Baldwin work was first published in the late 1940s. We should note that there was a powerful voice that was expressing a very different message at the same time. Piaget (1948) thought that interaction with same-status others was essential for the development of mature moral judgment, but he argued that the parent-child relation was essentially hierarchical. He thought there was no way in which parents could deemphasize their authority or have a "democratic" relationship with a child. The benefits of rational negotiation free of authoritarian elements could only be had, he thought, through interaction with peers. Of course, Piaget was not being widely read by American psychologists at that time, but it is instructive to remember that there were streams of thought that were not entirely compatible with what the Baldwin group thought they were finding.

Although the Baldwin group believed their results constituted a clear vindication of democratic child rearing, there were signals in this work that the granting of maximum freedom to children could have its downside, in terms of a lower sensitivity to the perspectives of social partners. Here enters the second stream of Lewinian influence on socialization research. A young clinical psychologist—Hubert Coffey—was a member of the team that organized and ran the sensitivity workshops at Bethel in the late 1940s. I have not been able to discover whether Coffey had joined the planning group before Lewin's death in 1947, but he was certainly an active member of the group shortly thereafter. He later joined the psychology faculty at Berkeley, and one of his graduate students was Diana Baumrind. For her doctoral thesis, she studied authority in discussion groups, and she began to feel that groups sometimes functioned more effectively with strong leaders. She recognized the deficits of authoritarian control, but argued that democracy, at least as conceptualized in the group atmospheres work, was too close to simple permissiveness, and that an alternative was possible that

would embody the strengths of strong leadership along with some of the strengths of a democratic group atmosphere.

### Parenting Styles

When Baumrind turned to studies of parenting, she set out to contrast three parenting styles: (a) an authoritarian one; (b) a nonrestrictive (permissive) style, which was actually quite close to what both the Lewin group and Baldwin had called democratic, in that it allowed children maximum freedom compatible with safety, with minimal parental imposition of demands or standards; and (c) a third, which she christened *authoritative* parenting. Baumrind predicted that this style would have better outcomes than either of the other two. Its central feature was what she saw as hierarchical reciprocity, meaning that each member of the parent-child dyad has rights and responsibilities with respect to the other. The most effective parents, she thought, would not hesitate to make demands on their children, or to set up rules and enforce them. At the same time they would be responsive to the children's needs, take time to listen to them and bargain with them, involve them in decisions, give them both responsibility and room for autonomy. Baumrind's authoritative style was different in important ways, then, from Baldwin's democratic parenting. We should note that a good family atmosphere, as Baumrind conceived it, was not dispassionate nor necessarily harmonious. Confrontation was to be expected in the interests of clarifying rights and responsibilities, and might be necessary in dealing with the tasks that arise in the course of daily life in a family group.

Baumrind and her colleagues began publishing their studies in the late 1960s (Baumrind, 1967, 1973; Baumrind & Black, 1967), and the findings were very rapidly disseminated. You all know what the major findings were. Compared to the children of either authoritarian or permissive parents, young children of authoritative parents were more mature and competent, being both individually assertive when appropriate and socially responsible in their interactions with others. Since the original publication of this work, others have examined the effects of authoritative parenting, with similar results (see review by Maccoby & Martin, 1983). For example, Hetherington and her colleagues report (in Hetherington & Clingempeel, in press) that this style of parenting is associated with high levels of social and scholastic competence, and low levels of externalizing problem behaviors. Especially interesting is that they find the benefits of authoritative parenting to be equally strong in intact families, divorced single-mother families, and remarried families.

Clearly, the concept of authoritative parenting is alive and well. We should note, however, that there is still a good deal of unclarity in describing and defining the alternative parenting clusters. Baldwin, as mentioned above, did not

find a laissez-faire style; nowadays, people *are* finding such a cluster (Hetherington & Clingempeel, in press; Pulkkinen, 1982)—which they sometimes label “disengaged” parenting. The emergence of this low-involvement parenting pattern may have something to do with the times in which we live and the lifestyles some parents have adopted; however, it is also relevant that disengaged parenting is more likely to be found with older children; it is less possible with younger ones.

In formulating her authoritative parental style, Baumrind made a genuine departure from the original view of group atmospheres that prevailed in the Lewin, Lippitt, and White group, but her work was clearly influenced by their views—indeed, it might be viewed as a reaction to them.

