

THE PHILOSOPHER'S FAMILY:  
AN INQUIRY INTO THE INFLUENCE  
OF FAMILY BACKGROUND ON THE  
VIEWS OF THE FAMILY PROPOUNDED  
BY TWENTY SOCIAL PHILOSOPHERS OF THE  
EIGHTEENTH AND NINETEENTH CENTURIES

by

Alanna Marilyn Mitchell-Hutchinson

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The Philosopher's Family: An Inquiry into the Influence of Family  
Background on the Views of the Family Propounded by Twenty Social  
Philosophers of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century.

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Author:

(signature)

Alanna Marilyn Mitchell-Hutchinson

(name)

11/17/11  
(date)

APPROVAL

Name: Alanna Marilyn Mitchell-Hutchinson  
Degree: Master of Arts  
Title of Thesis: THE PHILOSOPHER'S FAMILY An Inquiry Into  
the Influence of Family Background on the  
Views of the Family propounded by Twenty  
Social Philosophers of the Eighteenth and  
Nineteenth Centur  
Examining Committee:  
Chairperson: William Leiss

Paul Heyer  
Assistant Professor  
Senior Supervisor

---

William H. Melody  
Professor

~~W.~~ Smelser  
External Examiner  
Professor  
Department of Sociology  
University of California at Berkeley

Date Approved: April 16, 1981

## Abstract

The influence of an individual's family background on his or her political predisposition has been investigated in various ways. The purpose of this thesis is to examine the relationship between the family background of a philosopher and his or her philosophy of the family.

This thesis is exploratory in tone. Specifically its tasks were three: 1.) to relate the philosophies of individuals with their own family background, 2.) to examine this relationship by comparing philosophers to one another, and 3.) to suggest factors that might alter a close relationship between background and philosophy.

The underlying hypothesis is: that a typical philosopher of the eighteenth or nineteenth century will be favorably disposed towards the family if he/she perceives the family as similar in political style to his/her family of origin. The validity of this hypothesis will be found in a comparison of twenty different social philosophers and their philosophies of the family. The philosophers were selected according to four criteria: 1.) their philosophical emphasis was primarily social, 2.) they wrote prior to the popular advent of Freudian psychology and thus were not extremely self-conscious about their families' influence on their work, 3.) they lived during a period of intensive examination of social institutions, and 4.) they are frequently mentioned in sociology texts as contributors

to the rise of sociology.

The results support the hypothesis; the family background of a philosopher contributes to both perception of the family and disposition towards it as revealed by his/her philosophical writings. The style of authority in the home was most closely related to the individual's philosophy but the relationship between the individual's ordinal position and the individual's philosophy was not clear due to limitations in the data. Philosophers from a democratic family background tended to perceive the family as democratic whilst those from an authoritarian family background perceived the family as authoritarian. Those who perceived the family as authoritarian were less favorably disposed to it than those who perceived the family as democratic.

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## Preface

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the effect of family background on an individual's political predisposition. The method was historical comparison and involved analysis of data on the family backgrounds of twenty social philosophers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in comparison with the said philosophers' perception of and disposition towards the family. The strength of the expectation of influence is argued both theoretically in Chapter 2 and empirically in the presentation of information about the philosophers.

Data collection about the contribution of the family background to a political predisposition, or, more specifically, a philosophy of the family has been troubled for some time by the inherent reactivity of the question within the context of modern ideology. The explanation of the potential reactivity of the question rests with the prevalence of Freudian assumptions underlying understanding about everyday life. For example, we typically assume our behavior to be either conscious or unconscious -- a notion which originated with Freud; we are not terribly shocked when children masturbate -- another expectation introduced by Freud; the list goes on and most certainly includes the expectation that one's relationship to authority has its roots in one's family background and therein lies the inherent reactivity potential of questions about the nature of one's relationship to authority.

This paper, however, attempts to ask just such a question. But, by asking it of philosophers who predate the ideological incorporation of Freudian assumptions it short circuits the logical assumption of reactivity. One assumes in dealing with the lives and works of these particular philosophers that the influence of their family on their relationship with authority, or more specifically, their predisposition towards and understanding of the family, was, at the very most, only suspected. Whilst such data is in no way better proof of the relationship between family background and perception of and disposition towards the family, it suggests that the fear of reactivity around this particular question may have been, by the grace of history, circumvented. The major criteria underlying the selection of these philosophers, was therefore, the fact that each predated Freud.

Since the purpose of the thesis was to begin to suggest the strength of the influence of family background on political predispositions and an underlying proposition was that predisposition towards the family provides a glimpse of a general political predisposition, a second criterion in the selection of philosophers was that they should make a statement about the family, or one which could be interpreted to suggest something about their predisposition towards the family. The second criterion demanded then, that each philosopher be a social philosopher.

Finally the roster was narrowed simply because data on social philosophers of this period are limited; however, if



philosophers were included in lists of precursors to the rise of Sociology, one could safely assume that at least a limited amount of information was readily available. Therefore the last criterion determining a philosopher's selection was his/her inclusion in texts on the rise of Sociology.

It cannot be denied that some philosophers met all of the criteria and were nevertheless excluded from the study; such exclusions rest on the personal preference of the author to limit the number of philosophers included to twenty and the ultimate weight of the available data on and representativeness of each.

As can be gleaned from the above discussion of criteria determining the selection of the subjects for this thesis, is the proposition that the influence of family background on political predisposition is greater than the influence of nationality or academic training. The purpose of the thesis is to discover the strength of family influence on political predispositions. Political predisposition is related to one's perception of and disposition towards the family.

Comparing different philosophers' perception of the family involved classifying both their perception of the family, as well as their family of origin, as either authoritarian or democratic. That is, a family background is either authoritarian or democratic and an individual perceives the family as either authoritarian or democratic. However, in the final analysis, such categories prove to be conceptually vague and highly problematic. The categories become indistinct; their meaning for one culture, or

one point in time, may bear no relation to later interpretations. Thus, they were resorted to with reservation; nonetheless they permitted a worthwhile investigation and led to suggestive results encouraging further work. The analysis suffered however because of the oftentimes questionable arrangement of very complex philosophical positions as either democratic or authoritarian.

Chapter One provides an historical overview of world affairs so as to permit the reader to interpret the findings within a wider comparative context.

The results indicate support for the hypothesis that family background influences perception of and disposition towards the family. Further research is necessary to prove the strength of the relationship between political perceptions and predispositions with perception of and predisposition towards the family.

## I. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The twenty social philosophers who are the subjects of this thesis, were actively interpreting the events of the socially chaotic centuries during which they lived. The Western world during the period these philosophers lived was fraught with change causing many basic assumptions about the nature of social life to be called into question. Every assumption, every institution, upon which people had based their actions, was suddenly, radically challenged. This erupting consciousness was in part responsible for the erudite and prolific quality of their work. This resulted in an examination of the family that less chaotic times may not have inspired. Chapter I provides an historical touchstone to familiarize the reader with the general events of the period.

### Politics, Wars and Government

Political, economic and intellectual influences on consciousness can only be made artificially distinct. Nevertheless some distinction is required in order to represent these influences in symbolic form.

The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were studded with revolutions: four of them heralded a new age. The first well known revolution, the American, began as a less than innocuous tea party in Boston. The Boston tea party marked

the first step in the rebellion and separation of the American colonies from their founding nation. Britain had poured a great deal of money into the settling of the American colonies, not to mention a great deal of effort in politically out-maneuvering France at the Paris Peace Treaty in order to claim the colonies as her own. She didn't take kindly therefore, to the ingratitude the colonies demonstrated in refusing to pay her taxes and import their goods from her.

The colonies meanwhile, were increasingly annoyed by government at a distance, and less than convinced of its necessity. The economic issues of taxation and import duties were issues that every colonist could relate to, and when their political value was finally appreciated by a group of revolutionaries, the umbilical cord was given a triumphant tug. This culminated in the American Revolution of 1775.

It is conceivable that Britain could have maintained her grip on the colonies if she hadn't been experiencing such turmoil at home. Unlike the colonies she had no economic issue that the whole country would rally against. In addition her government was being exposed as less than saintly by the champion eloquence of William Pitt, the Earl of Chatham, in his speeches against Parliamentary corruption; he urged Parliamentary reform to provide fairer representation of the common people; politicians who had imprisoned people for political purposes were forced to pay compensation; it was not an opportune time for Britain to be engaged in a war that would give her politicians another country to exploit.

Britain did, however, persist with the war, maintaining an air of notable stubbornness. While on the other side France, rarely an ally to Britain, and angered at the farce of the Peace Treaty, did not hesitate to use the American Revolution as an opportunity for revenge. The colonies had requested her support and she was almost blatant in her alliance with them. On October 19, 1781 Britain admitted defeat. Perhaps the aid France gave to the Americans in support of their insurrection, was revenge with a boomerang effect. Eight short years after the American War of Independence, a revolution broke out in France. The collected intellectual, economic, and political frustrations felt by a burgeoning middle class, spewed forth with unmitigated velocity. Here was a force to be reckoned with, this was not a nobleman's war. While the American revolution had seemed logical even to many British people, the French Revolution shocked Europe to its very core. The threatening nature of this revolution had something to do with its cause -- it illustrated the fact that a serious public uprising had become a possibility.

The momentum of the revolution was barely contained. When Napoleon carried its gauntlet far beyond the borders of France, the leaders left behind could hardly conceal their relief; they had been afraid that it would have gone full circle and turned its rage on them. Politically it had been sparked by an intellectual elite, and fuelled by the anger of the poor. The frustrated middle class provided the knowledge, the propaganda, the impetus; the poverty of the

peasants provided both bodies and more importantly, an idealization of the values of the revolution. To fight against oppression was to wage a struggle in righteous indignation, in many ways though, it ultimately accomplished the same end; the morality typical of the middle class was no more representative of the revolutionary values they proclaimed than Christians were representative of the values proclaimed by the church.

The French Revolution caused a shift in world view. War was becoming a people's weapon; it had once been the privilege of kings. So while the French Revolution merely replaced one authority structure with another, it was an actualization of a new concept of the individual; people had begun to believe that they had control of their destiny. The third Revolution of the period was the American Civil War. Ideologically it united the American people in an effort to abolish slavery; politically, it acknowledged the union of the nation. The thirteen colonies had suffered a series of disputes with each other and Lincoln rode the issue of abolition to a powerful conclusion. Lincoln was determined to obliterate the barbaric practice of slavery, but his public stance was directed towards maintaining the solidarity of the union. On both counts he was victorious, and he set about reconstruction of the country with mercuric speed.

In 1848, there occurred another revolution in France. It succeeded in ridding the French of a king. It sparked a

series of smaller revolutions throughout Europe, and like the fading gunshots of a retreating army, it finally left behind an uneasy peace. Marx and Engels (1888) described it as "the first great battle between proletariat and bourgeoisie" but it as such, was a failure and marked the return of the struggle for political control to the hands of the "propertied class" (ed. L.S. Feuer, 1959:1). Simultaneous with and central to the revolutionary spirit of the proletariat in France was the budding relationship of Marx and Engels and other like-minded intellectuals convinced of the need to appeal in outrage against the financial orgies of the propertied class at the expense of those (the proletariat) less well-endowed. Such a promotion of self-consciousness about the extent of exploitation and the inherent injustice of it is a suggestive pivotal point in the development of the rising ideology of industrialism. The Paris Commune of 1871 was "to serve as a model to all the great industrial centers of France" (K. Marx in Freuer, 1959:366). Based on the strictest principles of universal suffrage and absolute representativeness of the people in their elected agents, it had as a central purpose the desire or tendency to abolish private property. It provided a prototype for change if not actual change and consequently, its existence had far-reaching implications in the shifting ideological ends of the period.

## Industry and Economy

The power of the people was not the only source of energy for the overthrow of the times. In 1760 coal ignited the Industrial Revolution in Britain. Industrial machinery fuelled by coal became a magnet attracting files of people from rural areas into crowded urban poverty. The population density produced by the influx, caused consciousness to be raised insidiously. Workers swarming in the close confines of urban centers began to witness, compare, and talk about lifestyles they had previously only glimpsed. The aristocracy too, was being forced to contend with issues of mass human welfare they had hitherto been in a position to ignore. They were less able to pride themselves on their beneficent treatment of their servants when children were losing lives and limbs in their factories.

But there was another contendor for the attention of the elite and power hungry: Capital. Imports and exports in the 19th century, doubled in Britain; iron was smelted at ten times the previous rate; it became possible for merchants to multiply their capital holdings a hundredfold. Thus, humanitarian impulses and fear of revolt competed with compelling greed. The state responded to the need for social control by creating a civil service, opening public schools, and working towards general social reform. Ideological control had become a political necessity.



## Thoughts and Ideas

The Roman church was no longer the stronghold of the people's faith after the Reformation. Religion, if necessary at all, was thought to be natural, rational; a consideration known as the deist movement of the eighteenth century. The hallmark of the era was the premise that institutions were the servants of the people, not people the servants of institutions. Social forms were attended to consciously, they had to be reasoned and not simply followed blindly. The church, however, did not relinquish control without a struggle. It fought with all the political power it still possessed, which was substantial. The major political weapon was censorship and the church attempted to curtail the power of her enemies by appropriating their access to the machinery responsible for the dissemination of information. From out of the Reformation came the value structures that we associate today with capitalism, such as the Protestant work ethic, the self-made man, individualism and self-responsibility. The Enlightenment which had begun in the seventeenth century, celebrated man's ability to reason; it had taken hold with the Scientific Revolution of the sixteenth century, which had demonstrated humankind's ability to understand and predict nature. Applying this ability, the philosophers reasoned human beings could conceivably make the world into whatever they wished it to be.

The problem was deciding what the world should be.

But many had confidence that through reason the ultimate truth would be discovered; a truth which would extract the best from historical knowledge and be refined by the tools of science and philosophy. The nineteenth century, while carrying forward many of the philosophical traditions that had found expression in the eighteenth century, also sponsored a movement in reaction to the Enlightenment philosophy. It was a conservative philosophy whose proponents maintained that the most cherished institutions of humankind should not be destroyed at the whim of excitable young men who had the audacity to believe that they could improve upon centuries of human experience with five odd years of deep thought. Philosophers influenced by Enlightenment ideals, were quick to respond that history itself was their teacher -- and indeed it was.

The third intellectual swell of the period followed the 1789 French Revolution; it was the romantic age. It was characterized by an emphasis on emotion, social institutions and creativity. Controversy raged between those who placed their faith in reason, those who defended the natural unfolding of human progress and those who protested that everyone should do whatever feels best. Much of the discussion was attending to the issue of authority. The doubt about the natural order of things, especially when it was apparently advantageous only to few, could not be quelled by military forces or superstitious rites. The reign of reason lost some of its

impetus although through the pursuit of science it maintains itself as an influential force.

## II. THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

The influence of the family on the philosophy of an individual is, of course, too general an effect to be satisfactorily measured in a project with the limited dimensions of a masters thesis. Therefore the influence of the family has been reduced to the examination of two variables. These variables are the perceived style of authority in the family and the disposition towards the family.

