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## Corporal Punishment and Its Relation to Race, Psychological Well-Being, and Parental Relationship

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**CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND ITS RELATION TO RACE,  
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING, AND PARENTAL RELATIONSHIP**

by

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B.S. May 2003, Longwood University

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of  
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the  
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## **ABSTRACT**

### **CORPORAL PUNISHMENT AND ITS RELATION TO RACE, PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING, AND PARENTAL RELATIONSHIP**

Michelle P. Kravitz  
Old Dominion University, 2005  
Director: Michelle L. Kelley

Previous research has documented the numerous negative effects associated with corporal punishment (Gershoff, 2002). The present study examined whether experiencing corporal punishment as a child is related to one's perception of the legitimacy of corporal punishment, race, the nature of the parent-child relationship (i.e., biological parent versus step-parent), and psychological well-being. Compared to college students who did not experience corporal punishment during childhood, college students who experienced higher levels of corporal punishment are expected to report that corporal punishment is a more acceptable form of discipline. College students who grew up with a stepfather were expected to be more likely to report having received corporal punishment as a disciplinary technique during childhood than were biological parents. African-American college students were expected to report higher levels of corporal punishment than were European-American college students. An interaction was expected such that European-American students who reported high levels of corporal punishment would report more depressive symptoms and psychological adjustment difficulties than would European-American students who experienced lower levels of corporal punishment during childhood or African-American college students who reported higher or lower levels of corporal punishment. College students who received corporal punishment as children believed that corporal punishment was a more acceptable form of

punishment than college students who were not spanked as children. Results of the other hypotheses were not significant. That is, after controlling for paternal education and family income, African-American college students were not more likely to report having received corporal punishment as children. In addition, individuals who lived with their biological mothers and a stepfather during the majority of childhood were not more likely to have received corporal punishment. Finally, experiencing corporal punishment as a child was not a significant predictor of psychological well-being for college students.

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## INTRODUCTION

Corporal punishment is defined as the legally permissible use of non-deadly force toward a child with the intent of causing pain in order to correct or control the child's behavior (Straus, 1991; Straus & Donnelly, 2001). According to the National Family Violence Surveys, 90% of American families use corporal punishment as a disciplinary technique (Straus & Donnelly, 2001; Straus & Gelles, 1990). Straus and colleagues also found that not only is spanking with an open hand on the buttocks common, 55.7% of parents slap or spank their children, 30.6% of parents push, shove, or grab their children, 10.4% of parents hit their children with objects, and 3.2% of parents throw objects at their children. They also reported that use of corporal punishment decreases with age. Specifically, 60% of 10- to 12-year-olds experienced physical punishment, whereas only 25% of 17-year olds experienced corporal punishment (Straus & Donnelly, 2001; Straus & Gelles, 1990). It is important to note that these surveys were conducted in 1975 and 1985, respectively. The National Family Violence Surveys, however, are arguably the most representative national sample of corporal punishment to date, which is why these studies are frequently cited.

Since the mid-1980s, there has been an increasing recognition of the potential negative effects associated with physical discipline. Dietz (2000) found that 85% of 2 and 3 year olds and 95% of 4 and 5 year olds were spanked during the preceding year. Graziano and Namaste (1990) found that 93% of the 679 college students who participated in their surveys said that they had been spanked. A more recent national study of American parents found 74% of parents of children 17 years old or younger use spanking as a form of discipline (Gallup Organization, 1995). Even most authors of

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The journal model for this thesis is *Journal of Family Psychology*.

books on childrearing support the use of corporal punishment as a legitimate form of discipline; approximately one out of 10 textbooks argues against the use of spanking (Straus, 1994). Although corporal punishment is a commonly-used form of discipline, few investigators have examined associations between the frequency of corporal punishment and later outcomes. Moreover, the outcomes associated with corporal punishment may differ as a function of the relationship to the individual and the respondent's race.

It is important to recognize that many parents who use physical discipline do so frequently. The National Family Violence Surveys found that in the previous year, 12% of parents reported using corporal punishment once, 46% of parents stated they had employed corporal punishment two to seven times, and 42% of parents admitted utilizing corporal punishment eight or more times (Straus & Donnelly, 2001; Straus & Gelles, 1990). On average, parents reported that they had used corporal punishment 8.9 times in the previous year (Straus & Donnelly, 2001; Straus & Gelles, 1990).

Considerable research has examined the effects of corporal punishment on children's behavior and attitudes. Some have argued that spanking results in negative outcomes for children (Gershoff, 2002). Although many children who received corporal punishment have "turned out okay," some researchers believe that spanking conveys the idea that hitting another person is acceptable (Straus & Donnelly, 2001). Another argument for not using corporal punishment is that corporal punishment does not facilitate moral internalization of parental values because it does not teach children the reasons for behaving correctly (Smetana, 1997).

*Theoretical Explanations for Violence in Children who Experience Corporal Punishment*

Both Social Learning Theory (Hyman & Clarke, 1991) and Cultural Spillover Theory (Straus & Donnelly, 2001) would predict that individuals who have experienced corporal punishment are more likely to view violence as acceptable. According to Straus's Cultural Spillover Theory, no matter how "legitimate" the violence in one area of life is, it can and will increase the likelihood of violence in other areas of life (Straus & Donnelly, 2001). Hence, spanking can increase the general level of societal violence. Gershoff (2002) states that corporal punishment may lead children to be more likely to resort to aggression and violence during conflicts with their children and spouses. Some have viewed the Cultural Spillover Theory in relation to parental stress; when parents have increased stress at work and increased economic problems, they tend to use corporal punishment more often (Stolley & Szinovacz, 1997). Research supporting the Cultural Spillover Theory found mothers who were stressed due to recent marital separation used physical punishment more than those mothers who were in intact marriages (Forgatch, Patterson, & Skinner, 1988). Therefore, researchers who advocate the Cultural Spillover Theory contend that individuals who have experienced corporal punishment may be more likely to use corporal punishment with their own children. In fact, some research has demonstrated that children as young as four years of age who are spanked believe that spanking is an acceptable form of discipline (Catron & Masters, 1993).

Proponents of Social Learning Theory would also argue that children who have experienced corporal punishment are more likely to mimic their parents' violent acts. Children are disposed to imitate aggressive models, making corporal punishment an easy target for imitation (Bandura & Huston, 1961). In fact, corporal punishment actually

models the behavior that parents are trying to discourage (Bandura, 1973). For instance, Dodge, Lochman, Harnish, Bates, and Pettit (1997) found children who showed high levels of reactive aggression often experienced harsh discipline and physical abuse. Thus, viewed from a Social Learning Theory perspective these children may be more likely to believe that it is acceptable to be violent and aggressive toward others. Researchers who adhere to either the Social Learning Theory or Cultural Spillover Theory would argue that corporal punishment has the potential to influence the larger society via more positive beliefs about corporal punishment (Straus & Donnelly, 2001). Some support has been shown for this proposition. Specifically, Graziano and Namaste (1990) found that college students who were spanked were more likely to approve of corporal punishment and planned to use physical punishment with their future children.

### *Views of Corporal Punishment*

In addition to the more global theories regarding the influence of corporal punishment on individuals and the use by society in general, Kazdin and Benjet (2003) argue there are three specific positions with respect to whether spanking is a legitimate form of discipline. The first position is the pro-corporal punishment view. This view argues that spanking induces desirable consequences such as respect for authority and good behavior. Proponents of the pro-corporal punishment view also contend that responsible parents should use spanking as a form of behavior modification. The second position is the anti-corporal punishment view. This view argues that spanking has both long and short-term harmful consequences. This view is also linked with the Social Learning Theory (i.e., any form of violence leads to violence). The final position is the conditional corporal punishment view. In this view, spanking is viewed as positive or

negative, but is dependent on other conditions. The conditional corporal punishment view does not advocate corporal punishment. Instead, this view contends that there are too many other variables that must be considered before one can evaluate the use of corporal punishment.

Even among professionals, there is no clear consensus on how to advise about spanking (Kazdin & Benjet, 2003). A survey of clinical psychologists found 70% would never suggest spanking a child, 26% would rarely suggest spanking a child, and 4% would sometimes suggest spanking a child (Schenck, Lyman, & Bodin, 2000). Findings from a survey of psychologists found one third of the respondents believed the American Psychological Association should have a policy opposing corporal punishment, whereas one third of those surveyed did not believe the American Psychological Association should have a policy regarding corporal punishment (Kazdin & Benjet, 2003). The United Nations, however, has argued against the use of physical violence toward children (Kazdin & Benjet, 2003).