### Intrinsic Motivation

Let us return for a moment to one of the most provocative findings in the early group atmosphere studies: the fact that under democratic leadership the children continued with their activities in the absence of the adult leader, while under autocratic or laissez-faire leadership, they tended to stop working and become bored and restless. We see that democratic leadership fostered what we now call “intrinsic motivation.” There were hints in the original write-up of the group atmospheres work that in the democratic groups, the boys saw the work plan as their own rather than as something imposed from without, and that this helped to account for their task persistence; however, it remained for attribution theory to formulate this process explicitly.

In the 1950s, several group dynamics people began work on perceptions of causality. They asked, When another person complies to your request, what motivation do you attribute to him? Is he complying because he is being kind and considerate, or only because he knows he must (Thibaut & Reiken, 1957)? Later, this question was turned around and applied to the attributions people would make about their *own* motivation when they have complied to the request of another. In his elegant chapter on social control processes and the internalization of social values, Lepper (1983) drew upon the experiments on overjustification to explain why Baumrind’s pattern of authoritative parenting fostered children’s intrinsic motivation to behave in socially approved ways. The heart of his argument is that authoritative parents do require their children to behave according to certain standards, but they do it with the minimum assertion of parental power that will suffice to bring about compliance, and not an ounce more. Authoritarian parents, by contrast, use more pressure than is needed, and permissive ones do not use enough to bring about compliance. When children comply with minimal external pressure, the theory holds, they will conclude that they must have behaved prosocially because they wanted to do so: that is, they attribute their good behavior to their own volition, and *voilà!* we have intrinsic motivation.



I confess to some skepticism about this very neat theory. I do not doubt that if parents apply more pressure than necessary, it will have the effect Lepper points to. His analysis also suggests that there is value in directing the children's attention away from the adult's authority role. The familiar nursery-teacher technique of saying "coats go on the hooks" rather than "hang up your coat" no doubt has the useful dynamic of deemphasizing adult authority, and it may be effective in getting children to do necessary things without being told. The problem is that quite a bit of pressure is often necessary to bring about compliance when a child is initially unwilling. I think children are likely to notice it when their parents apply pressure for good behavior, even if it is only enough pressure to get them to comply. You cannot fool most of the children even most of the time into thinking they really wanted to behave properly if in fact they did not. I would argue that substantial power assertion applied to an unwilling child is inimical to internalization, even if it does not go beyond the amount of pressure that is just sufficient for compliance. Here we are back to the initial problem: how to get children to *want* to behave in prosocial ways, to interact cooperatively with others, so that very little pressure is needed?

Questions about the processes that lead to internalization have been with us for a long time, and are with us still. The empirical findings concerning power assertion are actually quite consistent and hardly any longer in question. The work of Martin Hoffman (Hoffman & Salzstein, 1967; see summary by Hoffman, 1975) in the 1960s helped lay this foundation. He summarized a body of research indicating that a power-assertive parental style was associated with poor internalization of social values, as defined and measured in a variety of ways. Since that time, work on children's compliance (summarized in Maccoby & Martin, 1983) has shown that power-assertive parental commands are often effective in bringing about immediate compliance in the parent's presence, but are ineffective for getting children to behave in the desired ways when out of the parent's sight.

What are the elements that do seem to foster internalization? An important one is consistent with the early work on democratic leadership; studies of young adolescents have shown that when parents and children are jointly involved in making decisions that affect the children's lives, the children have better self-regulation and impulse control than when parents either impose decisions unilaterally or leave the decisions to their children to make alone (Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn, & Dornbusch, in press). The implication is that children are more willing to abide by standards if they have had a voice in setting them. Here are a few other processes that have been found to be associated with children's readiness to cooperate with parental socialization efforts:

*"Other-oriented induction."* Basically, this means calling children's attention to the effects of their actions on others. It has been shown to be especially effective for compliance outside the parent's presence (Kuczynski, 1983). Sheer

old-fashioned moral exhortation seems to have an effect in getting young children to consider the effects of their behavior on their partners, especially if accompanied by expressions of strong parental affect (Zahn-Waxler, Radke-Yarrow, & King, 1979).

*A secure attachment relationship* between parent and child. There is now a substantial body of work indicating that a secure attachment during the first two years of a child's life promotes children's subsequent willingness to pay attention to, and profit from, their parents' teaching efforts. But it is simplistic to see adult influence over children as stemming mainly from the attachment bond. There is the sobering evidence that children comply more readily to strangers than to their own parents. It has been shown (Landauer, Carlsmith, & Lepper, 1970; Parpal, 1986) that, when asked to do a boring task, a child will comply more readily when the request comes from the nursery school teacher or another child's mother rather than from the child's own mother. There is something about the history of the relationship with the mother that gives the child greater freedom to refuse, even though we know that this relationship does lay the foundation for the mother's being highly influential under some circumstances.