The influence according to these variables of the family must be measured with indicators, such as the perception of families as either authoritarian or democratic institutions compared with similar indicators of family background style of authority and ordinal position of the family member. The thesis suggests that an individual will be favorably disposed towards the family if he or she perceives the family to have a style of authority similar to that of the individual's family of origin. Thus, one is likely to be favorably disposed towards styles of authority similar to the style of authority of one's family of origin. However there is a good possibility that the effect of style of authority will be mediated by an individual's ordinal position within the family of origin; for example, the authoritarian father may focus his attention on the eldest son and leave the rest of the children to the management of a democratic mother. One would expect in such a

case that the siblings' perceptions of the style of authority in the family of origin would be different.

Chapter Two is arranged in two sections: the first discusses the theoretical arguments behind the concept of political predisposition; the second section offers a similar discussion on the expectations behind the concept of ordinal position.

### Political Predisposition

The term political predisposition is used throughout this thesis in a rather loose fashion, hence, it is important to clarify to what it is intended to refer. The family backgrounds of twenty social philosophers have been examined according to the style of authority in their homes and the ordinal position which the philosopher occupied. This data was then compared with their decision about the style of authority in families and their disposition towards the family in general. The decision about the family is considered a perception of the family; the disposition towards the family, because it rests on a decision about style of authority, is considered loosely, a political disposition. Because the style of authority in the family backgrounds of the philosophers appears to influence not only perception but also disposition, the term political predisposition roughly fits the nature of the phenomena I am seeking to analyse.

The unique aspects of this thesis center on the subjects. Each was a prominent social philosopher -- thus ensuring the researcher some biographical detail -- and each considered, or made a statement about the family. At times their statements appear casual and not the result of rigorous examination but it is these unintentional remarks that provide the strongest indication of an unsuspected influence. Philosophers are interesting subjects not simply because of the availability of information on their thoughts and lives but because of the expectation that they are able to separate the essential from the common with

inspired critical acumen -- helpful in a study of something as familiar as the family. Heretofore, philosophers have been isolated from critical comparison, however as Bendix noted in his essay on sociology, philosophers, no less than other scientists, were on Marx's list of those whose roots of thought should be seriously examined.

According to Marx, universities are involved in the contentions of society, and their vaunted posture above the battle is false. For him, true awareness of history requires a critique of the ideological foundations of scientific work (1970:834).

True, some steps have been taken in this regard; philosophers are categorized according to schools of thought but it may well be that schools of thought themselves represent types of political disposition and philosophers may be attracted to a school on the basis of a political predisposition the etiology of which is the subject of this paper.

A philosopher's consideration of the family is an example of their thoughts with regard to social institutions; but the family is also the institution the philosopher is most likely to illuminate with his or her personal experience -- the logic is clear; if family background does influence the political predisposition of a philosopher this will be apparent in his or her philosophy of the family and if the philosophy of the family is characteristic of the philosopher's considerations of social institutions, family background can be said to influence political predispositions.

The philosopher, simply by defining, ignoring, or taking

for granted any given cultural object is contributing to the ideological shape of his/her community. Thus, it is extremely important to uncover the extent of the influence of background on the treatment a philosopher gives to a cultural object such as the family. Consider for a moment the major social upheavals that have been blamed on Plato, Rousseau and most recently, Marx; was each man merely a product of his time? Or was he spawned in deeper currents that cut across centuries and tie one man to the other? A conclusion is beyond the scope of this paper but the nature of the inquiry is clear.

### The Family

Many people, philosophers or no, are quick to deny that their family had any influence upon their thinking but recent research on the organization of communication patterns indicates that communication patterns are related to thought patterns; communication patterns originate in the family. In addition, differences between families are frequently overlooked; families within the same neighborhood or even the same class are thought to possess similar frames of reference; however, such assumptions allow differences to be overlooked -- some frames of reference are highly family-specific, their diffusion spans generations and not neighborhoods. During my fieldwork as a family counsellor I encountered frequent examples of a family-specific framework like a fear of strangers that was passed from one generation to the next and was not characteristic of a neighborhood. The hypothesis that families have a specific world view was suggested to me during my fieldwork; this thesis is a partial test of it.



The framework that a family provides its members with is a filter through which their understanding of the world is formulated; an actor must have a set of operating assumptions according to which his or her thoughts and actions are organized. It makes sense to assume that these operating assumptions are related to a framework of meanings that develops within families; this thesis will test the assumption.

Knowledge, and that includes philosophy and analysis, involves active selection of information according to a framework frequently inaccessible, whose effect may be determined by comparing the selection processes of different individuals. This paper is based on the assumption that the individual's framework is developed in early childhood. The frameworks of individuals should be as different as their childhoods. Furthermore, the framework around which interpersonal relationships are organized is the product of the first social relationships a child engages in, for most individuals the first social relationships are formed in the family. Consequently, social frameworks should differ more between individuals of different families than those among family members. One of the primary social realizations a child has, will be, according to this analysis, in regard to authority. The child, therefore, has a primal experience with family government so to speak. It is simple to understand, given the assumptions above, why the family is considered so central to the adult's perceptions of political systems.

Early childhood experiences may result in a

personality that desires a submissive relationship to authority, a personality that alternates between acceptance and rejection of authority, or a personality that thrives on signs of love and acceptance. And these different personalities result in a different political behavior in later life. Germans raised in authoritarian families ...will want and expect leaders to stand in such an authoritarian relationship to them" (Sidney Verba, 1970:4).

The essay from which the preceding quotation was drawn takes a psychopathological approach, that is, that authoritarian (read bad) families produce disturbed individuals who need a political system to satisfy some of their pathological desires left over from childhood; whereas democratic (read good) families raise their children with enough love to ensure the child's needs have been met and the child will therefore not seek satisfaction of his or her desires in the political system. This paper on the other hand is a bastardization of Verba's essay in the assumption that all children seek to replicate relationships that are familiar. The need is a search for replication, and is for most individuals, unconscious.

If the need to replicate the familiar, acts as an influence on the political predisposition of an individual and that influence becomes established, then individuals may be enabled to compensate for the influence. Rather than taking the standpoint that one type of person has needs, and is therefore less formed than another, I will assume that all individuals seek replication of the familiar even in the face of a more socially beneficial choice.

Frequently, attacks on the ethnocentric bias of scholars

are limited to include the obvious influence of culture, but the bias imposed by family background often goes unchallenged. Verba, and others who attempt to correlate family backgrounds to the appearance of highly visible and destructive tyrants like Hitler, are challenging the bias imposed by the family but by basing their analysis on the authoritarian-democratic dichotomy they render accounts which are both reductionistic and premature. While I have relied on a similar dichotomy I have attempted to qualify it by being less prone to the assumption that one style of authority is superior to the other. By criticizing one style of authority and applauding the other, Verba and others, obscure the fact that one style of authority produces natural critics of the other. It is through such active conflict that the social order is established and the role of the family in the creation of the social order can only be determined through a critical examination of all types of families, regardless of whether some are considered more just than others by less than objective researchers.

While Verba seeks to stress that work on the authoritarian personality is exemplary of a tradition which could be fruitfully pursued, the emphasis of this thesis is less specific. "Harold Lasswell, as well as recent works on the authoritarian personality, suggests that much political behavior is a projection of private needs and emotions onto the political sphere" (Verba:2). It is not some of us who seek to meet our needs and emotions by having the orders around us aligned with those orders that are familiar to us because they replicate the

social structures of our childhood; but all of us who seek to re-establish the familiar; arguments which attempt to evaluate which familiar order is best or even least pathological become the sum of critical discourse. However, differences between families can be seen to contribute to critical discourse by motivating individuals to take a political position in opposition to those who seek to assert the rightness of a particular political organization. There may indeed be nothing inherently wrong with needs and emotions determining the political persuasion of an individual; analyses of needs and emotions may lead researchers to a determination of the organizing frameworks that are operative in the favoring of one style political organization over another. Thus, I accord a lesser primacy to needs and emotions than to the framework of operating assumptions, which while appearing to be less than rational because the actor is unconscious of them, are in fact historically rational given the purposes or ends inherent to a given operating scheme.

Consider for example, Burke, a vehement and eloquent spokesman in favor of respecting traditional authority. He argues his cause brilliantly -- because he believes that he is 'right', and that he is speaking the truth; he cannot be dissuaded by someone who believes that authority should be challenged, even though that position can be stated with equal eloquence and conviction by someone, Thomas Paine for example, who opposes Burke's respect for authority. Each of these men appears to the other sadly lacking in reason -- hence 'emotional' -- but it is a narrow and fallacious concept of reason; it implies

the existence of a single truth. Today, such a view of a single truth appears unsophisticated; we discuss concepts which emphasize perspective and point of view; we take great pains to guard ourselves against ethnocentricity; but we have yet to fully ground our positions in consideration of the childhood orders which may influence us to a far greater degree than does either our nationhood or our philosophical school. It must be emphasized that the orders to which I am referring are not the so-called personality orders and disorders, rather the orders that I am interested in are interactive orders through which we come to know the meanings of cultural objects, objects around which we organize our lives. An example of such an object is marriage, it has a meaning in the wider social sphere which becomes more discrete and specific according to one's specific experiences in relation to it -- a meaning which I would argue is largely determined by one's family background. A similar case may be made for emotions; (Hochschild, 1979) their meanings are discovered and illustrated by early interactive experiences as much as they later illuminate our interactions as adults. The composite scheme of these meanings furnishes the order according to which we organize our empirical interpretations.

The fundamental codes of a culture -- those governing its language, its schemes of perception, its exchanges, its techniques, its values, the hierarchy of its practices -- establish for every man, from the very first, the empirical orders with which he will be dealing and within which he will be at home" (Foucault, 1970: introduction pg.xx).

Within these broader cultural codes there exist similar but

more specific codes that are the codes of a family. The manner in which the two interact cannot be established here. It is enough to demand that culture not refer to just the broader national scheme -- indeed a tremendous wealth of complexity is lost in such a rendition; that complexity could be reintroduced by examining the cultural nuances that are provided by individual family-types. An account of the influence of particular family backgrounds on the philosophies of particularly influential individuals is an attempt to include the contributions of specific family institutions in the broader understanding of culture; and to raise pressing questions about the determinants of culture itself. Surely such information is essential to any search for change.

Change, in a word demands the relinquishing of the familiar, but ordinarily it is the relinquishing of one familiar order for another. That is, insofar as something is, or replicates a familiar order it is an order which is familiar to a specific interest group which has the power or political savvy to establish it. Change therefore implies a shift in the direction of another order which is familiar to another interest group. The thrust of my argument rests with the comparison of different evaluations of the family and the political implications of these evaluations; by attempting to ground such evaluations in the very personal lives of their adherents, I hope to provide insight into the origins of some political positions, thereby suggesting the point at which the concerns of a particular actor may be understood.

## Meanings and Politics

In my examination of the family backgrounds of twenty social philosophers and comparison of those personal histories with the philosopher's attitudes, analysis of ideological etiology is established. The extent to which any particular form or cultural object determines the meaning of that form for an individual, and hence action towards that form resulting in its recreation in a private or public sphere is the guiding purpose of my work. As such, my work is an investigation of symbolic interaction theory while lending impetus to a broader application of its implications. I am attempting to establish the needs developed in the family as a motivating force but I expect that the determining power of these needs becomes somewhat diffused over time as a result of other interfering factors. The thesis is simply a test of the strength of family background as an influence on the individual's philosophy about social institutions.

Families as unique cultural institutions cultivating the tastes, ambitions, and predilections of generations upon generations of philosophers have been given less credit for the formation of said philosophers than even arbitrarily defined nations. The primary group and its primacy in the etiology of the political order must be accorded a critical due.

Having argued the varying purposes behind the work at hand it is time to give some indication of the balance that was sought in the undertaking of it. Insofar as the family is considered to provide the organizing framework that will contribute to the political predisposition of the individual one may expect to find evidence of the family's influence in statements made

by the individual about social and political institutions; however, as Verba notes, political attitudes and behavior is also influenced by the broader cultural environment; predisposition interacts with the constant shift of world events.

Political behavior is not determined solely by the predispositions that an individual brings into the political process from his experiences and training in primary groups. It is also affected by the way in which the political system interacts with these predispositions...Insofar as political predispositions are molded in childhood, they are developed in essentially non-political situations. The point is obvious but significant. It means that predictions that can be made about adult political behavior on the basis of childhood experiences will be limited to a rather general set of predispositions that an individual brings into the political process in a sense, to an individual's psychological orientation to politics (1970:7).

Naturally, I would contend that the family is no less political than any other hierarchically arranged institution. Significantly, I hypothesize that the orders we come to know as political are arrangements comparable to those from childhood; they are ordinarily hierarchical, and they involve a relationship to authority; we engage in their re-creation as the result of a set of expectations we bring to interactions. Our expectations shape our perceptions and cause us to attempt to shape the behavior of others so that their behavior will conform to our expectations, thus defending ourselves against anxiety or alarm at the prospect of confronting the unfamiliar. Without continuing the dispute over the relative pathology of the individual's expectations of interaction, we may beg leave to interpret a psychological orientation to mean world view. By



beginning with the assumption that individuals act according to differing world views, a partial explanation for radical disagreements over truth is suggested. Verba labels this set of operating assumptions, this world view -- a psychological predisposition. The assumption is that people take a stance in interaction and their stance has unique historical antecedents that may be discovered by examining their childhood experiences. Thus, the actor's interpretation of present day experience is in some way determined by past experiences. Furthermore, notions of truth or objectivity are not particularly useful, as necessarily one must take a position.

Meanings, are comparisons of the unknown with the known -- the familiar -- hence the term referent. The early relations of childhood serve as referents to which later experiences are compared, in the process of becoming known or meaningful. Thus,

the primary group plays a major role in the political socialization of the individual before he enters the political process. It forms the predispositions that an individual brings with him into his participation in political affairs" (Verba, 1970:2).

The meaning of relationships, for example, philosophy about families, are derived from an implicit comparison with one's early childhood experiences -- even if this comparison were never explicitly stated and especially if this relationship were unsuspected. I am suggesting that the roots of an individual's ideas about society are social; that is, they are not merely the simple product of the creative individual; they are cultural expressions which are family-specific; the individual

has the broader culture interpreted to him or her within a family context. The impact of the family is compelling because the individual spends his or her formative years within the bosom of the family and is essentially defenseless against its cultural imprint.

While examination of political orientation may provide some insight into the influence a family has had on an individual's thought processes, an examination of philosophy about the family may ultimately prove more useful. There are, however, important similarities between the two: for example, authority structures and sensitivity towards change. A political orientation has implications beyond the mere interpretation of experience; individuals are not passive spectators, nor is their activity limited to mere cognition. Their actions extend beyond thought and they -- by communicative action -- shape the social forms in which they participate; while they engage in interpreting the stimuli of interaction they also negotiate the order that the interaction will assume. Since anxiety is heightened when two actors expect agreement and experience disagreement (Stamm & Pearce 1971, 1974) it is possible to hypothesize that actors are at one time trying to co-orient their interpretation with the interpretation of another, while simultaneously shaping the stimuli to conform to familiar experiences. In other words, while one may be actually witnessing the destruction of an oppressed country, one interprets it to mean that an upstart is getting a much deserved lesson. Political orientation affects not only what we see but what we wish to achieve. Much of

this striving must be unconscious -- we believe that we act according to truth, reality and reason, rarely do we suspect that we are acting according to mere perspective.

Sociology asks what happens to men and by what rules they behave, not insofar as they unfold their understandably individual existences in their totalities, but insofar as they form groups and are determined by their group existence because of interaction (Coser, 1971:178).