### *Family Situation*

Although researchers have examined outcomes associated with spanking, fewer investigations have examined why parents choose to spank. Factors that influence the use of corporal punishment include area of the country in which one lives, as well as the country in which one was raised. It is also important to recognize that the distinction between punishment and corporal punishment vary in different parts of the world (Vesterdal, 1983). Previous research has also demonstrated that parents with lower socioeconomic status (SES), younger parents, and less educated parents are more likely to use corporal punishment (Giles-Sims, Strauss, & Sugarman, 1995). Specifically, as

SES declines, the use of corporal punishment increases (Pinderhughes Dodge, Bates, Pettit, & Zelli, 2000; Wauchope & Straus, 1990). Related to the previous finding, Heffer and Kelley (1987) found that parents with low incomes were more likely to approve of spanking than were parents with higher incomes.

Some have speculated that race may also be a factor in determining whether a parent chooses to use corporal punishment. Specifically, compared to European-American parents, African-American parents are more likely to believe that corporal punishment is an acceptable form of punishment (Heffer & Kelley, 1987; Pinderhughes et al., 2000). In part this difference may reflect the lower socioeconomic status of many African-Americans or more conservative religious beliefs also more common among African-Americans (Heffer & Kelley, 1987; Pinderhughes et al., 2000).

Wolfner and Gelles (1993) found African-American parents were more likely to use physical punishment than were European-Americans. Dietz (2000) found that African-American parents were four times more likely to use corporal punishment than were European-American parents. Further research is needed to better elucidate whether individuals of other ethnic minorities also differ in their use and beliefs regarding corporal punishment.

Another factor that has received little empirical research is whether the use of corporal punishment differs as a function of whether the child is the biological child or stepchild of the person who employs corporal punishment. Research has shown that stepfathers are viewed less favorably than are biological fathers (Claxton-Oldfield, 1992). Researchers have also demonstrated that single parents (Loeber et al., 2000), divorced parents (Camara & Resnick, 1988), and stepfamilies (Hashima & Amato, 1994) tend to

use harsher disciplinary techniques, including more physical punishment than do two-biological parent families.

### *Corporal Punishment and Long-term Psychological Adjustment*

Relative to the literature on the use of corporal punishment, much less research has examined the short- and long-term outcomes associated with the use of corporal punishment. It is important to realize from the extant literature that additional literature is needed in this area. According to the National Family Violence Surveys, as compared to adults who were not corporally punished, those who were corporally punished have a higher rate of depressive symptoms and are more likely to contemplate suicide (Straus & Donnelly, 2001). Also, according to Straus and Donnelly (2001) young men who experienced corporal punishment as adolescents reported 23% more depressive symptoms than a comparison group who did not experience corporal punishment. Previous research has concluded similar findings; that is, harsh punishment that includes corporal punishment is associated significantly with adolescents' depressive symptoms and psychological distress (McLoyd, Jayaratne, Ceballo, & Borquez, 1994). The National Family Violence Surveys also reported that adolescents with a history of corporal punishment report more alienation than do adolescents who were not corporally punished (Straus & Donnelly, 2001). This finding is disheartening when one considers that nearly half of all adolescents experience corporal punishment (Straus, 1994). Harsh punishment is also associated with increased morbidity and adult forms of illness such as heart disease or cancer (Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi, & Lozando, 2002). In addition to examining depressive symptomatology, the present study examined other aspects of psychological adjustment such as anxiety. It was hypothesized that while corporal

punishment may be correlated with depressive symptoms, other aspects of psychological well-being, less often examined, such as anxiety, would be related to having experienced corporal punishment. Depressive symptoms also might be related to the participant's views on relationships and personality items such as warmth and dominance.

In addition to having experienced corporal punishment, the frequency with which a child experienced corporal punishment has been related to later aggression and misconduct (Gershoff, 2002). In particular, the detrimental outcomes of corporal punishment appear significant when the child was spanked at least one to three times a week (Larzelere, 2000). Gershoff (2002) also found that as age increases, so does aggressive and antisocial behavior. Other researchers have found similar findings. That is, the older the children are when they are spanked, the more likely they are to have mental health problems (Larzelere, 2000). Although corporal punishment has been related with immediate compliance, it is associated with 10 undesirable constructs, six in childhood: increased aggression, decreased moral internalization, increased delinquent and antisocial behavior, decreased quality of parent-child relationship, decreased mental health, increased physical abuse; and four constructs in adulthood: increased aggression, increased criminal and antisocial behavior, decreased mental health and increased adult abuse of own child or spouse (Gershoff, 2002).

### *Hypotheses*

*Hypothesis 1.* Based on the Cultural Spillover Theory and Social Learning Theory, it was hypothesized that compared to college students who did not experience corporal punishment during childhood, college students who experienced corporal

punishment would report that corporal punishment is a more acceptable form of discipline.

*Hypothesis 2.* College student participants were expected to report that biological parents were less likely to use corporal punishment as compared to non-biological parents. Because living with a stepmother is still less common than living with a stepfather, the present study tested this hypothesis by comparing only those respondents who resided with both biological parents as compared to those who resided with a biological mother and stepfather for the majority of their childhood.

*Hypothesis 3.* African-American college students were expected to report higher levels of corporal punishment and higher scores on the firm control dimension of the Children's Report Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; Schaefer, 1965a) than were European-American college students. Because family income is related to the use of corporal punishment and the mean income of African-Americans is lower than that of European-Americans (United States Census, 2000), this hypothesis was tested after controlling for family income and level of parent education.

*Hypothesis 4.* It was hypothesized that corporal punishment would be related to the psychological well-being of college students. Specifically, an interaction was expected such that European-American students who experienced corporal punishment would report more depressive symptoms and lower psychological adjustment (e.g., higher anxiety and lower warmth, but higher dominance, nonsupport, identity problems, negative relationships, and social detachment from the Personality Assessment Inventory (Morey, 1991) than would European-American college students who did not receive

corporal punishment during childhood or African-American respondents who did or did not receive corporal punishment during childhood.

## METHOD

### *Participants*

Participants were 189 undergraduate students between the ages of 18 and 25 at a medium-sized university in southeastern Virginia. Mean age of respondents was 20.25 years, with a standard deviation of 2.02. Seventy-seven percent (77.2%) were female; 14.3% were male (8.5% did not provide information on their sex). The majority of respondents were European-American (54.5%); 25.4% were African-American. Additional demographic information is provided in Table 1. Convenience sampling was employed in the present study. Participants volunteered for the study in exchange for extra credit in their psychology classes. The study was approved by the college committee at the participating university and was conducted in compliance with the code of ethics of the American Psychological Association.

### *Measures*

*Children's Report of Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; Schaefer, 1965a).* The version of the CRPBI administered in the present study is shortened 108-item version of the original questionnaire developed by Schludermann and Schludermann (1970). There are three overall dimensions: Acceptance versus Rejection, Psychological Control versus Psychological Autonomy and Firm versus Lax Control. The first factor measures, in the participant's point of view, how caring they believed their parent to be. An example being: "Almost always speaks to me with a warm and friendly voice." The Psychological Control factor measures, in the participant's point of view, how much

Table 1

*Demographic Characteristics of Participants*

	N	Percentage
Age		
18	36	19.0
19	42	22.2
20	33	17.5
21	18	9.5
22	22	11.6
23	9	4.8
24	5	2.6
25	8	4.2
Not Reported	16	7.9
Gender		
Male	27	14.3
Female	146	77.2
Not Reported	16	8.5
Race		
European-American	103	54.5
African-American	48	25.4
Multicultural	3	1.6
Asian	5	3.7
Pacific Islander	2	1.1
American Indian or Alaskan Native	5	2.6
Not Reported	15	7.9
Education		
Freshman	54	28.6
Sophomore	40	21.2
Junior	45	23.8
Senior	27	14.3
Post-Bachelor Student	7	3.7
Not Reported	16	8.5
Parents Divorced		
Yes	55	29.1
No	119	63.0
Not Reported	15	7.9

Table 1 Continued

	N	Percentage
Current Residence		
Dorm	45	23.8
Apartment/House	67	35.4
Parents	53	28.0
Other	9	4.8
Not Reported	15	7.9
Primary Living Situation		
Mother and Father	111	58.7
Mother Only	33	17.5
Father Only	8	4.2
Mother and Step-Father	17	9.0
Father and Step-Mother	1	0.5
Grandparents	1	0.5
Other	3	1.6
Not Reported	15	7.9
Primary Disciplinarian		
Mother	108	57.1
Father	58	30.7
Step-Mother	1	0.5
Step-Father	2	1.1
Other	4	2.1
Not Reported	15	7.9
Spanked as Child		
Yes	147	77.8
No	42	22.2