*Reciprocity.* Children comply more readily to a parent's directives if the parent has previously complied to the child (Parpal & Maccoby, 1985; Lytton, 1977).

*Inducing positive moods.* Skillful parents have probably always known that it is wise either to wait for a child to be in a good mood, or to generate one, if they want to get the child's cooperation; but now we have experimental demonstration of it in some work by Everett Waters and colleagues (Lay, Waters, & Park, 1989). They induced a positive mood in some of their preschool subjects and found that this improved the children's subsequent willingness to comply to their mothers' requests. On the other side of the coin we know that an angry, threatening home atmosphere induces fear (and sometimes anger) in children (Cummings, 1987)—moods that are distinctly not conducive to willing cooperation.

### **Developing Children's Skills**

Much of the socialization research that I have been discussing so far has focused on issues of parental control or influence. Over time, I think we have seen a shift of socialization research beyond this issue, although it has not been left behind. More and more, we have come to appreciate the role of parents in structuring children's environments so as to support children's acquisition of self-regulating skills. Even more important than structuring the environment, however, is the parent's role as a more competent interaction partner. People working from a Vygotskian perspective have furnished us with ample evidence that children are able to function on a higher level of competence when interacting with a

partner who is more familiar than they are with the strategies and scripts involved in planning and carrying out a sequence of actions (Rogoff, 1990). To adopt the Vygotskian term, parents “scaffold” a child’s activities through such strategies as subdividing a task so that the child can do one thing at a time, assigning the easier parts of the task to the child and doing the more difficult parts themselves, moving an item needed for the child’s work into the child’s line of sight, removing obstacles, etc.

This approach is conceptually related to the idea of democratic process. In both “scaffolding” and democratic parent–child interaction, the parent’s authority role is deemphasized, though a differential in competence does figure quite strongly in the Vygotskian work. You will recall that in the original group atmospheres research, a major distinction between democratic leadership and laissez-faire leadership was that democratic leaders took an active role in offering alternative strategies for group organization and task structure, and showing how craft materials might be used. There can be no doubt that Lewin, Lippitt, and White’s democratic leaders were engaged in “scaffolding” as we now think of it. Still, I believe the perspective of the Vygotskian group is different. In one sense it is broader, in that it is concerned with children’s acquisition of the entire range of competencies, including cognitive ones, not just those that have to do with behaving in a prosocial and socially responsible way. In another sense it is narrower, in that it is mainly concerned with the acquisition of *skills*, not motives and values.

### New Issues

As socialization research has unfolded over the years, I think we can see considerable tension over how global our constructs ought to be. Many researchers have turned to the study of more detailed processes, down to quite microscopic things such as the frequency of mutual gazing between mother and infant, without trying to characterize the overarching cluster of which such mutual behavior might form a part. For certain purposes, however, many researchers still would like to be able to make broader characterizations, and to do so it is necessary to aggregate the myriad details we get from observing and interviewing parents into a few dimensions or types. If we do not do some of this, we are snowed under in a welter of microscopic measures. And as I have indicated already, the strategy of deriving global typologies has paid off. Even though different researchers do not always come up with the same clusters or types when they factor-analyze their measures, there is considerable consistency across different samples studied with different methods concerning the nature of the parenting processes that are related to positive outcomes in children.

However, there are some problems that we cannot ignore that are encountered when we aggregate family process data into types. Researchers such as

Baumrind who have been doing this kind of work have found that there are substantial numbers of parents who do not fit clearly into any particular rubric. In part, this is true because individual parents vary considerably from time to time and from situation to situation in what kind of parenting they employ. As Grusec and Kuczynski (1980) have noted, parents tend to be power-assertive when they want immediate compliance, but are more likely to use induction for longer-range objectives. It seems that all parents use some mixture of techniques. Parents not only vary on the basis of their momentary socialization objectives, but also according to the stressfulness of the conditions that are impinging upon them at any given time from outside the family (Patterson, Bank, & Stoolmiller, 1990). No doubt there are some families in which no one parental style can be said to be predominant. At the same time, there are probably also families who do have a predominant parenting style that is maintained within and in spite of variations around their central tendency. The fact is that we know very little concerning the consistency of parenting styles across time and situations.