Interaction necessarily has an order; it occurs according to rules. Interactive rules are determined in interaction; the relationships of childhood provide the interactive orders upon which subsequent interactions depend. These orders inform the actions and meanings of individuals. But the orders do not determine what the individual would do were order not expected. Thus, the expectation of order itself acts as a constraint and the individual's responses are filtered according to the order that is expected. This emphasizes further the remoteness of political orientation from a merely psychological predisposition. The acquiescence to order itself is a social concession, the predisposition is, if anything, social.

Individuals submit to order, their stance or position in the order is determined by early interactive experiences. Within orders the individual is free to negotiate but the first act of submission -- the submission to order is achieved in childhood.

The fact that individual group members will, under certain circumstances, suppress their own views in order to conform to the dominant group position brings us to the first level of analysis of the impact of the face-to-face group on the political process" (Verba:2).

Submission -- the initial encounter with authority

produced it; it had a form; Verba calls it the dominant group position; for others it is the authority of the father which one submits to, others may have simply, for unqualified reasons submitted for want of order itself. There are a limited number of authority patterns; perhaps this is the reason that people of a nation have similar enough background authority patterns to decide the dominant authority pattern of a society.

Do those who experience one type of authority in the family, school, and peer group desire the same type of authority in their economic and political relations? Some of the evidence we have cited that such will be the case, but it may well be that in certain situations there is a high degree of autonomy among the various authority systems in which a person participates. Further research is needed on the relationship between primary group training and political predispositions (Verba:8).

It is useful to place the stress in this quote is in such a way as to have it read primary group training; since, political behavior is essentially group behavior, because political arenas are necessarily and exclusively social arenas; political predispositions, it may be logically inferred, must in some sense be based upon primary group training.

#### Primary Group Training

While it may be accepted at this point that the family provides group training and group orientation for the individual -- the strength of this influence has yet to be decided. Because my data is crude -- the biographies are suspect sources -- conclusive remarks on the extent of influence are not possible; however, in examining the supposedly critical analyses of the family by learned scholars and comparing these analyses to the scholars' primary group training I hope I am at least suggesting

a direction for further research. The argument is not meant to be deterministic, rather it is an appeal to an aspiration towards conscious control over unconscious influences -- a control that is not possible if the influence continues to be unconscious. Free will is only a potential benefit of consciousness; group training is training in both politics and ideology; the individual will suppress his or her own "views in order to conform to a dominant group position"; and individuals do seek familiar authority patterns in the social groups in which they participate; the patterns do appear to be based on primary group experiences. If it is accepted that primary groups influence the individual's perspective then they may similarly form or provide the framework through which all information is filtered. At the very least they introduce the individual to a pattern of authority, the familiarity of which may motivate the individual to experience anxiety when this pattern is not replicated in other social groups -- hence stimulating the individual's unconscious efforts to shape a group according to the pattern most familiar to him or her.

However, individuals may be able to define the pattern of authority with which they are familiar and understand that their attraction to its replication is a consequence of such familiarity. Only upon admission of the influence may the influence be countered.

Man's basic data are not in the least simple or elemental: what is basic is the highly complex structure of meanings and values produced and transmitted in history. What man knows about

the nature of the physical universe is only a subordinate part of his own process of self-discovery and self-revelation (1950:2).

Mumford's insightful remarks illuminate a labyrinth; the search for knowledge -- a search for self, but a self which is creating, even as it is searching; a self whose history is obscured by a perspective made limited by the events of that history. The pursuit of knowledge can only be aided by an extensive effort to lay bare the roots -- whether known or suspected. Knowledge is grounded in the circumstances of history, the influential forces of those circumstances must be measured and accounted for, only then is it possible to be free of non-productive constraints. The problem inherent to knowledge is that it is always a product of perspective; perspective essentially implies belief; things are not really the way they appear but because they appear that way we believe them to be as they appear. Our beliefs are not necessarily produced consciously and despite our better judgment we may come to argue passionately on behalf of positions we would, in a totally rational world, reject.

For the vast majority of mankind throughout history, the system of beliefs which they accepted, for which they were prepared to live and die, was not of their own making or choice; it was shoved down their throats by the hazards of birth... The continuous disasters in man's history are mainly due to his excessive capacity and urge to become identified with a tribe, nation, church or cause, and to espouse its credo uncritically and enthusiastically, even if its tenants are contrary to reason, devoid of self-interest and detrimental to the claims of self-preservation.

Koestler (1978:14) considers the motivation for such destruction rests in mankind's willingness to identify with the group; the

social fact of our lives -- we are born into a social world -- is so essential that it is cherished beyond reason. Nevertheless, Koestler accepts that the need to belong is an unrestrained impulse, so why does he rail against its results? It would be more fruitful for him to compare those whose need to belong served a constructive purpose with those who were stimulated by groups to destructive social ends.

The impulse to belong, to make the unfamiliar -- in the fullest sense of the term -- familiar, is the human condition. The unexpected is more frightening than opposition (Stamm & Pearce, 1971, 1974). A study of history is a study of familiar events, known events, experienced events and it may lead to a more astute reckoning of what we may expect from life. So much rests on ideological questions; so much about the organization of society and the survival of our species. The study of history leads to appreciation of the critique of ideology.

Knowledge cannot be separated from its source; it has a history.

Whatever man knows about external nature is a by-product of man's culture, as revealed in history; and the dimensions of nature alter with every change in man's own development; our present views of the universe are no more ultimate than the cave-man's. On every page of nature's opened book, man scrawls in the margin his own autobiography (Mumford, 1950:3).

It follows that humankind knows more about human culture than external nature; the difficulty is to separate the product from the processes. Mumford (1950) assumes that the individual passively accepts culture while Koestler (1978) asserts that it is pounded in at birth. In whatever manner culture is learned, in whatever manner beliefs are

inculcated, the fact remains, that many human actions defy reason. As Koestler notes, war is one of the many examples of humankind's ability to act unreasonably as evidenced in the soldier's convictions contradicting his acts.

The man who goes to war actually leaves the home which he is supposed to defend, and does his shooting far away from it; and what makes him do it is not the biological urge to defend his personal acreage of farmland or meadows, but his devotion to symbols derived from tribal lore, divine commandments, and political slogans (1978:15).

Acting according to commandments, our species lurches through time; critical scholars generalize about the human condition and neglect to confront the weakness of their logic -- each individual has a perspective, from that perspective he/she has an interest; within the public sphere, individuals who are trained according to a group's doctrine, compete to achieve the ascendancy of their interests. The individual's perspective, reflecting his or her ideology is manifested in communicative actions which favor one object, code, order, or symbol over another. The attempt to have a familiar order achieve ascendancy occurs in theological arguments, political debates and war. The sides in debates are bolstered by myths which are forced to jockey for explanatory supremacy; unfamiliar orders are threatening -- hence the debates have not only a mythical but an emotional tone. The symbols, codes, order, and myths around which our lives are oriented are referred to in this paper as cultural objects. Cultural objects are the ideological referents which exist beyond the immediate object to which they refer. Marriage is an example of such an object; one may speak of it to almost anyone in the Western world



without referring to a specific occasion, and be understood. As an object marriage is not created by the individuals who commit themselves to it; they go into it as into a form, and it will continue as a form even if their commitment to it ceases. Koestler's rage over the witless soldier is a challenge to these forms and to our lack of self-consciousness in regard to them. The search for explanations of human action leads directly to a search for the manner in which meaning is created, particularly in the case of authority. This may be a result of the irreducible visibility of the authority problem; human beings permit themselves to be governed -- the evidence is compelling, the explanation continues to be perplexing.

#### The Father's Authority

It may be assumed that each of us is in a relationship to authority; the quality, style, and our rationalization of the relationship remain in question; but the existence of the basic relationship is interesting; its origin is the subject of much debate. Central to it are questions about whether the relationship is renewed with every generation or whether the relationship is preexisting and one simply steps into it. The position taken in this paper is that the father-child relationship patterns subsequent authority relationships for the individual. This position is supported by both Freud and Weber to some extent, "(f)or Weber, the legitimacy of all authority rests on attitudes towards the supernatural" but Freud, insists McIntosh, concluded that "the deity is thus a father image which has been idealized, internalized, repressed and finally displaced outward" (McIntosh, 1970:902). The quality or style of the authority relationship,

which is its considered legitimacy, and its allowable extent, varies between individuals; such variations are difficult to account for by a national, state, or even an ethnic ideological explanation because extreme variation occurs even within these boundaries. Hopefully, variations may be in part explained by the pattern and style of authority within individual families; discrepancies between individuals who are members of the same family may be explained in terms of their ordinal position and their individual relationship with the household authority.

The political implications of this thesis must include a respect for the fact that the authority patterns advocated by an individual may not be an exact replication of familial authority patterns; the key rests in the individual's relationship with his or her parents; an individual's stance towards authority may, for example, be explained either as rebellion against authority or fear of authority. This slippery logic is not indulged in apart from speculative statements.

It may appear that this thesis is revisionistic and in opposition to Foucault's challenge of the alleged importance of the family; in fact, one position may well include the other.

Thus the father in the family is not the 'representative' of the sovereign or the state; and the latter are not projections of the father on a different scale. The family does not duplicate society, just as society does not imitate the family. But the family organization, precisely to the extent that it was insular and hetero morphus with respect to the other power mechanisms, was used to support the great 'manouvers' employed for the Malthusian control of the birth rate, for the populationist incitements, for the medicalization of its non genital forms.

Foucault (1978:100) may believe he is challenging the idea that the family and state are replicas of one another but he is merely pointing out that the state controls the family -- a statement I would in no way dispute. Simply because the father does not represent the state or because the family is not a replica state does not ensure that the meaning of authority to the individual does not result from the relationship between father and child. If meanings can be accounted for -- by an explanation other than that they are implicit comparisons of the familiar -- then Foucault's assertions may be fully granted. Since he provides no evidence of such an explanation his assertions may be easily cast aside. It may well be that the insular power structure of the family was manipulated by virtue of its isolation, but in itself this cannot refute Freud's theory that childhood authority relationships are carried over into adult life.

Naturally the study by Adorno et al. (1950) served as the central model for this paper, despite the fact that Adorno operated with an assumption of pathology as opposed to my contention that everyone acts according to family-derived frameworks. In other words I contend that there can only be different perspectives and all perspectives equally represent the family-derived needs of individuals -- there are not some individuals who have no needs and who would serve as ideal leaders for the rest of us. Nevertheless Adorno's work is extremely helpful in underscoring the central hypothesis of my work.

Ethnocentric children tended to come from families in which the authority figure (the father) was strict and rigid, and in which the

parent child relationship was one of dominance and submission. Unprejudiced children came more often from families characterized by a more affectionate and less rigid relationship. It is especially significant that the prejudiced and non-prejudiced children had expectations in non-family role relationships similar to those developed in the family (1950:3).

The inclusion of the fact that non-family role relationships are similar to those developed in the family leads to another variable that affects the political and philosophical orientation of an individual--ordinal position. For example, research indicates that first sons tend to internalize injunctions and assume responsibility earlier; a second sibling with a sibling three to four years senior will be more independent; the senior sibling will be most responsible (Harrison & Howard, 1968). Families offer a similar complex of relationships to that encountered throughout one's life, but because families contain fewer members, their organization provides a simple sketch that becomes filled out as the social life of the individual expands.

The family exemplifies the meaning of belonging to a social group. The group does not act on its own impulse nor do individual members act without using and therefore implicating each other as referents. Thus, information about the individual may be considered as information about the group. The group is a form which persists beyond the existence of any individual member. If, for example, I encounter an individual family member who believes that they are worthless, I might hypothesize that this member is the scapegoat of the group and that existence of a scapegoat indicates some unresolved problem

is preoccupying the group, the distress is blamed on the scapegoat, thereby allowing ventilation of the stress that the problem generates. Thus, scape-goats are usually not members who are central to the functioning of the group per se, that is, they are not usually the sole breadwinner; whilst they often are encountered in families where the sole breadwinner is an alcoholic. The existence of the scapegoat gives information about the nature of the group. This thesis was fruitfully argued by Mead, and Coser offers a particularly cogent rendition of it:

The behavior of an individual can be understood only in terms of the behavior of the whole social group of which he is a member, since his individual acts are involved in larger social acts which go beyond himself and which implicate the other members of that group (1971:334).

While the behavior of the individual may be considered invariably social, the meaning of action to the individual is, according to Mead, almost entirely individual:

[Mead] stressed, along with his pragmatic co-thinkers, the organic process by which every act of thought is linked to human conduct and to interactive relationships, thus rejecting the radical distinction between thinking and acting that had informed most classical philosophy. Mead advanced the idea that consciousness is an inner discourse carried on by public means (Coser, 1971:339-340).

It is interesting that behavior makes sense on two levels -- it has a social meaning that the individual may not fully appreciate and it has an often inaccessible private meaning which may bear no relation to its public meaning. The delightful aspect of philosophers is that their carefully constructed private meanings are made available for public perusal and serve

to be compared with the social meaning of their behavior. It is possible to determine and compare three things about philosophers: a) their disposition towards authority; b) their ordinal position in their families and c) the meaning the family has for them.

### Ordinal Position

It is the considered opinion of many scientists of human behavior that the familial environment, including style of authority and the individual's ordinal position in the family, will act as a major determinant of the achievements of that person. Their role in the family determines to some extent the role they will play in society.

Within the primary group, the individual, receives training for roles that he will later play within society. This training consists in both the teaching of certain standards of behavior that can be applied to later situations and, perhaps more significantly, the playing of roles in the family and in other primary groups that are similar to roles later to be played in the political or economic system (1970:3).

The manner in which Verba makes the preceding statement suggests that the training is consciously attempted; perhaps of greater interest is not the conscious training but the training by virtue of ordinal position, which is undergone irrespective of the conscious wishes of would-be trainers. Earlier remarks on the ordinal position of children indicated that an elder sibling would tend towards greater responsibility than a younger sibling. It is almost as though the group needs less responsible

behavior from a second sibling simply because the elder sibling acts responsibly. Thus Mead's note that individuals cannot be considered apart from their social context is insightful. Within families certain ordinal positions seem to offer more opportunity than others; at least opportunity in an economic sense; often the eldest son will be given a better education or will inherit control of the family business. Occasionally the reverse is true; for example, Benjamin Franklin's father could only afford to educate one son and he chose his youngest son because he had freer resources after he had managed to get the elder sons into trades.

In corporations too the point of entry, the ordinal position, may determine later opportunities.

The hierarchical systems in which most relations occur define which people are mobile, which will advance, which positions lead to other positions, and how many opportunities for growth and change occur along a particular chain of positions (Kanter, 1976:415).

Further, Bermann (1973) has noted that the function of children within the family varies grossly according to ordinal position; the family tends to concentrate their hopes and dreams on the firstborn child while the other children may play affectual, scapegoat or surrogate mother role; each role is determined according to ordinal position and number of children in the family. This tendency actually results in a determination of the child's achievements as an adult. Schachter (1963) discovered that eminent scholars tended to be first born or only children, he concluded this over-representation of eldest children in the eminent scholar ranks, was a result of the fact that eldest

children tended to be over represented within college ranks in general. The eminent scholars were eldest children because eldest children had a better chance for a college education. Parents attempt to treat all of their children equally but they often fail unintentionally because of strong stratification tendencies within a family culture.