Table 1 Continued

	N	Percentage
<b>Age at Last Spanking (n = 168)</b>		
2	2	1.1
3	4	2.1
4	7	3.7
5	13	6.9
6	12	6.3
7	15	7.9
8	16	8.5
9	9	4.8
10	20	10.6
11	13	6.9
12	17	9.0
13	8	4.2
14	7	3.7
15	1	0.5
16	2	1.1
19	1	0.5
Not Reported	42	22.2
<b>Who Did the Spanking</b>		
Mother/Mother figure	69	36.5
Father/Father figure	65	34.4
Mother and Father	15	7.9
More than two people	2	1.1
Other	2	1.1
<b>Belief That Spanking is Legitimate</b>		
Yes	116	61.4
No	58	30.7
Not Reported	15	7.9
<b>Plan to Spank in the Future</b>		
Yes	103	54.5
No	71	37.6
<b>Spank Kids Presently</b>		
Yes	5	45.5
No	6	54.5

Table 1 Continued

	N	Percentage
Marital Status		
Single	166	87.8
Married	7	3.7
Not Reported	16	8.5
Mother's Education		
Some High School	7	3.7
Completed High School	44	23.3
Some College	63	33.3
Completed College	36	19.0
Some Graduate School	2	1.1
Completed Master's Degree	19	10.1
Completed Doctorate	1	0.5
Not Reported	17	9.0
Father's Education		
Some High School	10	5.3
Completed High School	58	30.7
Some College	40	21.2
Completed College	34	18.0
Some Graduate School	4	2.1
Completed Master's Degree	18	9.5
Completed Doctorate	7	3.7
Not Reported	18	9.5

freedom they believed their parent let them have, and how much they were able to make their own decisions. An example from this factor is "Will avoid looking at me when I've disappointed her." The Firm control factor measures how much control the participant believed that the parent had over them. An example is "Is very strict with me."

Respondents completed the CRPBI twice. In the first version, respondents completed the questionnaire as it pertained to their mother or the female that they lived

with for the majority of their childhood prior to age 16. In the second version, respondents completed the questionnaire as it related to their father or the male parental figure that they lived with the majority of time during their childhood prior to age 16. Phrases that include “he/she” were changed to be a consistent gender (see Appendices A & B). Participants rated each item on a 3-point Likert-type scale from: 3) = Like, to 1) = Not Like. The CRPBI has shown that internal consistency is higher when applied to fathers than to mothers (Shaefer, 1965). Previous research has demonstrated alphas between .57 and .86 for this inventory (Schwarz, Barton-Henry & Pruzinski, 1985). In a study that compared normal children with boys institutionalized for delinquency, researchers reported reliabilities that ranged from .66 to .84 (Schaefer, 1965a).

*Center for Epidemiologic Studies – Depression (CES-D; Randolff, 1977).* The CES-D assesses current depressive symptoms (see Appendix C). This questionnaire is comprised of 20 items. Respondents rate each item using a four-point likert scale of how often this is how the participant felt in the last week (rarely to most of the time). A sample item is “I felt depressed.” After reverse scoring four items, a total depression score was obtained. Higher ratings on this questionnaire reflect greater depressive symptoms. Previous research has demonstrated an alpha of .87 for this survey (Kelley et al., 2002). Prior research also found that this instrument is widely used in assessing depressive symptoms in non-clinical samples of mothers (Kelley et al., 2002).

*Self-Analysis Form (Kremen, 1990).* The third questionnaire, the Self-Analysis Form, measures current level of anxiety (see Appendix D). Respondents rate each of the 14 items with respect to how often the participant felt this way during the last week on a 5-point Likert-type scale (never to always). A total anxiety score was computed; the

higher the score, the higher the anxiety level. A sample item is “I would describe myself as a tense person.” Previous research has demonstrated an alpha of .85 to .88 for this scale; Kelley and colleagues (2002) found scores on the Self-Analysis Form were related to scores as the CES-D as would be expected.

*Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI; Morey, 1991).* The final questionnaire, the PAI is a 52-item questionnaire that assesses many different personality factors. The PAI has the following subscales: Warmth, Dominance, Nonsupport, Identity Problem, Negative Relationship, and Social Detachment (see Appendix E). Each item is scored on a 4-point Likert-type scale (F = false, not at all true to VT = very true) reflecting how true the statement is in their beliefs. Prior to including the items in the inventory, each item was reviewed by a bias panel to identify potential problems. Morey (1991) examined every items’ psychometric properties as a function of demography.

The Warmth subscale consists of 12 items that assess an individual’s self-perceptions of warmth (e.g., “It is easy for me to make new friends.”). Higher scores reflect a warmer personality. The alpha for a college student sample has been reported at .80 (Morey, 1991).

The Dominance subscale includes 12 items that measure the individual’s perception of their interpersonal relationships. A sample item is: “I’m a natural leader.” Previous research employing a college student sample has reported an alpha of .81 (Morey, 1991).

The Nonsupport subscale includes 8 items that measure the amount of perceived social support (e.g., “My friends are available if I need them.”) the individual reports in

their environment. Morey (1991) reported an alpha of .75 for this subscale in a college student sample.

The Identity Problem and the Negative Relationship are subscales from the Borderline scale of the PAI. The Identity Problem subscale includes 6 items used to measure the participant's identity problems, or problems the participant has identifying him or herself. Higher scores on this scale are related with higher identity problems. The Identity Problem subtest includes statements such as "My attitude about myself changes a lot." Researchers found an alpha of .65 for college students (Morey, 1991).

The Negative Relationship subscale of the PAI is comprised of 6 items used to measure how the participant perceived negative relationships. The 6 items on this subscale include statements such as "My relationships have been stormy." A higher score reflects more negative interpersonal relationships. An alpha of .67 has been reported for the Negative Relationship subscale in a sample of college students (Morey, 1991).

The last subscale, Social Detachment, is a subscale of the Schizophrenia scale. It is used to measure how detached the participant feels. It included 8 items (e.g., "I don't have much to say to anyone."). Morey (1991) reported an alpha of .80 in a college student sample (Morey, 1991).

The independent variable, being spanked as a child, was assessed through a self report item "If you were ever spanked by a parent as a child, how old were you when you were last spanked" on the demographic questionnaire (see Appendix F). A following question asked who was the primary disciplinarian in their household while growing up and, if spanked, which parent usually spanked them. To distinguish between those who

have only been spanked as children and those who were spanked along with other harsher forms of discipline, several additional questions were asked to determine whether the participant was ever slapped as a child, or if any punishment left a mark on the body. A Likert scale question (1 = once a year, to 7 = more than once a day) addressed how often the punishment took place.

The acceptability of corporal punishment was assessed in a few self-report items including “Do you believe that spanking is a legitimate form of discipline?” The demographic questionnaire also included questions about gender, age, race, marital status, and so forth.

### *Procedure*

In response to a posted announcement of the study, participants completed an online survey that included a general description of the study, participant notification form (see Appendix G), study questionnaires, and a demographic information questionnaire. Participants completed these materials anonymously.

## RESULTS

### *Hypothesis One*

To test whether college students who experienced corporal punishment during childhood would report that corporal punishment was a more acceptable form of discipline, a one-way ANOVA was performed. The independent variable was whether the participant received corporal punishment as a child (coded as 1 = received corporal punishment; 2 = did not receive corporal punishment). The dependent variable was determined from the following question: “Do you think that spanking is a legitimate form of discipline?” (coded as 1 = yes, it is legitimate; 2 = no, it is not legitimate). The main effect for corporal punishment was significant,  $F(1,173) = 33.56, p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .163$ , power = 1.0. Respondents who were spanked as children reported that spanking was a more legitimate form of discipline ( $M = 1.05$ ) than did individuals who were not spanked as children ( $M = 1.36$ ). That is, approximately 74.8% of those who were spanked as children indicated that spanking was a legitimate form of discipline, whereas 14.3% of those who did not receive corporal punishment as children indicated that spanking was a legitimate form of discipline.