Another issue we are only beginning to come to grips with is the different relationships that parents can develop with different children in the same family. The behavior geneticists have been pressing us hard on this point, insisting that whatever impact parental socialization practices have on children is unique to each child. They say that similarities between siblings are fully accounted for by genetic factors; they do not insist that parenting practices have no effect—there's plenty of variance among children that remains to be accounted for after genetic effects are factored out, and presumably, this reflects environmental factors. But siblings, they say, appear to be getting different things from the same parents. Parents, they claim, are part of the "unshared environment" of siblings. Many of us in developmental psychology—and I include myself here—do not share the strong form of this view.

Our skepticism is partly based on the narrow range of outcome variables that have been utilized in the behavior genetics studies. But more important, we think that the effects of family environment (including parenting practices) on many aspects of children's development have been amply demonstrated through intervention research as well as correlational studies. And we think it implausible that the family atmospheres parents provide could be entirely independent from one child to another in the same family. These issues are currently being debated, and evidence is being marshalled. Gazing into my crystal ball, I will tell you that I think we will find that there are aspects of family atmosphere that are shared by all the members of a family. After all, children observe how parents are treating their siblings, and they learn from what they observe as well as from what they experience directly. Furthermore, atmospheres and moods tend to spread to whoever is in the room. Even though shared factors may not substantially affect family members' IQs, they should matter for the future development of individual family members nonetheless.

An example of the kind of evidence that we are all beginning to pay attention to comes from our follow-up study of adolescent children in divorced families. In our sample, there are many pairs of siblings who have lived together during the whole four or five years since their parents separated; but other pairs have been separated—one living with mother, the other with father—for varying periods of time. We find that the similarity between siblings in various aspects of their adjustment is a direct function of the amount of time they have spent together in the same parental household (Monahan, Buchanan, Maccoby, & Dornbusch, 1992). Others could give you instances of what appears to be the impact of shared environments. As evidence accumulates, we will have to sift it for confounding factors. Meanwhile, we certainly must take seriously the possibility that in many families the parents are more authoritative with one child, more authoritarian or permissive with another, depending in part on a given child's age, abilities, and temperament. So far, though, we know very little concerning how similar the relationships are that different siblings have with their parents.

When we think about the fact that different children can affect the same pair of parents differently, we are reminded—if we need reminding—of how interactive a process socialization is. In the original group atmosphere experiments, it was assumed that leaders could be trained to adopt one or another of the leadership styles, which would in turn affect the working climate of the group of children. It might have seemed strange to ask at that time whether the initial behavior of a group of children would determine in any degree the style a leader could adopt. Yet we should note that one of the groups did in fact reject authoritarian leadership; they rebelled, and in essence refused to allow the regime to be put in place. The other groups accepted authoritarian leadership, and it had the predicted effects. Parents, too, are limited to some extent in what parenting style they can adopt, particularly as children grow older. Much depends on the groundwork that was done in earlier years.

### **Differences Between Families and Task Groups**

Having looked for connections between the early work on leadership styles or group atmosphere and studies of family interaction, I would like to close with some comments about the connections that are not there. In a number of ways, families are quite different from the small task-oriented groups that one finds in children's clubs or teams, or in business settings, or in sensitivity-training groups. Family members have a longer history of relationships with one another, and a long future; they are ordinarily not free to leave one another, and these enduring relationships are usually emotionally very intense. The strength of parents' commitments to their children's welfare makes the commitments of leaders in other kinds of groups look pale by comparison. The gap between

parents and young children in levels of knowledge and skills is enormous; even when group leaders do have more experience in the domain of the group's task, the competence gap between leaders and followers is surely much smaller. Perhaps most important of all, task groups normally have a single leader. Intact families have two, and therein lies a world of dynamics unique to families. Children must relate to two adults, who must relate to each other. The family systems theorists have told us a great deal about these dynamics: the coalitions that form as subsystems, the strengths or weaknesses of the parental alliance, the implications of parental conflict or marital satisfaction. We are also becoming more sensitive to the contexts in which families function, and how these contexts can constrain the range of family environments that parents are able to construct. These developments take us considerably beyond the way we thought about in-family socialization in Lewin's time. They are important and promising.

I believe Kurt Lewin would find both family systems theory and studies of family ecology entirely compatible with his way of thinking. If he were here to know about these developments, he would surely be pleased.

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