Gustav Le Bon observes that

Men are ruled by ideas, sentiments, and customs -- matters which are of the essence of ourselves. Institutions and law are the outward manifestation of our character, the expression of its needs. Being its outcome, institutions and law cannot change this character (LeBon, 1960:4)(first published 1895).

The character of the institutions we create and recreate is a documentation of our character. The family is one form that has contained such processes with only minor structural alterations over many generations. The family is accessible and thus highly useful for the study of the manifestations of human character. However, it is a mistake to conclude that human character is simply manifested, it is manifested in response to the conditions within which it exists.

The heart of the problem of evolution is the recognition that the process will determine the form. The process takes now one form and now another according to the conditions under which it is going on (Mead in Coser, 1971:349).

Neither Mead nor LeBon are specific about which process; is it, for example, the unfolding of a single human life? Is it the current of an entire generation? Or is the process the survival of the species over millions of years? Some processes do determine forms but some forms determine processes.



Of particular importance in the structural versus interactional debate is the authority relationship, because it determines the character of all groups. Indeed, it would seem that a group cannot operate without deciding on an authority pattern. This is true because it is rules which breathe order into chaos and the authority of the group has to shore up the rules requisite to the group's operation. Some revolutionary groups advocate the destruction of traditional authority patterns but this is in fact a challenge to the life of groups themselves.

(T)hey threaten to destroy the life of the group by the removal of the authority which (although in terror) had preserved the group; and, at the same time, this removal promises a society without the father -- that is, without suppression and domination (Marcuse, 1955:66).

Marcuse assumes a Freudian perspective in accepting the father as the model of group authority. The entire concept of modeling as the basis for learning about patterns of human social functioning has much to recommend it; imitation was cogently developed as a theory by Gabriel Tarde and he described carefully the importance of the father as a model of other authority relationships.

In all periods the ruling classes have been or have begun by being the model classes. In the cradle of society, in the family, this close correlation between imitation, strictly speaking, and obedience and credulity is clearly shown. The father is, especially at first, the infallible oracle and sovereign ruler of his child; and for this reason he is his child's highest model (1903:199).

At first glance it might be expected that those who had a tyrannical parent may have most to gain from a reactive rebellion

against authority of any type, it appears however, that those who criticize authority most easily are those who have reason to fear its punitive excesses least. Families with a democratic style of authority -- love and fairness predominating -- raise children who have little fear of repercussions as the result of expressing their anger about authority. Thus rebellion against authority may be expected in individuals from families who demonstrated more fairness than tyranny.

Since the unprejudiced subjects on the whole received more love and feel more basically secure in relation to their parents, they more easily express disagreement with them without fear of retaliation or of a complete loss of love...Since hostility toward the parents, when present, tends to be more open, it often takes the form of rebellion against other authorities or, more generally, against objects nearer to the original objects of aggression than are the really or presumably, weak which serve as the favorite objects of aggression in the case of the prejudiced (Adorno et al., 1950:388).

The child who becomes critical of authority is therefore, likely a product of a democratic home and it follows that a child who becomes more supportive of authority as an adult (and is ethnocentric) is likely a product of an authoritarian family. The remarkable nature of these findings rests in the fact that a child who has been brutally treated comes to act as though he reveres authority and surprisingly chooses to treat brutally, other, weaker beings. In the Adorno study it is stated that

in view of their general tendency toward conventionality and submission toward in group members, it is not surprising to find in the prejudiced subjects a tendency toward 'idealization of the parents'...'objective appraisal' 88

of parents referring to an ability for critical evaluation of the parents in specific and psychologically conceived terms, on the other hand is predominant in the unprejudiced subjects (1950:340).

The criticism of parents and other authority figures leads to the important step towards independence by the child; a child who continues to revere authority without consideration, very likely still considers him/herself to be dependent upon that authority. "Fear and dependency seem to discourage the ethnocentric child from conscious criticism of the parents" (1950:482). The ethnocentric child seems to identify his or her own interests with the interests of the group, therefore they may be more ready to sacrifice themselves or, significantly, others, in order to aid the group's cause. An extreme identification with a group and/or authority is a simple way of avoiding exacting scrutiny of one's own interests and behavior; one sees one's actions as group motivated and therefore requiring little additional examination or justification. This "lack of insight into one's own shortcomings and the projection of one's own weaknesses and faults onto others...probably represents the essential aspect of the mechanism of scapegoating" (Adorno et al, 1950:409).

Consequently, the style of authority encountered in childhood not only reflects on the style of authority considered correct for political groups but additionally shapes the expectations one has of both other group members and outsiders. Presumably the fear and insecurity engendered in homes where the treatment of children is harsh promotes the inflexibility and defensiveness which dominate the character of some adults. Fear

makes change excessively frightening and the chaos of leaderless groups or groups swaying according to the frequently alternating public opinion, anathema. Those who are extremely frightened must feel secure when the leader though harsh is at least consistently harsh; early family experiences set the tone for later expectations and desires.

Evidence from the present study as well as from others supports the psychoanalytic axiom that the first social relationships to be observed within the family are, to a large extent, formative of attitudes in later life (Adorno et al., 1950:376).

Personality could be described as a framework of knowledge developed in a multitude of scenarios that form the personal history of every individual. In a phenomenological sense, uncovering the individual's meanings for actions -- communicative or otherwise -- should provide evidence of the patterns which motivate the actor. Every action is thus grounded historically and cannot be considered separately from its history. Although there have been attempts to locate a philosopher's ideas in schools of thought, this is not sufficient considering the political and hence ideological influences of their early family experiences on both their achievements and dispositions. "The individual's pattern of thought, whatever its content, reflects his personality and is not merely an aggregate of opinions picked up helter-skelter from the ideological environment" (Adorno et al., 1950:176). One could argue that even the attraction to particular schools is predetermined by the early childhood experiences thus ensuring consistent public representation of a limited number of authority patterns in a given period of time.

The child must have a system with which to organize environmental stimuli; such an organization is provided by the first few social experiences the child has. The child learns to take a position towards things; that position is socially confirmed by those with whom the child shares primary ties.

Although personality is a product of the social environment of the past, it is not, once it has developed, a mere object of the contemporary environment. What has developed, is a structure within the individual, something which is capable of self-initiated action upon the social environment and of selections with respect to varied impinging stimuli, something which though always modifiable is frequently very resistant to fundamental change. This conception is necessary to explain the persistence of ideological trends in the face of contradicting facts and radically altered social conditions, to explain why people in the same sociological situation have different or even conflicting views on social issues, and why it is that people whose behavior has been changed through psychological manipulation lapse into their old ways as soon as the agencies of manipulation are removed (Adorno et al., 1950:6).

A world view is something more than a habit of thought; it is the lens through which an individual's vision of reality is obtained. Its lack of susceptibility to change is further enhanced by the individual seeking, wily nily, to place him/herself in situations and contexts which will support it.

The family is not, however the sole determinant of the individual's frame work. The family too, has been determined; it plays a role in the greater social context and many of the ways it influences its children are a product of its social position. In the same manner that the ordinal position of children comes to influence their later acceptance of responsibility or achievement

motivation -- the eldest son is more likely to be the family's representative in the world -- the youngest child may have the most attention lavished upon it, thus influencing his or her ultimate ambitions; a similar hierarchy exists for families -- their class will determine many of their attitudes and limit their successes. The definition of classes, social groups and other aggregates is the result of social interaction; these definitions supply groups with a position in the social hierarchy as significant as the roles furnished by ordinal positions within the family. Similar to roles, the position of the group acts as a determinant of the perceptions of its members; and as the eldest sibling indicates a greater assumption of responsibility so may a social group assume a more conservative stance towards the maintenance of a given authority system.

It (this research) makes the assumption that people in general tend to accept political and social programs which they believe will serve their economic interests. What these interests are depends in each case upon the individual's position in society as defined in economic and social terms (Adorno et al., 1950:8)

'Economic' is immediately suggestive of group survival, and, as was previously mentioned, some individuals consider group survival a prerequisite to their own survival; so, some families view a certain political order a necessary prerequisite to securing their continued existence. While it may never be possible to argue that one political order will indeed guarantee survival it may well be possible to prove that political orders are only as sound as the family types that serve as their models. The

task of this paper is most succinctly stated by the proponents of the theory behind it:

The present research seeks to discover correlations between ideology and sociological factors operating in the individual's past whether or not they continue to operate in his present. In attempting to explain these correlations the relationships between personality and ideology are brought into the picture, the general approach being to consider personality as an agency through which sociological influences upon ideology are mediated. If the role of personality can be made clear, it should be possible better to understand which sociological factors are the most crucial ones and in what ways they achieve their effects (Adorno et al., 1950:6).

### III. PHILOSOPHERS WHO WROTE BEFORE 1848

#### Theoretical Arrangement

The family is the sort of universal experience that inspires opinions on its qualities while obscuring questions about its legitimacy or analysis of its origins. This perhaps is the difference between opinion and philosophy; whatever bias familiarity lends to philosophy is of serious concern because of the ideological implications inherent in philosophical inquiry; additionally, if learning about bias leads to an ability to control for it, then all discourse need not be lost to the rhetoric of relativity. Again, it must be emphasized that this exploration is suggestive and not conclusive; each author's philosophical consideration of the family will interact with biographical details about the author's family life. The conclusions are presented in the final section of the paper.

The influence of the family of origin on political predisposition is revealed by the two indicators described in Chapter Two -- style of authority in the family and perception of and disposition towards the family. The argument is that the philosophers' consideration of the family is an example of their thought with regard to social institutions in general. In Chapter Three and Four the philosophers' ideas are discussed in relation to his or her family of origin. Care was taken to present anecdotes of events that philosophers themselves felt were characteristic of the quality of their family life. However, in by far the majority of cases no such information was available, consequently the conclusions suggested by the



interpretations should be recommended with caution.

Since family background is considered a very strong influence, possibly stronger than either nationhood or philosophical school, it is useful to note those special cases where the variables of philosophical school and nationhood are held constant: Bentham and Mill; Marx and Engels. The reader will probably notice that the quantity of material included on each philosopher differs radically from case to case. Two factors contributed to this situation: one, the amount of information available on each differed and two, in many instances it was necessary to include voluminous detail on the philosophy of the family where the family was considered in detail, i.e., Hegel.

The style of presentation is defended finally, for an arrangement of data that facilitates interpretation. In order to understand the family influence an effort must be made to orient oneself to the perspective the philosopher might have held -- given a set of family circumstances. Determining this orientation is a method of deriving information about the world view a philosopher has, and may therefore illuminate facts on his or her framework of operating assumptions. To be sure, such a technique is highly interpretive, but it is tenable in social research because it suggests insightful hypotheses, which may be more rigorously tested. The material on the philosophers is organized to provide an opportunity for brief immersion in their families of origin and in their thoughts. Some of their backgrounds appear so hostile and cold that their

willingness to replicate these relationships in their adult lives by voting for authoritarian types of governments for example, appears frightening, E. Burke is a case in point; it is these apparently irrational desires of philosophers which justify this thesis.

Following each assertion the philosopher made which revealed information on perception of, or disposition towards the family, a question was asked about what the assertion also revealed about the philosopher's needs or emotions being projected in the assertion: Does this assertion have its foundation in a framework of operating assumptions which developed according to early childhood experiences? Is the philosopher impressing on the world his or her expectations of authority? While these questions may be cautiously answered by the data presented here, the ultimate unreliability of this data begs for a more rigorous test.

Finally, ordinal position, it was earlier hypothesized, might act as an intervening variable on the effect of the style of authority in the family of origin on the thoughts a philosopher had on the family. Its influence is expected to be even less direct or noticeable than style of authority, consequently, the reader is alerted to its possible effect since the data on it is too limited to permit even cautious conclusions.

#### Historical Arrangement

The philosophers who predated the French revolution of 1848 missed one of the more substantial social upheavals

in history; nevertheless they had participated in the intellectual ferment that had served as its inspiration. Unlike the American rejection of colonial status the war of 1848 was a proletarian and Catholic rejection of an order imposed by the bourgeoisie. Central to it were questions of rule and, it follows, authority. Thus social philosophers were being forced to confront styles of authority present in all social institutions including the family. Indeed such an interference of self-consciousness about authority in the family is suggested in the case of Marx and Engels, the results of the analysis of their histories are somewhat anomalous in the outcome set as indicated in Chapter Five.

#### Method

Although the interpretive style of the analysis has been briefly touched on in the introduction to this chapter, further methodological notes will aid the reader in assessing the rather succinct presentation of the evidence.

The sources used were both primary and secondary materials; biographical data was drawn almost entirely from secondary sources, while the illustrative quotes were taken from primary materials (English translations may be judged a secondary interpretive account rather than a true primary source): primary materials are so classified when they are published with the philosopher as the credited author of the work.

The statements made by the philosopher were considered illustrative of the philosopher's opinion of the family. Thus, quotes alluding to the philosopher's theories on the development of the family were not considered particularly

relevant unless they in some way revealed the philosopher's opinion of the family. Moreover representative quotes were included; those materials thought to be mere repetitions of a particular philosopher's opinion were not considered useful and thus were excluded.

The philosophers have been arranged in two groups with respect to this event: those predating the revolution in 1848 are presented in Chapter Three and the remaining philosophers make up Chapter Four.

Benjamin Franklin 1706-1790

Benjamin considered the family such a natural state of affairs it seems hardly to have occurred to him that it deserved comment. His own childhood was blessedly happy and for the most part without event. He noted in his autobiography that he was the youngest son of the youngest son for five generations. His father married twice and his wives produced seventeen children between them. At an early age he was apprenticed to a tyrannical older brother -- a printer. Of this experience he says: "(b)ut my brother was passionate and had often beaten me, which I took extremely amiss. I fancy his harsh and tyrannical treatment of me might be a means of impressing me with that aversion to arbitrary power that has stuck to me through my whole life" (19<sup>52</sup>:20).

Despite heavy competition for the attention of the parents, Franklin was able to find compensation for his brother's fierce treatment of him in his relationship with his father. His father found time to help Franklin with his reading and his skills in debate and still manage to feed, clothe and arrange the futures of the rest of his brood. Even when Franklin ran away from home fleeing the tyranny of his brother the family loved him enough to worry about him and finance his return home.

His own marriage appeared to be one of convenience rather than one signifying an overwhelming passion and in his thoughts on the institution he reflects on its instrumental qualities. In a letter to a Young Man on Early Marriage he remarks:

" I am glad you are married...You are now more in the way of becoming a useful citizen;...you have escap'd the unnatural State of Celibacy for life" (1958:10).

He encountered in his later years a difficulty with his son that caused him to admonish: "(t)here are Natural Duties which precede political ones, and cannot be extinguished by them" (1964:30); the duties to which he referred were those loyalties a child owes to its parent; the son in question had apparently overlooked them.

David Hume 1711-1776

The family, in the philosophy of David Hume, is a natural society; its boundedness is confirmed by the response of outsiders, who behave as though all family members -- those within a family boundary -- were of a piece. Thus a "quarrel with one person gives us a hatred for the whole family, though entirely innocent of that which displeases us" (1825;v.II:80). The natural society of the family is the individual's first experience with social boundedness; the baby subject to its family's control from childish dependency is, as an adult, wearer of the familial yoke through habit. "Man, born in a family, is compelled to maintain society from necessity, from natural inclination and from habit" (1825;v.II:80). We are born to it, inclined to it and eventually become habituated to it.