### *Hypothesis Two*

To test hypothesis 2, a new variable was computed based on whether the individual was raised by both biological parents or a biological mother and stepfather. Respondents who did not reside with both biological parents or a biological mother and stepfather were excluded from this analysis. One hundred and thirty-two ( $n = 132$ ) participants (69.8%) resided with both biological parents, whereas 17 participants (9.2%) resided with a biological mother and stepfather. A GLM ANOVA was performed with

caregiver (coded as 1 = biological parents; 2 = biological mothers/stepfather) as the independent variable. Whether the respondent reported that they were spanked as a child served as the dependent variable (coded as 1 = spanked as a child; 2 = not spanked as a child). Results of the analyses were not significant,  $F(1,148) = 1.21$ , n.s., partial  $\eta^2 = .01$ , power = .19. In contrast to what was hypothesized, respondents who grew up with a stepfather were not more likely to report that they had received corporal punishment as children.

### *Hypothesis Three*

Prior to testing hypothesis 3, independent tests were performed to determine whether African-American and European-American respondents differed on the level of maternal and paternal education and family income. Level of paternal education differed between the two groups,  $t(146) = 5.03$ ,  $p < .001$ . In addition, income differed between the two groups,  $t(132) = 3.52$ ,  $p < .01$ . As expected, African-American respondents reported their fathers had less education and that their families had lower income than did European-American respondents. Mothers' level of education did not differ between the two groups,  $t(147) = 1.73$ , n.s. Therefore, only paternal education and family income were entered as covariates in the analysis that follow.

A GLM ANOVA was performed with paternal education and family income as covariates. Whether the respondent indicated that they were spanked as a child (coded as 1 = spanked as a child; 2 = not spanked as a child) served as the dependent variable. Ethnicity served as the independent variable (coded as 1 = European-American; 2 = African-American). One hundred and three ( $n = 103$ ) participants (54.5%) identified themselves as European-American, whereas 48 participants (25.4%) identified

themselves as African-American. Respondents who reported an ethnicity/race other than European-American or African-American were not included in this analysis. Although European-American respondents were less likely to report that they had been spanked ( $M = 1.16$ , 80.6% had received corporal punishment as children) as compared to African-American respondents ( $M = 1.10$ , 89.6% had received corporal punishment in childhood), after controlling for paternal education and family income the mean did not differ significantly by group,  $F(3, 132) = .48$ , n.s., partial  $\eta^2 = .01$ , power = .15.

Two additional GLM ANOVAs were performed with ratings of mothers and fathers, respectively, on the Firm Control dimension of the Children's Report Parental Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; Schaefer, 1965a) as the dependent variables. The higher the score, the greater firm control the respondent reported. Paternal education and family income served as the covariate. Ethnicity served as the independent variable (coded as 1 = European-American; 2 = African-American). The main effect of race was not significant for ratings of mothers' use of Firm Control,  $M$  (European-American) = 20.08,  $M$  (African-American) = 21.46,  $F(3, 131) = 2.57$ , n.s., partial  $\eta^2 = .06$ , power = .62. The main effect of race was also not significant for ratings of fathers,  $M$  (European-American) = 20.47,  $M$  (African-American) = 20.96,  $F(3, 131) = .65$ , n.s., partial  $\eta^2 = .02$ , power = .18. The alpha for mother's use of Firm Control was .79, while father's Firm Control was .78.

#### *Hypothesis Four*

Hypothesis 4 was tested by conducting 2 (Ethnicity: coded as 1 = European-American, 2 = African-American) X 2 (Corporal Punishment: 1 = spanked as a child, 2 = not spanked as a child) GLM ANOVAs. Because paternal education and family income differed between European-American and African-American respondents, these variables

served as covariates in the GLM ANOVAs. The dependent variables were the following subscale scores from the Morey Personality Assessment Inventory: Nonsupport, Warmth, Dominance, Identity Problem, Negative Relationship and Social Detachment. As shown in Table 2, neither the interaction term nor the main effects were significant for any of the subscales of the Morey Personality Assessment Inventory.

A 2 (Ethnicity: coded as 1 = European-American, 2 = African-American) X 2 (Corporal Punishment: 1 = spanked as a child, 2 = not spanked as a child) GLM ANOVA was performed to determine if depressive symptoms were higher for European-American respondents who reported that they were spanked as children. Scores from the Center for Epidemiologic Studies – Depression (CES-D; Radloff, 1977) served as the dependent variable. Because paternal education and family income differed between European-Americans and African-American respondents, these variables were entered as covariates in the analysis. Neither the interaction term nor the main effects of Ethnicity or Corporal Punishment were significant, Corporal Punishment X Ethnicity:  $F(1, 131) = .02$ , n.s.,  $R^2 = .02$ , Ethnicity:  $F(1, 131) = .34$ , n.s.,  $R^2 = .02$ , and Corporal Punishment:  $F(1, 131) = .01$ , n.s.,  $R^2 = .02$ . The alpha for the CES-D was .90 for this study.

A 2 (Ethnicity: coded as 1 = European-American, 2 = African-American) X 2 (Corporal Punishment: 1 = spanked as a child, 2 = not spanked as a child) GLM ANOVA was performed to determine if anxiety was higher for European-American respondents who reported that they were spanked as children. Scores from Kremen's Self-Analysis Form (1990) served as the dependent variable. Because paternal education and family income differed between European-American and African-American participants, these variables were entered as covariates in the analysis. Neither the

interaction term nor the main effects of Ethnicity or Corporal Punishment were significant, Corporal Punishment X Ethnicity:  $F(1, 131) = .01$ , n.s.,  $R^2 = .01$ , Corporal Punishment:  $F(1, 131) = .43$ , n.s.,  $R^2 = .01$ , Ethnicity:  $F(1, 131) = .00$ , n.s.,  $R^2 = .01$ . The alpha for Kremen's Self-Analysis Form was .88 for this study.

Table 2

*Analyses of Variance Assessing Differences in Personality Characteristics (Nonsupport, Warmth, Dominance, Identity Problem, Negative Relationship, and Social Detachment) as a Function of Whether the Respondent was Spanked as a Child and Ethnicity*

Source	<i>df</i>	$R^2$	Adj. $R^2$	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>	alpha
Nonsupport		.06	.02			.88
Spank	1			.71	.40	
Ethnicity	1			.03	.87	
Spank*Ethnicity	1			1.65	.76	
Warmth		.02	-.02			.82
Spank	1			.16	.69	
Ethnicity	1			.48	.49	
Spank*Ethnicity	1			.02	.90	
Dominance		.02	-.02			.86
Spank	1			1.60	.21	
Ethnicity	1			1.19	.28	
Spank*Ethnicity	1			1.81	.18	
Identity Problem		.03	-.01			.72
Spank	1			.04	.83	
Ethnicity	1			.05	.82	
Spank*Ethnicity	1			.92	.34	
Negative Relationship		.03	-.01			.70
Spank	1			2.09	.15	
Ethnicity	1			.40	.53	
Spank*Ethnicity	1			1.55	.22	
Social Detachment		.04	.00			.88
Spank	1			.76	.38	
Ethnicity	1			.32	.57	
Spank*Ethnicity	1			1.01	.32	

*Note.* Spank: coded as: 1 = spanked as a child, 2 = not spanked as a child; Ethnicity: coded as: 1 = European-American, 2 = African-American. Personality Characteristic scores were derived from the Morey Personality Assessment Inventory.

## CONCLUSION

The present study examined having received corporal punishment as a child as related to perceptions of corporal punishment as a legitimate form of discipline in young adulthood. In addition, the present study examined whether as compared to residing with both biological parents, corporal punishment was more common among participants who resided with a biological mother and stepfather for the majority of childhood. The present study also examined whether having received corporal punishment during childhood would result in more negative psychological outcomes as reported by European-Americans college students as compared to African-Americans college students.

The first hypothesis was supported. That is, perceptions of the whether being spanked as a child were related to reporting that spanking was a legitimate form of discipline. According to the Cultural Spillover Theory, no matter how “legitimate” the violence in one area of life is, it can and will increase the likelihood of violence in other areas of life (Straus & Donnelly, 2001). More specifically, Straus and Donnelly (2001) contend that spanking conveys the message that hitting another person is an acceptable behavior. Results of the present study and those of Straus and colleagues support work by Graziano and Namaste (1990) who found that college students who were spanked were more likely to approve of corporal punishment.

Although Straus and Donnelly (2001) contend that associations between retrospective reports of spanking and beliefs about spanking during adulthood support the Cultural Spillover Hypothesis (i.e., violence leads to violence), it is possible that the identified relationship supports the Social Learning Theory. Specifically, Catron and Masters (1993) found that children as young as four years of age who were spanked

reported that spanking was an acceptable form of discipline. That is, regardless of the age of the individual, individuals “learn” acceptable behavior from their caregivers. Thus, for many individuals one’s beliefs about corporal punishment are developed from their experiences and observations during childhood.

The second hypothesis stated that college student participants would report that biological parents were less likely to use corporal punishment as compared to those who were raised primarily by a biological mother and stepfather. This hypothesis was not supported. Specifically, biological and non-biological parents did not differ in their use of corporal punishment. In fact, perusal of the data suggested that those who resided with both biological parents during childhood may actually be more likely endorse having received corporal punishment. Again, it is important to reiterate that this observation was not significant. It is, however, interesting and counter to the expected results. This might be an area for future research, especially since this study did not support previous research by Hashima and Amato (1994). Hashima and Amato found that stepfamilies tend to use harsher disciplinary techniques, including more physical punishment than do two-biological parent families. The lack of significant findings may reflect the low power. In fact, only 17 participants resided with a biological mother and stepfather during the majority of childhood. The lower number of respondents who resided with a biological mother and stepfather during childhood may be indicative of a college student sample. Specifically, the majority of the sample (69.8%) resided with both biological parents. M. Ver Ploeg (2002) found that individuals from single parent families and stepparent families were less likely to attend and complete college. A study similar to this conducted with high school students may have found more individuals from non-

traditional homes. In turn, it is possible that greater statistical power would be present to detect potential differences in corporal punishment between those raised by both biological parents versus a biological mother and stepfather. Future research could look at single mothers as well as step-families, since previous research has found similar results with these two groups (Ver Ploeg, 2002).

Results of the third hypothesis were also non-significant. Although European-American respondents and African-American respondents did not significantly differ on whether they reported having received corporal punishment as children, European-American respondents were less likely to report that they had been spanked as children (i.e., 80.6%) than were African-Americans (i.e., 89.6%). The lack of significant differences between the two groups does not support previous studies. For instance, a recent study, Deater-Deckard, Lansford, Dodge, Pettit and Bates (2003) found that African-American children were more likely to have experienced physical punishment. Clearly, the percentage of respondents in both racial groups who endorsed being spanked during childhood suggests that spanking is still quite prevalent. According to the National Family Violence Surveys, 90% of American families use corporal punishment as a disciplinary technique (Straus & Donnelly, 2001; Straus & Gelles, 1990). Although the percentage of respondents who reported having received corporal punishment during childhood was high, it was not as high as previously reported in the Family Violence Surveys. The present sample was generally middle-income. It is possible that the percentage of respondents who endorsed having been spanked in childhood would have been higher if the survey included individuals from predominantly lower-income families.

Nevertheless, the present study suggests that even among individuals from predominantly middle- to middle-income families, the prevalence of spanking is still incredibly high. Graziano and Namaste (1990) found that 93% of the 679 college students they surveyed said that they had been spanked. The third hypothesis, which was that African-American college students were expected to report higher levels of corporal punishment and have experienced more firm control during childhood as compared to European-American students, was not supported. There were no significant differences between the two groups. This result is not supported by previous research by Deater-Deckard and Dodge (1997) who found that African-American children and their mothers were more accepting of physical punishment than their European-American counterparts. This result was also found in a more recent study done by Deater-Deckard, Lansford, Dodge, Pettit and Bates (2003).

The last hypothesis which expected that European-American students who experienced corporal punishment would report more depressive symptoms and lower psychological adjustment (e.g., higher anxiety and lower warmth, but higher dominance, nonsupport, identity problems, negative relationships, and social detachment from the Personality Assessment Inventory (Morey, 1991) than would European-American college students who did not receive corporal punishment during childhood or African-American respondents who did or did not receive corporal punishment during childhood was also found to be non-significant. Psychological well-being did not differ as a function of having received corporal punishment as a child. Again, results of the present study do not support previous research stating that adults who were corporally punished have a higher rate of depressive symptoms as compared to adults who were not corporally

punished (Straus & Donnelly, 2001). It is possible that the college students experience higher psychological functioning than individuals who do not attend college. In addition, it is possible that individuals who were more severely affected by corporal punishment or who experienced corporal punishment and other severe forms of physical discipline were less likely to attend college. A future study could test students still in high school while comparing to those in college. In addition, additional research could look at different age groups (such as ages 5, 10, and 15) to see if corporal punishment takes a larger psychological toll at any one stage in life.

Clearly, the power of the present study to detect statistical significance was limited for some of the hypotheses. At the same time, the study produced a large dataset with considerable information that has yet to be analyzed for future studies. A more diverse sample, including high school students, or those not in college, would have also been beneficial to accrue the variety of participants needed to elucidate relationships between corporal punishment and psychological outcomes.

Despite the negative effects found in numerous accounts of previous research, this study failed to find any negative consequences of corporal punishment, although the majority of parents in the United States still use corporal punishment on their children. Results of the present study suggest that those who are spanked as children are likely to view spanking favorably. Clearly, it is plausible that these individuals will use corporal punishment with their own children.

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## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONNAIRE 1 (CRPB-MOTHER/MOTHER FIGURE)

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON ANY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE MATERIALS.

This questionnaire lists various attitudes and behaviors of parents. We would like you to complete these questions about your **BIOLOGICAL MOTHER or the woman that you lived with for the LONGEST PERIOD OF TIME prior to 16 years of age.**

Please darken the circle that corresponds to the woman you are completing these questions about:

O Mother                      O Step-mother                      O Grandmother                      Other

If you did ***NOT*** live with the woman above from birth to age 16, how long did you live with her  
I lived with her from age \_\_\_\_\_ to age \_\_\_\_\_.

If you did ***not*** live with your mother or other mother figure prior to age 16, please skip to the next questionnaire.

L – Statement is LIKE your caregiver  
SL – Statement is SOMEWHAT LIKE your caregiver  
NL – Statement is NOT LIKE your caregiver

	<u>Like</u>	<u>Somewhat</u> <u>Like</u>	<u>Not</u> <u>Like</u>
1. Makes me feel better after talking over my worries with her.	L	SL	NL
2. Isn't very patient with me.	L	SL	NL
3. Sees to it that I know exactly what I may or may not do.	L	SL	NL
4. Wants to know exactly where I am and what I am doing.	L	SL	NL
5. Soon forgets a rule she has made.	L	SL	NL
6. Is easy with me.	L	SL	NL
7. Doesn't talk with me very much.	L	SL	NL
8. Will not talk to me when I displease her.	L	SL	NL
9. Is very strict with me.	L	SL	NL
10. Feels hurt when I don't follow advice.	L	SL	NL
11. Is always telling me how I should behave.	L	SL	NL
12. Usually doesn't find out about my misbehaviors.	L	SL	NL
13. Spends very little time with me.	L	SL	NL
14. Almost always speaks to me with a warm and friendly voice.	L	SL	NL
15. Is always thinking of things that will please me.	L	SL	NL
16. Believes in having a lot of rules and sticking to them.	L	SL	NL
17. Tells me how much she loves me.	L	SL	NL
18. Is always checking on what I've been doing at school or at play.	L	SL	NL
19. Punishes me for doing something one day, but ignores it the next.	L	SL	NL
20. Allows me to tell her if I think my ideas are better than his/hers.	L	SL	NL
21. Lets me off easy when I do something wrong.	L	SL	NL
22. Sometimes when she disapproves, doesn't say anything but is cold and distant for awhile.	L	SL	NL