The family is hardly a rationally created institution, the product of the acuity of cold reason; indeed it is potentially in conflict with the self-interests of the individual. "A

parent flies to the relief of his child; transported by that natural sympathy which actuates him, and which affords no leisure to reflect on the sentiments or conduct of the rest of mankind in like circumstances" (1825;v.II:249). While we may be inclined naturally to protect our children, we are additionally inclined to laziness: "(T)o kill one's own child is shocking to nature, and must therefore be somewhat unusual; but to turn over the care of him upon others, is very tempting to the natural indolence of mankind" (1825;v.II:432.)

Hume resorts to a rather lame instinctual explanation for familial affections; dependency, habit and instinct become muddled influences leading to admittedly powerful social bonds, subject only secondarily to rational consideration.

The social virtues of humanity and benevolence exert their influence immediately by a direct tendency or instinct which chiefly keeps in view the simple object, moving the affections, and comprehends not any scheme or system, not the consequences resulting from the concurrence, imitation or example of others ...A father knows it to be his duty to take care of his children, but he has also a natural inclination to it" (1825;v.II:288).

While according the father an instinctive responsibility, Hume nevertheless has little respect for theories which overemphasize the father's authority in shaping the family or providing a model for government; rather, he seeks to limit the father's apparent influence by explaining

it as derived from the different stations available to the sexes -- not necessarily legitimated by nature. "Camps are the true mothers of cities; and as war cannot be administered, by reason of the suddenness of every exigency, without some authority in a single person...this reason I take to be more natural than the common one derived from patriarchal government, or the authority of a father, which is said first to take place in one family, and to accustom the members of it to the government of a single person" (1825;v.II:314).

Hume was not blind to the power the "station" of the male had over that provided to the female, nor did he gloss over the ideological implications of it:

As in the society of marriage, the male sex has the advantage above the female, the husband first engages our attention; and whether we consider him directly, or reach him by passing through related objects, the thought both rests upon him with greater satisfaction, and arrives at him with greater facility than his consort. It is easy to see that this property must strengthen the child's relation to the father, and weaken that to the mother" (1825;v.II:42-3).

The legitimacy of the "natural patriarchy" theories of government were compelling both in Hume's time and in our own. He was willing to counter them because of his own experience of paternal authority. He had never known the authority of a father. He was the baby of his family



and was looked after by an older brother and sister and ministered to by a devoted mother. The devotion of his mother -- her ability to sacrifice the concerns of her own life to the creative care of her children -- astounded Hume (likely because he fought in himself the selfish indulgency characteristic of the adored baby of the family; Bermann, 1973). The effect of his ordinal position, to postulate further, left him with a need to explain his own selfishness versus the obvious selflessness of his mother -- he explained her behavior as instinct, and his own as natural indolence -- the human condition. Hume fails to pursue his speculations about the family to their natural conclusion; he awards primacy to neither indolent self-interest nor to instinct. His conclusions are cavalier, and not the product of the rigorous reasoning for which he is remembered. The mark of his family is on him; it is difficult to reason separately from the influence of such powerful primal cross currents.

Jean-J. Rousseau 1712-1778

The French Revolution has been blamed on Rousseau. His active pen certainly had an influence on the prevailing ideology of his times. He considered the family as the oldest of human societies, and he thought it a worthy model for the state. But he thought it worthy only as a model. The nation should be as a brotherhood -- the leader as a father -- but the family unit itself interfered with the achievement of national brotherhood, so Rousseau thought it should be dismantled.

The family, on this showing is, if you like, the earliest model of political societies: the ruler in the one corresponds to the father in the other, the people in the one to the children in the other; all in both cases, have been born free and equal to one another, and alienate their freedom only as it is to their advantage to do so...In the family, the father has his reward for the care he bestows upon his children in the love he bears them. In the state, the pleasure of giving orders takes the place of love, which the ruler does not have for the people" (1954:3).

Rousseau waxes almost romantic in his plea for a society which would encourage replication of the bonds known in the family.

The first developments of the heart were the effect of a new situation, which united husbands and wives, fathers and children in a common habitation. The habit of living together gave rise to the sweetest sentiments known to men: conjugal love and paternal love. Each family became all the better united because the reciprocal affection and freedom were its only bonds (1964:146).

He was profoundly moved by the extent of familial sentiments and he believed that human society, in the form of the state would take on the same character if people broke down their barriers and entered into a contractual relationship with the state.

His idealism, his desire for the familial type of relationship in the state, may be attributed to his own ties as an adolescent. While his early life was pleasant enough -- an attentive, loving -- if immature -- father, who read novels to him late into the night; and an elder brother, about whom not much is known; aunts who doted on him in his dead mother's stead -- he was then virtually abandoned in his early adolescence. Thus he had known familial love, but he had to explain to himself

the reasons for his abandonment -- this is clear in his assertions about the freedom of the family bond: no obligations once the child is old enough to fend for itself. He strove to create the family-type nation because, I suggest, he needed to recapture the loving affections he had learned to depend on when he was cast somewhat ruthlessly into the individualized state. He wanted to tie others to himself and was willing to be tied, thus the contract -- a known return for a given effort, something that would be infinitely more comfortable and secure than love and inexplicable abandonment. In a continuation of this vein, Rousseau believed the state better equipped than fathers to raise and educate children; in his home he had known enough love to regret its loss; he would have almost certainly received better treatment overall at the hands of a rationally organized state than he did at the hands of a well-meaning but irresponsible father.

Denis Diderot 1713-1784

Denis Diderot was a central figure of the Enlightenment. Diderot was particularly concerned with the way in which material concerns corroded human relations especially within the family. "The wretched peasant in our country will kill his own wife with work to save his horse and let his child perish for want of attention while he calls in a doctor to look at his ox..." (Diderot, 1966:242). Implicit in this statement is the idea that one shouldn't kill one's wife with work nor should one neglect one's child -- but economic concerns drive men to distort their priorities, and erode their human sympathies. Clearly, Diderot was pained by the cost, in human tragedy, of poverty;

the family was shaped according to poverty's dictates, as is exemplified in this quote: "He does, he says, everything that despair would suggest to a father who has lost an only son, his family's sole hope for the future" (1966:76).

In his own family, Diderot played, significantly, the role of the "sole hope". He was the second son in a family of seven children, but his elder brother died and Diderot inherited the eldest son's slot with all its incumbent privileges and responsibilities. There is much evidence suggesting that the demands of this position chafed him, and while his parents were obviously devoted to him, they did not hesitate to invoke state-supported parental controls when devotion alone was insufficient rein.

Parental authority went rather far in the ancien regime, and it was not at all uncommon for heads of families to call to their assistance the supreme authority of the king in cases of particularly stubborn resistance...Thus the power of the state operated to moderate the passions of junior members of a family while abetting those of the head of it...It is extremely interesting to learn that Diderot was put under coercive detention (Wilson, 1972:41).

-- which he subsequently managed to escape -- and this merely for having the audacity to choose the bride he wanted rather than accept with grace the match that had been selected for him. Diderot was something of a champion of women, apparently out of respect for a younger sister. He was given to reprimand those who failed to have a similar sympathy: "And you, Monsieur Thomas, with a little sensibility, a little feeling for pain, what tender emotions you might have aroused in us by showing us women subjected, just as we are, to the infirmities of childhood; more confined and

neglected in their upbringing; abandoned to the same whims of fate..." (Crocker, 1966:313). The family, in his philosophy, was a unit shaped by the demands of the economy, its women and children slaves to the fathers, the fathers using all their power to steer their sons into positions of leadership wherein they would be expected to support the family. His philosophy of the family seems an obvious product of his experience.

Edmund Burke 1729-1797

Burke had a miserable home life at the hands of a tyrannical father. Yet he approached all institutions -- the family, the church, the state -- with a respectful appreciation and he was protective of them. He believed that they were natural associations and as such should not be tampered with.

Parents may not be consenting to the moral relation; but consenting or not, they are bound to a long train of burdensome duties towards a convention of any sort. Children are not consenting to their relation; but their relation, without their actual consent, binds them to its -- duties, -- or rather it implies their consent, because the presumed consent of every rational creature is in unison with the predisposed order of things (1865:166).

Binding, which naturally translates into bondage, is an advantageous arrangement, if occasionally uncomfortable, because all are equally subject to it. Bondage represents the sum of human experience; the force of one generation should not be permitted to undo the achievement of centuries of wisdom.

Man found a considerable advantage by this

union of many persons to form one family; he therefore judged that he would find his account proportionably in a union of many families into one body politic. And as nature has formed no bond of union to hold them together, he supplied this defect by laws" (1865:11).

And laws must be obeyed by all if they are to make sense for any. Burke was willing to let some suffer within families bereft of love, including himself, so that the majority would have the advantage of a society of bonded meaningful relationships. He would not permit the unfortunate circumstances of his own experience to set the standard for others. "In this choice of inheritance we have given to our frame of polity the image of a relation in blood: binding up the constitution of our country with our fundamental laws into the bosom of family affections; keeping inseparable, and cherishing with warmth of all their combined and mutually reflected charities, our state, our hearths, our sepulchres, and our altars" (1865:277). Burke's commitment to institutional forms provided a deep and eloquent defense of the sacred and the known -- a defense provoked in response to the challenges inspired by the revolution in France.

Words such as honor and duty form the main moral text of Burke's works, reflecting perhaps the only stance he could take in response to his own father -- the intemperate fellow certainly didn't inspire love. Burke shouldered his burdens proudly, almost as a martyr, and seems to have drawn sustenance from his pride.

On birth and the human condition Burke says

every man born into a community as much contracts an obligation to certain parents by his having been derived from their bodies...

(M)en come in that manner into a community with the social state of their parents, endowed with all the benefits, loaded with all the duties of their situation. If the social ties and ligaments, spun out of those physical relations which are the elements of the common wealth, in most cases begin, and always continue, independently of our will, so, without any stipulation on our part, are we bound by that relation called our country, which comprehends all the charities of all... (1865:167,166).

He asserts that some things are better left unchallenged; perhaps the unreasonable brute of a father is one of them. Burke's view of the family makes no pretense of celebrating affection; he defends it instead with speeches on duties, obligations and commitment. The wordless acquiescence of a youth who has chosen to swallow just protest, takes its toll as a man who exacts for his own obedience a demand for the unquestioned obedience of others.

Jeremy Bentham 1748-1832

Bentham considers the family a stable institution which persists through laws and habits, although as a form it was originally hammered into existence by the threat of physical violence. Particularly, he remarks on the power of the father vis-a-vis the mother and children. "Laying aside generosity and good-breeding, which are the tardy and uncertain fruits of long established laws, it is evident that there can be no certain means of deciding it but physical power: which indeed is the very means by which family as well as other competitions must have been decided long before any such office as that of legislator had any existence" (1961:367).

He thus offers the story of a civilized man -- the order

of things determined at first brutally and then perpetuated through legislation. Sentiments, which need not but often do arise within the family are explained by Bentham as the result of familiarity and the sense that the connection ought to produce affection.

(U)nder the head of a man's connexions in the way of sympathy, I would bring to view the number and description of the persons in whose welfare he takes such a concern, as that the idea of their unhappiness of pain to him: for instance, a mans wife, his children, his parents, his near relations, and intimate friends...Among near relations, although there should be no kindness, the pleasures and pains of the moral sanction are quickly propagated by a peculiar kind of sympathy: no article, either of honor or disgrace, can well fall upon a man, without extending to a certain distance within the circle of his family. What reflects honor upon the father, relects honor upon the son: What reflects disgrace, disgrace" (1962:26).

These theories about the origins and nature of the family form and sentiments, seem to rise naturally out of Bentham's family life. As a young boy he was aggressively prodded by his father to be upwardly mobile despite his own lack of inclination and his obviously gentle nature. He had high ideals but they had little to do with high station, hence his remarking in his philosophy of the family about the manner in which honor bestowed on the father or son is immediately reflected back on the family. In this manner he explains his father's aggressive prodding -- it was stimulated not by love but by a desire to bask in the reflected glory of his son's achievements. The father's role according to Bentham should be that of a guardian and master.



He wanted this role carefully defined and the execution of its inherent responsibilities guarded by legislation. Furthermore, he believed that inasmuch as the father received praise when his offspring found success -- so should they be blamed when their offspring found only failure. In speaking of the father Bentham says:

who might have fashioned at his own will the character and the habits of his children, may be considered the author of all the dispositions which they manifest. Are they depraved? It is almost always the effect of his negligence or of his vices. He ought therefore, to bear the consequences of an evil which he ought to have prevented... it may be said that the children, with the exception of the rights which belong to them as sentient beings, are part of a man's property, and ought to be considered as such. He who enjoys the advantages of the position, ought to bear its inconveniences...the responsibility of the mother as well as her power, remain absorbed in that of her husband (1962:385).

Bentham was the first son and nine years senior to the second son. His parents had a happy marriage in spite of his paternal grandmother's bitter contention that the marriage had been a terrible mistake. His mother died when he was eleven years old. His father continued to believe that Jeremy did not push hard enough for success even though he had earned his master's degree at sixteen.

Johann Gottlieb Fichte 1762-1814

The family exemplified to Fichte the perfect actualization

of the spiritual nature and interconnectedness of humanity.

"Through this [faith's] wondrous influence does the affinity of spirits in the invisible world permeate even their physical nature; manifest itself in two sexes, which, even if that spiritual bond could be torn asunder, would simply as creatures of nature, be compelled to love each other; flow forth in the tenderness of parents and children, brothers and sisters, as if the souls were of one blood like the bodies, and their minds were branches and blossoms of the same stem; and from these, embrace in narrower or wider circles, the whole sentient world" (Smith, 1848;v. I:551). This passionate declaration on the nature of love -- innate, a human characteristic -- this total belief in the unending flow of the spirit becomes eminently sensible in light of Fichte's childhood. He was the first child born to his parents and at his birth a prophecy was cast about his destiny. Because he brought a promise of greatness he was treated to an abundance of love and permissiveness during his early years.

Understandably Fichte thought the family was the very manifestation of love -- the connections it fired were almost strong enough to be visible. "It may be laid down as an incontestable principle, that where Virtues and Good Manners still prevail -- philanthropy, the charities of social life, sympathy, benevolence, domestic affections, the faithful and self-sacrificing attachment of husband and wife, parents and children, -- there Religion still exists, whether recognized or not; and there the capacity still exists for its attaining a full and conscious being" (Smith, 1848;v.II:244).

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel 1770-1831

Hegel's conception of the family is a deep and central portion of his work. He begins by tracing the actions of the individual to the individual's consciousness: "(b)ecause it is only as a citizen that he is real and substantial, the individual, when not a citizen, and belonging to the family, is merely unreal insubstantial shadow" (1910;v.II:443). This shadow existence is peculiar to family life because the family has a distinct reality for Hegel --

a natural ethical community -- this is the Family. The family, as the inner in dwelling principle of sociality operating in an unconscious way stands opposed to its own actuality when explicitly conscious; as the basis of the actuality of a nation, it stands in contrast to the nation itself; as the immediate ethical existence, it stands over against the ethical order which shapes and preserves itself by work for universal ends; the Penates of the family stand in contrast to the universal spirit...because the ethical element is the intrinsically universal element, the ethical relation between the members of the family is not that of sentiment or the relationship of love. The ethical element in this case seems bound to be placed in the relation of the individual member of the family to the entire family as the real substance so that the purpose of his action and the content of his actuality are taken from this substance, are derived solely from the family life (1910; v.II:442-3).