	Like	Somewhat Like	Not Like
23. Forgets to help me when I need it.	L	SL	NL
24. Sticks to a rule instead of allowing a lot of exceptions.	L	SL	NL
25. Tells me exactly how to do my work.	L	SL	NL
26. Doesn't pay much attention to my misbehavior.	L	SL	NL
27. Likes me to choose my own way of doing things.	L	SL	NL
28. If I break a promise, doesn't trust me again for a long time.	L	SL	NL
29. Doesn't seem to think of me very often.	L	SL	NL
30. Doesn't tell me what time to be home when I go out.	L	SL	NL
31. Gives me a lot of care and attention.	L	SL	NL
32. Believes that all of my bad behavior should be punished in some way.	L	SL	NL
33. Asks me to tell everything that happens when I'm away from home.	L	SL	NL
34. Doesn't forget very quickly the things that I do wrong.	L	SL	NL
35. Wants me to tell her about it if I don't like the way she treats me.	L	SL	NL
36. Worries about me when I'm away.	L	SL	NL
37. Gives hard punishments.	L	SL	NL
38. Believes in showing her love for me.	L	SL	NL
39. Feels hurt by the things I do.	L	SL	NL
40. Lets me help to decide how to do things we're working on.	L	SL	NL
41. Says some day I'll be punished for my bad behavior.	L	SL	NL
42. Gives me as much freedom as I want.	L	SL	NL
43. Smiles at me very often.	L	SL	NL
44. Is always getting after me.	L	SL	NL
45. Keeps a careful check on me to make sure I have the right kind of friends.	L	SL	NL
46. Depends upon her mood whether a rule is enforced or not.	L	SL	NL
47. Excuses my bad conduct.	L	SL	NL
48. Doesn't show that she loves me.	L	SL	NL
49. Is less friendly with me if I don't see things her way.	L	SL	NL
50. Is able to make me feel better when I am upset.	L	SL	NL
51. Becomes very involved in my life.	L	SL	NL
52. Almost always complains about what I do.	L	SL	NL
53. Always listens to my ideas and opinions.	L	SL	NL
54. Would like to be able to tell me what to do all the time.	L	SL	NL
55. Doesn't check up to see whether I have done what she told me.	L	SL	NL
56. Thinks and talks about my misbehavior long after it's over.	L	SL	NL
57. Doesn't share many activities with me.	L	SL	NL
58. Lets me go any place I please without asking.	L	SL	NL
59. Enjoys doing things with me.	L	SL	NL
60. Makes me feel like the most important person in his/her life.	L	SL	NL
61. Gets cross and angry about little things I do.	L	SL	NL
62. Only keeps rules when it suits her.	L	SL	NL
63. Really wants me to tell her just how I feel about things.	L	SL	NL
64. Will avoid looking at me when I've disappointed her.	L	SL	NL
65. Usually makes me the center of her attention at home.	L	SL	NL
66. Often praises me.	L	SL	NL

	Like	Somewhat Like	Not Like
67. Says if I loved her, I'd do what she wants me to do.	L	SL	NL
68. Seldom insists that I do anything.	L	SL	NL
69. Tries to understand how I see things.	L	SL	NL
70. Complains that I get on her nerves.	L	SL	NL
71. Doesn't work with me.	L	SL	NL
72. Insists that I must do exactly as I'm told.	L	SL	NL
73. Asks other people what I do away from home.	L	SL	NL
74. Loses her temper when I don't help around the house.	L	SL	NL
75. Does not insist I obey if I complain or protest.	L	SL	NL
76. Cheers me up when I am sad.	L	SL	NL
77. Sees to it that I obey when she tells me something.	L	SL	NL
78. Tells me of all the things she has done for me.	L	SL	NL
79. Wants to control whatever I do.	L	SL	NL
80. Does not bother to enforce rules.	L	SL	NL
81. Thinks that any misbehavior is very serious and will have future consequences.	L	SL	NL
82. Is always finding fault with me.	L	SL	NL
83. Often speaks of the good things I do.	L	SL	NL
84. Makes her whole life career about her children.	L	SL	NL
85. Doesn't seem to know what I need or want.	L	SL	NL
86. Is happy to see me when I come home from school or play.	L	SL	NL
87. Gives me the choice of what to do whenever possible.	L	SL	NL
88. If I've hurt her feelings, stops talking to me until I please her again.	L	SL	NL
89. Worries that I can't take care of myself unless she is around.	L	SL	NL
90. Hugged or kissed me goodnight when I was small.	L	SL	NL
91. Says if I really cared for her, I would not do things that cause her to worry.	L	SL	NL
92. Is always trying to change me.	L	SL	NL
93. Is easy to talk to.	L	SL	NL
94. Wishes I were a different kind of person.	L	SL	NL
95. Lets me go out any evening I want.	L	SL	NL
96. Seems proud of the things I do.	L	SL	NL
97. Spends almost all of her free time with her children.	L	SL	NL
98. I have certain jobs to do and am not allowed to do anything else until they are done.	L	SL	NL
99. Is very interested in what I am learning in school.	L	SL	NL
100. Doesn't like the way I act at home.	L	SL	NL
101. Changes her mind to make things easier for herself.	L	SL	NL
102. Can be talked into things easily.	L	SL	NL
103. Wishes I would stay at home where she could take care of me.	L	SL	NL
104. Makes me feel I'm not loved.	L	SL	NL
105. Has more rules than I can remember, so is often punishing me.	L	SL	NL
106. Says I will make her happy.	L	SL	NL
107. Will talk to me again and again about anything bad I do.	L	SL	NL
108. Lets me do anything I like to do.	L	SL	NL

## APPENDIX B

### QUESTIONNAIRE 1 (CRPB-FATHER/FATHER FIGURE)

This questionnaire lists various attitudes and behaviors of parents. We would like you to complete these questions about your **BIOLOGICAL FATHER or the MAN that you lived with for the LONGEST PERIOD OF TIME BEFORE age 16.**

Please darken the circle that corresponds to the woman you are completing these questions about:

O Biological Father                      O Step-father                      O Grandfather                      Other

If you did ***NOT*** live with the man above from birth to age 16, how long did you live with him  
I lived with him from age \_\_\_\_\_ to age \_\_\_\_\_.

If you did ***not*** live with your father or other father figure prior to age 16, please skip to the next questionnaire.

L – Statement is LIKE your caregiver  
SL – Statement is SOMEWHAT LIKE your caregiver  
NL – Statement is NOT LIKE your caregiver

	Like	Somewhat Like	Not Like
1. Makes me feel better after talking over my worries with him.	L	SL	NL
2. Isn't very patient with me.	L	SL	NL
3. Sees to it that I know exactly what I may or may not do.	L	SL	NL
4. Wants to know exactly where I am and what I am doing.	L	SL	NL
5. Soon forgets a rule he has made.	L	SL	NL
6. Is easy with me.	L	SL	NL
7. Doesn't talk with me very much.	L	SL	NL
8. Will not talk to me when I displease him.	L	SL	NL
9. Is very strict with me.	L	SL	NL
10. Feels hurt when I don't follow advice.	L	SL	NL
11. Is always telling me how I should behave.	L	SL	NL
12. Usually doesn't find out about my misbehaviors.	L	SL	NL
13. Spends very little time with me.	L	SL	NL
14. Almost always speaks to me with a warm and friendly voice.	L	SL	NL
15. Is always thinking of things that will please me.	L	SL	NL
16. Believes in having a lot of rules and sticking to them.	L	SL	NL
17. Tells me how much he loves me.	L	SL	NL
18. Is always checking on what I've been doing at school or at play.	L	SL	NL
19. Punishes me for doing something one day, but ignores it the next.	L	SL	NL
20. Allows me to tell him if I think my ideas are better than his.	L	SL	NL
21. Lets me off easy when I do something wrong.	L	SL	NL
22. Sometimes when he disapproves, doesn't say anything but is cold and distant for awhile.	L	SL	NL
23. Forgets to help me when I need it.	L	SL	NL
24. Sticks to a rule instead of allowing a lot of exceptions.	L	SL	NL
25. Tells me exactly how to do my work.	L	SL	NL

	Like	Somewhat Like	Not Like
26. Doesn't pay much attention to my misbehavior.	L	SL	NL
27. Likes me to choose my own way of doing things.	L	SL	NL
28. If I break a promise, doesn't trust me again for a long time.	L	SL	NL
29. Doesn't seem to think of me very often.	L	SL	NL
30. Doesn't tell me what time to be home when I go out.	L	SL	NL
31. Gives me a lot of care and attention.	L	SL	NL
32. Believes that all of my bad behavior should be punished in some way.	L	SL	NL
33. Asks me to tell everything that happens when I'm away from home.	L	SL	NL
34. Doesn't forget very quickly the things that I do wrong.	L	SL	NL
35. Wants me to tell him about it if I don't like the way he treats me.	L	SL	NL
36. Worries about me when I'm away.	L	SL	NL
37. Gives hard punishments.	L	SL	NL
38. Believes in showing his love for me.	L	SL	NL
39. Feels hurt by the things I do.	L	SL	NL
40. Lets me help to decide how to do things we're working on.	L	SL	NL
41. Says some day I'll be punished for my bad behavior.	L	SL	NL
42. Gives me as much freedom as I want.	L	SL	NL
43. Smiles at me very often.	L	SL	NL
44. Is always getting after me.	L	SL	NL
45. Keeps a careful check on me to make sure I have the right kind of friends.	L	SL	NL
46. Depends upon his mood whether a rule is enforced or not.	L	SL	NL
47. Excuses my bad conduct.	L	SL	NL
48. Doesn't show that he loves me.	L	SL	NL
49. Is less friendly with me if I don't see things his way.	L	SL	NL
50. Is able to make me feel better when I am upset.	L	SL	NL
51. Becomes very involved in my life.	L	SL	NL
52. Almost always complains about what I do.	L	SL	NL
53. Always listens to my ideas and opinions.	L	SL	NL
54. Would like to be able to tell me what to do all the time.	L	SL	NL
55. Doesn't check up to see whether I have done what he told me.	L	SL	NL
56. Thinks and talks about my misbehavior long after it's over.	L	SL	NL
57. Doesn't share many activities with me.	L	SL	NL
58. Lets me go any place I please without asking.	L	SL	NL
59. Enjoys doing things with me.	L	SL	NL
60. Makes me feel like the most important person in his life.	L	SL	NL
61. Gets cross and angry about little things I do.	L	SL	NL
62. Only keeps rules when it suits him.	L	SL	NL
63. Really wants me to tell him just how I feel about things.	L	SL	NL
64. Will avoid looking at me when I've disappointed him.	L	SL	NL
65. Usually makes me the center of his attention at home.	L	SL	NL
66. Often praises me.	L	SL	NL
67. Says if I loved him, I'd do what he wants me to do.	L	SL	NL
68. Seldom insists that I do anything.	L	SL	NL
69. Tries to understand how I see things.	L	SL	NL
70. Complains that I get on his nerves.	L	SL	NL

	Like	Somewhat Like	Not Like
71. Doesn't work with me.	L	SL	NL
72. Insists that I must do exactly as I'm told.	L	SL	NL
73. Asks other people what I do away from home.	L	SL	NL
74. Loses his temper when I don't help around the house.	L	SL	NL
75. Does not insist I obey if I complain or protest.	L	SL	NL
76. Cheers me up when I am sad.	L	SL	NL
77. Sees to it that I obey when he tells me something.	L	SL	NL
78. Tells me of all the things he has done for me.	L	SL	NL
79. Wants to control whatever I do.	L	SL	NL
80. Does not bother to enforce rules.	L	SL	NL
81. Thinks that any misbehavior is very serious and will have future consequences.	L	SL	NL
82. Is always finding fault with me.	L	SL	NL
83. Often speaks of the good things I do.	L	SL	NL
84. Makes his whole life career about his children.	L	SL	NL
85. Doesn't seem to know what I need or want.	L	SL	NL
86. Is happy to see me when I come home from school or play.	L	SL	NL
87. Gives me the choice of what to do whenever possible.	L	SL	NL
88. If I've hurt his feelings, stops talking to me until I please him again.	L	SL	NL
89. Worries that I can't take care of myself unless he is around.	L	SL	NL
90. Hugged or kissed me goodnight when I was small.	L	SL	NL
91. Says if I really cared for him, I would not do things that cause him to worry.	L	SL	NL
92. Is always trying to change me.	L	SL	NL
93. Is easy to talk to.	L	SL	NL
94. Wishes I were a different kind of person.	L	SL	NL
95. Lets me go out any evening I want.	L	SL	NL
96. Seems proud of the things I do.	L	SL	NL
97. Spends almost all of his free time with his children.	L	SL	NL
98. I have certain jobs to do and am not allowed to do anything else until they are done.	L	SL	NL
99. Is very interested in what I am learning in school.	L	SL	NL
100. Doesn't like the way I act at home.	L	SL	NL
101. Changes his mind to make things easier for himself.	L	SL	NL
102. Can be talked into things easily.	L	SL	NL
103. Wishes I would stay at home where he could take care of me.	L	SL	NL
104. Makes me feel I'm not loved.	L	SL	NL
105. Has more rules than I can remember, so is often punishing me.	L	SL	NL
106. Says I will make him happy.	L	SL	NL
107. Will talk to me again and again about anything bad I do.	L	SL	NL
108. Lets me do anything I like to do.	L	SL	NL

## APPENDIX C

### QUESTIONNAIRE 2 (IOFA)

Circle the number for each statement that best describes how often you felt or behaved this way during the  
past week.

0	1	2	3
Rarely or none of the time (1 day)	Some or a little of the time (1-2 days)	Occasionally or a moderate amount of time (3-4 days)	Most or all of the time (5-7 days)

**During the past week:**

- |     |  |   |   |   |   |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1.  | I was bothered by things that usually don't bother me.                                     | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2.  | I did not feel like eating; my appetite was poor.  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3.  | I felt that I could not shake off the blues even with the help from my friends and family. | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4.  | I felt that I was just as good as other people.  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5.  | I had trouble keeping my mind on what I was doing.   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6.  | I felt depressed.  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7.  | I felt that everything I did was an effort.  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8.  | I felt hopeful about the future.   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 9.  | I thought my life had been a failure.  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 10. | I felt fearful.  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 11. | My sleep was restless.   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 12. | I was happy.   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 13. | I talked less than usual.  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 14. | I felt lonely.   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 15. | People were unfriendly.  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 16. | I enjoyed life.  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 17. | I had crying spells.   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 18. | I felt sad.  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 19. | I felt that people disliked me.  | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 20. | I could not "get going."   | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

## APPENDIX D

### QUESTIONNAIRE 3 (IOFB)

Please circle the number for each statement that best describes how often you feel or behave this way.

(Never)      1      2      3      4      5 (Always)

1. I am often nervous for no reason.  
1      2      3      4      5
2. I suffer from nervousness.  
1      2      3      4      5
3. I believe that I am no more nervous than most others.  
1      2      3      4      5
4. I would describe myself as a tense person.  
1      2      3      4      5
5. I must admit that I have at times been worried beyond reason over something that really did not matter.  
1      2      3      4      5
6. It makes me nervous to have to wait.  
1      2      3      4      5
7. I worry about terrible things that might happen.  
1      2      3      4      5
8. I often lose sleep over my worries.  
1      2      3      4      5
9. I am easily startled by things that happen unexpectedly.  
1      2      3      4      5
10. I often find myself worrying about something.  
1      2      3      4      5
11. I sometimes get myself into a state of tension and turmoil as I think of the day's events.  
1      2      3      4      5
12. There are days when I'm "on edge" all of the time.  
1      2      3      4      5
13. I am able to remain calm even though those around me worry.  
1      2      3      4      5
14. I am easily "rattled" at certain moments.  
1      2      3      4      5

## APPENDIX E

### QUESTIONNAIRE 4 (PI)

Read each statement and decide if it is an accurate statement about you. Mark your answer by filling in one of the circles.

If the statement is FALSE, NOT AT ALL TRUE, fill in the F.

If the statement is SLIGHTLY TRUE, fill in the ST.

If the statement is MAINLY TRUE, fill in the MT.

If the statement is VERY TRUE, fill in the VT.

Give your own opinion of yourself. Be sure to answer every statement.

1. My friends are available if I need them.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
2. I'm a very sociable person.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
3. I'm a "take charge" type of person.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
4. My attitude about myself changes a lot.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
5. My relationships have been stormy.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
6. I just don't seem to relate to people very well.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
7. I like being around my family.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
8. It's easy for me to make new friends.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
9. I'm a natural leader.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
10. Sometimes I feel terribly empty inside.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
11. I want to let certain people know how much they've hurt me.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
12. I don't have much to say to anyone.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
13. If I'm having problems, I have people I can talk to.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
14. I like to meet new people.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
15. I would be good at a job where I tell others what to do.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
16. I worry a lot about other people leaving me.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
17. People once close to me have let me down.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT

18. I'm a loner.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
19. I spend most of my time alone.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
20. I am a warm person.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
21. I have trouble standing up for myself.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
22. I often wonder what I should do with my life.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
23. I rarely feel very lonely.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
24. I don't feel close to anyone.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
25. Most people I'm close to are very supportive.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
26. It takes me a while to warm up to people.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
27. I feel best in situations where I am the leader.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
28. I can't handle separation from those close to me very well.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
29. I've made some real mistakes in the people I've picked as friends.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
30. I enjoy the company of other people.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
31. People I know care a lot about me.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
32. It takes awhile for people to get to know me.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
33. I prefer to let others make decisions.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
34. I don't get bored very easily.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
35. Once someone is my friend, we stay friends.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
36. I like to be around other people if I can.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
37. In my family, we argue more than we talk.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
38. I try to include people who seem left out.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
39. I say what's on my mind.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT
40. I usually do what other people tell me to do.  
O F            O ST            O MT            O VT

41. I make friends easily.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
42. I spend little time with my family.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
43. I'm an affectionate person.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
44. People listen to my opinions.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
45. If I get poor service from a business, I let the manager know about it.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
46. I keep in touch with my friends.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
47. I'm a sympathetic person.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
48. Close relationships are important to me.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
49. I'm very impatient with people.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
50. I have more friends than most people I know.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
51. I don't like letting people know when I disagree with them.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT
52. I'm a very independent person.  
☐ F            ☐ ST            ☐ MT            ☐ VT

## APPENDIX F

### QUESTIONNAIRE 5 (DW)

Please fill in the circles that describe you.