Hegel was the eldest of three children and he was spoiled. His young brother died at an early age and although Hegel's

sister outlived him she killed herself apparently as the result of nervous disorders. His mother was learned; she devoted tremendous energy towards teaching the young Hegel who was known to be an excellent pupil. It was, perhaps, in response to the intimate bonds that he had forged with his mother that Hegel came to respect the depth of familial interconnectedness.

Children must have the feeling of unity with their parents; this is the first immediately moral relationship; every teacher must respect it, keep it pure, and cultivate the sense of being thus connected. Hence, when a third person is called into this relation between parents and children, what happens through the new element introduced, is that the children are for their own good prevented from confiding in their parents, and made to think that their parents are bad people who harm them by their intercourse and training; and hence we find this revolting. The worst thing which can happen to children in regard to their morality and their mind, is that the bond which must ever be held in reverence should become loosened or even severed, thereby causing hatred, disdain and ill-will (1892; v.I:437).

Hegel was similar to Fichte in his consideration of the bonds of unity present in the family.

The family is the objective spiritual bond which links man and woman in mutual love, confidence, and respect... The property of the family, which is a common product and concern is lifted mere formal legal status -- as it had in the contract regulating public transactions -- and acquires a social-personal value...The natural life of the family is one of intimate affection

and feeling, in which the children are loved simply because they are children (1959:247).

Hegel made a point of remarking on the transcendental nature of the family:

(T)he natural life of the family is thus shown to be subordinated to its ethical meaning; it is transcended in that the children grow out of it by means of it. The death of the parents also illustrates natural contingency and brings about legal relations in the inheritance and transfer of family properties to new families. Brothers and sisters find themselves reduced to legal persons in legal property relations of the contractual type (1959:247).

It is then, "(a)s ethical substance the state unites in its comprehensiveness the feeling of love nurtured in the family as feeling of patriotism" (1959:253). The family in Hegel's eyes is an example of the growing medium of bonds which solidify people into a nation -- the affective relations of the family come to have a political function. The replacement of the family by the state may come as a result of a sense of loss upon maturity of the close familial intimacies that Hegel had known in his youth. He had never known his father as a strong authority and, perhaps, did not fear the authority of the state. Indeed he noticed much about the achievements of civilization to recommend it. "Blood relationship therefore supplements the abstract natural process by adding to it the process of consciousness, by interrupting the work of nature, and rescuing the blood-relation from destruction" (1910;v.II:446). The family is, according to Hegel, the obvious mediator between the individual

and the socio-political realm.

Government is concrete actual spirit reflected into itself, the self pure and simple of the entire ethical substance. This simple force allows, indeed, the community to unfold and expand into its component members, and to give each part subsistence and self existence of its own. Spirit finds in this way its realization or its objective existence on the family is the medium in which this realization takes effect (1910;v.II:448).

It seems probable that Hegel was frustrated by the roles his learned mother and intelligent sister were forced to play, because he points out that one of the major contradictions in society concerns the lot of women. "Since the community gets itself subsistence only by breaking in upon family happiness, and dissolving self consciousness into the universal, it creates its enemy for itself within its own gates, creates it in what it suppresses, and what is at the same time essential to it -- woman-kind in general" (1910;v.II:474). While in one breath he notes the oppression of women with the next he defines the expression available to men as the 'brother':

This relationship [the brother] at the same time is the limit at which the circumscribed life of the family is broken up, and passes beyond itself. The brother is the member of the family in whom its spirit becomes individualized, and enabled thereby to turn towards what is other than and external to itself, and pass over into consciousness of universality. The brother leaves this immediate, rudimentary, and, therefore, strictly speaking negative ethical life of the family, in order to acquire and produce the concrete ethical order which is conscious of itself. He passes from the divine law, within whose realm he lived, over to the human law (1910;v.II:453).

Hegel made few comments on marriage, and his biographers only refer to his father in passing -- as a provider -- whilst they refer with frequency to Hegel's deeply entwined relationship to his mother. The situation appears to be almost classically triangular and oedipal which may account for the perspective Hegel has on marriage and parenting.

(T)he relationship between husband and wife is to begin with the primary and immediate form in which one consciousness recognizes itself in another, and in which each finds a reciprocal recognition. This relationship, therefore, finds itself realized not in itself as such, but in the child -- another, in whose coming into being that relationship consists and with which it passes away. And this change from one generation onwards to another is permanent in and as the life of a nation (1910;v.II:450).

It is possible to speculate that Hegel felt some guilt, as he likely preempted his father in his mother's affections.

The reverent devotion of husband and wife towards one another is thus mixed up with a natural relation and with feeling, and their relationship is not inherently self-complete; similarly, too, the second relationship, the reverent devotion of parents and children to one another. The devotion of parents towards their children is affected and disturbed just by its being consciously realized in what is external to themselves (viz. the children), and by seeing them become something on their own account without this returning to the parents: independent existence on the part of the children remains a foreign reality, a reality all their own. The devotion of children, again, towards their parents is conversely affected by their coming into being from, or loving their essential nature in, what is external to

themselves [viz. the parents] and passes away; and by their attaining independent existence and a self consciousness of their own solely through separation from the source whence they come -- a separation in which the spring gets exhausted (1910;v.II:450).

His statements on the family, especially on the growth of children, seem tinged with regrets, on the part of the parents as well as the child. Hegel was the product of a loving family -- it left its mark.

Charles Fourier 1772-1837

Fourier was the baby of a small family and the only boy. His father doted on him but died when Charles was only nine. He lived as an isolated child, secretive and always hiding his writing from his mother. His mother pictured him as a child always in need of assistance, especially of the monetary variety and persisted in rescuing him for most of his life. The instrumental quality of his relationship to his mother is reflected in his philosophy of the family.

One precious quality of the parental tie is the circumstance that it is the most durable of all. None of the four loves is so stable as the maternal; this property has thrown the philosophers into a host of errors. They have inferred from it that the family tie (which is not reciprocal, since the child does not render to its parent an equal share of affection), ought to take the helm in domestic relations, in which it ought however only to enter in the ratio of one quarter, more particularly as this love of parents for their children is



very blind and venal (1968:363).

Charles, who found it necessary to hide his writing from his mother, was quick to remark on the blind and venal love of the parent; and while a parent's love may be blind and venal, the child -- as remarked by parents -- scarcely bothers to love them at all. "It is certain, from the confession of all parents, that they are not sufficiently loved by their children" (Fourier, 1968:373). In fact the "child...does not derive the slightest enjoyment relatively to the family tie" (Fourier, 1968:367).

Fourier succeeded in a polemic against the family;

(e)ach family seeks to deceive the mass: to usurp by astuteness, larceny, and violence. The family refused the collective solidarity that would benefit the poor branches of society such as children, the infirm, and the unemployed...The family is thus an anti-social spring in both an individual and collective sense (1971:237).

He considered it an unhealthy institution for the state in addition to being corrupt within itself. "Civilized man is so wanting in real merits, that he tries to create factitious ones, such as that of paternity, and to arrogate to himself a public consequence, and also a filial affection, which he is not able to obtain by natural means, in support of that so often uncertain title" (1968:370).

Fourier's isolation as a child appeared as contempt for the much revered family institution which provided little to him. "No group is more remarkable on this head than that of the family, where you see the parents constantly opposed to the

children in their taste for pleasures, for dress, for spending, and in their choice in love and marriage; so that all children habitually disguise their dominant in order to affect the tonic, that filial deference which is required by the father and the law, -- a deference to which they are often obliged to sacrifice their lot" (1968:394).

#### IV. PHILOSOPHERS WHO WROTE AFTER 1848

The introduction to Chapter Three indicated that the presentation of data on the philosophers would be divided into two sections: the first section, Chapter Three provided information on philosophers who predated the revolution in 1848; this section, Chapter Four, differs only in that it presents data on philosophers who lived during or after the revolution of 1848.

##### Auguste Comte 1798-1857

Auguste was the eldest son and like Hegel remarked on the transcendental quality of the family. "The love of his family leads man out of his original state of self-love and enables him to attain finally a sufficient measure of Social love" (1953:104). Each man, too recognizes the ethical/moral keys in the family and are preoccupied with the transition from a child's selfishness to a citizen's generosity. Comte possessed a temperament in harmony with his mother's however, his father considered him simply an expense. At the age of nine he was torn from his family and he always regretted it. For Comte,

(t)he true social unit is certainly the family -- reduced, if necessary, to the elementary couple which forms its basis...There is a political point of view from which also we must consider this elementary idea, inasmuch as the family presents the true germ of the various characteristics of the social organism (Comte, 1848:502).

He was obviously alluding to authority figures and perhaps as well to the restriction of women common to both the family and the state.

The family expresses for Comte, not only the bridge

between the individual and the social but a bond connecting the human beings with a sense of immortality -- the being beyond the immediate experience of the individual and including the history of the ancestors of that individual; thus the individual was for Comte, the medium through which the ancestral existence was carried into the future. In his account, the family performs at least two transcendental functions; one, the shaping of the individual for society and the other, providing a conditional immortality via blood line. Comte manages to entwine these functions:

(t)he first germ of social feeling is seen in the affection of the child for its parents. Filial love is the starting-point of our moral education: from it springs the instinct of Continuity, and consequently of reverence for our ancestors. It is the first tie by which the new being feels himself bound to the whole past history of man. Brotherly love comes next, implanting the instinct of Solidarity, that is to say of union with our contemporaries; and thus we have already a sort of outline of social existence. With maturity new phases of feeling are developed. Relationships are formed of an entirely voluntary nature; which have therefore a still more social character than the involuntary ties of earlier years. This second stage in moral education begins with conjugal affection, the most important of all, in which perfect fullness of devotion is secured by the reciprocity and indissolubility of the bond...From this most perfect of unions proceeds the last in the series of domestic sympathies, parental love. It completes the training by which Nature prepares us for our successors; and thus it binds us to the Future, as filial love bound us to the past (1953:104).

The social affections which Comte compares to fraternal affections, were necessarily subject in both cases to a father-like authority. "The feeling of fraternity, which I place last,

because it is usually least powerful, will be seen to be of primary importance when regarded as the transition from domestic to social affections: it is indeed, the natural type to which all social sympathies conform" (1953:105). It is possible that Comte's frustration at being considered merely a financial burden to his father tainted his analysis of paternal authority.

(T)he paternal feeling will retain its natural power of developing, better than any other feeling, the widest of all social sentiments: that which urges us directly to satisfy the wants of our kind. However, this noble feeling is naturally too weak in the dominant sex, with whom it ought to be even stronger, at least in the existing phase of the Family, where the duty of protection belongs exclusively to the father. The paternal is ordinarily the least pure of all the domestic feelings. Pride and vanity have no small part in it: and even avarice is not an uncommon alloy in it (1875;v.II:159).

However Comte advocated bowing in respect to the authority of the father even though in individual cases such respect may be unwarranted. "Filial respect then begins to give dignity to an obedience which was long involuntary, and completes the first elementary step towards true morality; I mean the disposition to love our superiors" (1875;v.II:156).

The essential meaning of the family to Comte was the fact that one's ancestry gave rise in one's consciousness to a sense of historical connectedness.

In the human family the gradual education of the social feeling commences of itself under the necessary relations formed at our birth. From them we get our first notion of the continuity of past generations, secondly that of the solidarity of the living

generations (1875;v.II:156).

Harriet Martineau 1802-1876

Harriet was the sixth of eight children. She was wet-nursed and almost starved as an infant. She was very unhappy as a child -- she never received the attention she desired, especially with the fierce competition of seven siblings. Her father attended her mother well, but this was not sufficient to inspire Harriet to marry. She blames her early life for her unwillingness to marry.

The veneration in which I hold domestic life has always shown me that that life was not for those whose self-respect had been early broken down, or had never grown...When I see what conjugal love is, in the extremely rare cases in which it is seen in its perfection, I feel that there is a power of attachment in me that has never been touched (Martineau, 1877;v.I:1010).

Martineau was particularly concerned with the effect of marriage on women and the reciprocal effect of women's circumstances on the state of domesticity.

If he can meet with any society where the objects of life are as various and as freely open to women as to men, there he may be sure of finding the greatest amount of domestic purity and peace; for, if women were not helpless, men would find it far less easy to be vicious. Where the husband marries for connexion, fortune, or an heir to his estate, and the wife for an establishment for consequence, or influence, there is no foundation for high domestic morals and lasting peace; and in the simplest and purest cases of our attachment. The sordidness is infused from the mind before the subjects meet: and the evil effects upon the marriage state are incalculable (1838:178).

Out of one's early relationships one comes to know and value what one sees valued -- this observation has important implications for child-rearing. "As the minds of the young are formed, generally speaking, to an adaptation to the objects presented to them, their preference of warlike to commercial... is an eloquent circumstance" (1838:114). The values of the parents are reflected in the actions of the children. However, Martineau admits that reason may overcome inculcation of values, but it takes time and often requires needless repetition of error. "He may conclude that as are the parents, so will be the children; and that, for one more generation at least, there will be little or no improvement" (1838:180).

The origin of these problematic domestic relations rests with the religious climate of a given society: "(t)he friendly, no less than the domestic and political relations of society are dependent upon the prevailing religion" (1838:72).

John Stuart Mill 1806-1873

Probably the single most important fact about John Stuart Mill is that he was the eldest son of James Stewart Mill, who, along with Bentham entered John into a programmed educational mill that verged on Skinnerian proportions. The child, it seemed, was to provide proof of the mettle of James' educational philosophies. The effect of this programming on John's philosophy of the family was pronounced.

A person should be free to do as he likes in his own concerns; but he ought not to be as free to do as he likes in acting for another under the pretext that the affairs of the other are his own affairs. The state while it respects

the liberty of each in what specifically regards himself, is bound to maintain a vigilant control over his exercise of any power which it allows him to possess over others. This obligation is almost entirely disregarded in the case of the family relations, a case, in its direct influence on human happiness, more important than all others taken together. The almost despotic power of husbands over wives needs not be enlarged upon here, because nothing more is needed for the complete removal of the evil than that wives should have the same rights, and should receive the protection of law in the same manner as all other persons (1977:301).

After he grew up, Mill distanced himself from his family, although throughout his life he searched for the approval of his father which was rarely offered. His opinion of his mother seemed not too high and he did not recommend the family as a worthwhile institution.

Philosophically he was similar to Bentham and he advocated stricter involvement of the state with family affairs although he grants that this notion was not immediately popular.

(O)n this subject the defenders of established injustice do not avail themselves of the plea of liberty, but stand forth openly as the champions of power. It is in the case of children, that misapplied notions of liberty are a real obstacle to the fulfillment by the State of its duties. One would almost think that a man's children were supposed to be literally, and not metaphorically, a part of himself, so jealous is opinion of the smallest interference of law with his absolute and exclusive control over them; more jealous than of almost any interference with his own freedom of action: so much less do the generality of mankind value liberty than power (1977:301).



Mill called himself the 'manufactured man' and was never fully proud of his own accomplishments and successes -- swearing that any other child put through the same paces would yield the same results. There was no mention of love or other similar affection in his discussions on the family.