Gender:            ☐ Male            ☐ Female

Age:            \_\_\_\_\_

Level of Education:

- ☐ Freshman  
☐ Sophomore  
☐ Junior  
☐ Senior  
☐ Post-bachelor's student

Ethnicity: (check only one)

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> American Indian or Alaskan Native         | <input type="radio"/> Asian               |
| <input type="radio"/> Black or African American                 | <input type="radio"/> Hispanic or Latino  |
| <input type="radio"/> Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander | <input type="radio"/> White, non-Hispanic |
| <input type="radio"/> Multiracial                               |   |

Living Situation:

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Dormitory           | <input type="radio"/> With parents |
| <input type="radio"/> Own apartment/house | <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ |

Are your parents divorced?                      ☐ Yes            ☐ No

Who did you live with most of the time you were growing up?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Mother and Father      | <input type="radio"/> Mother                 |
| <input type="radio"/> Father                 | <input type="radio"/> Mother and Step-Father |
| <input type="radio"/> Father and Step-Mother | <input type="radio"/> Grandparents           |
| <input type="radio"/> Other: _____           |  |

Who was the primary disciplinary figure while you were growing up? (who disciplined you the most)

- |                                   |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Mother      | <input type="radio"/> Father       |
| <input type="radio"/> Step-mother | <input type="radio"/> Step-father  |
| <input type="radio"/> Grandmother | <input type="radio"/> Other: _____ |

If you were ever spanked by a parent as a child, how old were you when you were last spanked: \_\_\_\_\_

If you were spanked as a child, who did the spanking?

- ☐ Mother/ mother figure  
☐ Father/father figure  
☐ Grandmother  
☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

When you were punished as a child, what punishment came from each person? (circle as many as necessary)

- |                            |                  |                      |                    |                    |                       |                        |
|----------------------------|------------------|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| O Mother/<br>Mother figure | simply<br>verbal | spanked on<br>bottom | slapped<br>on face | hit with<br>a fist | hit with<br>an object | other: (fill in below) |
| O Father/<br>Father figure | simply<br>verbal | spanked on<br>bottom | slapped<br>on face | hit with<br>a fist | hit with<br>an object | other: (fill in below) |

<input type="radio"/> Grandmother	simply verbal	spanked on bottom	slapped on face	hit with a fist	hit with an object	other: (fill in below)
<input type="radio"/> Other: _____	simply verbal	spanked on bottom	slapped on face	hit with a fist	hit with an object	other: (fill in below)

If you were spanked as a child, how often were you spanked by each person? (1 = once or twice a yr, 7 = daily)

<input type="radio"/> Mother/Mother figure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="radio"/> Father/Father figure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="radio"/> Grandmother	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="radio"/> Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

How severe was the punishment by each person? (1 = not at all severe, 7 = very severe)

<input type="radio"/> Mother/Mother figure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="radio"/> Father/Father figure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="radio"/> Grandmother	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<input type="radio"/> Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Do you believe that spanking is a legitimate form of discipline? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you plan to spank your future children? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you have children, do you ever spank your child(ren)? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Marital Status:

<input type="radio"/> Single	<input type="radio"/> Married
<input type="radio"/> Separated	<input type="radio"/> Divorced
<input type="radio"/> Widowed	

Highest Level of Education Completed by Mother (Female head of household):

<input type="radio"/> Some high school	<input type="radio"/> Some courses toward master's degree
<input type="radio"/> High school	<input type="radio"/> Completed master's degree (e.g., M.S., M.A., M.S.W.)
<input type="radio"/> Some college	<input type="radio"/> Completed doctorate (Ph.D., M.D.)
<input type="radio"/> Completed college (e.g., B.S., B.A.)	

Highest Level of Education Completed by Father (Male head of household):

<input type="radio"/> Some high school	<input type="radio"/> Some courses toward master's degree
<input type="radio"/> High school	<input type="radio"/> Completed master's degree (e.g., M.S., M.A., M.S.W.)
<input type="radio"/> Some college	<input type="radio"/> Completed doctorate (Ph.D., M.D.)
<input type="radio"/> Completed college (e.g., B.S., B.A.)	

Please estimate your family's total income for last year \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for participating in this research!

**APPENDIX G**  
**PARTICIPANT NOTIFICATION FORM**

**Old Dominion University  
College of Sciences  
Department of Psychology**

**Title of Research:** Corporal punishment and its relation to race, psychological well-being, and parental relationship.

**Researchers:** Michelle Kravitz, & Michelle L. Kelley, Ph.D.

**Description of Research:** You are asked to participate as a volunteer in a scientific investigation as a part of the educational and research program of Old Dominion University conducted under the supervision of Dr. Michelle L. Kelley, Department of Psychology. The basic nature of this research, titled "Corporal punishment and its relation to race, psychological well-being, and parental relationship," involves completing a survey that assesses how your parents' disciplined you, your relationship with your parent(s), statements that describe yourself, and information about you and your family. Because the completion of the survey is completely anonymous, there will be no way we can associate your identity with your answers. To receive credit, you must give the survey to the Research Participation Administrator during her office hours. There will be no way to link your name or identity to your responses. At that time, further information about the study will be given to you as a written debriefing. Most people can complete the survey in less than 30 minutes.

**Inclusionary and Exclusionary Criteria:** In order to participate in this study, you must be:

- (1) no younger than 18 and no older than 25 years old

**Risks and Benefits:** The completion of this survey may result in increased self-awareness about your parents and your own feelings. For some individuals, this self-awareness may produce momentary discomfort. However, no appreciable adverse effects to your health or well-being are expected. Of course, there may be unforeseen effects for particular persons. The main benefit to accrue from this study is better understand how the type of discipline you received during childhood may differ as a function of race/ethnicity. You may also find the materials and questionnaires interesting and may learn something about yourself in the process.

**Costs and Payments:** You will receive **one (1) psychology research credit** for your voluntary participation in this study.

**New Information:** Any new information obtained during the course of this research that is directly related to your willingness to continue to participate in this study will be provided you.

**Confidentiality:** Your answers will never be revealed to anyone but the researchers. Also, because the researchers will not have your name on the questionnaires, it will never be associated with your responses. Therefore, you must complete them **anonymously**. Please do NOT put your name or any other identifying information on the materials.

**Withdrawal Privilege:** You may withhold any answer to any specific item(s) or question(s) in the questionnaires. You may also terminate your participation at any time, without penalty.

**Compensation for Illness and Injury:** Because this is a survey, it is unlikely that any physical illness or injury will result from your participation in this study. If any injury, physical or otherwise, should result, Old Dominion University does not provide insurance coverage, free medical care, or any other compensation for such injury. However, should your completion of the materials raise concerns about yourself for which you might wish professional help, you may seek free and confidential assistance at the University Counseling Center in Webb Center (683-4401). In the event that you believe that you have suffered injury as a result of participation in any research project at the university, you may contact Dr. Michelle Kelley at 683-4439, or Dr. David Swain, Chair of the University IRB at 683-6028.

**Agreement to Participate:** By checking the box below, you indicate that you have been informed about your participation in this research project. Please note there are two copies of the Participation Notification Form. Please keep one copy for your records. If you choose to participate in the study, please check and date this form and turn in this copy with your completed questionnaire. If you have questions about your participation in the study, please contact Dr. Michelle L. Kelley at 683-4439, or Dr. David Swain, Chair of the University IRB at 683-6028.

☐ I agree to participate in Family Ties \_\_\_\_\_ Date

**Please keep the other copy of this form for your records.**

## VITA

### MICHELLE P. KRAVITZ

#### Education

Aug. 2003 – Aug. 2005

Old Dominion University  
Norfolk, Virginia  
M.S., Psychology, August 2005

Aug. 2000 – May 2003

Longwood University  
Farmville, Virginia  
B.S., Psychology, May 2003; Minor: Sociology

#### Presentations

Kelley, M.L. & Kravitz, M.P. (2004, April). *Corporal Punishment and it's Relation to Race, Psychological Well-being and Parental Relationship*. Paper presented at the Virginia Psychological Association, Richmond, VA.

Carkenord, D., Bernozelli, C., Kravitz, M.P, Smith, K. (2003, April). *The influence of parent gender and severity of punishment on perceptions of child abuse..* Paper presented at the Carolina Psychology Conference, Raleigh, N.C.