Henry David Thoreau 1817-1862

Thoreau's home life was a busy, bustling place and filled, he often complained, with women. His mother operated the house as a boarding house and her talkative nature was something of an embarrassment to Thoreau. His father, however, was a quiet man and also from all reports quite yielding to his ebullient wife. The family was well planned -- the sexes were evenly represented. The eldest child was a girl, then, the second child a boy, then Henry David -- an indistinct middle child and finally a baby sister.

Thoreau discussed domesticities of various styles but granted little consideration to the family. "But probably man did not live long on the earth without discovering the convenience which there is in a house, the domestic comforts, which phrase may have originally signified the satisfactions of the house more than of the family" (1894;v.VII:45) -- hardly a sacred allusion to the family. Perhaps his childhood had been too full of women -- he scarcely ever mentions the fairer sex, and frequently his ramblings about the family remarked on its instrumental purposes. "When the illiterate and scornful trader has earned by enterprise

and industry his coveted leisure and independence, and is admitted to the circles of wealth and fashion, he turns inevitable at last to those still higher but yet inaccessible circles of intellect and genius, and is sensible only of the imperfection of his culture and the vanity and insufficiency of all his riches, and further proves his good sense by the pains which he takes to secure for his children that intellectual culture whose want he so keenly feels; and thus it is he becomes the founder of a family" (1894;v. VII:162). It was a statement which reflected fully Thoreau's cynical distaste for the pretensions of family life.

Given his family circumstance -- an upwardly mobile, talkative mother, with 'airs', his position as the middle child, -- his cynicism towards the family made a great deal of sense. Yet Thoreau admitted that love "is the motive power of all successful machinery" (1894;v.X:10) and when he was old and dying he turned towards the bosom of his family. Again, it was likely the yielding nature of his father that prompted his disregard of authority and caused him to comment bitterly "(p)ractically, the old have no very important advice to give the young, their own experience has been so partial, and their lives have been such miserable failures for private reasons as they must believe; and it may be that they have some faith which belies that experience, and they are only less young than they were (1894;v. VII:16).

Lewis Henry Morgan 1818-1881

Morgan was a supporter of Bachofen's theory of the rise of the family from the promiscuous horde. It is no wonder -- his

father begat thirteen children from two wives. Lewis was the ninth of his father's offspring and the fourth child of the second wife. He was very appreciative of family life but he admitted the lot of women could be improved.

We should value the great institution of the family, as it now exists, in some proportion to the expenditure of time and of intelligence in its production; and received it as the richest legacy transmitted to us by ancient society because it embodies and records the highest result of its varied and prolonged experience...it must advance as society advances, and change as society changes, even as it has done in the past. It is the creature of the social system and will reflect its culture. As the monogamian family has improved greatly since the commencement of civilization, and very sensibly in modern times, it is at least supposable that it is capable of still farther improvement until the equality of the sexes is attained (1877:491).

When Morgan was eight his father died and Morgan regretted it deeply. His father had been very supportive of his children -- the family took a great deal of pleasure in one another. It is likely that Morgan was impressed with the burden his mother had to carry alone upon the death of his father and it must have appeared idiocy to him that women were considered less than equal.

Morgan had great respect for the institution of marriage:

(t)he wife was not the companion and the equal of her husband but stood to him in the relation of a daughter; thus denying the fundamental principle of monogamy, as the institution in its highest form must be understood. The wife is necessarily the equal of her

husband in dignity, in personal rights and in social position. We may thus discover at what price of experience and endurance this great institution of modern society has been won (1877:474-5).

Karl Marx 1818-1893

Marx is always careful with structures: they never exist separately; they are always a part of the whole. His view of the family is as dim as the view he held of the state; the power imbalances in both upset him.

The division of labour is at this stage still very elementary and is confined to a further extension of the natural division of labour existing in the family. The social structure is, therefore, limited to an extension of the family...The slavery latent in the family only develops gradually with the increase of population, the growth of wants (1975;v.5:294, *The German Ideology*).

His own family circumstances, were, on the whole, quite pleasant. He had a close relationship with his father; he was the eldest son but he and his humorless, lamentious mother were never very close -- although he may have made up for this lack by his extremely close relationship with Sophie, his elder sister. Marx, as the eldest son and the third of nine children had a fairly powerful ordinal position in the family -- respected as the eldest son and babied by two sisters. His younger sisters report that Marx was a tyrant -- his thoughts on latent slavery in the family may have been born as a result of his experience as taskmaster. Marx basked in the encouragement of his father and later, Baron von Westphalen; but his remarks on the family reflect little romanticism and he joined in the raillery of the

times against the illusions of familiar institutions.

"Religion, family, state, law, morality, science, art, etc.; are only particular modes of production, and fall under its general law" (The Economic and Political Manuscripts of 1844:297). He directed much of his attack on the family against Hegel, whose comments, he had found, missed vital elements.

Family and civil society are actual components of the state, actual spiritual existences of the will: they are modes of existence of the state. Family and civil society constitute themselves as the state. They are the driving force. According to Hegel, they are on the contrary produced by the actual idea (1975, v. III:8).

Nevertheless the family does represent some worthwhile ideals.

In its highest development the principle of private property contradicts the principle of the family. In contrast with the state whose ethical life is natural, the estate of family life, it is only in civil society that family life becomes the life of the family, the life of love. The former is rather the barbarism of private property against family life (1975; v.III:99).

Although the family is growing out of a rotten seed -- it has potential. It must be examined skeptically, and thoroughly cleansed of the properties of exploitation. Meanwhile Marx cynically contends, "(t)axation is the fifth god, side by side with property, the family, order and religion" (1975;v.X:118).

Frederick Engels 1820-1895

Engels was the eldest son in a family of eight children. His parents were warm and humorous, his mother was especially

scholarly and the family was, by all accounts, comfortable. The family did however subject itself to the rule of an authoritarian religion. Engels was concerned about the exploitative division of labour inherent in the family and similar to Marx backed up his thesis on the Origins of the Family with the work of Bachofen.

The history of the family dates from 1861, from the publication of Bachofen's *Mutterrecht*. In this Work the author advances the following propositions: (1) That originally man lived in a state of sexual promiscuity,... (2) that such promiscuity excludes any certainty of paternity, and that descent could therefore be reckoned only in the female line, according to mother-right, and that this was originally the case amongst all the peoples of antiquity; (3) that since women, as mothers, were the only parents of the younger generation that were known with certainty, they held a position of such high respect and honor that it became the foundation, in Bachofen's conception, of a regular rule of women (gyneocracy): (4) that the transition to monogamy, where the women belonged to one man exclusively, involved a violation of a primitive religious law (Engels, 1942:8).

Certainly within Engels' home, a respect for motherhood and the mother's capabilities prevailed, nevertheless Engels wished for some revamping of the family structure. "The family still lives too much in the old style to be able to come to a proper understanding with the intruders and be on good terms with them, and here indeed a regeneration of the family is occurring; the disagreeable process just has to be gone through, and to my mind the old family badly needs it" (Engels, 1975;v.VII:164).

With Marx he laid down clearly the origins of the social structure pertaining to the division of labour:

(t)he division of labour is at this stage still very elementary and is confined to a further extension of the natural division of labour existing in the family. The social structure is, therefore, limited to an extension of the family...The slavery latent in the family only develops gradually with the increase of population, the growth of wants,..... (Marx and Engels, 1975;V.V:294).

But he also remarked on the seeds of collective ownership that existed within the family: "(t)he last vestige of common interests, the community of goods in the possession of the family, has been undermined by the factory system and...is already in the process of dissolution." (Engels, 1975;V. III:424).

Sir Henry Sumner Maine 1822-1882

To say that Maine supported a patriarchal familial-type organization, would be accurate. In addition he defended his views by resorting to the familiar instinct argument. "I do not affect to give any simple explanation of the subjection of the various assemblages of kindred to forms of power of which the patriarchal power of the head of the family is the type. Doubtless it is partly to be accounted for by deep-seated instincts" (1914:69). He defended the justice of instinct by recommending that it simplified the organization of structures. "It (patriarchal power) simplifies the conceptions of kinship and of conjoint responsibility, first in the Patriarchal Family and ultimately in the Clan or Tribe" (1914:70). The family structure

is tied expeditiously, according to Maine to both authority and property issues. "I say that there can be no material advance in civilization unless landed property is held by groups at least as small as families; and I again remind you that we are indebted to the peculiarly absolute English form of ownership for such an achievement as the cultivation of the soil of North America" (1914:126).

There is scant information available on his family life. It is known that because of an early family difficulty that he was brought up exclusively by his mother and is likely that he was an only child.

He stoutly defends the justness of a patriarchal system and one wonders whether it is because he so sorely missed it in his own life.

Taking the conceptions which have their root in the family relations -- what we call property, what we call marital right, what we call parental authority, were all originally blended in the general conception of patriarchal power. If, leaving the Family, we pass on to the group which stands next above it in the primitive organization of society -- that combination of families, in a larger aggregate, for which at present I have no better name than Village Community -- we find it impossible to understand the extant examples of it, unless we recognize that, in the infancy of ideas, legislative, judicial, executive, and administrative power are not distinguished, but considered as one and the same (1914:313-4).

Herbert Spencer 1820-1903

Spencer's early life was marred by the antagonism and bad temper of his father. He was raised outside of the school system



and he tended to disregard authority. His mother was compliant and, he felt, too submissive; she invited aggression, he would contend. A sister that he played with died at two years of age. On his family life he remarks "Morally, too, the regime I had lived under was salutary unfortunately during the years of my life at home, there was not that strong government required to keep me in order, while there was a continual attempt at government: the results being frequent disobedience and reprimands" (1904; v.I:131). He supported the contention that the basic institutions of society should not be tampered with. Eventually this argument evolved into his organistic theory of social action. He maintained contact with his father -- as the only child out of nine to survive, it was probably well that the father received some condolence from him despite the father's irascible temperament. It is worth remarking that this child of a chaotic household pressed for a calm that can only be imposed by adherence to rule.

Polygyny shares with monogamy the advantage that inheritance of power in the male line becomes possible; but under polygyny the advantage is partially destroyed by the competition for power liable to arise between the children of different mothers. In monogamy this element of dissension disappears, and settled rule is less frequently endangered. For kindred reasons ancestor-worship has its development aided. Whatever favours stability in the dynasties of early rulers, tends to establish permanent dynasties of deities, with the resulting sacred sanctions for codes of conduct...Beyond the benefit of constant maternal care, the children get the benefit of concentrated paternal interest (1910; V.I:683-4).

Spencer argued vehemently against state interference with the family. "The salvation of every society, as of every species, depends on the maintenance of an absolute opposition between the regime of the family and the regime of the State" (1910, v.I:719): further, "(w)hile the parent, as he ought to be, will conscientiously satisfy all the demands which his parenthood entails, he will sternly deny the right of any assemblage of men to take his children from him and mould them as they please" (1910, v.I:547). ). Despite his advocacy of a non-interference policy, Spencer admitted that there were problems amongst individuals in families and these minor idiosyncracies were difficult for him to explain within his organistic model; very likely his awareness of these idiosyncracies harkens back to his own experience of his father. He explained this distraction by the concept of instinct which varies in its intensity. "All must admit that we are guided to our bodily welfare by instincts; that from instincts, also, spring those domestic relationships by which other important objects are composed; and that similar agencies are in many cases used to secure our indirect benefit by regulating social behavior" (1954:19).

In the case of parental behavior instinct takes over where self interest alone might permit neglect: "instead of that powerful affection by which men are led to nourish and protect their offspring, did there exist merely an abstract opinion that it was proper or necessary to maintain the population of the globe, it is questionable whether the annoyance, anxiety, and the expense of providing for a posterity would not so far exceed the anticipated good as to involve a rapid extinction of the species" (1954:

18). Further, Spencer is quick to add that parental inclinations are not dispersed equally among human beings; "equally great irregularities may be found in the workings of that generally recognized feeling -- parental affection" (1954:21).

Spencer pays little regard to the affects, happiness, or love which are supposed to be found with abundance in the family -- although they were missing from his own; he blames the lack of these emotions on the subjugation of the wills of wife and child to the father. "Wherever anything worth calling connubial happiness at present exists, we shall find that the subjugation of wife to husband is not enforced; though perhaps still held in theory, it is practically repudiated" (1954:148). Indeed Spencer vigorously attacks what he believes are remnants of barbarism in the family -- possibly as a consequence of his experience of them. "That the law of equal freedom applies to children as much as to adults: that consequently the rights of children are co-extensive with those of adults: that, as violating those rights, the use of coercion is worn; and that the relationship now commonly existing between parents and children is therefore a vicious one" (1954:158). This apparent contradiction (we should be thankful for instinct because look at the barbarism it permits) -- never seems to find resolution within Spencer's theory, except perhaps with the potential of evolution. As he begins to allow himself full rein in considering parenthood his disapproval of many parental practices increases.

Paternalism has to devise some kind of rule for the nursery. Impelled partly by the creed, partly by custom, partly by inclination,

paternity decides in favor of pure depotism, proclaims-its-word the supreme law, anathematizes disobedience, and exhibits the rod as final arbiter in all disputes (1954:161).

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Fathers and mothers who enlarge upon the trouble which filial misbehavior entails upon them strangely assume that all the blame is due to the evil propensities of their offspring and none to their own. Though on their knees they confess to being miserable sinners, yet to hear their complaints of undutiful sons and daughters you might suppose that they were themselves immaculate. They forget that the depravity of their children is a reproduction of their own depravity (1954:169).

"Uncover its roots, and the theory of parental authority will be found to grow not out of man's love for his offspring but out of his love of dominion" (1954:170).

"The association between filial subservience and barbarism -- the evident kinship of filial subservience to social and marital slavery -- and the fact that filial subservience declines with the advance of civilization suggest that such subservience is bad" (1954:171).

Sir Edward B. Tylor 1832-1917

Tylor was the second son of Quaker parents. He had tremendous appreciation for the family and its natural provision of affective and social ties.

Mankind, can never have lived as a mere struggling crowd, each for himself. Society is always made up of families or households bound together by kindly ties, controlled by rules of marriage and the duties of parent and child (1960:402).

Apparently his family was firm yet forgiving in the Quaker tradition. He was a strong supporter of marriage and not

a little ethnocentric.

Marriage has been here spoken of first, because upon it depends the family, on which the whole framework of society is founded. What has been said of the ruder kinds of family union among savages and barbarians shows that there cannot be expected from them the excellence of those well-ordered households to which civilized society owes so much of its goodness and prosperity. Yet even among the rudest class of men, unless depraved by vice or misery and falling to pieces, a standard of family morals is known and lived by (1960:404-5).

The moral rule becomes transformed into the affection by choice;

Yet the family tie of sympathy and common interest is already formed, and the foundations of moral duty already laid, in the mother's patient tenderness, the father's desperate valour in defence of home, their daily care for the little ones, the affection of brothers and sisters, and the mutual forbearance, helpfulness and trust of all...Thus kindred and kindness go together -- two words whose common derivation expresses in the happiest way one of the main principles of social life (1960:405).

Tylor cautions against state interference with the family, fearing that it would weaken the ties of society. "With all the growth of individual freedom in modern life, the best features of family despotism remain in force; it is under parental authority that children are trained for their future duties, and law is careful how it gives the child personal rights against the parent, lest it should weaken the very cement which binds society together" (1960:428).

He was the eldest son in a strangely free and unusual family situation. The world was put at the feet of the children of Henry James and it is a tribute to them that in a situation of almost total freedom they managed to grow to discipline themselves and accomplish something which had meaning both for themselves and the world at large. The James' children, in their descriptions of their homelife, were reluctant to criticize the tremendous indulgences they were permitted because they recognized that they were progeny of a most devoted parent. For example, when Alice, William's sister wants to criticize their devoted father for always giving them sneak previews of their Christmas presents, she cannot because she recognizes his love even as she recognizes his childishness. The father in this family was more a child than even his children, and they knew it, and suffered it in him. Each one grew to have nervous and temperament difficulties. William was the eldest of four, he had two brothers and a sister. They were encouraged to become highly individualistic, and it shows in William's work. He was probably one of the most distinctly individualistic psychologists in history, he scarcely ever considered the social realm. For example he explains emotion as inexplicable -- "(t)he love of man for woman, or of the human for her babe, our wrath at snakes and our fear of precipices, may all be described similarly, as instances of the way in which peculiarly conformed pieces of the world's furniture will fatally call forth most particular mental and bodily reactions, in advance of, and often in direct opposition to, the verdict of our deliberate reason concerning them" (1928:249).

James sincerely believed that the individual was capable of self-determination, and he rails against other theorists who disagree.

He [Spencer] overdid the matter, as usual, and left no room for any mental structure at all, except that which passively results from the storage of impressions received from the outer world in the order of their frequency by fathers and transmitted to their sons. The belief that whatever is acquired by sires is inherited by sons, and the ignoring of purely inner variations, are weak points; but to have brought in the environment as vital was a master stroke (1978:12).

While he admits that Spencer was brilliant to be concerned with the social context shaping the individual -- it is obvious that such a consideration does not come naturally to James.

Surely the individual, the person in the singular number, is the more fundamental phenomenon, and the social institution, of whatever grade, is but secondary and ministerial. Many as are the interests which social systems satisfy, always unsatisfied interests remain over, and among them are interests to which system, as such, does violence whenever it lays its hand upon us (1911:102).

His father was the star of his family, the mother was a shadow figure, always there, always working, but never stealing the thunder. This is what inspired William to write: "Details are too long to quote here; but human nature, responding to the call of duty, appears no where sublimer than in the person of these humble heroines of family life..and where can one find greater examples of sustained endurance than in those thousands of poor homes, where the woman successfully holds the family together ... by taking all the thought and doing all the work...(1911:243).

## V. DISCUSSION

From the preceding illustrative quotes and supplementary biographical details a set of tables has emerged which organizes the biographical, perceptual and dispositional material in aid of a more rigorous comparison.

Those philosophers with excessively demanding and punitive parents -- particularly tyrannical fathers -- were classified as having an authoritarian family of origin. Philosophers whose parents were supportive and warm were categorized as having a democratic family of origin. Similarly, those philosophers who saw the power of the father in a family as excessive or unjust were thought to perceive the family as an authoritarian institution, while those philosophers who perceived the family as necessary, warm, loving and just were thought to perceive the family as democratic.

Those philosophers who favored the family, who thought it a wise and worthwhile institution, were considered favorably disposed towards the family; those philosophers who, on the other hand, thought the family a contaminated, vile or tyrannical institution were thought to be not favorably disposed towards the family.

Finally, favorable disposition towards the family when it was perceived as an authoritarian institution, was interpreted in Table 10 as pro-authority; favorable disposition towards the democratic family was considered in Table 11, pro-



democracy; Table 12 defines those who perceive the family as authoritarian and are unfavorably disposed towards it as "against authority".

Table 1  
Authoritarian Family Background

Youngest    Fourier \*

Middle      Burke

Eldest      Diderot,\* Bentham  
              Comte, Mill,

              Perceive Family as  
              Authoritarian

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Perceive Family as  
Democratic

Table 2  
Democratic Family Background

Youngest    \_\_\_\_\_

Middle      \_\_\_\_\_

Eldest      Marx, Engels, Maine  
              Spencer

              Perceive Family as  
              Authoritarian

Hume, Rousseau \*

Thoreau, Martineau, Morgan  
Tylor, Franklin \*

Fichte\*, Hegel\*, James

As Democratic

\* predated 1848 revolution

Table 3  
Pro Authoritarian Family

Youngest	_____	_____
Middle	Burke *	_____
Eldest	Comte	Maine
	Auth. Background	Demo. Background

Table 4  
Pro Democratic Family

Youngest	_____	Hume*, Rousseau*
Middle	_____	Morgan, Tylor, Franklin *
Eldest	_____	Fichte*, Hegel*, James
	Auth. Background	Demo. Background

Table 5  
Against Authoritarian Family

Youngest	Fourier *	_____
Middle	_____	_____
Eldest	Diderot, * Bentham, * Mill	Marx, Engels, Spencer
	Auth. Background	Demo. Background

Table 6  
Against Democratic Family

Youngest	_____	_____
Middle	_____	Thoreau, Martineau
Eldest	_____	_____
	Auth. Background	Demo. Background

Table 7  
Authoritarian Family Background

Youngest	_____	Fourier*
Middle	Burke*	_____
Eldest	Comte	Diderot*, Bentham*, Mill
	Pro Family	Against Family

Table 8  
Democratic Family Background

Youngest	Hume*, Rousseau*	_____
Middle	Morgan, Tylor, Franklin*	Thoreau, Martineau
Eldest	Fichte*, Hegel*, James, Maine	Marx, Engels, Spencer
	Pro Family	Against Family

Table 9  
Pro Family

Youngest \_\_\_\_\_  
 Middle Burke \*  
 Eldest Comte  
 Auth. Background

Hume, \* Rousseau \*  
 Morgan, Tylor, Franklin \*  
 Fichte, \* Hegel, \* James, Maine  
 Demo. Background

Table 10  
Pro Authority

Youngest \_\_\_\_\_  
 Middle Burke \*  
 Eldest Comte  
 Auth. Background

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Maine  
 Demo. Background

Table 11  
Pro Democracy

Youngest \_\_\_\_\_  
 Middle \_\_\_\_\_  
 Eldest \_\_\_\_\_  
 Auth. Background

Hume, \* Rousseau \*  
 Morgan, Tylor, Franklin \*  
 Fichte, \* Hegel, \* James  
 Demo. Background

Table 12  
Against Authority

Youngest Fourier \*  
 Middle \_\_\_\_\_  
 Eldest Diderot, \* Bentham, \* Mill  
 Auth. Background

\_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Marx, Engels, Spencer  
 Demo. Background

The tables numbered one to twelve illustrate the results of the analysis. The categories are crude and hence problematic; decisions about the style of authority in the philosophers' families were very difficult to make primarily because the quality of information on their primary relationships was poor. Apologies aside, the results do appear to substantiate the claim that family background does influence the perceptions of the philosophers especially with regard to authority; the disposition towards authority also appears to be influenced by family background. It is readily apparent that the influence of the philosophers ordinal position was subtle, if it exists at all, consequently the number of cases was too small to establish the nature of such an influence.

In sum, Table 2 indicates that ten philosophers from democratic families perceived the family as a democratic institution; they were: Hume, Rousseau, Thoreau, Martineau, Morgan, Tylor, Fichte, Hegel and James. Table 1 shows that six philosophers from an authoritarian family background perceived the family as authoritarian; they were: Fourier, Diderot, Bentham, Comte, Mill and Burke. The remaining four philosophers -- Marx, Engels, Maine and Spencer were products of what appeared to be democratic families; however, each perceived the family as an authoritarian institution. Presumably these exceptions indicate an intervening variable -- possibly ordinal position, or possibly some unsuspected

interference unrevealed by their biographers.

Table 4 indicates that disposition towards the family was favorably influenced by a democratic family background; with Hume, Rousseau, Morgan, Tylor, Franklin, Fichte, Hegel and James being favorably disposed towards the democratic family. Another interference is suggested in the case of Maine, who apparently came from a democratic family background and nonetheless perceived the family as authoritarian and was despite this perception, favorably disposed towards it.

In detail, Table 1 indicates that Fourier, the youngest and only male child in his family, was strongly ruled by his mother. The fact that he couldn't escape her and had little affection for her suggests that the social character of the family was at least somewhat authoritarian. Similar to Diderot, whose authoritarian parents, it will be recalled, put him under coercive detention for refusing to marry the bride they chose, Fourier perceived the family as authoritarian. Indeed, all six philosophers from an authoritarian family background perceived the family as authoritarian.

Table 2 illustrates some anomolous results. Four philosophers from an ostensibly democratic family background perceive the family as authoritarian, while by far the majority of those from democratic families perceive the family as democratic. The initial similarity noticed about the anomolous four is the fact that each was the eldest son. Secondly, unlike Fichte and Hegel who were eldest sons from a democratic family and perceived the family as democratic, Marx, Engels, Maine,



and Spencer lived after the proletarian revolution of 1848. It may well have been the interaction between their role as the eldest son and the historical challenge to authority signalled in the revolution of 1848 which is responsible for these anomalous results. Proceeding on that assumption we are left to explain William James as the anomalous philosopher. Such a characterization would suit the highly unique life history of James, so with a caution to the reader against placing great stock in these explanations we will put Table 2 to rest.

Table 3 gives an indication of the disposition of philosophers to the authoritarian family. It gives information only on those philosophers, Burke, Comte and Maine, who perceive the family as authoritarian and who are favorably disposed towards it. In this case Maine appears again as the unusual one in that, he, from an apparently democratic family background nevertheless perceives the family as authoritarian and is favorably disposed towards it. Perhaps the pressure on Maine as an only child in a fatherless home explains his hunger for patriarchy. It is obvious that he is not favorably disposed towards the family experience most familiar to him. In Table 4 the results illustrated are more in keeping with the expectations laid out in the hypothesis. Of fourteen philosophers from a democratic family background are eight who perceive the family as democratic and are favorably disposed towards it. Furthermore, no philosophers from an authoritarian family background perceive the family as democratic thus their disposition towards democracy cannot be suggested.

Table 5 indicates that of the six philosophers from

an authoritarian family background, (Fourier, Diderot, Mill, Bentham, Burke and Comte) four are not favorably disposed towards a family which they perceive is authoritarian. The exceptions are Burke and Comte and the only way to explain their unique situation is by resorting to the hypothesis. The individuals who are against the family they perceived as authoritarian also include three who are similarly not favorably disposed towards it; they are Marx, Engels and Spencer and they were discussed in reference to Table 2.

Table 6 is problematic because of confusing data about Martineau. As indicated in this table both she and Thoreau were progeny of a democratic family, both apparently perceive the family as democratic, yet, neither was favorably disposed towards it. There is some evidence in the sources on Martineau that suggest that she deeply resented patriarchy, if so, she could be added to the ranks of Marx, Engels and Spencer who saw the family as authoritarian and were very much against it.

Tables 7 and 8 provide a more immediate comparison of background influence on disposition towards the family. Table 7 indicates that four out of six from an authoritarian family background are not favorably disposed towards the family, while Table 8 indicates that nine out of fourteen individuals from a democratic family background are favorably disposed towards the family. While this does not support the hypothesis, it does suggest that family background influences perception of, and disposition towards it. Philosophers from a democratic family background tend to perceive the family as democratic and are

favorably disposed towards it.

Before concluding the thesis it must be emphasized again that use of the authoritarian/democratic dichotomy was excessively problematic. Moreover, use of this analytical device is recommended only if the categories are properly delineated. The scheme tends to distort the actual experiences and perceptions of the philosophers somewhat; however the scheme did allow sufficient investigation of the subject to permit the suggestion that the influence of the family of origin has ideological implications which demand further consideration.

The data in the tables are far from conclusive; further theoretical work is necessary to define more appropriate categories or family types to allow for the inherent complexity of the data.

## VI. CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the lives of twenty social philosophers active during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for the purpose of determining whether the influence of their family of origin on their philosophies of the family is significant enough to warrant further research. The underlying hypothesis, substantiated by the theory discussed in Chapter Two suggested that philosophers would perceive and be disposed towards the family as a social institution, according to their experiences with their family of origin. The philosophers were selected in such a way as to limit the reactivity of questions of family influence on their philosophy. That is, they were chosen because it was expected that they wouldn't be self conscious about the influence of their family of origin on their thoughts of the family. Essentially this criteria prevented a post-Freudian sample.

It was suggested that the influence of the family on the philosophers' predisposition would be greater than the influence of nationhood and philosophical school. It certainly seems evident in the tables in Chapter Five that family background has an influence despite nation or philosophical school. It affects the individual's perception of the family and the individual's disposition towards the family.

In Chapter Two, I argued the familiarity with and consequently disposition towards a certain style of political behavior in institutions (either democratic or authoritarian) would provide a given institutional arrangement with natural

critics. Obviously, this proposition is not borne out by the evidence. Philosophers from authoritarian family backgrounds tend to perceive the family as authoritarian and are critical of it on that basis -- Mill is a case in point. He was the product of an authoritarian family and he was quite critical of families which he insisted on perceiving as authoritarian, one is left to wonder whether he could see a democratic family as democratic; if not, he doesn't do justice to the position of social critic. On the other hand it may well be that his experience in an authoritarian institution sensitizes him to the implicit authoritarian aspects of the family in general. While his democratically reared counterpart is coddled into a false perception of the family as an inherently just institution. The family of origin then, does not necessarily enhance the wisdom of its progeny. The implications of this study are nonetheless extensive. It suggests that the family of origin does play an important role in the development of an individual's perceptions of social institutions. It further suggests that this influence may act as a greater determinant of the philosophy or attitudes of an individual than nationhood, neighborhood, or education. Untangling the origins of a particular ideology should include respect towards the impact of certain family styles as a determinant.

This thesis does have its limitations. One is that the explanation of anomolous cases such as Marx, Engels, Maine and James invites the suspicion that the etiology of political predisposition is complex enough to produce spurious evidence in a sample as limited as this one. Explaining why these four

men possessed such attitudes is extremely problematical and casts doubt on the other findings. Part of the problem is the limitations inherent in secondary historical materials. One is never completely sure of their reliability and hence the validity of the conclusions achieved through such research. But even if the individuals could be interviewed about the origin of their opinions, chances are their responses would prove even less illuminative than those provided in their biographies. The results of this thesis require meticulous dissection and careful selection of strong indicators of attitudinal tendencies, or political predispositions.

The results of this thesis suggest what only meticulous research can adequately test.

Families of origin do appear to determine the perception of and disposition towards the family as a social institution. Such an influence has been largely ignored in the social sciences to date and this thesis is a short remedial step. In the case of philosophers the influence has provocative consequences; philosophers similar to other social leaders advise the society that they serve, of a direction; if their work is seriously contaminated by the pressure of their personal needs and emotions both they and their admirers ought to be aware of it. Additionally, if all individuals had a greater self consciousness about the extent to which personal issues and insecurities acted on political decision-making, policy might reflect a benefit from their added wisdom.

The purpose of this thesis was a desire to test the

strength of the influence of the family of origin on the development of ideology. Twenty social philosophers predating Freud were selected and compared according to the style of authority in their family of origin, their ordinal position in their family and their thoughts on the family as a social institution. The influence of the family of origin on political predisposition is, according to the results presented here, strong enough to warrant further research of a more rigorous nature.

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